



Assemblymember Michael A. Blake *Reports to the People*

79TH Assembly District • The Bronx, NY • 718-538-3829
<http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Michael-Blake>

June 2015

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

To the people of our beloved 79th district

With your help and support, we have had a very productive first six months in the community and in Albany to enact our 3, 2, 1 vision.

3 E's of Economic Development, Education and Equality for all.

2 being the paths in how we achieve improvement:

- A) Strengthening our Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises to have greater access to capital, contracting and opportunities so they provide jobs to our community residents and empower our neighborhoods as a whole.*
- B) Creating a career-oriented education vision for our children and young adults that leads to jobs and economic security.*

1 being the commitment of improving our socio-economic situation to make our district and the South Bronx the urban metropolis of the world.

We passed a historic 2015-16 state budget that puts families from the South Bronx first by restoring much-needed funding for our schools, making it possible for more students to achieve a college education and helping New York's struggling families. The \$150.3 billion plan also funds numerous economic development projects to create more jobs and continues the state's fiscal discipline by holding spending growth to less than 2 percent for the fifth consecutive year.

A budget shows one's values and priorities. This historic budget absolutely puts the families of the 79th district, The Bronx, and all of New York first. The Assembly Majority stood up for the people. Our budget provides resources for programs that make a difference in people's lives and secured needed investments that will make New York a stronger place to live, work and do business. This budget demonstrates how we are actualizing our vision of Economic Development, Education and Equality for All.

Yours in service,

Michael A. Blake
Assemblymember Michael Blake

WE REFLECTED THAT VISION IN OUR LEGISLATIVE AGENDA AND ADVOCACY

JOBS

My second bill (A6902-A) passed the Assembly by a unanimous 119-0 vote, which would ensure that small businesses are paid within fifteen days of receipt of an invoice for certain payments so that they may continue to sustain themselves and conduct their business activities.

- We co-hosted the Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration Maria Contreras-Sweet with the New America Alliance, Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. & Congressman Jose Serrano for an impactful luncheon on how to provide access to capital and opportunities for our businesses to hire more Bronxites.

We are collaborating with several remarkable organizations to get more of our residents trained and hired for jobs.

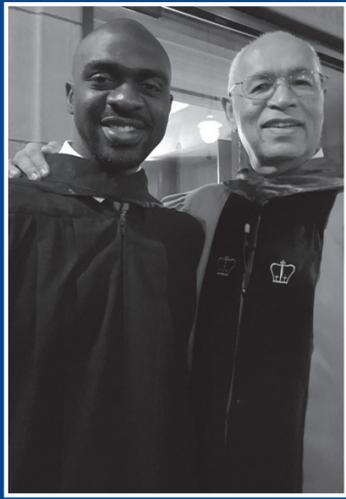
- Workshops in Business Opportunities (WIBO) to provide entrepreneurial training in the fall at Boricua College
- Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to train and hire local residents on nearby projects



- JUMA Ventures to hire young people for upcoming summer and fall jobs
- Operation HOPE to promote entrepreneurship, financial literacy and helping families improve their credit scores

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(CONT'D) WE REFLECTED THAT VISION IN OUR LEGISLATIVE AGENDA AND ADVOCACY



Dr. Victor Alicea and Assemblymember Blake at Boricua College's Commencement Ceremony. The Assemblymember was honored to give the Commencement Speech to our scholars from the district.

EDUCATION

We voted for historic education increases in this year's budget to help our students, including a significant increase in aid of \$1.6 billion over last year, \$30 million increase in pre-K funding for 3- and 4-year-olds and \$75 million for struggling schools.

Thanks to TechFIN (Technology for Families In Need), we are providing computers to students at the schools listed on the state struggling school list in our district and to the seven young men who attended President Barack Obama's "My Brother's Keeper Alliance" event.

