

An Unprecedented Evening

by Maryline Damour



Photo: © Virginie Blachère 2003

More than 400 guests gathered at the Brooklyn Marriott on November 6 to celebrate Brooklyn A's 35th Anniversary and to honor three outstanding individuals who are making a commitment to rebuilding and revitalizing New York City. Hosted and underwritten by Davis Polk & Wardwell, Pfizer and Independence Community Bank, the event raised \$255,000 for Brooklyn A, an unprecedented achievement for a community-based legal services organization.

The rain has kept few people away this evening. By 6:00 p.m., the room is filled with an incredible mix of leaders from New York City law firms, corporations, foundations and Brooklyn community organizations and residents. Guests have also come from as far away as Boston and Washington, D.C. to celebrate Brooklyn A's Partnership for Community & Economic Development and to pay tribute to this year's honorees.

Filmmaker Gertrude Houston, in collaboration with David Nolan of J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., have put together short films about the honorees and we get a personal glimpse of their childhoods and lives. After the film, each honoree speaks. Fred Hill, executive vice president of J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., shares his affection for Brooklyn A and his respect for the important work it is doing. Jim Gill, partner of Bryan Cave LLP, reminisces about his favorite team, the Brooklyn Dodgers, and compares their extraordinary qualities to those of the Brooklyn A team. And, Jeff Dunston, CEO of Northeast Brooklyn Housing Development Corp. speaks of the friends he's made at Brooklyn A in the course of working together to build affordable housing.

The evening continues with Veronica Martell and 20/20, a lively band that draws everyone to the dance floor, and even prompts a spontaneous break dancing exhibit by two of Jeff Dunston's sons. More surprises are in store when Jim Gill agrees to sign copies of his just-published autobiography, a copy of which is given to each guest through the generosity of an anonymous donor. It is truly a magical evening!



Above (left to right): Brooklyn A's Paul Acinapura, Honorees Jim Gill, Jeff Dunston and Fred Hill, and Brooklyn A's Martin Needelman. Below: A spontaneous break dancing exhibit delights our guests.

A Note from Sargent Shriver

SARGENT SHRIVER
1325 G STREET N.W. SUITE 500
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

November 24, 2003

Martin S. Needelman, esq.
Project Director & Chief Counsel
Brooklyn Legal Services Corp. A
260 Broadway
Brooklyn, New York 11211

Dear Marty:

Your handwritten note arrived in my office while I was in California last week, so I am taking my first opportunity to thank you for remembering my birthday.

I am grateful to you, dear Marty, for your thoughtfulness, and for your kind and generous words.

I agree with you that the Programs which we started when I was Director of Lyndon Johnson's War Against Poverty should be given full priority by Congress and The Administration. The work which you and your colleagues do each day at "Brooklyn A" is critical to the citizens whom you represent so ably. But, we need to expand the Legal Services Program throughout our country.

With all best wishes to you and your family and to everyone at "Brooklyn A" for a Happy Thanksgiving and a Joyous Holiday Season,

Sincerely yours,

Sargent Shriver
Sargent Shriver

IN THE NEWS

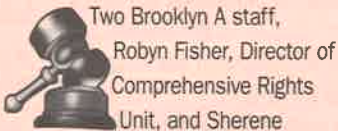
New Grants Awarded



Brooklyn A was awarded the following grants this fall:

- \$150,000/yr. for two years from the Department of Justice to provide legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, in conjunction with the North Brooklyn Coalition Against Family Violence.
- \$100,000 from the Booth Ferris Foundation to support Brooklyn A's technology upgrade project.
- \$25,000/yr. for two years from Independence Community Foundation for eviction prevention work in Williamsburg and Greenpoint.
- \$40,000 from the New York Community Trust to hire a pro bono coordinator and implement a pro bono program.

Brooklyn A Staff Honored for HIV/AIDS Work



Two Brooklyn A staff, Robyn Fisher, Director of Comprehensive Rights Unit, and Sherene

Washington, paralegal, received the Distinguished Service Award from the AIDS Institute in Albany on December 9 for their work with people affected with HIV/AIDS.

In Memoriam: Cesiah Mullane

Cesiah Mullane, chairperson of Cypress Hills Local Development Corp. board and a long-time community activist died after a battle with cancer on Tuesday, December 4 at the age of 74. A longtime friend of Brooklyn A, Cesiah paved the way for the creation of P.S. 7 and helped found Cypress Hills Local Development Corp. to help low-income families buy refurbished homes.

A Word from the Project Director

On behalf of the Brooklyn A Board, Staff, and Advisory Committee, I want to wish all our friends a wonderful holiday season and a great New Year!

We are all still relishing the extraordinarily joyous and successful Event that we held in November, honoring Jim Gill, Fred Hill and Jeff Dunston. What a wonderful trio of honorees and what a wonderful coming together of our corporate, banking, law firm, government and community friends and partners in a celebration of three absolutely terrific people, and of the work of Brooklyn A's Partnership for Community & Economic Development.

With the very difficult challenges faced by our neighbors and our neighborhoods in these very trying times, we are extremely proud of the role that Brooklyn A plays in working shoulder to shoulder with very effective community organizations in building and maintaining affordable housing, as well as sustaining and expanding the infrastructure (day care, senior citizens centers, primary care health facilities, anti-domestic violence support groups, among others) that is so critical to the survival and growth of our neighborhoods and their residents.

But Brooklyn A can and will do even more of this in the New Year and beyond, with your continuing and growing support. Our clients and communities deserve nothing less.

All the best!



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Brooklyn A Celebrates

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Clockwise from top left: Tom Schoenherr from Fordham University School of Law; Honoree Fred Hill with his wife and daughter; Honoree Jim Gill signs his autobiography for attendees; Dancing the night away at the Annual Event; Former Senator Alfonse D'Amato with Marty Needelman; KeySpan Corp. Manager of Credit Operations, Cecil Brooks with friends; Marilyn Gelber, Independence Community Foundation Executive Director and former Honoree; Honoree Jeff Dunston and Family.

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A MAJOR GIFT FOR BROOKLYN A

Peter Cross from Jacob Medinger & Finnegan arrived at the Annual Event with an amazing surprise—a \$50,000 contribution. Above: Peter hands the check to Brooklyn A's Board Chair Father Mahoney, surrounded by Paul Acinapura, Rick Wagner, Martin Needelman, and John Imperiale.

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