

THIRTEEN/WNET HONORS GED GRADUATES AND OTHER ADULT EDUCATION
STUDENTS IN ANNUAL RECOGNITION OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Ida Castro, Vice President, Government Relations And Development, V-Me Media, Inc. To Deliver Keynote Address At June 17 Ceremony

New York, NY, June 9, 2008 – A diverse group of over 100 men and women will gather in the main studio of Thirteen/WNET, New York’s public television station, at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, June 17 to celebrate the successful completion of their GED program. While students each have their own stories about what led them to this point, their goals were unified; to cross the stage and be handed their General Educational Development (GED) diplomas by Doreen Cokley, Deputy Superintendent, Office of Adult and Continuing Education, New York City Department of Education. Hosted by Jon Rubin, Director, State and Local Education Services at Thirteen, this inspiring moment will be highlighted with a motivational keynote address by Ida Castro, Vice President of Government Relations and Development of V-Me, a 24-hour Spanish-language television network and a service of Thirteen, in New York.

Among the graduates who will attend the ceremony are students who earned their GED diplomas through Thirteen’s on-air courses – ***GED Connection*** (Tuesdays and Thursdays) or ***GED en Español*** (Mondays and Wednesdays) at 5:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. These programs are part of the station’s larger initiative to provide comprehensive educational resources and services to teachers and students of all ages. The road to earning their GED diploma was often fraught with challenges. Sanya Lawrence, a 34-year-old mother of two, was nine months pregnant when she took her GED exam. For Sanya, just getting to the testing site was a great

physical task, let alone sitting in place for the hours it took to complete the exam. Despite these difficulties Sanya rose to the occasion and overcame her obstacles. As she put it, “No matter what the pressure or struggle, you can accomplish anything.”

Ana Medeiros came to New York from Brazil with the dream of becoming a dancer. Though she was able to study dance under Martha Graham and eventually teach dance herself, Ana learned that without a high school level diploma her future options were limited. Having successfully passed the GED exam, Ana plans to attend Borough of Manhattan Community College in the fall.

“I am proud that Thirteen has had a part in the great accomplishments of these graduates and am excited to continue our work of promoting education to students of all ages well into the future,” said Ronald Thorpe, Vice President and Director of Education at Thirteen.

“These students have shown that the strongest source of energy is that which is generated from within and Con Edison is honored to have supported the development of these fine students.” said Shaneequa Wright, Public Affairs Manager, Strategic Partnerships, Consolidated Edison, Inc. Additional speakers include Charlotte Hanson-Butler, Director, CUNYXpress, City University of New York; and Anthony Tassi, Executive Director, Mayor's Office of Adult Education.

Con Edison has provided major corporate support for Thirteen’s Adult Education Projects since 1989. Promotional support is provided by WBLS-FM Radio, *Hoy* newspaper and the *New York Amsterdam News*.

Further information about Thirteen’s adult education projects can be found at www.thirteen.org/pressroom – type in “Adult Education.”

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Thirteen/WNET New York is one of the key program providers for public television, bringing such acclaimed series as *Nature*, *Great Performances*, *American Masters*, *Charlie Rose*, *Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*, *Wide Angle*, *Secrets of the Dead*, *NOW With David Brancaccio*, *Exposé*, *Bill Moyers Journal*, and *Cyberchase* to audiences nationwide. As the flagship public broadcaster in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut metro area, Thirteen

reaches millions of viewers each week, airing the best of American public television along with its own local productions such as *New York Voices*, *Reel 13* and *Sunday Arts*. Thirteen extends the impact of its television productions through educational and community outreach projects – including the Teaching and Learning Celebration – as well as Web sites and other digital media platforms. More information can be found at: www.thirteen.org.

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Press Contact:

Joshua Kail

Thirteen

212.560.3056

Kailj@thirteen.org

Gloria Park

Thirteen

212.560.2063

parkg@thirteen.org