

CAB to announce name change, logo

BY DANIEL BEEKMAN

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), a Bronx-based non-profit known for its remarkable range of social services, will announce its brand new name and logo on Friday, November 13 at its new headquarters on East Tremont Avenue.

Why? Because CAB helps more than citizens, offers more than advice and does more than

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a government bureau. CAB helps immigrants. The non-profit offers language classes, hot meals and beds. It performs HIV tests, counsels children and repairs apartments.

CAB needs a name that better represents the non-profit and a more unique acronym, development director Ken Small said. Small still gets phone calls from stranded travelers.

"We're not a livery service!" Small shouts.

The name Citizens Advice Bureau originated in the United Kingdom, where CAB officers helped residents of England, Scotland and Ireland endure World War II. In 1972, Mildred Zucker, an American social worker with the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, opened a CAB office in Morris Heights.

CAB helped seniors apply for social security and medical benefits. The non-profit has expanded from one office to 29 and from two employees to more than 600 in 2009, success that board member Marshall Green credits to executive director Carolyn McLaughlin. McLaughlin is the glue that binds CAB homeless outreach to CAB workforce development.

Eva Medina of Fordham, 69, found the CAB Morris Senior Center on E. 181st Street in 2000, when she lost her daughter, her health and her job. Medina called the center "a blessing." It helped her beat depression, she said. Medina takes meal tickets, translates for senior Spanish speakers and runs afternoon bingo. The center offers workshops English and Spanish language classes, and health workshops. Medina enjoys the mix of seniors at the center; she has friends from the Caribbean and Africa, from Arthur Avenue and Co-op City. The seniors often visit Atlantic City.

Lesly Exil of Mosholu Parkway is the center's assistant director. The seniors are family, Exil explained.

"The center is my home," he said. "I see them get sick and get well. I see them laugh. I see them cry."

Small hopes the new name will help CAB reach even more immigrants. When he mentions the word "citizen" some immigrants tune out, Small said. CAB helps more than 3,500 people each year; 1,200 are immigrants.