

# YMI CONNECTION Fall 2012

“News, Updates, and Stories from the **Y**oung Men’s Initiative”

## At-a-Glance

- \* The Young Men’s Initiative Annual Report is now available: [on.nyc.gov/SzY8Lg](http://on.nyc.gov/SzY8Lg)
- \* Brand new website is now live: [www.nyc.gov/youngmen](http://www.nyc.gov/youngmen)
- \* You can now follow us on twitter @nycyoungmen

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## The Big Picture *The Big Picture brings you up to speed on the status of the Young Men’s Initiative.*

**One Year In....**When the Mayor announced the Young Men’s Initiative last August, City agencies and offices mobilized to start or expand dozens of programs and implement policy and practice changes that have positively impacted the lives of young men in New York City. One year, 40+ programs and policies, and 4,000 participants later, we are on to year two. This newsletter is one component of a menu of strategies the Office of the Mayor will use to communicate frequently about the initiative and its progress, including: a dedicated YMI webpage, Twitter handle, Tumblr page, and the newly-released Young Men’s Initiative Annual Report.—[on.nyc.gov/SzY8Lg](http://on.nyc.gov/SzY8Lg)

But before jumping into what’s ahead, we wanted to highlight some major milestones from the past year.

To help justice-involved young men, the Department of Probation

has changed its practices and opened five Neighborhood Opportunity Networks (NeON) or community-based probation offices (1 more is scheduled to open by late 2012). Currently,



(above) A group of students meet Giants star Victor Cruz for the Five Ways Education Pays Campaign (See Page 5 for more)

NeON staff and probation officers in Brownsville, Staten Island, Harlem, South Jamaica, and South Bronx are connecting young men with resources and supports to meet their personal, career and educational goals.

With the launch of “Close to Home”, the responsibility of NYC juvenile offenders are transferred to the City, so that the young people can be rehabilitated, educated, supervised,

and when necessary, confined near their families and in their communities.

Another agency that is changing practices is DOE, both in the health and academic realms.

The DOE now requires that comprehensive sex education be taught to all middle and high school students, giving teens the knowledge and tools they need to make healthy choices and stay on a path to success.

And helping students succeed on their path to college and career is the goal of DOE’s Expanded Success Initiative. Forty pilot high schools are implementing strategies and programs to increase the number of high school boys of color who are career and college ready. Lastly, the Young Men’s Initiative is increasing the number of youth who have concrete experiences to put on their résumés through the Young Adult Internship program (YAIP) and the Work Progress Program, both of which provide subsidized internships and jobs.



## On the Ground

**NYC Justice Corps:** NYC Justice Corps is just one of several Young Men’s Initiative programs that expanded this past summer. The program was piloted by the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) in 2008 and is currently managed by John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Justice Corps serves young adults aged 18 to 24 who are on probation, parole, recently discharged from the NYC jail system or NYS prison, or currently or recently enrolled in an alternative-to-incarceration program.

Through meaningful and reparative service to their communities, internships, and job and educational opportunities, the NYC Justice Corps provides Corps members practical skills, social support and leadership training. By actively partnering with the NYC Justice Corps, communities own the success and reintegration of their young adults. In January 2012, the City issued a Request for Proposals seeking up to four qualified organizations to expand NYC Justice Corps throughout the City. We look forward to announcing the launch of those expanded programs later this fall.

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

**Jobs-Plus:** We’re pleased to announce the expansion of one of the Young Men’s Initiative’s signature programs. Jobs-Plus was pioneered in 2009 by CEO. It was rigorously evaluated and proven to effectively boost and sustain the earnings of participants.

Increasing public housing residents’ self-sufficiency is a long-standing goal for New York City and other cities around the country. Although public housing provides stable and affordable housing to low-income Americans, it does not lead to improved employment outcomes and self-sufficiency. Jobs-Plus is an evidence-based employment

program serving residents of public housing developments. It has three major components: employment-related services to help residents secure and retain employment, financial incentives to increase resident’s awareness of public housing rent rules that help “make work pay”, and community support for work – e.g. using resident neighbor networks to spread information about work opportunities and other employment resources. A distinctive feature of the Jobs-Plus model is its goal to operate at “saturation” levels, meaning that services and work incentives are targeted to all working-age residents in the development,

rather than focusing on a subset of eligible individuals.

