

Statement to Restore the New York City SYEP in Summer 2020
For Immediate Release - April 10, 2020 9am

UPDATE May 7, 2020: budget hearings have begun, so please make sure to find your Councilmember [here](#) and call their office to voice your support. Read more about our work [here](#) and also from our friends at Teens Take Charge [here](#).

Note: we are still accepting signatures from organizations, elected officials, and community leaders. Sign [here](#); the list below is being updated live. Members of the public see [here](#).

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New York, NY - This week's decision to suspend the Summer Youth Employment Program comes as a disappointment to 75,000 youths and their families. Canceling SYEP would disproportionately harm marginalized youth, including youth of color, youth with disabilities, and justice-involved youth. As community leaders, service providers, and public officials, we are 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.

Over the past 56 years, New York City's SYEP has provided millions of youth workers with their first formal jobs, allowing them to gain 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.

Mac-Olivier Lalanne, a 19-year old rising junior at SUNY Plattsburgh who had interned previously in his state senator's office, had been selected for SYEP three years ago and was looking forward to participating in the program this year. "SYEP would have meant a lot to me to prepare for the life experiences I have to face after college," he said, "but when I heard that SYEP was cancelled, I don't know what to do next." To suspend SYEP this summer would be to fail youth like Mac-Olivier and thousands of others. It would disproportionately affect youth from marginalized and underrepresented communities. These are the same communities being hit hardest by COVID-19 and its economic impacts, and these families rely on the income that the young people earn during SYEP. Now it is more critical than ever.

SYEP has also been crucial in expanding opportunities for underrepresented youth. Not only are a vast majority of SYEP participants persons of color but SYEP also employs NYCHA residents and justice-involved youth. SYEP has elevated significance for justice-involved youth. Children in foster care look forward to the program all year, as participation gives them pride and independence. Similarly, SYEP motivates young people involved in the justice system and

challenges them while giving them focus. With unemployment rising, the benefits of SYEP are even more critical for the success of young people in New York City.

The impact that the cancelation of SYEP would have on communities of color in particular is unacceptable--81% of SYEP participants in 2019 were black, hispanic, or asian, and 84% were enrolled in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. Instead of eliminating the largest youth jobs program in the nation, New York City must instead support and expand economic opportunities for our youth. Ensuring that 75,000 young workers will have the opportunity to advance their careers and develop professionally should be a priority for New York, especially at a time when our communities are at risk of economic collapse.

In order to empower our youth and ensure our communities' economic success, we ask that Mayor de Blasio, City Council, and DYCD take action to restore SYEP for summer 2020. As a part of this process and to accommodate for current events, DYCD should:

- Fully fund SYEP for summer 2020
- Conduct SYEP orientation and other programming remotely, in conformity with public health measures
- Work with SYEP program partners to allow SYEP employment to occur remotely, in conformity with public health measures
- Provide internet access and remote work equipment to any SYEP participant who requests it, such that all SYEP participants can successfully complete remote work
- Provide individual grants to SYEP participants who would be unable to work remotely
- Engage SYEP workers in COVID-19 response and recovery initiatives such as community outreach, mutual aid, wellness checks, and calls to seniors or individuals with pre-existing conditions

Note: we are still accepting signatures from organizations, elected officials, and community leaders. Sign [here](#); the list below is being updated live. Members of the public see [here](#).

Signed,

Organizations:

All Star Code
America on Tech
American Red Cross of Greater New York
Artistic Noise
Association of Legal Aid Attorneys
Black Lives Matter Brooklyn
Bronx Community Board 6
Brooklyn Community Board 16
Brooklyn Young Democrats
Children's Aid
Chinese-American Planning Council
Commonpoint Queens

Community Justice Action Fund
CUNY University Student Senate
DecrimNY
Double Discovery Center
El Centro del Inmigrante
El Puente
Equality NY
Gangstas Making Astronomical Community Changes, Inc.
GAPIMNY—Empowering Queer & Trans Asian Pacific Islanders
Global Kids
Green Map System
HANAC Inc.
HERE to HERE
Indivisible Harlem
Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club
Lambda Independent Democrats of Brooklyn
LIFE Camp, Inc
Man Up Inc
Manhattan Community Board 9
Manhattan Community Board 11
Manhattan Young Democrats
Morningside Area Alliance
MetaBronx
Mixteca Organization Inc.
New York State Gender Diversity Coalition
New Yorkers Against Gun Violence
Organizing for Equity, NY
Pakistani American Youth Organization
Phipps Neighborhoods
Queens Chamber of Commerce
Red Hook Initiative
Rockaway Youth Task Force
Rooted Theater Company
Solar One
Teens Take Charge
The Bushwick Starr, Inc.
The Central Family Life Center
The Gathering for Justice
United Activities Unlimited
Urban Dove
UYAI / Bronx Connect
Youth Over Guns

Elected Officials:

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams
Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
State Senator Brian Benjamin
State Senator Julia Salazar
State Senator Jose Serrano
State Senator Robert Jackson
State Senator Velmanette Montgomery
Assemblymember Al Taylor
Assemblymember Catalina Cruz
Assemblymember Dan Quart
Assemblymember Harvey Epstein
Assemblymember Inez Dickens
Assemblymember Karines Reyes
Assemblymember Michael Blake
Assemblymember Nathalia Fernandez
Assemblymember Robert J. Rodriguez
Assemblymember Tremaine Wright
Councilmember Ben Kallos
Councilmember Carlina Rivera
Councilmember Farah Louis
Amanda Farias, Democratic State Committeemember
Christopher Marte, Democratic State Committeemember
Dan Cohen, Democratic State Committeemember
Emilia Decaudin, Democratic State Committeemember
Josue Pierre, Democratic State Committeemember
Avery Pereira, Brooklyn GOP District Leader
Corey Ortega, Manhattan Democratic District Leader
Kim Moscaritolo, Manhattan Democratic District Leader
Norma Campusano, Manhattan Democratic District Leader
Richard David, Queens Democratic District Leader

