

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of Communications

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White House to Honor Youth Jobs+ “Champions of Change”

WASHINGTON, DC - On Thursday, September 26th, the White House will highlight nine individuals and organizations that played a key role in the White House’s Youth Jobs+ program as “Champions of Change.” Among them are youth who were impacted by the Youth Jobs+ program, as well as non-profit and faith organizations that were particularly innovative and effective in answering the Administration’s call to action in working with local officials and helping to develop the discipline and skills associated with employment for our youth.

President Obama is focused on accelerating economic recovery and boosting job creation for all Americans, particularly key segments that need better access to employment. Among these key segments are the youth of America - the future of our economy and our country. The President issued the [Youth Jobs+](#) challenge to engage local elected officials, along with business and community leaders, to work together to connect young people with summer and year-round job opportunities.

“The work of these individuals and organizations has been vital in promoting youth employment, creating jobs, and providing young people with the skills they need to be successful” said Danielle Gray, Assistant to the President and Cabinet Secretary.

“Following on the President’s call to action, these ‘Champions of Change’ have helped connect young people with jobs and skills, creating opportunities in communities across this country.”

The Champions of Change program was created as an opportunity for the White House to feature individuals, businesses, and organizations doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities.

The event is closed to press but will be live streamed on the White House website. To watch this event live, visit www.whitehouse.gov/live at 3:20 pm ET on September 26th. To learn more about the White House Champions of Change program and the Champions we will be recognizing, visit www.whitehouse.gov/champions. To learn more about the White House Youth Jobs+ initiative, visit www.whitehouse.gov/youthjobs

**Gerald Chertavian, Founder and CEO, Year Up
Boston, MA**

Gerald Chertavian is dedicated to closing the Opportunity Divide that exists in our nation. Determined to make his vision a reality, Chertavian combined his entrepreneurial skills and his passion for working with urban young adults to found Year Up in 2000 – an intensive one-year training and education program that serves low income youth ages 18-24 and provides the technical, professional and communication skills needed to empower them to make successful transitions to careers and higher education. His commitment to working with urban youth spans more than 25 years. He has actively participated in the Big Brother mentoring program since 1985 and was recognized as one of New York’s outstanding Big Brothers in 1989. He is the recipient of the 2003 Social Entrepreneurship Award by the Manhattan Institute and the 2005 Freedom House Archie R. Williams, Jr. Technology Award. In 2008, he was appointed by Massachusetts’ Governor Deval Patrick to serve on the MA State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Chertavian earned an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School. He has received honorary doctorates from the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology and Mount Ida College. He is on the Board of Advisors for the Harvard Business School Social Enterprise Initiative and a member of the World Economic Forum’s Youth Unemployment Council.

Stacy Holland, Co-Founder and Former President & CEO, Philadelphia Youth Network Mt. Laurel, NJ

With 20 years of experience, Stacy Holland is a tireless advocate who has played a vital role in ensuring that youth in the Philadelphia region have access to the academic, career and support services necessary to build bright futures and prepare them to be leaders in the workforce. As the co-founder of the Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN), a non-profit formed in 1999, Holland oversaw the growth of the organization since its inception. Starting as a small non-profit organization, PYN has grown into an independent, citywide entity dedicated to integrating services and building systems that promote positive post-secondary and economic outcomes for young people serving over 17,000 youth yearly. Holland will continue her work in preparing youth for college and career success in her new role as the Chief of Strategic Partnerships at the School District of Philadelphia. Holland has led collaborative efforts that allowed PYN to: putting more than 92,000 youth to work in internships and training programs; reconnecting more than 7,300 out-of-school youth with education and training programs; infusing more than \$51 million into the local economy through wages paid to youth; launching seven industry pipeline programs to enhance education in high-growth and high-earning careers; coordinating services for over 140 youth-serving organizations. Holland holds a Master Degree from Teachers College, Columbia University and serves on a number of non-profit board as well as the Community College of Philadelphia.

John Hogan, CEO and Founder, Teen Force Los Gatos, CA

John Hogan is the founder and full-time volunteer CEO at TeenForce, a social enterprise dedicated to solving the youth employment crisis by meeting the hiring needs of business. TeenForce offers a business solution to a social problem. A self-sustaining, non-profit organization built on the staffing agency model, TeenForce provides employers with an opportunity to hire work-ready youth ages 14 -24 while also strengthening local communities. TeenForce delivers work readiness training, skills development, job placement services and career mentoring to ensure youth improve life outcomes through their employment experiences. As part of its Youth Jobs+ effort, TeenForce partnered with the San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce to generate 100 jobs for current and former foster youth in 2013. Mr. Hogan also co-chairs the Opportunity Youth Partnership effort in Santa Clara County as part of a Collective Impact initiative inspired by the White House Council on Community Solutions and the Aspen Institute.

