



**Department of
Youth & Community
Development**

**NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES**

**OVERSIGHT HEARING:
“Summer Youth Employment Program”**

**ANDRE WHITE
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF**

FEBRUARY 25, 2016

Good morning Chairman Eugene and members of the Youth Services Committee. I'm Andre White, Deputy Chief of Staff at the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). Joining me is Daphne Montanez, Assistant Commissioner, Youth Workforce Development, and Chris Lewis, Director of the Summer Youth Employment Program. On behalf of Commissioner Chong, thank you for inviting us to testify today on the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). DYCD greatly appreciates the \$21 million the City Council added to last year's program, and for your strong support each and every year for SYEP.

Recent research studies from the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business and New York University's Institute for Education and Social Policy have proven how important SYEP is to the lives of young people. The Wharton study examined the effects of SYEP on 300,000 participants from 2005 to 2008 and demonstrated that SYEP reduces incarceration and saves lives, by saving youth from external causes of death such as homicide. NYU's study found that SYEP contributes to positive academic outcomes, such as increased school attendance in the following school year, and increased probability of attempting and passing English and math Regents exams.

The Summer Youth Employment Program has existed in various forms since 1963. In its current version, SYEP provides New York City youth, ages 14 to 24 with paid summer employment for up to six weeks in July and August. Participants work in a variety of jobs in the nonprofit, government and private sectors. SYEP also provides workshops on job readiness, career exploration, financial literacy and opportunities to continue education and social growth. Programs are operated by community-based organizations in all five boroughs. SYEP has four service options, two of which select participants by lottery:

- **Younger youth, ages 14-15**, work 20 hours per week in jobs that include community service and service learning experiences. The 20 hours per week includes 5 hours of educational programming and group reflection.
- **Older youth, ages 16-24**, work in a variety of jobs that pay participants 25 hours per week with an intensive job readiness and educational-focused program orientation.

The two service options that don't require a lottery, include:

- **Vulnerable youth, ages 14-24**, includes specialized citywide services for special populations including justice-involved, foster care, runaway and homeless, and youth receiving ACS preventive services. We work with our government partners, such as the Administration for Children's Services, Department of Probation, Department of Homeless Services and the New York State Office of Children and Families, to recruit participants, who work a total of 25 hours per week with an intensive educational-focused program orientation.
- **Ladders for Leaders, ages 16-22**, are for high achieving students with prior work experience. Participants receive 30 hours of pre-employment workshops and work a minimum of 25 hours per week. Participants apply to be selected for Ladders, and they undergo employer interviews to be placed in their internships. Wages are paid by employers or through private funds.

Last year's Summer Youth Employment Program was the largest in DYCD's history. 54,263 youth were enrolled in the program, working in various industries such as healthcare, financial services, industrial, technology, retail, and government. A total of 9,156 worksites were developed in partnership with our 50 SYEP providers. Participants also earned \$54.3 million in wages, providing a direct economic stimulus to local businesses and communities across the city. Of the young people served:

- 57% were female and 43% were male
- 41% were from Brooklyn, 23% from the Bronx, 19% from Queens, 10% from Manhattan and 7% from Staten Island
- 40% identified as African American, 26% as Latino, 19% as White, 9% as Asian, 5% as Other and 1% as Native American
- 2,078 were vulnerable youth, which doubles the 1,000 served in 2014
- 2,962 youth identified themselves as having a disability

Last summer was also the first year of DYCD's multi-year campaign to increase the number of private sector employers that hire SYEP youth. We believe it is crucial, to have a diverse array of job opportunities, to expose youth to as many career and industry options as possible. Private sector worksites increased from 28% in 2014 to 35% in 2015. Ladders for Leaders, which specifically places youth in professional internships, served 1,035 participants, which doubled the 475 served in 2014, which also nearly doubled the 262 served in 2013. With the assistance of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City and the Center for Youth Employment, new employers that accepted Ladders interns included technology companies such as AOL and Pandora.

DYCD has also been implementing the Work, Learn and Grow (WLG) program, which was jointly funded by the City Council and the Mayor in the Fiscal Year 2016 adopted budget. Work, Learn and Grow complements our existing year round youth employment programs, namely the In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth programs. In-school youth who were SYEP participants in 2015 were eligible to apply, and selected by lottery for the program. Participants can work up to 10 hours a week, allowing them to build on their summer job experience. As of mid-February, 6,377 youth have enrolled in the program.

We are very eager to build on the success of 2015, and our planning for 2016's Summer Youth Employment Program is well underway.

The Governor released his Executive budget on January 13, 2016, and included \$31 million statewide for SYEP, which is \$1 million more than last year's adopted State budget. The extra \$1 million will pay for the state minimum wage increase from \$8.75 to \$9.00 on the State funded SYEP slots, assuming New York City receives the same percentage of State SYEP funding as last year. \$3.5 million to cover the state minimum wage increase on the city funded SYEP slots in the Fiscal Year 2017 preliminary budget was baselined in last year's preliminary budget by Mayor De Blasio. Currently, the Fiscal Year 2017 SYEP budget stands at \$52.6 million, which is projected to provide 34,809 youth with jobs in the summer of 2016.

Our campaign to increase the number of private sector worksites continues. At the SYEP Provider kick-off meeting on January 20th, we discussed the importance of employer engagement in continued efforts to recruit new private sector worksites this summer. DYCD is also working again with the Workforce Development Board, Mayor's Office of Technology and Innovation, and Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, to identify private sector employers to place young people in SYEP jobs this year. Young people interested in Ladders for Leaders have been able to apply for the program since January 12th, which is the earliest in recent years that we have made the application available. We expect to continue our partnerships with other city agencies as worksites, such as the New York City Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and New York City Department of Design and Construction. DYCD has also reached out to organizations with strong employer networks such as NYC and Company, the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce and the NYC Business Improvement District Association, regarding SYEP.

Our SYEP marketing efforts will get a boost this year from Daymond John, entrepreneur, investor, TV personality and star of ABC's "Shark Tank." Last year, Mr. John approached us about becoming a Summer Youth Employment Program Ambassador. Mr. John's first job was through SYEP, which he credits as helping him first learn about employment and the world of work. We filmed two public service announcements (PSAs) with Mr. John last Fall, and plan to release them in early March. One PSA encourages young people to apply to SYEP and the other one encourages employers to hire a young person through the program.

As research and experience has shown us time and time again, a summer job is a very positive and life changing experience for a young person. We are deeply committed to making sure we have a robust Summer Youth Employment Program every year, and look forward to our continued partnership with the City Council to ensure its success!

Thank you again for the chance to testify today. We are happy to answer any questions.



Testimony of:

Ariel Savransky, Policy Associate for Food and Economic Security and
Baldino Baldeo, Youth Action Member

Before the
New York City Council
Committee on Youth Services

Oversight: Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

February 25, 2016

Good afternoon. My name is Ariel Savransky, and I am the Policy Associate for Food and Economic Security at Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC). Joining me today is Baldino Baldeo, who is a Youth Action Member with CCC.

CCC is a 72-year old, independent, multi-issue child advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring every New York child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. As part of our commitment to ensuring New Yorkers know the facts, can share the facts, and can advocate for change, our work includes Youth Action, a program that gives NYC's youth the tools they need to become successful advocates for change. CCC is also a member of the Campaign for Summer Jobs.

We would like to thank City Council Youth Services Chair Mathieu Eugene, as well as the members of the Youth Services Committee, for holding today's oversight hearing to examine the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP).

CCC also wants to recognize and thank the City Council for your longstanding commitment to SYEP. Every summer, thousands more youth are able to participate in the program because of the funding the City Council adds to the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) budget. This past year was no exception with your tremendous allocation of \$21 million to add 18,306 slots last summer-- one third of all of last year's slots were funded by the City Council.

BACKGROUND ON SYEP

SYEP is a win-win for youth, their families, communities and the NYC economy. SYEP is a six-week summer program that provides youth ages 14-24 with work experience, training, income and lessons in financial literacy.

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. For many families, still struggling with low wages, unemployment, and poverty, this income is critical.

