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BOROUGH PRESIDENT DIAZ CALLED ON THE NATIONAL HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY TO BRING NEW PRESCRIPTION DRUG DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS TO THE BRONX

Today, in the Murray Cohen Auditorium at the Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. joined with New York Yankees and New York Mets legend Darryl Strawberry, representatives of the pharmaceutical industry and the Bronx healthcare community to call on the national healthcare industry to bring more new prescription drug development projects to The Bronx.

“In my inaugural address, I made it clear that bringing the development of new prescription drugs to The Bronx would be a major priority of my administration. The Bronx is the home to numerous top-notch healthcare institutions, and there is no reason why our borough should not be a leader in this important field,” said Borough President Diaz.

According to new reports issued by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), 687 new medicines and vaccines are being developed by companies with a presence in New York State, with 488 of those being developed by companies with a presence in New York City. Currently 334 clinical drug trials are ongoing at 23 Bronx sites right now, according to PhRMA’s report. Borough President Diaz called for an even greater investment by the pharmaceutical industry in The Bronx.

“The healthcare industry is already our borough’s largest employer, and we should do everything we can to expand their presence in The Bronx economy. When we finally create a cure for cancer, we want it to be developed right here in The Bronx,” said Borough President Diaz.

Baseball legend Darryl Strawberry and PhRMA Senior Vice President Ken Johnson both echoed Borough President Diaz’s call for increased drug development in The Bronx.

“I know first-hand the hope that new medicines provide,” said former New York Mets and New York Yankee slugger Darryl Strawberry, who is a patient advocate and two-time colon cancer survivor. “They gave me a second chance at life.”

“The medicines now in the research pipelines of New York’s companies are contributing significantly to the incredible progress made by biopharmaceutical companies in developing new and more effective treatments for a wide range of devastating diseases,” said PhRMA Senior Vice President Ken Johnson. “If we are going to cure cancer in our lifetime, as President Obama has challenged us, it will take a sustained national effort, with scientists from New York to California taking part in this critically important effort.”

“The Borough President is to be commended for his strong leadership in the health care area. Increased public awareness regarding the medical and economic benefits of medical research in The Bronx is important. It reinforces the dedicated efforts of Bronx-Lebanon and the other hospitals in The Bronx, as well as the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, in providing the highest quality care to the community,” stated Miguel A. Fuentes, Jr., President and CEO, Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center.