

Winter classes start at Mosholu Montefiore

Winter classes start Monday, January 11, through Saturday, January 16, for children and teens at the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center on Gun Hill Road and Dekalb Avenue, one block East of Jerome Avenue.

They are affordable, and taught by expert teachers who know how to relate to children and teens.

Classes are offered in beginner's ballet, jazz/hip-hop dance, break dancing, ceramics and pottery, wood crafts, jewelry making, creative arts and crafts, actor's studio, puppetry, baseball clinic, weight and fitness training, indoor soccer, basketball, computer training, fundamentals of math or reading. These 8 session classes cost \$75 for members and \$85 for non-members plus accident insurance.

The center's martial arts (karate) school serves children, teens, and adults and offers classes all taught by Sensei Luis Morales on Saturday, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 5:30pm to 8:30pm. Classes are broken down by age and ability with separate classes for teens and adults, as well as those who have earned their orange belt or higher. Fees are very affordable; children in Kindergarten to 6th grade pay \$80 for members and \$85 for non-members for 8 sessions (once a week) with

large discounts if they come more than once a week. Teens and adults pay \$95 for members and \$100 for non-members for 8 weekly sessions, who will also receive large discounts for additional weekly classes. Morales can be reached at (718) 944-3290 to discuss the complete program.

The center's new boxing program for children meets on Tuesday evenings 5:00 to 6 p.m. for 1st to 4th grades and 6 to 7 p.m. for 5th to 9th grades and Saturday from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. for 1st to 4th grades and 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. for 5th to 9th grades. One session for 8 weeks is \$90, two sessions a week for 8 weeks is \$165 plus accident insurance. Call Chris Pinto for details at extension 256.

Don't forget its children's baseball league registration time. The league will have Shandler Park back and will not have the problems it experienced last year. The league serves boys and girls in Pee-Wees 5-6 years old, Banthoms 7-8 year olds, Minors 9-10 years old, Major 11-12 years old, Seniors 13,14, and 15 years old and Girl's Softball ages 9 to 15 years old. Call Pinto at (718) 882-4000, ext. 280 for details.

For a free brochure call (718) 882-4000, ext. 0 or visit www.mmcc.org or just stop by the community center to register. Give the gift that keeps on giving.

Disability benefits seminar

White Plains law firm, Markhoff & Mittman, is offering a free seminar to help people learn more about obtaining Social Security Disability Benefits in the Bronx this month.

"Have you worked all of your life? Are you now unable to work because of a disabling condition? Are you prepared to deal with the social security administration?" asks attorney Scott Daniels. "I designed this seminar to provide you with valuable information should you find yourself in this situation. This is a free opportunity to educate yourself on

the complexities of Social Security Disability law."

It's not easy to get Social Security benefits. Each year, about 65 percent of the 2.5 million people who file with the federal government for Social Security disability are initially denied benefits.

To learn more about obtaining Social Security Disability benefits, attend this free seminar. Call (718) 509-9596 to reserve your seat. It is being held Tuesday, January 12, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Community Care of N.Y., P.C. which is located at 1963 Grand Concourse (intersection of 179th Street).

Bronx teens tour White House

Campaign volunteers meet President's political director

BY DANIEL BEEKMAN

Bronx teenagers who traveled to Philadelphia to campaign for presidential candidate Barack Obama more than a year ago were treated to an exclusive tour of the White House in December. Members of the Bronx Youth Empowerment Program explored the Obama residence, inspected presidential portraits and discussed history with White House political director Patrick Gaspard.

Bronx YEP members asked Gaspard how to succeed. Karin Pressley, 17, of Co-op City hopes to become a lawyer.

"He told us to read, write and ask questions," the Pelham Preparatory Academy senior said.

Bronx YEP teamed up with 1199 SEIU, the healthcare workers union, to sponsor the Washington, D.C. trip and White House tour. Bronx YEP leader Andy King was a City Council candidate in September. His wife, Bronx YEP leader Neva Shillingford, is an 1199 SEIU executive vice president.

King and Shillingford arranged the Bronx YEP tour on a previous visit to the White House for a holiday party. They escorted the teens to Washington. Gaspard is a former 1199 SEIU executive vice president. He succeeded President George W. Bush's political director, Karl Rove.

"We had a marvelous conversation [with Gaspard]," King said. "[The teens] asked dynamic questions, tough questions."

Most Bronx YEP members hail from the northeast Bronx. Jose Serrano, 18, is a junior at Truman High School. He joined Bronx YEP to hone his leadership skills and learn about African-American culture. Serrano, from White Plains Road and E. 220th Street, had never visited Washington before.

"We were in the [White House] Green Room and the Red Room," he said. "It was smaller than I [had] thought. The White House



Photo courtesy of Bronx YEP

Members of the Bronx Youth Empowerment Program toured the White House, decorated for the holidays, in December. They discussed history and careers with President Barack Obama's political director.

looks bigger on TV."

Bronx YEP members were impressed by a Christmas tree "wish box," the brainchild of First Lady Michelle Obama, Serrano said. The 18-year old wished for healthcare reform.

Gaspard explained that former presidents kept slaves to cook, clean and maintain the White House, 12-year old Nene Ali from the Edenwald Houses said.

"History is important," Ali said. "We don't

learn about that stuff in school."

Ali, an accomplished spoken word artist, performed for Gaspard. On paper she slipped into the Christmas tree "wish box," she scribbled her MySpace and Facebook addresses.

"I want to meet Mr. and Mrs. Obama," Ali said.

Both Ali and Pressley were struck by a portrait of President John F. Kennedy, his head down. Ali called the portrait "profound."

"Obama has so many issues," Pressley said. "But a president before him had to struggle, too. [The portrait] made me feel better."

If Pressley met the president, she'd ask him for time management tips. She and Serrano plan to share photos from the Washington trip at school.

"[The White House tour] made me think that anything is possible," Serrano said. "Obama did it."

Benedetto sponsors free mammo screenings

Assemblyman Michael R. Benedetto, in conjunction with Project Renewal, formerly operating as Women's Outreach Network, will be sponsoring a free Mobile Mammography Screening Van which will be outside of the Baychester Library, 2049 Asch Loop

North, on Saturday, January 23, beginning at 9 a.m.

This program is for women 40 years of age and older who have not had a mammogram in the past year. All insurance plans are accepted; however, if you do not have insurance, you can still sign up for the program.

An appointment is

necessary. Call 1-800-564-6868.

This program is funded by Bronx Cancer Services Program Partnership. Screening coordination and Outreach/In-reach funded by the Komen Greater NYC 2008 Community Breast Health Grant.