

Awards, networking at LIC Partnership breakfast

By Samuel Lieberman

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Keynote speaker George Fertitta, CEO of NYC & Company Inc., stated the importance of New York's hospitality industry, calling New York the nation's premier port of entry. The economic impact of the city's tourism industry amounts to \$70 billion a year, he said.

“There is no borough more important than any other,” said Fertitta. “And there is no borough with more diversity and more to offer than Queens.”

Fertitta also stressed the need for New York residents to exploit the resources of the city.

“We need to make those insular Manhattanites realize what Queens has to offer,” he said.

The rest of the meeting focused on LIC’s vision for the future. The neighborhood is poised to become a leading center of tourism and revenue for the city. Upcoming area building projects include 19 hotels, totaling 2,000 rooms.

Awards were presented to local business leaders and involved residents. The Leadership Award was presented to Patrick O’Brien and Community Board 2; the Community Partner Award to Gianna Cerbone-Teoli of Manducatis Rustica restaurant; and the Queens Plaza Business Award was given to Takashi Ikezawa and Fumio Tashiro of Resobox.

The real strength of the BID meeting was the ability of businesses and residents to meet and mingle.

“Any time you have an opportunity to learn about what’s happening in the community, it is exciting,” said Ian Hardouin, a resident of LIC for the past five years.

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