



**Implementation Study of  
The Center for Economic Opportunity's  
Work Progress Program and NYC Recovers**

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## **CEO RESPONSE TO BRANCH ASSOCIATES EVALUATION OF THE WORK PROGRESS PROGRAM AND NYC RECOVERS**

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In New York City, one out of five or nearly 200,000 young New Yorkers between the ages of 16 and 24 are not working and not in school.<sup>i</sup> While there are a number of community based organizations (CBOs) across the city that offer youth development services, participants in these programs often cannot find work and the subsidized job opportunities available to them are limited. Many of the non-profits serving these young adults simply cannot afford to provide them with subsidized jobs.

National research has shown that early work experience is a key ingredient to ensuring long term success for young adults. Young adults who obtain more work experience during their teenage years have smoother transitions to the labor market. They also have higher earnings and more steady employment well into adulthood.<sup>ii</sup>

Recognizing this, the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) in partnership with the NYC Young Men's Initiative and NYC Human Resources Administration launched the Work Progress Program (WPP) in February 2012. WPP is a flexible subsidized jobs program in which CEO reimburses CBOs for wages paid to low-income young adults (aged 16-24) who have been placed in short-term jobs that typically last 12 weeks, with a special emphasis on serving disconnected youth. The program was designed to complement existing community based youth programming (e.g. education classes) by adding a subsidized job into programs that did not currently offer them. Wage reimbursements are provided on the condition that participants also receive wraparound services. The types of services and jobs offered are determined by each CBO, the employers they work with, and their participants' needs, skills, and preferences.

When Hurricane Sandy subsequently struck New York City in October 2012, the storm left many neighborhoods across the city with a strained economy and increased unemployment among residents. In response, CEO leveraged the recently created framework of WPP to launch NYC Recovers, a subsidized jobs program designed to either serve residents from storm-affected communities or place New Yorkers in recovery-related work.

Since 2012, WPP and NYC Recovers combined have supported over 30 youth-serving CBOs throughout the city. These organizations have collectively placed over 2,000 young adults in subsidized jobs.

Seeking to study the effectiveness of these models and document lessons for the field, CEO contracted Branch Associates to conduct an implementation evaluation of WPP and NYC Recovers. The evaluators conducted site visits to ten WPP and NYC Recovers programs representing the diversity of organizations implementing the programs in size, experience, and mission. The evaluators interviewed staff and participants at each of the ten sites.

The report documents promising indicators of the programs' early successes, with 75 percent of participants completing their subsidized jobs and about half subsequently placed in employment or educational opportunities. In addition, the evaluators find that the programs delivered a variety of additional important benefits for participants, including:

- basic exposure to work,
- job readiness training and job development,
- job-related soft skills,
- job-related technical skills,
- career exploration,

- civic engagement,
- a modest paycheck,
- confidence and pride,
- a positive place to be, and
- caring staff to help them grow.

The evaluation also spoke to benefits of the programs for service providers, for whom they provide:

- opportunities to grow staff from within their communities,
- an ability to provide youth with a “ladder of services,”
- increased organizational capacity and office morale,
- and simple award requirements.

This evaluation has already informed CEO’s strategic planning and program operations for WPP and NYC Recovers. For example, in response to a staff recommendation highlighted in the report, CEO’s FY15 Request for Service Provider Applications allows providers to propose job placement periods longer than 12 weeks with sufficient justification. In addition, CEO in partnership with HRA is increasing opportunities for providers to interact and learn from each other through provider meetings and other venues.

In FY15, CEO has also been specifically encouraging proposals that target and recruit program participants from within the population of youth living in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residences as part of the Mayor’s Action Plan (MAP) for Neighborhood Safety – a coordinated plan to make New York City’s neighborhoods and housing developments safer, with a specific focus on the fifteen housing developments that account for almost 20 percent of violent crime in NYCHA.

Looking forward, CEO will continue to pursue the implementation and evaluation of subsidized jobs strategies to learn more about their effectiveness and broaden understanding of the best ways to leverage subsidized jobs to meet the needs of disconnected young adults.

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<sup>i</sup> Parrot, J., and Treschan, L. (2013). “Barriers to Entry: The Increasing Challenges Faced by Young Adults in the New York City Labor Market.” Jobs First NYC with The Fiscal Policy Institute and The Community Service Society of New York ([http://fiscalpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/JFNYC\\_Barriers\\_to\\_Entry\\_5-2-13.pdf](http://fiscalpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/JFNYC_Barriers_to_Entry_5-2-13.pdf)).

<sup>ii</sup> Sum, A., and Khatiwada, I (2010). “Vanishing Work among US Teens, 2000-10: What a Difference a Decade Makes! Four Million Missing Workers in June 2010.” Center for Labor Market Studies Publications, Paper 29 ([http://iris.lib.neu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1028&context=clms\\_pub](http://iris.lib.neu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1028&context=clms_pub)).

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## Executive Summary

In recent years, the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) in partnership with the New York City Human Resources Administration and the Young Men’s Initiative has expanded programs offering paid work experience to disconnected young adults. Recent research has identified transitional or subsidized employment as a promising approach for addressing the tremendous labor market challenges facing at-risk young adults.<sup>1</sup>

This report examines the implementation of two subsidized wage programs providing work experience for disconnected or at-risk youth and young adults. The Work Progress Program (WPP) provides short-term, part-time jobs as well as wrap-around services to low-income youth most of whom are unemployed and out-of-school. NYC Recovers is a similar subsidized wage program designed in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy to both provide residents affected by the storm with general employment opportunities and to place unemployed New Yorkers in recovery-related subsidized jobs within Sandy-affected communities.

CEO contracted with Branch Associates, Inc. to conduct a qualitative study of the Work Progress Program and NYC Recovers. The study included ten of the thirty providers delivering the WPP and NYC Recovers programs. Researchers conducted one-day visits to each of the ten selected programs in the summer of 2013. This report documents how the WPP and NYC Recovers models were implemented, how subsidized employment was operationalized, who the program is serving, and staff members’ and participants’ views of the programs.

CEO selected the ten nonprofit community-based organizations for this study to represent a range of organizations implementing the program. The sites ranged widely in size (and also ran WPP or NYC Recovers programs of widely varying sizes). Eight of the ten selected organizations had prior experience operating subsidized employment or paid internships. These providers almost all used program funds to expand existing transitional jobs or internships.

The majority of participants (70 percent) were male and two-thirds identified as Black. In terms of their educational background, more than half of all participants at the selected sites had either a high school diploma or GED, and very few had any college or vocational degrees. About 40 percent had less than a high school diploma or its equivalent.

WPP and NYC Recovers operated across all five boroughs and participants in the ten selected sites for this study also came from across the city, though Brooklyn and Queens were most highly represented.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, D. Bloom, *Transitional Jobs: Background, Program Models, and Evaluation Evidence* (New York: MDRC, 2010), 40.

## The Work Experience

The opportunity to earn a wage appealed to the target population and facilitated the outreach message and recruitment effort. Providers placed participants at in-house or external positions, or a combination of internal and external placements. External subsidized job placements varied from large and small private businesses, such as local restaurants, to nonprofit and governmental offices.

Subsidized jobs were entry level, unskilled positions that could provide young adults with a first job experience. Types of work included:

- Clerical (e.g. making binders, making copies)
- Food service (e.g. food handling, baking, making coffee, customer service)
- Front desk clerk (e.g. answering phone calls, letting people in)
- Youth work (e.g. supervising and/or leading recreational activities)
- Retail (e.g. moving inventory, stocking shelves)
- Landscaping (e.g. planting, weeding, pruning, carpentry, shoveling, mowing, mulching)
- Building maintenance (e.g. painting, janitorial work)

Supervisors play a key role in the subsidized work model, acting as mentors to participants, providing feedback and teaching participants how to succeed in the workplace. Many participants interviewed for this research praised their supervisors for giving constructive criticism in a way that encouraged and motivated them to do better. Supervisors stressed the importance of coaching participants to keep behaving appropriately at work even when they face serious issues at home, not letting “life get in the way” of success in the job.