There are four SYEP program models: one for younger youth; one for older youth, one for vulnerable youth; and Ladders for Leaders, which is a nationally recognized program that offers outstanding high school and college students ages 16-21 the opportunity to participate in paid professional summer internships. Ladders for Leaders differs from the traditional SYEP model in that it involves a competitive application process in which applicants are evaluated based on academic performance, an essay question and resume, as opposed to the lottery system used for the other SYEP models. The model for vulnerable youth prioritizes youth who are in foster care, receiving child welfare preventive services, are justice-involved or who are in the runaway and homeless youth system.

Job placements for all youth include opportunities in the public, non-profit and private sectors. This past summer, private sector worksites comprised 35% of approved worksites, an increase of 7% from the summer of 2014, expanding the industries in which youth were placed. This past

summer also included a representation of 17 different industries including healthcare, technology, retail, city agencies, and the financial and industrial sectors.¹

A key component of SYEP is the educational component, which is comprised of a formal orientation for all SYEP youth and weekly 5 hour workshops for younger youth. The educational component provides youth with the opportunity to learn how to participate in the work force and how to manage money. The Ladders for Leaders educational component involves a 30-hour pre-employment training in which participants learn workplace readiness skills and business etiquette.

To help youth learn to manage money, DYCD has developed several critical linkages. Three bank and ATM networks provide fee-free ATM transactions to participating youth. In addition, participants are provided access to a Visa-branded card with fee-free store transactions, online card activity information, an end-of-programs earnings statement and the option of direct deposit. In the summer of 2015, there was a 65 percent increase in direct deposit use with 7,839 youth choosing to take advantage of the direct deposit option.² Furthermore, 1,770 youth signed up for savings account and 5,800 set a savings goal average of \$760.³ These opportunities to open savings accounts and directly deposit earnings into those accounts provide real-life lessons in budgeting and financial transactions that are invaluable for youth.

IMPACT OF SYEP

SYEP also has other important impacts both for the participants as well as the communities in which they live. A recent study from NYU's Steinhart School of Culture, Education and Human Development found that participation in SYEP increases school attendance by about two additional school days.⁴ For students with lower school attendance rates (less than 95%), this increase was closer to four additional school days.⁵ The same study also found that among students 16 and older, participation in SYEP was associated with an increased likelihood that a student would take and pass the English and Math Regents Exams.⁶

SYEP helps make communities safer by providing youth with safe and productive opportunities during the summer. Above all, participation in summer employment programs has been associated with decreased risk of mortality,⁷ compared to youth who were not involved in these types of programs. Additionally, participation in summer employment programs is associated with decreased risk of being involved in violent crime or dangerous behavior,⁸ and decreased risk of incarceration.

¹ NYC Department of Youth and Community Development. *Annual Summary SYEP, 2015*. http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/downloads/pdf/2015_SYEP_Annual_Summary.pdf

² Id.

³ Id.

⁴ NYU Steinhart School of Culture, Education and Human Development. *More Than a Paycheck? The Impact of Summer Youth Employment on Students' Educational Engagement and Success*, June 2012. http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/spa2/SYEP_Policy_Brief_02_12_June_2012.pdf

⁵ Id.

⁶ Id.

⁷ The National Bureau of Economic Research. *The Effects of Youth Employment: Evidence from New York City Summer Youth Employment Program Lotteries*, December 2014. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w20810>

⁸ City of Boston. *Report of the Special Committee on Youth Violent Crime Prevention: Working Together to Increase the Peace*, June 2006. http://www.cityofboston.gov/citycouncil/pdfs/sp_youth_%20vio_prev_rep.pdf

SYEP also helps make communities more prosperous. The income earned by youth is often spent in the community, usually in businesses based near a participant's worksite or home, or contributed to household expenses, positively benefitting communities in which participants live.

Additionally, the youth often work in non-profit and community-based organizations, government offices and local businesses, and with educational and social service providers. Their work helps organizations provide vital services to the community including child care and food assistance, allowing these worksites to better serve the community.

Notably, many youth serve as camp counselors through SYEP. This means that not only will failing to restore the 34,000 middle school summer programming slots be detrimental to the children who would have otherwise gone to summer camp, but the failure will also be detrimental to the success of SYEP this summer.

UNMET NEED FOR SYEP

Given these benefits it is not surprising that historically, SYEP always receives many more applications than job opportunities available. This past summer, 131,897 youth applied for SYEP, but the program was only able to enroll 54,263 youth (41% of applicants).⁹ As has often been stated, getting an SYEP slot is literally winning the lottery.

While we are grateful that the City Council's commitment to SYEP helped to increase access (only 47,126 youth could participate in the summer of 2014), this trend is typical, with annual applications ranging from the 120,000-140,000 and participation ranging from 28,000-50,000.¹⁰

BUDGET ASKS

Notably, the City's Preliminary Budget failed to adjust SYEP funding to accommodate the increased minimum wage from January 2016, failed to baseline the \$21 million added by the City Council in the FY16 budget, and failed to add any additional capacity to the system. This is very disappointing.

The current City budget for SYEP for the upcoming summer (FY17) only includes \$35.9 million from the City and \$15.8 million from the state. This would only enable 33,383 youth to participate. (Note that if NYC received the same amount of private funding and federal Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funding as last year, the City would have enough funding for 38,289 youth to participate).

We are urging the Administration to **baseline funding to support 100,000 slots at a total of \$131.5 million in city funding. This would represent an increase of \$95.6 million in city funds for the summer of 2016 (FY 17)**

⁹ NYC Department of Youth and Community Development. *Annual Summary SYEP, 2015*.
http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/downloads/pdf/2015_SYEP_Annual_Summary.pdf

¹⁰ Id.

As a partner in the Campaign for Summer Jobs, we look forward to working with the City Council to urge the Mayor to take this important step, and ensure every SYEP applicant can participate.

If the Administration does not baseline additional funding for SYEP in the Executive Budget, we hope that the City Council will be able to work with the administration to add funding to the Adopted Budget. At a minimum, we hope the budget will ensure the same number of youth can be served this summer with the January 2016 minimum wage increase, but we hope to continue expanding the program and will be looking to reach 60,000 children this summer.

To reach 60,000 children this summer we would need to **add a total of \$33.6 million** to restore the slots added by the City Council last year, fund the minimum wage increase and add 6,000 slots. These 60,000 slots would be a step in the right direction toward reaching 100,000 slots by FY 19 and would be a manageable increase for providers should the additional summer slots not be announced until the budget is adopted in June. (While we strongly support 100,000 slots of SYEP, if the funding is not announced in the Executive Budget and is instead announced in June with only weeks for providers to prepare, realistically they could only accommodate 60,000 youth this summer.)

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen and expand SYEP, CCC respectfully submits the following additional recommendations:

- 1) **Urge the Mayor to restore the 34,000 middle school summer programming slots**
 - Mayor de Blasio did not include in his preliminary budget funding for summer programs for 34,000 middle school students, as was the case in the last budget cycle as well. Without this funding, middle schoolers will not have access to the summer programming they need, parents will be left without productive and safe places to take their children and the slots that were allocated for youth in SYEP to serve as counselors will no longer exist. This will diminish the capacity of SYEP to serve youth, as these placements will no longer be available. Furthermore, funding this program as an addition to the adopted budget in June leaves parents thinking they will be forced to find other placements for their children or take unnecessary time off work to care for children. Restoring these slots will remain a critical priority for CCC in the coming weeks and months ahead.
- 2) **Integrate IDNYC into the photo ID verification process for youth who have difficulty providing photo IDs.**
 - Many youth have trouble fulfilling the photo ID requirement. Providers report that youth—especially younger youth—do not have junior high school IDs, or report that the youth lost school photo IDs. IDNYC could be a good alternative for youth who do not have photo IDs, but the current timeframes do not match. Currently you accepted into SYEP have five days to submit this documentation, but it takes longer than that to receive an ID through IDNYC. We suggest that DYCD work with IDNYC to coordinate the photo ID process.

