

**Inside this Issue****New York at a**

**Glance.** Social networking sites like MySpace and Facebook are popular among the young, the poor, and those without a high school diploma.

**Legislative Updates.**

Taking their cues from Obama: the state and city are revving up for a recession and with any luck, change.

**In the News.**

It's the economy, stupid.

**On-Line Resources.**

CareerLink launches, targeting workers who can quickly re-engage with the labor market.

**In the Neighborhood.**

The news from our communities: Sunset Park and Bushwick/Bed-Stuy.

**Newly Released**

**Reports.** Cliff notes on the reports that shape us.

**New York at a Glance****Unemployment Rate In New York City**

The unemployment rate is determined by the number of individuals *actively* seeking work. Here are the seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for 2007—2008:

Month 2007-2008	NYC	US
December (2007)	5.1%	5.0%
January	5.7%	4.9%
February	4.1%	4.8%
March	4.5%	5.1%
April	4.7%	5.0%
May	5.2%	5.5%
June	5.4%	5.5%
July	5.0%	5.7%
August	5.8%	6.1%
September	5.8%	6.1%
October	5.7%	6.5%
November	6.3%	6.8%
December	7.4%	7.2%

New York State's private sector lost more than 49,000 jobs in December 2008. Over the past three months, the state has lost 102,900 private sector jobs. New York's unemployment rate, after seasonal adjustment, increased from 6.0 percent in November 2008 to 7.0 percent in December 2008 -- its highest level since June 1994. For the full report, visit [here](#).

**Youth, Poor, and Undereducated Disproportionately Use Social Networking Sites**

Younger online adults were much more likely than their older counterparts to use social networks, with three-quarters of those ages 18 to 24 using the sites, compared with just 7% of Internet users ages 65 and older. [More](#).

**Demographic Profile of US Internet Users Who Have Ever Used a Social Networking Site, November-December 2008 (% of respondents in each group)**

<b>Gender</b>	
Male	35%
Female	35%
<b>Age</b>	
18-24	75%
25-34	57%
35-44	30%
45-54	19%
55-64	10%
65+	7%
<b>Household income</b>	
<\$30,000	45%
\$30,000-\$49,999	38%
\$50,000-\$74,999	30%
\$75,000+	31%
<b>Education</b>	
Less than high school	43%
High school graduate	31%
Some college	41%
College graduate	33%
<b>Ethnicity/race</b>	
White, non-Hispanic	31%
Black, non-Hispanic	43%
Hispanic	48%
<b>All adults</b>	<b>35%</b>

Note: n=1,650

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project's December 2008 tracking survey, January 14, 2009

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www.eMarketer.com

## Legislative Updates

**Obama sends NYC Funds.** The some 3.4 billion in funds is expected to cover large gaps in Medicaid and education funding, which will free up funds for other programs. Bloomberg warns the funds will help, but will not end the city's fiscal woes. [More.](#)

**Democrats Take State Senate.** State Senator Malcolm Smith, a Queens Democrat, was elected as majority leader of the chamber marking the first time in 43 years that Democrats have controlled the Senate. The party now controls both houses of the Legislature and the executive branch as well. [More.](#)

**Gillibrand is New York's Newest Senator.** Gillibrand, who is starting her second term in the House, represents a usually Republican district that includes Albany and parts of the Hudson Valley. She is widely viewed as a centrist, and some Democrats and others have already criticized some of her positions, particularly her opposition to gun control. [More.](#)

**Paterson Delivers First State of the State Address.** On the subject of education, Paterson warned that 30 percent of New York State's students do not finish high school. He called for an expansion of early-college high schools, and he proposed a \$35 million Higher Education Loan Program to extend loans for needy students to attend college. [More.](#)

## Legislative Updates

**Bloomberg Delivers Eighth State of the City Address.** Mayor Michael Bloomberg gave his eighth State of the City address yesterday in which he said the city was "shaken," but not "broken." He outlined a nine-point plan to create 400,000 jobs over six years. To help freelancers and small businesses, the mayor called for a reduction or elimination of the unincorporated business tax, loans for those businesses that are struggling, the creation of work space for artists and "entrepreneur boot camps." [More](#) on the speech and [more](#) on Bloomberg's plans for job creation.

**Bloomberg Blasts Youth Block Grant.** Mayor Michael Bloomberg blasted Governor David Paterson's proposal to create a Youth Services Block Grant during testimony yesterday before State legislators. Under the proposal -- which would combine funding for several non-mandated youth development programs with mandated juvenile justice services and then cut the total by almost 25% -- the City expects to lose \$9.7 million in detention funding and \$1.4 million in youth prevention. *New York Nonprofit Press*.

## In the News

**New York Taking a Super-Sized Job Hit.** New York is expected to lose 181,000 jobs this year, more than any other metropolitan area. [More](#).

**Brooklyn Businesses Looking Stagnant, at Best.** A survey by the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce showed that nearly 75% of businesses believe the economy this year will either get worse or stay flat. [More](#).

**Street-Level Groups Enlisted to Report Labor Violations.** To crack down on businesses that pay less than the minimum wage, fail to pay overtime or to pay wages altogether, steal tips or commit other labor violations, Patricia M. Smith, Commissioner at the state Department of Labor, is starting an experimental program that will rely on community organizations to monitor compliance with labor laws. [More](#).