Work site supervisors and program staff noted participants’ lack of “soft skills” such as showing up on time, calling when they will be absent or late, and having a bad attitude about the work. Staff try to make the subsidized work offered through the program like a “real job” but in a more supportive environment.

## Participants’ Outcomes

The following outcomes were reported by both participants and staff alike.

**Job-related soft skills.** The most commonly mentioned benefit according to staff was that these jobs taught participants how to behave at work. These work behaviors, also known as “soft skills,” include showing up on time, taking direction from a supervisor, getting along with co-workers, and communication and conflict resolution skills.

**Job-related technical skills.** Though the subsidized jobs offered through WPP and NYC Recovers were entry-level, participants did have some opportunities to learn “hard” skills associated with youth recreational programming, landscaping, carpentry, boatbuilding, and environmental science that may be transferable to other jobs.

**Career exploration.** Participants became more informed about different types of jobs, which for some, led to more concrete career goals.

**Economic benefit.** Participants' excitement about WPP and NYC Recovers and working was influenced by the fact that they received a paycheck for their work.

**Confidence and pride.** Increased confidence stemmed from both the work and the paycheck, and participants took pride and satisfaction in their accomplishments and work products. Positive evaluations from supervisors also boosted participants' confidence. Even the process of getting feedback was helpful as evaluations helped participants understand their personal strengths and weaknesses.

**Civic engagement.** Participants became involved in their communities in positive ways. Jobs in their own neighborhood strengthened participants' connections to their community.

**Job readiness training.** WPP and NYC Recovers give all participants jobs that can go on their resumes. Participants believed that their newfound knowledge about resume writing, interviewing skills, how to network and the professional connections they developed through the program would prove valuable in their ability to land future jobs.

### Benefits to Participating Organizations

A range of provider organizations with different capacities successfully operated WPP and NYC Recovers, and all said they would apply to participate again – demonstrating overall satisfaction with the program. The goals of WPP and NYC Recovers align well with agencies' missions. The simplicity and ease of the application and reporting requirements were valued by participating providers.

Staff also acknowledged secondary benefits for their own organizations. For providers that placed at least some participants in internal positions, this additional labor source expanded the organizations' own capacities. In some instances, it freed up staff to take on other responsibilities.

### Staff Recommendations

Given that WPP and NYC Recovers are designed to only fund wages and fringe benefits paid to participants in the programs, provider organizations are responsible for funding the not-insignificant amount of work required to recruit, orient, and supervise participants. A common request by program staff concerned funding for program coordination or management which they believed would help them to focus on longer-term goals and maintain participation in post-program wrap-around services. Other suggestions called for extending the funding period and lengthening the time participants could be in subsidized positions. Staff members enjoyed

meeting their peers at CEO meetings and requested additional opportunities to learn from each other.

Overall, participants and staff expressed confidence that these programs provided valuable experience and skills to young people and strengthened the participating organizations.



## Overview of WPP and NYC Recovers

In recent years, the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) in partnership with the New York City Human Resources Administration and the Young Men's Initiative has expanded programs offering paid work experience to disconnected young adults. Recent research has identified transitional or subsidized employment as a promising approach for addressing the tremendous labor market challenges facing at-risk young adults.<sup>2</sup> The Work Progress Program (WPP) is a subsidized wage program designed to provide work experience for disconnected or at-risk youth and young adults.

Operated by both large non-profits with national reach and local community-based organizations, WPP connects low-income young adults with short-term, part-time jobs either within the partner organizations or in the community. Participants can typically work a maximum of 20 hours per week for up to three months. The program reimburses participating organizations only for participant wages (generally \$7.25 per hour, the minimum wage at the time of this study) and up to 13 percent fringe benefits. WPP is expected to complement existing youth services and CEO expects WPP providers to support participants through wrap-around services such as education, mentorship, case management, work readiness, and job placement services.

WPP targets low-income youth ages 18-24 with a stated preference for serving unemployed and out-of-school youth. CEO provides organizations some flexibility in selecting participants, such as including minors under age 18 as long as they have appropriate documentation (e.g., working papers and a physical exam). The goals of the subsidized jobs offered through WPP include contributing to the young adults' career exploration, meeting community needs, and helping young people develop their technical skills (e.g. computer/office skills, construction, landscaping and horticulture, etc.) and soft skills (e.g. teamwork, problem solving, leadership, etc.).

NYC Recovers is a similar subsidized wage program designed in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy to both provide residents affected by the storm with general employment opportunities and to place unemployed New Yorkers in recovery-related subsidized jobs within Sandy-affected communities. This subsidized employment program is expected to aid recovery efforts in devastated communities. Subsidized jobs through this program could include cleaning local community centers, re-painting local businesses, or removing debris. NYC Recovers, like WPP, only reimburses organizations for wages and fringe benefits. Participants can work either part-time or full-time. NYC Recovers targets participants age 16 and above who reside in storm-affected areas or are performing recovery-related work in storm-affected neighborhoods. As in WPP, providers may serve minors under age 18 only with appropriate documentation.

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<sup>2</sup> See for example, D. Bloom, *Transitional Jobs: Background, Program Models, and Evaluation Evidence* (New York: MDRC, 2010), 40.

## Implementation Study

Branch Associates, Inc. conducted a qualitative study of the Work Progress Program (WPP) and NYC Recovers. The purpose of the study was to obtain information about the experiences of, benefits to, and challenges facing participating organizations as well as to learn about participants' experiences in the program and their employment and educational outcomes.

Branch Associates conducted the study at ten of the thirty sites delivering the WPP and NYC Recovers programs in the summer of 2013. CEO selected sites that represent a range of organizations implementing the program (Exhibit 1 presents the list of selected providers).<sup>3</sup> Researchers conducted one-day visits to each of the ten selected programs. During this visit, researchers interviewed key program staff, worksite supervisors, and current and recent participants. This report documents how the WPP and NYC Recovers models were implemented, how subsidized employment was operationalized, who the program is serving, and staff members' and participants' views of the programs.

### Exhibit 1: Work Progress Program and NYC Recovers Providers in the Implementation Study

<b>Work Progress Program Providers</b>
<b>Boys Club of New York</b>
<b>Central Queens YM &amp; YWHA</b>
<b>FECS</b>
<b>Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO)</b>
<b>Good Shepherd Services<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Jewish Child Care Association</b>
<b>Re-CONNECT</b>
<b>Rocking the Boat</b>
<b>NYC Recovers Providers</b>
<b>Center for Employment Opportunities</b>
<b>Good Shepherd Services<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Project Hospitality</b>

<sup>1</sup> Good Shepherd Services received funding for both WPP and NYC Recovers programs.

## Description of the Study Sites

### Organizational Capacity

The ten nonprofit community-based organizations selected for this study ranged widely in size (and also ran WPP or NYC Recovers programs of widely varying sizes). A few of the

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix A [Table A1] for the total cumulative numbers of participants served in the Work Progress Program and NYC Recovers Program. Appendix A also includes data on all participants' characteristics and outcomes; Appendix B presents the same data but only for participants from the sites in the implementation study.

organizations had operated for less than 10 years and had budgets in the hundreds of thousands of dollars; others had operated for decades with million-dollar budgets. Three sites had fewer than 15 staff while the larger organizations employed hundreds and, in a few cases, thousands of employees. Eight of the ten selected organizations had prior experience operating subsidized employment or paid internships. Almost all of these providers used program funds to expand existing transitional jobs or internships. The other two organizations had not operated subsidized employment programs prior to WPP or NYC Recovers and started new programs with this funding.

