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Legislative Updates. Anxious about the gloomy economy, plans are on the table to extend unemployment insurance, develop a second stimulus package, and expand employment and training services to food stamp recipients.

In the News. In a world of instant information, *The Economist* asks, does ability to process new information trump all other skills?

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

On-line Resources. Skills2CompeteNY launches a website. The group plans to develop a set of policy recommendations for the city and state to expand access to post-secondary training.

Newly Released Reports. Cliff notes on the reports that shape us.

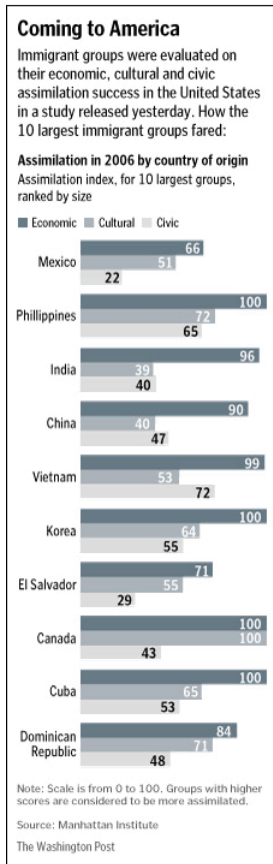
New York at a Glance**Unemployment Rate In New York City**

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
May	4.9%	4.5%
June	5.3%	4.5%
July	5.7%	4.6%
August	5.7%	4.6%
September	5.1%	4.7%
October	5.3%	4.7%
November	5.1%	4.7%
December	5.1%	5.0%
January (2008)	5.7%	4.9%
February (2008)	4.1%	4.8%
March (2008)	4.5%	5.1%
April (2008)	4.7%	5.0%
May (2008)	5.2%	5.5%

The unemployment rates is sneaking up and is likely to swell this summer as recent layoffs in the airline industry and on Wall Street hit the books. [More.](#)

Recent Immigrants are Culturally Assimilating, but their English Lags



Immigrants who arrived in the United States after 1995 are culturally assimilating more rapidly than their predecessors, according to a new study, sponsored by the Manhattan Institute, but their English language acquisition may lag behind. Researchers noted that economic and civic assimilation often occurs without significant cultural assimilation, such as learning English. The study indicates that slower rates of economic and civic assimilation may set Mexicans apart from other immigrants. Researchers say this may reflect fewer opportunities for Mexican immigrants to advance along these dimensions. The findings may have important implications for English literacy programs, particularly in Sunset Park, where one of the city's largest Mexican populations lives. [More.](#)

Legislative Updates

Unemployment Insurance Benefits Extended. The House passed a bill that will extend unemployment insurance benefits by 13 weeks and will allow veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan to receive increased education benefits that would cover state university tuition. The Senate is also expected to approve the bill. [More.](#)

Potential Second Stimulus Package. Democrats in Congress have broadly outlined the elements of a potential second stimulus package that could include a second round of tax rebates, further extensions of unemployment benefits, aid to states, funds to prevent home foreclosures, and funding for investments in infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and schools. Congressional insiders believe that a second stimulus package will not be considered until after the July 4th recess. (Source: *National Youth Employment Coalition*).

EITC “Steps it Up” for Youth. Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) introduced the Step Up Act, a bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act to double the economic incentive to join the workforce from \$438 to \$875. The bill also improves youth opportunity grants. [More.](#)

It’s Not a Name Unless it has “Opportunity” in the Title. David Hansell, commissioner of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, is seeking to change the name of his agency to the Office of Economic Support and Opportunity to symbolize the agencies expanding and evolving mission. [More.](#)

Thanks to Farm Bill, Food Stamps Now Include Expanded Employment and Training Services. Curiously enough, the “Farm Bill” actually directs more money to the poor than to farms -- an estimated \$209 billion goes toward nutrition programs, compared to \$35 million for agricultural commodities. The recently passed version will allow more Food Stamp recipients to voluntarily work more hours or participate in education and training activities, including adult literacy services. [More.](#)

Governor establishes Disconnected Youth Working Group. The working group is a direct result of Campaign for Tomorrow’s Workforce’s recent advocacy, and will be housed under the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet. (Source: *Campaign for Tomorrow’s Workforce*)

In the News

From Literacy to Digiracy. The article argues that our pedagogical tools are inconsistent with the skills needed to survive in a world where people are always connected to everyone and everything. The answer may not lie in teaching youth more hard skills, but rather in teaching them how to think. [More.](#)

