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Peculiar Vending Practices

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From the Village of Brooklyn, NY

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# OUR TIME PRESS

THE LOCAL PAPER WITH THE GLOBAL VIEW

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members  
Entreat  
Colleagues  
to Join Battle  
for Homeless

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Internet  
Manifests  
Media

Arianna Huffington  
(HuffingtonPost.com)  
sought to answer the  
question: "Is the New  
Media system old wine  
in new bottles?"

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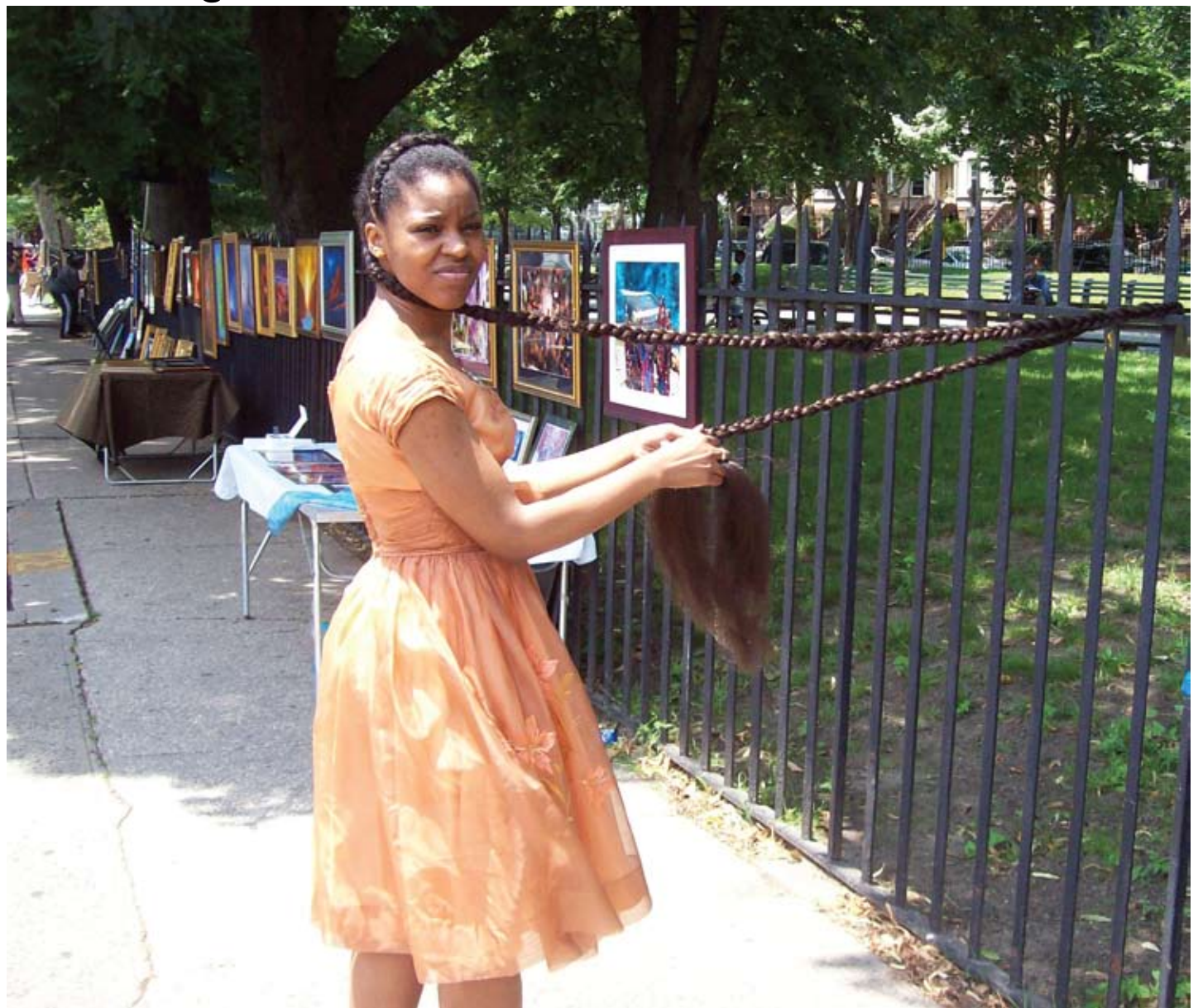
An Hurrah for  
NTAC's Valerie  
Oliver-Durrah

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# Summer Begins

with Old Battles, New Hopes for Healing and  
Investing in the Future



## Efforts to Seek Foreclosure Relief

NEDAP (Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project) congratulated the governor and legislature for reaching an agreement yesterday on a new law to address the subprime lending and foreclosure crises in New York State. The new law will provide an excellent framework for responsible lending going forward, and help ensure that New York homeowners get a fair shake in the foreclosure process.

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## Children at Risk Around the World

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The No One To Turn To report revealed that for years members of international organizations have abused children in the South Sudan and Haiti, and for years it has been underreported.