The majority of the sites characterized themselves as having a youth development focus. These organizations provide a “safe place” for young adults to develop their interests, skills and abilities, and build healthy and supportive relationships with peers and adults. These organizations strive to work with participants over a long term, meeting the needs of their clients as they age. For these sites, WPP/NYC Recovers mainly provided an option to keep older youth connected as they continued their education or prepared for college. In contrast, two sites with more of a workforce development focus, viewed the subsidized job primarily as a stepping stone to future, unsubsidized employment. As a result, these workforce-focused sites more actively assisted participants with job development and in finding unsubsidized employment after the subsidized work experience than the youth-development-focused sites.

### Program Staffing

Multiple staff at the sites contributed to the implementation of WPP or NYC Recovers including: grant writers, program coordinators or managers, caseworkers, worksite supervisors and human resources personnel. Typically, someone in the development department wrote the original design/proposal, and then they handed it off to program staff. Sites with multiple work site locations around the city had a program coordinator and/or worksite supervisor at each location. In some organizations, caseworkers handled the initial recruitment and intake, tracked attendance, and handled issues arising during the subsidized job. Site staff also arranged wrap-around services, such as: mental health counseling, job search, job readiness training, educational services (e.g., tutoring, help with the college application and the financial aid process, GED classes), and social activities. Staff, especially at the two sites that developed new subsidized employment programs, spent a considerable amount of time recruiting participants, identifying work sites, and developing processes and forms. As WPP and NYC Recovers only funded participants’ wages and benefits, time that staff spent on these programs was funded by other programs and funding sources.

## Population Served

WPP serves low-income young adults ages 16-24, with preference for serving those who are unemployed and out-of-school.<sup>4</sup> NYC Recovers has a broader age eligibility of low-income young adults or unemployed New Yorkers age 16 and older. NYC Recovers requires that participants must either be from storm-affected areas or be working to provide recovery services in storm-affected areas. WPP and NYC Recovers operated across all five boroughs and participants in the ten selected sites for this study also came from across the city, though Brooklyn and Queens were most highly represented (see Exhibit 2 below). Exhibit 2 also demonstrates that the majority (82 percent) of participants across the selected sites (including participants from sites operating NYC Recovers) fell within the 18-24 year old age group. Some programs did serve teenaged participants younger than 18; youth in this age group constituted 13 percent of the sample in the selected sites. Young adults age 25 years or older formed fewer than six percent of the sample at the selected sites.

The majority of participants (70 percent) were male, two-thirds identified as Black, and slightly more than one quarter (28 percent) identified as Hispanic. In terms of their educational background, more than half of all participants at the selected sites had either a high school diploma or GED, and very few had any college or vocational degrees. About 40 percent had less than a high school diploma or its equivalent.

A few sites reported focusing on participants of a specific age group (e.g., juniors and seniors in high school) or a specific geography to facilitate the ease of getting to the program and work site. In addition, two sites focused exclusively on working with young adults re-entering the community from the criminal justice system. Research suggests that employment and earned income is an important factor in reducing recidivism among this population.<sup>5</sup>

Participants in some WPP or NYC Recovers programs were engaged in other activities at the organization and the work experience supplemented these ongoing activities. In other sites, WPP or NYC Recovers funding enabled the organization to serve a population that had aged out of its services and were thus not receiving other services at the time of enrolling in WPP or NYC Recovers. Staff at one site said that programs for teenagers over 16 years old had been scaled back in recent years, and they appreciated the opportunity presented by WPP to redevelop services geared toward older youth.

### **Exhibit 2: Characteristics of Participants in Study Sites (N=577)**

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<sup>4</sup> The primary target population is low-income young adults between the ages of 18-24 years old. CEO also allows providers to support minors through the program with appropriate documentation.

<sup>5</sup> See for example, Baer, Demelza, et.al. *Understanding the Challenges of Prisoner Reentry: Research Findings from the Urban Institute's Prisoner Reentry Portfolio* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2006).

Characteristic	WPP and NYCR (N=577) % (N)	WPP only (n=328) % (N)	NYCR only (n=249) % (N)
<b><u>Gender</u></b>			
Male	70.0 (404)	67.7 (222)	73.1 (182)
Female	30.0 (173)	32.3 (106)	26.9 (67)
<b><u>Ethnicity</u></b>			
Hispanic	27.9 (160)	29.5 (96)	25.7 (64)
Non-Hispanic	72.1 (414)	70.5 (229)	74.3 (185)
<b><u>Race<sup>1</sup></u></b>			
Black	66.0 (357)	57.0 (179)	78.4 (178)
Hispanic <sup>2</sup>	18.3 (99)	29.0 (91)	3.5 (8)
White	7.4 (40)	12.1 (38)	0.9 (2)
Other	7.2 (39)	0	17.2 (39)
Asian	1.1 (6)	1.9 (6)	0
<b><u>Age</u></b>			
Under 18 years old	12.8 (74)	17.7 (58)	6.4 (16)
18-19 years old	36.9 (213)	43.9 (144)	27.7 (69)
20-21 years old	25.7 (148)	25.6 (84)	25.7 (64)
22-24 years old	19.4 (112)	9.2 (30)	32.9 (82)
25+ years old	5.2 (30)	3.7 (12)	7.2 (18)
Mean age	20.1 years old	19.3 years old	21.1 years old
<b><u>Education</u></b>			
Less than High School	39.6 (226)	39.0 (128)	40.3 (98)
High School Diploma	41.2 (235)	54.3 (178)	23.5 (57)
High School Equivalent	15.6 (89)	5.5 (18)	29.2 (71)

Characteristic	WPP and NYCR (N=577) % (N)	WPP only (n=328) % (N)	NYCR only (n=249) % (N)
Vocational Degree	0.7 (4)	0.6 (2)	0.8 (2)
Associates Degree	0.7 (4)	0	1.7 (4)
Some College	1.4 (8)	0	3.3 (8)
Bachelor's Degree	0.9 (5)	0.6 (2)	1.2 (3)
<b><u>Borough</u></b>			
Brooklyn	39.0 (215)	29.7 (90)	50.2 (125)
Queens	23.0 (127)	32.0 (97)	12.1 (30)
Bronx	18.8 (104)	19.5 (59)	18.1 (45)
Manhattan	15.2 (84)	18.5 (56)	11.2 (28)
Staten Island	3.8 (21)	0.3 (1)	8.0 (20)
Outside NYC	0.2 (1)	0	0.4 (1)
<b><u>Court Involvement</u></b> <sup>3</sup>			
Some History	52.5 (265)	27.7 (71)	77.9 (194)
No History	47.5 (240)	72.3 (185)	22.1 (55)

<sup>1</sup> 36 missing cases

<sup>2</sup> The percent of Hispanics is likely higher. On the item of Hispanic versus non-Hispanic, 28 percent were Hispanic. It is likely some of these cases were missing or coded as another race on the Race variable.

<sup>3</sup> 72 missing cases

## Outreach and Intake

Providers reported few problems in recruiting participants for WPP and NYC Recovers. For example, one provider invited unemployed young adults enrolled in its GED class to participate in its WPP program. For those providers that recruited from outside of their agency, recruitment tactics involved putting up flyers, attending community events (e.g. one site's staff attended events for young adult offenders), seeking referrals from other service providers (e.g. local high school guidance counselors), and word of mouth.

In conducting outreach, staff stressed to prospective participants that some level of motivation was needed to succeed in this program. Staff at one site communicated with potential participants that they were looking particularly for young men who were willing to buy into a positive alternative to hanging out on the streets. Staff did not report turning many potential participants away, but they did say they tried to select those whom they thought would grow from the opportunity by considering applicants':

- Maturity
- Dependability
- Attitude/disposition

Applicants' attitudes were considered particularly with respect to willingness to work and develop soft skills.