Swapping Pinstripes for Pink Slips. New York City has lost an estimated 10,000 financial-service job losses since August, a dip of 3.5%, federal Bureau of Labor Statistics data show. Bear Stearns alone is firing 9,159 people, or 66% of the company's total, and Manhattan-based Citigroup is in the process of laying off 15,900 of its workers worldwide, a 4% reduction. [More.](#)

How bad will the economy get? The recession of 1987 broke the trend of economic cycles that started and stopped with manufacturing, and started a string of economic cycles that were dictated by Wall Street. Experts predict that like in 1987, it may take a while for Wall Street's woes to filter down to the rest of us. But with 25% of all wages earned in the city coming from Wall Street, the effects may be sooner rather than later. [More.](#)

What is it Like to Live Poor in New York? Jeremy Reiss, director of Workforce Mobility Initiatives at the Community Service Society of New York, paints a picture of New York City's low-income workers on the Brian Lehrer show. [More.](#)

High Schoolers get Certified in Financial Literacy. A nonprofit called "Working in Support of Education" recently announced that three quarters of the high schoolers that took their financial literacy test, passed it. Nationwide, 22,511 students in more than 20 states participated. [More.](#)

Technology Entrepreneurs, Welcome to New York City. Mayor Bloomberg recently announced a \$2 million dollar fund to provide seed money to technology entrepreneurs with innovative ideas and a prototype in hopes of expanding the city's technology industry. [More.](#)

Hispanics Comprise 44% Of Adult Ed Students Nationwide. Data for the most recent program year show that Hispanics have increased as a percentage of total adult literacy students over the last five year and now account for 44% of learners in adult education programs. (Source: Office of Vocational and Adult Education Thursday Notes)

More States Use Data Matching for Job Outcomes. Georgia and Utah joined 33 other states in program year 2006-2007 using unemployment insurance (UI) data matching to find out how many adult education students met their goal of getting a job. Matched data are more likely to be valid and reliable than survey information, which is self-reported. New York has yet to jump on board. (Source: Office of Vocational and Adult Education Thursday Notes)

State DOL launches Internship Program for Youth Connected to School, but not Work. This new internship program will serve more than 1,850 youth in 19 different organizations statewide. The young adults must either be enrolled in high school or college to apply. (Source: NYS DOL)

In the Neighborhood

Ikea Opens! On June 18th, Ikea opened its doors in the Red Hook community. [More.](#)

Obesity Rates are Abnormally High in Williamsburg, Bushwick. If you thought that trendy Williamsburg, Brooklyn, was filled with nothing but stick-thin models, think again. Kids growing up in Williamsburg and neighboring Bushwick have the highest chance in the city that one of their parents is obese. [More.](#)

CAMBA's Supportive Housing Project Opens in Bushwick. Meet the Anna Gonzalez Apartments, a 99-unit supportive housing rental at Broadway and Willoughby in Bushwick. All of the furnished apartments will be rented to tenants who earn no more than 50% of area median income, the formerly homeless working, or individuals living with HIV/AIDS or a mental health diagnosis. [More.](#)

Sunset Park is a Hotel Hotbed. Last week SAI Hospitality, a hotel builder that's been bullish on Brooklyn lately, closed on the purchase of a warehouse on 33rd Street between 3rd and 4th avenues. More and more developers have been planning hotels for the industrial section of Sunset Park. There are hotels in the works on 38th, 39th, 49th, and 59th streets, most of them west of 4th Avenue. [More.](#)

On-line Resources

English Language and Civics Professional Development for Teachers. New courses to assist teachers in creating interesting and effective lessons that integrate U.S. history and U.S. government into adult ESOL classes are free online. [More.](#)

Skills2Compete New York. The website to New York's own Skills2Compete campaign launches! [More.](#)

Half in Ten. On May 13, CHN joined with The Center for American Progress Action Fund, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, and ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) to introduce *Half in Ten: From Poverty to Prosperity*. *Half in Ten* will seek federal and state solutions to cut poverty in half within ten years. [More.](#)

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Newly Released Studies and Reports

"Schools that Work." Center for an Urban Future, May 2008. This new report finds that New York City's long overlooked and under-funded career and technical education high schools might hold the key to improving citywide educational outcomes and ensuring a steady stream of skilled workers for local employers. [More.](#)

"Family Economic Security Profiles." National Center for Children in Poverty. NCCP's newest 50-state profiles provide data on low-income children and families in each state and highlight state policy choices regarding families' work attachment and advancement, income adequacy, and asset development. [More.](#)

"Adult Learning in Focus." Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHMES). Over 40% of students in community colleges by 2004 were adults, and the number of adults that enrolled part time in community colleges jumped from 17% in 1970 to more than 25% of all students by 2002, the study showed. [More.](#)

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