On May 1st, YMI, CEO and the City’s Human Resources Administration, in collaboration with the New York City Housing Authority, issued a Request For Proposals for qualified vendors to implement the Jobs-Plus program at up to seven additional sites around the New York City. We expect to announce the selected providers later this fall.

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**“NYC Justice Corps has helped me with my resume, job experience, and pre-GED studies. The program gave me hope when I didn’t have any.” - R. Cruz, NYC Justice Corps participant**

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Harlem NeON Resource Hub

The **Neighborhood Opportunity Networks (NeONs)** continue to expand. The first NeON was launched in Brownsville in 2011, and the Young Men’s Initiative is pleased to announce the launch of four more in Brownsville, Harlem, Jamaica, East New York, South Bronx, and Staten Island. Each NeON is a network of community organizations, government agencies, local businesses, and community residents focused on connecting probation clients who live in the target neighborhood to opportunities,

resources and services. By moving probation resources into the neighborhoods where probationers live, the City will increase connectedness between clients and their communities and build stronger relationships with community-based providers.

**One of nearly 7,000 posters placed around the city as part of “The Get Your ID Campaign”-on Coney Island F Train.**



Students listen to an announcement on the launch of the Expanded Success Initiative (ESI)



## One on One

*One on One highlights a participant in one of the Young Men's Initiative programs throughout NYC*

Name: Thairon Carrion  
 YMI Program: Work Progress\*  
 Internship: The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.



**YMI:** What skills did you learn during your Work Progress internship?

**TC:** "I improved my typing skills, worked on reports, and learned how to give an 'elevator speech' about CHCF and what my professional interests and goals are."

**YMI:** What lessons did you learn from your internship?

**TC:** "You could say before (Work Progress) I never did anything. I learned that nothing can be given to you and you have to work on where you wanna go. I don't want my family to go through economic stress. I know that jobs like at CHCF you get from going to school."

**YMI:** What's changed in your life after being part of Work Progress?

**TC:** "My mom is less stressed. Every parent wants their kid to be the best. Our

relationship has grown and on top of that she doesn't worry about me."

**YMI:** What stood out most to you from your internship?

**TC:** "When I started to do presentations and interviews with people who started their own businesses I was inspired. I learned a lot from other people's experiences."

**YMI:** Now that you have completed your internship, what immediate plans do you have?

**TC:** "I am starting my first semester at BMCC and pursuing a Liberal Arts Degree, and I want to explore a degree in Business Administration."

**YMI:** What are your ultimate goals?

**TC:** "I want to work as a guidance counselor. Eventually, however, I want to open up a few branches with guidance counselors that help students succeed in their classes, in life, and to be that extra hand."

*\*WorkProgress provides subsidized wages paid to young adults placed in short-term jobs through community-based organizations.*

## In The Spotlight

*In the Spotlight highlights a provider working with the City to accomplish the goals of the Young Men's Initiative*

Organization: Coro New York  
 YMI Program: Mayor's Youth Leadership Council\*  
 Interview with Coro Executive Director Scott Millstein

**YMI:** How does Coro (and its work) fit into the overall goals of the Young Men's Initiative?

**Coro:** At Coro we believe that the best policies are those that are informed by multiple perspectives—that is one of the core principles of our leadership training. That is also why we were pleased to partner with the Mayor's office to ensure that youth voice was represented in the development of these youth policies.

**YMI:** What is like to be part of such a robust, comprehensive effort?

**Coro:** It has been a privilege to work with City Hall on this initiative. Coro is an organization that has been helping to build the leadership community of the city for nearly 30 years, so we welcomed



the opportunity to contribute to this innovative, challenging and important effort. It's also been exciting to see how well received the recommendations of the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council have been. All the staff and leadership they met with throughout the year appreciated their perspectives and insights. And of course they had great ideas. The Council got feedback from nearly 600 of their peers so they really knew what they were talking about.

**YMI:** What impact do you hope Coro (and its work) will have on the young people of this city?

**Coro:** I know many experts were involved in the development of the YMI but the Mayor's office deserves credit for making sure there was meaningful involvement of youth "experts" as well.

I have no doubt that the implementation of the YMI initiatives will be better because of the input of the MYLC.

