

TESTIMONY

Before the Council of the City of New York
Committees on Youth Services and Small Business

Oversight: Support for Unemployed Youth

Valerie Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Connect

February 27, 2023

Good afternoon, Chair Stevens, Chair Menin, and members of the Committees on Youth Services and Small Business. I am Valerie Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Connect at the Department of Youth and Community Development. I am joined by Associate Commissioner Daphne Montanez.

On behalf of Commissioner Keith Howard, thank you for the opportunity to discuss DYCD's youth workforce development programs. The overarching goal of all our youth workforce development programs is to provide young New Yorkers with valuable skills, knowledge and experience that will help them build their careers in our dynamic economy. Working in partnership with our network of nonprofit program providers, we offer programs for both in-school and out of school youth that provide paid work opportunities, career exploration, and work readiness training, and in some cases occupational training, through a portfolio of programs for young people ages 14 through 24. Our programs include the Summer Youth Employment Program and its companion school-year program Work, Learn, & Grow, the federally funded Learn & Earn and Train & Earn programs for young people with barriers to employment, and the intensive Advance & Earn training and employment program.

Summer Youth Employment Program

Earlier this month, we opened applications for the 2023 Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). This summer will mark the 60th anniversary of the program, with New York City once again slated to provide 100,000 summer job opportunities for young people ages 14-24. SYEP applications can be completed online (nyc.gov/syep) or at a participating community-based organization until Friday, March 31, 2023. Applications are also open for employers who would like to provide work experiences for SYEP participants by becoming a worksite. We appreciate the City Council's strong commitment to promoting SYEP and hosting young people in government offices, and we look forward to working with you this summer.

The city's SYEP program, which is the largest in the country, runs for six weeks in July and August. The initiative provides youth with paid opportunities to explore potential career interests and pathways, allowing participants to engage in learning experiences that help develop their professional, social, civic, and leadership skills. SYEP participants are compensated for their work at diverse worksites in fields that include business/finance, fashion, philanthropy,

technology, arts/culture, engineering/construction, healthcare, legal services, real estate, transportation, advertising/marketing, hospitality/tourism, media/entertainment, and retail.

Last summer, a record number of participants got a jump start on their careers at more than 18,000 worksites in all five boroughs. Ladders for Leaders, a professional internship component of SYEP, doubled in 2022 to place 1,732 high-achieving young New Yorkers in internships at companies such as Google, JetBlue, Madison Square Garden, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, SL Green, A&E Networks, and the Ford Foundation.

As part of Mayor Adams' commitment to expanding SYEP, DYCD worked with City agencies, the City Council, and other public sector organizations last year to provide an unprecedented number of internship opportunities in local government to nearly 9,000 young people. Over 800 youth interned with the NYPD and FDNY, with both departments hosting events for participants to explore careers in law enforcement and first response.

SYEP offers workshops on work readiness, career exploration and financial literacy. Financial literacy curriculum equips young people with the tools to build a positive and healthy relationship with money. Youth identify their financial values; learn concepts related to banking, saving, taxation, and investing; and develop practical skills to achieve financial wellness. Additionally, as part of a national effort to encourage young people to save and make healthy financial choices, SYEP participants have the option to receive their wages via direct deposit to a bank account of their choice.

Special programming is available for NYC youth through various service options, including CareerReady. The initiative is designed for students between the ages of 14 and 21 from select DOE schools, and allows students, school leaders, and CBO program staff to align the SYEP experience with academic learning. Last year, SYEP's "school-based model" served 21,000 students at 226 NYC high schools. Selection to the program is conducted by the participating schools rather than the online lottery. Through SYEP Special Initiatives, equity is at the forefront of recruitment from historically underserved communities. In 2022, more than 13,300 participants were NYCHA residents; and nearly 4,700 young people were part of the SYEP Emerging Leaders Program, which provides specialized experiences for youth who are justice-involved, experiencing homelessness, in foster care, or who have disabilities and attend DOE District 75 schools.

Launching this summer is the inaugural SYEP Pride initiative. SYEP Pride will connect young people who identify as LGBTQ+ with supportive, safe, and affirming work and career exploration experiences. The program will also allow employer partners to offer unique employment and learning opportunities that will support and empower LGBTQ+ youth through the SYEP program.

CareerReady Work, Learn & Grow

CareerReady WLG is a school-year program that offers young people ages 16 to 19 from select public schools in New York City an opportunity to strengthen work readiness skills, explore careers, and receive academic support, including guidance on postsecondary education and the potential to earn college credit. The program offers college readiness skills to make a smooth

transition from high school to college and beyond; skill building activities including assistance with resumes, cover letters, interviews, and workplace etiquette; paid internship opportunities; and access to CUNY College Now courses. It is open to participants in the previous summer's SYEP cohort who attend partner schools. This past year, WLG also worked with SYEP Special Initiatives providers to serve over 900 youth who experienced barriers to employment or who reside in NYCHA developments. We thank the Council for your strong advocacy and partnership in the establishment and growth of the program.

Learn & Earn

Learn & Earn, formerly the In-School Youth Program, is a career exploration and academic support program for high school juniors and seniors. The program provides participants with academic support, college application assistance, work readiness training, service learning and leadership activities, as well as a paid six-week summer internship. We have implemented 250 paid hours of school year internship and college readiness services at \$15/hour for all participants. This will allow participants to grow work readiness skills, gain CUNY credit and earn money, and further align DYCD's workforce development programs for in-school youth.

Train & Earn

Train & Earn, formerly the Out-of-School Youth Program, is a career pathways program that provides comprehensive job training and employment services, along with support services needed by participants to find a permanent job, obtain their high school equivalency if applicable, and access postsecondary education and training. Train & Earn is for youth and young adults aged 16–24, who are not working and not in school, and meet certain other eligibility requirements. Training is provided in sectors including healthcare, IT, construction and logistics, and food service, and leads to participants receiving industry-recognized credentials.

Advance & Earn

Advance & Earn is our newest new training and employment program for youth between the ages of 16-24. Advance & Earn helps further young people's careers through comprehensive High School Equivalency (HSE) test preparation, employer-recognized trainings, credentials and certifications, and paid internships. Advance & Earn has exposed participants to the fields of masonry and landscaping, culinary arts, digital marketing, medical billing, and direct support professions, and guided through obtaining Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDL) and becoming Certified Nurse's Aides.

In February, our newest Advance & Earn program launched in the Bronx. The new program is located at Per Scholas headquarters on East 138 Street, providing High School Equivalency classes to prepare young people for the GED, as well as work readiness courses, internship opportunities, and advanced training for a variety of high-demand certifications in the medical field. We look forward to working with Commonpoint Queens and Per Scholas to provide these exciting opportunities to youth who really need the help.

Int. No. 686

Intro 686, on today's agenda, relates to partnerships and work sites in SYEP. In 2022, SYEP placed participants in about 3400 worksites in government agencies. We increased placements by 135% in Mayoral agencies and offices.

In order to expand placements in the private sector, First Deputy Mayor Wright challenged the City's Business Leadership Council to hire SYEP participants, and the Real Estate Board of New York called upon members to support the program. We connected with the Department of Small Business Services, which hosted interns in their offices and in the Workforce1 Centers. SBS provided important connections to their network of BID leaders, M/WBE firms, and Workforce1 partners. These and other public-private partnerships are integral to the program's growth.

DYCD staff, the nonprofit SYEP providers, and the worksites in every sector are committed to creating meaningful work experiences. It is important that we maintain flexibility in order to meet the evolving needs of participants and employers.

Thank you once again. We are here today with our colleagues from the Mayor's Office for Talent and Workforce Development and the Department of Small Business Services. We are pleased to answer any questions you may have.



**Citizens' Committee
for Children of NEW YORK**

**Testimony of Caitlyn Passaretti
Policy and Advocacy Associate
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York
Submitted to the New York City Council
Oversight Hearing on Support for Unemployed Youth
February 27th, 2023**

Citizens' Committee for Children of New York is a 76-year-old independent, multi-issue child advocacy organization. CCC does not accept or receive public resources, provide direct services, nor represent a sector or workforce; our priority is improving outcomes for children and families through research and advocacy. We document the facts, engage and mobilize New Yorkers, and advocate for solutions to ensure that every New York child is healthy, housed, educated, and safe.

We would like to thank Chair Stevens, Chair Menin, and all the members of the Committees on Youth Services and Small Businesses for holding today's oversight hearing on support for unemployed youth.

CCC's recently released [index on Child and Family Well-being](#), which analyzes all 62 counties in New York, demonstrates just how critical it is that we take action to support employment and engagement opportunities for young people in our city.¹ The index looks at indicators of *Teens Not in School and Not Working (16-19 years)* and *Youth Unemployment (20-24)*, finding that rates vary across boroughs:²

- In Bronx County, 7.4% of teens are not in school and not working in 2020, remaining constant from 2018. The youth unemployment rate is 19.8% in 2020, down from 20.4% in 2018.
- In Kings County, 6.6% of teens are not in school and not working in 2020, down from 6.8% in 2018. The youth unemployment rate is 12.8% in 2020, down from 14.4% in 2018.
- In New York County, 3.8% of teens are not in school and not working in 2020, down from 4.1% in 2018. The youth unemployment rate is 10.2% in 2020, down from 10.9% in 2018.
- In Queens County, 5.4% of teens are not in school and not working in 2020, up from 4.7% in 2018. The youth unemployment rate is 13.5% in 2020, down from 13.7% in 2018.
- In Richmond County, 4.9% of teens are not in school and not working in 2020, down from 5.9% in 2018. The youth unemployment rate is 12.1% in 2020, up from 10.7% in 2018.

Young people are still experiencing the effects of COVID, both socially and economically. CCC's *Keeping Track of New York City's Children* found that 62% of youth aged 18 to 24 reported a loss of employment income since March 2020, and nearly a quarter of youth aged 16-24 are out of school and out of work in New York City.³ This data shows too many young people facing barriers to accessing education, employment, and other community supports.

¹ "Child and Family Wellbeing in New York State." Citizens' Committee for Children of New York. (2023). Retrieved from: <https://cccnewyork.org/data-publications/cfwbnys2023/>

² The difference between "Teens Not in School and Not Working" and "Youth Unemployment" is the age range of young people. "Teens Not in School and Not Working" refers to 16-19 years, while "Youth Unemployment" refers to 20-24 year olds.

³ "Youth Chapter." CCC Keeping Track Online. (2020). Retrieved from: <https://cccnewyork.org/data-publications/keeping-track-of-nyc-children-2022/?section=Youth>



The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) remains a critical resource for young New Yorkers. This program has been shown to significantly reduce the likelihood of arrest and incarceration, as well as support opportunities for young people to develop skills and opportunities for their future.⁴ Other youth programs play an essential role in helping young people develop the skills and experience to achieve success as they grow into adulthood. Additionally, there is a growing body of research that shows the crucial developmental milestones youth achieve through extracurricular activities and summer camp models. There are data showing better mental health outcomes, higher achievements in academic settings, and successful job attainment as a result of engaging in these types of programs.⁵

Youth leaders from the CCC, CUNY's Intergenerational Change Initiative (ICI) and YVote came together to craft the 2023 Youth Agenda, of which Economic Mobility is a top priority. Youth want investments into employment opportunities, specifically summer jobs for all. **The young people surveyed reported they want to build and expand on the previous SYEP expansion by moving to a Universal SYEP and increasing year-round employment options.**⁶

In his State of the City address, Mayor Adams prioritized employment, uplifting the Apprenticeship Accelerator which aims to connect 30,000 New Yorkers to apprenticeships by 2030. **It will be pivotal to ensure this opportunity will be accessible to young adults and older youth as they try to find a place in the workforce.** This, in tandem with SYEP and Work Learn Grow, will increase employment opportunities for young people.