# Valerie's Value: Making a Way

## Prophet to Nonprofits, the Community and More

Some falter at the threshold, stop at the glass ceiling, trip before the finish line, believe there's no way around "No!;" give up before the bell. And then there's Valerie Oliver-Durrah, Brooklyn's own valiant and valuable 5'4" force of nature.

Over the past 20 years, the dynamic Brooklyn resident has won every award there is to win for her work connecting fledgling grassroots nonprofits throughout New York City to the funding stalwarts who more easily can offer jump-starts and supply fuel.

She founded her Neighborhood Technical Assistance Clinic in 1998 "to provide strategic direction, organizational oversight and technical clinics to grassroots nonprofits and grantmakers."

And "to create dialogues between funders, community-based and faith-based organizations to grow ... programs and services for (the) neighborhood."

The "Clinic" also has contributed to the lives of individuals and families on personal levels and made the community just a little bit stronger. That's why hundreds are expected to turn out for next week's NTAC star 10th Anniversary event, Tuesday, July 1, 7:00pm-10pm, at Steiner Studios (Abigail Kirsch at Stage #6) in the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Ten of New York's most respected community givers, including State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, will be "saluted" along with NYC's nonprofits and the local areas they serve at what hostess Durrah calls "At Home with NYC Neighborhoods Dinner Buffet Awards Ceremony." The event will feature an "under the stars" gala cocktail reception, and a dessert buffet illuminated by "real live" pre-Independence Day fireworks.

But the event is more than a soiree. It's designed, as she told us, to provide technical assistance to five grassroots organizations – one in each borough as well as funds for

others, including academic scholarships, throughout 2008. Proceeds will fuel efforts of: Brooklyn's Sesame Flyers; Staten Island's Sundog Theater, Manhattan's Harlem Dowling Parents Association Council; The Bronx chapter of the NAACP and Queens' LifeCamp, Inc. It also celebrates relationships and connections, the core of NTAC's mission: She says, "It will be an inspirational celebration of neighborhood life."

And, indeed, Ms.

Durrah's own inspired life is populated by an impressive line of New York City elected officials, community leaders and major grassroots organizations, whom she's honored at dozens of fund-raising and "meet the grantmakers" events over the years.

"All in attendance at this year's milestone represent more than 230 nonprofits that live the message, 'neighborhoods rule,'" she told us. In addition to highlighting State Sen. Montgomery, The Salute to New York City Nonprofits and the Neighborhoods They Serve will honor (for their vision and commitment to grassroots nonprofits), Cesar Claro, Executive Director of Richmond County Savings Foundation (RCSF); Rev. Kanyere Eaton, Executive Director, The Sister Fund; Seth Edwards, Vice President at JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s Community Relations; June Jee, Director of External Affairs at Verizon and Verizon Foundation; Larry Mandell, Former President



The Bronx was a recent stop on Valerie Oliver Durrah's five-borough crusade to encourage strategic relationships and dialogue between non-profits and funding agencies through the Neighborhood Technical Assistance Clinic she founded and runs. Here, she's seen with Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion, Jr. and Monroe College President Stephen Jerome at NTAC's "Bronx Meet the Grantmakers during Bronx Week." On July 1, the dynamic networker celebrates a luminous 10 years at a fun-raising fundraiser (complete with fireworks) at Steiner Studios in the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

of the United Way of New York City; State; Brenda Scott, Director of Community Affairs for Macy's East; Rev. Dr. Gary V. Simpson, Pastor Concord Baptist Church of Christ; Rev. Emma Jordan Simpson, Executive Director of the Children's Defense Fund of New York; Elwanda Young, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at the United Way of New York City.

And when Ms. Durrah brings funders and nonprofits around the same table she's usually at the head of it, directing with laser cuts to the chase. And that's a blessing to our community. The exchange fest of shared ideas, strategies and resources benefits all concerned. It's also a political statement: funders can fulfill the promise of their stated missions; fundees can actualize their dreams and sanction programs.

Now that's power.

"Community-based and faith-based organizations have taken on major responsibilities in our country's social services," she says

(www. neighborhoodclinic.org).

"Financial resources and organizational capacity are key to their success. Relationships between funders and nonprofits, between programs and the communities they are to serve, have never been more important."

On the day we went to press – just five days – before her event, Ms. Durrah sent out an e-mail message that simply stated, "Final outreach to nonprofits to be in attendance at the roll call of nonprofits for The Salute to NYC's Nonprofits and the Neighborhoods They Serve, to join in strengthening the efforts of NYC nonprofits to our neighborhoods."

Roll call, indeed! Her office phones were literally ringing off the hook; the Queen had sent out the word, and everybody was lining up to get on board. Who knows what's next for the Brooklyn powerhouse - a show called, what else, "Valerie." For event information, contact: Zella Jones, 212-260-0878.

(Bernice Elizabeth Green)

