

The Way to Work

Newsletter
Spring 2007

Vocational Foundation Inc.
Est. 1936

Message from the CEO

I am often asked: "What does **Vocational Foundation, Inc. (VFI)** offer to New York City's 200,000 out-of-school and unemployed young people that no one else does?"

As one of the nation's first youth workforce development agencies, VFI is the only one that provides New York City's disconnected youth with the following seamlessly integrated comprehensive set of services:

- GED Prep and Literacy Training
- Occupational Training
- Intensive Counseling
- Employability Skills Training
- Job Placement
- Retention Services through our nationally acclaimed *Moving Up* program that provides up to 30 months of job coaching, career advancement and mentoring

Founded in 1936, VFI has set the gold standard among workforce development agencies serving youth by achieving high rates of enrollment, graduation, job placement, job retention, and GED passage (see page 2).

I am proud to share with you some of VFI's recent accomplishments at our new and expanded headquarters in Lower Manhattan. In our program area, we inaugurated a Security Guard Training Track, added Psychology Area Services and renewed a literacy link with **NYCDOE Offsite Educational Services**. Financial achievements include expansion of the board of directors, reduction of our cost per participant and a first-ever grant from the **NYC Council**. Additionally, we improved outreach and increased enrollment by initiating a partnership with the **NYC Housing Authority** and hosting college and job fairs at VFI.

To continue to build on our successes, we are presenting an opportunity for VFI supporters to spend the day on the links at the Ardsley Country Club, where we are hosting our **2nd Annual Golf Classic on May 7th** (see page 15).



Hector Batista, CEO of Vocational Foundation Inc.

Success Story

Kimberly C. came to VFI in November 2004 as a 20-year-old single young adult. She was diagnosed with dyslexia in the 4th grade and struggled with it most her life. Her father had been injured and was unable to work. Her mother was also unemployed and severely ill. Kimberly worked an average of 30 hours per week at Toys R Us to support her family. Her emotional struggles and stress around her father's injury and mother's illness led her to drop out of high school. Kimberly wanted to secure a job with higher wages. She enrolled in VFI's Bank Teller with Basic Accounting training program. At that time, she scored below the 6th grade level in math and below the 8th grade level in reading.

Kimberly had trouble with attendance and for a period of time stopped coming to classes. With support and encouragement from her Career Manager, Kimberly graduated VFI's training program in 2005.

Kimberly then began working at **Washington Mutual** in the Bronx with a starting salary of \$30,000. She now earns \$50,000 as a Senior Personal Financial Representative. Kimberly says that the best part of her job is helping people.

An active VFI alumna, she is a frequent guest speaker at our Bank Teller with Basic Accounting training track program where she shares her experiences with participants. She also reviews resumes, helps them prepare for job interviews at various New York City banks and participates in our Job Fair.

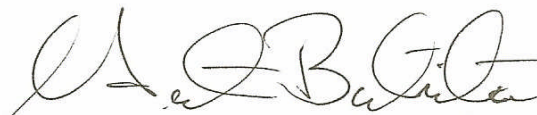
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The Way to Work | Message from the CEO (continued)

One of the high points of this year was our First Annual gala, held on February 12, 2007 (see page 10) at the Copacabana. Having reached the extraordinary milestone of 70 successful years of operation, I would like to thank our participants, who overcome incredible odds to complete this program and reach their goals. I would also like to thank the board of directors for their leadership and commitment to VFI's important work.