About half of the providers used the application process to hone participants' job readiness skills by requiring those interested in WPP or NYC Recovers to submit an application or resume and interview with the program coordinator. This process was intended to help participants develop their skills by putting them through a simulated job application process rather than to act as a screening mechanism, and staff provided support to aid participants throughout the process. For instance, one Program Coordinator called prospective participants to remind them about the program interview if they failed to show up at the scheduled time and helped others to develop a resume if they did not yet have one. At other sites, the application process consisted of a more traditional intake for services in which staff completed assessment forms and noted various social service and mental health needs.

Potential applicants at one program were required to write a five paragraph essay about why they were interested in the program, and the skills they hoped to gain. In discussing the essay with prospective participants, a staff member noted that, as with any job opportunity, he asked participants three questions: 1) Can you do what the job requires? (e.g., can you lift 40 pounds if that is required?); 2) Do you want to do it?; and 3) Are you qualified? Participants' interests were given a lot of weight since most positions were entry level with few skill requirements.

## The Work Experience

Four of the ten selected sites placed all participants at in-house positions. Two sites placed all participants in external job sites. The remaining sites employed a mix of internal and external placements. One program switched from a reliance on internal placements in its first cohort, to placing the majority of participants in external positions in its third cohort in the spring and summer of 2013. The number of work sites per program (both internal and external) varied widely across the sites, ranging from two to a high of 26 different work sites.

### External placements

Most providers that placed participants at external worksites used employers with whom they had pre-existing relationships. Even those with relatively new subsidized employment programs placed participants with “known” employers with whom they had previous relationships through other work.

WPP also led some providers to expand their employer network. This was not always easy. According to staff from one of the programs working exclusively with ex-offenders, finding even low-skill manual labor jobs willing to take on participants with criminal backgrounds is challenging. In addition, a few staff reported that the short-term nature of the funding cycle created additional hurdles in building relationships with external employers. In the case of WPP, these relationships with employers could also be more difficult to build given the limited number of hours that participants could work per week.

External subsidized job placements varied from large and small private businesses to nonprofit and governmental offices. Specific work sites included: a bakery, local restaurants, consulting and marketing firms, a health spa, a literacy organization, a physical therapist office, a barber shop, retail stores, a local politicians office, and a day camp.

Participants from two programs worked at multiple worksites that rotated or changed by day or week. These worksites could be located at some distance from the main program site and so participants met in the morning and traveled together by van with a supervisor.

### Internal Placements

Several of the larger provider organizations had a range of internal placements. For example, one agency placed participants in its communications, education,

## *Unique work sites*

**Rocking the Boat** participants worked in one of two specialized programs. A boatbuilding program incorporated the entire process of building a traditional wooden boat from reading a design, using tools (chisel, rulers, etc.), making calculations, finishing and also repairing boats. Participants in the environmental science program tested water quality, tracked local wildlife (e.g. birds, fish, eel), and performed other tasks related to the environment of the Bronx River.  
[www.rockingtheboat.org](http://www.rockingtheboat.org)

**Project Re-CONNECT** is starting up several small businesses in Brooklyn, such as opening a local café and market. In the start-up phase, participants performed a variety of tasks which varied day-to-day, from cleaning up and building out the café and market space to receiving training in baking, food handling, learning barista tasks, and customer service.  
[www.reconnectcommunity.org](http://www.reconnectcommunity.org)

operations, and arts departments. Placements at another large organization included clerical work at a drop-in center for homeless youth, stocking and serving food at a food pantry, and working with maintenance staff.

Jobs in after-school and summer camp programs were popular internal placements for three organizations. Although these job placements were technically internal, they occurred at various satellite locations that housed the organizations' after-school and summer day camp programs.

### Types of Subsidized Jobs

Regardless of whether the subsidized jobs were internal or external, they were entry level, unskilled positions that could provide young adults with a first job experience. Types of work included:

- Clerical (e.g. making binders, making copies)
- Food service (e.g. food handling, baking, making coffee, customer service)
- Front desk clerk (e.g. answering phone calls, letting people in)
- Youth work (e.g. supervising and/or leading recreational activities)
- Retail (e.g. moving inventory, stocking shelves)
- Landscaping (e.g. planting, weeding, pruning, carpentry, shoveling, mowing, mulching)
- Building maintenance (e.g. painting, janitorial work)

Researchers identified few differences in terms of the subsidized jobs in WPP versus the NYC Recovers programs focused on placing Hurricane Sandy affected residents in jobs. One exception was a difference in the nature of the rebuilding and recovery jobs in one NYC Recovers program that focused on placing New Yorkers in recovery-related subsidized jobs. This site had participants doing work that included muck-out, demolition and specialized mold remediation in Sandy-affected neighborhoods. The training and skill level required for these projects were higher than the work typically handled by both other NYC Recovers or WPP participants.

### Matching Process

In organizations with multiple work sites, staff used informal assessments, conversations, or resumes to place participants in appropriate worksites. Factors that were taken into account included:

- Participants' interests (considered broadly, such as interest in working outdoors or in an office)
- Assessment of skills (based on prior knowledge of the participant, such as being good at working with children)
- Prior experience
- Travel time to the worksite

- Schedule and availability

Some providers had few options for placement and consequently there was little ability to match participants individually to a particular type of job.

A few sites had participants interview with potential supervisors, but this was mostly a formality and did not affect participants' placements. As with the program intake process, this interview was mainly used to hone participants' job readiness skills. One site even held mock interviews with program staff first to prepare participants and teach them how to "sell themselves" during an interview.

### Job Orientation

Providers gave participants in WPP and NYC Recovers two types of orientation. The most common involved helping participants to complete the necessary paperwork and getting them on payroll. Participants in internal placements also often attended organization-wide orientations which would be required for all new employees and covered organization rules, paperwork, and background about the organization. Participants were introduced to their assignment and the job requirements and expectations were also reviewed. Depending on the provider organization, this orientation happened in a group or on a one-on-one basis. Staff from one organization noted that participants in WPP subsidized jobs were treated like any other intern at their organization.

A second type of orientation, specific to WPP participants, involved orientation to the world of work. Through group workshops, staff taught participants how to behave in the workplace and successfully navigate the world of work by developing positive relationships with their co-workers and bosses. Staff sought to help participants understand what would be expected of them on the job – e.g. that they must behave professionally, be on-time, get their work done and look presentable. Workshops often began before the subsidized job and continued throughout the subsidized employment period. A few providers paid participants their hourly rate for attending these workshops.

Workshop topics included:

- Resume writing
- Interviewing skills
- Professional communication
- Appropriate work attire
- Work attitude
- Budgeting and financial management

One provider created a handbook that described the expected code of conduct for their program and contained an agreement signed by the participant, the worksite supervisor, and the program supervisor. Another provider set the tone for the new participants by holding a participant-led orientation that not only reviewed program guidelines, but also involved former participants who shared their stories and experiences.

Although a few sites did not hold a formal orientation, staff provided informal orientations or introductions to the WPP or NYC Recovers subsidized jobs by talking individually to participants about what their job entailed and laying out the agency ground rules.

### Supervision

The role of supervisors in WPP and NYC Recovers is to delegate assignments, provide instructions and guidance on how to do tasks, check that work is done, provide feedback and, in some cases, formally evaluate job performance. An important part of their role involved providing training about basic workplace standards – e.g. showing up on time, how to dress, and how to interact with peers and other staff. Supervisors also instructed participants in specific job skills, such as how to work with children in a youth program, and in more technical skills in areas such as boatbuilding, environmental science, and landscaping. A supervisor from one program referred to himself as “part teacher, part boss.”

In most WPP and NYC Recovers programs, there appeared to be frequent communication between the supervisors and participants. In situations where supervisors worked directly alongside participants, they had frequent contact throughout the day. For example, at a school-based summer camp, supervisors worked right alongside participants. In informal meetings throughout the day, supervisors explained what the tasks were for the day and the roles of the participants to play. WPP participants who were working with youth were in constant sight of their supervisors, and never left alone with groups of younger children.

