



YMI CONNECTION

News, Updates, and Stories from the Young Men's Initiative

Autumn 2013

The Young Men's Initiative (YMI) launched in August of 2011. Over the course of three years, the City will invest a combination of public and private funds to support new programs and policies designed to address numerous outcomes related to education, health, employment and justice. These programs and policies will break down barriers to success and help young Black and Latino men achieve their professional, educational and personal goals.

The Big Picture

The Big Picture brings you up to speed on the status of the Young Men's Initiative

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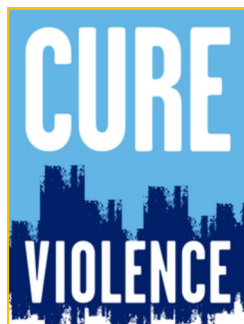
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Curing Violence with Young Men's Initiative

Violence breeds violence; it can spread like a disease. One way to prevent violence is to interrupt its transmission. The Cure Violence program does just that. This public health approach to violence prevention aims to redirect young people caught up in violence and to change a community's mindset about violence. Cure Violence has been successful in many communities hit hard by violence. Evidence shows the program can reduce violence, build positive connections with youth, and shift community attitudes away from accepting violence as normal. Cure Violence programs use trusted community insiders with backgrounds similar to youth caught up in violence as their core staff. Known as Violence Interrupters and Outreach Workers, these staff work with youth to mediate conflict, offer non-violent solutions, and connect youth with needed services. They are powerful mentors to youth at risk of violence. Violence Interrupters and Outreach workers also work with the entire community, responding quickly to shootings through organized community events and canvassing to spread the word about non-violence. They are effective change agents for the community. In New York City the program is a component of the Young Men's Initiative (YMI) and is overseen by the Health Department – the City agency focused on disease and injury prevention. Programs are operating with tremendous strength in East New York, Crown Heights and Central Harlem and with a special component that brings Violence Interrupters and Outreach Workers into the hospital setting. By bringing the mediation services into Kings County and Harlem Hospitals, in particular, staff have great opportunities to stop retaliatory violence among friends and family of hospitalized victims. In addition, with funds from the City Council, the Health Department is overseeing sites in South Jamaica Queens, the south Bronx, and Staten Island.



Congratulations to Man Up! in East New York on one year without a shooting! - 2013

CUNY Fatherhood Academy Admits New Cohort

As the CUNY Fatherhood Academy at LaGuardia Community College--a multifaceted program that gets young fathers back on an academic track while helping them become better parents at a time when father absence and low father involvement is a reality--enters its fourth cohort, the program can look back at an impressive list of accomplishments. "We have had success in helping our guys earn their GED's, find jobs, enroll in college and boost their parenting skills," said Beth Lord, the program's director. "The lives of these young men have dramatically changed as a result of this program." And the numbers back up Ms. Lord's words. Since the program began in 2012, 100 young fathers have gone through program and 36 are currently enrolled. Among the 100 graduates, 33 have earned their GED; 46 are employed in part- or full-time jobs; and six are now enrolled at LaGuardia and two will be entering in the spring while nine are currently in college prep. Ms. Lord and her staff attribute the program's success to their commitment that no student should be left behind. "The door is always open," said David Speal, the program's counselor/case manager.



Above: Members of the 4th cohort of the CUNY Fatherhood Academy show their new LaGuardia Community College ID Cards on the first day of the program.

"Whether it is a student in the first cohort who is still preparing for his GED exam or a graduate who is looking for a job, we are here to help them reach their goals." Supporting the academic program is a tutoring program for both current students and graduates, which is being expanded, and a soon-to-be-launched academic mentoring component. And on the personal side, there are the parenting skills workshops. "We cannot forget that these young men are fathers who are learning to be better parents," said Ms. Lord. "They are now on the right path to becoming role models for their children."

Sneak Peak From The First YMI: Making It Happen Youth Empowerment Summit



Above: Participants signing out at the YMI Youth Empowerment Summit.

The Young Men's Initiative in cooperation with The Urban Male Initiative held our first ever *Making it Happen: Youth Empowerment Summit (YES!)* at John Jay College on November 9th. The all-day event was attended by nearly 200 youths of various ages that represented all 5 boroughs. The *Making it Happen: Youth Empowerment Summit (YES!)* provided participants with the opportunity to attend specialized workshops, network at a resource fair, as well as hear from keynote speakers. The workshops ranged in topics from financial management to interview preparation, as well as coaching on how to leave a troubled past behind. The resource fair offered dozens of feature tables that allowed youth to explore what interested them the most; whether it be education, justice, health, or employment. The keynote speakers offered a testament of advice as to what paths they took to a positive future. The day proved to be one of enlightenment and empowerment for the attendees. Stay tuned to the next edition of YMI Connection to read more!



