



ASSEMBLY MEMBER LATOYA JOYNER

77TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

ASSEMBLY.STATE.NY.US/MEM/LATOYA-JOYNER



APRIL 2015 - NEWSLETTER

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Honoring Women's History Month with Zumba



Focusing on fitness and families, Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner, along with District 9's Community Education Council, supported the powerful women of our district with free Zumba classes. The events offered families a free workout and healthy eating options.

Recognizing District 77's Women at Samaritan Village



Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner honored Samaritan Village's Highbridge Residential Treatment Program for its hard work and tireless effort in supporting the community. Samaritan Village has proven itself to be a major contributor to the well-being of Bronx families through its assistance and services that include treatment for substance abuse, innovative services for veterans, and programs for homeless individuals, women and children, seniors and families.

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LATOYA'S LINE

Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner released the following statement regarding the New York City Department of Education's free Universal Pre-K program.

"It's never too early to begin your child's education and this great opportunity – made available by Mayor Bill de Blasio and the New York City Department of Education – will help families throughout the Bronx and New York City achieve this important goal. If your child was born in 2011, you can jump-start their educational development during a key time in their formative years by enrolling them into the free, first-rate Pre-K program for the 2015-2016 school year."

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April 2015 Off-Site Constituent Services Hours and Locations

When: Tuesday, April 14 (10:00 AM-1:00 PM)

Where: Woodycrest Center for Human Development - 153 West 165th Street Bronx, NY 10452

ASSEMBLYWOMAN JOYNER SECURES EDUCATION AID



Assemblywoman Joyner made sure that District 9's voice was heard during budget negotiations. She helped to secure a \$505.1 million increase in education aid over the last year to be directed to meeting the needs of New York City's students. The funding will assist schools that need it most, by adding:

- **\$30 million in additional Pre-Kindergarten funding while protecting last year's Pre-K investment in New York City. This includes an expansion of the Universal Pre-K Program to include 3-year olds;**
- **\$75 million in grants for struggling schools; and**
- **\$20 million in grants for libraries, teacher centers and bilingual education.**

For higher education, the enacted budget provides an unprecedented 20% increase in funding for opportunity programs over last year's levels.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN JOYNER: 2015-2016 BUDGET INVESTS IN BRONX FAMILIES, CHAMPIONS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, SUPPORTS SENIORS



Assemblywoman Joyner meets with New Settlement parents and students.

"This year's budget focuses directly on helping to guide all Bronx families towards success. It is truly a win win enabling us to better the community today while improving opportunities for future generations. The SFY 2015-2016 Budget ensures that our students and their families can obtain a quality, yet affordable, education and secures future employment opportunities through local economic investments. Not only will this budget help keep housing affordable and help those families down on their luck in homeless shelters, it also maintains essential Medicaid and community health efforts that ensure working and low income New Yorkers can have access to quality health care – a major concern for families and seniors in the 77th Assembly District."

-Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner

BRONX, N.Y. – Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner (D-Bronx, 77th AD) said the final state 2015-16 budget provides key opportunities for the Bronx by offering much-needed support for families and seniors. It will bolster the local economy through key investments in education, health care and much needed job creation.

Including a commitment of \$415.6 million in funding for improving and maintaining New York's housing and community development programs, the budget also supports affordable housing in the Bronx. Also, this year's budget adds funds to programs specifically focused on homeless service and programs over the next few years.

The 2015-2016 SFY Budget also provides funding for programs geared towards jump-starting economic development by helping the Bronx community through job retention and creation, **including a \$1 million commitment to the Bronx Overall Development Corporation, \$2 million for the Bronx Children's Museum and a 57 percent increase in state funding for the Minority and Women-Owned Business Development Loan Program.**

The enacted budget promises more than \$86.1 million in funding for Medicaid initiatives and directly funds dozens of community health programs. It will ensure prescription drug assistance that can help lower income Bronxites to obtain the treatment they need. Also, the final budget restores funding to continue Medicaid support for working, and low-income families and seniors who require costly long term care.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN JOYNER FILES NEW LEGISLATION THAT WILL HELP VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TO FILE IMMEDIATE ORDERS OF PROTECTION

Assembly Bill A.6262 creates pilot program to protect victims of domestic violence by reducing filing time for orders of protection

BRONX, N.Y. – Victims of domestic violence and their families will have easier access to obtaining orders of protection under new legislation that is moving through the New York State Assembly. Introduced by Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner (D-Bronx, 77th AD), Assembly Bill A.6262 will create a pilot program that protects domestic violence victims by speeding up the process for obtaining temporary orders of protection.

