



**For Immediate Release: June 12, 2009**

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## **Fighting Hunger with Style:**

### **Top NYC Designers Present Fashion Show and Celebrity Plate Auction to Aid Leading NYC Anti-Hunger Group**

### **Miss Africa USA, Local Elected Officials, NYC School Children Urge Government to End Hunger in NYC**

As the economy continues to decline and more New Yorkers struggle to afford enough food for their families, designers, elected officials, public spokespeople, and New York City school children raised their voices to urge all levels of government to take the lead in ending hunger in New York City.

The evening began with a visual feast of fashion. Gilles Montezin, acclaimed designer of pieces for Sarah Jessica Parker and Madonna as well as for the movies *Sex and the City* and *Confessions of a Shopaholic*, opened the fashion portion of the evening featuring pieces from his couture collection. William T. Buster, a top NYC designer, featured original pieces from two classic American eras: “American Beauty 1950-1965,” a salute to the styles of Audrey Hepburn and Jacqueline Kennedy, and “Art Deco Design 1925-1949,” which featured the youthful aesthetic and short skirts from the 1920’s to 1940’s.

Said designer Gilles Montezin: “Hunger is an issue that can and does impact all of us. I am very excited to have an opportunity to support the New York City Coalition Against Hunger in their efforts to fight hunger in New York City.”

Said designer William Buster: “I personally experienced hunger as a child. After seeing a profile of NYCCAH on the news, I saw that the need was growing and the donations were dropping because of the economy. As a citizen, I had to do something to help. I hope this will encourage other citizens to do the same – there are always creative ways to make a difference.”

The proceeds of the show and auction benefited the New York City Coalition Against Hunger (NYCCAH), an umbrella organization that represents the more than 1,200

nonprofit soup kitchens and food pantries in New York City and the more than 1.3 million low-income New Yorkers who are forced to use them. NYCCAH works to: expand and simplify access to food stamps and other government nutrition assistance programs; increase government support for food pantries and soup kitchens; and support the ability of low-income people to move towards economic self-sufficiency. More information about NYCCAH can be found on-line at [www.nyccah.org](http://www.nyccah.org).

Said Joel Berg, Executive Director of the New York City Coalition Against Hunger: “The New York City Coalition Against Hunger is thrilled that talented designers like Gilles Montezin and William Buster, elected officials, Miss Africa USA, and NYC children are contributing to NYCCAH’s anti-hunger efforts. Wonderful fashion makes a statement and our statement today is that, while charitable efforts are important, in order to end hunger government must support policies – such as a strong Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act – that can end hunger once and for all.”

The event also featured an auction with plates designed by elected officials, including Senator Chuck Schumer, as well as celebrities such as news personality, Rachel Maddow, and T.V. star, Fran Drescher.

Nearly 1,300 New York City school children also decorated plates displayed at the event to represent their commitment to fighting hunger. Each plate represented 10,000 New Yorkers who are unable to afford enough food to feed their families.

During the intermission of the fashion show, Miss Africa USA, Nyasha Zimucha, spoke about her commitment to NYCCAH’s anti-hunger work. Zimucha serves as an ambassador for change on humanitarian issues both in the United States and throughout the continent of Africa.

Zimucha stated: “I think many people forget about those that are struggling right here in this great city – New York City. Our world today faces many challenges but no one should ever go hungry. I fully support the New York City Coalition Against Hunger and extend myself as a volunteer to assist in reversing the growing hunger and poverty crisis.”

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