



## **Van Thompson of Skanska receives Community Service Award**

January 27, 2009 - Spotlights

According to Skanska USA Building Inc., a Bronx community board has presented Rufus Van Thompson with its Community Service Award for his work with Skanska's "Construction Management Building Blocks" program. The adult education course prepares minority and women contractors to excel in their work and their construction industry business.

Thompson received the award for his "unwavering commitment to developing the Bronx community." The course, held at Bronx Community College, was attended by 32 "subs" from all over the city.

"It's great to see Skanska recognized for its commitment to a New York community," said Thompson. "This award proves the "Building Blocks" program's success, and will help it to grow in the future."

Each year Skanska partners with a different community organization. This year Skanska worked with the Bronx Overall Economic Development Committee. Past partners include the Harlem Business Alliance and the New York State Association of Minority Contractors in Brooklyn.

Skanska's "Building Blocks" started in the face of an optimistic forecast of an 18 percent increase in construction citywide between 2006 and 2009 [source: New York Building Congress]. But, says Thompson, "It's even more important if construction slows that Skanska New York prepare local subcontractors - especially these minority and women business owners - to withstand an economic shift. And besides, the demand and need for construction haven't diminished."

Students receive training in marketing, estimating, project startup and closeout, scheduling accounting, legal process, human resources, safety, and bonding. Also, they are provided with a basic introduction to the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED certification process and to sustainable development, construction management techniques, and environmental health and safety.

Thompson is currently project manager on the United Nations Capital Master Plan project. He also aids the New York City School Construction Authority's Mentor Program and was recently brought onto Skanska's National Diversity Council. A graduate of the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Thompson has certificates in Engineering and Architectural Technologies.

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