In other cases, supervisors worked in close proximity but not necessarily in the same space as participants and they reported contact on a daily or weekly basis. In a few cases, participants reported that they had limited communication with supervisors, which occurred mainly when the participant had a question, there was an issue with the participants’ job performance, or to assign new tasks. One participant said that though his supervisor was available if he had questions, his contact with his supervisor was limited: “As far as my work, I clock in and clock out. [My supervisor] checks on the situation if I have a problem.”

In the vast majority of programs, WPP and NYC Recovers program staff were in regular contact with the external and internal site supervisors regarding attendance and job performance. Communication between program staff and supervisors occurred by phone and email, as well as in formal reports. One program coordinator noted that she also sometimes showed up unannounced at work sites to learn first-hand how things were going.

One provider organization has a unique system in which its own staff supervise participants in external worksites. Staff supervisors pick up participants at designated locations, report attendance to a centralized data office, train and supervise participants at the work site, complete an evaluation for each participant on a daily basis, and return participants to the designated pick up/drop-off locations at the end of the work day.

### ***Feedback and Performance Evaluations***

An assumption embedded within the subsidized work model for young adults is that supervisors can act as mentors to participants, providing feedback and teaching participants how to succeed in the workplace. Many participants interviewed for this research praised their



#### **In Participants' Own Words**

"It's good to get feedback about my work performance, lets me know what I do well."

"The worksite supervisors were helpful and laid out what my job would be very clearly."

"Learning how to receive negative feedback about my performance was a good learning experience."

"Never before have I been in an environment that pushes for you to be better."

"[Staff] are always willing to help. They are always reaching out to see how they can help more. They are always trying to keep me motivated."

supervisors for giving constructive criticism in a way that encouraged and motivated them to do better. Participants at one site concurred in describing their supervisors as helpful, people who "have my back" and were good communicators.

Supervisors stressed the importance of coaching participants to keep behaving appropriately at work even when they face serious issues at home, not letting "life get in the way" of success in the job. Supervisors also said they balanced giving participants the space to work independently and checking on them to make sure the work was being done correctly.

In some settings, feedback was an ongoing, informal process because of the intimacy in which supervisors and participants worked together. In others, participants and supervisors reported that they arranged to meet

once a week about their work assignments and job duties. Participants received feedback regarding their job performance during these weekly face to face meetings.

Not all participants described their supervisor as a mentor. Some participants said they had more of a traditional employee/boss relationship. They were mainly told what to do, what their schedule was, and they got their supervisor to sign off on their timesheet.

Supervisors at four sites formally evaluated participants' performance in mid-term and/or final reviews. Two of these sites used a rubric to rate various technical and soft skills. These written evaluations were delivered and discussed in person and evaluations were framed as ways to improve performance, rather than a negative or critical process.

In the site with the most formalized feedback system, site supervisors evaluated job performance for all program participants on a daily basis. Evaluation included daily ratings on attendance/timeliness, cooperation, and effort. In addition to this daily contact, participants met with their job coaches weekly; the job coach reviewed the evaluations and gave guidance regarding the performance evaluations.

Across all programs, the most common complaint from work site supervisors and program staff about participants' work behavior concerned their lack of "soft skills" such as showing up on time, calling when they will be absent or late, and having a bad attitude about the work. Program staff at one site that placed groups of participants together at a single worksite said they schedule "seven [participants] with the expectation that five will show." Nonetheless, many staff reported that the problems with job performance were typical of other youth employed by the agency or enrolled in other programs.

Attendance issues (i.e. tardiness and absenteeism) were addressed immediately by supervisors in either calls or meetings with participants and/or notification of program staff. Though a few staff mentioned that participants could be released from the program for excessive absenteeism, this seemed to happen infrequently. Some sites established rules for attendance, such as one site which had a rule that participants would be dismissed after five unexcused absences.

Another reportedly big barrier the young adults in the program faced was lack of appropriate communication skills. Many are uncomfortable interacting with a boss or understanding what to do when they need to call out from work. Because of their lack of work experience and infrequent interactions with professionals, participants needed a lot of behavioral coaching: "Very basic stuff. How to act, how not to act. Like, don't chew gum during an interview." Participants also benefited from being coached to be enthusiastic about job opportunities, especially during interviews.

Staff and supervisors from several sites described participants' biggest challenges as managing their emotions "and not letting whatever drama is in their life distract them and cause them to make bad decisions." One staff person mentioned that a big part of what they are trying to influence among the young participants is good decision-making, dealing with peer pressure, and developing goals and effective plans for their lives.

## Participants' Experiences and Outcomes

Overall, according to both staff and participants, participants were enthusiastic about the program. Participation and attendance is one measure of the extent that participants valued the subsidized employment experience. The number of hours that participants worked varied widely. This is partly attributable to differences in sites' expectations for the number of hours participants work each week (which ranged from 12 to 20) and the number of weeks participants are expected to work, which ranged from 8 to 18 weeks (though 12 weeks was the most common job length).<sup>6</sup> Variation in total hours worked also reflects participants' absenteeism from their work assignments. According to data from CEO, over three-fourths of the participants at the selected sites completed a subsidized job.<sup>7</sup> About one half of all participants in the ten sites worked 120 or more hours in their subsidized job, 20 percent worked between 61-119 hours, and 30 percent spent 60 or fewer hours in the subsidized job.

Exposure to the world of work accorded multiple benefits to WPP and NYC Recovers participants. The biggest benefit to the young adults is just basic exposure to work. Staff noted: "There is a sense of pride when they get hired and start getting paychecks"; "It's a good trial run for the real world." The participants also learned that you can enjoy your job. Participation in the program helped them develop the capacity and understanding of "what it takes to get and keep a job." After WPP, many participants were ready to find another unsubsidized job.

Having a paid job also meant that participants had a place to be and were expected to be somewhere. By providing a positive place for youth to be, WPP and NYC Recovers got young adults off the streets. Providing a positive path gave participants hope for the future. When they were working, they avoided engaging in destructive behaviors that could get them in trouble. WPP opened doors for participants who might not otherwise have had employment opportunities. WPP expanded opportunities for young adults to participate in a program that provides them with a safe space and caring staff to help them grow.

<sup>6</sup> Taking the proposed weekly hours and job length into account at each site, the total hours participants could work in WPP/NYC Recovers ranged from 144 to 315 hours.

<sup>7</sup> A relatively high numbers of cases (196) are missing for the percentage of participants who completed a subsidized job.

## In Participants' Own Words

When asked what they have gained from their job:

- ✓ "Patience"
- ✓ "Respecting others"
- ✓ "Control over myself, my emotions, at work"
- ✓ "Learning to deal with disrespectful people"
- ✓ "Working as a team"
- ✓ "Confidence"
- ✓ "Time management"
- ✓ "Learn to have fun and enjoy yourself when you work"

Participants and program staff suggested a remarkably similar list of benefits to the participants as a result of their experience in the program:

- ***Job-related soft skills***

Staff try to make the subsidized work offered through the program like a “real job” but with a lot of support built in for participants. The most commonly mentioned benefit according to staff was that these jobs taught participants how to behave at work. These work behaviors, also known as “soft skills,” include showing up on time, taking direction from a supervisor, getting along with co-workers, and communication and conflict resolution skills. These skills apply to all jobs and were described as skills that will be essential to future employment successes.

Supervisors provided support and encouragement, allowing participants the chance to make mistakes (e.g. being late, not calling when absent) and learn from these mistakes without being fired. Many people, particularly young adults who may not have thrived in traditional classroom settings, learn best by doing.

Participants agreed that the WPP or NYC Recovers work experience improved their social and communication skills. Specific soft skills that participants mentioned include improving their: ability to communicate in a professional manner with supervisors, ability to be a team player and get along with co-workers, punctuality, attention to detail, and patience.

