

YMI CONNECTION Winter 2013

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

At-a-Glance

- YMI presented at the National Mentoring Summit in DC: <http://tiny.cc/nsqqrw>
- Read about the launch of ABLE at www.nyc.gov/youngmen
- Follow us! We’re at @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.

YMI in 2013 . . . As we enter the second year of our work, the Young Men’s Initiative has been particularly focused on addressing mental health disparities for young men involved in the justice system in NYC. While we celebrate having our lowest incarceration rates since 1986,

issues. We are pleased in this issue to highlight two groundbreaking programs recently announced by the Mayor that are designed to reduce length of stay and/or re-incarceration through increased access to treatment and resources for young men.



Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs, Commissioner Dora Schirio, Deputy Warden Raleem Moses, Warden Antonio Cui, and RDNC Office Kerrion Cohall at ABLE kickoff event

we are simultaneously addressing the needs of incarcerated young men who are disproportionately affected by mental and behavioral health issues. In 2012 about 36% of those in NYC Department of Corrections custody had a mental health issue, a figure which rises to nearly 50% for adolescents 16-18 years of age. Young men with mental health issues are far more likely to experience longer stays in jail than those with similar charges and risk levels who don’t have mental health

Adolescent Behavioral Learning Experience (ABLE)
In August 2012, YMI launched the nation’s first social impact bond to support an evidence-based cognitive behavioral therapy program for young adults on Rikers Island. The Adolescent Behavioral Learning Experience (ABLE) focuses on personal responsibility education, training, and counseling, with the goal of reducing the likelihood of re-incarceration. In this social impact bond model, Goldman Sachs provides financing;

Bloomberg Philanthropies provides grant support for the effort; MDRC, a leading non-profit, oversees project implementation; and the Vera Institute of Justice evaluates whether the project reaches its targeted reductions in re-incarceration. In addition, the Osborne Association and Friends of Island Academy are providing the therapeutic intervention. As of January 2, all adolescents at Rikers Island are now participating in ABLE.

Court-Based Intervention and Resource Teams (CIRT)

In December 2012, the Mayor announced our new system of Court-based Intervention and Resource Teams (CIRT). CIRT was informed both by recommendations from the Mayor’s Steering Committee on Citywide Justice and Mental Health and a rigorous data-driven analysis conducted by the Council for State Governments. By using newly implemented assessment and screening tools and expedited information sharing to the courts, CIRT will identify and serve over 3,000 clients. Clients accepted into the program will receive community based supervision and linkages to mental health treatment. CIRT will expand the City’s capacity to provide community based alternatives to those incarcerated by over 60 percent. This program will benefit young men in particular, as many options currently available target an older population with longer histories of incarceration and hospitalizations. Keep an eye out, as we expect CIRT to go live in late 2013.



On the Ground

NYC Recovers: The Work Progress Program is a tool we use to help community-based organizations make an even bigger impact. Through the Work Progress Program, the Center for Economic Opportunity approves CBOs to place young people who are receiving their services into part-time jobs and pay them wages. The program then provides a wage reimbursement to the CBOs.

After Hurricane Sandy, the Young Men's Initiative expanded the Work Progress Program to create NYC Recovers. NYC Recovers is a subsidized wage program designed to support rebuilding in Sandy-affected neighborhoods. NYC Recovers reimburses wages paid to either hurricane-affected residents ages 16 and up placed in general employment opportunities or to unemployed New Yorkers working directly in support of the recovery efforts in the Sandy-affected neighborhoods, including Rockaway Peninsula, Breezy Point, Gerritsen Beach, Brighton Beach, Broad Channel, Coney Island, Graveshead, Red Hook, St. George, Dongan Hills, New Drop Beach, Tottenville, Throgs Neck, and Lower East Side.

NYC Recovers workers helping rebuild after Hurricane Sandy

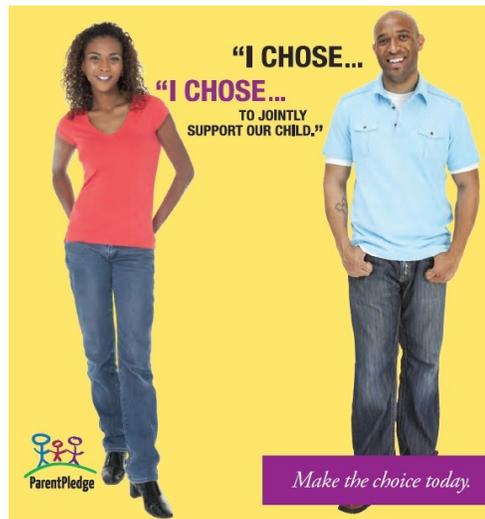


On The Ground brings you updates on our programs—what's new, what's expanding, and important milestones.