3) Continue to maintain and expand SYEP for youth with disabilities and vulnerable youth

- CCC applauds DYCD's continued commitment to enrolling students with disabilities and vulnerable youth in SYEP. SYEP is an important way to engage youth and to connect them with opportunities for career exploration and academic and social growth. In the summer of 2015, 2,962 youth with disabilities¹¹ and 2,078 vulnerable youth – including runaway and homeless youth, justice-involved youth, and youth receiving foster care and preventive services – participated in SYEP.¹² CCC believes that SYEP is a valuable tool in the City and State's efforts to ensure that all youth gain valuable competencies that prepare them for future work and education.

EVIDENCE OF NEED

The case for expansion can most effectively be made by hearing stories from youth. CCC's Youth Action Program is an after-school program for high school students, which teaches youth how to engage in fact-based advocacy. After completing our Youth Action course, youth are eligible to become Youth Action Members (YAMS). YAMS develop their own youth-led advocacy projects and participate in CCC's advocacy.

Following is the testimony of one of our Youth Action Members, Baldino B. Baldeo:

Young teens that are in high school and able to obtain working papers will often be very anxious to get a job to make their own money. SYEP is a safe and secure way for teens to do this. In addition to making some money over the summer, they can also get great work experience. Government agencies, hospitals, summer camps, non-profits and small businesses are just some of the job sites available through SYEP. Working in these types of jobs teaches young people how to have a good work ethic, such as being punctual, working with others, and acting responsibly. It also allows youth to manage their own money. SYEP helps young people build their resumes, making it easier for them to get other jobs in the future. Finally, they can also get an idea of whether they would like to pursue a particular career.

A few years ago, my sister was fortunate to be accepted into SYEP, and from that experience she found her passion in working with kids. It helped her to choose the right major in college and she is working toward a career in this field. In addition, she now has professional references and work experience to put on her resume. Unlike my sister, a very good friend of mine applied to SYEP 3 years in a row but never got picked in the lottery. She is graduating this year and has no work experience and no idea what she wants to do for a career. If she had been able to be a part of SYEP, she would at least have the work experience needed in order to apply for jobs in college. And there is the possibility it could have helped her decide what she wants to study.

Right now I'm in 11th grade and would love to apply to SYEP but I'm extremely nervous that I won't be able to get in because of how few slots are available. Having a summer job is a great way for youth to use our time productively and can help us with the shaping of our futures. For these reasons, increased funding for SYEP is an investment better than any stock or bond

¹¹ Id.

¹² Id.

that's available. If the quote "the children are the future" is true, then this investment is a crucial way to secure a great future.

Baldino B. Baldeo

B. Baldeo

CONCLUSION

In closing, CCC believes DYCD's Summer Youth Employment Program is an invaluable resource for youth. We urge the administration and the City Council to work together to ensure SYEP is able to serve more youth at the higher minimum wage this coming summer.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**Lazar Treschan
Director of Youth Policy
Community Service Society of New York**

**Testimony to the Committee on Youth Service
of the Council of the City of New York
February 24, 2016**

Issue: ***Oversight: Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)***

Recommendation: ***Expand SYEP to universal service levels and enact key reforms***

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about summer jobs for New York City Youth. My name is Lazar Treschan and I am the Director of Youth Policy for the Community Service Society of New York (CSS), an organization that conducts research and advocacy to advance public policy for low-income New Yorkers. Yesterday, CSS released a new report proposing a universal summer jobs program for all New York City youth seeking a job. Our proposal would expand service to universal levels, and make key enhancements to SYEP that will improve outcomes for youth, CBO service providers, and employers. I will summarize the key points in our proposal in this testimony.

Last year, nearly 55,000 young people participated in the city's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), through which they worked for seven weeks, learned new skills, and earned real wages, many for the first time. According to a study of SYEP, the youth that participate will see better grades and exams scores when they return to school in the fall, along with decreased chances of getting arrested or into trouble. To put it simply, work works, when it comes to better outcomes for our kids.

What's unfortunate is that another 55,000 young people applied for the program and were denied slots due to funding limits. Unless they were able to find a job on their own – something

that data shows is harder than ever for younger workers – they saw diminished school and life outcomes after the summer. The phenomenon known as “summer melt” reduces hard-earned gains made during the school year for idle students.

We spend nearly \$20,000 per year on public funds for each high school student, yet see a good percentage of our schools’ hard work melted away over the summer months. But summer jobs can counter this, not only maintaining students’ skill levels but increasing them. In addition, summer work offers room to explore careers and develop interests, connections, and a sense of a pathway for what might come after high school.

Given their overwhelming return, we can no longer afford *not* to invest in summer jobs for every young person who seeks the opportunity. Turning away young people from a program that solidifies their school-year learning, offers them a chance to contribute to our economy and local institutions, and gets them career-ready is too sensible an investment to pass up. It’s time to make summer jobs universal, an option available to every young person who wants to work.

Yesterday, the Community Service Society of New York is published a proposal for a new, universal Summer Internship Program, that enhances the current SYEP. In her recent State of the City speech, City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito announced new investments to enhance SYEP—we recognize her leadership on this issue, and seek her support to move toward universal programming.

Such an expansion is also an opportunity to improve the program. Right now, SYEP is too disconnected from a student’s experience the other 10 months of the year. Instead of just being a job, the program should be an internship, which builds off the skills and interests developed during the previous school year, leading into the next one; in essence, an extension of the school year. New York City could become the first city in the nation to offer a 12-month

high school program: 10 months of school, followed by an optional two-month summer employment experience.

Unlike the current SYEP, a Summer Internship Program that is more school-connected could offer distinct, sequenced job experiences for young people at different stages. After 9th grade, the youngest participants would be in a program oriented around community service, rather than a formal job, in which they would learn about working in teams, showing up on time, and dealing with supervisors, in a relatively low-stakes setting, such as a public service project. After 10th grade, participants would “graduate” into entry-level work positions in nonprofit organizations, summer camps, and museums. After 11th and 12th grade, they would be “promoted” into more formal private, public and nonprofit jobs, which would be connected to the skills and experiences they have demonstrated during the school year, both in the classroom and in interviews with potential summer employers.

None of this type of school-year planning currently exists, due in large part to the annual funding uncertainty around summer jobs, and its current method of administration. But making the program universal and guaranteed would allow the community-based organizations (CBOs) that provide the program much more time to get to know their youth participants and potential employers, develop jobs, and embed themselves in high schools.

The promise of a paid summer experience should provide an additional strong incentive for students not to drop out from high school. But youth who have already done so should also be able to participate. But unlike now, where a 15 year-old high school sophomore might work alongside a 22 year-old young adult, the service to “disconnected youth” would be distinct, with a set-aside of jobs that were targeted more toward their specific needs, and more likely to help them get back into the workforce.

A move to a universal summer internship program would benefit many: students, would gain skills, experiences, and real wages; schools would not be forced to cope with “summer melt”; public institutions and private sector employers would gain the energy and efforts of so many young workers.

For those who believe college should be a greater focus than work for young people, we have good news. Research shows that employment during the high school years, can increase the likelihood of college, as students become more familiar with why they should attend college, and are likely to make better choices about the types of degree programs that will help them start good careers.

We have made great strides in advancing access to early education through universal pre-kindergarten education. It’s time for the same type of effort for older youth making the tricky transition to adulthood, in a labor market that is harder than ever for young people. A universal summer internship program will not be cheap, but it would cost less than our recent pre-K expansion, so we know that it’s possible. All it takes is the will to do it.

Our report can be found at the CSS website: <http://www.cssny.org/publications/entry/universal-summer-jobs-for-new-york-city-youth>



City Council Hearing – Committee on Youth Services Oversight Hearing RE: Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

**Testimony by Cidra M. Sebastien, Associate Executive Director
The Brotherhood/Sister Sol (Bro/Sis)
February 25, 2016**

Over the past five years, SYEP (Summer Youth Employment Program) administered by Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) has experienced several ups and downs of city and state funding and program shifts. With 100,000 to 130,000 applicants each year and between 27% and 41% of youth receiving employment, this is not a program that should be at risk of losing any funding. We need to ensure SYEP is fully funded, has quality worksite programs, and provides workforce development to young people who participate.

In 2013, 135,388 youth applied with 27% receiving employment; in 2015, 131,897 youth applied with 41% receiving employment. While this is an improvement, sustaining this level of employment will be in jeopardy with any budget cuts.