- We are leading a technology collaborative effort with Yes We Code, Startup Box and The Knowledge House to have more young people learn coding and quality assurance for technology jobs.
- I have visited many schools in the district from School for Excellence to P.S./M.S. 4 to Success Academy 3. At Mott Hall III Charter School, I spoke to 8th grade students as they celebrated their high school acceptances. At Bronx Democracy Prep, Assemblymember Blake & Senator Rivera engaged in a town hall with students to learn of their concerns and encourage them to dream big dreams.
- I also wrote an Op-Ed for the Amsterdam News called: **The Savage Inequality of Education Must End**. It called for the end of divisive language and for us to focus on the children. In the midst of the \$76 million of foundation aid our district is owed, our struggling schools and the variance of public, private, charter and religious schools we have, I am focused on us getting more funding and positive changes for our schools.

HOUSING

Speaker Carl E. Heastie appointed me as the Chair of the Subcommittee on Mitchell Lama to ensure the best options for rehabilitation and preservation of these developments, including Concourse Village. This work is crucial to keeping affordable housing for middle- and low-income New Yorkers available.

We voted for a historic \$100 million in this year's budget for NYCHA repairs, which will be a tremendous benefit to the residents of our developments.

In partnership with the Urban Justice Center's Safety Net Project, we hosted "Know Your Rights" sessions so residents know how to address their housing concerns immediately.

In partnership with State Senator Gustavo Rivera, we participated in Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) events to help seniors fill out applications to potentially get rent freezes through that program.

- Following town halls at the Webster Houses, Forest Houses and at Nos Quedamos, Assemblymember Blake is even more committed to push for stronger rent laws, truly affordable housing policies, ending vacancy decontrol and ensuring developments with community amenities.



Assemblymember Blake advocating for stronger rent laws in Albany with tenant activists.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

My first passed bill (A.7501) passed the Assembly by a 92-8 vote. It would strengthen information disclosures for those in custody in the criminal justice system. This bill would require the department of corrections and community supervision (DOCCS) to provide inmates with forms to disclose medical information and mental health treatment information, and to provide persons appointed to receive such disclosures a copy of the authorization form.

I've been appointed a Co-Chair of the Criminal Justice task force of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Caucus promote a "Before, During and After" comprehensive legislative package. It includes Raise The Age for 16 and 17 year olds to no longer be tried as adults in criminal court, push for a Special Prosecutor or a panel to review cases of death of unarmed civilians by police officers, Grand Jury transparency and uniform police standards.

I have hosted a community town hall to hear your concerns, participated in two public hearings to receive recommenda-



Assemblymember Blake leading a Town hall at Forest Houses with support from Justice League NYC.

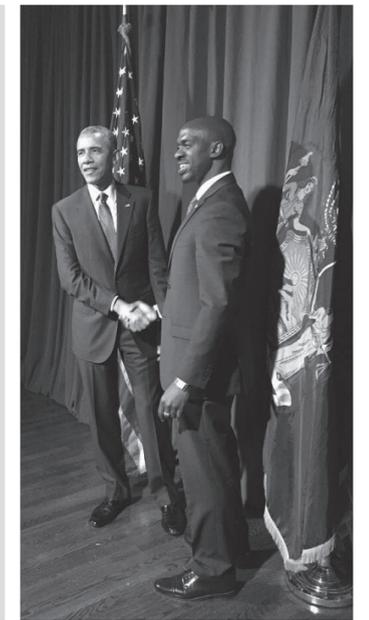
tions, co-led four press conferences, marched on the first day of the 250 mile march to D.C. and in New York City where people were unjustly treated. We will not stop until transformative change happens.

COMMUNITY

President Obama visited The Bronx and shouts out "Your Assemblymember and my friend"



I was honored to be a guest at President Obama's speech at Lehman in The Bronx about the "My Brother's Keeper Alliance" to empower boys and young men of color that Black and Brown Lives Matter. Seven young men from our district attended the event, including Darinel Montero from Bronx International High School who introduced President Obama. Local and national leaders in philanthropy, business, government, faith communities, media were in attendance for this historic event where the President joked that Assemblymember Blake needs to stand up and get some TV time when he gets a shoutout by the President of the United States. My team will work closely with My Brother's Keeper Alliance to provide opportunities for the young men in the 79th district.



