



FISCAL YEAR 2015 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

BRIEFING

BEFORE THE NYC COUNCIL

**COMMITTEES ON YOUTH SERVICES AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**

PRESENTED BY

COMMISSIONER BILL CHONG

MARCH 10, 2014

Good morning, Chairs Eugene and Arroyo and members of the Youth Services and Community Development committees. I am Bill Chong, Commissioner of the Department of Youth and Community Development.

I thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Fiscal 2015 Preliminary Budget.

Introduction

As you know, in early January, Mayor Bill de Blasio appointed me as DYCD Commissioner. I was honored to be asked to help implement his ambitious and progressive agenda to create a thriving and more equitable New York City by expanding programming to tens of thousands of middle schoolers, and services to other needy New Yorkers.

The Council has a history of strong support of DYCD programs. I look forward to working with you to make the Mayor's vision a reality for New Yorkers from all neighborhoods across the city.

Fiscal 2015 Preliminary Budget Overview

The Mayor's Preliminary Budget reflects his values and priorities for the city. DYCD's proposed budget is \$524.7 million – the highest its ever been and at long last ends the budget dance our young people, parents, and community-based partners have endured for too long. The bulk of the funding of \$428.7 million - or nearly 82% is city-tax levy, \$64.6 million is federal, \$25.3 million is intracity and \$6.1 million is state funding. This enables DYCD to expand services across an array of areas including afterschool, runaway and homeless youth and immigrant services.

Afterschool Services

- Out-of-School Time (OST) Expansion

The middle school years are a pivotal point in a young person's life – it's a time when academic achievement can fall off, peer pressure mounts and some may make bad choices.

As the Mayor often says, after school programs can be a "game changer" for young people - regardless of family income or neighborhood. After school programs play a vital role in building their academic skills, self-confidence, resiliency and social skills.

Last week, the Mayor released his \$190 million plan to more than double the number of middle school youth served by afterschool programs to 120,000 across 512 schools starting in September. Currently, only about one-quarter of 224,279 middle school age youth at 239 schools have access to after school services.

The new enhanced program model builds on the best features of DYCD's current OST program and other exemplary middle school programs. The expansion also increases the price per slot from \$2,100 to \$3,000 and expands the program hours to 540 per year. This higher cost

will help increase program quality in helping smaller organizations meet program standards, bring more resources to after-school programs and target struggling students.

The Mayor's plan provides immediate funding and we thank the Council for its support to secure the funding for after school and universal pre-k for every family who needs it.

- Cornerstone Program Expansion

In January, DYCD opened 45 additional Cornerstone Programs in public housing developments across the five boroughs. In total, there are now 70 programs citywide serving over 15,000 participants of all ages in an array of academic, recreational, cultural, and community engagement activities. This was in response to the New York City Housing Authority's plan to close the centers it operated due to its budget shortfalls. The programs are supported by an investment of \$28.2 million in Fiscal 2015, which includes \$926,286 previously allocated by the Council due to budget cuts.

- Beacon Program

We recognize the Council's assistance in keeping seven Beacons open and adding funding for the remaining 73 programs. In total, the Fiscal 2015 budget includes \$38.5 million to serve over 80,000 participants. It is important to note, however, that the average city-tax levy funded Beacon program budget is approximately \$346,147.

- Expansion of Runaway and Homeless Youth Services

The budget also reflects the Mayor's priority for runaway and homeless youth. The \$14.2 million baselines the Council's funding of \$7.17 million while adding \$2.4 million more to support 76 new crisis beds starting April 1. In total, we anticipate having seven drop-in centers, three outreach vehicles, 192 crisis and 137 transitional beds.

- Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

The budget includes \$38.1 million to serve nearly 28,000 young people in the Summer Youth Employment Program. As you heard during the February SYEP hearing, this is a decrease from the 36,000 last summer. While the city's commitment of \$20.6 million remains, part of the reason for fewer slots is the increase in the minimum wage. Additionally, we do not anticipate the availability of some federal funding used in the past. We are hopeful that Albany will help mitigate this slot reduction by increasing its statewide allocation to \$35 million. While we await the state budget to pass, and we are at the beginning of the city's budget process, in order to serve the same number of youth as last year, we need an additional \$13 million. As you know, we opened the SYEP application period a month earlier to provide young people and providers additional time to prepare for the program.

- Expansion of Services to Immigrants

Thanks to the support of the Council, this fiscal year we launched a new initiative to assist young people pursue Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. We are proud that New York City is a national leader on DACA, both in terms of our financial commitment and the innovative structure of our program which was shaped by input from the Council, DYCD staff, immigration specialists and advocacy organizations.

We are investing \$13.7 million over Fiscal 2014 and 2015 to serve nearly 11,000 participants. The investments are being made in three areas: Outreach, Literacy and Employment Services and Legal Assistance.

In addition to DACA, the budget also baselines the Council's funding to the Immigrant Opportunity Initiative of \$4.3 million and includes \$3.3 million in federal funding to serve approximately 10,000 participants.

Conclusion

The Mayor's budget charts a new course – it is fiscally responsible, invests in communities and begins his long-term strategy to fight against income inequality for all New Yorkers. I look forward to working with you to help implement his vision in making sure all 8.4 million New Yorkers have the same opportunity to succeed.

I am joined by Deputy Commissioners Suzanne Lynn and John Cirolia.

We are pleased to answer your questions.



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Testimony of
Good Shepherd Services

Submitted by
Michelle Yanche
Assistant Executive Director
To the New York City Council Finance & Youth Services Committees

March 10, 2014

RE: FY 2015 Preliminary Budget Proposal for Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)

I am pleased to submit this testimony on behalf of Good Shepherd Services. Thank you for giving considerations to these recommendations.

Good Shepherd Services (GSS) is a leading youth development, education and family service agency that serves over 27,000 program participants a year. We give young people growing up in some of New York City's most under-resourced communities the opportunities and supports needed to take ownership of their future, making a difference today and for the next generation. Focusing our community-based after-school work in Brooklyn and the Bronx, we provide 23 after-school programs for 4,000 elementary, middle and high-school students in the public schools and NYCHA community centers. We are also a Transitional Independent Living (TIL) provider. With a 40-unit residence "The Chelsea Foyer" located at The Christopher on West 24th Street, which is partially supported with DYCD Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) funding. The Chelsea Foyer provides 40 young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 who are aging out of foster care, homeless or at-risk of homelessness, with supported transitional housing in a co-ed setting.

GSS' programs succeed because of the unique way in which we work:

- We have a profound belief in our participants' strengths inherent and in the ability of individuals and families to transform themselves.
- We surround youth and families with strength-based services and supports.
- We employ a rigorous business approach that stresses partnerships and makes the very most of both public and private resources.

Good Shepherd Services also serves as a member of the Steering Committee of the Campaign for Children, the coalition of over 150 New York City provider and advocacy organizations that have worked together over the past 2 years to fight to preserve, restore, baseline and now expand resources for child care and after-school programs. In this capacity we have developed a full Transition Plan for these two systems, which has been shared with the City Council and can be found at this link:

<http://www.campaignforchildrennyc.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Transition-Plan-Dec-13.pdf>.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Campaign for Children's Transition Plan outlines specific recommendations that the City can take over time to develop a high-quality, universal system of early childhood education and after-school programs. The City's plan to expand UPK and after-school programs for middle school students is an important step in realizing the universal system of our vision. GSS is a strong supporter of UPK NYC because it moves the needle toward a stable, high-quality system that can better meet the great need for after-school – particularly in addressing the following key areas:

- ***Create a dedicated funding stream***

The Campaign for Children's Transition Plan frames the full set of recommendations in the categories of **Quality, Investment and Expansion**. For our vision in all three of these areas to become a reality requires a fundamental infusion of long-term dedicated resources into the child care and after-school systems. **It is primarily for this reason that we have given our full support to the Mayor's plan and have lent our voice to efforts in Albany to call for New York City to have the authorization needed to create a dedicated funding stream to support this critical work of system expansion.** Without dedicated funding for these programs, our energies remain locked in the annual budget dance to fight for the same pot of limited dollars and deny families and their children the ability to count child care or after-school program from one year to the next.

Beyond this and the detailed recommendations in the Campaign for Children's Transition Plan, I want to add a few additional points that support our efforts in support of **Quality, Investment and Expansion**, specifically in the area of after-school programs which is where Good Shepherd Services expertise is focused.

- ***Supporting quality is critical***

As we work to expand programming in after-school, we have a strong infrastructure and decades of work and learning to build upon from the City's major after-school initiatives: Out-of-School Time (OST), Beacons and Cornerstone; from the work of strong, experienced providers; and from city-wide intermediary organizations like The After School Corporation and Partnership for After-School Education. This is a critical

opportunity to build on the work already accomplished and move the needle even further on system-wide quality investments.

- ***The need for high-quality programs dwarfs supply***

Less than half of New York City's middle schools have access to a DYCD-funded after-school program. In February, one of Good Shepherd Services' afterschool division directors told me that she has received calls from 5 different principals in the past month asking if there is some way we could offer a program in their schools. We wish we could be we are limited by available resources. To this end program expansion should seek primarily to add sites but also where possible to add slots at existing sites. While some of Good Shepherd Services' existing middle school sites could add slots as a more rapid way to ramp up system capacity, we see the greatest need in expanding to schools that currently are without a program.

- ***Program expansion must cover the full cost of quality***

DYCD was explicit in the past that in order to stretch available resources, their contracts with OST providers did not cover the full cost of the model. From our experience as an OST Middle School provider, it is necessary to increase the cost per participant by approximately one third. Not all providers have been able to do this even at current service levels. We have found it is becoming increasingly difficult to raise these funds even for large organizations like us. More critically the level of private funding that underpins current programs cannot be "scaled up" as the system expands. Thus, the new cost model for an expanded system cannot assume to rest on a base of private funding that simply will not be there.

SERVING YOUTH WHO HAVE RUNAWAY OR BECOME HOMELESS (RHY)

Good Shepherd Services is a member of the NYC Youth Alliance, the Coalition for Homeless Youth and the NYC Coalition on the Continuum of Care (CCoC) and strongly endorses the recommendations of these coalitions for greater investment in the RHY funding stream. We are very pleased that \$7.2 million in funding for RHY services was base-lined in the November 2013 Plan and we applaud Mayor de Blasio for allocating an additional \$1.3 million for 2014 and \$2.4 million for RHY in 2015 to expand crisis beds. These are important first steps, but the City has a long way to go to provide safety, shelter and services for this extremely vulnerable population of young people. I have included on the reverse side of this page the recommendations of the CCoC that outlines 3 things New York City can do right now to begin to address the housing, shelter & service needs of young people who have become homeless.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations.

If you have any questions or need additional information, I can be reached at michelle_yanche@goodshepherds.org or 212-243-7070, ext. 255.

Meeting the Needs of Homeless Youth

NYC Coalition on the Continuum of Care (CCoC)

Tonight there are thousands of young adults in the City that will not have a safe place to sleep. 3 things New York City can do right now to begin to address the housing, shelter & service needs of young people who have become homeless are:

1. Establish a “One Stop” centralized and comprehensive resource system

Services to assist youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are often spread across multiple systems and providers and often at many different locations. Centralized and comprehensive “One Stops” designed to meet all of the services needs of the diverse population of homeless youth is essential. “One Stops” should be both physical and virtual so that both youth and providers can easily access the same pool of information about services, shelter and housing options.

2. Expand emergency and transitional shelter capacity

There are not enough emergency and transitional beds to meet the needs of homeless and at-risk youth. Youth who access these safe and supportive options also need to be able to stay longer while they work to secure permanent housing and services. The emergency and transitional beds and services must account for the unique needs of the different sub-groups of young homeless people including: parenting, pregnant, LGBTQ, commercially and sexually exploited youth and older youth between the ages of 21 and 25. The recent budget request by Mayor de Blasio to fund 76 additional crisis beds is a step in the right direction but that only brings the youth shelter system total to 323 beds, still a fraction of the need.

3. Provide additional permanent housing assistance

New York City must also work to increase the availability of and access to quality, affordable housing for homeless and at-risk youth. This includes short-term and long-term rental assistance, public housing and supportive housing – rental housing tied to onsite social services, for particularly vulnerable youth. While homeless youth make up at least 10% of the single homeless population in the City, less than 1% of the supportive housing is dedicated for youth and there’s even less rental assistance and public housing available to them.

Going forward, New York City must take concrete action steps to quantify the number of young people who are homeless (with sensitivity to the different forms that homelessness can take for young people) and their collective need for housing, shelter and services, while simultaneously working to identify and address the gaps in the current system, implement needed program and policy changes and take aggressive action.

The NYC CCoC is a broad-based coalition of homeless housing and shelter providers, consumers, advocates, and government representatives, working together to shape citywide planning and decision-making to prevent and eradicate homelessness. For more information visit www.nychomeless.com or contact the CoC Youth Co-Chairs, Joey Lopez at jlopez@aliforneycenter.org or Mary Adams at madams@lanterngroup.org

New York City Youth Alliance

The After-School Corporation ▶ Citizens' Committee for Children of New York ▶ Coalition for Asian American Children & Families
▶ The Dryfoos Group ▶ Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies ▶ Human Services Council ▶ Neighborhood Family Services Coalition
▶ The New York Immigration Coalition ▶ Partnership for After School Education ▶ UJA-Federation of New York
▶ United Neighborhood Houses of New York ▶ YMCA of Greater New York

Testimony of the New York City Youth Alliance Presented to the NYC Council Youth Services and Community Development Committees Preliminary Budget Hearing: Fiscal Year 2015 March 10, 2014

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the members of the New York City Youth Alliance, a confederation of New York City organizations working on youth development, youth employment and disconnected youth issues. We would like to thank Youth Services Chair Mathieu Eugene, Community Development Chair Maria del Carmen Arroyo, and Finance Chair Julissa Ferreras for the opportunity to testify regarding the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2015 Preliminary Budget.

We have seen the demand for our programs and services increase over the last several years – and have done our very best to answer the call to do “more with less.” Now, more than ever, children and families depend on us for after-school programs, health services, child welfare services, summer jobs and direct assistance. We are so pleased to see the commitment the Administration, especially the Department of Youth and Community Development, has made to supporting the expansion and increased quality of youth serving programs in New York City, and hope to see additional improvements soon.

The following items are of particular concern to the NYC Youth Alliance:

Out-of-School Time – Overall Issues

We applaud the Administration for their commitment to expanding after-school programs for middle school students.

In addition, we were so pleased to see the additional funding for the Out-of-School Time (OST) program that the City Council had been adding to the budget, has now been included in the baseline. However, it's important to note that while the funding has been baselined, the current programs are still operating with one-year contracts that expire on June 30, 2014. . We urge DYCD to make announcements as soon as possible for how new contracts starting July 1, 2014 will be put in place so that there will be no disruption of services. Separately, the OST programs that were supported with Council one-year funds need an allocation for their summer

programs in the FY 2015 budget otherwise there will be no summer component for these programs during summer 2014. We urge the Administration to commit the additional resources needed to support summer programming for these programs. With so many contracts due to expire in June 2014, it is critical that additional funds are allocated to support summer programs. The summer programs offered through after-school programs are critical to keeping young people engaged and safe while school is not in session and while parents work.

It is of the utmost urgency that programs and community organizations are notified as soon as possible in regards to next year's funding so that plans can begin to take place including staffing, curriculum, and parent notification.

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) - Expand the program for New York City Youth

Due to the increase in minimum wage, New York City could lose up to 2,750 jobs this summer, if all other funding streams remain funding streams at the same levels as last year. Statewide, an additional \$10M is need to maintain the same number of SYEP slots. Governor Cuomo has allocated an additional \$2.5M to SYEP thus far.

We urge funding for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) to be expanded for New York City youth. Currently, there is \$45.6M in City, State and Federal funding to support 31,670 jobs - tied for the lowest level in over a decade. At the same time, in each of the last three years, over 100,000 youth have been denied jobs due to limited funding. Despite the benefits SYEP provides, our city's young people are increasingly being denied the opportunity to work given the overall downward trend of investment at the City, State and Federal levels.

We are requesting an additional \$13 million that would allow for a modest program expansion of jobs - in line with the Campaign for Summer Jobs vision to reach 100,000 SYEP slots in five years. The \$13 million would fully account for the minimum wage increase and expand the system by 10%, to 39,600 jobs.

Council Youth Initiatives – Full Restoration

We urge the City Council to fully restore funds to all Council Youth discretionary programs. We commend the Council for their continued use of these critical funds to support after-school and youth development programs throughout New York City.

Council discretionary funds are the lifeblood of many non-profit organizations in New York City. These awards can complement other government funding sources and private fundraising. Many times, discretionary awards sustain programs that are successful, but are not yet funded by dedicated, budgeted government dollars. Without discretionary support, many not-for-profit social service providers would have to reduce services or close completely.

Discretionary funding often support organizations that are community and culturally competent, but too small to qualify for City contracts that tend to favor larger and more

established organizations. As the most local representatives, Council Members are uniquely positioned to address local service gaps and needs in their communities through more flexible funding that they can allocate to these CBOs, that might not have the resources or capacity to apply for a cumbersome RFP, or that provide services not covered through an agency RFP.

It's important to note that even the "best" procurement is not perfect and can leave service gaps that Council Members are uniquely poised to see in their communities and can use discretionary funds to address.

We urge you to restore funds for the following city-wide initiatives which were eliminated in the Mayor's Preliminary Budget for FY15: Y Afterschool, YMCA Teens Take the City, Cultural After School Adventures program (CASA), Dropout Prevention Initiative, Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation, NY Junior Tennis League, and Council Member discretionary programs.

In addition, we strongly encourage the Council to support \$3.8 million to the After-Three Program. The Council helps support 39 after-school programs in all five boroughs with comprehensive school-based programs through this program, managed by The After-School Corporation (TASC).

Discretionary funds to youth programs allow families in New York City to receive critical services. We urge you to restore funding for these vital programs and provide a needed support for working families.

Increase funding for Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Programs

We are very pleased that \$7.2 million in funding for RHY services was baselined in the November 2013 Plan. Additionally, we applaud the Mayor for allocating an additional \$1.3 million for 2014 and \$2.4 million for RHY in 2015. This funding is critical to youth who have no other place to go and to the organizations that provide shelter and support services to them. This allocation supports drop-in, street outreach, emergency shelter beds and transitional independent living beds for at-risk and LGBTQ runaway and homeless youth citywide. Street outreach workers provide youth with important information on where to go for service and transport them to safe environments. Drop-in centers provide youth and their families with counseling and referrals to social workers. Due to the high poverty rates among youth, it is critical that supports be available for the runaway and homeless youth populations.

It's also important to note that these programs are cost-effective. According to a report issued by New Avenues for Youth in Portland Oregon, for every \$1.00 invested in programs for runaway and homeless youth they saved on average \$4.12 in costs to the community^[1]. They

^[1] New Avenues for Youth, The Economic Benefits of Helping Homeless Youth, Page 3, available at http://www.newavenues.org/files/NewAvenues_Cost_Benefit_Study.pdf

reported their prevention and early intervention program actually saved \$5.04 for every dollar spent to run the program.

