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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BEDC ENROLLING CLIENTS FOR SPRING LAUNCH CLASS

BROOKLYN, NY—February 7, 2006—Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation’s *LAUNCH* program, a unique entrepreneurial training course designed exclusively for clients in recovery from a serious mental illness, is now enrolling students for its spring classes.

LAUNCH entrepreneur training classes will be held weekly beginning in March and will continue for three months at BEDC’s offices in downtown Brooklyn. The program is **free to qualified clients** from all five boroughs of New York City.

Registration is required. For more information and to apply to the *LAUNCH* program, please call Marjorie Schulman, program director, at 718-522-4600, ext. 22 to make an appointment.

“Since *LAUNCH* began offering classes in 2003, nearly 200 clients have participated or are currently participating in the program,” Ms. Schulman said. “A number of clients have started businesses including landscape services, custom-made bags and accessories, fragrances, handmade jewelry, tutoring services, carpentry, retail, video production, marketing consulting, and others. Many also have participated in the annual bazaars BEDC sponsors to give graduates from all of our entrepreneur programs experience marketing and selling their products and services.”

LAUNCH, which stands for Lead, Act, Undertake, Navigate, Change, and Heal, offers:

- One-to-one business guidance and business planning.
- Interactive group classroom instruction on entrepreneurship.
- Specialized workshops.
- Networking events.
- Access to retail opportunities.
- Referrals to free legal services.
- And, for those who qualify, referrals to BEDC’s Eureka! Loan Fund.

LAUNCH, which is funded by a grant from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, has received national recognition from the Abilities Fund, the Association for Enterprise Opportunities (AEO), and Psychiatric News. The entrepreneurial skills of *LAUNCH* clients have been recognized by the United Nations Year of Microcredit, Brooklyn Business Library's Power Up Business Plan Competition, and other organizations.

BEDC, a private, nonprofit organization, was established in 1979 to stimulate Brooklyn's economy and create job opportunities for the borough and its residents. BEDC has evolved into a multi-service, business-consulting agency, serving more than 1,000 clients annually and offering comprehensive economic development services. More information is available at www.bedc.org.

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