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<p><b>Welcome to SoBRO's Winter Newsletter</b> <b>Greetings SoBRO Supporters,</b></p> <p>Welcome to the third edition of our electronic newsletter. We have been busy in the final months of 2009, so read on to catch up with our various activities and initiatives.</p> <p>Feel free to forward this email along to any friends or colleagues that you think may be interested. You can also call us if you have any questions or would like to know more about any of these stories at (718) 292-3113 or email us at <a href="mailto:info@sobro.org">info@sobro.org</a>. Enjoy!</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>  <p>Phillip Morrow President / CEO SoBRO</p>	<p><a href="#">Join Our Mailing List!</a></p>
<p><b>SoBRO Students Take their Ideas to City Government</b></p> <p>Last year, SoBRO staff asked student participants in the Community Justice Project (CJP), an after school program at PS/MS 3, to think of something they would like to change in their community. They looked around their neighborhood, and decided they wanted to fix their local dilapidated park. The goal, says Eva Lopez, SoBRO's program director for CJP, was to teach kids how to engage in the slow, sometimes tedious process of advocating for change. As a <a href="#">front page article in the Tremont Tribune</a> put it, CJP "has taken on the Herculean task of getting middle schoolers excited about things like community boards."</p> 	<p><b><a href="#">SoBRO E-Newsletter Online Archive</a></b></p> <p><b><a href="#">News in Brief</a></b></p> <p>Now you can find SoBRO on Facebook. To join our discussion of all things Bronx, <a href="#">click here</a> and become a fan.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Click on the following links to learn more about some of SoBRO's recent grants and initiatives:</p> <p><a href="#">Bank of New York Mellon Grant</a></p> <p>-----</p> <p>Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation <a href="#">College Ready Communities</a> and</p>

Judging from the progress the students have made bringing attention to their park (Quarry Roads Ballfields on East 181<sup>st</sup> St.), it seems they should have a new found faith in the power of community advocacy. A petition they circulated received over 200 signatures (Including one from Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., who signed at this year's Get Green Fest. [Click here](#) to see a picture of the event.), and Bronx Community Board 6 voted to support the proposal they presented at the Board's September session. Now they have been promised a meeting with Bronx Parks Commissioner Hector Aponte. In the mean time, the students are working with their school science teacher to test the soil and air quality of the park, and to research what grass would best to plant. SoBRO will keep our supporters updated on our CJP and other youth program activities. *(Photo: CJP Student Leaders Lisa Johnson, left, and Hamsa Usman)*

## SoBRO Scholarship Winners Announced

Each year, SoBRO awards \$10,000 in scholarship money to participants in the Youth Department. Any student that is going to enroll in a degree-granting 2 or 4 year program the following Fall is eligible, and students are chosen based on applications, essays and their performance in their respective programs.



The two scholarships - each of which provides scholarship money to five individual students - are the Jerry Weston Scholarship and the Bernie Gold & Anthony Pellicano Youth Scholarship. The Gold & Pellicano Scholarship fund was established by Brian Gold at the SoBRO 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala in November 2008, where he was a Gala honoree. The Jerry Weston Foundation has endowed an annual scholarship for SoBRO student for many years. To see short bios of Gold & Pellicano Scholarship winners, [click here](#); to see the Weston winners, [click here](#). *(Photo: Scholarship Winners Asetta Ramsey, left, and Ibrahim Jejote)*

## YouthBuild Goes Green

In June 2009, the U.S. Department of Labor [announced](#) that SoBRO would receive funding to continue the operation of the YouthBuild Transformation Academy. YouthBuild, the legendary program that gives high school dropouts on-the-job training while they work toward their GED, celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. In addition to the life-changing results it helps participants achieve, YouthBuild has been recognized as amongst the most effective use of stimulus funds one can find: a 2008 study at Vanderbilt University found that "Every single dollar spent on a YouthBuild participant yielded between \$10.80 and \$42.90 in benefits to taxpayers."



The new SoBRO YouthBuild program will incorporate a strong "green skills" training component, including energy efficiency, weatherization,

### [Green Carts Program](#)

Cit and Metlife Foundation [Grants to SoBRO EDP Program](#)

Con Edison [Grant for Green Job Training](#)

NY State Dept. of Labor [Brownfield Job Training Grant](#)

US Small Business Administration ["Program for Investment in Micro-Entrepreneurs"](#)

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The 2010 Census is critical to making sure that our communities have fair and accurate representation. [Click here](#) to find out what SoBRO is doing to help.

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A client of SoBRO's Economic Development Department and 2009 Gala honoree, El Nuevo Delicioso Restaurant, received the NYC Dept. of Small Business Services ["Small Business of the Year" award](#).

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The SoBRO 37<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala took place on Dec. 3, 2009 at the Grant Hyatt in New York. [Click here](#) to view pictures from the event, read the program, and more.

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In September 2009, SoBRO welcomed Lourdes Zapata back to SoBRO as Seniore Vice President of Community and Economic

and environmental cleanup training. As a result of the partnerships SoBRO has forged with leading energy and environmental training associations (the Association for Energy Affordability and the NYC Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation) as well as their member employers in New York City, YouthBuild 2009 will offer its participants additional in-class and on-site training in these sectors, nationally recognized industry certifications, and internship and employment opportunities. The SoBRO YouthBuild Transformation Academy will help 60 local youth over the next two years. *(Photo: SoBRO YouthBuild Alum Andre Lawson)*

Development. [Click here](#) to learn more.