The Parent Pledge Project: All the research and our own experiences tell us that children thrive when both parents provide consistent financial and emotional support. When fathers are actively and regularly involved in the lives of their children, those children are more likely to experience better outcomes in the classroom and less likely to engage in behaviors that compromise a healthy future.

But fathers and mothers can find navigating child support and co-parenting responsibilities in the family court system an intimidating experience. We realize that this experience can exacerbate an already antagonistic

Learn more about the Parent Pledge Project at <http://tiny.cc/laxqrw>



Mentoring for REAL: Mentoring is a key part of the Young Men's Initiative, and more than 1,400 young people have participated in YMI mentoring programs since we launched YMI in August 2012. Our newest mentoring program is Mentoring for REAL (Resiliency, Education, Attendance and Leadership). Mentoring for REAL

atmosphere between parents, making it more difficult to communicate and fulfill their responsibilities to the children they love.

The Parent Pledge Project was launched to offer parents an opportunity to voluntarily establish child support agreements in a non-adversarial, community based setting. Working together, the Mayor's Office, the NYC Human Resource Administra-

tion, Community Mediation Services and three community - and faith-based organizations, (Children's Aid Society, The Door and St. Paul's Community Baptist Church) offer trained mediators office space where they provide parents the opportunity to discuss child support and co-parenting rights and responsibilities and establish child support agreements outside of court. The agreements established will conform to the Child Support Standards Act and will be capable of being filed with, reviewed by, and approved by the New York State Family Court.

The Parent Pledge Project is part of a national movement to create family-centered approaches that increase father involvement in their children's lives and improve the reliability of Child support payments to families in need.

"The families we work with need as many constructive resources as possible. The Parent Pledge Project can be that for them."

—Greg Morris, Children's Aid Society

nected them with mentors. This program builds on YMI's mission to support the Department of Education in adopting restorative approaches to discipline.

Thanks to the Open Society Foundations for their support of Mentoring for REAL!

One on One

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

Name: Ayodele Aruleba
YMI Program: Mayor's Youth Leadership Council



Ayodele Aruleba will graduate from Herbert H. Lehman High School in the Bronx in Spring 2013. He joined the MYLC because he believes an authentic view of school life is important to make real changes.

YMI: What does it mean to be an alumni member of the MYLC?

AA: We use the leadership concepts we learned in the first year to help create some of the programs that we recommended to the mayor, like increasing access and utilization of health services. Right now we're working with the Health and Hospitals Corporation to conduct patient surveys of teens using their clinics.

YMI: What lessons have you learned from participating in the MYLC?

AA: There's a leadership concept called "getting on the balcony"—it means looking at things from different perspectives, and it helps you understand how someone else understood an issue. I think it will help me later in life, because I know my perspective—I want to know others' perspectives.

YMI: Why do you think youth voice is important in City policy making?

AA: Youth voice is important because decisions made by the government should be talked about with the stakeholders—the people who are going to be affected. Getting the perspective from somebody in high school helps understand how high schools will be affected by certain policies.

YMI: What's next for you, now that you're graduating from high school?

AA: I plan to get my undergraduate degree, majoring in political science and economics, and then I want to go to law school.

YMI: What are your ultimate goals?

AA: I'd really like to go into government and reform education.

YMI: What advice would you give to young people serving currently on the MYLC?

AA: Remember who you're representing and their importance. Sometimes councilmembers can forget who they're representing. They're here to represent youth. They have to work hard to make youth voice heard and credible in New York City government.

**The Mayor's Youth Leadership Council engages high school students for two years to work with the Office of the Mayor to provide youth voice in policy work..*

In The Spotlight

In the Spotlight highlights an agency or provider working with the City to accomplish the goals of the Young Men's Initiative

Agency: Department of Youth and Community Development

YMI Program: Cornerstone Mentoring Program

YMI: What is the Cornerstone Mentoring Program?

DYCD: Cornerstone provides activities year-round for adults and children. We're located in 25 NYCHA community centers throughout the city. Through YMI we offer group mentoring to young people transitioning from elementary to middle school and middle to high school.