One on One

One on One highlights a participant in one of the YMI

Name: Tyree Hicks **YMI Program:** Arches

YMI: Tell us about your involvement with YMI.

Tyree: My involvement is basically to make sure that everybody that's in the program or that's going...or that's looking forward to getting into the program starts off on a nice path.

YMI: Tell us about where you started and what it was like for you to be involved and your role, tell us about that too.

Tyree: I started on Rikers Island. I got released, and when I got released I had to go to probation. And, my probation officer, Mr. Mangum, referred me to Arches program. Over the months I've noticed that they helped me build my character and that leads me to the characteristics that I am now. A working man. And no longer doing negative things in life.

YMI: What inspired you?

Tyree: What inspired me to change and to just go positive in life, I would say my 4 year old son..one. My mentors too. My mentors they play a major role in my life. Like, I can call them at any time, any day, any hour, the hour. And the give me positive feedback all the time.

They make me feel like my toughest my darkest hours are always light or is always something light that I can get over.

YMI: How do you feel now about being a role model?

Tyree: I feel as though being a role model towards other people is great. Reason why I feel like that is that I feel like I'm turning another life around so they won't have to go down the road that I chose. Or they won't have to go down a negative road where it might mess up their life because once you go there some people come back and don't, you know, switch over, or they stay on that path of negativity and they don't make it. So it feels great to be a role model.



Above: Tyree Hicks with his daughter

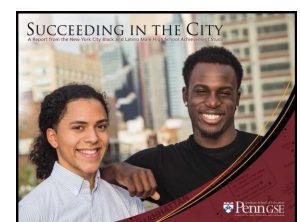
On The Ground

On The Ground brings you updates on our programs what's new, what's expanding, and important milestones.

Succeeding in the City is the first publication from the New York City Black and Latino Male High School Achievement Study. As a project, it conducted individual interviews with over 400 students from 40 public high schools – in which 90 were enrolled in 44 colleges and universities, whilst the remaining were high school juniors and seniors that were college bound. Rather than perpetuating the deficits and documenting the failures in urban schools, 12 Black and Latino males researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and Shaun Harper opted to study students who were able to cultivate productive relationships, resist pressures to drop out of high school and join gangs and who were able to succeed in environments that cyclically disadvantage due to structural inequities. Understanding and appreciating how these interviewed participants were able to succeed educationally as well as professionally was the primary objective of this project. The report can be downloaded in PDF (at no cost) from www.gse.upenn.edu/equity/nycreport.



Above: Shaun Harper (far left) and his research team. Right: *Succeeding In The City* Report.



MY-YMI

MY-YMI is our list of ways that young people can utilize apps and connect with influential social media networks

Smartphone Apps To Try!

Mint: Learn to manage your money with this simple app!

Interview Buzz Lite: Prep for interviews with sample questions

Pocket Resume: Export your online resume to PDF and edit it for different jobs.

Dictionary.com: Never puzzle over a word again! Great for homework help.

Teens In NYC: A place for you to locate sexual health services, clinics and more.



Twitter Accounts to Follow!

Expanded Success Initiative @ESI In NYC

The Daily Love @theDailyLove

NYC Department of Health @NYCHealthy

Harlem Educational Activities Fund @HEAF

Youth Organizing to Save Our Streets @yo_sos

All Star Code @AllStarCode

Resilience Advocacy @endyouthpoverty

David Rush @DavidRushOnline

Hector Cordero @HCorderoGuzman

Work Force 1 @NYCWorkforce1

Allan Houston @Allan_Houston

In The News

In The News contains links to articles and other mentions of YMI in the media

Andre Mitchell Inspires Neighbors to Make East New York A Safer Area
<http://bit.ly/19v9qbI>

No Shootings or Killings for 363 Days, But The Fight Is Far From Over
<http://nyti.ms/12Q62G8>

Young Black and Latino Men Are, In Fact, Going to College
<http://bit.ly/16a77dn>

In Plain Sight <http://bit.ly/14WRULX>

Stereotypes Add To Burden For Minority Male Students, Researchers Say
<http://bit.ly/18jFHS2>



Above: Tislam Milliner patrolling Brooklyn, with the organization Man Up! **Below:** *Young Black and Latino Men, Are, In Fact Going to College*



In The Spotlight

In The Spotlight highlights an agency of provider working with the city to accomplish the goals of YMI.

