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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **NonProfit HelpDesk Announces Technology Security Awareness Project**

Brooklyn, NY, March 13, 2009 – The NonProfit HelpDesk (NPHD), a division of the Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island, announced today that it is undertaking a project to assist small not-for-profit organizations in evaluating and improving their computer network security.

“Nonprofit organizations face many of the same concerns about data security as businesses face, as well as unique issues of client privacy,” says Chaya Abelsky, Director of the NPHD. “But they typically lack the resources to focus on this issue. In our ongoing technology support for nonprofit organizations, we’ve identified network and data security as an important area that commonly requires improvement.”

Ms. Abelsky notes that a lack of appropriate security at small nonprofits may place sensitive employee data (including social security numbers and bank accounts) at risk. Social service agencies may not always have adequate protection for highly sensitive data about their clients, including information on medical conditions, AIDS status and domestic violence situations. It’s absolutely essential that this information remain secure and that access to it be limited, even within the agency. This is a matter of policy, procedure and technology.

The Technology Security Awareness Project will evaluate the status of computer network security at small not-for-profit organizations, enabling these organizations to reduce their vulnerability to security breaches and protect their personal and organizational data. The project is being funded by the Hearst Foundation, which has provided funding for projects of the NonProfit HelpDesk since 2002.

### **Free Security Assessments to be Conducted**

The project will have multiple phases:

- Survey security awareness among small not-for-profit organizations
- Provide an onsite security assessment for 30 organizations
- Create training materials on security issues for upper-level management and for general/office staff, and conduct training sessions

Staff from the NonProfit HelpDesk will be conducting an initial telephone survey of more than 200 small nonprofits. Selected responding organizations will be invited to apply for one of 30 free comprehensive security assessments.

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## **Nonprofits Can Apply for Free Security Assessment**

Organizations can add themselves to the list to be considered for the free assessment by completing a brief (8 question) multiple choice questionnaire, which can be found online at [www.nphd.org](http://www.nphd.org) or obtained by emailing Ms. Abelsky at [chaya@nphd.org](mailto:chaya@nphd.org).

All organizations that complete the questionnaire will receive a copy of the full results of the initial survey.

## **About the NonProfit HelpDesk**

The NonProfit HelpDesk (NPHD) was created in 1992 to provide specialized technical assistance to nonprofit organizations throughout New York City. We have grown to help build all aspects of management and organizational capacity at the community-based nonprofit organizations that are a vital part of the fabric of life in New York City communities.

Our client organizations provide youth services, cooked meals, services for the homeless, local development and cultural celebration, as well as many other services. As our social safety net frays, these groups can make a critical difference in the quality of life for neighborhood residents.

The NPHD strengthens these organizations by providing services, education and resources in financial management, technology, marketing and in the development of leadership, organizations and programs. We are frequently able to offer our services free of charge. The organization uses its social service background to deliver holistic support with understanding, relevance and innovation.

## **About the William Randolph Hearst Foundation**

The Hearst Foundations are national philanthropic resources for organizations and institutions working in the fields of education, health, culture and social services. Our goal is to ensure that people of all backgrounds have the opportunity to build healthy, productive and inspiring lives.

The Hearst Foundations support well-established nonprofit organizations that address important issues within our **major** areas of interests – education, health, culture, and social service – and that primarily serve large demographic and/or geographic constituencies. Within these areas, the Foundations generally provide endowment, program, and capital grant support. Private nonprofits with significant support from the philanthropic community are favored over those financed through government sources.

The Hearst Foundations have combined assets of more than \$1 billion. In 2007, the Foundations awarded 278 grants totaling nearly \$43 million. Since 1975, the Foundations have approved \$725 million in grants.