- ***Job-related technical skills***

Though the subsidized jobs offered through WPP and NYC Recovers were entry-level, participants did have some opportunities to learn “hard” skills that may be transferable to other jobs. Participants working in youth programs developed competencies around child care skills, such as how to run activities and develop positive relationships with younger youth. Some other subsidized jobs taught participants technical skills associated with landscaping, carpentry, boatbuilding, and environmental science.

- ***Career exploration***

Participants became more informed about different types of jobs. Several participants who worked in after-school programs or summer camps spoke about how the jobs influenced their current career goals. The experience gave participants a sense of direction; some want to continue what they were doing, others decide they want “more” and become motivated to continue their education in order to expand their choices. In one focus group, two participants explained that the work experience helped them to better understand the educational requirements necessary to achieve their career goals. The work experience also helped some participants figure out careers that do not interest or suit their temperaments, such as one

participant who had thought she wanted to go into early childhood education who said she had decided to change course after working in a day care.

- ***Economic benefit***

Participants' excitement about WPP and NYC Recovers and working was influenced by the fact that they received a paycheck for their work. Earning a modest paycheck made a difference for the low-income young adults and their families. This was especially important in communities hard-hit by Hurricane Sandy – where families lost not only their homes, but clothing and other possessions.

- ***Confidence and pride***

Increased confidence stemmed from both the work and the paycheck, and participants took pride and satisfaction in their accomplishments. One participant involved in boatbuilding noted they were learning “real” skills that compared favorably with grocery store or other entry-level jobs, and spoke with pride about their work and work products. Positive evaluations from supervisors also boosted participants' confidence. Even the process of getting feedback was helpful as participants said they learned how to accept feedback without being defensive, and that evaluations helped them understand their personal strengths and weaknesses.

- ***Civic engagement***

Participants became involved in their communities in positive ways. Participants working in an evacuation center helped its residents by caring for their pets, organizing the stock room, and preparing and serving food. Working in youth development programs allowed participants to serve as role models to younger children. Jobs in their own neighborhood gave participants a sense of “belonging and ownership of the place they come from.” Participants in NYC Recovers who came from other neighborhoods to do recovery-related work in Sandy-affected areas were surprised by the extent of the damage from the storm, and enjoyed “giving back” to the community.

- ***Job readiness training and job development***

WPP and NYC Recovers give all participants jobs that can go on their resumes. Participants may also use staff or supervisors to provide references or letters of recommendation that may help them get jobs in the future. Participants believed that the workshops (e.g. on resume writing, interviewing practice, and learning how to network) and the professional connections they developed through the program would prove valuable in their ability to land jobs in the future. Staff at some sites worked more actively with participants to help them find unsubsidized jobs.

For instance, participants at one site meet weekly with a job coach to help them get “job start ready” by helping them practice interviewing, assisting them in creating resumes and cover letters, providing encouragement throughout the job search, and connecting them to additional support services. This agency also employs job developers who support WPP participants by helping to match them to full-time unsubsidized job opportunities. Those individuals placed in full-time jobs have access to job retention specialists who help participants develop the focus to stay employed in these full-time jobs and to plan for the long term.

Staff at a few sites mentioned that they had hired former WPP participants for current summer positions. At one such site where WPP participants have become a talent-pool, one staff member estimated that approximately sixty percent of former WPP workers had been hired to work in part-time summer positions at the agency.

- ***Additional benefits from wrap-around services***

WPP participants were introduced to an array of wrap-around services. These services vary depending on the provider but include college access, vocational training, life skills classes, and mental health counseling services. Participants from one program commented that it was their relationship with an agency social worker that led them to finish high school, and another attributed his plan to go on to college instead of the military to a relationship with a staff member. Participants said that workshops and relationships with staff helped in areas such as nutrition, domestic violence, work ethics, conflict resolution, and money management. In some sites, staff helped participants fulfill goals to attend college, helping with visits and the financial aid process.

## Staff Members' Assessments

The providers all said they would apply to participate again – demonstrating overall satisfaction with the WPP and NYC Recovers programs. The simplicity and ease of the application and reporting requirements were valued by participating providers. Applying to WPP and NYC Recovers was straightforward for organizations. The application required a description of their proposed program and an uncomplicated budget calculation covering only participants' wages and fringe benefits. Funds for both programs were allocated for up to six months and CEO accepted and funded applications from organizations seeking to run WPP and/or NYC Recovers on a rolling basis.

The payroll aspect also did not pose problems for sites. Payroll was handled by the sites as if participants were employees. Timesheets required supervisors' approvals, and in some cases were reviewed by the site coordinators or management staff, and were then forwarded to the

payroll or accounting department for processing. Providers subsequently submitted the necessary paperwork to the NYC Human Resources Administration for reimbursement of wages and fringe paid to participants in the program. Sites did not report problems or issues with this process.

The WPP and NYC Recovers program staff generally reported that their programs had changed little since they began. The one area in which some sites had made changes involved job readiness workshops. In response to feedback from both participants and supervisors, a few programs attempted to improve participants' job readiness and job performance by adjusting the content and timing of workshops. Several programs created workshops that outline job descriptions and supervisors' expectations on the job, held prior to participants' job starts. Providers also improved attendance at the training workshops by scheduling them on a weekly basis and paying participants their hourly wage to attend.

### Benefits to Participating Organizations

Program staff valued WPP and NYC Recovers for all of the observed impacts on participants listed above. Staff also acknowledged secondary benefits for their own organizations. WPP enabled some agencies to grow their staff from within the community. For instance, staff explained that hiring a 16 year old through WPP allowed those youth to grow and develop, increasing the chance that in the following year those youth could be hired through the Summer Youth Employment Program or else directly by the agency. In this way, WPP helped agencies stay connected with this target group and provide a "ladder of services" to participants that would lead toward an unsubsidized job.

For providers that placed at least some participants in internal positions, this additional labor source expanded the organizations' own capacities. In some instances, it freed up staff to take on other responsibilities. This was the case in organizations that, for example, used WPP participants to serve as front-desk clerks or assist in the office performing administrative tasks. In sites that hired WPP participants for youth work, adding to the staff allowed them to either serve higher numbers of youth or improve their staff-child ratios. Adding an additional staff person provided more "eyes" on the children served, extra hands to get things done, and was mutually beneficial for the participants and younger children.

A third benefit identified by program staff was the positive impact it had on office morale. Internal worksite supervisors and other internal staff members reported enjoying working alongside WPP participants.

## Staff Recommendations

Given that WPP and NYC Recovers are designed to only fund wages and fringe paid to participants in the programs, provider organizations are responsible for funding the not-insignificant amount of work required to recruit, orient, and supervise participants. A common request by program staff concerned funding for program coordination or management which they believed would help them to focus on longer-term goals and maintain participation in post-program wrap-around services.

One additional funding-related enhancement mentioned by program and fiscal staff responsible for budgeting and planning is extending the funding period.

Both staff and participants also recommended that participants be allowed to work in a single subsidized job for a lengthened period of time, and relatedly that they be allowed to work in multiple subsidized jobs. Program staff posit that participants would continue to grow and develop if they could stay in a subsidized job longer, and that with more time the program could tackle additional issues such as budgeting and financial management (e.g. help participants open a bank account and have paychecks directly deposited). A longer subsidized job period would also allow participants more opportunities to overcome hurdles (both job and non-job related).

Staff members' recommendations for improving the program also included increasing sharing and networking opportunities. Program staff, including senior agency staff as well as the program directors and line staff, enjoyed the opportunities they had to connect with other providers at meetings convened by CEO and they suggested there be more opportunities for networking and information sharing.

Staff at some of the agencies with less experience providing subsidized employment wanted to learn about promising and best practices in this field. Specific examples of issues that staff mentioned an interest in learning about from other research or their peers included:

- Content of job readiness workshops,
- Keeping participants engaged in wrap-around services after the end of the subsidized job, and
- Recruiting external subsidized job placements.