It is estimated that on any given night there are over 3,800 youth homeless in the city. One New York City shelter reports turning away 300 youth each month. Surveys of RHY contacted from three major homeless shelters and drop-in crisis centers reveal there may be as many as 32,000 young people on the street in any given year. According to the report published by the Independent Budget Office, there were only 113 crisis beds and 122 transitional independent living beds (TIL) available to New York City's homeless youth in 2009. The shortage of shelter beds and TIL beds urgently needs to be remedied. We recommend the increase of 100 shelter beds per year until every youth has a bed available on any given night. It is estimated this would necessitate an increase of \$3.5 million per year in additional federal, state and city funding. We appreciate the Mayor's support of RHY by proposing increases throughout the next several years, but we need even more funds to alleviate the shortage of shelter beds. We ask the Mayor and City Council to increase funding for RHY services.

Beacon Centers – Increase Support

We are grateful that the 66 Beacon Centers funded by city tax levy dollars, had their funding baselined. However, Beacon programs have gone through many rounds of PEGs before the recent baselining, so they continue to operate at reduced levels of funding while still serving thousands of young people and their families throughout New York City. We urge the city to restore their funding to FY2010 levels of \$58 million. Furthermore, the 7 Beacon programs funded by City Council dollars must be made part of the system overseen by DYCD. Their contracts will also end June 30, 2014.

Adult Literacy Services and Immigrant Opportunities Initiative (IOI) – Increase investment to \$10.1 million

We are grateful to the Mayor for including the baselined funding for adult literacy programs in the FY 2015 Preliminary Budget. This includes the \$1.5 million Adult Literacy Initiative, the \$1 million ESOL portion of the Immigrant Opportunities Initiative, and the \$1 million DYCD RFP PEG restoration, for a starting point of \$3.5 million in the budget. These allocations fund community-based programs that provide ABE (Adult Basic Education), ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language), and HSE (High School Equivalency) classes for the 1.3 million New Yorkers who lack either an HSE, English proficiency, or both.

The NYC Youth Alliance recommends a return to the FY2010 funding level at \$10.1 million. This would support 8,417 seats and an array of programs at a level of \$1,200 per slot to support quality instruction and holistic supports. We are then supporting an increase of 50% each year for the next four years, with the intention of creating 28,406 seats for \$34.1 million.

An educated and skilled workforce is critical to sustain a thriving economy that can create jobs and generate the revenues needed to support New York City. For low income adults and

opportunity youth in New York, education is the key to securing employment, helping their children succeed in school, or acquiring the language skills to navigate daily life. Median wages are 25% higher for employed individuals that have completed high school or earned a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential. Every HSE credential generates \$324,000 in net benefits for the City. Yet, despite its benefits, funding for adult education has been cut dramatically, even in the face of growing need. Since its peak in FY 2010, annual allocations were reduced by almost 66% (\$6.5 million) from FY2010 to 2014 representing a loss of close to 7,000 classroom seats for ESOL, ABE, HSE and BENL programs.

New York State's replacement of the GED® with the new Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC™), requires students and educators to adopt Common Core standards, shift to computer-based testing over time, and prepare for a more challenging exam. Without increased support, New York students, already far behind the state and national curve in terms of pass rate, will fall even further behind. The pass rate on the current HSE exam is 23 percentage points higher for those in government funded community-based programs, compared to those who walk-in unprepared.

The implementation of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) has resulted in an increase of youth and young adults enrolling in a variety of adult education classes, as one of the requirements of DACA is that a young person has a high school degree or be working towards one. In NYC, there are nearly 16,000 individuals who would be eligible to apply for the DACA program if they were able to enroll in an HSE preparation class. With the uncertainty of Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) in Congress, it is to the City's benefit to reach as many youth as possible who are eligible for DACA. The \$18 million allocated in New York City's FY 14 budget is helping to address the needs of this population.

Expand Opportunities for New York City Youth

We are embarking on a very exciting time for after-school and youth development programs in New York City. While expansion is specifically taking place for middle school after-school, we strongly urge expansion for after-school programs for elementary and high school students, as well as the Summer Youth Employment Program and other critical programs. Members of the Youth Alliance were involved with creating a document branded by the Campaign for Children to detail both short and long-term expansion for after-school programs.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. We look forward to working with the City Council, the Mayor and DYCD to ensure these services to continue to help New York City's youth and families.



THE COALITION FOR ASIAN AMERICAN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**New York City Council
Committee on Youth Services
FY2015 Preliminary Budget
March 10, 2014**

**Testimony of Marissa Martin
Director of Government Affairs, Coalition for Asian American Children and Families**

Good afternoon. My name is Marissa Martin, and I am the Director of Government Affairs for the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families. We would like to thank Finance Committee Chair Ferreras, Youth Services Committee Chair Eugene, Community Development Chair Arroyo and members of the Youth Services and Community Development Committees for holding this important oversight hearing on the city fiscal year (FY) 2015 Preliminary Budget.

Since 1986, CACF is the nation's only pan-Asian children's advocacy organization, and works to improve the health and well-being of Asian Pacific American (APA) children and families in New York City in three key policy areas: education, health and child welfare. CACF challenges the stereotype of Asian Pacific Americans as a "model minority" and advocates on behalf of underserved families in our community, especially immigrants struggling with poverty and limited English skills. We work with our membership of over 50 community based organizations to promote better policies, funding, and services for East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander children, youth, and families.

CACF also co-leads the 13% and Growing Coalition, a group of over 45 Asian led and serving organizations that work together to ensure that New York City's budget protects the most vulnerable Asian Pacific American New Yorkers. Coalition members employ thousands of New Yorkers and serve hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. Currently, the Asian Pacific American community is by percentage the fastest growing group in New York City, nearly doubling every decade since 1970, and is 13% of the population. Unfortunately, current levels of public funding for the Asian Pacific American community remain disproportionate to our community's needs.

- 1 out 25 APA children live in poverty.
- 26% of APA live in poverty, the second highest of all racial groups in NYC.
- APAs have the highest rate (42%) of linguistic isolation meaning that no one over the age of 14 in a household speaks English well.
- 1 out of 4 APA high school students does not graduate on time.
- 1 out of 8 APAs in NYC are uninsured.

CHALLENGES

Consider that APA led and serving organizations receive less than 1% in public social service contract dollars and City foundation grant dollars. And yet, while many 13% and Growing Coalition members have long relied on City Council discretionary dollars to bridge the gap and continue to provide vital services in APA ethnic enclaves in Council districts city-wide, our analysis of publicly available budget documents

from the FY2014 Adopted Budget revealed that **APA led and serving organizations received only 2.5% of City Council discretionary dollars and 0.33%¹ of all initiative funding.**

Youth services are especially important for immigrant youth who struggle with English language proficiency, the acculturation process, and inadequate academic preparation. Immigrant youth come from families that face high rates of poverty, live in linguistic isolation, and lack the knowledge of available systems and resources. Despite the "model minority" stereotype, Asian Pacific American youth must also overcome challenges:

- 1 out of 4 Asian Pacific American high school students does not graduate on time or at all.
- 1 out of 5 Asian Pacific American students is an English Language Learner.
- According to the New York State Department of Education, only 50% of Asian Pacific American (APA) students² are considered prepared for college and career.³ For APA students in high need urban-suburban areas, the rate drops to 35.2%.⁴

KEY PROGRAMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Without youth services, many immigrant youth can find themselves isolated and marginalized, and without the support to navigate systems and access critical services that would put them on the path to become competent and responsible adults. We ask the City Council to work with the Mayor to restore the following programs.

Out-of-School Time

- ❖ We applaud the Administration for their commitment to expanding after-school programs for middle school students. In addition, we were so pleased to see the additional funding for the Out-of-School Time (OST) program that the City Council had been adding to the budget, has now been included in the baseline. However, it's important to note that while the overall funding has been baselined, the programs have not. **We urge DYCD to make announcements as soon as possible for how that funding will be allocated so community organizations can begin to plan for the RFP process and how to proceed with programming.**
- ❖ We also urge the Administration to commit additional resources to **support summer programming.** With so many contracts due to expire in June 2014, it is critical that additional funds are allocated to support summer programs. The summer programs offered through after-school programs are critical to keeping young people engaged and safe while school is not in session and while parents work.

Council Youth Initiatives

- ❖ We urge the City Council to fully restore Council Youth discretionary programs. These funds are important to meeting the on the ground needs of APA community members. These dollars help to fund vital services in local districts and citywide. These services are implemented by trusted community based organizations that understand the unique cultural and linguistic, social and economic needs of the diverse Asian Pacific American community. These organizations are rooted in and have the trust of their communities. They are often the first to become aware of and respond to the community's needs in a culturally competent and linguistically appropriate manner wherever pockets of the APA communities exist.

Summer Youth Employment Program

¹ 13% and Growing arrived at these percentages based on an analysis of publicly available information in Schedule C of the FY2014 Adopted Budget. Initiatives include both City Council sponsored-initiatives and agency programs.

² "Most New York Students Are Not College Ready," New York Times, Feb. 7, 2011. Available online at: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/08/nyregion/08regents.html?_r=1&hp.

³ Ibid. According to the New York State Department of Education College and Career Ready is defined as achieving a grade of 80 on the Math Regents, and a 75 on the English Regents. It is important to note that by their calculations, these grades merely predict a C grade for college level courses in these same subject areas.

⁴ Ibid.

- ❖ We urge funding for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) to be expanded for New York City youth. Currently, there is \$45.6M in City, State and Federal funding to support 31,670 jobs - tied for the lowest level in over a decade. At the same time, in each of the last three years, over 100,000 youth have been denied jobs due to limited funding.
- ❖ We are requesting an additional \$13 million that would allow for a modest program expansion of jobs - in line with the Campaign for Summer Jobs vision to reach 100,000 SYEP slots in five years.

Adult Literacy

- ❖ We are grateful to the Mayor for including the baselined funding for adult literacy programs in the FY 2015 preliminary budget. This includes the \$1.5 million Adult Literacy Initiative, the \$1 million ESOL portion of the Immigrant Opportunities Initiative, and the \$1 million DYCD RFP PEG restoration, for a starting point of \$3.5 million in the budget. These allocations fund community-based programs that provide ABE (Adult Basic Education), ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language), and HSE (High School Equivalency) classes for the 1.3 million New Yorkers who lack either an HSE, English proficiency, or both.
- ❖ **We urge the City Council to return to the FY2010 funding level at \$10.1 million.** This would support 8,417 seats and an array of programs at a level of \$1,200 per slot to support quality instruction and holistic supports. We are then supporting an increase of 50% each year for the next four years, with the intention of creating 28,406 seats for \$34.1 million.

Immigrant Specific Programs

- ❖ We are also grateful to the Mayor for including the \$4.3 million baselined funding the Immigrant Opportunities Initiative. **Two-thirds of all New Yorkers are immigrants or children of immigrants.** The Immigrant Opportunities Initiative funds programs that help these New York immigrant families obtain citizenship and language skills necessary for decent jobs, and to protect their legal rights.
- ❖ In FY 2014 budget, the City Council allocated \$18 million over 2 years for DACA eligible youth. The implementation of DACA has resulted in an increase of youth and young adults enrolling in a variety of adult education classes, as one of the requirements of DACA is that a young person has a high school degree or be working towards one. In NYC, there are nearly 16,000 individuals who would be eligible to apply for the DACA program if they were able to enroll in an HSE preparation class. With the uncertainty of Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) in Congress, it is to the City's benefit to reach as many youth as possible who are eligible for DACA.
- ❖ **While these are only short term initiatives, we urge the Mayor and City Council to continue to invest in the growing immigrant populations of New York City.**

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Asian Pacific American community is demanding our fair share in the City budget to ensure that youth in our community does not get left behind. Therefore, we put forward the following principles in how our City government should address the financial crisis.

- ❖ **Award 10 percent of points in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for organizations that demonstrate their capacity to provide culturally competent and language accessible services.** It is important for New York City agencies to increase access to vital services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. The Office of Minority Health proposed Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) as a means to correct inequities that currently exist in the provision of health services and to make the services more responsive to the individual needs of all consumers. These standards provide a common understanding and consistent definitions of culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS)⁵ and can offer important guidance for New York City.

⁵ US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health-National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care, March 2001.

Culturally specific community-based organizations are more likely to understand the complex multi-layered challenges and obstacles and appropriately address the needs of racial, ethnic and linguistic populations groups that experience unequal access to services. Without culturally competent and language accessible services, community members may experience delayed access to services in the short term, which can result in costlier interventions in the long term. Culturally specific community-based organizations are also better equipped to form essential relationships and engage their communities in the creation and implementation of services relevant to the diverse and unique needs of the victims. They play a vital role in providing services that are relevant to their communities and address the complexity of needs.⁶ With the growing racially diverse population, it is necessary for services to go beyond cultural awareness and knowledge but also ensure providers have appropriate skills and are able to use them effectively in cross-cultural situations.

- ❖ **The City should invest in small CBOs that serve emerging immigrant communities.** These organizations are rooted in and have the trust of their communities. They are often the first to become aware of and respond to the community's needs in a culturally competent and linguistically appropriate manner. However, the funding for services these small CBOs provide are often not baselined, don't have access to larger contracts and are often the first to be eliminated. A decrease in funding to these grassroots organizations translates into a diminished capacity to address the community's needs.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and we look forward to working with the City Council to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to the services and support they need to thrive.

⁶ US Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women, OVW Grants to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence and Stalking Program, March 2012



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**Testimony of United Neighborhood Houses
Before the New York City Council
Committee on Finance
Committee on Youth Services
Committee on Community Development
On the FY 2015 Preliminary Budget**

Honorable Julissa Ferreras, Chair, Committee on Finance

Honorable Mathieu Eugene, Chair, Committee on Youth Services

Honorable Maria del Carmen Arroyo, Chair, Committee on Youth Development

Submitted by Gregory Brender and Kevin Douglas, Policy Analysts

March 10th, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Gregory Brender and I am a policy analyst at United Neighborhood Houses, New York City's federation of settlement houses and community centers. UNH member agencies are deeply committed to fostering positive development for New York's children and youth and providing education for adult learners. Our members have firsthand experience providing high quality services to young people in a multi-service community based setting. Through their work in adult literacy education, UNH members have seen the transformative power of services such as adult literacy and ESOL. We are glad to have this opportunity to testify about these issues and look forward to working with members of the City Council

The FY 2015 Preliminary Budget Proposal ends a long budget dance for many services that has been painful to communities and to providers. For the last several years, key funding streams serving young people and adult learners including Out of School Time, Beacons, Cornerstone and Adult Literacy Education have been cut in the Preliminary Budget and saved at the last minute by the City Council.

This process destabilized systems by forcing staff into a situation where they do not know in June if their jobs will still exist in July. The budget dance also precluded multi-year planning.

Now that we have hopefully ended this practice for good we have the opportunity to discuss a budget that will support the services that we know our young people and adult learners truly need and deserve.

After-School

We are greatly encouraged by the growing recognition of the importance of after-school. Mayor de Blasio made expanding after-school part of his campaign's centerpiece proposal and won a mandate from the voters of New York City to ensure that every middle school student has access to a high-quality after-school program. We believe that all New York City's children deserve access to high quality early childhood education and after-school programs from Kindergarten through High School.

UNH strongly supports New York City's plan to expand after-school programs for middle school students through a modest, targeted tax increase. Many young people and parents from UNH member agencies have visited Albany, made phone calls and organized in their communities to support New York City's plan. We are thrilled that many members of the City Council have been lobbying for the plan and that the resolution supporting New York City's plan passed with an overwhelming margin.

We were also happy to have the opportunity to work with DYCD in creating a plan to implement the Mayor's vision of universal middle school after-school. Recently, DYCD released a white paper on how it would move forward in fulfilling the promise of a quality after-school slot for every middle school student. The plan described in the White Paper includes:

- A plan to place a program in 273 district schools that do not have an after-school site
- Increasing rates throughout the entire OST system including existing providers in order to have rates reflect the amount of funds a provider typically spends in order to support a middle school after-school program.
- An expectation that schools will contribute to the after-school programs in order to increase buy-in among principals and improve collaboration between the school and after-school programs.
- The inclusion of unstructured hours so that young people can view the programs as social and recreational and use them both for enrichment and recreation.
- A plan to target struggling students including outreach to ensure that the young people who most need the support and reinforcement from after-school participate in the programs.

However, New York City's plan for expanding middle school after-school programs should be a part of a larger continuum of services for children and youth that starts with early childhood education and goes through high school. As part of the Campaign for Children, UNH has proposed a vision for expanding and improving after-school. The Campaign for Children Transition Plan calls upon the city to:

- Ensure universal access for after-school for children and youth grades K-12 as well as early childhood education for younger children.
- Ensure programs have a holistic approach to supporting youth in all areas, including social and emotional well-being, educational and academic achievement, and physical health and wellness.

- Appropriately compensate well-trained staff. This includes raising the rates paid to providers and indexing their salaries to inflation so that the real value of their earnings does not decrease.
- Fund on-site paid trainings for after-school staff.
- Develop an evaluation process that is more dynamic and less onerous for providers.
- Leverage after-school programs to support students in building common core competencies.
- Ensure programs are culturally competent and language accessible.
- Develop a system to track waitlists.

We also face immediate challenges in the Out-of-School Time system which is going through a dramatic transition. We believe that this transition will be successful and look forward to working with the City Council and administration to make sure it is.

As you know, in the current fiscal year approximately 50% of the current Out of School Time system is funded by the City Council and provided by community based organizations that were designated by the City Council. The City Council took this action in response to the 2012 OST Request for Proposals which did not fund many existing high quality programs which had operated successfully in their neighborhoods for years. The OST RFP created such a dramatic loss of capacity in the system both because it incorporated a large cut in city funding but also because it increased the per child rate in order to increase program quality.

Programs funded through the OST RFP are funded at higher rates and they are also required to provide more academic enrichment as well as have an education director. The City Council sites do not have this funding or these requirements.

Former Mayor Bloomberg's final budget action, the November modification, baselined the funds that the City Council has allocated. Thankfully, this baselining is continued in Mayor de Blasio's Preliminary Budget Proposal. However, the funds that were baselined were only enough to support the current capacity of the system at the lower City Council rates not the increased rate paid to other baselined programs. We urge the city to invest in the OST system to ensure that all OST programs are funded to provide high quality services.

Lastly, we do not know yet how DYCD will procure these newly baselined funds. However, given the importance of program stability, we urge DYCD to use an expedited process that allows existing high-quality providers to continue serving their neighborhoods. Moreover there should be one OST system and the newly baselined programs should be brought up to the funding level of the programs funded through the OST RFP.

Adult Literacy

Funding History

Despite there being over 1.3 million New Yorkers lacking a high school diploma or English proficiency, the City's investment in community based literacy services is far below where it should be. Between FY2010 and FY2014, DYCD's funding for Adult Basic Education (ABE), Basic Education in Native Language (BENL), English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL), Pre- High School Equivalency (Pre-HSE, formerly known as Pre-GED), High School Equivalency Prep (HSE-Prep, formerly known as GED-Pre) and Family Literacy has fallen precipitously: a 66% reduction from \$10.1 million to just \$3.5 million¹. In addition to this overall reduction in funding, a tremendous amount of instability has been created in the field due to the shift from baselined funding to one-year Council restorations.