Runaway and homeless youth (RHY) do not have an option for a permanent exit out of homelessness, as vouchers for them are not permanent. In NYC Fiscal Year 2022, less than 6% of youth exited a DYCD RHY residential program into their own apartment or supportive housing, compared to 39% being discharged back into another homeless situation.⁷ **Stable employment and housing are clearly connected, which is why it is critical to ensure that young people aging out of foster care or leaving detention can utilize the CityFHEPS voucher immediately, without having to register with the shelter system and wait 90 days. If we can ensure young people can access housing, it is more likely they will be able to sustain employment.**

⁴ Judd B. Kessler & Sarah Tahamont & Alexander Gelber & Adam Isen, 2022. "[The Effects of Youth Employment on Crime: Evidence from New York City Lotteries](#)," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, vol 41(3), pages 710-730.

⁵ Heller, R., & Ettekal, A. V. "THE DEVELOPMENTAL VALUE OF EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS: A conversation with Andrea Vest Ettekal." (2021). *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 102(8), 30–34. Retrieved from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27083855>

⁶ The 2023 Youth Agenda. 2023. Retrieved from: https://www.canva.com/design/DAFWzjE8Aj8/XzKyq9e-4FHi7BpWKUWltg/view?utm_content=DAFWzjE8Aj8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

⁷ New York City YHPD Planning Committee. (2022). *Opportunity Starts with a Home: New York City's Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness*. New York City, NY: New York City YHDP Planning Committee



CCC urges city leaders to take the necessary steps to strengthen the entire youth services ecosystem so providers can meet the needs of youth while also meeting the needs of their staff. Youth employment and youth services provide opportunities for young people to achieve financial goals, connect with other youth, and build community.

The Campaign for Children, of which CCC is a steering committee member, has developed the following recommendations which support youth services and programs:

Prioritize programming for special populations of youth

- Young people who have lived experience with the foster system, shelter system, justice system or immigration system may be unaware of opportunities available to them or lack resources to connect to them. **We therefore urge city leaders to increase investments in youth employment and youth development programming and enhance supports that enable special populations of youth to access year-round youth development and employment training opportunities.**
- **Ensure that the enrollment process for summer youth programs has resources for families who need additional digital and language support.**
- **Provide more robust and comprehensive trainings to support District 75 youth who do want to enroll into summer experiences, in addition to providing resources for that child's specific needs** (accessibility equipment, consistent paraprofessional staff presence, clear escalation protocols, and additional layers of support)
- **Reform CityFHEPS so that runaway and homeless youth can utilize vouchers without having to go into the shelter system**

Address administrative barriers that prevent programs from effectively serving youth

- Significant delays within the Comprehensive Background Check system in youth-serving programs have hindered the ability of providers to hire sufficient staff for their programs. **We therefore urge city leaders to address ongoing delays experienced within the Comprehensive Background Check system.**
- When DOE managed enrollment this past summer, CBOs were unable to enroll a child even there was an opening, and instead had to go through complex administrative barriers to enroll through DOE. **Therefore, we urge city leaders to enable CBOs to maintain their own rosters so that if there are young people who cannot attend the CBO's programming, CBOs have the power to unenroll that youth and give that slot to a young person who can attend so the slot does not go to waste.**
- **Maintain SACC (School Age Child Care) licensing ratios of staff to youth and allow for budgets that account for the additional staff and other costs.**

Ensure adequate resources for the youth services system

- Currently, providers are experiencing multiple months of payment delays that are jeopardizing fiscal solvency of CBOs and negatively impacting both the workforce and the children, youth and parents depending on youth services. **New York City must ensure timely contract registration and payment for services rendered.**
- **Design year-round SONYC and COMPASS procurements (concept papers and RFPs) that have cost escalation built in and that accurately reflect the costs of providing services**



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and implementing innovative program design. The year-round model would give providers more space to plan and prepare for programs, which ultimately benefits youth and families.

- **Model planning for future summer programming after this year's successful expansion of SYEP by investing early to give sufficient time to prepare and remaining attentive to feedback from providers and advocates**
- **Match cost-per-participant rates of Beacon and Cornerstone programming with school-based alternatives.** To address this, we urge the City to set a wage floor at \$21 an hour, allowing providers to offer competitive salaries and compensate staff for the important, quality work that they do. A wage increase for both afterschool and summer programming will help with staffing challenges and stabilize the youth development workforce to prevent the sector from losing more talented individuals to other employers.
- **Invest the needed funding to realize the Apprenticeship Accelerator goals**

By implementing the above recommendations and guaranteeing programs are accessible to all young people, NYC can confidently provide services for unemployed youth, help young people develop valuable skills and experience, and ensure that they have the support they need to thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Testimony by

Coalition for Homeless Youth

on

Oversight: Support for Unemployed Youth

Submitted to

The New York City Council's Committee on Youth Services

By

Lauren Galloway
Advocacy Coordinator
Coalition for Homeless Youth

Verbal Testimony Given: February 27, 2023
Written Testimony Submitted: February 28, 2023

Introduction

Lauren Galloway (she/they), the Advocacy Coordinator of the Coalition for Homeless Youth (CHY), welcomes the opportunity to submit written testimony for the Youth Services Committee Unemployed Youth Oversight Hearing.

This written testimony is in addition to the verbal testimony that was given, at the hearing.

Background

Who are Runaway and Homeless Youth?

RHY are generally defined as unaccompanied young people who have run away or been forced to leave home and now reside in temporary situations, places not otherwise intended for habitation, or emergency shelters. The federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act defines the population as being between 12-24 years of age. As of April 2017, New York State redefined RHY to be anyone under the age of 25 years¹.

On a single night in 2022, 3,594 unaccompanied and parenting youth under age 25 were counted as experiencing homelessness in the NYC Point in Time (PIT) count². In NYC Fiscal Year 2022, 3,027 RHY, were served in DYCD RHY residential programs, including 329 minors³. Another 28,119 RHY received non-residential services at a DYCD RHY drop-in center or through street-outreach⁴. In 2021, DHS reported a total of 4,051 unaccompanied or parenting youth between the ages of 18 and 25 entering either single adult or family shelters⁵, and the Department of Education (DOE) reported that during the 2019-2020 school year, almost 7,500 unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness attended NYC public schools⁶.

Like all other segments of NYC's homeless population, RHY experience harm that disproportionately impacts their health and creates roadblocks to long-term wellness. This is more recently detailed in "Opportunity Starts with a Home: New York City's Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness (OSH)."⁷ The myriad of harms that confront RHY, include: increased mental health problems and trauma, substance use, exposure to victimization and criminal activity, and unsafe sex practices⁸. Youth of color and LGBTQ/TGNC youth are also vastly overrepresented in the RHY population⁹.

Why must we focus on housing?

Since modern homelessness began in the late 1970s, homeless youth have faced the reality that the city does not provide enough age-appropriate shelter and largely leaves them out of access to permanent housing options. Under the previous administration some improvements were made in addressing the needs of RHY, however, the harsh reality is that there are still nowhere near enough resources provided by the city to meet the needs of its homeless youth and young adults. The lack of a right to youth shelter (for all youth), the relatively small number of beds in the DYCD RHY continuum, as well as the marginal number of age-specific beds in the DHS system, all present major system-gaps that too many young people fall through.

The lack of almost any available subsidized exit from DYCD facilities – partially a result of the historic ping-ponging of responsibility for homeless youth between City agencies, which has meant that those

¹ [Legislation | NY State Senate \(nysenate.gov\)](https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2022/1000)

² [CoC PopSub CoC NY-600-2022 NY 2022.pdf \(hudexchange.info\)](#)

³ [FY22 LL86 RHY Demographics-and-Services Report-final.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](#)

⁴ Ibid

⁵ [NYC-Community-Plan-DIGITAL.pdf](#)

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

relying on the DYCD programs are typically left out of permanent housing options. This leaves the City's homeless young people often circling in-and-out of DYCD programs, sometimes ending up in the DHS shelter-system or domestic violence shelters operated by the Human Resources Administration (HRA), and often ending up on the streets as homeless adults.

In a study completed by the Center for Innovation through Data Intelligence (CIDI) that looked at outcomes for youth in the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), DHS and DYCD systems between 2008 and 2013, analysts found that "Having a subsidized exit substantially reduced the likelihood of both future system use and being a high service user in all models—by about two-thirds and 85%, respectively."¹⁰ Access to subsidies is a life-changing matter. Currently, homeless youth relying on homeless youth services (DYCD) are one of the only homeless sub-populations in New York City that has been left with virtually no option for permanent housing to help them exit homelessness. And although youth in DYCD programs currently have access to a set allocation of Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV), and a small number of CityFHEPS pilot vouchers, neither is permanent. Youth relying on DYCD's homeless youth programs currently have no ongoing access to local housing subsidies like CityFHEPS. These young people do not receive any priority access to NYCHA units, or priority access to non-EHV Section 8 subsidies. Youth eligible for supportive housing also face significant barriers to accessing a unit, and there has been ongoing difficulty ensuring fair access to supportive housing interviews and acceptance for homeless young people, particularly those with serious and persistent mental illness. The latter issue is not solely a result of the dearth of available supportive housing, but also a result of referral decisions made by City agencies and cherry-picking/creaming at the provider-level.

In NYC Fiscal Year 2022, less than 6% of youth exited a DYCD RHY residential program into their own apartment or supportive housing¹¹, compared to 39% being discharged back into another homeless situation¹². For many homeless youth this is preventable if the City turns its attention their way. We believe that if RHY had subsidized permanency options available to them in DYCD facilities, there's good reason to believe they may never enter the DHS or HRA systems. This makes the need for access to vouchers not only important as a means for RHY to exit homelessness all together, but also supports DHS's goal of preventing people from entering their system.

Why is employment important to finding housing?

Runaway and homeless youth (RHY) have always experienced barriers to income access, however current policies and COVID-19 have only made things worse for this vulnerable population. Runaway and homeless youth are already navigating stressors due to lack of housing security by not having equal access to many permanent housing resources, like CityFHEPS, and employment barriers are a major contributing factor to obtaining and being able to maintain housing. In many cases youth and young adults lack the ability to even begin to find employment, which then makes them unqualified for certain housing vouchers, permanent support housing and rapid rehousing, and therefore many are left to cycle the shelter system.