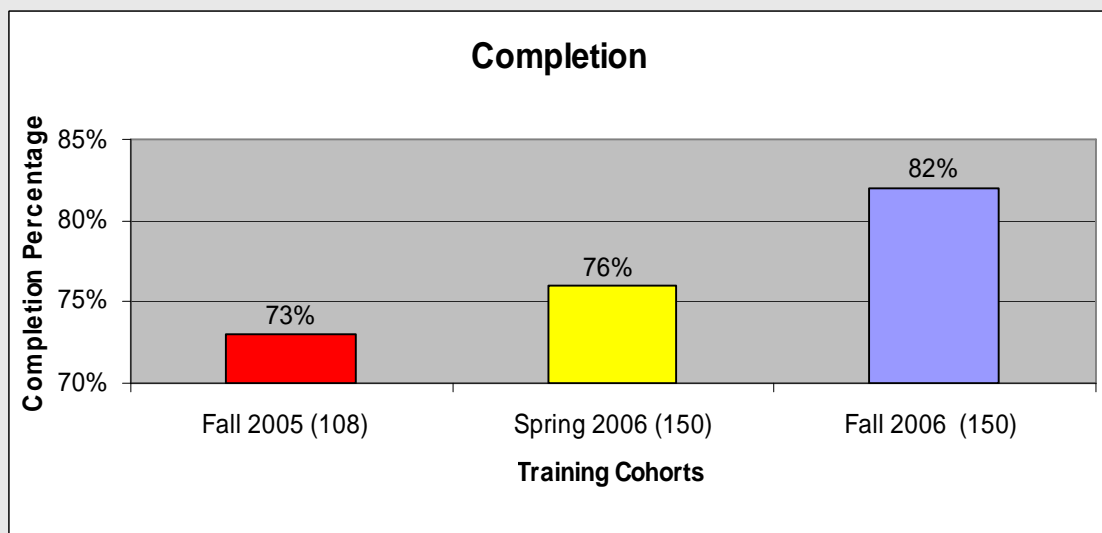
And, I would like to extend a special thanks to our many friends and contributors whose steadfast and generous support has allowed this wonderful organization to help so many young people discover their potential and find the way to work.



Hector Batista

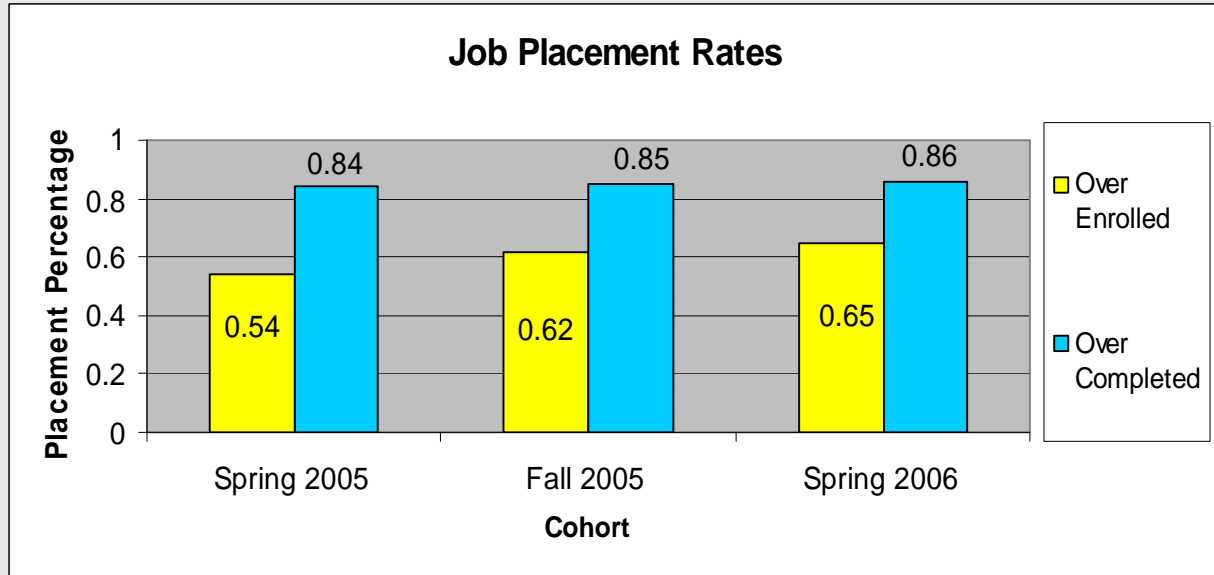
Outcome Measurements

As shown in the chart below, the graduation rates for people who have enrolled in VFI training programs have improved dramatically over the past two program years since our recent relocation to Manhattan. We have also increased the number of participants we serve.

