Quick Stats-Expanded Program

Agency	Start date	Number Served Annually	Annual Budget
Department of Youth and Community Development New York Public Library, Queens Public Library, Brooklyn Public Library	September 2008	678 (FY '11)	$1,818,000 (FY '11)
YMI Expansion	**September 2011**	**928**	**$1,034,583***

*Does not include $2,030,000 of agency base funds

Problem Statement	GED programs generally serve participants reading at the eighth grade level or above and very little is available for young people with fourth to eighth grade reading skills. The Commission for Economic Opportunity identified basic literacy services as a crucial need for young adults and the working poor – CEO's primary target populations. In New York State, approximately 30% of young adults between the ages of 16 and 18 and 22% of young adults between the ages of 19 and 24 have "below basic" literacy skills.[i]
Research and Evidence	Few literacy programs specifically target the needs and interests of young adults and 17-to-24-year-olds are often poorly served by adult literacy programs.[ii] Although adult education programs have long waiting lists, retention is a persistent problem among 17-to-24-year-olds, with dropout rates approaching 50% at many sites.[iii] The Center for Economic Opportunity has invested in several initiatives that include a literacy component: ▪ *CUNY Prep* helps out of school youth pass the GED and prepare for college. ▪ *SBS Customized Training Grants* support employer-based contextualized literacy and ESL for low-wage workers. ▪ *Multiple Pathways to Graduation (OMPG)* is the Department of Education's initiative to help over-age and under-credited students to complete high school, and includes basic literacy programs.
Program Description	The Young Adult Literacy Program creates pre-GED level literacy and numeracy classes for young adults (17-24 years old) based on best practices. Programs provide targeted instruction, work readiness, paid internships, and support services. The Young Men's Initiative is enhancing the programs in FY12 with an additional $1,000,000 to support the launch of five new sites. The Young Adult Literacy programs use curriculum and instructional approach to the needs and interests of young adults who read at Pre-GED (4th to 8th grade) level. The program model offers a work readiness or internship/job placement component, modest participant incentives, and case management services to support sustained participation. Programs serve cohorts of approximately 20 students and engage them for an extended period, as most students need to advance several grade levels to enter GED programs or realistically compete in the job market.

Young Adult Literacy Program

	There are 17 sites, of which eight are contracted with community-based organizations and nine are based at public libraries, including The New York Public Library, Queens Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library. CEO works with the Youth Development Institute (YDI) to provide technical assistance to the sites, promote lessons learned, and ensure that the programs provide high-quality services.

Implementation Timeline	• All 5 new YMI sites (3 CBOs and 2 Library sites) launched in October, 2011.

Target Population	The programs target disconnected youth between the ages of 17 and 24 whose reading skills are between the fourth and eighth grade level, with a particular focus on those who read between the fourth and sixth grade level.

Expected Outcomes	• Improved young adult program attendance and persistence • Literacy and numeracy gains • Successful transition of participants into GED programs, employment, or employment training

[i] "Highlights from the 2003 New York State Assessment of Adult Literacy 13." (2007) Washington D.C.: American Institutes for Research: http://www.air.org/publications/documents/SAAL_NY_web.pdf.

[ii] See generally, Flugman, B., Perin, D., and Spiegel, S. (2003) "An Exploratory Case Study of 16-20 Year Old Students in Adult Education Programs" available at web.gc.cuny.edu/dept/case/adult_ed/Adult_Ed_TimesRoman_Final_Rpt.pdf; see also Hayes, E. (1999) "Youth in Adult Literacy Programs" Review of Adult Learning and Literacy 1.http://www.ncsall.net/?id=524.

[iii] Flugman et al., supra note ii at 61.