As of October 2022, youth unemployment rates in New York City are significantly higher than those for all workers, at 5.6% in New York City, compared to 1.6% in the rest of New York State and 3.4% nationally.¹³ We believe that the unemployment numbers specifically for homeless young people is even higher. Access to employment that guarantees a stable income is crucial in a young person's ability to exit homelessness. National data shows that youth with a household income of less than \$24,000 a year were 2.6 times more likely to experience homelessness.¹⁴

¹⁰ [housing-trajectories-of-transitionage-youth.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](#)

¹¹ [FY22_LL86_RHY_Demographics-and-Services_Report-final.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](#)

¹² Ibid

¹³ [Nearly 18% of NYC's Young People Are Unemployed \(govdelivery.com\)](#)

¹⁴ [NYC-Community-Plan-DIGITAL.pdf](#)

It is clear that employment support is needed in order for runaway and homeless youth to secure housing.

In order to more adequately meet the needs of unemployed runaway and homeless youth, CHY recommends that the City address the following barriers to employment:

1. Employment Barriers

- a. **Identification:** You must have identification in order to find employment. When obtaining an ID you must provide proof of address, and have original vital documents, which poses a barrier for many homeless young people to obtain ID. Due to their age and disconnect from their legal guardians it is hard for many homeless young people to obtain the vital documents on their own, which creates an additional delay in their process of obtaining an ID. For undocumented youth, access to legal services also creates an additional barrier to obtain the documentation and legal authorization needed to obtain a state ID. This is currently impacting an unprecedented amount of young people due to the influx of migrant youth we are seeing in RHY program. The city needs to make obtaining vital documents, ID and working permanents more accessible to runaway and homeless youth, including migrant young people.
- b. **DYCD Drop-in Center No Sleeping Directive:** The recent 24hr drop-in center no sleeping directive issued by DYCD¹⁵ is not only inhuman, but it will create an additional barrier to youth gaining and maintaining employment. Having the ability to rest is vital to a person's overall health and wellbeing, and lack of sleep impacts humans' ability to function at a level needed to maintain employment. If we are denying youth sleep, how are they able to arrive at work rested, on time, and functioning? The DYCD funded 24hr drop-in centers have been operating as instructed and celebrated by DYCD since 2019, which is why there is so much confusion around why this directive was issued in the first place. DYCD needs to immediately rescind this directive and respond to providers and advocates request for guidance to ensure that youth are able to rest, and that providers are supported in providing the services that youth have been relying on since the inception of the 24hr drop-in center programs.
- c. **Conviction records:** Currently in NY state employers have to abide by unlawful discriminatory practices¹⁶ when it comes to hiring anyone with a conviction record, however as the law states: "unless there is a direct relationship between a prior criminal offense and the specific employment sought or held or employment of that individual would involve an unreasonable risk to property or to the safety or welfare of specific individuals or the general public." Therefore, as we see for most black and brown youth trying to find employment with a past conviction, they are discriminated against based on this loophole in the law. The city needs to support the passing of the youth justice and opportunities act, which would allow judges to grant a new young adult status expanding protections up to the age of 25 so individuals can have their cases sealed on background checks for past low-level misdemeanors, which as we know keep youth and young adults from obtaining employment due to past actions.
- d. **Job Security and Discrimination:** Due to the overrepresentation of youth of color and LGBTQIA youth in the RHY population. RHY often face increased employment discrimination. This discrimination is only increased for youth that have also been involved in the criminal legal system. The city needs to better enforce anti-discrimination protections, and fund youth-designed employment programs that specifically support RHY in accessing livable-wage employment across sectors. In addition, the city must

¹⁵ [DYCD Drop-in Center Directive email dated 1.13.23](#)

¹⁶ [§ 8-107 Unlawful discriminatory practices. \(amlegal.com\)](#)

support protections for individuals with conviction records and alleviate barriers they currently pose to both employment and housing access.

Thank you to Chair Stevens and the rest of the members of the Committee on Youth Services for holding the hearing on unemployed youth, as well as the council's ongoing support of youth experiencing homelessness in NYC.

For questions please contact:

Lauren Galloway

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The Coalition for Homeless Youth

Founded in 1978 as the Empire State Coalition of Youth and Family Services, The Coalition for Homeless Youth (CHY) is a consortium of 65 agencies whose mission is, as a membership organization, to use its collective voice to promote the safety, health, and future of runaway, homeless and street involved youth through advocacy, authentic collaboration with youth and young adults (YYA) with lived expertise and training and technical assistance.

CHY is primarily an advocacy organization, leveraging the expertise and experience of its membership as well as YYA with the lived experience of homelessness to shape the landscape for runaway and homeless youth across New York State. This is achieved by increasing public awareness, coalition building, policy work and public advocacy campaigns for pertinent legislation and funding. Notably, in 2015, CHY was instrumental in the advocacy efforts that resulted in the doubling of the State budget for runaway and homeless youth services. CHY's advocacy also contributed to the development of NYS statutory and regulatory changes that became effective in 2018, permitting localities across the State to extend length of stay and increase age of youth served by RHY programs in their communities. Most recently, we passed state legislation this session that will grant decisionally capable runaway and homeless minors the ability to consent to their own health care, including gender-affirming care. As well as NYC legislation that we maintain gives both homeless youth and youth aging out of foster care access to city-sponsored housing vouchers.

An additional area of focus for CHY is the strengthening of service delivery for runaway and homeless youth, primarily through the provision of specialized trainings and technical support. Until 2019, CHY held the state contract to provide annual web-based trainings, on diverse topic areas, to providers across the state, reaching hundreds of professionals working with homeless and runaway youth. Since 2019, CHY has continued to provide training and technical assistance on a smaller scale due to funding restrictions; however, resuming this service remains a top priority for our membership.

Lastly, and most importantly, as a coalition and voice for a community that is often overlooked, underrepresented and under-resourced, CHY prides itself on ensuring that the majority of our staff have the lived experience of youth homelessness. Our commitment to giving power to those with lived experience is also prioritized through our support of the New York City Youth Action Board (YAB), as well as our annual Youth Advocacy Fellowship Program and new Homeless Youth Peer Navigation Pilot. These initiatives not only expand the way that CHY is authentically collaborating with YYA who have the lived experience of homelessness, but it also awards us the ability to work together with YYA, to give them the tools and supports needed so that they can effectively create change.

Hello, my name is Tyrel Hunt. I work as the Director of Marketing at Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning (Also known as JCAL), in Queens New York. I am also a filmmaker, working on my second feature film "The Sound of Southside". Through both my job at JCAL and my efforts as a filmmaker, I have witnessed the impact that the medium of film can have on a community.

I ask that the city make a concerted effort toward allocating funds to BIPOC filmmakers, and the organizations that serve our communities. I believe that this investment would result in a more creative and vibrant New York.

At JCAL, I help to produce the annual 10 Minute Film Festival - where emerging BIPOC directors are showcased and receive cash prizes. We run this event on a shoestring budget. Still, our festival has become a place for underrepresented filmmakers to showcase their stories and find community. JCAL, and many other organizations are doing the **work**, and we could expand our reach and impact with the city's help.

While there are programs like "Made in NY" which provide incentives for big budget movies to film in NYC, the city is in need of more incentives for microbudget filmmakers, and more funding for the festivals which showcase their work.

I am one of these filmmakers. Film has taught me to be resourceful and collaborative. With my most recent film, I raised over \$50,000 and happily paid it right back to the many artists and small businesses that were a part of the film. Due to my film's budget, I do not qualify for opportunities like the Made in NY marketing credit, which requires a film budget of at least \$400,000, or the New York State Film Tax Credit Program, which requires a budget of at least \$1,000,000.

These restraints discourage many local NYC artists from creating, or prompt them to make their films elsewhere.

My film's story will focus on the resiliency of art in the city, a theme that I believe in wholeheartedly. There are many other artists with stories to tell. Please allocate funds to BIPOC filmmakers, and give us a chance to tell them.

*Testimony of Allyson Bay, Manager, Evaluation and Learning at JobsFirstNYC
before the
2/27 Hearing of the City Council Committee on
Support for Unemployed Youth*

Greetings Committee Chair Stevens and Menin and the distinguished members of the City Council Committee on Youth Services and Small Business. Thank you for allowing JobsFirstNYC to provide testimony today on important issues affecting New York City's young adults. Thank you to the members of the committee that we have had the opportunity to meet with to discuss advancing workforce development for young adults.

My name is Amanda Rosenblum, and I'm a Vice President at JobsFirstNYC, which provides research and develops systems that impact how Philanthropy and Government invest in workforce development. We create systems that focus on making New York City more INCLUSIVE and ADVANCES ECONOMIC MOBILITY FOR ALL YOUNG ADULTS AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY CALL HOME.

In New York City, despite a decade's long trend of increasing gains in the labor market and rising educational attainment, the proportion of young people 16-24 years old who are both 'out of school and out of work' (OSOW) has increased significantly since the onset of the pandemic. This trend reversal further sets back an already vulnerable population to the fringes of our economy and society.

Moreover, this negative shift occurs at a critical time when the upward mobility of OSOW young adults depends on attaining a quality education while concurrently developing a rich foundation of relevant skills necessary to successfully engage with today's evolving job market demands. In the years immediately preceding the pandemic (2018 and 2019), 13.1 percent of all youth in the 16 to 24 age group were not in school or part of the labor force—the lowest rate since 2010. Post-pandemic, that share has risen by almost 3 percentage points to 16 percent. In absolute terms, an additional 25,500 young people have joined the OSOW category in NYC, with the bulk of the increase begging in the 18-24 age group.

In partnership with Community Service Society, JobsFirstNYC commissioned a data brief that explores the state of the OSOW population and related trends using both US Census and the City of New York's administrative data. The report examines the OSOW population from a variety of socio-economic and demographic perspectives, identifies programs and policies that seek to address the needs of this population, and includes actionable recommendations to ensure that OSOW youth are put back on track to economic security.

Some Key Findings in the report include:

- The number of OSOW youth has increased significantly since the onset of the pandemic, reversing a decade long trend. The increase in OSOW youth is especially noteworthy since the overall population of 16–24-year-olds has decreased over the same period.
- Black and Latino/a/x/Hispanic communities had the largest increases in the overall OSOW youth population since the pandemic. OSOW youth are more likely to come from low-income Black and Hispanic households
- OSOW population increased most in the city's economically marginalized districts, especially in Manhattan and Queens, where there are fewer City workforce program sites.
- The following districts experienced the largest increases in the OSOW youth population since the pandemic: Queens CD 1; Manhattan CDs 4, 5, and 9; Bronx CDs 4 and 8.
- The Districts with the overall highest OSOW population have historically experienced barriers to economic mobile opportunities. These districts are: Brooklyn CD 16; Bronx CDs 1, 2, and 5; Manhattan CDs 10 and 11.
- The gap between male and female OSOW rates, which was narrowing pre-pandemic, has begun to diverge since pandemic, with the rates of males in the OSOW population growing.
- Although educational attainment has continued to improve among the 16–24-year-old population, most OSOW young adults lack any college education.
- The increase in OSOW youth is driven largely by a lack of options in the labor market than by reduced school or college enrollment or education attainment. Industrial sectors where youth employment tends to be highest have not returned to their pre-pandemic levels.
- Among youth who are employed, wage growth has been slow relative to growth in wages for all workers, and the share of workers in part-time work has increased.