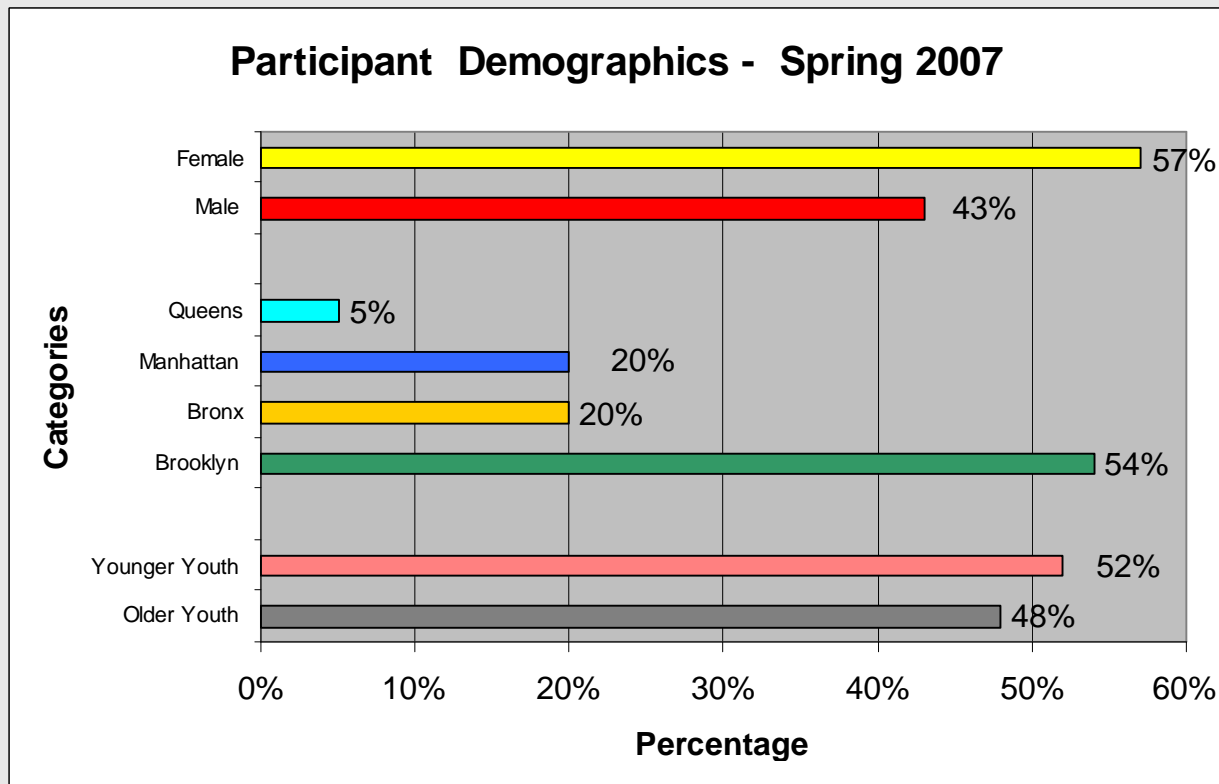


The Way to Work | Outcome Measurements (continued)

The chart below describes our job placement rate in two different ways: (1) the number of job placements that were achieved over the total number of clients who enrolled in the program (over enrolled), and (2) the number of job placements that were achieved over the number of participants who completed the training program (over completed).



The following chart provides information on the gender, borough of residence and age of VFI participants who attended the Spring 2007 cycle. It shows that we have increased the number of participants we are serving from Manhattan and that a larger share of the population we are serving is younger youth.