YMI: Some of your Cornerstone Programs were hit hard by Super-Storm Sandy. What has recovery been like so far?

DYCD: For four days after the storm, our staff that didn't go to shelters reported to ten Cornerstone Programs. After the second day, kids started showing up at the Cornerstones again, and many sites organized relief efforts to support the three Cornerstones that were badly damaged during the storm.

YMI: What kinds of relief work



Mentors and mentees making sandwiches together for a community meal at Marolboro Houses in Brooklyn

did you do?

DYCD: The children did cake sales to raise money for the damaged centers and to buy gifts and school supplies for the children who attended those centers. That's an example of centers not affected by the hurricane doing service to support the rest of the centers. At one Cornerstone, the director took ten teenagers and carried groceries to the people in Surfside who

were affected. They did that for the whole week. The teenagers all wanted to go but they wouldn't all fit in the van, so they took turns.

YMI: I understand you have a partnership with the New School.

DYCD: We work with the New School to recruit and train student/

mentors who enroll in a year long class on mentoring in the city. Two student/mentors were placed at sites that were affected by the storm., Coney Island Surfside and Two Bridges.

YMI: How did this work fit into Cornerstone's ethic of service?

DYCD: Mentors and mentees have grown comfortable with the idea of being of service and seeing opportunities to be of service as something to take advantage of. We already incorporate service days into the mentoring program, and a lot of sites were looking forward to finding out how they could connect with the Sandy relief work. Service is definitely part of the civic engagement that we already embed in our leadership, and civic responsibility is part of the Cornerstone program model.

**The Cornerstone Mentoring Program is a group mentoring activity for students transitioning from elementary school to middle school or middle school to high school. For more information visit nyc.gov/ymlc or nyc.gov/dycd*

BeYond NYC

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

The National Council of

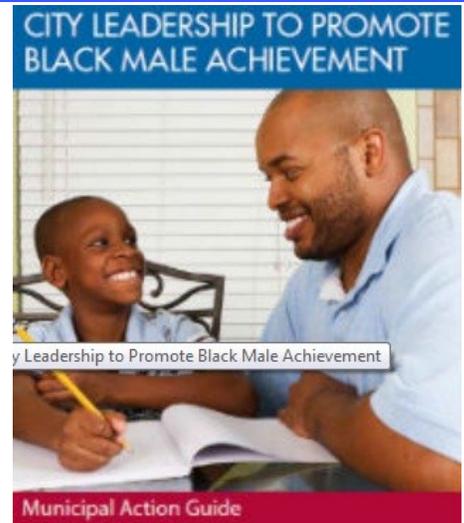
La Raza's Workforce Development Forum in October 2012 included a panel focused on the Young Men's Initiative. Senior representatives from YMI and the Center for Economic Opportunity provided an overview of the entire program and policy portfolio and highlighted outcomes for several programs that were initially launched by the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) and expanded under the Young Men's Initiative due to demonstrated success in enrolling a significant number of black and Latino young men. These include NYC Justice Corps, NYC Work Progress, and the Young Adult Literacy Program. To learn more about these programs, please visit CEO's website at www.nyc.gov/ceo.

The Young Men's Initiative was profiled in two reports: **The Foundation Center's** October 2012 report *Where Do We Go from Here? Philanthropic Support for Black Men and Boys* and

City Leadership to Support Black Male Achievement: A Municipal Action Guide published by **National League of Cities'** (October 2012). Both reports highlight the growing investment of philanthropy and municipalities in black male achievement across the county.

These reports were announced at the first ever **Innovation and Impact Forum for Black Male Achievement** sponsored by the **Open Society Foundations Campaign for Black Male Achievement**. Mayor Bloomberg delivered opening remarks and Mayor Nutter discussed initiatives underway in Philadelphia.

The National Mentoring Partnership held its annual conference in Washington DC in January 2013. The conference included a panel titled "New York City's Mentoring Investment and Evaluation- A Key Strategy in the Young Men's Initiative" that included three presentations. The first gave an overview of the Young Men's Initiative and the mentoring portfolio.



lio. The second presentation covered the evaluation framework for mentoring programs. The final presentation highlighted two mentoring programs: Arches Transformative Mentoring program and Mentoring for REAL (Resiliency, Education, Attendance & Leadership). Both mentoring programs are funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Open Society Foundations.

