



COMMUNITY BOARD ELEVEN

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Nilsa Orama
Chair

Angel D. Mescaín
District Manager

Date: May 21, 2020

Committee: Youth & Education

Board Vote: 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 present not voting

RE: Resolution to restore funding for Summer Youth Employment Program for Summer 2020

WHEREAS Manhattan Community Board 11 (hereinafter “CB11”), whose primary mission is to advise elected officials and government agencies on matters affecting the social welfare of the district encompassing East Harlem, Randall’s Island, and Ward’s Island;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in tremendous job loss across the United States, and resulted in enormous loss of human life in New York City, particularly low income Black and Latinx communities like CB11’s district that were already struggling economically prior to the pandemic;

WHEREAS, youth in CB11’s district desperately need support and investment. Of the 98,151 residents age 16 and older in East Harlem, 50.3 percent are either unemployed or not in the labor force. Nearly thirty percent of family incomes in the past 12 months were below the Federal poverty line, the percentages are even higher for youth and seniors (45 and 36 percent respectively); one-third (31 percent) receive food stamps. These statistics show a community that is in need of quality education and local hiring initiatives to increase economic development and employment. Programs to help residents become self-sufficient, rather than dependent on government assistance, will make East Harlem a more prosperous and vibrant community;

WHEREAS, too often available employment opportunities are entry level in the service sector. The City must prioritize enhancing job training opportunities in East Harlem which target living wages, career paths and the evolving job market;

WHEREAS, as part of our FY 2021 budget request, CB11 requested the Department of Youth & Community Development to provide, expand, or enhance the Summer Youth Employment Program. In 2019, 70,000 of the 160,000 applicants were able to participate in the Summer Youth Employment Program;

WHEREAS, Mayor Bill de Blasio’s decision to suspend the Summer Youth Employment Program, which provides 75,000 youth workers summer job placements, is devastating to already hard-hit communities—these youth workers are disproportionately low income youth and youth of color, and 81% of SYEP participants in 2019 were Black, Hispanic, or Asian;

WHEREAS, cancellation of SYEP not only results in a loss of income for 75,000 youths and their families, it also deprives these youth from gaining on-the-job experience and professional development. The experience that participants glean from this program—the largest of its kind in the United States—prepares them to enter college or other trades while providing them with reliable and steady income. The cancelation of SYEP would be highly destabilizing for our youths’ career development;

WHEREAS, CB 11 joins community leaders, service providers, and public officials in calling on Mayor Bill de Blasio and the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development to immediately restore SYEP this year. New York City must fully fund SYEP for summer 2020, allow SYEP workers to work remotely, and provide internet access and equipment to allow youth workers to successfully complete remote work;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that CB11 calls on Mayor de Blasio, City Council, and DYCD take action to restore SYEP for summer 2020.