Training Readiness Workshops

VF I is planning to establish a pre-training academy called the **Training Readiness Workshop (TRW)**. This training will provide 100 hours (one month) of pre-GED math and English remediation for participants whose reading levels fall below the 9th grade level. This extra training, given between cycles, should increase their reading levels by at least one grade level before they enter the VFI customized core training program, and improve their performance.

VFI Partners With NYCHA

Hector Batista, VFI's CEO, initiated a partnership with the **New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)**. NYCHA has provided VFI with 9,000 names of prospective participants who live in low-income housing units and VFI mailed informational packets to them. This partnership helped increase our enrollment by 27% from 218 in 2005 to 300 in 2007 as well as increase the number of male participants in our program.

In large part due to our improved intake and enrollment procedures, VFI is currently operating at full capacity. This partnership with NYCHA also helps to ensure that the most disadvantaged youth in New York City continue to have access to the services we provide.

OES Returns to VFI

To accelerate and deepen the learning process, in September 2006 VFI re-established its partnership with the **NYC Department of Education's Offsite Educational Services (OES)**. The OES Alternative High School Program operates more than 60 small, innovative learning environments city-wide. Three OES instructors and one para-professional assigned to VFI are responsible for GED exam preparation, basic literacy skills classes and specialized tutoring both one-on-one and in small group settings. With the help of OES, VFI has achieved an historically high GED passage rate of 82% for Fall of 2006, with 45 participants passing the GED exam. And our most recent GED predictor exams indicate that 70% of VFI participants have attained scores that qualify them to take the GED exam.

Continuing Education Opportunities

Beginning with the Fall 2007 cycle, VFI will provide continuing training one evening per week for VFI Alumni who are working but don't have a GED, and need a few weeks or months of tutoring in reading and math to be able to pass the GED test. We will also extend the therapeutic counseling services provided by our staff Program Psychologist. She will also be available one night per week to meet with alumni.

College Prep Program

For those participants who completed their GED or have earned a high school diploma, VFI will provide self-assessment tools to match interests with aptitudes and skills and help participants to research college options, scholarships, financial aid, as well as assisting them to complete college and financial aid applications.

Psychology Services Added

Thanks to a grant from the **van Ameringen Foundation**, VFI was able to hire its first full-time Program Psychologist. VFI is one of the only comprehensive youth workforce development organizations that provide this invaluable service. The Program Psychologist has created and implemented a psychology services program providing scheduled individual counseling for training participants and conducting crisis intervention, psychological assessments, diagnoses, consultations and making needed referrals to external agencies. The Program Psychologist has received encouraging feedback from instructors about improvements in client behavior and all of her ongoing clients have completed the VFI job training program.

Laptop Donation from Hewlett-Packard

Thanks to **Hewlett Packard's** generous donation of 50 new, well-equipped laptop computers, all VFI staff members' computer workstations were upgraded. VFI was also able to furnish a new Alumni Resource Center with computers that will be available to job training graduates so they can brush up on skills, perform job searches, write resumes, research colleges and prepare applications.

Eisenhower Forum

On November 6, 2006, **Hector Batista** was invited by The Eisenhower Foundation in Washington D.C. to serve as a distinguished panelist, along with leading experts in youth workforce development from around the country.

The agenda included discussions on recent research and the development of a working document that will lead to a comprehensive employment-training model. By keeping abreast of the trends in youth workforce development and partnering with stakeholders, Mr. Batista has re-established VFI as a leader among New York City's youth workforce development agencies.