With respect to city-based programs to support OSOW youth, enrollment in the Summer Youth Enrichment Program (SYEP) reached an all-time high, exceeding 100,000 in 2022. The Administration expanded SYEP by 25,000 slots in 2022 given the high demand. Black and Latino/a/x/Hispanic youth make up the largest share of enrollees in the SYEP program and are more likely to reside in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens.

One key recommendation that came from the report is further expanding SYEP, including by increasing the number of slots available; making it a year-round program - which will greatly increase young adult educational and career development outcomes;

improving the quality of employer preparation; and expanding private and public sector partnerships to create opportunities for young people to be more competitive in a rapidly changing labor market.

But we must warn that many of the OSOW population continues to struggle to matriculate into SYEP opportunities. Additionally, the expansion of SYEP isn't enough to support the economic mobility of young adults. Young Adults may develop basic professional skills but it hasn't historically changed their workforce outcomes. We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony to the joint Youth Services and Small Business Committee hearing and are looking forward to your leadership to address the crises that young adults in NYC face.

We stand ready to support the City's efforts to find solutions for our young people in New York. With over 16 years of experience, JobsFirstNYC identifies, designs, and advances practices and policies that achieve better outcomes for employers and workers. We create localized solutions that respond to the unique needs of neighborhood communities with high numbers of young adults who are out of school and out of work and our research with educational institutions have improved leaky educational pipelines and built equitable pathways to postsecondary education and career opportunities.

My colleagues and I look forward to sharing this data brief with each of your offices upon release and will follow up with members of the committee to schedule time to share more details about this important data and ways we can partner to expand the council's support of workforce development in your districts and throughout New York City.

Thank you very much.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT HEARING
FEBRUARY 27, 2023

Good morning, Chair Stevens and distinguished members of the Youth Services Committee. My name is Monia Salam, and I coordinate the New York City Work-Based Learning Coalition. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the Oversight hearing on Unemployed Youth. Through the first year-plus of the Adams Administration, the Mayor and his team have set transformative goals and made important investments to expand Work-Based Learning opportunities grounded in flexibility, choice and coordination for schools and youth-serving. Our coalition stands in full support of this administration's expansion of the youth employment programs). That said, we are concerned that the ongoing expansion of youth employment programs have overlooked the immigrant students and other vulnerable young people.

The application and enrollment process of the city youth employment programs require young people to submit a large number of documents including social security cards, work authorizations, proof of age, proof of address, working papers, etc... Throughout this process, many vulnerable young people lose the opportunity to access paid job opportunities due to their inability to submit all their documentation in a timely manner to be enrolled in these programs. This issue primarily impacts youth who are:

- **Immigrants** who are awaiting U.S immigration proceedings often lack access to work authorization documents, and subsequently the covid-19 pandemic significant delays in renewal paperwork for these documents;
- **undocumented**, who lack social security numbers to access the city's youth employment programs;
- **asylum seekers** who are awaiting immigration proceedings; and
- **in foster care and transitional housing** who are often unable to access their required documentation and lack the sufficient support to renew/replace these documentation due to their unforeseen circumstances.

To ensure all New York City students can access career-connected learning where they are able to learn about their interests and future careers, we recommend that the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) invests in a year-round enrichment program. This program should include 1) flexible time requirements, 2) greater ease of access and enrollment than summer internship programs, and 3) more accessible entry points for young people who may not yet be ready for or interested in a paid internship. We recommend that DYCD creates this program under the SYEP/WLG Special Initiative contracts to ensure that all young people in these circumstances are able to access it. Through this program, it's important that vulnerable young people are supported from start to finish (applications, documents, enrollments, paycards, etc...). We ask that DYCD creates contracts to SYEP providers with sufficient funding to ensure that they are to provide high-quality support to youth and their families.

In closing, our coalition looks forward to working with Chair Stevens and DYCD to ensure that all New York City students can access career-connected learning. The FY24 budget is an opportune moment to provide the investments needed to make this a reality.

The New York City Work-Based Learning Coalition is comprised of nonprofit organizations, young people, practitioners, advocates, employers, and thought leaders committed to increasing equity, quality, and access to work-based learning opportunities for New York City's youth. We aim to better prepare all young New Yorkers for career success and economic security in a rapidly changing economy/labor market. We envision that every young person has access to high-quality career exploration and real-world work experiences. The work of the WBL Coalition is to discover, support, and implement advocacy efforts in coordination with young people, schools, nonprofit organizations, and NYC and NYS agencies.

Renaissance Technical Institute (RTI) is a 501 © 3 non-for-profit organization that provides FREE vocational training in New York City. Since its creation in 2016, we have graduated over 1,435 students in all areas of vocational training. Most of our students were at-risk high school students or formerly incarcerated men and women who were looking for a second chance. RTI is the only free vocational training school in New York City that does not require a candidate for a high school diploma or GED, criminal records, immigration status, or income verification. The only requirement that RTI has, is that the student must be 17 years old or older.

Our Mission:

Renaissance Technical Institute (RTI) supports at-risk youth or those who have dropped out from a traditional high school by providing free vocational training, with a focus on environmental sustainability in order to encourage students to become productive members of their communities.

Our Vision:

Our vision is to break the vicious cycle of crime, gang involvement, and youth incarceration; to decrease the number of high school dropouts and reduce unemployment. We encourage environmental sustainability through our programs while partnering with employers who share the same commitment.

Our Accomplishments:

On July 7, 2022. RTI graduated One hundred (150) students. These students were mostly single mothers that graduated from our Nurse Assistant Program, EKG, Phlebotomy and Patient Care Technician Programs.

- Twenty-four (24) high school students graduated in the Advanced Carpentry and the Electrical fields.
- Twelve (12) students obtained their Commercial Driver License.
- Five (5) students obtained their CompTIA Certificated A+.
- Seventeen (17) students graduated from our Carpentry Class.
- Twenty (20) students graduated from our Plumbing Class.
- Thirteen (13) students graduated from HVAC Training
- Nine (9) students graduated from Solar Panel installation.
- Thirty (30) students graduated from our Security Training.
- Eighteen (18) students graduated from our traditional Electrical Class.

We have the capacity to graduate more than 150 students per year. However, the lack of funding and space availability does not allow us to open classes as frequently as needed. RTI has a waiting list that keeps growing every single day. Currently, we have a waiting list with over 3,000 candidates. Most of them are females who are seeking the opportunity to receive free vocational training on the health field.

In the 2021-2022 school year, RTI partnered with Ellis Prep High School. Ellis Prep is a transitioning high school that receives youngsters who migrated to this country during the process of completing their high school education their home countries). In the first year of our partnership, Ellis Prep sent twenty-four (24) students to RTI. These students were divided in two classes; Eight (8) students joined the Carpentry Class and 16 students joined the Electrical Class. Three Months later, all twenty (24) students graduated and completed their OSHA40 training. The collaboration between Ellis Prep and RTI was amazing. The students who joined the program shared their experiences with other classmates and many more students want to be in the new program. Now Ellis Prep is using the new collaboration program as an incentive to those students who want to pursue a technical/vocational career.

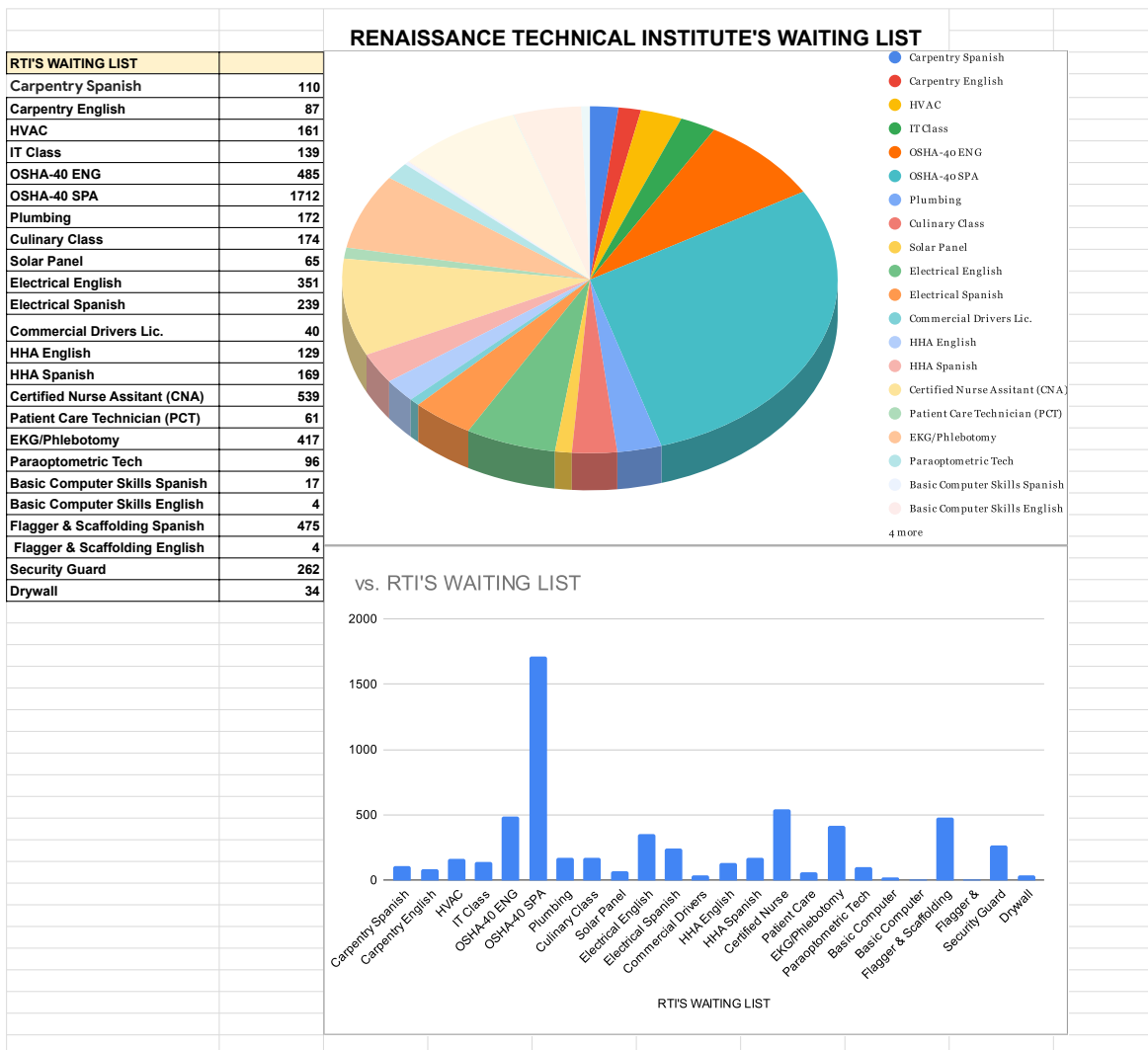
For the school year 2022-2023, RTI will be working together with three (3) high schools in New York City. Ellis Prep, New Visions Charter School and The Global Learning Collaborative at the Louis D. Brandies High School Campus. We are expecting at least 60 at-risk high school students to come to RTI to receive vocational training.