In addition, program staff mentioned it would be helpful to share templates and documents used by other providers, such as intake and assessment forms, evaluation forms used to rate participants' job performance, and how others document and report on funds.

Overall, staff members expressed support for the Work Progress Program and NYC Recovers, suggested recommendations to change the model only when asked, and believe these subsidized employment programs are working well. They hope these programs will continue to benefit young adults in communities across New York City.

## Conclusion

Provider organizations of different sizes with different capacities successfully operated WPP and NYC Recovers. The goals of WPP and NYC Recovers align well with agencies' missions and there were many benefits to participants. The number of participants served by each provider seemed appropriate in that the organizations found meaningful jobs and provided appropriate supervision and follow-up.

Participants' outcomes included immediate and tangible benefits such as updated resumes with employment references, job-related skills in office procedures, landscaping, carpentry, and youth development and recreational programming. Participants also gained valuable skills in knowing how to behave in the workplace. Learning how to communicate with supervisors and co-workers, problem solving and conflict resolution skills, improved punctuality, and patience may help participants obtain and retain jobs in the future. Participants gained confidence in their own abilities and expect this experience will give them a leg up in finding future employment.

Several features of the work experience were critical to achieving positive outcomes:

- ✓ **Wages** – Wages not only provided an economic benefits to the individual participants and their families, but also motivated participants to take these jobs seriously.
- ✓ **Supervision** – participants appreciated getting feedback about their performance from supervisors, and learning how to receive negative feedback was valued. Supervisors motivated participants to keep improving. In many cases, supervisors knew that participants faced personal issues, but they counseled participants to manage their emotions at work and not to let their home life interfere with their job performance.
- ✓ **Support** -- Providers helped participants in various ways such as providing work-appropriate clothing, transportation, and lenient policies when participants missed work or came late without advance notice. Job readiness workshops touched on various job-related topics, reiterating and strengthening the messages about the importance of appropriate behavior at work.

Both participants and staff viewed these programs as worthwhile and helpful. Participants gained skills and work experience in a supportive framework. Participating organizations valued the opportunity to expand their services and capacity.

## Appendix A

### WPP/ NYC Recovers Participant Data (all sites<sup>8</sup>)

For this evaluation, CEO collected participant-level data on background characteristics, program participation, and program outcomes from WPP and NYC Recovers providers. Providers were asked to supply these data as far back as possible for all of their WPP and NYC Recovers participants (since these programs began in spring 2012). The dataset is composed of twenty-three WPP-funded organizations and a total of 1,017 participants (687 in WPP and 330 in NYC Recovers).<sup>9</sup> The Center for Employment Opportunities and the Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service served the largest number of participants (187 and 111 participants, respectively).

#### Background Characteristics of Participants

Almost two-thirds of participants were men (65%) and about one-third women (35%) (Table A1). About 63 percent were African-American, 23 percent Hispanic<sup>10</sup>, 6 percent White, and 4 percent each Asian and other. On average, participants were 20 years old; 17 percent were under 18 years old, 38 percent were 18 or 19 years old; and 45 percent were 20 or older. Forty-three percent of participants did not have a high school diploma or GED<sup>11</sup> and 54 percent had a high school diploma or GED. Almost 60 percent had not had any court involvement (about 10% of cases were missing this item).

#### Participation in Subsidized Jobs

Across organizations, 75 percent of participants completed their WPP subsidized jobs (though almost 20% of cases were missing data on this item) (Table A2). On average, participants worked a total of 125 hours in their subsidized job. Almost half (48%) worked 120 or more hours in their WPP subsidized (or about 20 hours/week for 6 weeks)<sup>12</sup>; a quarter worked 61-199 hours and about another quarter (27%) worked 60 hours or less.

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<sup>8</sup> All WPP and NYC Recovers sites that submitted individual level data to CEO (N=23 organizations).

<sup>9</sup> Participants with 0 hours in subsidized jobs were removed from the analysis (no exposure to intervention) (N=12).

<sup>10</sup> The percent of Hispanics is likely higher. On the item of Hispanic versus non-Hispanic, 31 percent were Hispanic. It is likely some of these cases were missing on the race variable.

<sup>11</sup> Though 17% were under 18 years old, so may be on track to graduate high school.

<sup>12</sup> Organizations varied in the number of weeks and the number of hours/week that participants could work in the subsidized job.

## Post-Program Outcomes

Funded organizations collected data on educational and employment activities following the subsidized job. These outcomes should be interpreted cautiously as many cases (about 20%) were missing these data. About one-third of participants were involved in an educational opportunity following their WPP subsidized job (Table A3) and about 34 percent had an unsubsidized job (29% part-time and 11% full-time).<sup>13</sup> About 55 percent of participants were in either an educational or unsubsidized employment opportunity after completing WPP.<sup>14</sup>

We examined whether the number of hours a participant spent in a WPP subsidized job was associated with post-program outcomes (education or employment). Table A4 shows that participants who worked at least 61 hours in their subsidized job were more likely to participate in an educational opportunity after the program than those who worked less. Similarly, participants who worked 120 hours or more in their subsidized jobs were more likely to have an unsubsidized job at the end of the program than those who worked less (45% of those who worked 120+ hours versus 23% of those who worked 61-119 hours and 25% who worked less than 61 hours). This same pattern was found for part-time post-program employment. The opposite was found, however, for full-time employment. Those who worked the least in their subsidized jobs (less than 61 hours) were the most likely to have full-time employment. This may be in part because participants leave their subsidized jobs early if they find full-time unsubsidized employment.

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<sup>13</sup> 115 participants reported participating in both an unsubsidized job and an educational opportunity post-program.

<sup>14</sup> Among cases not missing either variable. 200 cases were missing post-program information on education or employment.

**Table A1. Characteristics of WPP/NYC Recovers Participants**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>% (N)</b>
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	64.6 (656)
Female	35.4 (360)
<i>Ethnicity</i>	
Hispanic	30.7 (310)
Non-Hispanic	69.3 (701)
<i>Race<sup>1</sup></i>	
Black	63.3 (613)
Hispanic	22.9 (222)
White	5.9 (57)
Other	4.2 (41)
Asian	3.7 (36)
<i>Age</i>	
15-17 years old	17.2 (172)
18-19 years old	38.2 (381)
20-21 years old	23.3 (232)
22-24 years old	17.1 (171)
25+ years old	4.2 (42)
Mean age	19.9 years old (range: 15-59)
<i>Education</i>	
Less than High School	43.2 (436)
High School Diploma	40.5 (409)
GED or equivalent	13.4 (135)
Vocational Degree	0.4 (4)
Associates Degree	0.4 (4)
Some College	0.8 (8)

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Bachelor's Degree	1.3 (13)
Post Graduate	0.1 (1)
<i>Marital Status</i> <sup>2</sup>	
Unmarried	99.4 (834)
Married	0.6 (5)
<i>Children</i> <sup>3</sup>	
Yes	12.3 (113)
No	87.7 (808)
<i>Borough</i>	
Brooklyn	45.3 (449)
Bronx	20.4 (202)
Queens	19.4 (192)
Manhattan	12.5 (124)
Staten Island	2.2 (22)
Outside NYC	0.2 (2)
<i>Court Involvement</i> <sup>4</sup>	
Some History	41.1 (375)
No History	58.9 (538)

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<sup>1</sup> 48 missing cases  
<sup>2</sup> 178 missing cases  
<sup>3</sup> 96 missing cases  
<sup>4</sup> 104 missing cases

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**Table A2. Subsidized Jobs**

	<i>% (N)</i>
Completed subsidized job	75.1 (616) <sup>1</sup>
<i>Hours in Subsidized Job</i>	
Less than 61 hours	26.6 (268)
61-119 hours	25.1 (253)
120 or more hours	48.4 (488)
	<i>Mean</i>
Mean hours worked in subsidized job	125 hours (range: 1-611)
Mean hours for those that completed subsidized job	159 hours (range: 14-611)
Mean hours for those that did not complete subsidized job	79 hours (range: 1-497)
Mean amount reimbursed to grantee organization	\$992 (range: \$0-\$4,426)

<sup>1</sup> 197 cases were missing

**Table A3. Post-Program Outcomes**

	<i>% (N)</i>
Educational opportunity after subsidized job	32.7 (267) <sup>1</sup>
Unsubsidized employment	34.4 (345) <sup>2</sup>
Full-time unsubsidized employment	10.6 (106)
Part-time unsubsidized employment	29.2 (238) <sup>3</sup>
Involved in education or job post-program	55.3 (452) <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 200 missing cases

<sup>2</sup> 69 respondents that were placed in full-time or part-time job were coded as “no” for any unsubsidized employment. These cases were re-coded as yes.