The Way to Work | Visitors Tour VFI

NYC Council Member Miguel Martinez Receives VFI Thanks for New Computer Lab

On Wednesday, March 21, 2007, VFI staff and participants welcomed **NYC Council Member**

Miguel Martinez as he arrived at VFI's headquarters in downtown Manhattan to see the new computer labs made possible through a grant from the **New York City Council**. They gave special thanks to Councilman Martinez for spearheading this initiative. VFI's Information Technology Manager, along with volunteers from the NPowerNY Technical Task force, set up the new workstations. Sixty IBM ThinkCentre computers were placed in VFI classrooms in November and participants in the Fall 2006 training sessions were the first to use them. The two new computer labs will be used in Medical Administrative Assistant, Office Support Specialist and Computer Technology training. VFI participants will now have the latest technology at their fingertips and will be better prepared to make the transition into the world of work with confidence and assurance.



NYC Council Member Miguel Martinez (second from right) meets VFI participants, who thanked him for VFI's new computers.

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer Tours VFI

With VFI's recent relocation of its offices to lower Manhattan where it was originally established over 70 years ago by Walter N. Thayer, **Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer** toured the new facilities on Thursday, March 22, 2007. VFI staff and participants provided him with a warm welcome.




Borough President Scott Stringer speaks to VFI participants in one of the classrooms at 52 Broadway.





VFI participants welcome Borough President Scott Stringer (third from right) to VFI.

The Way to Work | CEO Receives OTTY Award

Hector Batista, CEO of Vocational Foundation, is a recipient of this year's 2006 OTTY Award. The **OTTY (Our Town Thanks You) Awards** recognize the special contributions individuals have made to their East Side community. "Our Town" is a Manhattan weekly. Recipients include organizational and civic leaders who work specifically within the neighborhood or East Side residents who make special contributions to the greater New York City community. Grub & Ellis and Our Town Newspaper hosted the award event which was held at the Museum of the City of New York on February 28, 2007. Other recipients, pictured below, include **Governor and Mrs. Eliot Spitzer** and former New York Giants running back **Tiki Barber**.

**Grub & Ellis**
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The Way to Work | First Annual Gala

Febbruary 12, 2007. **Vocational Foundation, Inc.** celebrated its 70th Anniversary with an evening of dinner and cocktails, awards, dancing and a silent auction. This event acknowledged seventy years of achievement in helping New York City's most disadvantaged young people ages 17–21 find and keep a job through educational and occupational training. The legendary Manhattan nightclub, the Copacabana, was the site for the gala, where over 200 guests were entertained during dinner by headliners from the Broadway show "Tarzan."

Jeanne Thayer, widow of VFI's founder, **Walter N. Thayer**, served as honorary Chair with VFI Capital Trustee **Edward L. Barlow**, **Thomas Fitzpatrick** and **Ann W. Thayer**, daughter of Walter N. Thayer, serving as Co-Chairs. Award-winning CBS newscaster **Maurice DuBois** was emcee for the evening. **The Honorable William C. Thompson, Jr.**, NYC Comptroller, presented **Derrick Cephas**, **President and CEO of Amalgamated Bank** with the Corporate Leadership Award. **VFI Board Chair Nicholas M. Brown, Jr.** presented the Community Service Award to the **New York State Association of Community Developers**, represented by their **President, Kristina Hosch**. The Chairman's Award was presented to former **VFI Board Chair, Camille (Mik) Chwalek** by **Edward L. Barlow** of **Whitcom Partners**.

Balloons, selling for \$100 each and representing transportation stipends for VFI participants, were completely sold out thanks to the generosity of our guests. Silent auction items included Yankee box seats, tickets to Broadway shows and Lincoln Center performances, dinners at popular Manhattan restaurants and a sailing adventure, among other items. The benefit raised over \$200,000 and proceeds will fund program and curriculum enhancements and services to an ever increasing number of out-of-school and out-of-work youth from the City's poorest neighborhoods.



Many Thanks to
our Guests for
their
Overwhelming
Support

VFI CEO Hector Batista, Emcee Maurice DuBois of Channel 2 News, NYC Council Member Miguel Martinez and Honoree Derrick Cephas, President & CEO of Amalgamated Bank.