In Mayor Bloomberg's November 2013 Budget Plan he baselined several key Council literacy initiatives and restorations, and we appreciate that Mayor de Blasio has retained this \$3.5 million in DYCD's FY2015 Preliminary Budget. However, given the enormity of need in New York's immigrant communities in particular, and the unique stresses recently introduced with the introduction of Common Core in adult education, we urge an additional \$6.6 million investment in community based literacy services this year. This expansion would be the first step of a broader vision to significantly enhance the availability and quality of adult literacy instruction.

Economic Benefits of Adult Literacy

According to Census data, the median earnings for individuals 25 and older who earned their high school equivalency diploma is \$30,915/year- a full \$6,000 greater than the \$24,520 for those who did not hold a high school diploma². In fact, for every individual in New York City who earns their high school diploma or its equivalent they generate a net economic benefit to the City over their lifetime in terms of their higher rates of employment, earnings, spending and contributed tax revenues and decreased rates of utilization of public benefits. It is no surprise then that adult, Spanish-speaking English learners lose roughly \$3,000 per year in earnings as a direct result of their limited English skills³.

Benefits to Children and Families

Beyond the employment and economic benefits of having an educated workforce able to partake in training or educational programs to upgrade their skills and viability, there are numerous social benefits incurred to the families of those learning English. Strikingly, research has found that the greatest predictor of whether a child will be raised in poverty is simply the mother's educational level⁴. This

¹ Midway through FY2014, a new temporary initiative was launched by the City to reconnect DACA-eligible individuals to literacy programs, known as the Young Immigrant Literacy Program (YILP). While significant, approximately half of the funding has already been expended and is not clear that the program will be continued.

² United States Census Bureau, "Educational Attainment: Five Key Data Releases from the U.S. Census Bureau", 2012: http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/pdf/2012-02-23_education_slides.pdf

³ Lexington Institute, "The Value of English Proficiency in the United States Economy", 2012: <http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/library/resources/documents/Education/ValueOfEnglishProficiency.pdf>

⁴ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, National Institutes of Health (NIH), "Improving Mother's Literacy Levels May be Best Way to Boost Children's Achievement", 2010: <http://www.nih.gov/news/health/oct2010/nichd-25.htm>

reality has dramatic implications when we consider that over 60% of all New York City public school students are either immigrants or children of immigrants⁵. It also bears noting that for parents to successfully learn about, and navigate the systems to enroll their children in pre-kindergarten or afterschool programs requires that they have sufficient English skills and comfort in interacting with teachers and other school administrators.

Common Core Challenge

Added to the already numerous challenges facing adult learners in even accessing an adult literacy class is the reality that beginning just a few weeks ago, New York State became one of the first states in the nation to begin administering a Common Core-aligned High School Equivalency exam. Whereas the “GED” has commonly been considered to be synonymous with a high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, in fact the GED® was simply the predominant exam *leading to* an HSE. The new exam to earn an HSE in New York is now known as the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC™) and early indicators are that the exam is far above and beyond the level of instruction and student knowledge historically required to earn an HSE. While the State recently made the decision to slow the implementation of Common Core testing in the P-12 system, it is simultaneously pushing ahead full steam on aligning adult education to the standards, meaning ironically a high school senior will not be required to pass a fully common core aligned exam until 2022- five years after immigrant and adult learners will be expected to.

With one New York State already having the 3rd lowest pass rate on the GED® exam, and NYC having among the lowest pass rate in the State, it is clear that with the increased rigor of the common core standards, things will not improve for adult learners and immigrants seeking to increase their literacy skills or earn an HSE diploma unless the system is significantly expanded and improved. The predominant reason for the low success rate in New York City and New York State is the fact that the majority- roughly two-thirds of testers- are “walk-in” testers, meaning they did not have the benefit of an HSE prep program. By in large, those students fail the exam. On the reverse end, those students lucky enough to secure a seat in one the limited community based literacy classes pass at rates close to the national average. New York City’s students are not failing because of a lack of ability, but because there is a failure to offer, and engage more students in classes.

Expanding System Capacity and Quality

UNH believes that in order to capitalize on the benefits of adult literacy programming—and not just for the individual, but for their families and our economy—New York City must make a concerted effort to expand the availability of classes offered through DYCD. DYCD contractors- settlement houses, libraries and other community based organizations- are uniquely positioned to offer culturally competent and accessible services to immigrant communities often hesitant to engage with government institutions when they lack documentation, or to young adults that did not complete high school.

The current lack of investment truly does a disservice to the hard working immigrants that keep the city running and hope to build better lives for themselves and their families. UNH recommends DYCD’s literacy programming be funded at \$10.1m in FY2015- enough to serve 8,417 students- and be

⁵ http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/Our_Children_Our_Schools%20FINAL_Report.pdf?pt=1

expanded by 50% in each of the following three years in order to begin to meet overwhelming demand for these services. Further, UNH urges that providers be reimbursed a minimum of \$1,200 per student in order to reflect the true cost of providing quality instruction, which will only increase in difficulty and expense as programs begin to adapt to the new Common Core Learning Standards.

Summer Youth Employment

For decades, SYEP has been the stepping stone into the world of work hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. In New York City, SYEP operates as a six-week, 20-25 hour, minimum-wage employment experience for youth between the ages of 14-24. Most recently the program served just under 36,000 youth in the summer of 2013- out of a pool of more nearly 136,000 applicants. Due to the fact that demand for the program consistently outpaces available job slots, youth are selected via a lottery process in late spring prior to beginning the program in July. In recent years youth have roughly a 25% chance of being selected for participation, and given the lottery-style nature of the program, many youth are turned away two, three, or more years in a row. In fact, in each of the last three years, NYC's SYEP program, administered by the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), has turned away over 100,000 youth per summer.

Benefits of SYEP

The benefits of SYEP have been made abundantly clear over the years through both research and anecdote. Youth employment during the high school years has been found to be directly related to the likelihood that a young adult holds employment after graduation⁶, and those youth are also likely to earn more over their lifetimes than those that had later entry into the workforce. More recently, the NYU Institute for Education and Social Policy studied the NYC SYEP program and found that for youth at educational risk, indicated by high rates of school absence, those that participated in SYEP had higher rates of attendance in the following school year, as well as an increased likelihood of taking and passing the Math and English Regents exams⁷.

In addition, because over 32% of SYEP youth are assigned to work in summer day care/camps serving children, non-profits are able to utilize these no-cost workers to serve larger numbers of children while meeting mandated staff: child ratios. This is a tremendous boon to the thousands of working families that rely on the availability of free or low-cost summer day programs for their children.

Funding History

Despite the enormity of benefits rendered at such a low cost- the typical NYC cost per participant is less than \$1,500- SYEP has consistently suffered from disinvestment at the federal, state, and city levels. Whereas for several years the program was supported by a significant infusion of resources from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the funding was exhausted in FY 2010-11. At the same time, in NYC, local City Tax Levy (CTL) investment in the program fell several million, and the state's SYEP investment was dramatically cut from \$35 million per year to just \$15.5 million in SFY 2010-

⁶ Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *The Editor's Desk*, "Youth working in high school more likely to be employed in future"; <http://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2000/jul/wk5/art02.htm>

⁷ NYU Steinhardt Institute for Education and Social Policy. "More than a Paycheck? The Impact of Summer Youth Employment on Student's Educational Engagement and Success"; http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/spa2/SYEP_Policy_Brief_02_12_June_2012.pdf

11. For the past three years the City's investment has remained flat at \$20.6 million, private contributions for SYEP through the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York have fallen in each of the last two years- and it is not clear whether revenues from that fund will continue to be directed to SYEP.

Minimum Wage Impact

Given the recent increase in the State minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$8.00/hour, the cost-per slot in SYEP has increased, and without additional investment by the State or City, the number of youth able to participate in the program will fall even further. The State has made a modest increase in its investment, and while we continue to advocate for the full funding at the state level we believe is required to maintain current job levels (\$7.5), it is unclear whether any additional resources will be directed towards New York City's program. Without these additional dollars, 2,750 fewer youth will be able to secure a job versus last summer. With over 100,000 youth being turned away each summer, this is a trend that must be reversed.

Expanding SYEP Opportunities

In recognizing the significant and cost-effective benefits of SYEP, UNH encourages DYCD to adopt a five-year plan to scale up 100,000 job opportunities through SYEP. In FY2015 UNH recommends an additional \$13 million investment for a total of \$33.6 million which will allow for a modest 10% growth in program slots this year. Over the following years, UNH recommends the following levels of City investment:

FY2015	\$33.6 million	39,600 summer jobs
FY2016	\$45.7 million	45,540 summer jobs
FY2017	\$61.4 million	54,600 summer jobs
FY2018	\$87.4 million	71,000 summer jobs
FY2019	\$133.4 million	100,000 summer jobs

Opportunity Youth

Today in New York City one in five youth fall into the category of what has traditionally termed "disconnected youth"—young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 that are neither in school nor employed. The more apt descriptor for this population is "opportunity youth" in that it recognizes the tremendous untapped talent and energies of these youth. The challenges facing these youth are significant however, from family and childcare responsibilities to, often times, undeveloped educational or employment skills.

The funding that supports programs for these youth is fractious and largely supported by federal dollars at constant risk of reduction. There are however, some programmatic bright spots in the landscape for these youth, and last fall United Neighborhood Houses helped launch the New York Opportunity Youth Agenda (NYOYA) to highlight these models and encourage greater city investment in those programs successfully serving youth.

Programming

Broadly categorized, services for the opportunity youth population fall into one of four domains:

1) Services for youth considered “*Job Ready Now*”—youth that have some employment experience and/or skills to immediately succeed in a job, but in need of some assistance in connecting to actual opportunities. Human Resources Administration’s (HRA) wage subsidy program known as the Works Progress Program is one such example.

2) Youth in need of “*Workforce Transition Supports*”—those that have limited employment experience and some work skills, but would benefit from supervised internships and guidance before transitioning to regular employment. DYCD’s Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP) is one such example of these services.

3) “*Comprehensive Youth Development*”—holistic and comprehensive services for those youth that require intensive social-emotional support, case management, skills training and education assistance. DYCD’s Out of School Youth (OSY) program is an example of this service model.

4) “*Back to School Programs*” are for youth that are focused on earning their high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, as well as for those interested in pursuing higher education. These services are offered through programs such as DYCD’s Young Adult Literacy Program (YALP).

Expanding Opportunity

With over 180,000 youth in the OSOW category, New York City is losing out on opportunity to tap into their social and economic potential. As the City looks at ways to reduce inequality in outcomes, one of the best places to invest is in supports for youth at this critical juncture in their lives—if supported, they can get back on track to educational and career goals—if not, they often will struggle for the rest of their lives to earn a family-sustaining income.

UNH supports the NYOYA plan to serve at least 90,000 of these youth within the next four years, through a scaled up approach. With an average cost of \$5,000 per youth, serving this many youth will require a \$450 million investment over time. A significant portion of that funding already exists in current spending (~\$225 million), and so the campaign is pushing for both a repurposing of existing funds to better serve youth, as well as new investments from the Administration and City Council, in addition to a “matched” investment from the foundation community.

In this first year of the plan, UNH supports a \$10 million increased investment in DYCD programs that are successfully serving youth such as the aforementioned Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP), Young Adult Literacy Program (YALP) and Out of School Youth (OSY) program, as well as a \$10 million City Council Opportunity Youth Initiative which would allow for new and expanded creative programming in high-need communities. Together this \$20 million investment would serve roughly 4,000 new opportunity youth in high-quality programs.

**New York City Council
FY 2015 Preliminary Budget Hearing
Youth Services Committee
March 10, 2014**

**Submitted on behalf of:
Dr. Deborah MacFarlane Antoine
President and CEO
New York Junior Tennis & Learning (NYJTL)
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Queens, NY 11377
347 417-8103**

Thank you for the New York City Council's longstanding support of ***New York Junior Tennis & Learning*** (NYJTL) legally incorporated as the New York Junior Tennis League. We are the largest and most successful scholastic tennis program in the country, annually serving 45,000 youngsters through our tennis and educational programs.

When Arthur Ashe founded this organization over 40 years ago, he knew that tennis could open doors for the youth of our city, showing them another road to travel. He knew that that by putting a racquet into a child's hand and by turning schoolyards and parks into tennis courts, you could transform a child's life.

With the sustained financial support of the City Council, NYJTL has continued the mission of Arthur Ashe and has offered the youth of our city much more than the chance to learn tennis. The overwhelming majority of the youth we serve are Black, Latino, Asian, new immigrant populations and come from low income families. NYJTL gives these children the opportunity to learn the sport of tennis—and just as importantly-- the opportunity to be physically fit; the opportunity to reach new educational heights; and the opportunity to expand their horizons beyond their immediate world, building self esteem and learning the affirmative values of perseverance, cooperation, fairness and respect.

NYJTL brings the sport of tennis to 45,000 children of all social, cultural and economic backgrounds. **Funded as Council Citywide Initiative, NYJTL provides quality tennis and educational programming in EVERY Council District.**

Council Citywide Initiative funding is used to support NYJTL's schoolyard (in-school) tennis programs, its year-round community tennis (after-school) programs, its Winter Early Morning Program and its Advanced Training Program as well as educational programs throughout the five boroughs.

- **School Yard Tennis Program** - The Schoolyard Tennis Program supplies free tennis equipment, teacher training, and ongoing support to approximately 200 schools

throughout the city that include tennis as a regular part of their physical educational curriculum.

- **Community Tennis Program** - The Community Tennis Program reaches children throughout the five boroughs by supplying trained coaches, tennis instruction, match play, educational services, and special events to youth ages 5-18, during the Spring, Summer and Fall. Community Tennis Programs develop the tennis skills of young children and stress character development and positive life experiences.
- **Winter Early Morning Program** - This program enables players to continue their progress during the indoor season and includes a number of NYJTL-sponsored events: Hartman Cup Championships, Holiday Tournament, and Presidents' Week Tournament.
- **Advanced Training Program** - The Advanced Training Program provides approximately 80-120 experienced players ages 9-18 with year-round training by USTA High Performance-certified coaches, travel to top local and national competitions, tournament entry fees, and special events.
- **Arthur Ashe Educational Guidance Program** - From starting elementary school to acceptance into college, individuals and families receive counseling, tutoring, visit colleges and are assisted with financial aid leading to scholarship offers.

All of our programs are FREE. In the past year, more than 45,000 New York City children, ranging in ages from 8-18 years old, have benefitted from our programs. Most of these youngsters will never play in the US Open and that's ok. They will, however, learn life lessons about integrity, discipline, sportsmanship and honesty, which will help shape the adults they will become.

In FY 14, NYJTL received \$800,000 as a Council Citywide Funding Initiative. This year, we have submitted a request for \$1,000,000. We are asking for this increase to enable us to continue to serve EVERY Council District and defray the cost of significantly higher DOE security and permit fees. Increased funding will also help to support tennis and educational programming at NYJTL's

new Cary Leeds Center for Tennis & Learning at Crotona Park in the Bronx. This Center, which was funded in part by the Council, will serve as an incredible resource for young people from throughout the Bronx and the surrounding boroughs. Children and teens will receive free academic enrichment activities and more than 6500 hours of free tennis lessons each year. Programs will operate year round on 22 tennis courts (one of which will be bubbled for winter play) and in the two-story 12,000 square foot Club House.

Continued Council funding of NYJTL's after-school and summer programming is critical to our mission. With your support, we can continue to make a tremendous difference in the lives of thousands of New York City youth and their families. Our programs:

- *Help fight childhood obesity;*
- *Teach the joys and benefits of tennis - discipline, good sportsmanship, team play and competition;*
- *Prevent youth on youth and gang violence.*

We could not do what we do without the strong funding support of the City Council. On behalf of the thousands of youngsters annually served by NYJTL, I thank you for the Council's longstanding commitment to the youth of our city and for its sustained support of youth programs.

Your support of NYJTL and our Citywide Funding Initiative request of \$1,000,000 in the FY 2015 Budget is respectfully requested.



**Testimony from the New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy
Presented to the NYC Council Youth and
Community Development Committees
March 10th, 2014**

Agudath Israel of America
Bronx Works
Brooklyn Public Library
Catholic Charities Neighborhood Services
Chinatown Manpower Project
The Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
The College of New Rochelle
Community Service Society
Cypress Hills Local Dev Corporation
The Doe Fund
Edith & Carl Marks Jewish Community
House of Bensonhurst
FEGS Health and Human Services
Fifth Avenue Committee
Fortune Society
HANAC
Highbridge Community Life Center
International Center of CCCS
Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House
Jewish Community Center of Staten Island
Jewish Community Council of
Greater Coney Island
LaGuardia Community College Center for
Immigrant Education and Training
Lehman College Adult Learning Center
Literacy Assistance Center
Literacy Partners
Lutheran Family Health Centers Adult and Family
Education
Make the Road New York
Maura Clarke-Ita Ford (MCIF) Center
Neighborhood Family Services Coalition
NYC College of Technology Adult Learning Center
New York Immigration Coalition
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation
Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow
Phipps Community Development Corporation
Project Reach Youth
Queens Community House
Riverside Language Program
Shorefront YM-YWHA
Turning Point
UAW Region 9A Education Fund
UJA-Federation of New York
Union Settlement Association, Inc.
United Neighborhood Houses
University Settlement Adult Literacy Program

The New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCCAL) is comprised of teachers, managers, students, and allies from community-based organizations, advocacy groups, public libraries, and colleges in the City University of New York. NYCCAL advocates for an adult literacy system that provides quality, comprehensive, and accessible educational services to current students and other adults who require it. NYCCAL believes that being able to read and write, learn English, obtain a High School Equivalency diploma, and enter training and post secondary education are the rights of every New Yorker and the cornerstone to an equitable and just society.

This testimony is being submitted by the New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCCAL). Our coalition is comprised of teachers, managers, students, and allies from community-based organizations, advocacy groups, public libraries, union training programs and colleges in the City University of New York (CUNY). NYCCAL advocates for an adult literacy system that provides quality, comprehensive, and accessible educational services to current students and other adults who require it. NYCCAL believes that being able to read and write, learn English, obtain a High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma, and enter training and post-secondary education are the rights of every New Yorker and the cornerstone to an equitable and just society.

We would like to thank Chairs Eugene and Arroyo for the opportunity to testify today on the Mayor's FY 15 preliminary budget. Local funding for adult education has been cut dramatically in the last four years. Annual allocations were reduced by almost 66% (\$6.5 million) from FY2010 to FY2014 representing a loss of close to 7,000 classroom seats for ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language), ABE (Adult Basic Education), HSE (High School Equivalency) and BENL (Basic Education in Native Language) programs. The loss of those seats has led to increased waitlists and programs having to turn away students.

