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**THE BRADFORD SWETT CHARITABLE FOUNDATION  
& FRIENDS PLEDGE \$5 MILLION GIFT TO  
ABYSSINIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR  
THURGOOD MARSHALL ACADEMY LOWER SCHOOL**

**New School Addresses Student Overcrowding and  
Lack of Resources in City's Lowest Performing District**

***– New K-6<sup>th</sup> Facility to House 325 Harlem Students by 2010 –***

New York, NY, February 8, 2007—Abyssinian Development Corporation (ADC), an innovative not-for-profit organization dedicated to renewing and reclaiming the spirit of community in one of New York City's oldest and most storied neighborhoods, today announced that they have received a \$5 million challenge grant from the Bradford Swett Charitable Foundation and Friends to help pay for a state-of-the-art facility for the Thurgood Marshall Academy Lower School (TMALS). **This generous donation marks the largest single gift ever given to a public school in Harlem.** TMALS, temporarily housed at West 151<sup>st</sup> Street, is a collaboration of ADC, New York City Department of Education and New Visions for Public Schools.

When the school opened in September 2005, it comprised just two kindergarten and two first grade classes. TMALS is expanding with a new grade each year until it serves students from kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade in September 2010. ADC will use funds from the Bradford Swett Charitable Foundation and Friends endowment toward a five-year development project—a state-of-the-art facility with space and resources for 325 students.

**ADC's Chairman and Founder Rev. Calvin O. Butts, III said,** "This generous gift from the Bradford Swett Charitable Foundation and Friends honors the philanthropic legacy of Mr. Swett. His love for this community and commitment to quality education, now lays the groundwork for us to execute our vision for the Thurgood Marshall Academy Lower School. The grant further challenges us to raise \$5 million in matching funds so that we can successfully

complete our building plans by 2010. We are grateful to the Swett family for continuing to support our mission to empower, rebuild and strengthen the Harlem community.”

“The Bradford Swett Charitable Foundation is excited to be a part of this wonderful initiative to enhance the educational opportunities available to the families of Harlem,” **said Holly Swett.** “Reverend Butts and the Abyssinian Community had a profound effect on my husband, and the Bradford Swett Charitable Foundation gives this gift in honor of his memory.”

**Robert G. Wilmers, Chairman of the Board, M&T Bank,** has also made a significant contribution to the endowment. “I am truly excited to be a part of this historic initiative to service the children of Harlem with an excellent education and a nurturing and challenging academic environment,” said Mr. Wilmers. “Partnering with the Bradford Swett Charitable Foundation to provide ADC with this challenge grant is indeed a milestone in securing the future and prosperity of Harlem residents.”

**Sheena Wright, President and CEO of Abyssinian Development Corporation,** added, “The Bradford Swett Charitable Foundation has been a true blessing to the children of Harlem. This landmark gift to ADC for the Thurgood Marshall Academy Lower School marks a major step towards the completion of ADC’s education corridor—designed to foster successful student performance, academically, socially and emotionally.”

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### **About Abyssinian Development Corporation**

Abyssinian Development Corporation (ADC) is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit comprehensive community development corporation dedicated to improving the quality of life in Harlem. For almost 18 years, ADC has helped to strengthen and rebuild the socioeconomic fabric of the Harlem community by developing housing, spearheading commercial development, stimulating the local economy, fostering education, strengthening families and building community capacity through civic engagement. By providing quality affordable housing, social services, educational opportunities and economic development programs, ADC has played a key leadership role in the current “Harlem Renaissance.” ADC has grown into a \$73.2 million, 130+ person agency with significant accomplishments including development of low-income housing, homeownership opportunities as well as commercial and retail development. ADC established the Thurgood Marshall Academy for Learning and Social Change, a public intermediate and high school, and its successor, opened in September of 2005, the Thurgood Marshall Academy Lower School. For more information, visit: [www.adcorp.org](http://www.adcorp.org).