One of the biggest advantages that Renaissance Technical Institute has is that when students complete one of our construction's courses, they receive a national certificate that is valid in the entire United States. Renaissance Technical Institute wants to bring solutions and inspiration to young adults in New York City.

Furthermore, RTI is always looking to help New York City residents in any way possible. Since 2022, we have assisting many of the asylum seekers that are coming to New York City. They are coming to stay and begin a new life here with their families. RTI wants to help asylum seekers to become productive to our City and to keep them out of trouble. On that note, on October 17, 2022, RTI started an OSHA40 training course where 110 asylum seekers obtained their OSHA40 certificate, all free of charge. Having the OSHA40 certificate will allow them to work on any construction site regardless their immigration status.

From October 17th, 2022 to December 16th, 2022, we graduated one-hundred and ten (110) asylum seekers weekly. Many of them are already working in construction sites in New York City. In eight (8) weeks, RTI graduated nine-hundred (900) asylum seekers with the OSHA40 certificate. The asylum seekers attended the OSHA40 training five days per week (Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 4:30pm). We provided them breakfast and lunch every day.

Our last OSHA40 for asylum seekers was on 12/16/2022. We ran out of funding to keep covering the expenses of this class. As we mentioned before, RTI graduated 900 asylum seekers, but we have more than 1,000 on our waiting list. Every day, we received at least 45 new applicants. Unfortunately, we are unable to start a new OSHA40 class anytime soon. It is heart-breaking to see how these people come to our school telling us, “I have a job offer and the only thing that they ask is for my OSHA40 certificate, please help me. I need to work to support myself and you might be our only help.”



Our Proposal:

Since day one, Renaissance Technical Institute's BIG picture is to be able to open one Training Center in each borough; where young adults, at-risk students, adults and formerly incarcerated who are looking for a second chance to become productive to our society could receive FREE vocational training and breaking the cycle of recidivism.

Our Ask:

With a \$5.7 million dollars budget Renaissance Technical Institute will be able to open three new centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens and keep open the main location in East Harlem in Manhattan. By covering these areas, RTI would be able to elevate the young people of our communities to a new height and stop the poverty and incarceration cycle that is plaguing our disadvantaged communities. Please see below what each site would offer if our request were granted.

Renaissance Technical Institute (RTI) would prefer to use NYCHA's locations to increase the possibility of minority and low-income youths. In our current location, the Johnson Houses in East Harlem, those residence houses are not placed on the waiting list, and they get preference for registration in any new program. The same policy will be in place in new NYCHA's locations throughout the city of New York.



YouthBuild NYC Collaborative 206 East 118 Street, New York, NY 10035

Testimony to Youth Services Hearing, NY City Council

1pm on Feb 27, 2023

Prepared by David Calvert, Citywide Coordinator of the YouthBuild NYC Collaborative

Good afternoon, honorable Chairman Stevens and Committee members, my name is David Calvert, representing the YouthBuild NYC Collaborative. Let's talk about YouthBuild and our request for \$3.2 million to expand and enhance services in FY2024.

The Collaborative coalesces nine New York City YouthBuild sites located in all five boroughs. YouthBuild is a program model that we originated here in NYC – in East Harlem -- 44 years ago. During a period of nine months, youth aged 16-24 who are out of school and out of work obtain education coursework to get their GEDs, as well as vocational credentials and experience, leadership development, community service, counseling, and then a year of placement and follow up services. The program caught a wave during the tough 1980s decade, spreading around the city and state, and in the 1990s it went national, and now each year 8,000 youth do YouthBuild in 45 states, and thousands more overseas in 23 other countries. At my home base in East Harlem, we have run a YouthBuild program every year since 1979, and have graduated 1,550 youth. I am pleased to have been active in the start-up and build-up of YouthBuild, since 1978, a journey that has taken me from East Harlem to seven other countries, and since 2010, back home in El Barrio.

The City Council is not alone in funding YouthBuild. Federal US/DOL grants designated for YouthBuild sites can be accessed, but normally fewer than half the operating sites in NYC obtain those scarce grants. To ensure full coverage for NYC youth, since 2014, the Council fills the gaps in the federal funds by allocating \$2.1 million each year by way of a Speaker Initiative, delivering full, comprehensive services to hundreds of Opportunity Youth. All nine of the NYC programs are bolstered by these enabling grants, and for several, it allows them to keep their doors open, to survive and thrive. This City Council Speaker Initiative has been decisive in making sure each year that 650 hard-pressed youth receive the best services they can in order to set them up for success. It has enabled YouthBuild to expand its offerings and support systems for more and more young people. Virtually all program participants come from difficult backgrounds; the wraparound services they receive at their YouthBuild site provide the tools they need for sustainable futures.

We respectfully request that support from the Council continue, and that it be expanded this year to \$3.2 million, so that more lives may be transformed by this productive funding. The increase will ensure that each program is supported sufficiently to provide the top shelf training and follow-up that the students deserve. Four of the nine YouthBuild sites are expected as of now to have active US/DOL/YouthBuild grants for FY2024; for them, the Council money will provide a needed supplement and match. For the other five sites, the Council funding will be vital, guaranteeing the capacity to continue.

The City Council has been a major player in making the difference for young people in our city who often have been hit the hardest. Since 2014, 2,900 YouthBuild alumni have benefitted from direct, full-time YouthBuild participation due to the support of the City Council; this support must continue. As has been said, “A mind is a terrible thing to waste.”

Thank you for your time and concern, and for caring deeply about the Opportunity Youth of our City.

David Calvert, dcalvert@yayb.org,

Revised budget summary (January 2023):

Citywide - 3-year plan -- revised Jan2023	Current year # youth served	Funded Year 1 - # youth served	Funded Year 2 - # youth served	Funded Year 3 - # youth served	Total # youth served	Cost per youth	Overall 3-yr project cost \$	\$ 3-yr portion covered by others	3-yr NYC cost portion \$	NYC cost \$ Year One	NYC cost \$ Year Two	NYC cost \$ Year Three
YouthBuild students (F/T)	350	385	424	466	1,274	\$ 23,300	\$ 29,692,355	\$ 14,846,178	\$ 14,846,178	\$ 4,485,250	\$ 4,933,775	\$ 5,427,153
Follow-up/Alumni services	150	350	385	424	1,159	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,853,600	\$ 741,440	\$ 1,112,160	\$ 336,000	\$ 369,600	\$ 406,560
Extended Hours / P/T	-	482	844	1,159	2,485	\$ 6,500	\$ 16,152,500	\$ 1,615,250	\$ 14,537,250	\$ 2,819,700	\$ 4,937,400	\$ 6,780,150
Youth in Community	-	201	235	309	745	\$ 800	\$ 596,000	\$ 119,200	\$ 476,800	\$ 128,640	\$ 150,400	\$ 197,760
Youth-Create	-	120	240	360	720		\$ 13,650,000	\$ -	\$ 13,650,000	\$ 2,450,000	\$ 4,550,000	\$ 6,650,000
Totals	500	1,538	2,128	2,717	6,383	\$ 32,200	\$ 61,944,455	\$ 17,322,068	\$ 44,622,388	#####	#####	\$ 19,461,623
Increase/yr in youth served		308%	138%	128%								
3-yr increase in youth served					1277%							

Youth Create:	# of projects	# of youth	cost @ \$175K	TA @ \$350K	Total
Year One	12	120	\$ 2,100,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 2,450,000
Year Two	24	240	\$ 4,200,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 4,550,000
Year Three	36	360	\$ 6,300,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 6,650,000
3-yr Totals	36	360	\$ 12,600,000	\$ 1,050,000	\$13,650,000

The earlier budget summary (Sept 2022):

Citywide - 5-borough 3-year plan -- Full Plan - Sept2022	year # youth served (b/o FY 2022)	Year 1 - # youth to be served	Year 2 - # youth to be served	Year 3 - # youth to be served	3-yr total # youth to be served	Cost per youth	Overall 3-yr project cost \$	\$ 3-yr portion covered by others	3-yr NYC cost portion \$	NYC cost \$ Year One	NYC cost \$ Year Two	NYC cost \$ Year Three
YouthBuild students (F/T)	350	457	475	519	1,451	\$ 25,000	\$ 36,275,000	\$ 18,137,500	\$ 18,137,500	\$ 5,712,500	\$ 5,937,500	\$ 6,487,500
Follow-up/Alumni services	150	439	664	896	1,999	\$ 1,600	\$ 3,198,400	\$ 1,279,360	\$ 1,919,040	\$ 421,440	\$ 637,440	\$ 860,160
Extended Hours / P/T	0	482	844	1159	2,485	\$ 6,500	\$ 16,152,500	\$ 1,615,250	\$ 14,537,250	\$ 3,133,000	\$ 4,937,400	\$ 6,780,150
Youth in Community	0	201	235	309	745	\$ 800	\$ 596,000	\$ 238,400	\$ 357,600	\$ 96,480	\$ 112,800	\$ 148,320
Youth-Create	0	300	400	500	1,200		\$ 20,069,700	\$ -	\$ 20,069,700	\$ 2,819,700	\$ 7,750,000	\$ 9,500,000
Totals	500	1,879	2,618	3,383	7,880	\$ 33,900	\$ 76,291,600	\$ 21,270,510	\$ 55,021,090	\$12,183,120	\$19,375,140	\$ 23,776,130
Increase/yr in youth served		376%	139%	129%								
3-yr increase in youth served					1576%							

Youth Create:	# of projects	# of youth	cost @ \$175K	TA @ \$500K	Total
Year One	30	300	\$ 5,250,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 5,750,000
Year Two	40	400	\$ 7,000,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 7,500,000
Year Three	50	500	\$ 8,750,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 9,250,000
3-yr Totals	50	500	\$ 21,000,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$22,500,000



YouthBuild NYC Collaborative 206 East 118 Street, New York, NY 10035

**Proposal Prepared for the NYC Executive Budget
from the YouthBuild NYC Collaborative – 3-years, \$44.6 million
30 January 2023**

Introduction:

In the fall of 2022, in response to requests from Sheena Wright, First Deputy Mayor for the City of New York, and Keith Howard, Commissioner of DYCD, the YouthBuild NYC Collaborative proposed to strengthen and expand the impact of YouthBuild in a concerted citywide effort to provide more opportunities to low-income youth that will create healthier communities and diminish crime while putting thousands of young people on a direct path to high school graduation, college, employment, and responsible adulthood, including, in some cases, important civic leadership participation in their communities.

On January 26th we heard Mayor Eric Adams, in his State of the City address, signal that his “working people’s agenda starts with jobs – not side hustles or occasional gigs but jobs with good pay and good benefits, jobs you can support yourself and a family on, jobs you can build a life around.” He said “We’re reimagining our city’s workforce development system from the bottom up – improving education, expanding job training, and creating employment on-ramps at every stage of the process,” and he pledged to connect 30,000 New Yorkers to apprenticeships by 2030. This is the kind of vision and commitment that has fueled YouthBuild for forty years; we will be proud to stand with the Mayor in the rollout of these plans. We have seen thousands of YouthBuild students complete a year of “pre-apprenticeship” with YouthBuild, only to find no open doors for formal apprenticeships, and be relegated to underemployment and *la brega*... life-long struggle. We stand ready to help the Mayor turn that around.