Community Leaders:

Alan Aja, Chair of the Department of Puerto Rican & Latino Studies at Brooklyn College
Alexa Aviles, Community Leader
Alexandra Taber, Community Leader
Althea Stevens, Community Affairs Department Director at East Side House
Aminta Kilawan-Narine, Community Leader
Amit Bahl, School Leader at Urban Dove Team Charter School
Amoy Barnes, NYC DOE Transition and College Access Center
Andrea Gavora, Program Director High School & College Success at Commonpoint Queens
Andrea Guaman Lopez, Community Leader

Andrea Lopez, Community Leader
Andrew Albright, Community Leader
Andrew Padilla, Manhattan CB11 Member
Anthony Beckford, Community Leader
Barry Weinberg, Manhattan CB9 Chair
Brian Romero, Community Leader
Carla Thomas, Community Leader
Christina Das, President of Brooklyn Young Democrats
Christopher Fuentes-Padilla, Community Leader
Christopher Volpe, Community Leader
Curtis Young, Executive Director of Artistic Noise
Cynthia Felix, Vice President of the Brooklyn Sunset Park Lions Club
Cynthia Gonzalez, Brooklyn CB7 Health Chair & Carroll Gardens Association Chair
Daniela Finlay, City Elected Official Coordinator for Zoomers Caucus
Dario Cerrud, Associate Executive Director of Urban Dove
Deirdre McIntosh-Brown, Manhattan CB9 Youth, Education and Libraries Co-Chair
Destiny Delacruz, Community Leader
Dianne Morales, Community Leader
Dion Quamina, Secretary of Brooklyn CB17 & Member of Brooklyn NAB 16
Elizabeth Adams, Community Leader
Eliza Pacheco, Community Leader
Elizabeth Bishop, Community Leader
Elvis Santana, Community Leader
Emerita Torres, Community Leader
Emily Task, Community Leader
Enrique Peña-Oropeza, Academic Senator at CUNY Queens College Student Association
Ericka Medina, Red Hook Initiative
Evie Hantzopoulos, Executive Director of Global Kids
Felicia Singh, Educator and Community Leader
France Francois, Founder of In Cultured Co
Frantzy Luzincourt, President of the Undergraduate Student Government at City College
Gloria Rodriguez-Novoa, Sunset Park Lions Club
Heather Squatriglia, Association of Legal Aid Attorneys
Ismabel Cueto, Community Leader
Ischia Bravo, Community Leader
Jabari Brisport, Public School Teacher
Jared Trujillo, President of the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys
Jason Salmon, Community Leader
Jason Wu, Manhattan CB11 Member
Jennifer Johnson Avril, Community Leader
Jessie Ngok, Community Leader
Joan Alexander-Bakiriddin, Brooklyn CB17 Youth Committee Chair
Jon Gabay, Urban Dove

Joseph Coborne, President of CUNY Queens College Student Government Association
Julia Elmaleh-Sachs, Executive Vice President of Brooklyn Young Democrats
Julia Forman, Community Leader
Julio Pena III, Brooklyn CB7 Youth & Education Committee Chair
Justin Collins, Brooklyn CB7 Member
Justin Westbrook-Lowry, Chairperson of the NYC DYCD NAB Bronx District 9
Katia Portela, Community Leader
Katherine Walsh, Brooklyn CB7 Member
Keith Garcia, Assistant Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life at Northwestern University
Kenneth Lee, Community Leader
Kevin Wei, Community Leader
Kimberly Watkins, President of CEC District 3
Kristen Gonzalez, Queens CB4 Member
Lee Sunday Evans, Artistic Director at Waterwell
Lismari Antigua, Community Leader
Mac-Olivier Lalanne, Zoomers Caucus Member
Marti Cummings, Manhattan CB9 Member
Martha Bayona, Community Leader
Matthew Levy, Manhattan CB12 Member
Natalie Martinez, Director of Youth Employment Programs at HANAC Inc.
Nick Roloson, Community Leader
Nidia Perez, Community Leader
Niisa Orama, Manhattan CB11 Chair
Pablo Zevallos, Community Leader
Patrick Johnson, Community Leader
Rakim Brooks, Community Leader
Rebecca Lamorte, Manhattan CB8 Member
Rick Echeverria, Community Leader
Robin Karasyk, Vice President of the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys
Rod Townsend, Community Leader
Rodrigo Camarena, Community Leader
Ramdat Singh, Educator & Community Leader
Samy Nemir Olivares, Community Leader
Sanduke Mcphatter, Executive Director of G-MACC INC.
Seth Rosen, Community Leader
Shahana Hanif, Community Leader
Shaun Abreu, Double Discovery Center Board Member
Shoshana Brown, Community Leader
Shrowna Thomas, Community Leader
Sofia Shapiro Cruz, Community Leader
Stephanie Pope, Association of Legal Aid Attorneys
Tanvir Hayat, Case Manager at ACE Programs for the Homeless
Tricia Shimamura, Manhattan CB8 Member

TS Candii, Decim NY Steering Committeemember

Victor Adesoba, Community Leader

Whitney Hu, Community Leader

Wilfredo Florentino, Community Leader

Zohran Mamdani, Community Leader