**CUNY Plans New Approach to Community College.** The blueprint has been released for the college of the future, a 5,000-student Manhattan campus that would be New York City's first new two-year institution of higher education in 37 years. Among the ideas, students would be required to enroll full time, taking at least 12 credits a semester. Majors would be limited to about a dozen fields with robust job opportunities, including health care and environmental technology. Admission would still be open to anyone with a high school diploma or G.E.D., but face-to-face interviews would be required. [More](#).

**Thousand lose Jobless Benefits.** After two rounds of extensions, the first round of workers who are still unable to find a job may have to transition from unemployment insurance to welfare. [More](#).

**Foreclosure Rates Fall, Finally.** The five boroughs saw a 32% decline in residential foreclosures in the last three months of 2008 as homeowners benefited from a 90-day statewide moratorium. [More](#).

**Blacks and Latinos Make Up 80% of Those Stopped and Questioned by Police.** The Center for Constitutional Rights, citing NYPD data obtained in a suit, said the vast majority of those stopped and questioned in 2005 through June 2008 weren't charged with a crime. [More](#).

## In the Neighborhood

**No new hotels in Brooklyn.** At least according to the McSam Hotel Group. The group already has six projects either built or underway in the Brooklyn area but says their 'bullish' days are over. [More](#).

**YWCA opens its doors to tenants.** After over two years on construction, the YWCA has recently obtained its certificate of occupancy for its recently completed low-income housing project on Atlantic Avenue. Approved tenants have already started to move in. OBT would like to commend Martha Kamber, executive director of the YWCA, on a job well done.

**Coney Island may be the only Project that isn't Drowning in this Economy.** Virtual reality rides and IMAX theaters would join the Wonder Wheel and the Cyclone under the city's latest plan to revitalize Coney Island. The plan, which must go through a lengthy approval process, includes a 27-acre amusement district, 4,500 new apartments -- 900 of them "affordable" -- 800 hotel rooms, a 12-acre park and posher stores for now somewhat seedy Surf Avenue. Under the proposal for the famed Brooklyn beach, a "Wonder Wheel Way" will connect the Ferris wheel, parachute jump and Cyclone rollercoaster. The \$2.5 billion plan will almost certainly attract some opposition, with some Coney Island residents already saying it has too much housing and not enough space for amusements. [More](#).

## On Line Resources

[AdLit.org](#). Although the site is focused on grades 4 -12, there is a lot of material that is applicable to disconnected youth building their literacy skills.

[Technology Integration Self Assessment](#). This tool allows teachers to determine their level of tech-savviness, and provides suggestions for professional development.

[CareerLinkNYC.com](#). The site is for recently unemployed entry-mid level individuals, who with the right resources, can quickly reconnect to employment opportunities. The site includes labor market data, support resources, and information on changing careers.

## Newly Released Studies and Reports

**Review of the Financial Plan for the City of New York. State of New York Comptroller. December 2008.** New York City faces an even grimmer fiscal picture than the one outlined by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, according to a new report by State Comptroller Thomas DeNapoli. While the city will end this fiscal year with its budget balanced, DeNapoli foresees a budget gap of \$3.5 billion for fiscal year 2010 and \$8 billion for 2011. Bloomberg projected a \$3 billion deficit for 2010. DeNapoli attributes his new estimate to the worsening economy situation and likely cuts in state aid to the city. For the full report, visit [here](#).

**Still Broken: New York State Legislative Reform 2008 Update. Brennan Center for Justice. December 2008.** Both houses of the State Legislature are still rife with dysfunction, according to a new report which follows up on two other critical studies in 2004 and 2006. The report says leaders in both the Assembly and the Senate have a stranglehold on legislation, committees fail to hold hearings on legislation and the vast majority of legislation introduced never receives a vote. The report calls for strengthening committees and individual members. For the full report, visit [here](#).

**50+1: A Federal Agenda for New York City. Center for an Urban Future, January 2009.** The advent of the Obama administration offers great hope that the period of years, if not decades, when the federal government all but turned its back on the needs of urban communities is finally over. But what exactly should the new president do for New York City? The report lays out 51 specific recommendations for what the Obama administration and the 111th Congress could do to help New York City. The ideas range from taking immediate steps to ensure that the 2010 Census does not undercount New York and providing anti-terror funds to localities based on risk to accelerating the rollout of new air traffic control technology to reduce flight delays. To read the full report, click [here](#).

**A foot in the Door: Using Alternative Staffing Organizations to Open Up Opportunities for Disadvantaged Workers. Public Private Ventures, January 2009.** Despite the current recession, temporary employment will likely represent an increasing share of the labor market in the future, particularly for entry-level and low-wage occupations. In recent economic downturns, the temporary help sector has been among the first to rebound, coming back strongly after times of high unemployment. In this climate, alternative staffing organizations, which couple temporary placements with key supportive services, are well-positioned to provide needed assistance to both disadvantaged job seekers and employers. To read the full report, click [here](#).

**Missing the Mark: A Report on NYC's Back to Work Program & Its Effectiveness In Meeting Employment Goals for Welfare Recipients. Community Voices Heard. November 2008.** A recent report by the nonprofit group Community Voices Heard (CVH), a membership organization of low-income people, found that HRA's efforts to place work-ready clients in sustainable jobs through the three-year-old Back to Work program has hit a wall. The report suggests that the high sanction rate and poor job placement and retention rates demonstrate that HRA needs to re-think the shape of its "work-first" approach to welfare. Coming at a time when work itself is harder to find than it used to be, some are paying attention. To read the full report, click [here](#).

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