We appreciate that Mayor deBlasio included \$3.5 million that was baselined in Mayors Bloomberg's November Plan for adult education, however, we are concerned that this funding remains inadequate for the need through New York City. With the exception of the November Plan budget announcement for FY 15, the City's community-based adult literacy funding has come from the City Council for the past several years through the Adult Literacy Initiative, the Immigrant Opportunities Initiative (IOI), and the Council restoration for the DYCD RFP. While this funding has been critical in allowing providers to offer classes, the instability of one-year funding has made it difficult for providers to plan from year to year. However, we are concerned that we don't yet know how and when the new baselined funding will be allocated to providers. We urge the Council to work with the Mayor's Office and DYCD to ensure that this funding reaches the non-profit community as soon as possible to ensure no lapse in services.

Elimination of GED®; Introduction of Common Core

Across the City, increased demand for literacy services has exceeded capacity in programs. At the beginning of 2014, New York State transitioned from the General Educational Development (GED®) to a new

exam known as the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC™). Since the new test is designed to align with national Common Core standards over a three-year period, the TASC™ is already significantly more rigorous than the current GED®. As a result, programs faced a significant uptick in demand for HSE preparation classes in 2013 and will continue to do so as the transition continues. In addition, the exam will increasingly be administered by computer, moving away from the current paper and pencil GED® testing system, which will require computer literacy skills, a new hurdle for test-takers.

In order to ensure that New Yorkers seeking to earn their high school equivalency diploma to retain or obtain employment, or to more improve their English literacy skills, it is critical that the City expand the capacity and quality of our system to meet community need—especially within the context of the new Common Core standards.

Immigration Reform and Deferred Action

Additionally, the implementation of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) has resulted in an increased demand from youth and young adults, as one of the requirements of DACA is that a young person has a high school degree or be working towards one. In NYC, there are nearly 16,000 individuals who would be eligible to apply for the DACA program if they were able to enroll in an HSE preparation class. With the uncertainty of Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) in Congress, it is to the City's benefit to reach as many youth as possible who are eligible for DACA. The \$18 million allocated in New York City's FY 14 budget is helping to address the needs of this population. However, it is important to note that this funding stream is also for a particular segment of the adult learner community and does not account for older immigrants, or non-immigrant New Yorkers that either de-enrolled or were pushed out of the K-12 system.

Economic and Social Benefits of Adult Literacy

In New York City, there are 1.3 million New Yorkers who lack either an HSE, English proficiency, or both. Additionally, the City is home to over 3 million foreign born residents, which represents 37% of the City's population. While not all of our City's immigrants are in need of adult education services, they do make up a large part of the need. With immigrants generating nearly 1/3 of all economic activity in the City and comprising 44% of our workforce, it is in our collective interest to ensure they have the literacy and numeracy skills needed to perform their jobs, enroll in training and credential programs and advance in their careers¹.

Investments in adult education benefit the learners, their families, our economy, and society as a whole. While higher education is increasingly seen as necessary to achieving individual financial security and local economic growth, for many New Yorkers the pathway to postsecondary success has to start with basic education, English language literacy, and High School Equivalency preparation, and the achievement of even a high school degree produces economic and social returns to families and their communities. These direct economic benefits include increased employment, higher salaries that lead to more consumer spending and increased tax revenue; attainment of a high school degree or its equivalent also reduces social welfare costs, and by lowering the need for public benefits. In fact, for adults that are able to complete high school or earn a HSE, median wages are 25% higher. Helping adults finish their

¹ DiNapoli: Immigrants Continue to Play Key Role in New York City Economy:
<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/press/releases/nov13/110713a.htm>

primary education better prepares them to enroll in training programs, pursue college, or advance in their careers. Furthermore, every high school credential earned generates \$324,000 in net benefits for the City, through reduced reliance on public benefits (\$135,000) and increased taxes paid (\$190,000) as a result of higher earnings.²

Pre-Kindergarten and Afterschool Expansion

With the City's planned expansion of universal pre-K and afterschool, we need mechanisms in place to ensure that the parents who have language barriers are able to partake in the system and navigate the cumbersome application process. A mother's educational level is the strongest predictor of whether a child will be raised in poverty—by helping parents improve their English skills, they will be better able to participate in, and support their child's education.³ Supporting adults in need of literacy skills will help kids in pre-K programs reach their full potential.

NYCCAL has laid out a series of three recommendations for the FY 15 budget:

- **Restore community based adult literacy programing to a funding level of \$10.1 million in FY 15:** Despite 1.3 million New Yorkers lacking a high school diploma and/or English proficiency, there are less than 7,000 City-funded community based adult literacy program slots. At a minimum, restoring literacy funding to FY 10 level of \$10.1 million will signal NYC's commitment to creating opportunities that help pull people out of poverty and connect them to the socio-economic fabric of our city.
- **Expand investment each year by 50% in order to close the gap between community needs and education opportunities.** In order to seriously tackle the educational and language barriers limiting our workforce's potential, we must significantly scale up investment in community based literacy services: \$15.15m in FY 16, \$22.73m in FY 17, \$34.09m in FY 18. Within four years this investment will have created over 28,000 classroom seats, with a capacity to serve over 68,000 each year.
- **Reimburse providers for services at a rate of \$1,200 per student.** The success of adult literacy providers is influenced in large part by their cultural competence, neighborhood-level accessibility, and holistic approach— meaning when someone walks through the door of a program, that they receive much more than just literacy instruction. For individuals lacking English proficiency and/or a high school diploma, they are usually facing additional challenges. It is by recognizing and meeting these additional needs in a welcoming and supportive environment that students are able to succeed in the classroom.

However, in order to recruit and retain quality staff that contribute to cultural competence, to offer classes at flexible hours and accessible locations, to provide comprehensive supports— in short, to build high quality and successful programs, contracted providers must be reimbursed adequately. The current reimbursement rates providers receive from city, state and federal sources—often in the range of \$800-\$1,000/student— are well below the true cost of ensuring student success. NYCCAL strongly encourages setting reimbursement rates at a minimum of \$1,200/student.

² Lazar Treschan and David Jason Fischer, "From Basic Skills to Better Futures: Generating Economic Dividends for New York City" <http://www.passged.com/media/pdf/research/From-Basic-Skills-to-Better-Futures.pdf>

³ National Coalition for Literacy, <http://www.national-coalition-literacy.org/advocacy/FamilyLiteracyFactSheetfromNCFL.pdf>



FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT WELFARE AGENCIES

TESTIMONY

of

The Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies

Before the

New York City Council Youth Services Committee

Budget Hearing on the Mayor's Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2014-2015

March 10, 2014

Prepared by:

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Noah Franklin – Senior Policy Analyst for Child Welfare and Workforce Development

Jennifer Jones Austin

CEO/Executive Director

My name is Kathy Fitzgibbons and I am the Senior Policy Analyst for Elderly Welfare and Youth Services at the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (FPWA). FPWA is an anti-poverty, policy and advocacy organization with a membership network of nearly 200 human services organizations and churches that operate over 1,200 programs throughout the New York City metro area. Together we serve over 1.5 million low-income New Yorkers of all ages, ethnicities and denominations each year. Our members represent every level of New York City's social service system, providing FPWA with a comprehensive view of the complex social service problems that face human service organizations and the clients they serve every day.

I would like to thank the City Council for the opportunity to testify on policies and investments that will strengthen the youth services delivery system throughout New York City. I look forward to working with Council Member Eugene and members of the Youth Services Committee to continue building services for our city's disenfranchised young people and to ensure vulnerable youth of our city have a consistent, supportive voice on matters of concern to them. Providing access to key services such as afterschool and employment programs for our youth will stabilize their lives and allow them to achieve economic equality and prosperity.

Recommendations on Policy/Program/Service Improvement

Raise the Age of Criminal Responsibility

FPWA strongly supports raising the age of criminal responsibility in New York. New York is one of only two states that prosecutes all children and youth as adults when they turn 16 years old. Every year, nearly 50,000 16-17 year olds are arrested and face the possibility of being prosecuted in adult courts, placed in adult jails and prisons and having the outcomes on their permanent records despite the fact that the vast majority of these arrests were for nonviolent crimes (75.3% were misdemeanors). Research has proven that adolescents' brains are not fully developed and continue developing in their 20's. This makes treating 16- and 17-year-olds as adults in the criminal justice system inappropriate and ineffective. FPWA recommends that New York ensure that youth involved in the criminal justice system are provided with court processes, services and placement options that are developmentally appropriate.

Develop an inventory of current afterschool programs operating throughout New York City

New York City is fortunate to have an array of high quality afterschool programs. In order to gain a complete picture and understanding of the afterschool system throughout New York City, FPWA recommends that the city conduct an inventory of all of the afterschool programs that exist. This record will serve as helpful information when planning for the needs and services of young people. It is recommended that the following information be obtained:

- Map the geographic locations of the programs
- Ascertain the enrollment in programs where there are open slots and areas where there are waiting lists for service
- Determine where initiatives are needed in the communities and which schools might not have programs so coverage can be provided at all schools that desire a program
- Label the programs that are provided by the Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), which will aid in the coordination and communication between departments

Recommendations on the Budget

Invest and Expand Afterschool Programs for New York City's Youth

As a steering committee member of the Campaign for Children, FPWA shares the vision of the campaign that every child in New York City deserves access to safe, high-quality, and affordable early childhood education and after-school programs. We are grateful that funds for afterschool programs in the amount of \$56.7 million for Out of School Time (OST) were baselined in the November 2013 Plan and that \$19.4 million was allocated for new Beacon cornerstone programs. This action gives the youth, as well as our member organizations, security in knowing the vital programs that they have relied on for so long will be preserved for future years. We are pleased that the current total allocation for OST is \$151.7 million.

FPWA embraces Mayor de Blasio's plan for \$190 million to provide quality afterschool programs for all middle school youth using the current OST model. This proposal is of great significance to FPWA in that we currently have 24 member agencies that provide afterschool services. It is critical that middle school students be given access to these supports so that they can make positive gains in their academic performance and benefit from diverse programs that enrich learning. FPWA recognizes and supports the provision of afterschool programs that include a holistic approach which foster social and emotional well-being, educational and academic achievements, and physical health and wellness. Afterschool programs provide a range of activities including assistance with school day lessons in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), literacy and the arts, homework help and tutoring, dance, martial arts and other sports.

Expand Beacon Program Funding

FPWA is very pleased that funding for Beacon programs in the amount of \$4.4 million was baselined in the November 2013 Plan. This is a step in the right direction for stability for Beacon programs, however program allocations have been eroded through the years and need to be increased to sustain the operation of these vital services. FPWA has learned that current allocations for these programs do not cover the total expenses needed to operate Beacons. For example, security fees are expensive and agencies have not received cost of living increases to run these services. FPWA recommends that the City Council allocate additional funds to Beacon Programs utilizing an inflationary rate.

Expand Cornerstone Programs by Reopening Closed Programs

FPWA is pleased that funding was allocated for 45 new Cornerstone Programs in the amount of \$19.4 million in the November 2013 Plan, however we recommend that the 24 programs in NYCHA facilities that were closed be reopened. In addition, we would like to expand the capacity of the existing Cornerstone Programs where possible. Cornerstone youth programs are designed to help participants acquire the skills and aptitudes they need to graduate from high school, attain success in their chosen career, and contribute to the community. Typical youth activities in cornerstone programs include sports, literacy and skill building tasks. Cornerstone adult programs are designed to enhance skills and promote social interaction, community engagement, and physical activity. Typical classes include adult basic education (ESOL and GED), and family relations related activities. Cornerstone programs are vital for our economically disadvantaged youth and their families.

Increase funding for Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Programs

FPWA is very pleased that \$7.2 million in funding for RHY services was baselined in the November 2013 Plan. Additionally, we applaud Mayor de Blasio for allocating an additional \$1.3 million for FY 2014 and \$2.4 million in FY 2015. This funding is critical to youth who have no other place to go and to the organizations that provide shelter and support services to them. This allocation supports drop-in and street outreach services, emergency shelter beds and transitional independent living beds for at-risk and LGBTQ runaway and homeless youth citywide. Street outreach workers provide youth with important information on where to go for service and transport them to safe environments. Drop-in centers provide youth and their families with counseling and referrals to

social workers. Due to the high poverty rates among youth, it is critical that supports be available for the runaway and homeless youth populations.

RHY programs are very cost effective. According to a report issued by New Avenues for Youth in Portland Oregon, for every \$1.00 invested in programs for runaway and homeless youth they saved on average \$4.12 in costs to the community¹. They reported their prevention and early intervention program actually saved \$5.04 for every dollar spent to run the program.

It is estimated that on any given night there are over 3,800 youth homeless in the city. One New York City shelter reports turning away 300 youth seeking shelter each month. Surveys of runaway and homeless youth contacted from three major homeless shelters and drop-in crisis centers reveal there may be as many as 32,000 young people on the street in any given year. According to the report published by the Independent Budget Office, there were only 113 crisis beds and 122 transitional independent living beds (TIL) available to New York City's homeless youth in 2009. We appreciate the Mayor's support of RHY by proposing increases throughout the next several years, the shortage of shelter beds and TIL beds urgently needs to be remedied. We recommend the increase of 100 shelter beds per year until every youth has a bed available on any given night. It is estimated this would necessitate an increase of \$3.5 million per year in additional federal, state and city funding. The \$3.5 million increase is on top of the additional allocation that has been proposed in the Mayor's Preliminary Budget. Since funds for RHY services have been depleted since the Great Recession by 63%, we need to build RHY services as much as we can to support our young people long-term. We ask the City Council to increase funding for RHY services.

Funding for Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

We strongly recommend that the City Council support funding for the SYEP so that 100,000 jobs can be provided to New York City youth this summer. For the summer of 2012, there was a total of \$43.1 million available for 29,416 jobs. For the summer of 2013, \$45.2 million in city, state and federal funds supported over 35,000 jobs. This represents an increase of 5,700 jobs for our youth over the summer of 2012. The increase in funding is due to additional private sector and Federal Community Services Block Grant funds. The summer of 2013 saw 135,388 New York City youth apply for a summer job. Sufficient funds need to be available so youth can have the same number

¹ New Avenues for Youth, The Economic Benefits of Helping Homeless Youth, Page 3, available at http://www.newavenues.org/files/NewAvenues_Cost_Benefit_Study.pdf

of jobs available than were provided in 2013. The Governor has proposed increasing the SYEP allocation from \$25 million to \$27.5 million for 2014-2015, but we remain concerned that due to the rise in the minimum wage, fewer jobs will be available to youth than for the summer of 2013. Additionally, we strongly believe that at least 100,000 jobs should be ultimately provided to meet the demand.

SYEP provides youth between the ages of 14 and 24 with summer employment and educational experiences that builds on their individual strengths and incorporates youth development principles. At a time when only 26% of the number of SYEP applicants are getting a placement into the program, we cannot afford to have the number of jobs available to our youth be reduced even further. With the number of applications submitted each year for the program, our goal is to increase the number of jobs substantially to begin to meet the demand for this program. It should also be noted that the wages that youth are earning are a boost to the economy as they are typically spending their earnings at local businesses within their neighborhoods.

We have the following success story to share concerning SYEP participants from one of FPWA's member agencies:

Mary was very reliable and hardworking this past summer at the Roads to Success Program located at PS 111. She had a perfect attendance rate and was never late at her job as a camp counselor. She loved working with children and had great passion for the work she performed on the Summer Youth Employment Program. Mary was offered a position as an after-school counselor for the spring semester.

This is Bob's first year working for the SYEP program. He was selected by the site supervisor to continue working part-time during the academic year. He will start working in the fall and will continue to be assisting in video production and camera work as he did over the summer for NYC Parks and Recreation Youth Made Media.

Employment opportunities such as those offered by SYEP are critical for youth. In particular, of the nearly 900,000 young adults 16 to 24 years of age in New York City, almost 25 percent live below the federal poverty line, compared to 19 percent of all New Yorkers regardless of age. It's clear that youth have been disproportionately impacted by the Great Recession. Since 2003, employment remained weak for young adults, even during the period of economic growth in the middle of the

decade. The recent recession saw unemployment among 16-24 years olds worsen further, from a rate of 15 percent in 2006 to 18 percent in 2012, which represents a worsening jobless rate for our young people. There are 173,000 disconnected youth throughout New York City who are neither in school nor working.² We urge a restoration and increase in funds for SYEP so that jobs are available to begin to meet the skyrocketing demand.

Support \$1.0 million for the Teen Relationship Abuse Prevention Program (RAPP)

This important program educates and counsels teens about domestic violence, bullying and all aspects of healthy teen relationships. We urge the City Council to restore \$1 million for this critical program for the FY2014 budget.

Fund Community Based Adult Literacy Programs at \$10.1 Million

In a city where 1.6 million out-of-school youth and adults 16 years of age and older do not have a high school diploma or GED, where 30 percent of high school students are dropping out, and where only 3 percent of the 1.23 million adults in the city who speak English "less than very well" are enrolled in English-language programs, an educated and skilled workforce is critical to sustain a thriving economy that can create jobs and generate the revenues needed to support New York City. For low income adults in New York, education is the key to securing employment, helping their children succeed in school, or acquiring the language skills to navigate daily life.

Since its recent peak in FY 10, annual allocations were reduced by almost 66% (\$6.5 million) from FY 2010 to FY 2014 representing a loss of close to 7,000 classroom seats for Adult Basic Education (ABE), High School Equivalency (HSE), English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL), and Basic Education in Native Language (BENL) programs. Over the last four years, the city's investment in DYCD's Adult Literacy programs has fallen to just \$1 million in FY 2013, which was restored by the City Council for one year. In FY 2013-2014, the City Council allocated \$1 million to partially restore the Adult Literacy Services. This funding restoration enabled 11 adult literacy programs to provide basic literacy, ESOL and GED classes for adults. In addition, the City Council allocated \$1.5 million to its Adult Literacy Services Initiative to create additional basic literacy, ESOL and GED classes for adults.

² Treschan, Lazar, et al, *Missed Opportunity: How New York City Can Do a Better Job of Reconnecting Youth on Public Assistance to Education and Jobs*, The Community Service Society Reports, June 2011, page 5.
http://b3cdn.net/nycss/f763229f781980fb6a_5fm6y1dps.pdf

Literacy program participants are hard-working contributors to New York City's economy: 72 percent of literacy students are working full- or part-time. Literacy services are keeping them in their jobs, helping them advance, and enabling them to contribute to our economy and tax base. New York City cannot afford to make cuts to adult literacy. As a direct result of these literacy programs, over 1,000 individuals obtained jobs last year. These jobs bring significant production and tax revenue to fuel New York's economy, and savings on public benefits.

In New York City, there are 1.3 million New Yorkers who lack either an HSE, English proficiency, or both. We urge City leaders to reverse recent trends and increase investment to \$10.1 million in FY 2015. This supports an array of programs at a level of \$1,200 per slot to support quality instruction and holistic supports. The City's investment in adult education should grow by 50% each year to begin to meet the need and demand for services.

Conclusion

We thank the City Council for the opportunity to testify. We hope that you will strongly consider our budget and policy priorities for FY 2014-2015 during this year's budget negotiation process.