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 The SoBRO development project on Southern Blvd passed a major milestone when it recently [received ULURP certification](#).

## Meet Our Board

In this installment of Meet Our Board, SoBRO would like to recognize Simon Bergson for four years of service as the Chairman of SoBRO's Board of Directors. Simon first worked with SoBRO when he relocated his beer distribution business, Manhattan Beer Distributors, to the South Bronx in 1979. SoBRO was instrumental in connecting him to tax incentives, warehouse space, and even employees from our Career Development department. In turn, businesses like Manhattan Beer were critical to bringing back the jobs to the South Bronx that are the backbone of a vital community. Simon served on the SoBRO Board of Directors for 20 years before he became Chairman in 2005. During his four years as Chairman, SoBRO continued to expand its offerings: new buildings have been planned, new education initiatives undertaken, and new community renewal projects completed. Simon will continue to be a key member of SoBRO's Board, and we thank him for his service as Chairman and contributions to SoBRO.



The new Board Chairman, who assumed the position in late 2009, is Anthony Riccio, the Senior Vice President of the Galesi Group / Harlem River Yard Venture. Tony Riccio has been a board member since 2001, and his ties to our community are strong: through his efforts, the abandoned Penn Central Rail Yards in the South Bronx has been turned into a state-of-the-art intermodal rail terminal and industrial park, the largest private industrial development in the City's recent history. Prior to this project, Tony served in New York City government under four different mayoral administrations. His vast knowledge of real estate development and love of the Bronx and wider New York City communities suggest that Tony's tenure as SoBRO's Board Chairman will be one of effective and dynamic leadership. *(Photo: Tony Riccio, left, and Simon Bergson)*

## Bronx Business Bio: Golden Krust



In 2009, Golden Krust Caribbean Bakery and Grill celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as one of the leading purveyors of fast-service Caribbean cuisine in the United States. With

over 120 nationwide stores in operation and further growth predicted for the future, Golden Krust's success is even more remarkable considering its humble beginnings.

Golden Krust originated with Ephraim and Mavis Hawthorne, owners of Hawthorne & Sons Bakery in St. Andrew, Jamaica. Their children, wanting to continue the family's tradition of Jamaican cuisine in New York, decided to start their own business and opened the first Golden Krust on Gun Hill Road in the Bronx in 1989. Customers enjoyed the beef patties, wraps, and baked goods so much that the business soon grew to 17 stores in New York. In 1996, Golden Krust became the first black-owned business in the United States to be given a franchise license, and has been expanding ever since.

Because of its strong local presence (the company is headquartered here and employs around 125 local residents), Golden Krust has worked with SoBRO on many occasions during the past year. When the company was experiencing shipping and loading problems at their Bronx facilities, SoBRO requested that the Department of Transportation install a "No Standing Except Trucks" sign in front of the Golden Krust facility, which greatly improved loading efficiency. SoBRO's Procurement and Technical Assistance team has helped them receive their New York City Minority/Women Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) certification, and helped them to market to and receive assistance from various arms of the federal government. SoBRO has also assisted the company in applying for NYC tax incentive and funding programs that offer support for hiring and renovation costs. And finally, Golden Krust regularly hires graduates of SoBRO's Career Development program, translating their success as a business into success for the South Bronx community. Golden Krust sets a sterling example of a successful Bronx business, and SoBRO wishes them continued success. To learn more about Golden Krust, visit [goldenkrustbakery.com](http://goldenkrustbakery.com).

## A SoBRO Farewell to George Marquez



In September 2009, SoBRO lost an ardent supporter, passionate leader, and great friend when George Marquez passed away.

He started at SoBRO in 1996 as the Director of the youth center. He had a staff of three, one of whom, Mario Bodden, is still at SoBRO. "We had five desks...and we had 20 folders of young people and we said, 'We're going to conquer the world, we're going to get DYCD contracts and we're going to be big!'" Mario remembers of the time when George arrived. George's "passion for people," as Mario puts it, and his ambition and talent made a real difference.

When George became the Director, the youth center enrolled fewer than 100 participants annually; by the time he left in late 2008, the SoBRO Youth Department had 49 full-time staff serving nearly 2,000 students each year.

"The Youth Department began to take over the whole organization under George's leadership," jokes SoBRO President Phillip Morrow. "He was always telling me, 'I could do more, I could help you make the organization run better. Give me more responsibility.' And I did," Phil says. George assumed responsibility of SoBRO's entire education program—youth, adult,

and career development-in 2001. Both departments underwent huge expansions and won a string of awards throughout the rest of George's tenure.

In late 2008, George left SoBRO to become the president of the Harlem Commonwealth Council, a nonprofit organization in Harlem with a mission similar to that of SoBRO. Even after his departure and passing, the staff he mentored and programs he created at SoBRO and elsewhere continue to thrive. His smile, sense of humor, leadership and friendship are sorely missed, and they continue to inspire the work we have before us in improving the lives of the individuals and communities we serve.

**About SoBRO**

*SoBRO, a not-for-profit community development corporation, has been serving the South Bronx since 1972. SoBRO's programs include adult education and workforce training, real estate and community development, technical and financial assistance for businesses, and an array of programs for youth. For additional information about SoBRO, call 718 292-3113 or visit [www.sobro.org](http://www.sobro.org).*

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