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## **The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation Continues its Support of Baltimore City's Ex-Offender Re-entry Initiatives**

*Appreciation Breakfast slated for May 31st*

BALTIMORE – Mayor Sheila Dixon will join over 150 Baltimore area business, community, faith-based and government leaders at the annual Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation Employer Appreciation Breakfast on Thursday, May 31, 2007 from 8:00 -10:00 a.m. at the University of Maryland, School of Law, Westminster Hall located at 517 W. Fayette Street in Baltimore.

The event is designed to spotlight several employers for their commitment to the successful employment of ex-offenders and to acknowledge previously incarcerated individuals who are now gainfully employed. Mark Vernarelli, communications director for the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services will serve as the master of ceremonies. Guests include Maryland State Superintendent of Schools, Nancy Grasmick, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Secretary Gary Maynard and Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Secretary Tom Perez.

“We have a collective responsibility to help our fellow citizens who were incarcerated and now have a desire to rebuild their lives,” said Mayor Dixon, “As we work to make Baltimore a safer city, it is essential that we support these individuals in their efforts to find employment, secure housing and stay on a path towards productive citizenship.”

More than 9,000 ex-offenders who are released from Maryland's correctional systems return or move to Baltimore City each year. These individuals often face numerous obstacles as they attempt to secure employment and re-join their communities. Many, however, do make the successful re-entry, thanks in part to employers who are willing to give them an opportunity to get a job and earn a living.

Now in its sixth year, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation Employer Appreciation Breakfast continues to promote activities that lead to successful community re-entry and employment. The Mayor's Office of Employment Development, together with its partners is committed to assisting ex-offenders as they transition back into the community. The impact of this work is seen in economic and community development that increases the tax base, strengthens and reunites families, enriches the labor pool and reduces crime while providing individuals with opportunities to rebuild their lives and develop and contribute their talents. Expenditures for public safety and corrections are reduced and family stability is increased as fathers and mothers reunite with their families.

The event is sponsored in partnership with The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, Mayor's Office of Employment Development, Governor's Advisory Council on Offender Employment Coordination, Maryland Correctional Enterprises, Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services, Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice, The Greater Baltimore Committee and the University of Maryland School of Law.

For more information about the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation Employer Appreciation Breakfast, please call 410-523-1060.

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