In addition to making our city's youth policies more effective, I hope the students who participated in the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council will serve as a reminder to all students that young people can help make our city a better place. This fall they will return to their schools with new skills and new perspectives on leadership and we have challenged them, as we do with all alumni, to use what they learned to lead change in their own schools. We know how effective they can be as student leaders which is why we are eager to put them to work to help us train the next MYLC cohort.

*\*The MYLC allows young people to learn leadership skills and advise the Mayor's office and other City agencies on policy issues affecting youth in NYC. LINK: [bit.ly/RRRPOz](http://bit.ly/RRRPOz)*

## BeYond NYC

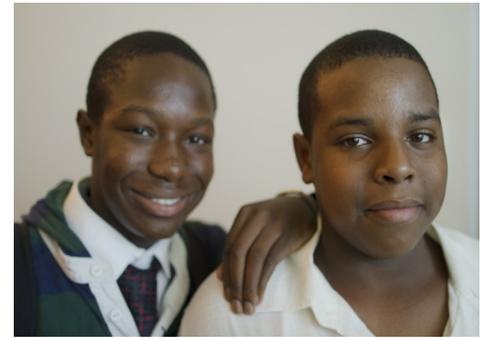
*Beyond NYC provides information about the reach the Young Men's Initiative has outside of the city*

The Young Men's Initiative was profiled in the **Conference Board of Canada's** August 2012 report *Healthy Youth: Why Employers Should Care and What They Can Do*. The report was part of an effort to highlight examples of promising collaborations that aim to improve life and health outcomes for young people. YMI was one of five initiatives included in the report and the only example from outside of Canada. Click [here](#) to read the report.

**The Children's Defense Fund** held its 2012 National Conference, Pursuing Justice for Children and the Poor with Persistence and Urgency, in Cincinnati, Ohio from July 22 – 25. 3,000 leading researchers, educators, policy-makers, practitioners, faith leaders, and advocates attended, including 1,000 young adult leaders. Alan Farrell, Citywide Fatherhood Services Coordinator, Shawn Dove, Campaign Manager for Black Male Achievement, Open Society Founda-

tion and Kenneth Braswell, Executive Director of Fathers Incorporated, participated in the mini-plenary "Helping Fathers Build Strong Healthy Families." Alan, Shawn and Kenneth discussed lessons learned thus far and best practices gleaned from NYC Dads- the Mayor's Fatherhood Initiative, The President's Fatherhood Clearinghouse and the Young Men's Initiative, the collaboration between the Mayor's Office, Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Open Society Foundation's Campaign for Black Male Achievement.

Included in the conversation was an overview of the importance of fathers in the lives of children as well as how city, state and federal government can work to remove barriers fathers face as it relates to employment, education, housing and child support.



The **15th Annual Welfare Research and Evaluation Conference** was held in Washington DC May 30 – June 1, 2012. Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs facilitated a panel entitled: "The Young Men's Initiative: Tackling disparities between young black and Latino men and their peers." On the panel were Carson Hicks, Director of Programs and Evaluation and Kate Dempsey, Director of Budget & Operations, both of the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity. Alan S. Farrell, Citywide Fatherhood Services Coordinator and David Banks, President/CEO of the Eagle Academy Foundation were also there. David was the Co-Chair of the YMI steering committee that made the recommendations to Mayor Bloomberg to establish the Young Men's Initiative served as the panel discussant.

The panel included three presentations. The first gave an overview of the Young Men's Initiative, highlighting research that illustrates the disparities between young men of color and their peers across four issue areas and the programs and policies that will tackle these disparities. The second presentation discussed the Citywide multi-agency Fatherhood Initiative, designed to strengthen NYC families by helping fathers be active in their children's lives. This included a discussion of the CUNY Fatherhood Academy, a program run through the Young Men's Initiative in partnership with CUNY to boost fathers' parenting skills while connecting them to employment and education. The third presentation provided an in depth discussion of employment programs geared towards improving outcomes for young men of color.

Click [here](#) to see the conference video.

