



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
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HENRIETTA LYLE
Chairperson

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District Manager

June 25, 2014

Richard Weiss, CASAC
President & CEO
Argus Community, Inc.
760 E. 160th Street
Bronx, NY 10456

Re: Argus Community Application for OASAS Youth Prevention Services

Dear Mr. Weiss,

Please accept this letter demonstrating Community Board 10's Health and Human Services and Education, Youth and Libraries Committee's Health and Human Services and Education, Youth and Libraries Committee's support for Argus Community's OASAS certified Youth Prevention Program located at 262 West 145th Street, New York, NY at the Youth Intervention and Development Center. It is our understanding that Argus Community intends to continue a pro-active, research-based, and data driven prevention program in the Harlem neighborhood of New York County (10039), as well as providing services to other neighboring districts (East Harlem, Morningside Heights, Washington Heights). At the present time, the Youth Intervention and Development Center is one of the only existing youth prevention service in the Harlem catchment area. Argus Community intends to operate an evidence based-prevention model program that will serve at a minimum of 100 youth ages 5-20 at our facility, and hundreds of youth offsite by implementing best practices shown to increase protection factors in youth, and reduce risk factors in effort to reduce and prevent alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, gambling, and other problem behaviors including delinquency, teen pregnancy, school drop-out and violence.

Argus Community has conducted a needs assessment by examining existing research on New York County via the Kids' Wellbeing Clearinghouse and has determined that New York County, especially East and West Harlem and its surrounding neighborhoods, has one of the highest indices of Risk Factors that jeopardize the overall health, education, and well-being of children, youth, and families that live in this borough.

Many of the neighborhoods in the Harlem community suffer from extreme economic deprivation. According to the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) *Risk Factors That Inhibit Health Youth Development*, extreme economic deprivation leads to problem behaviors including substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school drop-out, and violence. New York County also suffers from higher than average arrests for drug use, possession, and sale, arrests of youth for violent crimes, youth school drop-out, and youth unemployment, and this is particularly evident in the East and West Harlem sections of New York City. Based on research and key informant

interviews, the Harlem neighborhoods have a strong presence and availability of alcohol and other drugs, social norms favorable towards substance use, parental attitudes favorable towards alcohol and other drug use as well as problem behavior, early initiation of alcohol and drug use and problem behavior, low commitment to school, and academic failure. It is the intent of Argus Community to assist with educational/academic needs, job training and referrals, and pro-social alternative activities that may alleviate the issues faced in the region.

Argus Community has been working with youth for over 40 years and has demonstrated an ability to prevent problem behavior and promote healthy development among children, adolescents, and young adults. Argus is presently implementing an evidence-based program and strategies in our Youth Intervention and Development Center in Harlem, and has systematically demonstrated an ability to effectively achieve the outcome of reducing and avoiding alcohol, tobacco, substance use and abuse, problem gambling and other problematic behaviors. Argus Community's evidence-based model includes curriculum such as Too Good for Drugs (elementary, middle, and high school versions), Too Good for Violence, Project towards No Drug Abuse (high school), Reconnecting Youth, and Life Skills Training.

Argus is confident that it will continue to provide an effective and viable youth prevention program to the Harlem neighborhoods and schools which is currently lacking this vital resource. As part of a community needs assessment, Argus Community has identified certain elementary, middle, and high schools in the designated areas that may benefit from onsite youth prevention program services.

It is my understanding that many of the local elementary, middle, and high schools have agreed to partner with Argus Community to establish safe and effective, evidence-based youth prevention services onsite, which will serve to strengthen the educational and support services provided to the students. This collaboration will provide innovative, comprehensive services including counseling and education to prevent and intervene in the use of alcohol and other drugs, gambling, and violence.

We endorse Argus Community in their effort their effort to provide high quality, comprehensive capacity building youth prevention services that result in successful interventions strategies, and will serve to produce a high-impact on the outcomes for youth within this community.

Sincerely,

Henrietta Lyle
Chairperson
Community Board 10