In 2009, the eligibility requirement expanded to include 14 to 24 year olds. SYEP was reduced from a seven-week program to a six-week program and potential hours earned were scaled for certain youth. At Bro/Sis, very few of our members who apply to SYEP actually received jobs. I would advocate for SYEP to return to a seven-week program model.

In June 2015, I testified to this Committee about the state of New York City's most vulnerable youth – this is connected to SYEP and youth employment opportunities. I am currently a Steering Committee member and Co-Chair of the Education Committee of the Young Women's Initiative, and Executive Director Khary Lazarre-White sits on the Board of Advisors of the Young Men's Initiative. We know that our young people at The Brotherhood/Sister Sol, and all youth of New York City deserve a fully funded summer program that provides meaningful employment opportunities. If we want to ensure more youth have a summer without violence, we need a robust budget for SYEP. If we want to ensure more youth have a summer to develop workforce skills and continue to learn so they do not lag into the new school year, we need a robust budget for SYEP. We cannot allow the SYEP budget to be cut and expect our young people to have a meaningful summer.

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol defines our community as being within a half-mile radius of our building and including West Harlem, Hamilton Heights and Washington Heights. A recent New York Times described Manhattan as “an island of extremes” as it has the biggest dollar income gap of any county in the country, according to data from the Census Bureau. The top 5 percent of households earned \$864,394, or 88 times as much as the poorest 20 percent (\$9822). Fully aware of this statistic and the real life impact in the lives of our youth and families, Bro/Sis employs nearly 75 to 100 young people throughout the year. They receive stipends for community organizing, managing our youth-led farmers market, participating in gender-specific career and college internships, and other program focused on increasing their knowledge

base, developing agency and reducing violence.

Our members used their money earned from summer employment to pay their personal phone bill or to buy back-to-school clothes; however, increasingly, they are using their earned money to assist with rent, household groceries, and other family expenses. This is the state of our young people's experiences; this is the state of the City. There is no denying the economic impact of our members' having summer employment is significant.

We recommend the following:

- City funding to SYEP increases to ensure that more youth are employed, the program returns to seven weeks, and the least amount of hours per week youth receive is 25 hours
- DYCD should partner with innovative community based organizations and private institutions to provide youth with a broader range of employment opportunities that include the arts, technology, entrepreneurship, higher education, health care, and lead to the development of a range of skills
- Enhance "Educational Component" to include meaningful workforce development and skill building including resume writing, interview skills, budgeting, and career exploration; these sessions could be in the form of workshops and/or site visits

Founded in 1995, The Brotherhood/Sister Sol (Bro/Sis) provides comprehensive, holistic and long-term support services to youth who range in age from 8 to 22. Our Theory of Change is to provide multi-layered support, guidance, education and love to our membership, to teach them to have self-discipline and form order in their lives, and then to offer opportunities and access so that they may develop agency. Bro/Sis presently provides direct service to nearly 1000 young people - at our Harlem site, and via our work in three EPIC schools in Brooklyn and Queens, and anti-violence programming at a Bronx school. In addition, Bro/Sis administers a farmers market and environmental program that served over 2000 community residents and sold nearly 34,000 lbs of produce last season. We expose our young people to new opportunities through wilderness retreats, cultural performances, college tours, and month long intensive international study programs. For our recent alumni members, we provide support to ensure they remain in college or employed and that they continue to make healthy and productive choices in their lives; fully developing emotional intelligence and critical decision-making skills.

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation

Testimony for the New York City Council re: Summer Youth Employment Program

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation would like to thank the New York City Council for the opportunity to testify here. With a mission to improve the quality of life in Central Brooklyn and beyond, Restoration partners with residents and businesses to foster economic self-sufficiency, enhance family stability and growth, promote arts and culture and transform the neighborhood into a safe, vibrant place to live, work and visit.

My name is Jako Borren, Director of Program Operations at Restoration and in this role I oversee the Economic Solutions Center, providing social services, financial literacy, education and training, and workforce development services to some 7,000 Brooklyn residents annually.

A crucial component of the services we deliver is our ability to cater to youth and young adults and therefore it is my pleasure to testify on behalf of Restoration's Summer Youth Employment and Work Learn Grow initiatives.

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation has been operating the Summer Youth Employment Program since the summer of 2013. With a base contract of 250 slots annually, Restoration has placed 529, 870, and 1109 youth and young adults in the summer of 2013, 2014, and 2015 respectively – a total of more than 2,500 placements over the past three years.

With applications of around 4000 or more each year -- just for Restoration alone -- it is evident that the number of youth and young adults interested in opportunities for work experience and additional income far exceed the number of available slots. The vast majority of applicants are African American (82%) or Hispanic (10%) and reside in neighborhoods with high unemployment and poverty rates among these populations, including Bedford Stuyvesant, Bushwick, Brownsville, and East New York. The average applicant family size is 4 and over forty percent (42%) of them rely on Foodstamps, Social Security or other form of public assistance. Many families rely on programs such as the Summer Youth Employment program to support household income.

The Summer Youth Employment Program is an important vehicle for Restoration to connect youth and young adults with initial work experience. A third of applicants does not have any prior work experience and the majority of the remaining applicants has only very limited work experience. As we know, youth in New York City is challenged to compete with more seasoned job seekers for even the most entry level positions. An often heard complaint by employers is that job seekers lack the required soft skills to perform in the work place -- for example punctuality, workplace behavior and etiquette, and the ability to follow instructions. Skills that come with experience which young people oftentimes do not yet possess and will only gain through exposure to the work environment.

The Summer Youth Employment Program is for many youth and young adults a first step on their career path. It provides them with a supportive environment where qualified program staff trains and works with them towards a successful job experience. The youth has the opportunity to explore career aspirations while gaining basic job skills.

Take Nafi for example. She enrolled in Summer Youth Employment Program last summer and started working with TJ Murchison Media Boutique as a public relations intern. She had just graduated from Hunter College with a degree in Media Relations and did not yet have any work experience. From the beginning Nafi paid attention to detail, was eager to learn and intent on showing that she was up for the task. Nafi proved to be a trustworthy addition to the Murchison team with a great work ethic. She became such an asset to TJ Murchison that she was hired part time after the summer program ended. She continues to grow in her role as she is not only supporting the company with client campaigns, but is now also managing and training new interns.

Similarly, for small businesses who do not always have the means to take on a new staff member, the Summer Youth Employment Program is a great opportunity to test the waters. Again, taking the example of Murchison. The business owner started her company part-time in 2013 while working a fulltime job on Wallstreet. She left the corporate world in January of 2015 to focus on her business fulltime. Hiring and training the staff she needed was an expensive proposition for her and the Summer Youth Employment Program provided her with the opportunity to offer subsidized employment while focusing on her business expansion.

Earlier this fiscal year, Restoration was awarded the Work Learn and Grow contract, connecting over 450 youth with year-round work experience assignments while in school. This extension of the Summer Youth Employment Program exposes youth to jobs over a longer period of time. Work Learn Grow allows community based organization, such as Restoration, to work more intensively with the youth and thus instill work place behaviors to better prepare them for the competitive world of work.

Let me illustrate with an example. Vincent, a Work Learn Grow participant, was initially assigned to Wallgreens. He showed up for work a couple of times, but then stopped coming. Restoration's Work Learn Grow team contacted Vincent to find out what was going on in his life and after meeting with him it was apparent that he was unmotivated and distracted. He had also told his mother that he was still working while he was out doing other things. After this conversation and several coaching sessions, it was decided that Vincent would be reassigned and placed with another worksite where he is doing office work and has an opportunity to work with children. He is now showing up consistently and happy in his work assignment.

Moreover, through the youth we are also able to connect to their families and offer the supports they need, including income supports, financial literacy, education and training, and career development. Zaire for example came to Restoration to enroll in Work Learn Grow and inquired about opportunities for her 25 year old brother who was out of work. Restoration's Work Learn Grow team was able to connect him with our job readiness and financial literacy services.

Programs such as Summer Youth Employment and Work Learn Grow are crucial in our efforts to reach youth, young adults, and work with their families to become financially independent, self-sufficient, and upwardly mobile.