Testimony of

Moira Flavin
Policy Associate for
Early Childhood Education,
Education and Youth Services

Before the
New York City Council
Finance, Youth Services and Community Development Committees

Regarding the
New York City
Fiscal Year 2015 Preliminary Budget

March 10, 2014

Good afternoon. My name is Moira Flavin, and I am the Policy Associate for Early Education, Education and Youth Services at Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc. (CCC). CCC is a 70-year old independent child advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that every New York child is healthy, housed, educated and safe.

I would like to thank Chairs Ferreras, Eugene and Arroyo, and the members of the Finance Committee, Youth Services Committee, and the Committee on Community Development, for holding today's hearing on the impact of the FY15 Preliminary Budget on Youth Services.

CCC is pleased to testify before the City Council at this exciting time for youth services in New York City. After years of advocating for the restoration of the same funding and slots for youth services year after year, we are now here to talk about how we can strengthen and expand New York City's youth services system.

We are extremely grateful that millions of dollars for youth services, including runaway and homeless youth services (RHY), Out-of-School Time (OST) after-school programs, Beacon programs, and Cornerstone programs, have been baselined.¹ Mayor de Blasio has also declared the budget dance to be over and this Preliminary Budget takes some steps to begin the expansion of youth services. We are looking forward to working with the new Administration, the new Youth Services Chair and the entire City Council to build on our current youth services system so that we can provide high-quality programming and support to many more young people. This is indeed an exciting time for youth services in New York City.

After-School Programs

New York City's after-school programming includes a mix of academic supports, sports, youth development, and recreation. After-school programs keep elementary, middle and high school students engaged in a wide array of enriching and positive activities during after-school, holiday and summer hours.

Youth are at greatest risk for delinquency between the hours of 3-6pm² and every \$1 invested in youth services saves \$3 in savings for participants and taxpayers.³ After-school programs enable parents to work while their children are both safe and receiving stimulating, nurturing and developmentally appropriate care. These programs have clearly demonstrated their benefits for children, families, and communities.

¹In November 2013, just before he left office, Mayor Bloomberg baselined over \$65 million in funds for youth services, which includes funds for Out-of-School Time (OST), Beacons, Cornerstone programs, and runaway and homeless youth (RHY) services.

² Fight Crime Invest in Kids. *New York City's Out-of-School Time Choice: The Prime Time for Crime or Youth Enrichment and Achievement*, 2008. Available online: <http://www.fightcrime.org/reports/NYCAS2pager.pdf>

³Lattimore, C. B., Mihalic, S. F., Grotspeter, J. K., & Taggart, R. (1998); "The Quantum Opportunities Program"; In D.S. Elliot (Series Ed.), *Blueprints for violence prevention: Book four*; Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

CCC, along with our colleagues in the Campaign for Children, have created a transition plan for the City premised on the belief that every New York City child should have access to high-quality, affordable early childhood education and after-school programs.

The City's plan to provide full day universal pre-kindergarten (UPK) to every four-year old and after-school to every middle school student is a large step towards achieving this vision. We look forward to working with the new Administration and the City Council to make this plan a reality.

As you know, a key component to making the City's plan come to fruition is ensuring the City has dedicated, sustainable funding for the expansion. Mayor de Blasio's proposal to implement a modest, temporary personal income tax on the wealthiest New York City residents ensures that the City has the dedicated and stable funding it needs. Specifically, Mayor de Blasio is calling for a five-year increase in the NYC income tax on earners over \$500,000 from 3.876% to 4.41% - which would raise approximately \$530 million. The UPK expansion would cost \$340 million and the after-school expansion would cost \$190 million.

The \$190 million investment in after-school programs for middle school students will allow New York City to offer after-school programs in the 273 district middle schools currently without any programming, as well as to implement services in eligible charter schools⁴ and community settings, such as libraries. This will result in after-school services for an additional 62,791 middle school students starting in September 2014.⁵ Funding will also be set aside to enhance existing programs by increasing their hours of operation, thereby allowing more students to participate in after-school activity more days during the week.

Recently, the Mayor's Office, in conjunction with the Department of Youth and Community Development, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Office of Management and Budget, released a white paper, *After-School Programs for Middle School Students*, outlining the model for the after-school program expansion. Built on the research that shows quality after-school and expanded learning opportunities can teach middle school students important social and emotional skills, and improve academic outcomes and overall school engagement, the new model will:

- Increase the price per participant to \$3000,⁶ which will strengthen the services provided by enabling programs to:
 - hire certified teachers to serve as educational specialists.
 - hire more experienced activity specialists.
 - increase the number of hours of programming to 540 (from 413 currently), 324 of which will be structured activities while 216 hours will be unstructured activities.
- Promote partnership with the host school by requiring an in-kind contribution to the program.
- Target students who are struggling academically.

⁴ According to the *After-School Programs for Middle School Students* white paper, charter schools would be eligible if their school day ends at 3pm and they lack a comprehensive after-school program.

⁵ *After-School Programs for Middle School Students*. March 2014. Available at <http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/afterschool0303.pdf>

⁶ OST, the largest after-school program in NYC, currently pays \$2100 per middle school participant.

- Include enrichment activities, leadership development, academic support, and physical and healthy living.
- Focus on family engagement.⁷

In addition to the new after-school programming due to come online this fall as a result of the City's plan, the City currently provides after-school programs to nearly 150,000 elementary, middle and high school students in OST, Beacons and Cornerstone programs.⁸

While millions of dollars has been baselined into DYCD's budget for OST, Beacons and Cornerstone, it remains unclear to us how the baselined funds will continue to be used to ensure capacity, quality and continuity of the after-school programs currently serving children. Notably, all of the contracts for programs previously funded by the City Council end on June 30, 2014. This includes funds for 36,533 OST slots and 7 Beacon programs. In addition, the OST programs funded by the City Council (that are now baselined) are receiving a lower rate than DYCD's other OST programs. Furthermore, approximately 45 NYCHA Cornerstone programs are still funded with one-year funding.

As we prepare for the upcoming Executive Budget, CCC makes the following recommendations with regard to after-school programs.

Recommendations:

- A) Develop a procurement process that gives priority to current quality programs, ensures the OST slots, 7 Beacon programs, Beacon slots and Cornerstone slots become part of the systems administered by the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), and prevents any system disruption.**

Specifically, CCC and our colleagues in the Campaign for Children suggest there be a short-term procurement process to extend current contracts for one year (at a higher rate) and then a longer-term contracting process the following year so the programs are on the same cycle as those programs funded by DYCD.

- B) Protect and baseline funding previously in the budget for one year (OST and Cornerstone).**

In FY13, 65,957 young people were enrolled in the Out-of-School-Time program.⁹ This figure represented an 11% increase as compared to the prior year,¹⁰ due to a one-time investment of \$7 million in Department of Education funds for OST. CCC is hopeful that the Administration and

⁷*After-School Programs for Middle School Students*. March 2014. Available at <http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/afterschool0303.pdf>

⁸According to the FY14 Mayor's Management report 59,730 children were enrolled in OST (July to October 2013). In addition, approximately 64,000 children are served in Beacons and approximately 15,000 in Cornerstone programs.

⁹Preliminary Fiscal 14 Mayor's Management Report. Department of Youth and Community Development. February 2014. <http://www.nyc.gov/html/ops/downloads/pdf/pmmr2014/dycd.pdf>

¹⁰Ibid.

the City Council will work together to ensure the \$7 million for OST programs is included in the FY15 Executive Budget.

When DYCD began the NYCHA Cornerstone programs in 2010, they opened in 25 NYCHA community centers citywide. In FY13, funding supported services for 5,852 participants at the 25 sites, with many programs serving more than their contracted capacity.¹¹ The FY14 budget included \$19.4 million for DYCD to expand NYCHA Cornerstone to 45 additional community centers, for a total of 70 Cornerstone programs citywide. However, the \$19.4 million included in the November Plan and now in the Preliminary Budget was only a one year commitment and is not carried forward in the outyears.

Finally, there are several City Council initiatives for after-school programs that have not yet been baselined. This includes \$3.00 million for TASC, \$350,000 for the YMCA, \$1 million for Sports and Arts Foundation, \$800,000 for the New York Junior Tennis League and \$350,000 for Big Brothers Big Sisters.

CCC will be urging the Administration to baseline the one-year funds for OST, Cornerstone and the other City Council-funded after-school programs. We respectfully request that the City Council also urge the Administration to do this in the Executive Budget.

C) Ensure funding for summer programming.

The summer programs offered through after-school programs are critical to keeping young people engaged and safe while school is not in session and while parents work. Furthermore, enrichment activities play an important role in preventing summer learning loss.¹²

With so many contracts due to expire in June 2014 and the City's new after-school programs due to begin in September, CCC will be urging the Administration to ensure that there is sufficient funding for this summer and for future summer programs added to the Executive Budget and we hope the City Council will also be making this request.

D) Identify new funding sources to expand after-school programs for elementary and high school students and increase funding for Beacon programs.

The City's plan for universal pre-k and expanded after-school does not address the need for after-school programming in elementary school or high school. There is a great need for after-school programs for youth of all ages, and it is critical that these programs also be expanded.

Furthermore, the 80 Beacons in New York City, 14 of which are federally funded, while 66 are funded with City tax levy, have experienced several rounds of cuts in the past several years. Each Beacon has an operating budget of approximately \$350,000, and that budget has not increased since the program's inception in 1991. CCC urges the Administration and the City Council to work together to increase overall funding to Beacons and restore the program to FY10 funding levels of \$58 million.

¹¹ Email communication with DYCD, October 3, 2013.

Summer Youth Employment

SYEP is a win-win for youth, their families, communities and the NYC economy. SYEP is an invaluable program that provides youth ages 14-24 with a six-week summer work experience, training, income and lessons in financial literacy. The program provides a youth with up to six-weeks of paid employment, as well as an educational component. Wages earned help to supplement family income, youth learn about budgeting and saving, and much of the earned income is spent in the local economy.

The summer of 2013 marked the implementation of DYCD's new SYEP contracts, which now include 4 program models: younger youth (ages 14-15); older youth (ages 16-24); vulnerable youth (ages 14-24) and Ladders for Leaders (age 16-24). The model for younger youth includes more educational opportunities, a 20- hour work week and work experiences that are service learning and community service projects. The models for older youth and vulnerable youth include a 25 -hour workweek. The model for older youth includes an orientation focused on work readiness and financial literacy and more diverse work experiences in nonprofit, public and private sectors. The model for vulnerable youth is for runaway and homeless youth, justice-involved youth and youth involved with ACS in either foster care or preventive services. Finally, Ladders for Leaders requires 30 hours of pre-employment training prior to interviews and participants are selected through a competitive application process. Those chosen receive a professional employer-paid internship. Salaries ranged from \$7.25-\$24 per hour.

An important part of the SYEP program is the educational component, which is comprised of a formal orientation, weekly 5-hour workshops for younger youth, and the ability to learn how to manage money. SYEP offers youth training in work readiness, time management, and job search skills, as well as financial literacy.

Given these benefits it is not surprising that historically the SYEP program always receives many more applications than job opportunities available. This past summer 135,388 youth submitted applications and only 35,947 youth were able to enroll (27%). This trend is typical, with annual applications ranging from the 120,000-140,000 and participation ranging from 28,000-50,000.

It is important to note that DYCD will not be able to serve the same number of youth this summer without a funding increase because of the increase in the minimum wage in New York. Last summer, the minimum wage was \$7.25 an hour. This January, New York's minimum wage increased to \$8.00 an hour, and it is scheduled to increase again in 2015 and 2016 (up to \$9 in 2016.)

It is critical to adjust the funding levels for SYEP whenever the minimum wage is increased. Currently, the State Executive Budget is proposing to raise its statewide support from \$25 million to \$27.5 million in an attempt to accommodate the increase in the minimum wage. We estimate that \$35 million is needed from the State to address the full impact of the increased minimum wage and for SYEP to serve the same number of youth. We are advocating for these funds as part of the State Budget process and urge the City to do so as well. Similarly, to serve the same number of children, the City will need to adjust its share.

Recommendations:

- A) Ensure at least the same number of youth can be served annually by indexing SYEP to the minimum wage and begin to implement a 5 year plan to expand SYEP to serve 100,000 youth annually.**

The invaluable benefits of the SYEP program make it clear that the City needs a five-year plan to ensure that interested youth can participate in the program. With over 125,000 youth typically applying, a program that can reach 100,000 youth seems like an appropriate target.

To reach that goal, CCC is asking the Administration and the City Council to work together to increase the number of youth served this summer to 39,600, which represents a 10% increase from last year. The State Executive Budget has proposed adding \$2.5 million, which only covers the cost of the increased minimum wage (to \$8.00) for State-funded SYEP slots. While we have advocated for additional State funds to cover the minimum wage increase, if there is no additional SYEP funding from the State, this would require the City to add \$13 million to both fully account for the the minimum wage increase and expand the system by 10%.

- B) Restore the number of weeks youth work back to seven**

SYEP plays a critical role in engaging youth in positive experiences during the summer months and providing families with supplemental income. This is especially important given the fact that one in five New Yorkers lives in poverty.¹³ Unfortunately, beginning in the summer of 2013, the duration of the Summer Youth Employment program was reduced from 7 weeks to 6 weeks. Therefore, all youth were engaged in positive programming for a shorter amount of time and earned less in wages as compared to previous summers. The shorter duration proved especially challenging for summer camps, many of which use SYEP youth as staff.

Furthermore, the new service options prescribed different hours for different age groups. Younger youth (ages 14-15) were only paid for 20 hours instead of 25 in previous years. As a result, younger youth earned only \$870 in 2013 (20 hours per week for 6 weeks at \$7.25 per hour), as compared to a total income of approximately \$1268.75 (25 hours a week for 7 weeks) in the summer of 2012.

CCC urges the new Administration and the City Council to reconsider this recent change to SYEP and restore the program to seven weeks. This would mean paying all participating youth for at least 25 hours a week, including educational activities. To do this would increase the cost of SYEP, including the cost of addressing the minimum wage increase and the proposed expansion.

Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY)

¹³Citizens' Committee for Children of New York. Keeping Track Online. www.data.cccnewyork.org.

There are an estimated 3,800 runaway and homeless youth in New York City.¹⁴ These youth, many of whom have been abused, sexually exploited, and/or in contact with the juvenile justice or criminal justice systems, are critically in need of the broad continuum of essential services for runaway and homeless youth provided by DYCD. On January 28, 2013, there was a Youth Count conducted that included a survey of the 182 youth that visited drop-in centers or supportive housing residences that evening. Notably, the survey found the youth had been homeless for an average of 927 days—or 2 ½ years.¹⁵

Despite the need for services, the City currently only has 253 emergency shelter and transitional living beds. Since 2006, over half of the system was actually funded with one-year City Council discretionary funding. As was discussed in relation to after school programming, this money was baselined in November, which is a tremendous benefit to the system, but the contracts for the Council-funded beds end on June 30, 2014. CCC remains concerned about how these services and providers, who have a long history of working with the City's runaway and homeless youth, will be incorporated into the system.

In addition to the baselined funding for RHY, CCC was pleased to see that the CFY15 Preliminary Budget included \$2.4 million for 79 new shelter beds for runaway and homeless youth.

Recommendations:

- A) Develop a procurement process that gives priority to current quality programs and providers serving Runaway and Homeless Youth, and prevents any service disruption.**
- B) Expand and strengthen the City's RHY system by continuing to increase the number of shelter beds available, as well as the services RHY need.**

Opportunity Youth¹⁶

Currently, 1 in 5 young adults in New York City, approximately 186,000 youth between the ages of 17 and 24, are not in school or working.¹⁷ Young people who are not in school or working face particularly difficult paths ahead in terms of future education and employment.¹⁸ As a City, we must invest in these young people to help them reconnect to educational and employment opportunities so they are equipped with the skills they need to compete in the fast-changing labor

¹⁴Freeman, Lance, Darrick Hamilton. Count of Homeless Youth in New York City. Empire State Coalition of Youth and Family Services, 2008. Available at: www.citylimits.org/images_pdfs/pdfs/HomelessYouth.pdf

¹⁵New York City Continuum of Care, *A Count of Unaccompanied Homeless Youths in New York City*. 2013. http://www.nyhomeless.com/downloads/pdf/2013_NYC_Homeless_Youth_Report.pdf

¹⁶“Opportunity Youth” are also referred to as “disconnected youth,” but the term “opportunity youth” better illustrates the economic and educational potential of these youth.

¹⁷Community Service Society. “Barriers to Entry: The Increasing Challenges Faced by Young Adults in the New York City Labor Market.” May 2013. http://fiscalspolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/JFNYC_Barriers_to_Entry_5-2-13.pdf

¹⁸Connecting the Disconnected: Improving Education and Employment Outcomes Among Disadvantaged Youth. April 2013. <http://ftp.iza.org/pp56.pdf>

market. As a supporter of the New York Opportunity Youth Agenda,¹⁹ CCC respectfully submits the following recommendations for the City to better serve these youth

Recommendations:

A) Develop a new City Council initiative aimed at Opportunity Youth in high need communities.

Of the 186,000 opportunity youth in New York City, 56% live in just 20 community districts.²⁰ The Council should invest in a new \$10 million Youth Opportunity! (YO!) Initiative aimed at young people in these 20 communities. Programs seeking funding could be based in any area of New York City, but at least 50% of participants across the initiative would come from a target community. The initiative could support both comprehensive education and training programs and internships and job placement.

B) Enact Legislation to ensure that young people who do not finish high school have options.

We recommend the City Council work with the new NYC DOE leadership and the NYS Education Department to develop legislation to enact a system to retain information on, track, and repeatedly offer opportunities for young people who have left high school to return to education or enroll in a community-based program.

Conclusion

In conclusion, CCC is committed to working with the Administration, the City Council, and the other advocates and providers to protect and expand after-school programs, SYEP, and services for runaway and homeless youth and opportunity youth. Thankfully, we are no longer asking to restore the same funds, but can finally talk about expanding these important services to ensure that every child in New York City has access to a quality after-school program and children at higher risk receive the critical services they need. These investments are cost-effective, produce good outcomes for children and youth, and ensure that the City can avoid the fiscal burden of more costly interventions in the short and long term.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

¹⁹ See <http://www.nyoppityouth.org/>.

²⁰ Ibid.



The Reach of our Model and Effect on Policy – New York City, National and International

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol (BHSS) was founded in 1995 and provides holistic and long-term support services to youth who range in age from 8 to 22. We offer wrap around evidence-based programming such as four-six year rites of passage programming, thorough five day a week after school care, school and home counseling, summer camps, job training, college preparation, employment opportunities, community organizing training, and month long international study programs to Africa and Latin America.

BHSS is locally based with a national reach as we publish assorted curricula and collections of our members' writings; train educators from throughout the nation on our approach; and advise on educational policy across the country and New York City. We have earned national recognition for our evidence based model, receiving an array of awards, including from *Oprah Winfrey*, *Ford Foundation*, *New York Women's Foundation*, *RUSH Philanthropic Arts Foundation*, *Abyssinian Development Corporation*, *Fund for the City of New York*, the *New York State Department of Education*, and *Brown University*.