The Way to Work | First Annual Gala (continued)



*Gala Emcee Maurice DuBois of WCBS News and
The Hon. William C. Thompson, Jr.*



VFI Board Chair Nicholas M. Brown, Jr., Honoree Kristin Hosch of the NYSACD, VFI Trustee Edward L. Barlow, Honoree & Former VFI Board Chair Mik Chwalek & VFI CEO Hector Batista.



VFI CEO Hector Batista, NYC Council Member Robert Jackson and Maurice DuBois.

The Way to Work | First Annual Gala (continued)



Former VFI Board Chair Mik Chwalek, one of the evening's honorees, with family members.



Mr. and Mrs. Ramon Escobar of the NYSACD, NYC Council Member Miguel Martinez, Eddie Torres of the NYASCD and VFI CEO Hector Batista enjoy the festivities.

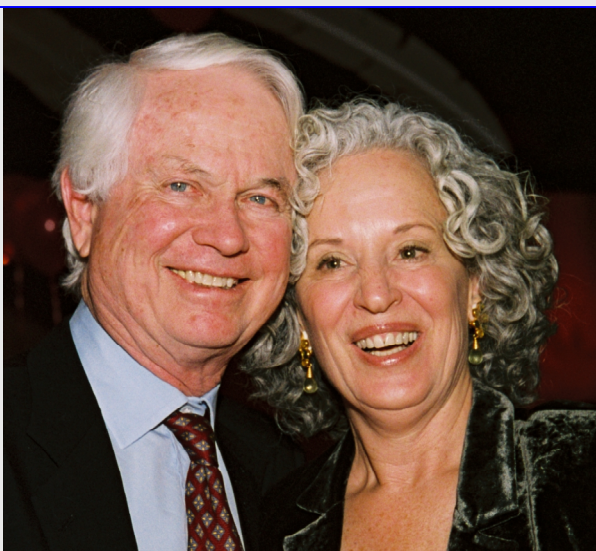


VFI Board Treasurer Martha S. Sproule and VFI Board President Ann W. Thayer, Ms. Noreene Storrie, Ms. Kate Nulty and VFI CEO Hector Batista.

The Way to Work | First Annual Gala (continued)



Cast Members from the Broadway hit musical "Tarzan" perform at the Gala.



VFI Trustee Edward L. Barlow and VFI Board President Ann W. Thayer.



VFI 70th Anniversary Gala Celebration guests enjoy dinner at the Copacabana.

The Way to Work | Graduation Ceremony



NYC Council Member and Chair of the Education Committee Robert Jackson was the keynote speaker at VFI's graduation ceremony.

On August 24th, nearly 200 VFI participants proudly approached the podium of the UFT Conference Room at VFI's new Manhattan headquarters at 52 Broadway to accept their diplomas. For many of them it was their first graduation ceremony ever. **New York City Councilman Robert Jackson** was the commencement speaker. Special guest and platinum-selling recording artist **Joseph "Fat Joe" Cartagena** offered graduates words of inspiration — encouraging them to follow their dreams, work hard and continue down the road to success they had begun at VFI. Several members of VFI's Board of Directors and the entire staff were present at the event. VFI is proud of the hard work and dedication participants demonstrated in completing our rigorous training programs. Family members and friends joined the graduates in the celebration, which was followed by a buffet dinner.



Members of VFI's graduating class in 2006 celebrate.



Platinum-selling recording artist Joseph "Fat Joe" Cartagena addresses members of the graduating class.