<sup>3</sup> 201 missing cases

<sup>4</sup> 200 missing cases

**Table A4. Post-Program Outcomes by Hours in Subsidized Job**

	<b>% in educational opportunity*</b>	<b>% in unsubsidized job*</b>	<b>% in full-time job*</b>	<b>% in part-time job*</b>
120 or more hours	34.0	45.4	9.5	37.7
61-119 hours	37.1	23.1	8.6	16.8
Less than 61 hours	21.7	25.1	14.6	20.3

\* Chi-square, p<.05

## Differences between Participants in NYC Recovers-funded Programs and WPP-funded Programs

We examined differences in post-program activities between participants of NYC Recovers-funded organizations (five organizations) and WPP-funded organizations (18 organizations). These differences should be interpreted cautiously due to the large number of missing cases for post-program activities. WPP participants were more likely to participate in educational opportunities following their subsidized jobs compared to NYC Recovers participants, while NYC Recovers participants were more likely to have an unsubsidized full-time or part-time job than WPP participants (Table A5).

These differences may be due to different opportunities at the organizations where participants worked in subsidized jobs or due to differences in participant characteristics. For example, NYC Recovers participants were older, slightly more likely to be male, Black, and to have a GED than WPP participants (Table A5). They also worked 22 hours less, on average, in their subsidized jobs. Since WPP participants were younger, they may be more likely to consider educational opportunities than, on average, older NYC Recovers participants.

**Table A5. Selected Differences between NYC Recovers Participants and WPP Participants**

	<b>NYC Recovers (N=330)</b>	<b>WPP (N=687)</b>
<i>Post-Program Activities</i>	%	%
Educational opportunity	18.9	35.6
Full-time unsubsidized job	17.3	7.3
Part-time unsubsidized job	48.3	25.1
<i>Demographic Characteristics</i>		
Male	69.4	62.2
Hispanic	22.6	34.6
Black	81.2	55.3
White	2.7	7.3
HS diploma	31.8	44.6
GED or equivalent	23.8	8.5
Less than high school	37.0	46.1
No history of court involvement	37.4	70.9

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Mean age	21.5 years old	19.1 years old
<i>Subsidized Job</i>		
Mean hours in subsidized job	110 hours	132 hours

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\* All differences: chi-square,  $p < .05$   
or t-test,  $p < 0.5$

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## Appendix B

### WPP/NYC Recovers Participant Data (10 Implementation Study Sites)

The following tables provide data on participants from the 10 organizations selected for the qualitative implementation study conducted by Branch Associates in summer 2013. These data were provided by the selected organizations to CEO.

**Table B1. Characteristics of WPP/NYC Recovers Participants (10 Sites)**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>% (N)</b>
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	70.0 (404)
Female	30.0 (173)
<i>Ethnicity</i>	
Hispanic	27.9 (160)
Non-Hispanic	72.1 (414)
<i>Race<sup>1</sup></i>	
Black	66.0 (357)
Hispanic	18.3 (99)
White	7.4 (40)
Other	7.2 (39)
Asian	1.1 (6)
<i>Age</i>	
Under 18 years old (15-17)	12.8 (74)
18-19 years old	36.9 (213)
20-21 years old	25.7 (148)
22-24 years old	19.4 (112)
25+ years old	5.2 (30)
Mean age	20.1 years old
<i>Education</i>	
Less than High School	39.6 (226)
High School Diploma	41.2 (235)
GED or equivalent	15.6 (89)
Vocational Degree	0.7 (4)
Associates Degree	0.7 (4)
Some College	1.4 (8)

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Bachelor's Degree	0.9 (5)
<i>Marital Status</i> <sup>2</sup>	
Unmarried	99.3 (449)
Married	0.7(3)
<i>Children</i> <sup>3</sup>	
Yes	12.0 (58)
No	88.0 (425)
<i>Borough</i>	
Brooklyn	39.0 (215)
Queens	23.0 (127)
Bronx	18.8 (104)
Manhattan	15.2 (84)
Staten Island	3.8 (21)
Outside NYC	0.2 (1)
<i>Court Involvement</i> <sup>4</sup>	
Some History	52.5 (265)
No History	47.5 (240)

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<sup>1</sup> 36 missing cases  
<sup>2</sup> 125 missing cases  
<sup>3</sup> 94 missing cases  
<sup>4</sup> 72 missing cases

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**Table B2. Participation in Subsidized Jobs (10 Sites)**

	<i>% (N)</i>
Completed subsidized job	76.9 (293) <sup>1</sup>
<i>Hours in Subsidized Job</i>	
Less than 61 hours	30.2 (173)
61-119 hours	20.3 (116)
120 or more hours	49.5 (283)
	<i>Mean</i>
Mean hours worked in subsidized job	124 hours (range: 1-477)
Mean hours for those that completed subsidized job	172 hours (range: 15-477)
Mean hours for those that did not complete subsidized job	88 hours (range: 1-247)
Mean amount reimbursed to grantee organization	\$1,005 (range: \$0-\$3,455) <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 196 missing cases  
<sup>2</sup> 187 missing cases

**Table B3. Post-Program Outcomes (10 Sites)**

	<i>% (N)</i>
Educational opportunity after subsidized job	39.7 (151) <sup>1</sup>
Unsubsidized employment	35.8 (203) <sup>2</sup>
Full-time unsubsidized employment	10.6 (60)
Part-time unsubsidized employment	37.1 (141) <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 197 missing cases<sup>2</sup> 62 respondents that were placed in a full-time or part-time job were recorded as “no” for any unsubsidized employment. These cases were re-coded as yes.<sup>3</sup> 197 missing cases

## Differences between Participants in Ten Evaluation Organizations and Participants in all Other Organizations

We examined whether and how the participants at the ten organizations that were part of the implementation study differed from participants at the organizations not part of the study. Participants worked a similar number of hours at their subsidized jobs and had similar completion rates. Participants at the study sites were more likely to participate in an educational opportunity or part-time job following the program than participants at the non-evaluation sites (full-time job did not differ) (Table B4).<sup>15</sup>

Different outcomes may be due to organizational differences or differences in the characteristics of participants. Participants at the study sites were more likely to be male, Black, have a high school diploma or GED, and to have a history of involvement with the courts (Table B4).

**Table B4. Selected Differences between Participants at Evaluation Sites and Participants at Non-Evaluation Sites**

	<b>Evaluation sites (N=577)</b>	<b>Non-evaluation sites (N=440)</b>
<i>Post-Program Activities</i>	%	%
Educational opportunity	39.7	26.5
Part-time unsubsidized job	37.1	22.3
<i>Demographic Characteristics</i>		
Male	70.0	57.4
Hispanic	27.9	34.3
Black	66.0	59.8
Asian	1.1	7.0
White	7.4	4.0
HS diploma	41.2	39.6
GED or equivalent	15.6	10.5
Less than high school	39.6	47.8
No history of court involvement	47.5	73.0

<sup>15</sup> Results should be interpreted cautiously due to missing data.

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Mean age	20.1 years old	19.6 years old
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\* All differences: chi-square,  $p < .05$  or  
t-test,  $p < 0.5$

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