The Mayor also called for a safer city, safer neighborhoods, and said “We will make better use of our most powerful tool in the fight against crime: our communities.” As this proposal will describe, we endorse and plan to execute a neighborhood anti-crime approach that is youth-centered, participatory, progressive, and productive.

For YouthBuild, a crucial way to confront violence is to address the root causes by establishing real opportunity and embracing positive youth development. Our work is geared to attain real solutions to the ills we face, which include poverty, prejudice (racial and otherwise), mental health disorders, lack of a level playing field, and the despair and sense of futility that so many have learned from a sordid past

and present. YouthBuild offers each young person an exit strategy from these crushing limitations, and in so doing, leads away from violence, away from victimhood, and promotes safe neighborhoods.

Our proposal to strengthen and expand YouthBuild opportunities in NYC is in itself an anti-violence measure. It would be supplemented by other direct steps to confront violence: community education, gun buybacks, community actions and pronouncements to stand up to gun use, promotion of safe spaces, participation in violence interruption events that occur after shootings, social media posts that highlight anti-violence and street-safe culture, youth conferences and tournaments with anti-gun themes.

The proposal can best be understood in three distinct buckets, each of which will be described in detail:

- 1) **YouthBuild: Expanding and Improving the Core Fulltime YouthBuild Model.** YouthBuild is designed for the most disadvantaged and under-served group of youth: low-income, unemployed youth who left high school without a diploma. We will expand the reach of YouthBuild services by welcoming previously excluded population groups including immigrants, young adults up to age 30, and young people with very low literacy rates, and broaden services to new neighborhoods. We will enhance the program with stronger follow-up supports, and more help with housing, child care, and access to mental health services. We also aim to strengthen the core construction training program in partnership with NYC.
- 2) **Youth-in-Community: Creating Community Impact Opportunities** that are positive and safe, typically on a part-time basis during afternoon, evening, and weekend times. These will be designed consistent with the YouthBuild program qualities, but the program components will be open also to young people still in school or employed, and to young adults, with or without a high school diploma, who are still seeking their own path out of poverty.
- 3) **“Youth-Create – Young People Creating Community Solutions:” 36 New Community Improvement Projects.** In a set of pilot sites in communities of concentrated poverty throughout NYC, groups of teenagers will be organized and given part-time jobs to create significant Community Improvement Projects of their own design, through the same spirit and process that created the first YouthBuild program in East Harlem under the federal Community Anti-Crime Program.

If all three initiatives we proposed in 2022 were to be fully implemented, with steady expansion over a three-year period, close to 8,000 youth would be directly engaged and supported, at a total three-year cost of \$78.5 million. Of that overall cost, we requested that \$56.1 million be provided by the Executive Branch of the City of New York, and we projected that other funders, including the US Department of Labor and the NYS Department of Labor, would provide \$22.4 million. Year to year, the cost to the City for that proposal was to be \$21.1 million in Year One, \$26.3 million in Year Two, and \$31.6 million in Year Three.

Today we return to you, as requested, with a sharply moderated approach that would lower the Executive Budget cost for Year One to \$10.2 million, Year Two to \$14.9 million, and Year Three to \$19.5 million, for a total 3-year cost of \$44.6 million, and directly serving close to 6,400 NYC youth, including 1,270 YouthBuild students in the fulltime, transformative, “pre-apprenticeship” program year, and 1,150 YouthBuild alums tracked and supported for placements and follow-up services.

Naturally, we remain committed to the original, greater scope of work and impact, and will be prepared to upgrade these operations when the city is ready to do so, which could coincide neatly with the Mayor's second term.

Below we have laid out the background and details of each of the above three elements of the proposed citywide expansion in all five boroughs.

1) Strengthen and Expand the YouthBuild Full-Time Program

The classic YouthBuild program is a uniquely comprehensive full-time, nine-month, paid program for young people ages 16 to 24, who have left high school without a diploma, and have grown up experiencing poverty. The program includes 50% education, coupled with job training in construction or other sectors, paid community service building affordable housing or providing other important community services, personal and peer counseling, leadership development, an AmeriCorps college scholarship earned through community service, and placement in college and/or employment. *With the Mayor's promise of thousands of apprenticeship opportunities opening in New York for black and brown youth, who were long shut out, YouthBuild will operate as a vital pre-apprenticeship program that intentionally provides Opportunity Youth the tools, skills, education, confidence, and contacts to proceed into formal apprenticeship opportunities and solid, well-paid careers.*

a) History/Background

Our New York City government first partnered with local community organizations and willing youth to provide this transformative path in 1979, when the first ever YouthBuild program was launched in East Harlem. In 1984 the City Council provided funds for a City-wide replication that laid the foundation for YouthBuild's subsequent expansion. Its success has resulted in steady scaling over the decades: 18 YouthBuild programs now operate in NYS, 250 across the US, and 81 in 23 other countries. Since YouthBuild was authorized in Federal law in 1992, over 200,000 YouthBuild students in the USA have worked toward their high school diplomas while building or rebuilding over 35,000 units of affordable housing in their communities. This year worldwide, up to 20,000 Opportunity Youth will participate in YouthBuild programs replicating (and continually enhancing) the original NYC model. At our home base in East Harlem, we have operated a YouthBuild program every year since 1979, graduated 1,500 youth, and completed the gut rehabilitation of 13 previously vacant tenement buildings which now provide protected low-income housing in our neighborhood.

When YouthBuild started, its job training component was focused entirely on construction, with young people building affordable housing for their neighbors, usually doing gut rehabs on abandoned buildings. This was especially attractive to the young men who were otherwise being pulled into gang life. At that time there were 10,000 vacant, city-owned buildings in NYC, which could be acquired essentially for free if you were a nonprofit building low-income housing. But those days are past. Now YouthBuild programs, attentive to labor market data and requirements, have added exciting new career tracks, including culinary, building maintenance and operations, information technologies (IT), health professions (e.g., home health aide, medical billing, nurse's aide), cosmetology, green industries (e.g., air selling, heat pumps, inspections), hospitality, transportation (driver license training), and more.

b) Current Status Nationally and in NYC

For FY2022, the federal government allocated \$99 million through the U.S. Dept of Labor for YouthBuild programs across the country. Several hundred programs compete for federal US/DOL/YouthBuild grants each year, but only about 80 are awarded. As a result, in NYC normally only about half the operating sites obtain these scarce grants. Since 2014, the City Council has allocated annually \$2.1 million through a Speaker Initiative for YouthBuild from Discretionary Funds to help ensure that all these vital programs are made whole, not abandoned year to year for lack of sufficient federal funds. This City Council citywide support has been decisive in making sure that each year 500+ youth – 350 in full-time YouthBuild cohorts, and another 150+ receiving follow-up support – take this path to personal success and community leadership. These YouthBuild opportunities provide them with a sense of purpose, belonging, and meaning, as they join with their peers to provide service to their communities and become positive role models for younger youth.

The YouthBuild NYC Collaborative coalesces the New York City YouthBuild sites – currently nine – located in the five boroughs. Those nine YouthBuild programs are operated by some of the finest community service institutions in the city:

-Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (NMIC)	Washington Heights, Manhattan
-Youth Action YouthBuild	East Harlem, Manhattan
-New Settlement	Mt Eden, Bronx
-SOBRO	The Hub, Bronx
-The Hope Program	Hunts Point, Bronx
-Queens Community House	Pomonok Houses, Queens
-Antioch Community Services	Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn
-St Nicks Alliance	North Brooklyn
-Central Family Life Center	Stapleton, North Shore of Staten Island

Each of these institutions has successfully taken up the awesome challenge of empowering young people who desperately need a shot, a second chance, to turn their lives around through participation in a full-time program that includes *education, training, counseling, leadership development, paid community service, job and college placement, and follow-up services*, all guided by respect, inclusion, and yes, love.

This proposal is built around expanded services led by the existing nine YouthBuild programs in NYC, and with the support of the City we plan to add programs, or program annexes. We know that the Manhattan Economic Opportunity Center, led by Anthony Watson, seeks to launch a YouthBuild site in Central Harlem, and that Liz Morgan, director of YouthBuild IMPACT in Staten Island wants to add a second site in that borough, and new sites could emerge in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens as well. There are excellent organizations in NYC who would want to run a YouthBuild program if funds become available. A competitive grant process for new organizations could be managed either by DYCD or by the NYC Collaborative. We prefer not to set up an increasingly competitive environment for the grantees, but we do want to improve access for young people in key neighborhoods without a YouthBuild program. This is a balancing act for a network that must plan for ongoing sustainability for each new initiative while remaining fiercely committed to meeting the needs of our youth.

c) Understanding the Program Design of YouthBuild

Typically, YouthBuild students dedicate nine months full-time toward obtaining their high school equivalency (HSE), gaining vocational credentials and hands on experience through related community service projects, receiving peer and professional counseling, and participating in leadership

development training and experiences. Careful placement in college and/or employment coupled with follow-up counseling and other services are provided. Thus, the five major program components of YouthBuild can be summarized as education, job training, counseling, leadership development, and placement including follow-up supports.

The qualities of a successful YouthBuild program have been summarized as follows. These are not easy to measure, but they express the philosophical core and spirit of YouthBuild. To succeed, the program components must be suffused with these qualities, and staff must be trained in their meaning. They are designed to provide experience directly opposite to the previous negative experiences of YouthBuild students. The essential YouthBuild program qualities are:

- *Profound respect for the young people's intelligence*
- *Power for the young people over their immediate environment, expressed through policy councils participating in program-related decision-making*
- *Protection for the participants, as much as possible, from disaster—or at least the support necessary to cope with it*
- *Meaningful and important work for both students and staff*
- *Real, patient caring for the young people's development*
- *Teaching of academic, employment, and social skills*
- *Consistently positive values*
- *A firm and loving challenge to stop self-destructive behavior and change negative attitudes*
- *Family-like support and appreciation from peers and adults*
- *High standards and expectations*
- *Staff members who have overcome similar obstacles who can serve as inspiring and caring role models*
- *An understanding of the proud and unique history of their own people, and respect for people of different cultural backgrounds*
- *Heightened awareness of the present-day world and young people's important place in it*
- *A clear and visible path to future opportunity*
- *Real concern and action to change the conditions that have affected the young people and the people they love*
- *Fun!*

We have listed the above qualities not only because they are core to full-time YouthBuild programs, but also because we will imbue these qualities into the new part-time programming that will be developed through this funding in initiatives #2 and #3.

