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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2026 Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) Kicks Off With Jobs and Paid Work Experiences for Over 100,000 Young People

Thousands of employers are helping to make the City more affordable for young New Yorkers and their families

NEW YORK, NY – Today the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) officially begins, as 100,000 young New Yorkers prepare to step into workplaces and take on projects across the five boroughs. From community organizations and small businesses to hospitals, cultural institutions and government agencies, participants are gaining valuable early work experience, earning their first paychecks and developing skills that will serve them throughout their careers. As they contribute their talents and energy to neighborhoods across New York City, these young people are not only preparing for their futures, but are helping strengthen the communities they call home.

“Celebrating its 63rd year as the nation’s largest youth employment program, SYEP continues to create career pathways and expand opportunities for young people to explore their interests, gain meaningful work experience, build professional skills and earn a paycheck. By connecting participants to employers, mentors and real-world experiences, SYEP helps prepare the next generation of New York City’s workforce while investing in communities across the five boroughs,” said **NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Commissioner Sandra Escamilla-Davies**. “Alongside Summer Rising, Saturday Night Lights, Summer Night Lights, and other free DYCD programs, SYEP provides young people with safe, engaging opportunities to build lasting relationships, develop skills, discover new possibilities and create experiences that will shape their futures long after the summer ends.”

SYEP runs for six weeks in July and August. Participants get a jumpstart on their careers at thousands of worksites across the City, in industries such as business/finance, government, fashion, philanthropy, technology, arts/culture, engineering/construction, healthcare, legal services, real estate, transportation, advertising/marketing, hospitality/tourism, media/entertainment and retail.

SYEP advances the City’s vision of making New York City more affordable by helping young people earn income, gain valuable skills and build pathways to long-term economic opportunity. The program offers tailored experiences to thousands of participants facing some of the greatest barriers to success, including young people at the highest risk of gun violence, NYCHA residents, youth living with disabilities and those who are justice-involved, experiencing homelessness or in foster care. SYEP also supports participants in select high schools by connecting work experiences to high school academic learning and helping young people build the skills and credentials needed to access family-sustaining careers. By investing in youth employment and career development, SYEP helps put money in the pockets of young New Yorkers today while creating stronger economic futures for them and their families.

High school seniors and college students in Ladders for Leaders, a professional internship component of SYEP, are connected to pre-employment training and access to competitive internships with leading companies, including IAC, BlackRock, Northwell Health, the Real Estate Board of New York, SL Green, Rudin, JCDecaux North America, Live Nation and more.

SYEP participation outcomes cited in studies include improved school attendance, connections to new skills, reduced incarceration rates and keeping teens and young adults safe, including youth who wouldn’t

otherwise have access to paying jobs. Additional research indicates summer jobs save lives, reduce crime and strengthen communities. A [2021 study](#) found that SYEP participation lowered participants' chances of being arrested by 17 percent, and by 23 percent for felony arrests. SYEP youth are also [significantly less likely to be incarcerated in New York State](#) more than five years after their participation in the program.

Participants aged 14 and 15 receive a stipend for the summer; older youth aged 16-24 are paid the prevailing minimum wage. Last year, nearly 70 percent of program participants signed up to be paid via direct deposit. With an aim to further grow that number, the program is adding an additional focus on financial empowerment. All SYEP participants must spend at least two hours of Hats & Ladders educational content on financial literacy. Additionally, SYEP is partnering with the Department of Worker and Consumer Protection (DCWP) Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) to bring financial educators and banking institutions to SYEP providers and enrollment events.

In a continuing partnership with longtime funder Cities for Financial Empowerment (CFE), DYCD hosted the first Financial Partnership Learning Initiative session, which equips SYEP providers with banking integration strategies.

With support from the James and Judith K. Dimon Foundation, high school students will have more opportunities to take CUNY credit-bearing courses this summer and employers will have access to additional resources that will support them in developing impactful internships for high school students in in-demand industries including technology, healthcare and finance.

Even the youngest SYEP participants can build career readiness skills through project-based learning. 14- and 15-year-olds participate in hands-on experiences facilitated by DYCD-funded community-based organizations in all five boroughs, with projects ranging from community advocacy and peer education to entrepreneurship and coding. This year, DYCD is piloting innovate learning models with leading employers that give young people access to cutting-edge technology used to address real-world challenges. At the heart of these experiences is helping young people learn how to leverage artificial intelligence (AI) to bring their ideas to life while developing the skills and mindset to become the innovators of tomorrow. In partnership with The Hip Hop Museum, Microsoft will teach entrepreneurship through the lens of hip hop, while the New York City Football Club will challenge young people to use AI and community research to develop solutions that expand access to soccer across New York City in celebration of the FIFA World Cup 2026™.

