



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## Senator Rivera and Borough President Diaz Celebrate Food Day and Launched Bronx CAN Health Initiative in Bronx Schools

GUSTAVO RIVERA October 25, 2011



State Senator Gustavo Rivera (D, WF-Bronx) and Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. (D-Bronx) attended a celebration of National Food Day on Monday, October 24 at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula, which is one of several schools in the Bronx that have adopted the Bronx CAN Family Health Challenge. The Family Health Challenge and the corresponding guidebook that is attached were created through a partnership between SEIU-CIR (SEIU's Committee of Interns and Residents) and the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center. In addition to the Academy of Mount St. Ursula and other Bronx schools' participation, the

guidebook will be distributed to students at more than 50 public schools through Montefiore Medical Center's school-based health clinics.

"For the last few months, the Bronx CAN Health Initiative has inspired Bronxites to take responsibility over their own health and make changes to their habits in order to lead longer and healthier lives," said Senator Gustavo Rivera. "Given that issues of obesity, heart disease and diabetes start with the formation of bad health habits at a young age, I am excited that the Bronx CAN Health Initiative is continuing in Bronx schools. It is my hope that the students and families who take on this 8-week challenge will continue to incorporate the lessons they learned as part of the Family Health Challenge into their daily lives."

"The Bronx CAN Family Health Challenge is a perfect example of how members of our Bronx community form partnerships and work together to create great programs that have a large, positive impact on the well-being of the borough. I urge all Bronx students and their families to take on the eight-week Family Health Challenge. The lessons they will learn during these eight weeks can really help the members of our community, young and old, to start making healthier decisions as far as what they eat day to day, and can ultimately lead to a healthier lifestyle for Bronxites overall," said Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

"Montefiore Medical Center is honored and excited to be a partner in this important initiative, which is all about engaging youth and families in making healthy choices", said Roberto S. Garcia, Senior Director of The Office of Community Relations at Montefiore. "Montefiore continues to be a leader in providing programs and services that enhance the health of all members of our Bronx community."

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's latest reports, the Bronx continues to be the unhealthiest county in the state of New York, with higher rates of obesity, diabetes and asthma than other parts of the state. In response to this report and to the crisis of

obesity and obesity-related diseases, State Senator Rivera (D,WF-Bronx) and Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. joined with community organizations from throughout the Bronx to launch the Bronx CAN Health Initiative in June of this year.

As part of the health initiative, Senator Rivera vowed to lose 15 to 20 pounds before the end of October. As of October 24th, Senator Rivera had lost 16 pounds. His last weigh-in will be on October 29, 2011 at 1:30PM at St. James Park for the last of the Bronx CAN Health Initiative's monthly health fairs.