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Grants
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CAB is Now BronxWorks

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Citizens Advice Bureau is now BronxWorks. The agency celebrated its name change at a ceremony last Friday attended by friends and supporters, including Congressman Jose E. Serrano, Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs, Deputy Borough President Aurelia Greene, and Assemblywoman Vanessa Gibson and Bernice Williams, Vice Chair for Bronx Community Board 5.

"The old name no longer fits what we do. The new name is a more accurate reflection of our purpose and it makes clear to people that we are a Bronx-based organization," said Executive Director Carolyn McLaughlin at a ceremony last Friday marking the event.

The Citizens Advice Bureau was founded in the Morris Heights section of the Bronx in 1972. It was based on a British model that emphasized the provision of neighborhood-based walk-in services to help people obtain benefits, address housing matters, and avoid consumer scams.

"We have clearly grown beyond that," says McLaughlin, who had led BronxWorks since 1979. "Our organization is a leading direct service provider for children, working age adults, seniors, and families."

In 2009, BronxWorks was a finalist for the highly-coveted New York Times Nonprofit Excellence Award, a testimony to its superior management practices and outstanding service to low-income individuals, households, and communities. Robert Hess, the commissioner of the New York City Department of Homeless Services, has lauded BronxWorks for our street homeless initiatives, which have resulted in a 72% reduction in the number of homeless individuals on Bronx streets between 2005 and 2009.

The name change did not occur overnight or in a vacuum.

"Our board, senior staff, and key stakeholders were engaged in a process that entailed several months of careful review and deliberation," explains McLaughlin. "We looked at many options before moving ahead with the name change, which is accompanied by a new tagline and logo, as well as a refined mission statement."

A board committee, created by CAB board chair Sean Delany, and chaired by United Way of New York City president and CEO Gordon Campbell oversaw the process.

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