



# Gray's News and Notes

Chairman Vincent C. Gray, Council of the District of Columbia

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Chairman Gray with the Friendship Public Charter School football team and coaches and Positive Choices students. They joined the Chairman, other officials, and the Atlantic Coast Conference in announcing the EagleBank Bowl, the city's first college bowl game at RFK Stadium, in December.

## An Adoption Success Story

Dear Friends,

I want to share with you an email I received recently that shows that adoption does work in the District of Columbia. Despite the news of tragic stories of children in troubled homes, adoption remains a viable option for finding stable parents for children in need. Ellen Sittenfeld Battistelli wrote: "With the most recent heartbreaking news, I want to share with you something good. Sixteen years ago, my husband and I were in the process of trying to adopt our two year old D.C. foster child. [There was a hold up in the adoption]. I was frantic and called you. You got it back on track and the adoption went through. I am grateful for the good work you do." I assisted Battistelli while I was Director of the District's Department of Human Services.

This mother went on to tell me, in an interesting turn of events, I had just sworn in her daughter, Becky, as a City Year AmeriCorps volunteer, along with other young leaders in the program. **See the pictures below.** Now 18, Becky is providing classroom support at DC Preparatory Academy Public Charter School. In a very moving statement, she testified at the Youth Issues hearing on October 11<sup>th</sup>. "I was born into a family that was very unstable. Both of my parents had drug abuse problems. As a result I was born with Cerebral Palsy," Becky said. "Your actions 16 years ago played a huge role in the way my life turned out...Ever since they adopted me, my family has given me all the love and nurturing I need...I think that every child needs a loving, caring adult in their lives."

There are hundreds of children waiting to be adopted in the District. They need permanent, loving homes and caring parents. Call 202-671-LOVE (5683) or [click here](#) to learn how to become an adoptive or foster parent. Becky's story goes to show you that we cannot give up on our vulnerable children even as we read dismal headlines about isolated cases. I invite all young people to my next [youth hearing on November 8<sup>th</sup>](#).

## Upcoming Council Hearings

Wednesday, October 22

10:00 AM, Council Chamber, Room 500, Committee on Human Services:  
**Report on Supportive Placements & Emergency Shelter Capacity**

Thursday, October 23

3:00 PM, Room 412, Committee on Workforce Development & Government Operations:  
**Department of Employment Services**

Monday, October 27

11:00 AM, Room 412, Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary:  
**Ambulance Fee Amendment Proposed Rulemaking Approval Resolution of 2008, PR 17-1027**

Tuesday, October 28

10:00 AM, Council Chamber, Room 500, Committee of the Whole:  
**Public Schools Hearing Amendment Act**



Chairman Gray speaks at the City Year Ceremony. He swore-in Becky Battistelli (on the right), Kemi Sobowale and other AmeriCorps volunteers.

**[Check Out the Schedule of Council Meetings Airing on TV 13 Live and On Demand](#)**



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**See the New Council Web Site:  
[www.dccouncil.us](http://www.dccouncil.us)**

## **Putting the Brakes on Hate**

Earlier this year, the Council unanimously passed a sense of the Council resolution I introduced that declares that acts of hate or prejudice on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation, race, gender identity, religion, culture, disability or ethnicity shall not be tolerated in the District of Columbia; and called on all to speak out against hate and practice tolerance. There's reason now to go a step further--I have asked Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary Chairman Phil Mendelson to hold an oversight hearing on hate crimes and he has agreed. I am raising this issue as I join the gay community in decrying the tragic beating death and robbery of Tony Randolph Hunter, a gay man. We'll be calling on police to testify about their response to hate crimes, and looking at what more can be done to prevent such acts.

Vincent C. Gray

### **News You Can Use**

**[Watch the Chairman in the music video "Demand the Vote"](#)**

**[Listen to Chairman Gray on Metro Talk w/Jerry Phillips on Federal News Radio WFED 1500 AM/820 AM, 4th Saturdays at 12-noon & Sundays at 4 PM](#)**