As announced in the Spring and Summer 2013 issue of YMI Connection, YMI has partnered with ASHOKA Changemakers to launch an online competition, “**My Voice, Our City... What will you do?**” The competition encouraged Black and Latino young men, ages 16-24, local organizations and community leaders to submit innovative program ideas that brighten the future of NYC. ASHOKA selected a panel of judges that chose the Grand Prize Winner of \$20,000 and 10 finalists. Public voting took place in September for three Runners-up, who were awarded \$5,000 each. We are pleased to acknowledge the following organizations as recipients of the My Voice, Our City: What will you do? Competition:



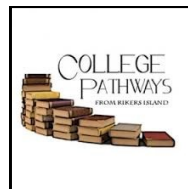
Grand Prize Winner: \$20,000

STEM for All at Emerging Leaders in Technology and Engineering, Inc. (ELiTE): Offers students the opportunity to develop skills in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math by increasing their access to a community of peers and mentors and academic resources, including e-learning platforms and open-sourced curricula. Led by trained engineers from top universities, STEM for All is creating a pipeline of diverse, motivated, and socially responsible professionals who have the skills to design solutions to community challenges in the U.S. and abroad.



Three Runner-Up Prize Winners: \$5,000 each

1. College Pathways from Rikers Island at College Initiative: This program provides young men at New York City’s main jail complex, many of whom never considered college an option, the chance to imagine themselves – and succeed – as college students with unprecedented access to community-based support to transition successfully to academic life. 2. Building Leaders and Scholars Through Soccer at South Bronx United (SBU): This program leverages the power of soccer to help young people, particularly young men from immigrant families, to become leaders and scholars. SBU engages young New Yorkers through their passion for the sport and then provides educational, mentoring, and support services to help them achieve greater success on and off the pitch. 3. Teaching Kids from Low Income Communities to Code at ScriptEd, Inc.: This organization empowers students from low-income communities by bringing computer programming courses directly to their schools, and helping them secure summer internship opportunities with software developers. Please visit www.myvoiceourcity.com for information about our winners!



Above: From Left to Right - ASHOKA Changemankers, College Pathways, SBU, and ScriptED.



Check It Out

Check It Out includes links to articles and resources of interest to our partners and allies

Succeeding in the City: A Report from the New York City Black and Latino Male High School Achievement Study

<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/succeeding-city-20130930.pdf>

2013 Black Male Achievement Fellows at OSF

<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/multimedia/introducing-2013-black-male-achievement-fellows>

Creating College Ready Communities: Preparing NYC's Precarious New Generation of College Students

<http://www.newschool.edu/milano/nycaffairs/DownloadReport.aspx>

Violent Youth Crime in U.S. Falls to New 32-Year Low

<http://johnjayresearch.org/rec/files/2013/10/databit201304.pdf>

Chicago Fights Gang Violence with Facebook

<http://www.govtech.com/public-safety/Social-Media-Transforms-the-Way-Chicago-Fights-Gang-Violence.html>

Public Enemies: Social Media Is Fueling Gang Wars In Chicago

<http://www.wired.com/underwire/2013/09/gangs-of-social-media/all/>



This mural in a Chicago neighborhood is entitled "A Mothers Greatest Fear."

Beyond NYC

Beyond NYC provides information about the reach the Young Men's Initiative has outside of the city.

The fourth annual *Education Nation National Summit* was held at The New York Public Library on October 6th-8th with a focus on 'What It Takes' for us as a nation to best prepare our youth for a college bound path. *Education Nation* is NBC News' year-round initiative to engage the country in a solutions focused conversation about the state of the education system in America. This town hall style discussion allows for well-informed policymakers, educators, social leaders, parents as well as the public to collaborate on ideas in the effort to develop the American educational system. Covering a broad range of topics, from educational challenges and potential solutions; to spanning educational innovations, the discussion allows for an informative platform that provides Americans with the knowledge that they need to make informed decisions about how to not only develop our education system immediately, but long term as well. One of the more engaging aspects of the summit was the *Student Town Hall* where actual students were able to provide their perspective on topics such as safety on campus, student mobilization, technology in the classroom, as well as a variety of other points. You can read more about the event on www.educationnation.com.



Above: Students at the Education Nation National Summit





YOUNG MEN'S INITIATIVE

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Center for Economic Opportunity



Human Resources Administration
Department of Social Services
Commissioner Robert Doar



Department of Education

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