

July 18, 2016

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## **QEDC hosts graduation ceremony for first ever Prime Skills entrepreneur course in Jamaica**

*Budding businesspeople learned startup secrets from experts*

(Jamaica, NY) — With exultant speeches by all 12 graduates, the Queens Economic Development Corporation celebrated the first ever completion ceremony of its new Prime Skills Entrepreneurship Program class at the Thomas White Jr. Foundation building in Jamaica on July 12.

With funding and expertise provided by the NYC Department of Small Business Services and the Office of City Council Member Ruben Wills, Prime Skills offered 12 informational classes over a six-week period during which guest lecturers shared their expertise in such fields as advertising, entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, and technology.

Many of these Prime Skills graduates are tenants of New York City Housing Authority properties (i.e. South Jamaica Houses and Baisley Park Houses) in Southeastern Queens. In the weeks ahead, they will receive additional assistance from QEDC in refining their plans and registering their businesses, which will provide such services as child care, case management, green construction, and express delivery. They will also have the opportunity to enter a competition for a \$10,000 award this fall.

A key aspect of the Prime Skills curriculum covers contracting opportunities provided through Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, which requires that companies that receive certain HUD funds provide job training, employment, and contract opportunities to low-income residents of the neighborhoods where they operate.

*For photo caption: Posing with the graduates are Council Member Wills; Prime Skills Coordinator Yusuf Abdul-Wali, a retired professor at LaGuardia Community College; QEDC Deputy Director Ricardi Calixte; Assemblywoman Vivian E. Cook; and QEDC Executive Director Seth Bornstein.*

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