Sincerely,

Jako Borren
Director of Program Operations
Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation
Phone: 718-636-6972
Email: jborren@restorationplaza.org



CAMBA
Testimony before the New York City Council
Committee on Youth Services
February 25, 2016
Kevin Coffey

My name is Kevin Coffey and I am a Senior Vice President at CAMBA. I would like to thank Council Member Eugene and the members of the Committee for holding this hearing and allowing us to testify about the importance of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). CAMBA is one of New York City's largest and most trusted community-based organizations and is unique among peer agencies in scale, quality, and responsiveness. Founded in 1977 as a merchants' block association, the agency has grown in direct response to the needs of the Brooklyn community and beyond. Today, CAMBA provides services to 45,000 individuals and families annually through an integrated set of six program areas: Economic Development, Education and Youth Development, Family Support, Health, Housing, and Legal Services. Through our comprehensive continuum of care, CAMBA provides services which connect people with opportunities to enhance their quality of life.

CAMBA has been providing SYEP since 1995. For decades, SYEP has served as a stepping stone into the workforce for many youth in New York City. The program provides an opportunity for young people to earn income over the summer while developing workplace skills. These skills include punctuality, responsibility, effective communication, time management, team-based work, and budgeting. Youth learn these critical skills that can lead to future employment opportunities. Moreover, youth are exposed to a network of professionals and leaders outside of their schools and their immediate communities who can serve as mentors, career advisors and valuable allies as they seek to build careers. By creating positive work experiences and providing participants with insight into the world of work, SYEP is shaping the City's future workforce.

SYEP has an impact beyond helping the teens who are its primary beneficiaries. For example, SYEP youth workers at summer camps add staff capacity, allowing host organizations to serve more children. Youths' wages also have an economic impact in the communities where they live and buy items such as clothing and school supplies.

This past summer, the diversity of job opportunities increased substantially, with over 30% of SYEP slots being in the private sector, many within the technology field. A range of job opportunities allows youth to be paired within expressed areas of interest.

This year, we are also providing youth employment services through Work, Learn, and Grow, the invaluable school-year complement to SYEP. We are currently working with 150 youth who are gaining important work experience while attending school.

In the summer of 2016, CAMBA started with 350 SYEP slots and was ultimately awarded a total of 774 slots. We received over 5,000 applications. Given this unprecedented demand for SYEP, CAMBA believes that it is essential that funding for the program grow to provide greater numbers of youth the opportunity to reap the rewards of this program. While we would prefer for the Mayor to baseline funding for the program, we are calling on the City Council to provide total City funding of \$69.5 million, a \$33.6 million Council addition to account for the increase in the minimum wage and to provide a total of 60,000 slots for FY 2017. This will move the City closer to the goal of providing enough jobs for all youth who want them, a threshold we put at 100,000 SYEP slots.

Thank you again for allowing us to testify today. I trust that our presentation will prove helpful to your deliberations.

THE 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
Tel. (212) 967-0322 ext. 324 (UNH) or 212-619-1661 (NFSC) ♦ fax 212-619-1625**

**Testimony of the Campaign for Summer Jobs
Before the New York City Council
Committee on Youth Services
Oversight Hearing – Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**

Honorable Mathieu Eugene, Chair

**Presented by Andrea Bowen, Policy Analyst, United Neighborhood Houses
Justin Hardy, National Urban Fellow, Neighborhood Family Services Coalition
February 25, 2016**

Good afternoon, Chair Eugene, and members of the Committee on Youth Services. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and for Council's leadership and support of SYEP for the last two years during the program's period of unprecedented expansion.

My name is Andrea Bowen, and I am a Policy Analyst with United Neighborhood Houses (UNH). I am here today with Justin Hardy, National Urban Fellow at the Neighborhood Family Services Coalition (NFSC). UNH and NFSC convene 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 in and effective programmatic models for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). As you know, SYEP is a six-week program that provides jobs at the State's minimum wage for 14-24 year olds. CSJ derives its strength from being in direct, regular contact with SYEP providers. Our testimony is informed by their experience.

Background

For the last three fiscal years, more than 130,000 young people a year have applied to SYEP. Despite the record-breaking number of 54,263 SYEP job slots this past summer, over 77,000 young people who applied for a job did not have an opportunity to work through SYEP.

CSJ has been working successfully with the City Council for the last two years to make sure the program expands by 2019 to 100,000 slots, which we have estimated meets demand based on both the number of applications typically received and the number of youth selected who participate in the program. Since CSJ announced its goal of reaching 100,000 slots by 2019, the City Council has made investments that have increased the number of slots by 18,306.

Benefits of SYEP

For decades, SYEP has served as a stepping stone into the workforce for many youth in New York City. The program provides an opportunity for young people to earn income over the summer while developing professional skills. These skills include the importance of punctuality,

responsibility, effective communication, time management, and budgeting. Youth learn critical work skills that can lead to future employment opportunities. By creating positive work experiences and providing participants with insight into the professional world, SYEP shapes the City's future workforce.

Research has shown that SYEP participants demonstrate higher rates of school attendance and passage of the NYS Regents examinations, and lower rates of mortality and incarceration. In addition, the program goes beyond helping teens—SYEP youth workers at summer camps add staff capacity, allowing host organizations to serve more children.

This past summer, the diversity of job opportunities increased substantially, with over 30% of SYEP slots being in the private sector, many within the technology field. A range of job opportunities allows youth to be paired within an expressed area of interest.

Budget Recommendations

CSJ and the community based organizations who provide SYEP want to see the program grow and provide youth with deeper connections to job experiences and career readiness. To that end, we make the following budgetary and policy recommendations:

- **We call upon the City Council to provide funding that will expand the number of SYEP slots to 60,000 this coming summer, approximately 6,000 more slots than last summer. This would bring the City's SYEP budget to a total of \$69.5 million, and would require a City Council investment of \$33.6 million, which includes a restoration of last year's \$21 million investment in SYEP.** In addition to providing nearly 6,000 more slots, this funding would also provide for a minimum wage increase from \$8.75 to \$9 an hour.
- **We also call upon Council to restore 34,000 summer program slots at a cost of \$20.35 million.** Nearly a third of SYEP placements are in summer programs. Without a restoration of these summer program slots, many SYEP jobsites themselves are at risk of closing. CSJ's co-chairs, UNH and NFSC, are both part of the Campaign for Children, and will be working with Council to restore the summer program slots.

Policy Recommendations

- **Begin the application process on February 1 next year,** affording providers more time and predictable numbers of participants in order to make job placements. We acknowledge DYCD's efforts in moving last year's application start date up to March 2, but would like to see the start date be earlier than March 2 this year.
- **Integrate IDNYC into the photo ID verification process for youth who have difficulty providing photo IDs.** Many youth have trouble fulfilling the photo ID requirement. Providers report that youth—especially younger youth—do not have junior high school IDs, or report that they have lost school photo IDs. IDNYC is an alternative for youth who do not have photo IDs, but once youth are accepted into SYEP, they have five days to turn in documentation. Once people have applied to IDNYC, they have to

wait 10 to 14 days to receive their IDNYC cards. DYCD should work with IDNYC to make sure that, once a youth is approved to receive IDNYC, they can use that approval to fulfill the photo ID requirement of the SYEP application process.