Another thing: to add extra value to the students' community service experience, most of them are YouthBuild AmeriCorps members funded through a National Direct YouthBuild grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service to YouthBuild USA, Inc. with subgrants to the NYC sites. As a result, the students earn college scholarships in exchange for the time they spend doing community service. These scholarships add importantly to the long-term options they see for themselves.

d) Vision for Expanded Eligibility

New York City's YouthBuild programs currently serve youth who are 16-24, unemployed, over 90% of whom left high school without a diploma and come from low-income families. Some are foster youth and about one-third are court-involved. The majority are young men. They are among the most

disadvantaged young people served by any existing job training programs or included in any national service AmeriCorps programs. They are all searching for a way to get back on track. They are usually guided to YouthBuild by a friend or family member who knows how well it worked for themselves or someone else. Graduates typically say something like this: “Without YouthBuild I would have been dead or in jail by the time I was 25. Now, instead, I am in college, employed, and a proud parent, active in my community.”

Sadly, half of the youth applicants for YouthBuild are deemed ineligible and denied admission under current rules imposed by various funders and partners. With City funding and a fresh new look, we can make significant adjustments that open wider access to the full-time YouthBuild program. For example: 1) Many struggling young adults are older than 24, which is the assigned upper age limit for US/DOL YouthBuild grants. We propose to extend the age range to 30. 2) YouthBuild federal funding disqualifies applicants who are not citizens and are immigrants. With City funds, we aim to welcome immigrants and non-citizens who meet the other criteria. Expanding eligibility in this way may be linked to adding bi-lingual English/Spanish programming. 3) Many applicants cannot as yet perform reading and math at the minimum 7.5 grade level that is required in order to have a chance of obtaining their HSE’s within nine months. YouthBuild is judged and funded federally and by NYC/DOE’s District 79 partly based on HSE achievement levels; this obviously provides pressure on eligibility. We propose to create “Youth-in-Community” programming that would accept students regardless of their reading level and would give them the remedial and experiential supports that would allow them to gain the skills needed to be formally enrolled in the full-time YouthBuild program or in District 79. We know that turning away young people who read below the 8th grade level, are unemployed, and have no HS Diploma, is a sure way to increase despair and crime in our communities. Welcoming them and meeting their needs will create a wonderful new path to hope and responsibility.

Clearly, the expanded vision and eligibilities described here will allow more deserving youth to participate in the fulltime YouthBuild experience, and in a parallel bonus, they will allow expanded opportunity for many hundreds more to take place in the package of part-time activities described later in the proposal.

e) Enhanced Partnership with the Juvenile Justice System

YouthBuild has been shown to be extremely effective in working with court-involved youth, and typically, about a quarter of YouthBuild students have been court-involved. The SMART YouthBuild program is a version of YouthBuild designed for youth offenders to “Start Making A Real Transformation” while incarcerated. It was tested and funded in a variety of locations across the country. Local YouthBuild staff would build relationships with young people while they were incarcerated, and then provide a direct route into the full-time YouthBuild programs upon release. This decreased recidivism within a year of release to just 1%. Two of the programs in NYC – Dreams in Brooklyn and SoBRO in the Bronx - piloted this program at Rikers Island and it was extremely successful. A full report of this initiative is available, called “Life After Lock-up.” Re-establishing this approach in NYC citywide could directly diminish crime and violence while offering positive paths for court-involved and re-entry youth.

f) Re-establishing a Strong Construction Career Path to Apprenticeships

We mentioned above that construction training done while producing low-income housing in our neighborhoods was the original, long-term focus of YouthBuild’s job training, and that the menu of

training options has expanded in recent years. The USDOL added a “Construction Plus” version which allowed sites to add any additional career track as long as each site also sustained a construction component. Thus, in NYC numerous new career paths have already been added, as listed earlier in this document.

The expansion to other career tracks is a positive development. However, we are very interested in working with the city to re-establish construction through creation of affordable housing as a central element, and to prepare Opportunity Youth for union apprenticeships in the trades. Now that NYC no longer has thousands of abandoned buildings awaiting gut rehab, it has been harder to find appropriate sites. However, NYC still has a serious problem with homelessness and an acute shortage of affordable housing, both of which affect our youth constituency deeply, and which they would be proud to help solve. As a result, whether through partnerships with NYCHA or HPD, or any other affordable housing initiatives, we would like to have cohorts of young people who get the deep satisfaction of learning well-paid construction skills in a field that has a shortage of employees, while they get to produce or protect low-income housing as a key benefit for their communities. This has been an enormous source of pride for YouthBuild students in NYC and across the country who collectively have participated in producing over 35,000 units of low-income housing.

We look forward to deeper partnerships with NYCHA, HPD, and other producers and owners of affordable housing, and with the construction unions.

g) YouthBuild in Local High Schools

We will meet with DOE to discuss our plan to locate YouthBuild programs and accessibility within a number of high schools, as has been accomplished already at Boys and Girls High School by Dreams YouthBuild, and by the St. Nicks Alliance (YouthBuild North Brooklyn), which is fully integrated at the Grand Street Campus in North Brooklyn. The Grand Street Campus serves 1600 students across three high schools (E. Williamsburg Scholars Academy, HS for Enterprise, Business and Technology, and Progress HS). Through collaboration with public high schools, and leveraging our existing relationship with DOE District 79, we can provide smooth, productive transitions for failing and suspended youth to access YouthBuild opportunities. The goal for YouthBuild and DOE leadership will be to gauge and meet the needs of DOE’s schools, and see how YouthBuild can help.

h) Adding some Additional Focused Services and Costs

While the five core components of the YouthBuild program are more comprehensive than other job training programs, there are still some aspects that are missing, that we would like to add. For example, some of our students are homeless, some are parents without child-care, some have parole or probation obligations that are hard to meet, many have a variety of personal or family crises and traumas for which they need periodic support. We propose to add staffing and financial resources to address these additional challenges. The precise methods will vary, but in some cases it will involve mentoring or professional counseling, or case managers who can find housing and child-care resources. In other situations, it may require additional funds to pay fees or emergency costs. We thus aim to add a qualified counselor for each program, and a pool of funds for crisis management. Maximizing the availability of social services can change lives, e.g., securing childcare vouchers for childcare expenses, generating monthly in-house food banks, obtaining rental and utility assistance for eligible students, etc.

In addition, predictably, many of our students are food insecure (hungry) and lack a family that can provide food. Therefore, we aim to provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks every day at YouthBuild

programs, funds for transportation, and increase the level of stipends for students providing service to their communities.

On another front, we want to ensure that we have funds sufficient to provide adequate access to full learning about college opportunities. For most of our students, going to college had always been the remotest of possibilities. Part of the transformative experience of YouthBuild is learning that in fact they can choose to do these things, and succeed. But they need exposure, and access. Trips to visit college campuses, to learn about historically black colleges outside of the city, and to see public colleges with residential options are key to their awakening. Such trips will be built into the NYC funding. The AmeriCorps education awards that the students earn feed into this access nicely.

i) A New City-Wide Initiative to Enhance Job Placement, Training, and Social Media Impact:

With the support of the NYS Workforce Development Institute, this winter the YouthBuild NYC Collaborative is launching a three-point pilot initiative to enhance YouthBuild operations and success in the five boroughs. 1) This initiative creates a new website that will feature profiles of hundreds of “job-ready” YouthBuild students and graduates citywide, where approved contractors and companies will have access to recruit and hire YouthBuild graduates. 2) It provides direct online training offerings to YouthBuild students citywide, designed to add important and potentially missing elements for students, e.g., training in the use of Microsoft Office platforms, in Cybersecurity, and in other areas if requested. 3) It includes a significant amount of social media advertising and promotional material designed to enhance recruitment of YouthBuild students and to inform the broader community about YouthBuild success. We propose to build on and expand this operation with the support of the City of New York, and we think the model could be replicable in other cities around the country, just as YouthBuild itself has proven to be.

j) Apprenticeships, paid internships:

Classroom training is a central component for YouthBuild, and over a period of nine months, YouthBuild students typically allocate half their program time to academic studies geared toward passing the GED/TASC test, to gain their high school equivalency. In addition, there is classroom-based coursework in vocational training curricula, leading to useful knowledge and certifications. But to complete their YouthBuild experience it is important that students get out of the classroom and into real action. The community service and leadership development components of YouthBuild help to allay the classroom limitations. When YouthBuild students move on to internships at “real world” places of business, they develop work skills, work interrelationships and contacts, confidence, placements, and careers. At an internship, a student moves from the group classroom to the work setting, where accountability and growth are built into the experience. We propose that these internships be paid at minimum wage or better, and that internship opportunities be cultivated at every YouthBuild site as a standard, central aspect of the YouthBuild experience.

As for apprenticeships, they are paid positions, they are more specialized, and they represent an open path to a specific career. Typically, apprenticeships are offered to the “best candidates,” as defined by the unions and employers, and most of these opportunities were closed to our youth. While the opportunities there are still limited, we have seen the door open a bit in recent years, we have some success stories, and now the Mayor is acting to open the door much wider. YouthBuild staff will do their part by training and educating the youth, preparing them to make the step to apprenticeship, helping to make the connections, and staying with them after they have been placed. And the YouthBuild

students and graduates will do their parts. This is a workforce development issue, a social justice issue, a human rights issue. But it is also about the future of our city, which must engage its youth in the economy, work, and culture of the city, and start transferring the leadership and ownership to the next generation.

k) Entrepreneurial training:

Some YouthBuild students have identified “starting a business” as their long-term goal, and at least one YouthBuild site (NMIC - YouthBuild Northern Manhattan) has built in entrepreneurial training as a centerpiece component. For a young person with a business plan and motivation, there is access to capital start-up funding through NYC/SBS and other sources, there are business mentors available, there are market niches to enter, and YouthBuild will aggressively help them access and achieve those goals. Instead of “getting a job” they will be creating a job, and perhaps in time, hiring others.

l) Understanding the Funding Structure:

Of course, YouthBuild programs are most successful when they are adequately funded. The federal YouthBuild grants from the Dept. of Labor typically offer up to \$16,500 per student for the program year, about \$4,000 per student for follow-up services, and require an additional 25% match from direct funding or targeted in-kind services. The normal procedure for each program is to seek other supplementary funds, since the standard grant is based on a scarce budget regimen.

An indispensable partner that helps meet this match for the NYC YouthBuild programs is District 79 of the NYC Department of Education, which provides HSE teachers, meals, metro cards, and the like to support each of the nine programs. Other government-related partners active with many YouthBuild programs include NYCHA, DYCD, HPD, Probation, CUNY, Community Boards, Workforce 1, Office of the Mayor (Workforce Development, CEO, WWP, Community Affairs, etc.), elected officials, NYSERDA, and AmeriCorps/Vista.

A distinctive component of this proposal is to establish stronger funding streams for each YouthBuild program, to enhance the success and quality of the experience for each youth. This funding plan, as shown in the attached budget, would standardize overall support for each fulltime YouthBuild student at \$23,300 per year, so each youth can shine. The City will pay only a portion of that, since the US Department of Labor, the NYS Department of Labor, and the City Council of NYC have been reliable in doing their parts. We will be ensuring that the Opportunity Youth of our city -- young people who have dropped out of school, who have grown up surrounded by the traumas and insecurity of NYC’s toughest neighborhoods, and who have taken on the challenge of YouthBuild -- will get the support they need and deserve.

