



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## State Senator Jeff Klein Hosts First Ever Bronx h.I.r.e. Certification Fair to Combat Unemployment in the Bronx

JEFFREY D. KLEIN April 7, 2015

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*Klein Secures Additional \$200,000 in Funding for Bronx H.I.R.E.*

*500 Training Opportunities & Certificate Program Slots Available To Bronxites At No Cost*

**BRONX, NY - State Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) and the Bronx Chamber of Commerce**, today held the first ever Bronx H.I.R.E. Certification Fair at the Hutchinson Metro Center in the Bronx. Nearly 200 job seekers attended the fair and signed up for free

certification programs in a variety of industries, including childcare, healthcare, technology and more. Throughout the program, attendees met with Bronx employers offering on-the-job training, post certification employment opportunities and additional insight on industry specific job requirements.

“For too long, the Bronx has had the dubious distinction of having the highest unemployment rate in New York State. The Bronx H.I.R.E. program aims to change that -- connecting hard-working Bronxites with real jobs, and putting unemployed workers on a path to long-term financial independence,” **said Senator Klein.** “As certificate programs can often be costly and serve as a barrier to employment, I’m proud to offer these 500 certificate program slots at no cost to all our attendees here today. I look forward to working together with the Bronx Chamber and our wonderful local employers to close the skills gap, connect job seekers with permanent employment opportunities, and ultimately, build a brighter future for all Bronxites.”

“As a result of Senator Klein’s funding, Bronx H.I.R.E. candidates have the opportunity to receive a variety of certifications -- ranging from accounting to childcare -- as well as intensive professional development trainings. Our job seekers continually expand and strengthen their skillsets and will be able to obtain employment in leading industries,” **said Michelle Dolgow Cristofaro, Bronx H.I.R.E. Administrator and Bronx Chamber of Commerce Chief-of-Staff.**

“We are witnessing tremendous economic growth across the borough. New businesses and developments are choosing to invest in the Bronx, which produces more jobs and benefits the Bronx economy. Today’s certification fair will help Bronx employees build their credentials and become employed,” **said Joseph Kelleher, President and COO of Hutchinson Metro Center and Chairman of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce.**

The Certification Fair began in the late afternoon with a keynote address from Senator Klein. Job seekers then had the opportunity to sign up for certifications like security guard training courses, CDL licensing opportunities, computer technician trainings, culinary certificates, Microsoft Word and Outlook, Quickbooks courses and Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) certificates. Employers in attendance included Directions for Our Youth, Children's Corner Childcare, D&J Ambulette, ALL Transit, Ikon, Maggies Paratransit and Centerlight.

The Bronx H.I.R.E. program, first launched in July 2014, works with local businesses -- both big and small -- to identify new job openings and provide Bronx residents with the resources, skills and support services they need to succeed in today's job market. In just over nine months, Bronx H.I.R.E. has placed more than 360 candidates in jobs and provided more than 60 job seekers with certifications.