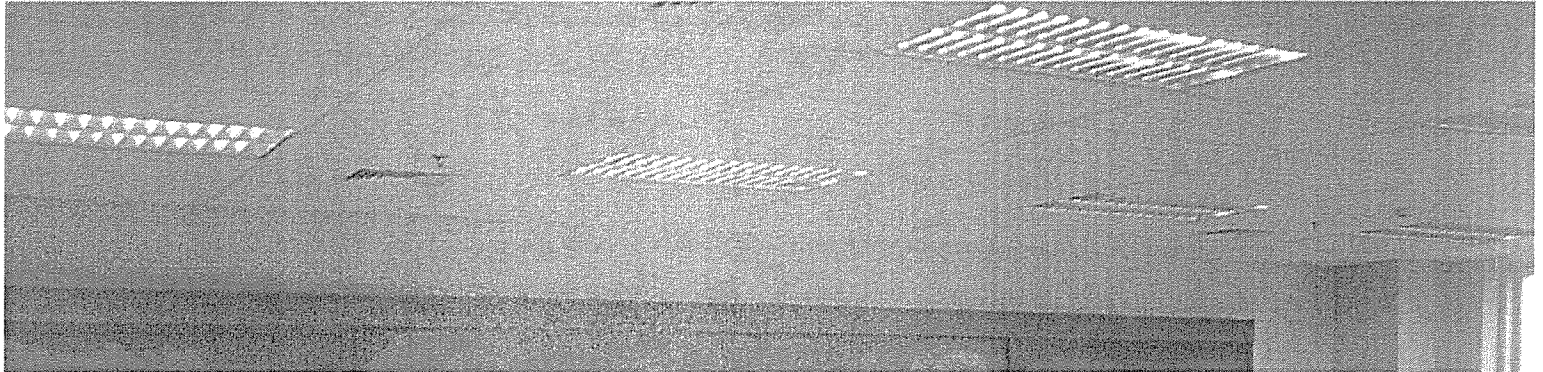
Conclusion

Campaign for Summer Jobs' ultimate goal is for the City to provide a summer job for every young person who wants one. We look forward to working with both the Mayor and the City Council to make this a reality for New York City's youth. However, implementing an expansion that would nearly double the existing system takes planning and time. Typically the administration and City Council reach a budget agreement just days before the summer starts. Therefore, this year, we urge the City Council to invest funds to expand SYEP to serve 60,000 youth.

Thank you for considering these recommendations, and we look forward to answering any questions you have. You can reach at abowen@unhny.org or 212-967-0322 ext. 324, or justin@nfsc-nyc.org, or 212-619-1666.



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JUSTICE IN EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The Justice-in-Education Initiative is a collaboration between the Center for Justice at Columbia University and the Heyman Center for the Humanities, along with the Media and Idea Lab of the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, to provide educational opportunities to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons and to integrate further the study of justice into the Columbia University curriculum.

Although, the United States comprises only five percent of the world's population, we have more than twenty-five percent of the world's prisoners. Columbia University sits at the heart of our current mass incarceration crisis. According to the Justice Atlas of Sentencing and Corrections, more than 50% of all incarcerated Manhattanites call Harlem home. Yet statistical evidence overwhelmingly confirms that a college education reduces recidivism, increases employment opportunities, and strengthens communities. The Justice-in-Education Initiative seeks to provide greater educational opportunities to those who are or have been incarcerated, as well as to enrich the academic life of faculty and students wishing to engage in issues of contemporary justice.

The Justice-in-Education Initiative aims to do the following:

Aim 1 is to offer courses, taught by Columbia instructors, in local prisons and to provide those who have come home from prison with the opportunity to continue their education at Columbia and its partner institutions, drawing on the support of community organizations.

The Justice-in-Education Initiative offers courses, taught by Columbia instructors, in local prisons and provides those who have come home from prison with the opportunity to continue their education at Columbia and its partner institutions. For formerly incarcerated persons and court-involved youth, Justice-in-Education provides a skills-intensive humanities course offered through Columbia's Department of English and Comparative Literature and conducted on Columbia's Morningside Campus.

Aim 2 is to provide opportunities for jailed youth to engage with education.

In Rikers Island jail, where the average stay is around three months, Columbia faculty and students are offering college-oriented educational programming to youth and young adults ages 16 to 24 years. These programs – that take the form of mini-courses on topics including hip hop/beat making, computer coding, and developing a business plan – are designed to engage young people who are incarcerated.

Aim 3 is to develop strong curricular support for the effective engagement of Columbia faculty and students in prison and jail education.

The Justice-in-Education Initiative provides Columbia students and faculty with an interdisciplinary framework for understanding criminal justice issues by supporting the development of new course offerings within the undergraduate curriculum that engage contemporary issues of justice. It also supports the development of a new website, designed in conjunction with Core preceptors and students, that would support discussion of contemporary justice issues.

Aim 4 is to change public and political thinking about the importance of access to higher education for the incarcerated and the formerly incarcerated.

In collaboration with the Media and Idea Lab at the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, the Justice-in-Education Initiative will address how to change the narrative about incarcerated people so as to emphasize their potential to grow and develop. Columbia faculty and students will work with community partners to produce new

narratives about incarceration. These stories will emphasize the role of education in human development, whether behind bars or in the successful reentry of those coming home from prison.

The Justice-in-Education Initiative strives to not only make higher education available to a population that has been effectively excluded from it, but also contribute to the growing movement to end mass incarceration.

For more information contact us @

justice-in-education@columbia.edu or 212-854-1277

The Justice-in-Education Initiative is supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.



[About](#) [Education](#) [Research](#) [Policy](#) [Events](#) [Resources](#) [Support](#)



MISSION & BACKGROUND

The Center for Justice at Columbia University is committed to reducing the nation's reliance on incarceration and advancing alternative approaches to safety and justice through education, research and policy. Its mission is to help transform a criminal justice system from one that is driven by punishment and retribution to one that is centered on prevention and healing. The Initiative is interdisciplinary and built around community collaboration. It works in partnership with schools, departments, centers and institutes across Columbia, other universities, government agencies, community organizations, advocates and those directly affected by the criminal justice system.

Background

The United States currently leads the world in its incarceration rate, with more than 2.2 million people in its prisons and jails. This figure, which marks a 500% increase over the past three decades, means that while the U.S. boasts a mere five percent of the world's population, it has more than a quarter of the world's prisoners. The causes and consequences of mass incarceration are numerous and far-reaching, leading many to assert that it is the civil rights issue of today. From minimum mandatory sentencing and the war on drugs to discriminatory policing and the disproportionate implementation and impact of criminal justice policies on people of color, to private prisons and the divestment from education, to the use of punishment as the primary tool of addressing societal challenges and to the impacts on democracy and voting rights; families, communities and the larger society have been deeply affected by our current criminal justice system.

The United States is now at a historical moment where the consequences of mass incarceration and criminal justice policy have captured public attention promoting calls for change across partisan divide. Based in the strongly held belief that universities have a large role to play in enacting social change, the Center seeks to engage and harness the collective capacity of Columbia University and its range of resources, including faculty and students, to impact the trajectory of criminal justice policy. The Center is an interdisciplinary project as we seek to work beyond individual disciplines to create and support social change. Towards this end, we strongly believe that working in collaboration with those directly affected by mass incarceration and criminal justice policy, including people who have been formerly incarcerated and community organizations and advocates working on these issues, is critical to developing effective solutions. Lastly, we aim to serve as a bridge between academia and community and grass-roots organizations.

The Center was launched in 2014, growing out of a year long pilot project called the Justice Initiative. Its origins date back to 2009 with the founding of the Criminal Justice Initiative: Supporting Children, Families and Communities, based at the School of Social Work. CJI is recognized as a leader in developing programs and trainings addressing mass incarceration and its consequences. CJI has also succeeded in building a web of relationships with a wide array of faculty, students and community members working on issues of mass incarceration and criminal justice.

Center Agenda for 2014

Through our yearlong program of events, we aim to ensure that students and faculty are more informed about and engaged with criminal justice issues. Our education work includes supporting innovative teaching related to justice and incarceration throughout the schools and disciplines. Our Investing in Justice Pilot Projects funds university-community research partnerships, curriculum and conferences and our research working group will provide opportunities for faculty and students to receive support for ongoing research. Our policy work includes a large symposium and campaign to release aging people in prison. In spring of 2015, we will begin our advocacy efforts to increase educational opportunities for people who are in prison and who have come home from prison. Finally, our website is a resource for work on new thinking about justice at Columbia and in the community.