BHSS is an evidence-based program that has documented outcomes that far surpass City numbers:

- Harlem's teenaged pregnancy rate is 15 % - our members have a rate of less than 2%; our educational achievement numbers far surpass those of NYC as well.
- In the City of New York the general high school graduation rate is 61%; where as 88% of our alumni have graduated from high school, 94% either graduated from high school or earned their Graduate Equivalency Degree
- In Harlem 30% of youth, ages 18-25, are working full time or in college; where as 95% of BHSS youth are working full time or enrolled in college.
- One out of three Black men in American, ages 20-29 are under supervision of the prison system – in prison, on probation or on parole. After 19 years no member or alumni of BHSS is incarcerated and less than 1% are on probation.

Of BHSS work, Oprah Winfrey said when presenting the founders with the Angel Network Award and featuring us on her show:

"Khary and Jason are using their passion to uplift and inspire a next generation through extraordinary work that creates leaders and a sanctuary for children where they can develop a higher vision for themselves."

BHSS has a wide reach throughout New York City and the United States and its model is seen as a leading example for the field –

- Executive Director Khary Lazarre-White was appointed by former Mayor Michael Bloomberg to the Board of Advisors of the Young Men's Initiative, the \$140 million public/private partnership that seeks to provide interventions to support young men at risk in NYC.
- Khary Lazarre-White serves on the National Board of Advisors for Susan L. Taylor on her National Cares Mentoring Movement, and serves on the Board of Advisors for the Heinz Endowments on their Pittsburgh citywide African American Male Initiative and two alumni of BHSS have worked in

Pittsburgh for the last two years on the effort.

- BHSS advised on the New York City Council Task Force to Combat Gun Violence that resulted in a 5.4 million effort in four of the highest crime neighborhoods in New York City – Harlem, the South Bronx, Jamaica, and Central Brooklyn.
- In addition to his participation in three White House convenings – one on responding to the drop out crisis in American High Schools; a second for leading nonprofits and organizers in the State of New York; and a third focused on the educational achievement of Latino males – Khary Lazarre-White was also invited to the announcement of the “My Brother’s Keeper” Initiative at the White House in February 2014 .
- BHSS has been selected by the New York City Department of Education as one of four professional development providers to the 40 high schools selected as a part of the Young Men’s Initiative’s Expanded Success Initiative.
- BHSS received support from the Open Society Institute to train their grantees in New Orleans, Milwaukee, Jackson (MS) and Chicago. BHSS has trained representatives from nearly 200 schools and community based organizations across the country.

BHSS model is seen as one of the leading youth development models in the country.

BHSS is not simply based in NYC and the US, but has a deep and extensive international reach as well. BHSS has held a youth International Study Program since 1996. We spend 6 months teaching our young people about the culture, politics and history of a nation, and then our youth spend one month in the country. We have taken young people to Brazil, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ghana, Haiti, Mexico, Morocco, Puerto Rico, and South Africa. BHSS has also had its approach modeled and done extensive training of youth workers in Brazil and Bermuda. In fact Bermuda is using BHSS' approach to respond to an explosion of violence on the island and one of our alumni was hired to guide for the programming for five years.

BHSS partners with the United States Department of State in two ways: **1)** the State Department has sent representatives from Brazil and Argentina to BHSS to be trained on our approach and learn more about our model and **2)** is also funding BHSS to engage in an intensive two-year youth media exchange between youth journalists from BHSS and leading youth bloggers in Rio, Brazil. Finally, through assorted foundation contacts BHSS has trained youth development and education workers from Australia, Ireland, Argentina, Brazil, and South Africa in the areas of conflict resolution, youth development and youth organizing.

NYC, Youth Development & Service Providers

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol is pleased with Mayor Bill DeBlasio’s commitment to prepare every student for success with his focus on universal pre-K and the expansion of after school programming for middle school students.

The current New York City RFP system often advantages large non-profits while not giving emphasis to smaller, innovative CBOs that may not match minimum threshold requirements and yet can provide equal or better client outcomes. Problems regarding the RFP system are related to: scale or numbers of clients served, a cumbersome and tedious application processes, complicated reporting systems, and untenable delays of actual grant funding that smaller CBOs simply cannot carry.

We recommend the following:

- Any new health or human services RFP have a portion of the new or re-bid funding (10%) “carved out” for a separate competitive process for small non-profits. This category can be defined as “Seeding Innovation” for example.

- The City can define the size of the acceptable applicants for Seeding Innovation such as, any non-profit that receives less than \$500,000, or less than \$1 million in New York City funding.
- The RFP could perhaps be streamlined for this category, so that requirements regarding scale, or past experience are more flexible.
- Funding for “Seeding Innovation” grants should be fast-forwarded and guaranteed within a 90-day time frame of contract signing, so CBOs that compete for the grant dollars do not have to rely on other funding sources to start the program.

Request to the City Council to Support Our Summer Programs

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol is requesting \$250,000 from the City Council to support our summer programs. As we serve 350 youth annually, we spend approximately \$800 per child during the summer.

Our 2014 summer programs and activities include:

- *Youth Farmers Market* – we will kick-off our 2nd annual 20-week youth-led farmers market in Hamilton Heights; residents are able to use their WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons to purchase fresh produce for local farmers at our market
- *Social Justice, Civic Engagement & Urban Farming* – members will participate in an 4-week intensive community organizing and civic engagement training program; another cohort of members will participate in training and hands-on skill development in environmental justice, urban farming and landscaping in the three-lot community garden we steward
- *College & Workforce Development* – members will participate in a series of workshops to support high school graduates' transition to college which includes providing a swag bag of school supplies; to support high school juniors in their college application process; and our current and alumni members will receive workforce development training
- *Summer Youth Employment Program/SYEP* – BHSS is a work site for youth selected for summer jobs through SYEP; in summer 2013, our SYEP participants created a “tumblr” page to document their experience and to develop their skills as journalists, <http://brosissyep.tumblr.com/>
- *Summer Day Camp for elementary members* – Using the five boroughs as their playground, our members explore museums, parks and cultural sites, and take swimming and tennis lessons; during the 6-week camp, they also participate in a 5-day overnight camping experience
- *Summer Day Camp for teen members* – Our members participate in a 4-week adventure that includes the arts, career exploration, leadership development, and visits to various colleges and universities and cultural sites such as the African Burial Ground and El Museo del Barrio
- *International Study Program to Ghana* – after a 6-month course to learn about the history, culture, environment, politics, and economy of Ghana, a group of our members will study abroad for 4 weeks in the country; members will return to create an exhibit to reflection their experiences in Ghana

Additionally, during the summer we continue to provide critical support and guidance to our recent alumni, ages 19 to 22. They seek our guidance as they secure internships and employment, take summer college courses or do both. More and more often, we are providing scholarships for members to bridge the gaps their loans, work study and grants do not cover. We contribute to clear balances that may prevent them from registering for the fall semester, pay for fall semester books and registration fees.

With the support of the City Council, we can provide a safe space full of resources and love for our members to have a memorable and fruitful summer. Thank you for your consideration.

Testimony for Youth Committee Meeting
of the
New York City Council
March 10, 2014

From
VISIONS/Services for the Blind
and Visually Impaired

Promoting the independence of people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired

visions VACATION CAMP FOR THE BLIND (VCB) | visions AT SELIS MANOR | visions REHABILITATION SERVICES

Testimony of VISIONS/Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

New York City Council Committee on Youth and Community Development

March 10, 2014

On behalf of over 17,000 youth in New York City who are blind or visually impaired, VISIONS presents the following issues for consideration by the Committee of Youth and Community Development as it develops budget priorities for FY 2015.

VISIONS is the only organization in New York City to provide Out-of-School Time after-school programming for high school students who are blind or visually impaired.

VISIONS previously received funding through DYCD for OST programs for high school youth. While OST funding has been expanded for elementary and middle schools, high school students have been left out. There is a high need for after-school programming for this class of students. There are approximately 7,000 high school students with visual impairment, but no City funded OST after-school programs for high school students. Funding support would help provide

writing skills, computer technology skills, leadership skills, pre-vocational services, and nutrition counseling and health snacks to encourage students to prepare for academic and professional success. High school OST funding needs to be restored.

VISIONS also encourages the City Council to provide resources to city agencies, especially those that work with youth including the Department of Youth and Community Development, the Department of Education, the Administration for Children's Services and others, to develop disability training programs. All staff that do or should interact with youth with disabilities including those who are blind or visually impaired should be trained on disability etiquette. Statistics show that the number of youth attending schools with multiple disabilities including blindness is escalating rapidly. Staff working with youth facing multiple disabilities requires training to help address the unique needs of these youth. Funding should be provided to establish disability-training programs in all city agencies. Involving the Mayors Office for People with Disabilities and private nonprofit agencies would raise the competency of city and school employees in working with youth with disabilities.

VISIONS provides work experience training for

blind youth with supervised internships throughout New York City. Over 104 blind youth and adults completed internships last year arranged through VISIONS. Visually impaired youth make great workplace candidates, but the present lottery system for selecting youth eligible for SYEP funding makes it unlikely that youth who are blind are chosen since they are in the same pool as all other applicants. Either a separate lottery with slots equal to the ratio of blind to all students should be developed, or a sufficient number of slots from the overall pool of candidates should be dedicated to blind youth and other youth with disabilities.

These recommendations will help close some of the gaps in services that would enable blind and disabled youth to pursue their dreams just as sighted kids do.

For additional information, please contact Nancy D. Miller, LMSW, Executive Director/CEO at VISIONS, 212-625-1616 ext. 117 or at nmiller@visionsvcb.org.

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visions

services for the blind and visually impaired

Promoting the Independence of People of All Ages Who are Blind or Visually Impaired

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Incorporated as a 501(c)3 charity in 1926

VISIONS at Selis Manor is a center for counseling, classes, computer training, vision rehabilitation and volunteer programs located at 135 West 23rd Street NY, NY, for youth, adult and senior tenants and community users who are blind or visually impaired.

VISIONS Center on Blindness (VCB) is a 35 acre, year-round residential vision rehabilitation and training center located in Rockland County, NY, serving people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired and their families.

Individual and Group Vision Rehabilitation Training is offered for people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired leading to independent living at school, home, work, and in the community.

Services for Blind Elders are offered at VISIONS at Selis Manor, collaborating senior centers, at VCB, and on a time limited basis in the senior's home (vision rehab services). VISIONS at Selis Manor offers programs for blind elders including; **VISIONS Center on Aging**, an innovative senior center. A distinct project for **caregivers** provides support, information and respite services at VCB.

Youth and Adult Workforce Programs provide work experiences, vocational training and placement in jobs.

A **Youth and Vision Loss Coalition** improves the education, rehabilitation, and transition of youth with support for parents.

Intergenerational & Adult Volunteer Programs serve individuals at home, at VISIONS at Selis Manor and in the community.

Blindline® (212-625-3301) is a New York State information and referral service for vision related products, programs, and services, and call center that provides vocational training for interns.

Community Advisory Boards sponsor **Public Education Seminars, Outreach Activities, and Special Events.**

CIL Publications are audio books for blind people and lesson plans used by Vision Rehabilitation Therapists and Orientation and Mobility Specialists.

VISIONS multicultural and multilingual staff serves nearly 6,000 individuals annually in the New York Metropolitan Area. Services are free of charge for VISIONS clients who are primarily low income.

VISIONS is supported through a variety of sources including individual, corporations, foundations, government contracts, Borough Presidents, NYC Council Members, and New York State legislators.

Donations to VISIONS are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. A copy of VISIONS annual report and financial statement is available by writing VISIONS or NYS Dept. of Law - Charities Bureau, 3rd floor, 120 Broadway, NY, NY 10271.

VISIONS/Services for the Blind & Visually Impaired meets all of the BBB Wise Giving Standards and is an accredited charity and member of the BBB seal program for Charity Accountability.





VISIONS Through The Years Celebrating 87 Years of Service

In the early 1920s six women formed an organization devoted to serving New Yorkers who were blind. They saw needs of people that had been overlooked, such as the need for a place with specially designed accommodations and services. The organization, called Vacation Camp, started on March 5, 1923 with sixty-two charter members. The women rented a cottage in Rye, New York. By the second summer, VCB hosted 150 blind and partially sighted guests over a ten-week season. VCB pioneered racially integrated groups. On June 15, 1926, Vacation Camp and Dormitory for the Blind was incorporated. An estate in Rye was purchased, and a residence for 13 blind working men was established on 120th Street in Manhattan.

In 1951, a thirty-five acre facility in the Village of New Hempstead, New York, was purchased, offering year-round services. Local Lions Clubs adopted VCB offering volunteer and financial support.

In 1964, VISIONS introduced the first group of seniors with vision loss to a senior center in their own neighborhood. Today, we provide outreach, information services, and counseling to help older individuals integrate into community life, and serve as a liaison with over 150 centers and sites throughout New York City.

In 1972, CIL (Center for Independent Living) rehabilitation services began as the only program at the time providing comprehensive individualized services for older people who are blind. CIL and VCB merged in 1984. Today, consumers receive training at home, at work, at school, at VISIONS at Greenwich Street and VISIONS at Selis Manor. In 1993, VISIONS rehabilitation department received the Program of Distinction Award from the National Rehabilitation Association, New York Metropolitan Chapter.

In 1997, VISIONS Intergenerational Program won the Youth Serving Elders Award from NYSIGN, the New York State Intergenerational Network.

In 2001, VISIONS at Selis Manor inaugurated its new rehabilitation, vocational and social programs to serve tenants of Selis Manor and community residents of all five boroughs who are blind or visually impaired.

In 2004, VISIONS received a Best Practices Award from the Council of Senior Centers and Services of New York City for its senior center training and integration of seniors who are blind into center activities. VISIONS was named Outstanding Employer by the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP), an inaugural national recognition award.

In 2005, VISIONS created Blindline® a vocational training program and call center to enable people to locate resources and services for people who are blind or visually impaired.

In 2006, VISIONS received the New York State Coalition on Aging Intergenerational Program Award.

In 2007, VISIONS created an Employment and Training Center at VISIONS at Selis Manor. VISIONS was chosen by CONTRIBUTE Magazine as the #2 charity in the Health and Medical category.

In 2008, VISIONS won a SNAPPLE award for Intergenerational Volunteer Services and first prize in the FECS Haym Salomon Juried Arts Competition. VISIONS expanded the Employment Center at VISIONS at Selis Manor renaming it Workforce Development and Training.

In 2009, VISIONS changed the name of VCB from Vacation Camp for the Blind to VISIONS Center on Blindness to reflect the changed mission of the facility.

In 2010, VISIONS added a separate program for caregivers of blind seniors offering information support and respite services. VISIONS was honored by the NYS Division of Human Rights for its programs and advocacy. VISIONS was chosen as one of the Great Disability Nonprofits.

In 2012, VISIONS Center on Aging, a new center for blind seniors opened its doors Monday through Friday offering a hot dinner meal and adapted programs. It also serves as a training site for staff from the aging network.

In 2013 VISIONS created a Youth and Vision Loss Coalition.



Testimony of

Michael Polenberg, Vice President
Government Affairs

Safe Horizon, Inc.

On the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2015 Preliminary Budget

Youth Services Committee
Hon. Mathieu Eugene, Chair

New York City Council

March 10, 2014

Thank you, Chairman Eugene and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to testify before you today on the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2014 Preliminary Budget. My name is Michael Polenber, and I am the Vice President for Government Affairs for Safe Horizon, the nation's leading victim assistance organization and New York City's largest provider of services to victims of crime and abuse, their families and communities. Safe Horizon creates hope and opportunities for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers each year whose lives are touched by violence.

The City Council has long been a key supporter of our programs helping adult and child victims of abuse, neglect and homelessness. City Council funding fills in gaps where no other financial support exists, and allows us to draw down critical dollars from other sources. And it demonstrates the value that you and your colleagues place in helping victims of crime access desperately-needed shelter, services, legal assistance and counseling.

After years of advocacy to restore desperately-needed City Council RHY funding each Spring, we were pleased when this funding was baselined last December and included in the Mayor's preliminary budget proposal in January. We were doubly pleased when the Mayor's FY15 Preliminary Budget included funding for additional shelter beds for homeless youth, a trend we hope will continue in future years. While we don't yet know how DYCD will allocate the baselined City Council funding, we wanted to take this opportunity to tell you a little about our Streetwork Project, the life-sustaining work that we provide to homeless and at-risk youth, and to let you know how prior City Council funding helped sustain this important work.

Safe Horizon's Streetwork Project

Safe Horizon's Streetwork Project, founded in 1984, includes three main components – citywide overnight street outreach, two drop-in centers and a 24-bed overnight shelter. The program is committed to reaching out to homeless and disenfranchised youth of New York City, offering them respite from hunger, cold, loneliness and fear and the opportunity to reclaim for themselves a sense of dignity and self-worth. With every bag lunch, medical appointment, referral, condom and group counseling session we offer, we communicate to our clients our concern for their lives and our belief in their potential. Our mission is to act as a catalyst for their self-empowerment.

More than 60% of homeless youth report being homeless because they escaped domestic violence and child abuse in their homes. We also know that commercial sexual exploitation can affect any young person, regardless of age, location, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. We safely estimate that between 87 and 95% of our Streetwork Project clients have engaged in survival sex at least once, and that this is primarily due to a lack of other options for survival.

Safe Horizon's Streetwork Project tackles the immediate and deeper issues that homeless youth face, through emergency services as well as long-term, practical assistance. Streetwork also has New York City's only five-borough, seven-night-a-week street outreach program that

brings meals and referrals to neighborhoods where homeless teens congregate. Streetwork not only provides shelter, meals and clothing – it provides the second chance that young people need to reclaim their lives and futures from violence and abuse.

Overnight Shelter

With major support from the New York City Council, Safe Horizon operates a 24-bed overnight shelter in Harlem for homeless and at-risk young people. In the past year, 241 young people between the ages of 16 and 21 received a hot meal and overnight shelter through this program. All of these young people receive medical and psychiatric care, case management, crisis counseling, housing assistance and information on sexual health and self-care.

But more than this, the homeless young people who come to our shelter are safe – safe from violence, safe from sexual exploitation, safe from disease. For many, our overnight shelter is the first safe place they have slept in many months, or even years. Abused as children, unable to succeed in foster care placements or group homes, preyed on by adults and forced into survival sex to obtain basic necessities, the clients we see are scared, hungry and distrustful. These are our children – collectively – and we are obligated to do all that we can to keep them safe.

Drop-in Center

The City Council also partially supports our Harlem drop-in center, where we provide a full complement of services to approximately 1,400 homeless and at-risk young people each year. Each person who walks into our drop-in center can get a nutritious meal, a hot shower,

access to laundry services and a chance to rest. Our clients also receive case management, counseling, practical assistance, medical and psychiatric care, and an opportunity to pursue employment and educational goals. During the day, our Center is filled with young people engaged with our staff, learning about available resources, and participating in group discussions about topics such as safer sex, health and well-being. In short, our Center is a respite for young people whose lives are chaotic, and the funding we receive from the City Council supports a critical part of our program.

