

**Launch of the NYC CCT Program with Mayor Bloomberg & Deputy Mayor Gibbs
March 29, 2007**

Good morning.

I want to thank Mayor Bloomberg and Deputy Mayor Gibbs for the vision and leadership they have demonstrated in seeking new solutions to the very complex and profound problem of poverty.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Starr Foundation, Robin Hood Foundation, OSI and AIG for their partnership and support of this effort.

The Rockefeller Foundation is proud to work with partners who have the foresight to see what their investments can mean for moving New Yorkers out of poverty. Since its founding in New York in 1913, the Rockefeller Foundation has had a commitment to work that can have a significant impact on the lives of poor and vulnerable people.

And as a global foundation, we have operated at the intersection of the international and domestic arenas. Whether advancing the green revolution in Latin America, Asia and now Africa or seeding the community development movement in U.S. cities, we have sought to invest in ideas generated from around the world that have the potential to transform societies.

And today's announcement continues this tradition of bridging the global and the local.

Mayor Bloomberg has stated that the work of poverty reduction shouldn't take a back seat to politics; that we all have a moral obligation to address the root causes of poverty in this city. He challenged and empowered his staff to come up with creative solutions that dealt with poverty holistically. And sought out expert advice to learn about proven poverty reducing solutions in other regions of the US and from other parts of the world.

A particular program developed in Mexico stood out: Oportunidades.

Over the last few months we have worked closely with Deputy Mayor Gibbs and the members of her team to organize meetings between the architects of the Mexican Oportunidades program and the expert staff of The Center for Economic Opportunity, MDRC and SeedCo who are designing, implementing and evaluating the Opportunity NYC program in New York City.

Launched in 1997, Oportunidades in Mexico has the benefit of ten years of research behind it. Evaluation was built into the program and the results have been remarkable:

Results have shown a decrease in the number of poor households, an increase in the rate of school enrollments, increased rates of vaccination, and a decrease in the frequency of sick days, to name just a few of the many notable outcomes.

Unlike traditional welfare programs, Oportunidades ensured that beneficiaries made long-term investments in the health and education of their families.

Given the program's success, the principles of Oportunidades have now been replicated and adopted in more than 20 countries, including Argentina, Bangladesh, Honduras, Jamaica and Turkey. All of these programs have been subject to evaluation and significant impacts have been detected.

Now, after many months of hard research and planning, the model is being adapted to fit the needs of New York's poor communities. The pilot will be rigorously tested and support for this program is what philanthropy at its best can do.

We make investments and take risks that are calculated, manageable, smart and strategic. Before investing in any project, we review hard evidence; evaluate the strategy and design; and assess the capacity of the partners.

In the case of this initiative, we believe that Opportunity NYC can make great strides in combatting poverty, and we are proud to play a part in this pioneering program.

Thank you