2) Youth-in-Community: Creating and Supporting a Variety of New Part-Time Opportunities

Many of our programs have space that is under-utilized in the afternoon, evenings, and weekends, and we know there are thousands of young people who are seeking support and need part-time learning, training, community-building, leadership, and self-development activities on many fronts. This set of young people needs activities within a culture similar to the safety, respect, and family-like community

they find in YouthBuild. That culture is created by the collection of program qualities listed in the YouthBuild program design above. These same qualities will be intentionally built into the part-time programming.

Activities may include volunteering in service projects, or internships and work experience opportunities which will introduce them to learning real life work experience. They may also include teaching lessons on test taking, resume preparation, interview skills training, broader career counseling, financial planning and wealth-building workshops, entrepreneurship training, social skills training, anger management, learning internet for beginners, technology skills training, pre-GED or GED preparation, sports, art and music, leadership and civic engagement training, sex education, fitness and nutrition, meditation, personal healing methods, and/or many other learning options, as requested and needed by the young people, along with fun activities like movie nights, game nights, comedy fests, and poetry/spoken word nights.

The sites will be lively, the youth will be able to find meaning and opportunities in spaces that will not victimize them or expose them to the traumas and humiliations they might otherwise endure outside. Clearly, these new part-time opportunities for 3,200 marginalized and vulnerable youth in the next three years will push back against street violence while shaping lives and expanding horizons and confidence.

Each organization has a set of activities and opportunities it seeks to offer to part-time participants. These opportunities will be open to the same range of young people eligible for YouthBuild – Opportunity Youth -- plus whoever else is seeking the variety of education, employment, and leadership training available. This may include additional youth who are younger, ages 13 to 17, students still in high school, or high school graduates who are unemployed and having trouble finding jobs, young people with entry-level jobs who are seeking advancement, high school graduates who want to go to college but have no idea how to make it happen, and so forth. So many youth are seeking a support system.

One of the main goals for extending hours will be to provide direct, targeted support to hundreds of youth, including young people who have applied to enter YouthBuild but been denied admission, or who dropped out of a YouthBuild cohort but want to earn their way back in, or who want to prepare themselves to apply for YouthBuild. This programming should not require full-time training. The extended hours approach will provide a much-needed vehicle to aid large numbers of youth in these pursuits. Part-time support will be adequate too for the placement and ongoing counseling of YouthBuild graduates and alumni. Programs often lack sufficient staffing to provide pro-active follow-up for graduates' job retention, college success, housing, crisis management, and access to leadership opportunities as well as continued community-building with other graduates that can lead to greater exercise of their leadership skills in their communities. With the needed funding in place, we can guarantee a strong plan to expand follow-up staff capacity and inter-site collaboration, cementing YouthBuild gains and advantage for hundreds of youth. We project an average cost for YouthBuild-related part-time activities of just \$4,915/person/year.

3) Launching “Youth-Create – Young People Creating Community Solutions”

As a proactive, positive youth development strategy to help redirect the recently increased tendencies to gun violence and robbery, the moment is ripe for a dramatic return to the origins of YouthBuild. We propose to fund community-based non-profit organizations in New York City to organize, inspire, and

resource teenagers in low-income neighborhoods. With adult support, the teenagers will imagine, design, and implement significant community improvement projects to solve problems they face and to build assets that will benefit their neighborhoods.

When asked, young people invariably define violence as one of the problems that they would like to solve. They often name police-community relationships as a priority for improvement. They also name providing sufficient positive opportunities for young people so they will avoid gang involvement. But regardless of what projects they design, engaging young people in community improvement projects of all types diminishes violence. The process builds confidence, hope, and self-respect. It creates cohesive peer groups that drive purpose and develop positive role models for younger teenagers. It also creates pathways to leadership and civic engagement that strengthen safety and collaboration in the community for the long run.

YouthBuild itself was originally created in 1978 by organizing a group of teenagers in East Harlem who, when asked what they would like to do to improve their community, said, “We would hire the unemployed young people to rebuild those abandoned buildings to create housing for those homeless people.” With the help of two NYC agencies – HPD and the now defunct Dept of Employment – and a hard-working cohort of neighborhood youth, we made it happen. It worked. To quote one young man from back then: “Wow, to think I used to stand on that corner selling drugs, and now I am on this corner building housing for my neighbors!” That initial success led to the gut rehabilitation in East Harlem of 13 vacant tenement buildings for permanent low-income housing under the banner of YouthBuild, while YouthBuild went national and then international.

Let’s ramp up this creative energy from young people again, but this time citywide, with a wider vision for wider gain, and as a NYC pilot program that may find replication in other urban areas. Through a competitive RFP process, non-profit organizations in New York City would be invited to compete for grants to organize young people to create community improvement projects of their own design. Each project would include one full-time organizer and a core group of 10 to 15 teenagers dedicating at least ten paid hours/week at minimum wage to developing their project. The cost of each project per year would be \$175,000 for salaries and benefits, stipends, space, food, travel, communications, and other TBD costs of the specific project.

Each non-profit applicant could choose whether to apply for \$175,000 to organize and implement one Youth-Create project, or to do a more ambitious multiple-project community organizing effort in their neighborhood with as many as five projects each year. In our 2022 request, we had proposed that local non-profits launch 30 of these new Community Improvement Projects (CIPs) in Year One, spread throughout the five boroughs. Those projects would be sustained in Year Two with another \$175,000 for each CIP from City Funds, and we would add on ten more projects, and again ten more in Year Three, for a total of 50 projects citywide, engaging 500+ youth. Each year \$500,000 additional dollars would have been allocated for training and technical assistance for these projects. Thus, the three-year cost to the City would have amounted to \$22.5 million. By Year Three, the local projects would be expected to be self-supporting through whatever funding streams are applicable to the particular projects they have created. It would be the responsibility of the local non-profit to raise the funds required to bring the projects to culmination and sustain them over time.

Our current, adjusted request carries forward the same structure, and while it decreases the number of youth served and cost, it remains an exciting and worthwhile pilot program. We now call for 12 new projects in the first year, 12 more in the second year, so at that

point there would be 24, and in the third year, 12 more, for a three-year total of 36 new CIPs. The TA cost drops to \$350,000 per year. The three-year total cost would be \$13.6 million.

This budget plan could change, depending on the effectiveness of our national partner, Youth-Create, in raising other philanthropic and federal funds for a national Community Improvement Project initiative which would build on our success in NYC. Here is some additional detail on how these CIPs would likely roll out:

Types of Community Improvement Projects for Youth-Create:

Projects will be expected to make meaningful and tangible change. Temporary clean-ups or short-term events will be acceptable only as supplementary to projects with more lasting impact. Each team of young people will choose their own priorities. Examples of eligible projects are below, but the projects would not be limited to these:

1. Building new parks, affordable housing, and/or community facilities of various types with the stipulation that these be built according to green standards.
2. Building cooperative relationships and activities engaging the police with youth and adults to build mutual respect and trust and to increase neighborhood safety.
3. Supporting and reforming the re-entry experiences of Returning Citizens.
4. Sponsoring gun buy-backs through churches and/or non-profits.
5. Providing healthy food, childcare services, healthcare supports, elderly services, and other needed services to residents.
6. Creating or managing new jobs and job training for young adults that will provide a pathway out of poverty for the individuals, coupled with direct benefits to the community.
7. Engaging students in improving school quality, safety, tutoring, advanced classes, college access, parent engagement, or other needs.
8. Creating after-school activities and safe spaces for school-aged children.
9. Training participants and residents in conflict resolution and restorative practices, financial literacy, facilitative leadership, and other beneficial subjects.
10. Creating cooperative businesses or gardens that produce economic and social benefits to the community.
11. Developing other projects that meet needs identified by the young people.
12. Educating elected officials and public appointees about public policies that could improve conditions in the neighborhood related to crime, criminal justice, safety, housing, jobs, health, education, leadership development, small business development, environmental stewardship, or other areas of public benefit.

Young people are eager to become a force for good. They have very good ideas about what their communities need, with great passion for bringing those ideas to life.

In addition, there are few life experiences more transformative for young people than feeling they have the permission, resources, and support to create something positive benefiting other people in their world. Such an experience not only unleashes the ingenuity and positive energy of young people so that

we can *all* benefit from their vision and effort. It also helps to strengthen the professional skills of each participant, build out their social capital, and cultivate a lasting identity as a changemaker who can improve the world. New York City will benefit enormously in both predictable and unpredictable ways, directly and indirectly, from 36 community improvement projects engaging at least 360 young leaders as a core group that will influence and benefit countless others, creating an immeasurable positive ripple effect.

Accountability for Outcomes

Each of the three proposed initiatives will have its own set of outcome measures and data against which its success will be evaluated.

In the full-time YouthBuild program this is well-established: we measure recruitment numbers, program attendance, completion, HSE attainment, certifications attained, service hours achieved, job placement, college placement, voter registration, and retention in jobs and college.

In the new part-time activities, specific outcomes will be defined for each kind of activity.

In the Youth-Create launch, we will assess the completion of community improvement projects, the teenagers' attendance in their part-time paid roles, their retention in high school, and their own assessments of the impact on themselves and their communities. We may also get assessments from community leaders and adult support groups who participate.

All three initiatives will be implemented with careful adherence to the basic guideposts of YouthBuild: Love, Accountability, Collaboration, Diversity, and Leadership.

Let's make history together!

David Calvert
Citywide Coordinator
YouthBuild NYC Collaborative
dcalvert@yayb.org, 646-351-2433

cc. Sheena Wright, First Deputy Mayor, City of New York
Mike Nolan, Youth Policy Point Person, Office of the Deputy Mayor
Keith Howard, Commissioner, DYCD
Valentin Lopez, Assistant Commissioner for Discretionary Programs
Darryl Rattray, Deputy Commissioner for Strategic Partnerships, DYCD
Andrew Miller, Senior Director for Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs, DYCD
Dorothy Stoneman, Board Chair, Youth Action YouthBuild, and former CEO of YouthBuild USA
Anthony Watson, Executive Director, MEOC, and Boardmember, Youth Action YouthBuild

**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: David Calvert
Address: 206 E 113 St / W 105 St NYC 10025
I represent: Youth Build NYC Collaborative
Address: 206 E 113 St NYC 10025

**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: 2/27/23

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Larven Galloway
Address: _____
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: 2/27/2023

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: David Hiraldo
Address: 173 East 112th Street
I represent: Renaissance Technical Institute
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: Abby Jo Egal

Address: 1 Liberty Plaza

I represent: Talent

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: Je'Neen Jones - Seo

Address: _____

I represent: SBS, Assistant Commissioner Workforce

Address: One Liberty Plaza

**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: Valarice Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner

Address: _____

I represent: DyCD

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: Daphne Martinez, Assoc

Address: Commissioner

I represent: Dyap

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: Feb 27, 2023

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Morris-Perry

Address: W 147th St

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: 2/27/23

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lovelle Shaw

Address: E Gan Hill Rd.

I represent: Christopher Morris-Perry D7

Address: _____