The National League of Cities (NLC) launched its Network to Improve Outcomes for Young Men of Color and City Leadership to Promote Black Male Achievement at a convening in Washington DC in February 2013. Not-for-profit, philanthropy elected officials and government leaders from 18 cities met to discuss strategies to improve social and economic outcomes for young men of color. The Young Men's Initiative, as well as initiatives underway in Philadelphia and Oakland, was featured on a panel to discuss how government-driven, local initiatives are supporting black and Latino male achievement. The Open Society Foundations Campaign for Black Male Achievement and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation are providing support for the effort. NLC will issue a request for proposals to participate in a new technical assistance project on City Leadership to Promote Black Male Achievement. For more information about this project or the Young Men of Color Network, contact Leon Andrews at andrews@nlc.org.

YMI in the News

YMI in the news contains links to articles and other mentions of YMI in the media

- *Still Working The Streets, Now To Combat a Plague of Gun Violence*
New York Times, December 25, 2012
<http://nyti.ms/10f3nVi>
- *Where People Live: Probation Goes Back to the Neighborhood*
Child Welfare Watch, December 11, 2012
<http://on.nyc.gov/1211GqP>
- *City's Incarceration Rate Plummets as Nation's Climbs*
New York Times, December 32, 2012
<http://nyti.mes/TaRJFH>
- *Teen Pregnancy Down 27% in City Over last Decade*
New York Daily News, February 3, 2013
<http://nydn.us/W14tGG>
- *NLC Announces New Guide on City Strategies to Promote Black Male Achievement*
National League of Cities, September 23, 2012
<http://bit.ly/Oz7ho8>

Check It Out

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

Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM) Annual Meeting

Atlanta, March, 13-16, 2013

<http://tiny.cc/id1zrw>

The SAHM Annual Meeting is the premier multidisciplinary educational event in adolescent medicine and health. The meeting offers innovative research, clinical workshops and discussion forums for attendees of diverse disciplines and from around the world.

Services (ISIS) Youth Tech and Health Conference

San Francisco, April 7-9, 2013

<http://ytlive.org/>

The YTH Live conference is the premiere event for health and technology profes-

sionals to get together with youth, parents and community leaders to advance the health of young people. Hosted by ISIS, the U.S. leader in using technology and new media for sexual and reproductive health, the conference is expecting over 600 national and international attendees.

The Boys Initiative – Health Guidelines for Adolescent and Young Adult Males

<http://theboysinitiative.org/home.html>

Earlier this month [The Boys Initiative](#) announced the appointment of **David L. Bell, MD, MPH**, to serve as a founding member of the steering committee to guide its groundbreaking project [Health Guidelines for Adolescent and Young Adult Males](#). Dr. David L. Bell is a member of the YMI Advisory Board.



YMI works with human service provider agencies to learn how to Ban the Box. From left, Steve Stein Cushman (Law Department), Glenn Martin (Fortune Society), Commissioner Vincent Schiraldi (Department of Probation), Wendy Trull (Mayor's Office) and Lorenzo Harrison (US Department of Labor).

The Young Men's Initiative is on the Web! Connect with us to learn more about our work.

@nycYoungmen nycyoungmen.tumblr.com nyc.gov/youngmen

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.

Becoming a Partner

Application Open: NYC Recovers and the Work Progress Program

The Young Men's Initiative and CEO are seeking service providers to participate subsidized wage programs for low-income young adults, the Work Progress Program and NYC Recovers: NYC Recovers will offer reimbursements for wages paid to either Sandy-affected residents aged 16 and above and placed in general employment opportunities or to unemployed New Yorkers working directly in support of the recovery efforts in Sandy-affected neighborhoods. CEO is accepting applications on a rolling basis, pending availability of funds.

[Download the Application](#)

Take the Pledge! The Parent Pledge Project Is Accepting Referrals

The Parent Pledge Project offers non-married parents an opportunity to work with a mediator to draft child support and co-parenting agreements in a non-adversarial community setting, instead of in court. To refer clients or to learn more about the Parent Pledge Project, please contact Kori Robinson at (718) 523-6868 Ext. 305, visit www.nyc.gov/nycdads or call 311/.

[Download the brochure](#)

Check out these resources for organizations learning about Ban the Box:

In October 2012, YMI held a series of seminars for human service provider organizations to learn about Executive Order 151 and how to "Ban the Box". Check out these resources for more information:

[Employing Your Mission"](#)

[A Guide for New York State Employers?"](#)

[Connecting Youth & Business: A Toolkit For Employers?"](#)