## YMI In the News

*YMI In the News includes links to articles and other mentions of YMI in the media*

- *Mayor: 4,000 young men so far in NYC program*  
CBS News, October 5, 2012  
<http://cbsn.ws/SyT5fY>
- *Mainstreaming Efforts Praised in Schools Study*  
New York Times, August 31, 2012  
LINK: [nyti.ms/O3RtJG](http://nyti.ms/O3RtJG)
- *New Hope in South Bronx*  
The Epoch Times, August 28, 2012  
LINK: [bit.ly/OJeNjN](http://bit.ly/OJeNjN)
- *Initiative Aims to Improve Health, Success of Young Men of Color* Latina Lista, August 27, 2012  
LINK: [bit.ly/OpPHk6](http://bit.ly/OpPHk6)
- *Wall Street's Solution for Repeat Offenders?*  
The ROOT, August 25, 2012  
LINK: [wapo.st/PO4GVt](http://wapo.st/PO4GVt)
- *Bloomberg initiative revamps Jamaica probation program*  
The Times Ledger, July 19, 2012  
LINK: [bit.ly/OWgKFm](http://bit.ly/OWgKFm)
- *Bloomberg credits boosts in test results to new school initiatives*  
GothamSchools, July 17, 2012  
LINK: [bit.ly/NCQ0Zd](http://bit.ly/NCQ0Zd)
- *Summer Youth Employment And Education Programs Launched*  
Gazette, July 11, 2012  
LINK: [bit.ly/NINaa8](http://bit.ly/NINaa8)

**MYMI** *mYmi will highlight ways to get involved with YMI programs, through volunteering, Request for Proposals, Request for Applications, and more*

### Work Progress Program Released: 10.01.12

CEO and the NYC Human Resources Administration are seeking service providers to participate in a subsidized wage program for low-income young adults. The Work Progress Program offers reimbursements for wages paid to young adults placed in short-term jobs. The program is funded by the Young Men's Initiative and is accepting applications on a rolling basis.

Download the application here: [Work Progress Program Provider Application](#)

**Cornerstone Mentoring** matches youth aged 10 to 15 in group mentoring with a trained adult at 25 Cornerstone Community Centers located in NYCHA developments in all five boroughs. Regularly scheduled mentoring sessions focus discussions and activities on leadership and success, as well as on developing a greater sense of care for one's community. Each mentoring site is responsible for planning and implementing a service event that helps cultivate an ethic of service in mentees. Mentoring groups also participate in numerous outings that allow mentees and mentors to build their relationship outside of the Cornerstone center.

Anyone interested in volunteering at a mentoring site, or in making learning or service opportunities available for the mentoring groups, should contact Ruben Mina, Project Manager, at (212) 442-8251 or [rmina@dycd.nyc.gov](mailto:rmina@dycd.nyc.gov).

## Meeting a Giant

During the summer, a group of students set off to Albany to watch the Giants train for the upcoming season. The real treat came at the end of practice when WR Victor Cruz came over to talk with them about his newly-released autobiography, *Out of the Blue*. It was all part of the **Five Ways Education Pays Campaign** which kicked off in late June.

With the help of the community-based organization Hip Hop 4 Life to keep them on track, students were challenged to read Cruz's 304-page book and answer questions on how education always played a big part of his road to stardom.

During their meet-and-greet, Cruz asked the students what they thought of his book and how they would include education in their professional and personal lives. Of course, there was also a chance to sign footballs, t-shirts, and headphones.

*\* The Five Ways Education Pays Campaign is a two-year initiative to increase college awareness and aspirations in black and Latino middle school boys and their families by promoting the five concrete ways that going to college pays off in the long run: higher income, better health, more security, strong com-*



WR Victor Cruz speaks with students about his new autobiography, *Out of the Blue*.

The Young Men's Initiative is now on the Web!



@nycYoungmen

[nyc.gov/youngmen](http://nyc.gov/youngmen)

<http://nycyoungmen.tumblr.com>

*The mission of this newsletter is to capture the spirit of the Young Men's Initiative through content that speaks to various stakeholders invested in our work. Each issue will contain program and policy updates, personal stories from our partners and program participants, thought resources and opportunities to get involved. This newsletter is a snapshot of where the Young Men's Initiative is and where it is headed.*

### Mayor's Management Report Features Young Men's Initiative

For the first time, the Mayor's Management Report outlined data for a cross-agency program, the Young Men's Initiative. The Report identified citywide indicators, including graduation rate, employment and felony conviction, which will help measure the success of YMI programs and policies.

REPORT: [on.nyc.gov/Uiv8cC](http://on.nyc.gov/Uiv8cC)