The Way to Work | Scheduled Events

2nd Annual Golf Classic

May 2007

College Fair

May 2007

Job Fair

June 2007

Graduation

August 2007

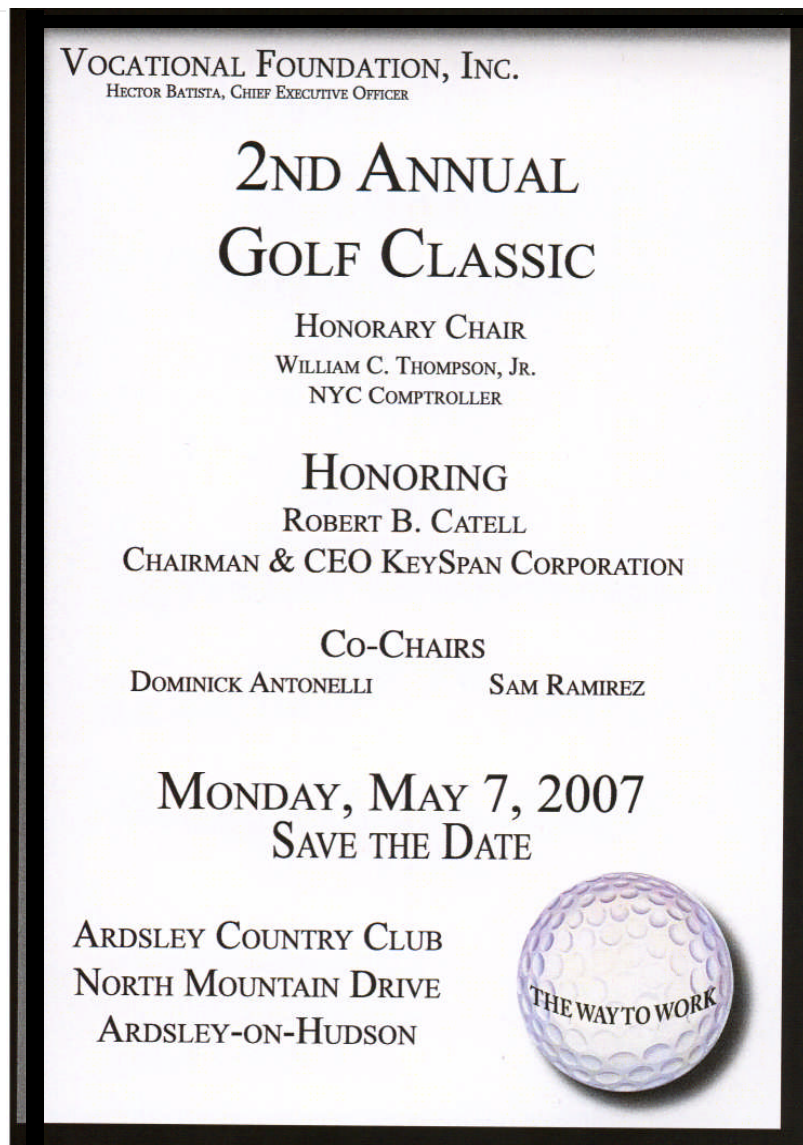
2nd Annual Golf Classic - May 7th at Ardsley Country Club

Robert Catell, CEO of KeySpan Energy, is honored at VFI's 2nd Annual Golf Classic on May 7th. His award is presented by last year's Golf Classic honoree, New York City Comptroller **William C. Thompson, Jr.** In May 2006, more than a hundred golfers hit the greens at the beautiful Ardsley Country Club to raise

funds for VFI programs. The event proved so successful that we are giving our friends another chance to improve those handicaps!

In addition to great giveaways, guests have the opportunity to win prizes — a brand new car in our hole-in-one contest — and other fabulous prizes for the longest drive and closest to the pin. There is also a silent auction with exciting items such as tickets to sports events, top-name golf clubs, theater and dinner packages, weekend get-aways and airline tickets.

After 28 foursomes spend the day on Ardsley's challenging course, they enjoy cocktails and a buffet dinner at the clubhouse that overlooks spectacular views of the Hudson River. Please plan on joining us. Players of all levels are welcome! Call Veronica Garcia at 212-823-1029 for more information.



The Way to Work | Thank You to Our Contributors

July 1, 2005 to April 15, 2007

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(Above \$500,000)

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The Way to Work

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Vocational Foundation, Inc.

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