“New York City has always been a global engine of creativity and opportunity, so we’re excited to partner with the City’s Summer Youth Employment Program and The Hip Hop Museum to help unlock that potential for the next generation. We’re piloting a program that blends the cultural power of Hip Hop with Microsoft’s cutting-edge Innovation practices to give young people the tools, confidence and pathways to turn their ideas into real ventures,” **said Mike Pell, director, Microsoft Garage.**

Every year, Lyft provides 1,200 free two-month Citi Bike memberships for SYEP participants, enabling young people to get to their jobs, explore their city and have fun. The company also hosts SYEP interns on their Social Impact team; participants gain exposure to careers in the private sector while building their leadership and communications skills as Citi Bike community ambassadors.

“We’re proud to continue partnering with the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development because we believe access to transportation is access to possibility. Since 2022, Lyft has provided free Citi Bike memberships and hands-on experience to help young New Yorkers build real skills—and real confidence. Because when young people move, cities move with them,” **said Inbar Kishoni, senior manager, Community & Equity Programs, Lyft Urban Solutions.**

“We are proud to continue our partnership with DYCD through the Summer Youth Employment Program, providing thousands of young people across Manhattan and the Bronx with meaningful opportunities to develop career skills, gain paid work experience, and prepare for their futures,” said **Yokasta Morales, executive director, Children’s Arts & Science Workshops (CASW)**. “SYEP is more than a summer job—it is a year-round investment in young people, equipping them with employment training, financial literacy, career readiness and the confidence to succeed. Every summer, we see firsthand how these opportunities empower youth to build independence, strengthen their communities and create brighter futures.”

“Through our partnership with New York City’s Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), Group Effort has had the privilege of providing 100 NYC youth with hands-on internship experiences in media and entertainment. Our mission has always been to create lasting career pathways for young people, and this public-private partnership plays a vital role in advancing that goal. By supporting local entertainment companies and connecting youth to meaningful summer employment opportunities, we’re helping build a stronger, more inclusive workforce for the future,” said **Sumi Parekh, executive director, Group Effort Initiative**.

“As New York City’s Place for Aerospace, the Intrepid Museum is dedicated to creating meaningful connections and hands-on employment experience which not only provides practical 21st century skills but also exposes Summer Youth Employment Program participants to next-step pathways that lead to real opportunities. It is always exciting and energizing to meet the new cohort of curious and talented New York City youth who come to us through our partners in SYEP!,” said **Susan Marenoff-Zausner, president, Intrepid Museum**.

“We are proud to be part of a city that, every year, pours into its own. A summer job is so much more than a paycheck—for the young people we serve, some of whom are our city’s most vulnerable, it’s often the first time they feel agency and independence,” said **Michael De Vito Jr., executive director, New York Center for Interpersonal Development, Inc.**, an SYEP provider. “We nurture that by being responsive to what they need and supportive of the decisions they make for themselves. Invest in young people this way and you don’t just change a summer—you build a stronger New York.”

“NYC Health + Hospitals has a longstanding relationship with DYCD programs SYEP and Ladders for Leaders to host participants at various facilities and clinics where they are assigned tasks and projects to support various healthcare initiatives. We are excited to provide invaluable experiences to participants in these programs that are seeking a career in clinical and non-clinical spaces in healthcare, especially as an entry point to full time roles in our system,” said **Adyna Gamboa, assistant vice president, Workforce Development, NYC Health + Hospitals**.

“REBNY is proud to support SYEP and the meaningful opportunities it creates for young New Yorkers to gain real-world experience, broaden their horizons and take early steps toward their future careers,” said **James Whelan, president, REBNY**. “Our members understand the importance of investing in the next generation, and their participation reflects the real estate industry’s commitment to New York City’s workforce.”

“The Summer Youth Employment Program empowers young people to build the skills, relationships and sense of purpose that shape their futures,” said **Kieran Harrington, CEO, RiseBoro Community Partnership**. “RiseBoro is committed to investing in the next generation, providing hands-on work experience, career exploration and workplace skills training. We are proud to partner with the City in

pursuit of a shared vision where New Yorkers can achieve economic stability, regardless of their zip code.”

“SYEP allowed me to gain more experience in the career field I am interested in pursuing. Having people who work in that field gave me incredible advice on what I can expect in the future throughout my career path and offered me resources I can use to help guide me through my pathway. This program also allowed me to be more social and confident in myself by learning how to communicate and work with others. Overall, SYEP is an amazing opportunity to get yourself out there, gain experience, and explore different career paths,” **said SYEP 2025 Participant, age 20, Manhattan.**

“My SYEP experience was very meaningful because it gave me a chance to learn new skills, work with different people, and explore a professional environment. One of the best parts was being able to gain hands-on experience while also learning about teamwork and communication. This program was beneficial because it helped me build confidence, taught me how to manage money, and gave me a better idea of what I want to do in the future,” **said SYEP 2025 Participant, age 15, Brooklyn.**

For more information on SYEP, visit nyc.gov/syep and the [2025 SYEP Annual Report](#).

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