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THE NEW YORK
COMMUNITY TRUST



New York's Community Foundation Gives Emergency Funding to Help Haitian Immigrants

New York City, Feb 23—Even before the devastating earthquake, thousands of Haitians relied on money sent from family in New York City, and now that support is more crucial than ever. The federal government has given undocumented Haitians the opportunity to file for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), which will allow them to live and work here legally for 18 months, so they can send money to desperate relatives and friends in Haiti. **The Fund for New Citizens in The New York Community Trust** has made **\$100,000** in emergency grants to help provide free legal assistance to poor, fearful, undocumented Haitians who are already in the United States and can't return to Haiti, and who can apply for TPS—a complicated process—by July 21.

“With the clock ticking, and up to 25,000 Haitians eligible for this status in the City, it is clear that the most immediate need for Haitians in the City is well-coordinated help applying for Temporary Protected Status in neighborhoods like Flatbush, Crown Heights, and Canarsie, where the majority of New York's Haitian immigrants live,” said Joyce Bove, The Trust's senior vice president for programs and special projects. Grants went to **Brooklyn Defender Services, CAMBA,** and the **New York Immigration Coalition.**

Applying for TPS is not easy and often complicated by lack of identification and proof of income. In addition, small mistakes in the application process can result in denial. Poor applicants need immediate, competent, and free legal help to get through the process safely. But the many lawyers eager to volunteer often don't have expertise in immigration law and must be trained, their services coordinated, and their availability advertised in a short period of time.

“Coming out of hiding as an undocumented immigrant and applying for Temporary Protected Status is a serious decision, and Haitian immigrants need lawyers who can explain the benefits and possible risks,” said Kathleen Masters, who works in Flatbush, Brooklyn as Deputy Executive Director of CAMBA.

Also, in the rush to apply, new non-English speaking immigrants are more easily tricked into paying exorbitant fees or paying for help from lawyers with no experience in immigration law. Fortunately, there are legal services providers who have the expertise and the ability to train and coordinate services.

A \$45,000 grant to **Brooklyn Defender Services** will support its Haitian Legal Relief Project, which held a training session on TPS on February 3 that drew more than 200 attorneys. The funding will enable the agency to help 3,000 people apply for TPS and file petitions to bring family members to the U.S. from Haiti temporarily. It will also conduct three workshops and coordinate 15 legal clinics in the heart of the Brooklyn Haitian community through July.

A \$45,000 grant to **CAMBA**, a multi-service organization based in the heart of the Haitian community in Flatbush, Brooklyn, will enable the agency to help 1,500 undocumented Haitians. CAMBA will hold individual meetings and group workshops about the TPS application process in churches, the Haitian Family Reception Center, and at offices of other community groups.

Originally established in 1987 with support from the Fund for New Citizens, the **New York Immigration Coalition** will use a grant of \$10,000 to be a clearinghouse for nonprofits, law schools, lawyers, and government regarding information related to Temporary Protected Status—services, events, volunteer opportunities, and contact information.

About The Fund for New Citizens

The Trust has long-supported legal help for New Yorkers who cannot afford an attorney and created the Fund for New Citizens in 1987 to help immigrants take advantage of a federal law that offered an opportunity to legalize millions. Since then, The Fund for New Citizens has made more than \$14 million in grants to strengthen immigrant-led organizations; challenge punitive immigration laws; promote pro-immigrant policies at the State and City levels; foster coalitions of immigration advocates and others with shared concerns; and support partnerships to provide legal help to immigrants.



It is composed of the following funders: Altman Foundation, Morton K. & Jane Blaustein Foundation, Booth Ferris Foundation, The Clark Foundation, Dora Fund in The New York Community Trust, Ford Foundation, FJC, a Foundation of Philanthropic Funds, Charles Evans Hughes Memorial Foundation, Interest on Lawyer Account, Fund of the State of New York, Suzette Brooks Masters & Seth J. Masters Fund in The New York Community Trust, The New York Community Trust, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and Twenty-First Century ILGWU Heritage Fund.

About The New York Community Trust

Through the generosity of New Yorkers, past and present, who set up charitable funds with us, The New York Community Trust makes grants for a broad array of charitable activity so important to the well-being and vitality of our city. Since 1924, The Trust has helped donors achieve their charitable goals by funding effective nonprofits that offer proven and promising solutions to the City's challenges. We ended 2009 with assets of \$1.8 billion in nearly 2,000 charitable funds, and made grants totaling \$127 million (unaudited).

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