Unanimously approved by the Senate in mid-January, the bill will provide victims of domestic violence a safer and more accessible method for obtaining temporary orders of protection. The legislation amends the Family Court Act and the Judiciary Law to allow the Office of the Court Administration to develop a pilot program permitting domestic violence victims to file for orders of protection electronically and issue such orders remotely.

Currently, New Yorkers are forced to travel to family court – a trip that may not be possible for many due to the fear of retaliation from their abuser.



JOYNER SUPPORTS A HEALTHIER BRONX



Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner believes that every resident should live an active and productive lifestyle. In addition to her highly attended Zumba events at local District 9 schools (page 1), she has also been a leading force in Albany to address diabetes, obesity, kidney disease, asthma and

other chronic illnesses in our community.

Last month, she passed a resolution designating March 2015 as Nutrition Month in the State of New York. She has also joined with Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. in a borough-wide social media campaign known as #NOT62 seeking to improve the health of residents throughout the Bronx.

JOYNER JOINS WEST BRONX HOUSING COALITION

Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner partners with other elected officials to combat the West Bronx housing crisis.

Along with State Senator Gustavo Rivera, Assemblywoman Joyner and fellow city and state elected officials have formed the West Bronx Housing Coalition to address housing and property management issues that can impact Bronx families.

“As housing costs continue to spiral through the roof, families throughout the West Bronx are being squeezed by the worst affordable housing crisis in New York’s history, and I am pleased to join with elected officials from throughout our community as we stand-up for residents from all walks of life. Together we can make a difference in the battle for quality affordable housing by unifying around an agenda that includes strengthening state rent regulations.”

-Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner

PUBLISHED OP-ED ARTICLES

Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner recently published an opinion article for *City Limits* explaining how the New York Legal Education Opportunity Program (LEO) can help diversify the legal profession.



New York's Attempt to Diversify Legal Profession

BY LATOYA JOYNER,
ASSEMBLY MEMBER

As an African-American and proud Bronxite, the New York Legal Education Opportunity Program (LEO) changed my life. It introduced me to the legal profession and helped to guide me towards assisting Bronx families from the “People’s Court” in New York Civil Court to the “People’s House” in the New York State Assembly. But for those that came after me, this opportunity wasn’t available and many were unable to experience law in the same rewarding way that I did. The LEO program was

first introduced by former New York State Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye – its primary goal was to help ensure diversity in the legal community and serve those individuals that have traditionally been under-served in the legal profession. Its core model includes a six-week summer program that assists minority, low-income and educationally disadvantaged students. Free of charge, students like me were granted access to academic courses, textbooks, dormitory rooms and meal plans. After I participated in the program, I went on to study law at the University at Buffalo Law School, where I served as the associate editor for the Buffalo Journal of Gender, Law and Social Policy. I also interned with the New York State Division of Human Rights in the Bronx, where I helped to investigate housing discrimination claims – a real problem for families and residents in the 77th Assembly District. The LEO program helped to influence my decision to become an attorney. I wanted to help Bronx residents and families that were unable to seek out this help themselves. I still serve the community in this capacity as a member of the New York State Assembly.

But lately, the New York State Judicial Institute – the functioning body that helps to institute legal and justice-related educational programs – has not received sufficient funding for the LEO program to operate. It pained me to find out that this great opportunity was lost due to fiscal constraints. Year after year, I was approached by peers and colleagues who sought my advice on how to become prepared for law school. Without hesitation, I encouraged them to apply to the LEO program. The lack of funding to this vital opportunity program has led to an unwanted and unnecessary domino effect that can bar minority and low-income students from becoming law school ready and possibly passing the New York State Bar Exam.