Overnight Street Outreach

City Council support for our overnight street outreach program allows us to meet with young people this evening and every evening on street corners throughout the five boroughs, offering food and support, as well as information and referrals to shelter and services. We engage young people who have fallen through the cracks of our safety net system of care, and who are at very high risk for abuse and exploitation. Using a non-judgmental, client-centered approach, we connect them with our network of drop-in centers and shelters as well as those operated by our colleagues, many of whom are here today. In every corner of every borough, our outreach team moves young people from the danger of the streets to the safety of shelter and eventually housing.

We are enormously grateful to the City Council for funding all of these important components of our Streetwork Project, and we will be working with our colleagues at DYCD to help ensure this funding will continue to sustain our programs.

Summary

As always, Safe Horizon continues to be a resource for your staff, particularly in your district offices. We are pleased to be able to respond to your queries about domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and other crimes. And we look forward to continuing this partnership to ensure that all New Yorkers receive the assistance and services to which they are entitled. We thank the New York City Council for its past support for these and other vital initiatives that help hundreds of thousands of crime victims access the help they need in order to rebuild their lives.

Thank you, and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Youth and Vision Loss Coalition Testimony on the NYC Preliminary Management Report for 2014-15

Prepared by Mike Godino, Manager Youth and Vision Loss Coalition
mgodino@visionsvcb.org 212-625-1616 ext. 142

The New York City Council City Hall

New York, NY 10007

Committee room

To: Committee on Youth Services, Chairman Eugene and Committee on Community Development, Chairwoman Del Carmen Arroyo,

Good afternoon and thank you for hosting this hearing as a means of gathering information on the management standards of NYC from the prospective of the community.

My name is Mike Godino, I am the manager of the newly formed Youth and Vision Loss Coalition of NYC. The coalition came together in the hope and promise to better serve the community of young people with vision loss throughout New York City. Our members include over thirty agencies, and organizations serving or representing youth with vision loss, and over eighty individuals, working with or having a family member with vision loss. Our goal is to establish an informational mentoring guide for navigating the myriad of complex educational and rehabilitative services available within New York City to enhance the rate of success among young people.

I come here today to introduce this new and exciting coalition to you and the New York city Council and also to share some of the views and opinions of the coalition's members on the management of New York City and how it affects young people with vision loss.

One of the initiatives for the forming of this coalition is the member's understanding that many youth with vision loss are un or underserved with respect to their vision loss. The members of the coalition have concerns with respect to the manner in which the NYC Department of Education (NYC DoE) views the federal disability classifications under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Within the IDEA students are classified into one of thirteen disability classes as required in their Individual Education Program (IEP); however, in these current times of modern medicine, people including babies and children have a lesser rate of mortality giving rise to people living and thriving with various disabilities. In many cases, these various disabilities can be numerous within one person and, although the IEP does permit comorbidity within the classification of disability, it can only be listed as Multiple Disabilities. As Cortical Visual Impairments (CVI) are commonly identified in children within the developmental disability classes, the coalition members requests the City Council look at the NYC DoE classification structure and recommend the DoE note specifically on a child's IEP their status of vision if a vision loss is identified. We feel this would [permit parents and children the opportunity to realize and receive the added value of vision services

throughout their education and beyond. The benefits of this recommendation can be realized in more successful student accomplishments as the students will have better ability to use the vision they have or make the appropriate adaptations for the vision loss. This can also be readily accomplished now during the DoE's migration to a new data system that manages information for students with disabilities.

Additionally, the members of the Youth and Vision Loss Coalition have recently been made aware, at a town meeting, that some school officials are suggesting that the school is not able to accept children who are blind. Although the afore mentioned incident has been appropriately mitigated by intervention and advocacy, the coalition suggests the City Council recommend disability diversity training for all DoE staff and administrators. This would add a greater understanding and acceptance of people with disabilities throughout the education system.

Finally, the coalition members have become aware of a report to the NY State legislature regarding a budget appropriation for state wide Early Intervention funding. In their March 4, 2014 report to the NYS Legislature on the progress with the transition to the State fiscal agent in the Early Intervention Program, the Department of Health stated, State appropriation in 2014-15 would need to be increased to as much as \$690 million in order to reimburse counties for services paid with county funds in the past and also make *new* payments to providers in the first instance for services provided in 2014-15. This would be an increase of \$ 526.5 million relative to the \$163.5 proposed appropriation for the 2014-15 Executive Budget. Although not a part of the Preliminary Management Report, we bring this to your attention as coalition members are sure, such a limited appropriation will negatively impact a vital service to the innocent and youngest needing these critical services.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to share some of the views and opinions of the Youth and Vision Loss Coalition. If you have any questions or, need more information about the Youth and Vision Loss Coalition, please feel free to contact me at: 212-625-1616 ext. 142 or by e mail at, mgodino@visionsvcb.org

Respectfully Submitted,
Mike Godino, Manager, Youth and Vision Loss Coalition



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Preliminary Budget Hearing – Youth Services & Community Development

**Submitted to
NYC Council, Committees on Youth Services & Community Development**

**Submitted by
Jessica Orozco, Esq.
Director of Immigration and Civic Engagement
Hispanic Federation**

March 10, 2014

Good morning, my name is Jessica Orozco and I am the Director of Immigration and Civic Engagement at the Hispanic Federation (HF). Chairs Arroyo and Eugene and members of the respective committees, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of New York's Latino community partners.

Hispanic Federation is the premier Latino membership organization in the nation founded to address the many inequities confronting Latinos and the nonprofits that serve them. For more than 20 years, Hispanic Federation has provided grants, administered human services and coordinated advocacy for our broad network of agencies that serve more than 2 million Latinos in areas of health, education, economic empowerment, immigration and civic engagement.

Overall, HF is pleased to see that several vital programs that sustain Latino and other community-based organizations were recently baselined by the Mayor's Office. The City Council now has the opportunity to further support the city's 2.3 million Latinos by ensuring these initiatives receive a long-needed increase.

Nonprofit Stabilization Fund for People of Color Led CBOs

In partnership with the Asian American Federation, Black Agency Executives and Coalition for Asian American Children & Families, Hispanic Federation has created a series of reforms and recommendations to strengthen People of Color Led Community Based Organizations or CBOs. Under the previous administration, too many Latino-led CBO's, along with those in Asian and black communities, were boxed out of city funding opportunities for human services and the arts. For too long, the city has failed to value or support the culturally-competent and linguistically-appropriate services offered by our agencies. Instead of partnering and investing in these vital institutions with long, proven track records, we have witnessed increasingly biased city agency RFP processes that have led to severe cutbacks – and even closures – for many people of color led CBOs.

This City Council has a unique opportunity this year to turn this sad trend around. Hispanic Federation and its 60 member agencies in New York City, along with our partners at the Asian American Federation, Black Agency Executives and Coalition for Asian American Children & Families, **call on the Council to establish a \$10 million Nonprofit Stabilization Fund for People of Color Led CBOs.**

Such a groundbreaking Nonprofit Stabilization Fund (NSF) will provide grants to help secure the long-term viability of people of color led CBOs by providing them with comprehensive capacity building assistance to fortify financial, board, staff, management, IT, and outcomes evaluation systems. Without these basic infrastructure investments, the city's human service sector will not be fully up to the task of providing the vast array of immigration, education, senior, youth, health and other services we all rely upon.

Immigrant Opportunity Initiative & Adult Literacy Services Initiative

New York City's Immigrant Opportunity Initiative (IOI) provides access to crucial services to NYC's immigrant community, providing funding for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, citizenship and permanent residency application assistance, and support with employment authorization and issues. The entire community benefits from these immigration programs. As immigrants learn English, their chances of obtaining better-paying jobs increases, leading to bigger tax contributions to the City and empowering immigrants to civically contribute to their communities.

Despite the city's continued growth in foreign-born families, funding for IOI has steadily decreased since its height of \$11.25 million in 2008 to \$4.6 million in 2013. Currently, approximately 37% of NYC's population is foreign-born. Over the past 5 years, state and federal funding for immigrant services has drastically decreased, putting a burdensome strain on immigrant service providers. In order to meet the need for immigrant services in this great city, **HF is recommending the city work to increase IOI to \$25 million. For starters, the Council can at least match the baselined \$4.34 million to double the existing pool of funds and provide immigration assistance and English instruction to an additional 5,000 to 10,000 New Yorkers.**

Regarding the Council's Adult Literacy Services Initiative, we similarly ask that the Council match the recently baselined \$2.5 million to double the number of ESOL students served across the five boroughs. With state and federal funding for literacy services also at a decline, community-based organizations are constantly struggling to stay afloat to provide staple services such as Adult Basic Education (ABE), ESOL and GED preparation classes. As these organizations are trusted by community-members and located within the heart of affected neighborhoods, adult literacy service providers are among the best qualified and most effective in New York City. They provide a comfortable and intimate setting for participants to become educated, gain indispensable skills and obtain their degrees. As more individuals complete these programs, the entire city benefits. For every GED/high school diploma earned generates net benefits in the amount of \$324,000 for the City. For these reasons, **we ask the Council to double the current level of funding to the Adult Literacy Initiative to bring it to \$5 million.**

New York Immigrant Family Unity Project

In 2013, the NYC Council provided \$500,000 in funding to launch a pilot program called the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP). The goal of the NYIFUP is to provide legal representation to 190 indigent immigrants in removal proceedings at the Varick Street Immigration Court in Manhattan.

As you know, the right to legal representation does not extend to immigration courts. Sixty percent of detained immigrants and 27% of non-detained immigrants in New York do not have legal counsel. Having representation greatly impacts the client's experience in detention and probability of relief from removal. In fact, individuals who have legal counsel in removal proceedings are ten times more likely to have a successful outcome.

HF strongly encourages NYC Council to include a \$5.3 million appropriation for NYIFUP in the FY' 2015 budget to permit the program to continue. This budget would allow the NYIFUP to provide legal representation to 1,650 NYC residents. The permanent implementation of NYIFUP would allow agencies to deliver quality services to those truly in need, keeping families together, ensuring due process and equal access to representation.

Universal Pre-K and Afterschool Programs

Last, but certainly not least, **the Federation supports the Mayor's proposal to institute a modest income tax surcharge on high income earners to fund universal pre-kindergarten for all four year olds and afterschool programs for all middle school students.** In addition, we continue to support increased aid for long-standing vital afterschool programs for all ages including those in Beacons, Out of School Time (OST) Programs, and NYCHA Cornerstone Community Centers. At a time when Latino college retention and graduation rates, let alone those in high schools, are abysmal by any standard, it is paramount that we stop setting up Latino children to fail and invest right from the start. Increasing U-PreK and afterschool programs is the right approach to proving our children with the academic and social support they need to grow into our next generation of leaders.

Thank you for your time and attention to these important issues. It is our hope that making these investments in the final FY'15 Budget will improve Latino community-based organizations that provide essential services and build a stronger New York City for us all.



Sports & Arts in Schools Foundation
Engaging Students' Minds and Bodies

**FY 14 Preliminary Budget Hearing
NYC Council Youth Services Committee
Hon. Mathieu Eugene, Chair**

Monday, March 10, 2014

**Presented by
James R. O'Neill, CEO
SASF**

Thank you again for your past support of the Sports & Arts In Schools Foundation (SASF). SASF is truly a Council Initiative, having been created 22 years ago at the suggestion of Speaker Peter F. Vallone who, at that time, wanted a CBO to create and operate free summer camps throughout the city. From our humble beginnings, we have grown, with the Council's support, to become one of the largest direct provider of school based after-school arts, sports and academic programming in New York City and one of the largest providers in the country.

Mission & History

The mission of SASF is to help bridge the academic performance gap among under-achieving students by extending the school day and year with wholesome, skill-building activities designed to improve New York City children's self-esteem, character and values, attitude toward school, attendance, academic performance, health and wellness, and lifelong employment opportunities.

For the past 22 years, we at SASF have been successfully running programs which engage, both physically and mentally, our city's youth to stem the tide of childhood obesity. None of this would be possible, however, without the funding support of you and your colleagues in the Council.

In FY 2014 SASF received \$1 million from the Council as a Citywide Initiative (down from \$1.2 million in FY 2011 and \$2.1 million in FY 2008). This year, we are seeking a full restoration of our FY 2014 funds in order to sustain our free Council Camps and our After-School Sports and Fitness Programs throughout the five boroughs. Your support is critical!

We applaud Mayor de Blasio for the baselining of OST funding and we enthusiastically support the Middle School Expansion. We urge the Council to continue to support SASF's critical youth services activities throughout the city.

SASF firmly believes every student should have a quality after-school program including sports, arts, and academic enrichment.

As the Council begins to negotiate the FY 2015 budget, I would like to share with you some quick facts about SASF:

- **Through our Council Camps and After-School Sports Programs, we serve every Council District.**
- Though all of our programs, SASF annually serves 20,000 students throughout the five boroughs.
- **The overwhelming majority of youth served are Black and Hispanic youth from the highest poverty neighborhoods in the city.**
- Our programs are primarily housed in Title 1 schools.

These programs are vital to low-income families in NYC. Many of the children participating in these programs are living in families whose incomes put them below the poverty line. NYC is being battered by historic cuts in federal and state grants that unfairly fall on the shoulders of the most vulnerable families of our great city.

The summer is the most stressful time for low-income families, when school is out. I have been frequently told by mothers **“that if your program was not in my child’s school, I couldn’t work.”** I urge you, on behalf of thousands of children who depend on our free summer program and after-school sports program to restore the City Council Sports and Arts Summer Camps and our After-School Sports Programs.

New York City Council Sports and Arts Summer Camps

Council Summer Sports and Arts Camp programs for elementary students (grades 1-6) chiefly wrap around summer classes for mandated students to increase students’ positive connection to schools, to encourage classroom attendance, and to provide free sports activities in school in the afternoon after the morning academic work. The summer camps also serve students who are not required to go to summer school but who wish to participate in the Camps’ free, fun and structured activities. The students lack access to a

varied menu of sports and arts activities available to their peers from more affluent neighborhoods. Free summer programs are declining in New York City and SASF remains one of the few sources of free programs for city young people and their families.

These programs are amazingly inexpensive to run as school-based programs that chiefly operate in empty school buildings, most of which are opening only for free breakfast and lunch programs. The cost is less than \$48 per week, per child- [This figure could dramatically change if the DOE implements its new fee policy requiring community-based organizations to pay space usage and security fees.]

Middle School Academics and Sports Camp programs help bridge the academic performance gap for city students in public middle schools (grades 6-8) and prepare them for a successful transition into 9th grade and high school completion 4 years later. These programs address the low-high school completion rates in New York City by helping to provide middle school students with the skills necessary to go on to and complete high school.

Summertime can be a crisis time for many bright, ambitious city youngsters in grades 9-12 or college. During the year, these young people benefit from the structure and relationships with caring adults provided by school and after-school programs. During the summer months, these support systems vanish, and are often replaced by destructive elements of “street culture.” Summertime employment of **NYC high school and college-aged young people** will fill this service gap. Instead of experiencing the slide in reading and academics common among urban youth, the summer becomes a time for educational and career opportunities, as well as personal growth and character development.

The Council camps are essential help to families in the long hot summer weeks, when school is out and where few sports and arts opportunities are available to low-income children. **The Hayden Foundation has agreed to provide a match of \$325,000 if the Council restores funding for SASF Summer Programming.**

Need for NY City Council Sports and Arts Summer Camps

The Summer Camps address 3 issues.

1. The need for free, safe, structured, skilled-based activities for over 5,000 city children from low-income families during the summer working day when families, especially working mothers, need safe and structured activities for their children.
2. Creation of approximately 700 summer jobs for city teenagers and young adults.
3. The childhood obesity epidemic.

The SASF After-School Sports Leagues

SASF After-School Sports Leagues provide students with:

SASF Sports Leagues:

- Organized, weekly competition among 60+ participating schools in basketball, flag football and soccer over 12-week seasons.

SASF Culminating Tournaments and Events:

- Competitive day-long and multi-day organization-wide events in flag rugby, soccer, flag football and SASF's Presidents' Week 3 v. 3 Middle School Basketball Tournament, the largest tournament of its kind in the nation.

SASF Track & Field Program:

- Conducted in cooperation with New York Road Runners Foundation, two regional track meets taking place at the premier facilities at Icahn Stadium, Randall's Island, NYC.

It is now well documented that school-based sports and fitness activities have a positive impact on student's attitude towards school, health and academic performance.

Finally, these programs have enormous support: 94% of voters believe that there is a need for children to be engaged (during the after-school period and summer) in sports, arts and academic enrichment activities. Also important is the cost-effective benefits of

funding experienced well managed non-profits to deliver these critical programs especially in very difficult economic times.

On behalf of 20,000 participating NYC youngsters, SASF strongly urges your support for the full restoration and long-term expansion of these programs.

Thank you.

Jim O'Neill
CEO
SASF

Meeting the Needs of Homeless Youth

NYC Coalition on the Continuum of Care (CCoC)

Tonight there are thousands of young adults in the City that will not have a safe place to sleep. 3 things New York City can do right now to begin to address the housing, shelter & service needs of young people who have become homeless are:

1. Establish a “One Stop” centralized and comprehensive resource system

Services to assist youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are often spread across multiple systems and providers and often at many different locations. Centralized and comprehensive “One Stops” designed to meet all of the services needs of the diverse population of homeless youth is essential. “One Stops” should be both physical and virtual so that both youth and providers can easily access the same pool of information about services, shelter and housing options.

2. Expand emergency and transitional shelter capacity

There are not enough emergency and transitional beds to meet the needs of homeless and at-risk youth. Youth who access these safe and supportive options also need to be able to stay longer while they work to secure permanent housing and services. The emergency and transitional beds and services must account for the unique needs of the different sub-groups of young homeless people including: parenting, pregnant, LGBTQ, commercially and sexually exploited youth and older youth between the ages of 21 and 25. The recent budget request by Mayor de Blasio to fund 76 additional crisis beds is a step in the right direction but that only brings the youth shelter system total to 323 beds, still a fraction of the need.

3. Provide additional permanent housing assistance

New York City must also work to increase the availability of and access to quality, affordable housing for homeless and at-risk youth. This includes short-term and long-term rental assistance, public housing and supportive housing – rental housing tied to onsite social services, for particularly vulnerable youth. While homeless youth make up at least 10% of the single homeless population in the City, less than 1% of the supportive housing is dedicated for youth and there’s even less rental assistance and public housing available to them.

Going forward, New York City must take concrete action steps to quantify the number of young people who are homeless (with sensitivity to the different forms that homelessness can take for young people) and their collective need for housing, shelter and services, while simultaneously working to identify and address the gaps in the current system, implement needed program and policy changes and take aggressive action.