The HEYMAN CENTER for the Humanities at Columbia University

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Public Humanities Initiative



Upcoming PHI Events

February 26, 2016
Real Women, Real Voices: Where the people meet the policy

March 29, 2016
Mobility and Confinement: An Interdisciplinary Conference on Incarceration in America

[View full schedule of upcoming Public Humanities Initiative events.](#)

Featured PHI News

February 4, 2016
The Confined Arts Exhibition

January 15, 2016
Justice-in-Education Initiative Transforms the Lives of Current, Former Prisoners

November 10, 2015
Call for Applications: Public Humanities Graduate Student Fellowship, 2016-17

August 28, 2015
Short Videos by JUST Arts Lab Students at Columbia

[PHI Mailing List](#)

About the Initiative

In 2014, the Heyman Center for the Humanities established a Public Humanities Initiative. Its mission is to foster and enhance community engagement with the humanities at Columbia and university engagement with Columbia's diverse neighboring communities. Often collaborating with other Columbia centers and institutes, with local educational and cultural institutions, and with community organizations, it sponsors a wide range of programming, service, and research activities intended to interest and include audiences beyond the university.

The Heyman Center Public Humanities Initiative strives to expand the opportunities for humanities-based conversations, on and off campus. It sponsors lectures, panel discussions, roundtables, film screenings, poetry readings, dramatic performances, and community-university collaborative projects.

In partnership with the New York Council for the Humanities (NYCH), it supports graduate fellowships in the Public Humanities and works with community organizations on specific NYCH-funded projects. It also supports curriculum development for courses with significant public humanities content.

Additionally, the Heyman Center Public Humanities Initiative administers The Justice-in-Education Initiative, a collaborative project with the Center for Justice at Columbia and the Media and Idea Lab to provide education to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons and to integrate the study of justice more fully into the Columbia University curriculum. The Justice-in-Education Initiative is made possible by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.



Public Humanities Programming

The Public Humanities Initiative sponsors cultural events, discussions, and collaborative projects that advance public engagement with the humanities. These projects involve faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, community organizations, and local artists. In the coming months, programming will include events on a range of topics, including "narratives of inclusion" and "art as activism."



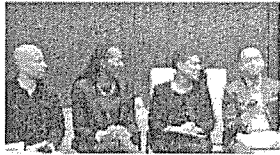
Public Humanities Fellowship

In partnership with the New York Council for the Humanities, the Heyman Center Public Humanities Initiative offers graduate students the opportunity to explore the public dimensions of their own scholarship by supporting projects that are situated in the public sphere. Public Humanities Fellows receive training in the methods and approaches of public scholarship, often working closely with organizations committed to serving public audiences. [↗](#)



Public Humanities Initiative News

The Heyman Center Public Humanities Initiative envisions new ways of interacting with the public, focusing our efforts on the impact of the humanities on civic life and society. To stay abreast of the latest news and happenings, please visit our [PHI News page](#). [↗](#)



Justice-in-Education Initiative

The Justice-in-Education Initiative is a collaboration between the Heyman Center for the Humanities and the Center for Justice at Columbia University, along with the Media and Idea Lab of the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, to provide educational opportunities to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons and to integrate further the study of justice into the Columbia University curriculum. [↗](#)

[About /](#)

Mission

[Mission](#)[History](#)[Staff](#)[Trustees](#)[Annual
Reports](#)[Financials](#)[Investment
Overview](#)[Policies](#)[Careers](#)[Contact
Information](#)

Mission

The Foundation endeavors to strengthen, promote, and, where necessary, defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies. To this end, we support exemplary institutions of higher education and culture as they renew and provide access to an invaluable heritage of ambitious, path-breaking work.

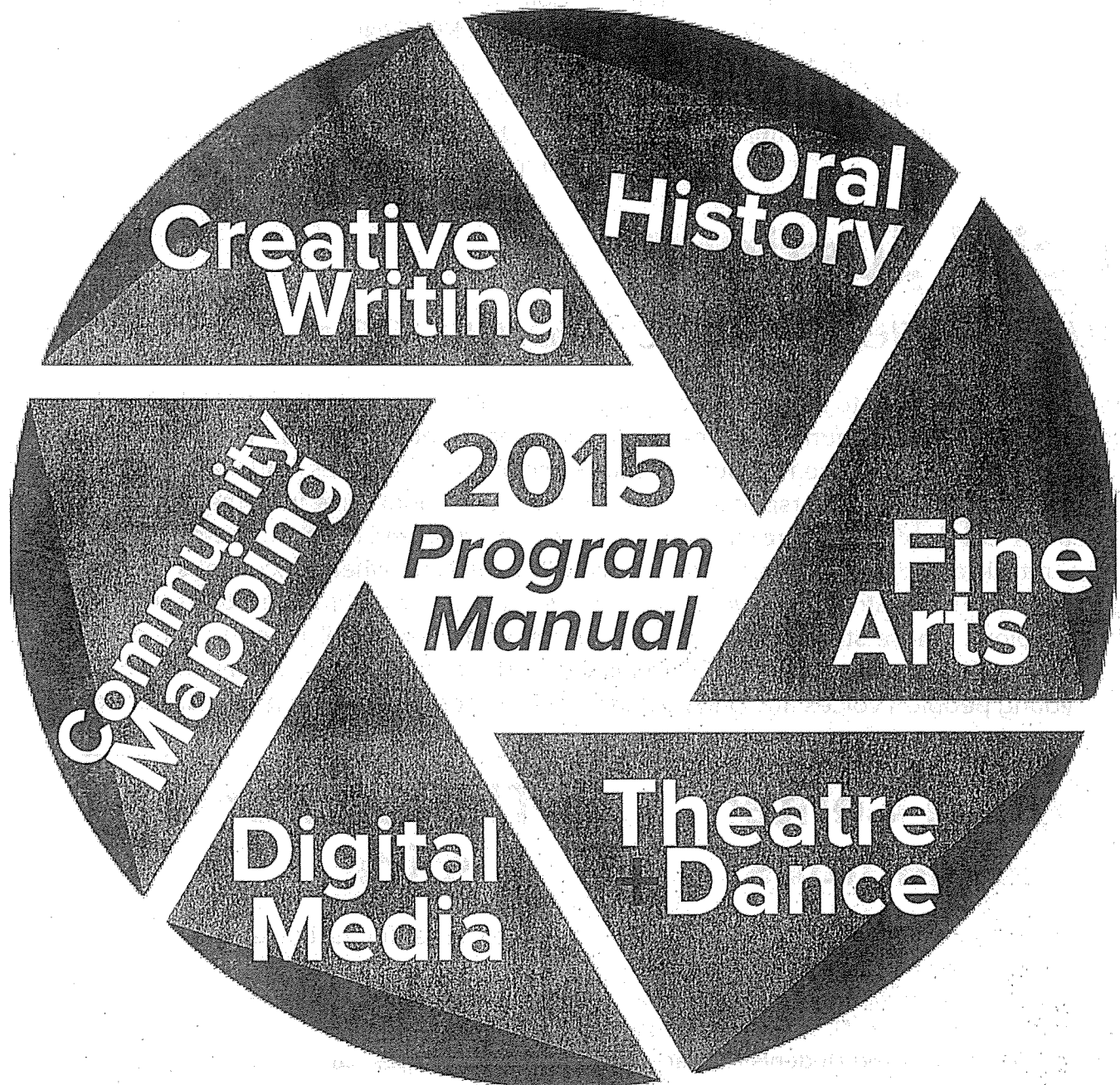
RATIONALE

Through forms of representation and expression as old as rock art and ancient lyric and as new as graphic novels and digital music, humankind has developed means of chronicling, recording, analyzing, and transmitting its understandings of human agency, dignity, history, and society. Much of this work has been accomplished in the domains of the humanities and the arts.

In tandem with the sciences and social sciences, the humanities and arts deepen our understanding of the human condition and experience. Their values are essential to viable societies and to productive relations among

them. Since leading institutions of higher education and culture set and extend the standards for achievement in the humanities and the arts, the task of nurturing them is vital to our shared global future.

Justice Storytelling +Arts Lab



About Us

The **JUST Arts Lab** is a safe and supportive space to learn arts and media production skills and engage in creative exploration and self expression. You will explore a variety of personal and community topics through independent and group projects. Together, the group will generate new stories about justice and inclusion that are initiated and driven by participants. We will also explore ways of advocating for community needs and using media as a tool for community education and engagement.