I commend Speaker Carl E. Heastie for granting my request to fund the LEO program in this year’s state budget and his commitment to opportunity programs. New York State has one of the most diverse populations and yet, the legal profession - meant to represent their interests - is not. While there has been progress among the diversification of law firms, there has been little movement at the senior level. Minority and women attorneys do not hold a real voice among the most senior leadership bodies at signatory firms, according to the New York City Bar Association’s 2013 Diversity Benchmarking Report. Also, “people of color and women are significantly under-represented on the bench,” the New York State Bar Association highlighted in a 2014 report. More shocking is that women make up nearly 52 percent of the entire New York State population, but men make up a 65 percent slice of the attorneys in the Empire State.

The statistics are not better nationwide. Eighty-eight percent of attorneys are white, said the American Bar Association. Meanwhile, black, Hispanic, and Asian Pacific Americans make up 4.8 percent, 3.7 percent and 3.4 percent of the legal profession, respectively. And for the incoming class of students, less than one-third are considered minority enrollment.

Former Chief Justice Kaye has said previously that a diverse bench gives the belief that the public has a stake in the justice system. In my opinion, the same premise can be applied to the legal profession and those representing our youth, our community members and our families. The LEO program can help us achieve this goal. As a member of the New York State Bar, this opportunity program truly helped to open up doors for me, as I transitioned from the court room to the Assembly Chambers.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN JOYNER INVITES YOU TO HER UPCOMING APRIL EVENTS

**Free Civil Legal Services
Coming to Your Neighborhood**



Courtesy of
NYS Assembly Member
Latoya Joyner

The Mobile Legal Help Center is a partnership between the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) and the New York State Courts' Access to Justice Program that provides free civil legal services to New Yorkers in need.

Private meeting rooms and technology inside the vehicle enable it to function as a full-service office.

The vehicle will be stationed at:

**Selwyn Ave btwn Mt. Eden Parkway
and E. 173rd Street, Bronx, NY
(Near Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center)
April 7, 2015
10am to 3pm**

To Make an Appointment please visit:
<https://mobilelegalhelpcenter.acuityscheduling.com/>

For more information, please call:
Office of Assembly Member Joyner
(718) 538-2000



Staff onboard the Mobile Legal Help Center will provide FREE legal assistance on issues related to:

- HOUSING
- PUBLIC BENEFITS
- DISABILITY BENEFITS
- HEALTHCARE BENEFITS
- IDENTITY THEFT
- DEBT MANAGEMENT
- CONSUMER CREDIT
- IMMIGRATION
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- DIVORCE
- CUSTODY
- EMPLOYMENT
- ADVANCE PLANNING
- SUPERSTORM SANDY


Everyone is eligible to receive free legal services, regardless of immigration status.

Reinforcing her support for assisting constituents and Bronx families, Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner invites the community to obtain free civil legal services on April 7 from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM at Selwyn Ave btwn Mt. Eden Parkway and E. 173rd Street (near Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center).


The event, which is held in conjunction with the Mobile Legal Help Center, a partnership with the New York Legal Assistance Group and the New York State Courts' Access to Justice Program, includes free legal assistance on issues related to housing and public/disability/health care benefits, immigration, domestic violence, and many more.




Everyone is eligible to receive free legal services, regardless of immigration status.

For more information, please call Assemblywoman Joyner's District Office at 718-538-2000.



**ASSEMBLYWOMAN
LATOYA JOYNER
PRESENTS HER
1st Annual
SENIOR CITIZEN
WELL-BEING
EXPO**






FRIDAY, APRIL 24TH
FINDLAY HOUSE
1175 FINDLAY AVENUE
BRONX, NY 10456
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Refreshments will be served

Let's celebrate your health and well-being! Join us for an afternoon of free services and information focused on our senior citizen community

SPONSORS/PARTNERS:

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Phone: 718-538-2000

Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner will hold her 1st annual Senior Citizen Well-Being EXPO on Friday, April 24 from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM at the Findlay House (1175 Findlay Avenue).

Celebrating health and wellness for the community, the free event will include services, application assistance and information focused on our district's senior community.

For more information, please call Assemblywoman Joyner's District Office at 718-538-2000.