"Abrazo" for All

Abrazo, which is the Spanish word for embrace, are events co-hosted by Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz, Assemblymember Blake, Chairman Marcos Crespo and Assemblymember Luis Sepulveda which have more than 600 attendees at each event. At our African American Abrazo, we recognized Abraham Jones from the Claremont Center. At our Boricua Abrazo, we honored Maria del Pilar Avila of the New America Alliance. We also have Abrazos for the Garifuna, Bangladesh and Dominican communities.



COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

Assemblymember Michael Blake holds a number of key committee and task force memberships in the Assembly and is Chair of the subcommittee on Mitchell Lama.

Our goal in these committees is to ensure that the district's

- Chair, Subcommittee on Mitchell-Lama
- Member, Committee on Banks
- Member, Committee on Correction
- Member, Committee on Election Law
- Member, Committee on Housing
- Member, Committee on Governmental Operations

views and needs as well as our agenda of economic and social justice are represented on issues. Below are the current committee appointments. We welcome questions about the purpose and work of these committees.

- Member, Committee on Veteran's Affairs
- Member, Black Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus (Co-Chairman, Criminal Justice Taskforce)
- Member, Assembly Majority Working Group on Transparency, Operations and Public Participation

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

NYCHA Repairs: 718-707-7771
New York City General complaint and information:311
Urban Justice Center (Housing concerns): 646-602-5600
Department of Education: 718-935-2000
SUNY EOC (Jobs)..... 718-530-7000

POLICE PRECINCTS IN THE 79th DISTRICT

40th Precinct: 718-402-2270
 41st Precinct: 718-542-4771
 42nd Precinct: 718-402-3887
 44th Precinct: 718-590-5511
 48th Precinct: 718-299-3900

SOCIAL SERVICES

Department Human Resources: 877-472-8411
 Home Care: 347-346-9676
 Employment Services: 718-542-6777
 Medical Assistance/Eligibility and Info Services Unit: 212-273-0047
 Income Support/Public Asst.: 718-220-6629
 or 7003 or 6079
 Food Stamps: 718-220-6675

Office and Contact Information

Staff Names:

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SAVE THE DATE
 Join us for our
Summer Grand Opening
Saturday June 27th, 2015 • 3:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
 780 Concourse Village West (Ground Fl. Professional Space)
 Bronx, NY 10451



Assemblymember

Michael A. BLAKE
Reports to the People

June 2015

Michael Alexander Blake's very name predicted his future in politics. Named after two Jamaican prime ministers, he always had a fascination with politics.

Before he launched his political career, Blake was a sportscaster in Chicago. When he felt he wasn't doing enough to help people, he decided to intern for a state senator, and later joined President Barack Obama's "Yes We Can" political training program.

"I don't think there's a more comprehensive way to help than public service," Blake said. "I genuinely don't think there is one. So that's where it all started for me."

Blake describes himself as a "live music junkie" who also loves sports. When not busy with politics, he'd like to someday get back to playing the piano, a childhood pastime.

He says his goals include combating income inequality and helping people reach their potential. This year, he has pushed criminal justice reforms, including the "Raise the Age" campaign.

"This year hopefully showed people what young progressive energy can do," he said. "There's this transformational feel that's started to happen in Albany. I feel this is the beginning of some major things that are going to happen."

If you could have any here superpower, what would it be?
 "To live forever."

If you could change one thing about state government, what would it be?

"That we would find more efficient ways to fund the local projects in need. If we could find ways to help people faster and give them the resources they need, that would be the most changeable thing to get done."

-AH



Credit: Shannon Decelle
 City and State Magazine

Assemblymember Michael A. Blake
 79th Assembly District

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**Looking for internships and volunteer opportunities?
 Come join us over the summer!**

E-mail sanchezj@assembly.state.ny.us for more details.