The NYC CCoC is a broad-based coalition of homeless housing and shelter providers, consumers, advocates, and government representatives, working together to shape citywide planning and decision-making to prevent and eradicate homelessness. For more information visit www.nychomeless.com or contact the CoC Youth Co-Chairs, Joey Lopez at jlopez@aliforneycenter.org or Mary Adams at madams@lanterngroup.org

CAMPAIGN FOR SUMMER JOBS

c/o United Neighborhood Houses (UNH), 70 W. 36th Street, 5th Floor, NY, NY 10018
Neighborhood Family Services Coalition (NFSC), 120 Broadway #230, NY, NY 10271
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**Testimony Before the New York City Council
Committee on Finance
Committee on Youth Services
Committee on Community Development**

On the FY 2015 Preliminary Budget

Honorable Julissa Ferreras, Chair, Committee on Finance
Honorable Mathieu Eugene, Chair, Committee on Youth Services
Honorable Maria del Carmen Arroyo, Chair, Committee on Youth Development

Testimony Submitted by: Kevin Douglas, Policy Analyst, United Neighborhood Houses
Kelly Daniels, National Urban Fellow, Neighborhood Family Services Coalition
March 10, 2014

Recommendation: Increase Investment in Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) by \$13 million and implement the "One-Hundred-In-Five" Plan: a vision to expand SYEP to 100,000 jobs per summer within five years

Good Afternoon Chair Ferreras, Chair Eugene and Chair del Carmen Arroyo, thank you for the opportunity to testify this afternoon. My name is Kevin Douglas and I am a Policy Analyst at United Neighborhood Houses (UNH). I am accompanied by Kelly Daniels, a National Urban Fellow working with Neighborhood Family Services Coalition (NFSC). In 1999, NFSC and UNH co-founded the Campaign for Summer Jobs (CSJ), a coalition of nearly 100 community-based and citywide organizations in New York City that advocate for State and City investment and effective programmatic models for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). For the past 15 years, the Campaign has organized an annual Youth Action Day that brings nearly 300 young people to Albany to meet with legislative and senate members about the importance of State funding for SYEP. While we continue to actively push for additional state investment in the program, this afternoon we would like to discuss how New York City can proactively support greater employment opportunities for the City's youth. Specifically, in addition to the \$20.6 million included for SYEP in the FY2015 Preliminary Budget, we urge the City Council and Administration to invest an additional \$13 million in the program this year as part of a broader

vision of SYEP expansion, the “One-Hundred-In-Five” plan: 100,000 summer jobs within five years.

Benefits of Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

SYEP is a highly beneficial program for both youth participants and the community. SYEP provides a work environment to learn and develop “soft skills” such as the importance of punctuality, responsibility, effective communication, time management and budgeting. Youth that are employed during their high school years are more likely to hold employment after graduation, will learn critical habits of outstanding work ethic and discipline, and have the opportunity to start building a professional network to assist in later entry into the workforce.

In addition, SYEP is a safe and productive summer activity for youth to engage in while gaining independence, responsibility, and the ability to financially assist their families.. In terms of academics, a 2012 study conducted by the NYU Steinhart School of Culture, Education, and Human Development showed that youth who were at educational risk -indicated by high rates of school absence- that participated in SYEP had higher rates of attendance in the following school year, as well as an increase of likelihood of taking and passing the Math and English Regents exams.¹

SYEP also benefits local community’s economies. In DYCD’s analysis of SYEP youth spending habits, it was revealed that youth spend a large portion of their earnings in their community.² Since 32% of SYEP youth work as counselors in day camps, daycare centers, and community centers, an additional benefit is accrued to the community as these SYEP staff help these camps meet mandated staff: child ratios while serving more children.

City, State, Federal, and Private Funding

While last year approximately 36,000 jobs were funded for SYEP there were also over 100,000 youth turned away from the program and denied the opportunity to work. Over the last several

¹ Leos, Urbel, Jacob, Amy Ellen Schwartz, Meryle Weinstein, Beth C. Weizman. “More than a Paycheck? The Impact of Summer Youth Employment on Students’ Educational Engagement and Success.” Institute for Education and Social Policy. 2012.

² NYC Department of Youth & Community Development. “Summer Youth Employment Program Annual Summary 2012.” NYCDYCD. 2012.

years the percentage of youth able to work has fallen dramatically: in FY2007 almost 60% of the applicants were served, where as last year just 27% were served. SYEP is funded primarily through city, state, federal, and private funds. For several years the private funds had been provided through the New York Fund to Advance NYC. At this point in time it is unclear whether any contributions to this fund will continue to be earmarked to SYEP, putting at risk over \$2 million in support. Further, the final Federal investment will remain unknown for some time and it is unlikely the City will see the same level of support as last year.

In previous years City Tax Levy (CTL) investment averaged \$30.9 million, however, in each of the past three years it has fallen precipitously to just \$20.6 million. Even as we encourage the City to take a leadership role in safeguarding and expanding employment opportunities for youth, the Campaign continues to work with state officials to fully resource the program. The State used to regularly invest \$35 million in the program statewide, with nearly \$20 million coming to NYC. Currently, it is investing \$25 million with less than \$14 million to contribute to NYC's program. We wish to recognize and thank DYCD Commissioner Bill Chong for his department's work in Albany to promote SYEP and encourage additional investment.

Minimum Wage Impact

Although an increase in the State-mandated minimum wage provides significant benefit to households supported by minimum wage workers, it also requires the state to invest additional resources into SYEP to ensure the increased cost per participant does not lead to job slot loss. NYC typically receives 54% of the total state investment, and so a \$10 million increased investment at the State level would yield the \$5.4 million needed in NYC to preserve job slots. After much work by CSJ over the last year to raise this issue with the Governor and legislature, we were encouraged to see the State's FY2015 Executive Budget include an additional \$2.5 million investment- for a total of \$27.5 million- but disappointed that this investment fell short of the additional \$10 million (\$35 million total), needed to avert SYEP slot reductions in NYC and around the state.

Without an additional \$7.5 million statewide investment (\$4.05 million for NYC), NYC's program will see a loss of 2,750 youth jobs this summer. We are actively working with the legislature to invest the additional resources but it is unclear what the final level of support will

be in the State Enacted Budget.

NYC's "One-Hundred-In-Five" Expansion Plan

DYCD's concept paper highlights that in 2011 national summer teen employment rate of 25.4% to be the lowest since records began in the late 1940s. Moreover, between 2008 and 2012 alone, applications soared 28% from 103,000 to 132,000. Given the high rates of youth unemployment, especially among minority, low-income youth, NYC has an obligation to help end this "tale of two cities"—those youth that are able to gain access to the world of work through their parents professional connections, and those whose parents cannot offer that access.

The benefits of SYEP have been made abundantly clear over the years through research and anecdote. The Campaign for Summer Job's vision is the "One-Hundred-In-Five" expansion plan: which would have provide 100,000 summer youth jobs (the number tuned away each summer) within five years. This plan is inclusive of the recent, and future scheduled state minimum wage hikes, and would represent a meaningful commitment by the City to ensure youth have positive, safe formative work experiences as they prepare to enter the workforce. This planning is necessary to address the NYC youth unemployment crisis and current limited SYEP capacity:

Fiscal Year (FY)	Investment	Summer Job Slots Funded
FY2015	\$33.6m	39,600 job slots
FY2016	\$45.7m	45,540 job slots
FY2017	\$61.4m	54,600 job slots
FY2018	\$87.4m	71,000 job slots
FY2019	\$133.4m	100,000 job slots

We note that if the State invests the additional \$7.5 million we are requesting, then the entire \$13 million City investment would go towards supporting program growth. If the additional \$7.5 million is not invested in SYEP at a state level, then \$4.05 million of the \$13 million of the City investment would be to preserve existing job slots, and the remaining ~\$9 million would represent program growth.

We look forward to working closely with the City Council and DYCD to implement the “One-Hundred-In-Five” plan in order to expand employment opportunities for youth in New York City.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and we are happy to field any questions.

Campaign for Summer Jobs SYEP Summary (Feb, 2014)

(funding in millions)

<u>Summer City</u>	FY2007 2006	FY2008 2007	FY2009 2008	FY2010 2009	FY2011 2010	FY2012 2011	FY 2013 2012	FY2014 2013	Projected FY 2015 2014
CTL	26.9	32.4	30.9	13.8	23.9	20.6	20.6	20.6	20.6
Mayor's Fund					2	6.1	2.8	2.2	0*
City Subtotal	26.9	32.4	30.9	13.8	25.9	26.7	23.4	22.8	22.6
State									
TANF/ General Fund	30	35	35	35	15.5	15.5	25	25.0	27.5
NYC Portion	21.1	20.2	19.7	19.5	8.5	8.5	13.5	13.7	14.85
State Subtotal	21.1	20.2	19.7	19.5	8.5	8.5	13.5	13.7	14.85
Federal									
CSBG				3	1.6	1.6	1.6	6.5	
WIA (ISY/OSY summer)	5.4	3.8	3.4	3	3.4	2.4	4.5	2.6	
ARRA				28.2	12.1				
WIA (Summer Jobs Express)						1.7			
WIA (ISY/OSY Waiver)						2.6			
Federal Subtotal	5.4	3.8	3.4	34.2	17.1	8.3	6.1	9.1	9.1
Total Funding	53.4	56.4	54	67.5	51.5	43.5	43	45.6	46.6**
% change		5.62%	-4.26%	25.00%	-23.70%	-35.56%	-1.15%	6.05%	2.19%
Total Youth Served	41,650	41,804	43,113	52,255	35,725	30,628	29,416	35,957	31,670
Total Applicants	71,670	93,750	103,189	139,597	143,169	131,119	132,593	135,338	135,555
% served	58.11%	44.59%	41.78%	37.43%	24.95%	23.36%	22.19%	26.57%	23.36%

*Private contributions remain unknown and are not assumed in FY2015.

**Though \$9.1m in federal support was received in FY2014, it is unlikely that this level of investment will continue, rendering the projected budget of \$46.6m high.



LiteracyINC

When a child reads, a community succeeds!

**Preliminary Budget Hearing
Committees on Youth Services and Community Development
Submitted by Literacy Inc. (LINC)
March 10th, 2014**

Good Afternoon: My name is Safiya Raheem. I am here today representing Literacy Inc. - known by its acronym LINC - on behalf of its Executive Director, Shari Levine.

We commend Mayor de Blasio and the City Council for addressing, head-on, the importance of early childhood education and the need for universal Pre-K and afterschool programs - some of which are included in this DYCD preliminary budget. We believe that there is a larger conversation to be had regarding childhood literacy and we would like to begin that conversation now when, early childhood education is at the forefront of both the Administration's and the City Council's agenda.

New York City is currently facing a literacy crisis that disproportionately affects children living in poverty and children of color. As Councilmembers, many of you observe this in your own constituency. Seventy-four percent of children living in poverty do not read on grade level by 3rd grade. City-wide, only 16% of Black children and 17% of Latino children are proficient readers by grade three. Once these children fall behind, they are more likely to drop out of high school, face increased social and economic challenges, and continue the cycle of poverty. LINC sees the implementation of universal Pre-K and expansion of after school programs for middle school children as necessities in closing the achievement gap.

As part of LINC's Reading Partner Program, we facilitate after school programs that help foster leadership skills in middle school students.

LINC matches middle school students to read with first and second grade children once a week for an hour. This partnership not only promotes literacy development for the younger student, but forges a sense of purpose and responsibility for the older students that permeates other aspects of their lives. LINC has observed that middle school students who participate in after school reading partner programs are more likely to show increased school attendance, and demonstrate leadership skills in their school communities.

In 2012-13 LINC reached approximately 8,000 low-income children and 1,500 parents in New York City. Through our neighborhood approach, we worked directly with 27 New York City public schools, 8 branch libraries, 45 community partners, and distributed over 4,500 books to low-income children.

Our success is in the numbers: 88% of LINC participants demonstrate improved vocabulary, increased time spent reading and improved reading aloud skills, all of which translate into success in school and in life. Consistently, LINC demonstrates that when we link together existing community resources, when we give our time, support and attention, we can help kids learn to read and bring the joy of reading to every community. An adequate city budget devoted to Out of School Time supports is essential to



LiteracyINC

When a child reads, a community succeeds!

sustaining these successes. LINC joins advocates and service providers across New York City in emphasizing the importance of a generous investment in our youth.

Additional details about LINC's history and our programs are contained in our written testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

.....

LINC PROGRAM DETAIL

Founded in 1996 by New York State Regent Emerita Mimi Levin Lieber, Literacy Inc. (LINC) is working to address the literacy crisis facing New York City children. Based on research showing that mobilizing the entire community—peers, parents, and community members— LINC's Comprehensive Literacy Model connects schools, families, and the community to create a sustained, coordinated, neighborhood-based effort to help develop literacy skills for at-risk youth.

Our program areas are: (1) Reading Partner Programs that pair young readers with older children and other adults to give children more one on one reading time; (2) Parent Engagement Programs that support reading development in home; and (3) Reading Everywhere Celebrations that create literacy-rich communities through increased literacy excitement and engagement throughout the surrounding neighborhood. We are also emphasizing staff development programming that helps teachers to strengthen the school-home connection.



When a child reads, a community succeeds!

LINC's Innovative Approach

Literacy Inc. (LINC) builds neighborhood networks to support young readers. We leverage existing community resources to provide expanded literacy-building opportunities for children and their families. Our goal is to ensure that all children are competent and enthusiastic readers by third grade.



LINC's work is grounded in the core beliefs that:

- All children can be proficient readers with enough one-on-one support
- In every community, resources are waiting to be activated to bring the joy of reading to children
- Literacy-rich communities with well-educated populations are able to thrive and break the cycle of poverty

LINC's Comprehensive Literacy Model

SCHOOL + FAMILY + COMMUNITY = SUCCESSFUL READERS

LINC works with schools, families, libraries, local businesses, and community partners to create a sustained, coordinated, neighborhood-based effort to help develop literacy skills for at risk youth. This work is done by:

- Providing many positive experiences reading one-on-one
- Making sure that books are always available to children – at home, at school, and in the community
- Actively demonstrating that reading is both important and fun



LINC Programs

SCHOOL + FAMILY + COMMUNITY = SUCCESSFUL READERS

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Reading Partner Programs

A critical factor in reading achievement is, quite simply, the amount of time children spend reading. LINC's Reading Partner programs work within schools to pair K-2nd graders with older students to deliver weekly one-on-one reading support. These partnerships create positive relationships around literature and strengthen a school's culture of literacy.

Teacher Professional Development

Teachers who have access to quality professional development are better able to serve the children and families they work with. LINC works with teachers to strengthen literacy learning environments and parent/teacher collaboration to ensure the home/school continuum of learning.

Reading Celebrations

Celebrating the importance and joy of reading are integral in building a child's literacy success. LINC works with school administrators, teachers and PTAs to conduct school-wide TIGER celebrations (Together In Getting Everyone Reading). TIGER celebrations include a month-long read-a-thon, and a trip to the Bronx Zoo.



FAMILY PROGRAMS

Parent Engagement Workshops

Every parent wants the best for their child and wants them to succeed in life. LINC provides parents with the knowledge and tools to aid their children in building literacy success. Workshops focus on how to build a daily reading routine; how to support classroom learning at home; and how to infuse literacy learning into everyday activities.

Book Drives

Successful readers have access to quality literature at home. LINC partners with community organizations, local businesses, independent schools and publishing houses to collect and distribute books to low-income families so they are able to build home libraries. Home libraries support reading routines and reinforce reading importance.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Reading Everywhere Celebrations

LINC's Reading Everywhere Celebrations infuse the joy of reading to every corner of a community. LINC partners with libraries, parks, local businesses, and community organizations to host reading celebrations where families read together, and participate in art and game activities.

VIP (Very Involvement Parent) Academy

The VIP Academy is an intensive four-session program that trains parents to become reading ambassadors in the community. Parents that demonstrate a leadership role are given the skills to host their own Reading Everywhere celebrations, and promote LINC's mission in the community.

Reading Advocate Volunteers

LINC actively enlists the support of volunteers from our communities to assist with reading celebrations, serve as guest readers, lead reading activities, and serve as role models.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/10/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jessica Orzco
Address: 55 Exchange Place, NY NY 10005
I represent: Hispanic Federation
Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/10/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Shira Sameroff
Address: 345 43rd Street
I represent: Center for Family Life
Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RON NANO
Address: 58-12 QUEENS BLVD SUITE 1
I represent: NEW YORK JUNIOR DEMOS LEAGUE
Address: 58-12 QUEENS BLVD SUITE 1

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/11/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: NYJTL
Address: 58-12 QUEENS BLVD SUITE 1 WOODSIDE, NY 11377

I represent: NYJTL
Address: 58-12 QUEENS BLVD SUITE 1 WOODSIDE, NY 11377

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: MARTHA AGOSTU (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: SAST

I represent: SAST

Address: 58-12 Queens Blvd

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Kermit Patterson (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: SASF

I represent: SASF

Address: 5812 Queens Blvd

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Michael Polenberg (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Safe Horizon

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Suzanne Lynn (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: Deputy Commissioner

I represent: PYCB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: John Cirolia (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: Deputy Commissioner

I represent: PYCB

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bill Chung, Commissioner

Address: PYCB

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Godino

Address: Youth & Vision Loss

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/10/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kathy Fitzgibbon

Address: 281 Park Ave South

I represent: FWA

Address: Same

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/10/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CITRA SEBASTIEN

Address: WEST 113 RD

I represent: THE BROTHLYWOODS SISTER SOL

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gregory Bender

Address: _____

I represent: United Neighborhood Houses

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: March 10, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Vanessa Mancho

Address: 435 45th street Brooklyn, NY 11220

I represent: Center For Family Life

Address: 343 43rd street Brooklyn, NY 11232

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/10/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Robert Ortiz

Address: 1264 66th Street Brooklyn, NY 11219

I represent: Center for Family Life

Address: 345 43rd Street Brooklyn, NY 11232

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MOIRA FLAVIN

Address: 105 East 22nd Street NYC

I represent: Citizens' Committee for Children
of New York

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/10/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jelly Daniels

Address: 1150 W 95th St Apt 2B NY 10025

I represent: Campaign for Summer Jobs

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/10/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kenn Douglas

Address: _____

I represent: Campaign for Summer jobs

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Morisa Marking

Address: _____

I represent: Coalition of Asian American

Address: Children & Families

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gigi Li

Address: _____

I represent: NFSC

Address: _____

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Youth
Youth
Alliance

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michelle Yooche

Address: 5030 Broadway, Suite 641

I represent: Good Shepherd Services

Address: _____

Youth
Alliance

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rachel Sabella

Address: TASC

I represent: _____

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/10/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Safiya Raheem

Address: 5030 Broadway, Suite 641

I represent: Literacy Inc (LINC)

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 3/16/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Watson

Address: 500 Halsey St Bklyn NY

I represent: Cntr for Court Innovation

Address: 520 8th Ave, 18th, NY, NY

NYCCAL

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Leah Hebert

Address: _____

I represent: Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow

Address: 783 4th Ave, Brooklyn NY 11232

NYCCAL

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sandy Myers

Address: _____

I represent: USA-Federation of NY

Address: _____