We will learn + practice:

ARTS

Creative writing
Fine arts (such as drawing, painting)
Oral history interviewing
Theater + dance
Digital media + Videography
Community stories + Neighborhood mapping

CAREER READINESS SKILLS

Project planning + development
Project budgeting
Designing + making presentations
Interviewing + listening techniques

Social Justice:

Youth Stories, Artistic Expression + Advocacy

Young people have a lot to say about how they see and experience justice and injustice in their own lives, their communities, in the media, and throughout the world. The **JUST Arts Lab** is designed to create a space for young social justice artists, advocates, and leaders to explore their experiences with and perspectives on what a just world looks like from their and other generations' points of view. Through storytelling, exploration, and advocacy across different forms of artistic and digital media, young people will investigate what justice looks like. The heart of the Lab is the stories that youth participants want to tell and the questions that they want to explore. These stories, questions and creative envisioning will be part of an ongoing dialogue with the Center for Justice, Columbia University, and the many communities of NYC where young people's voices and perspectives are incorporated into the public discussion on reimagining justice locally and nationally.

Heyman Center for Humanities

The Heyman Center for the Humanities provides the intellectual and physical space for interdisciplinary discussions among members of the Columbia community and the New York City public. It brings together faculty and students from across the university to share thinking, debate ideas, and collectively consider methodological, conceptual, and ethical issues of common interest and concern.

The Center for Justice

The Center for Justice at Columbia University works across disciplines in collaboration with the community to reduce the United States' reliance on incarceration and advance alternative approaches to safety and justice through education, research and policy.

Program Timeline

July 6-9: Self Portraits

We will begin by exploring self-representation through visual art, photography, and writing. We will read different kinds of writing that incorporate ideas of origin and identity. Participants will produce their own visual and written self-portraits.

July 13-16: Listening/Being Heard

We will begin with the art of listening and learn interviewing skills, drawing from oral history, anthropology, and narrative medicine. We will also study spoken word, rap and hip hop as examples of different forms of engaging text and music. We will collect, interpret, and produce oral accounts and produce musical tracks.

July 20-23: Embodying Participation

Further developing on the themes generated within our community up to this point, we will explore dance, theater, and circus in order to experience the rich challenges of ensemble creative work.

July 27-30: Reading Representation + Mediation

We will begin by asking fundamental questions of voice, authorship, and autonomy. This will set the stage for a rich ethical discussion about subjectivity and bias in visual storytelling. We will discuss and experiment with different ways the camera, light, and sound can immerse viewers and help convey the artist/filmmaker's intended message. We will conclude the week focusing on "the invisible" (and sometimes purposely visible) art of editing.

August 3-6: Mapping Self, Neighborhood + Communities

We will extend our focus to look at social issues that are affecting communities and regions, drawing from critical geographies and community mapping.

August 10-28: Action + Advocacy

Building on the skills and explorations of previous weeks, participants will develop a narrative project that they want to explore and develop with the support of an advisor/s. Participants will be encouraged to form groups with others who have complementary skill sets and interests.

Skills Pre-Teens & Young Adults Learn From the Arts

1. Creativity - If young have practice thinking creatively, it will come naturally to them now and in their future career. Being able to think on your feet, approach tasks from different perspectives and think 'outside of the box' will distinguish one child from another. In this arts program, pre-teens and young adults will be asked to recite a monologue in 3 different ways to:

- Create a painting that represents a memory,
- Creatively compose a piece of writing and/or poetry.

2. Confidence - The skills developed through theater, not only train young people how to convincingly deliver a message, but also build the confidence they need to take command of the stage or and keep the attention of their audience. Theater training gives young people practice stepping out of their comfort zone and allows them to make mistakes and learn from them in rehearsal. This process will empower young people to perform, speak and/or present in front of large audiences.

3. Problem Solving - Artistic creations are birthed through the solving of problems. How do I turn this clay into a sculpture? How do I portray a particular emotion through dance? How can I turn this mistake into an intentional aesthetic? Without even realizing it young people that participate in the arts are consistently being challenged to solve problems. All this practice problem solving develops children's skills in reasoning and understanding. This will help develop important problem-solving skills necessary for success in any career.

4. Perseverance - When young people practice, learn the skills and techniques and don't give up, completing a difficult project or accomplishing a goal can become that much easier. In an increasingly competitive world, where people are being asked to continually develop new skills, perseverance is essential to achieving success.

5. Focus - The ability to focus is a key skill developed through ensemble work. Keeping a balance between listening and contributing involves a great deal of concentration and focus. It requires each participant to not only think about their role or simply one aspect of there creation, but how other roles contribute to the bigger picture of what is being created. Recent research has shown that participation in the arts improves children's abilities to concentrate and focus in other aspects of their lives.

6. Receiving Constructive Feedback - Receiving constructive feedback about a performance or visual art piece is a regular part of any arts instruction. Young people learn that feedback is part of learning and it is not something to be offended by or to be taken personally. It is something helpful. The goal is the improvement of skills and evaluation is incorporated at every step of the process. Each arts discipline has built in parameters to ensure that critique is a valuable experience and greatly contributes to the success of the final piece.

7. Collaboration - Most arts disciplines are collaborative in nature. Through the arts, young people will practice working together, sharing responsibility, and compromising with others to accomplish a common goal. When a child has a part to play in a music ensemble, or a theater or dance production, they begin to understand that their contribution is necessary for the success of the group. Through these experiences children gain confidence and start to learn that their contributions have value even if they don't have the biggest role.

8. Dedication - When young people get to practice following through with artistic endeavors that result in a finished product or performance, they learn to associate dedication with a feeling of accomplishment. They practice developing healthy work habits of being on time, respecting the contributions of others, and putting effort into the success of the final piece. In the performing arts, the reward for dedication is the warm feeling of an audience's applause, making all their efforts worthwhile.

9. Accountability - When children practice creating something collaboratively they get used to the idea that their actions affect other people. They learn that when they are not prepared or on time, that other people suffer. Through the arts, children also learn that it is important to admit that you made a mistake and take responsibility for it. Because mistakes are a regular part of the process of learning in the arts, young people begin to see that mistakes happen. They learn to acknowledge them, learn from them and move on.

Researchers found that sustained learning in music and theater correlates strongly with higher achievement in both math and reading. In addition, a study of a high-poverty school in Chicago showed that the schools that were participating in the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE) made huge strides in closing the gap between high- and low-income students' academic achievement. These are precisely the result CVU seeks to attain amongst students of a lower socio economic status (SES).

**THE COUNCIL
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Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 2/25/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANDRE WHITE Deputy Chief of Staff

Address: 123 William St.

I represent: DYCD

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 2/25/16

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Name: DAPHNE MONTANEZ Assistant Commissioner, Youth Workforce Development

Address: 123 William St.

I represent: DYCD

Address: _____

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Name: CHRIS LEWIS Director, SYEP

Address: 123 William St.

I represent: DYCD

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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Date: 2/25/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kristin McCloud

Address: 534 Linwood St. Brooklyn, NY 11208

I represent: Songs of Solomon, Inc.

Address: 318 W. 139th St. New York, NY 10030

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jako Borren

Address: 1368 Fulton Street, Brooklyn NY 11216

I represent: Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corp

Address: 1368 Fulton Street, Brooklyn NY 11216

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Name: Kevin Coffey

Address: 1720 Church Ave

I represent: CAABA

Address: 1720 Church Ave Brooklyn NY 11226

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(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: _____

DR. SAT BHATTACHARYA

Address: _____

536 E 82nd St, #5F, NY, NY 10028

I represent: _____

HARLEM CHILDREN SOCIETY

Address: _____

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(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: _____

Cidra M. sebastien

Address: _____

512 West 143rd street NY NY 10031

I represent: _____

The Brotherhood - Sister Sol program

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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Date: 2/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: _____

David Fischer

Address: _____

253 Broadway 8th Fl

I represent: _____

NYC Center for Youth Employment

Address: _____

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Andrea Bowen - Justin Hardy

Address: _____

I represent: Campaign for Summer Jobs

Address: _____

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ariel Savransky + Baldino Baldeo

Address: 14 Wall St. NY NY 10005

I represent: Citizens' Committee for Children

Address: 14 Wall St. NY NY 10005

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Appearance Card

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Date: 2/25/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ISAC Scott

Address: 50 E 106 St NYC 10029

I represent: Columbia University

Address: _____

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