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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

### Three Winners Drive to Victory in MTA Second Avenue Subway Simulator Tournament

#### *Head-to-Head Competition Awards Winners Gift Certificates to Upper East Side Businesses*

MTA Capital Construction held the championship round of its Second Avenue Subway simulator tournament at the Community Information Center on Saturday. Six finalists competed as virtual train operators (two each from the 8-12, 13-20, and 210-plus age groups) to see who clocked the fastest time while providing the safest, smoothest ride for their virtual passengers.

The simulator enables the virtual operator to drive the train through the tunnels, stopping at the 96, 86 and 72 St stations. The best scores are those who make the trip in the fastest time, but speed isn't the only factor used in determining the score. Stopping or accelerating abruptly directly affects passenger mood, which adds time to the score, while a positive passenger mood subtracts time. Passing a red light, speeding, overshooting the platform and enabling the wrong doors to open also adds time to players' scores.

"The simulator has proven to be a tremendously popular feature at our Community Information Center," said MTA Capital Construction President Michael Horodniceanu. "It has significantly increased the number of visitors at the facility, enabling us to educate the public about the Second Avenue Subway, its construction schedule and its benefits through our rotating exhibits and special events. More than 14,000 visitors have come to the center since it opened in July 2013."

The competition was held in collaboration with the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, and prizes were provided by merchants from along the Second Avenue construction corridor. More than 40 competitors registered for the first round, which took place in late August and early September.

- Naim Polanque of Queens, N.Y., took the first prize in the 8-12 age group and won a \$100 gift certificate to Marianne Vera Salon.
- Roland Balutiu of New York, N.Y., took the first prize in the 13-20 age group and won a \$100 gift certificate to Le Tarte Flambee.
- David Heslop of Queens, N.Y., took the first prize in the 21-plus age group and won a \$100 gift certificate to The Penrose.
- Amir Masood of New York, N.Y. was runner up in the 8-12 age group and won a \$50 gift certificate to Beach Cafe.
- Alex Fox of New York, N.Y., was runner up in the 13-20 age group and won a \$50 gift certificate to Eneslow Shoes.
- Marcel Benjamin of New York, N.Y., was runner up in the 21-plus age group and won a \$50 gift certificate to Grace's Marketplace.

The three new stations in the simulation were created using renderings as well as the actual materials being used in its construction, so the texture of floor and wall tiles and other materials are replicated in the virtual stations as closely as possible to how they will look when completed.

The public is invited to drive the simulator at the Community Information Center, located at 1628 Second Avenue between 84th and 85th Streets. The center serves as a one-stop shop where Second Avenue residents, businesses, stakeholders and the general public can learn more about the project. Community liaisons are available to answer questions and address concerns. A first-of-its-kind facility, the CIC offers rotating exhibits and programming about the construction of the Second Avenue Subway.

#### **About the Second Avenue Subway**

Phase 1 of the Second Avenue Subway will serve more than 200,000 people per day, reducing overcrowding on the Lexington Avenue Line and restoring a transit link to a neighborhood that lost the Second Avenue Elevated in 1940.

When Phase I is complete, it will decrease crowding on the adjacent Lexington Avenue Line by as much as 13 percent, or 23,500 fewer riders on an average weekday. It will also reduce travel times by up to 10 minutes or more (up to 27 percent) for those on the far east side or those traveling from the east side to west midtown.

The line is being built in four phases, with the first phase providing service from 96th Street to 63rd Street as an extension of the  train. Passengers can stay on the train to travel to the West Side, Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn via the Broadway line. Three new ADA-accessible stations are being built along Second Avenue at 96th, 86th and 72nd Streets, as well as new entrances to the existing Lexington Av/63 St Station at 63rd Street and Third Avenue. Further phases of the project will extend the line from 125th Street in Harlem to Hanover Square in the Financial District.