**Lisbeth Shepherd, Executive Director, Green City Force
Brooklyn, NY**

Lisbeth Shepherd founded Green City Force (GCF) in 2009 to provide a career pathway for low-income young adults. GCF's model combines workforce development, national service and sustainability focused on behavior change. Green City Force was incubated by Blue Ridge Foundation NY and recognized by Mayor Bloomberg in 2013 as NYC's Most Innovative Nonprofit. A Clinton Global Initiative member, Green City Force has built one of the largest urban corps with major funding from the NYS Corporation for National and Community Service funding, launched the Love Where You Live campaign in partnership with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) to incite and inspire energy and water conservation via behavior change, and created the first urban farm on public housing in partnership with NYCHA and Added Value, all the while preparing young adults to enter career pathways to family-supporting jobs. Lisbeth previously founded Unis-Cité, the leading national youth service program in France which engages over 2000 annual corps members in 50 cities and inspired national legislation affecting 75K young adults. She is co-author of *Demain Le Service Civil*, an Echoing Green alum, Draper Richards Kaplan Fellow, Audobon "Woman Greening the City," Yale graduate and mother of two.

**Jeff Tollefson, Executive Director, Genesys Work
Eden Prairie, MN**

Jeff Tollefson proudly serves as the Executive Director of Genesys Works in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, Minnesota, where he helps students break out of the poverty cycle and into the corporate world, shining a light on a path few students from low-income environments even know exists. Through Genesys Works, Jeff is committed to building bridges between economically-disadvantaged high school students, businesses seeking technology-proficient workers, and a public education system struggling to produce college and career-ready graduates. After spending more than 17 years in the venture capital industry, his involvement as a partner (and now

board member) of Social Venture Partners helped him to see how his time, talents and relationship networks could be better utilized in the social sector, leading Jeff to leave the for-profit world and launching the Genesys Works program in the Twin Cities in 2008.

Deshawn Shepherd

Chicago, IL

Deshawn Shepherd is a 19-year old Chicagoan from the Roseland community. DeShawn attended Thornwood High School and earned his GED from Olive Harvey College in December 2012. This past summer he participated in the One Summer Chicago Plus job program, and worked at St. Stephens Church. Currently, Deshawn is enrolled as a full-time student at Olive-Harvey College, majoring in Health Care. His long term career goal is to be a successful pharmacist. Deshawn believes success is earned and not given. He is particularly thankful to his mother, Latrice Shepherd, father Dezhawn Robinson, and late grandmother, Emma Jean Robinson for never giving up on him even when he gave them reasons to.

Abraham Alvarez

San Francisco, CA

Abraham "Abe" Alvarez is currently fifteen years old, born and raised in San Francisco and is attending Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory where he has a 3.5GPA and is in 10th grade. He is proud to have overcome many hardships and challenges in his life growing up with a single mother in the Mission District to get to where he is today and has never been more focused on success including utilizing his summer to work. This summer he applied for an internship through Future Graduates, one of many programs through San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee's Summer Jobs+ Campaign which focused on getting youth paid summer work experiences. Future Graduates is a partnership between a non-profit created to leverage the power of the technology community around civic action in San Francisco and the San Francisco Police Foundation dedicated to helping San Francisco high school students graduate and prepare for future careers in Tech. Through an interview and orientation with the Police Department Abraham was placed with a Tech start up- Media Relevance for a 8 week paid internship where he was one of four interns spending time doing customer development on understanding how both student and consumer behavior pertains to watching video. He also helped the Media Relevance Team define this new experience for his generation, as well as students in high school by conducting interviews and creating mock ups. Abe's duties were important in providing real world research which will translate to the user experience that will be incorporated into an app in the near future for the company. More importantly in the future, Abraham is interested in taking his Technology experience with Media Relevance into the areas of health, specifically with eyesight potentially becoming an eye doctor.

Tiffani Cooper
Baltimore, MD

Tiffani Cooper, 20, is a 2010 graduate of Baltimore City Public Schools' National Academy Foundation School, and a current student at Baltimore City Community College (BCCC), where she is earning an associate's degree before moving on to Morgan State University to study hospitality management. Tiffani has participated in YouthWorks - Baltimore City's summer jobs program - since 2007. This summer, while working in the facilities department at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), Tiffani performed so well that she was offered a full-time position at MICA once her YouthWorks assignment ended. While she worked the morning shift during the summer, she now works the evening shift to accommodate her school schedule. Tiffani credits YouthWorks and the jobs she has held each summer since the age of 14 with helping her broaden her resume, expand her networking abilities, improve her communication and customer service skills, and set long-term goals.

Emmanuel Haynes
St. Louis, MO

Emmanuel Haynes is a 12th grade student In St. Louis Missouri at Carnahan High School of The Future. He participated in the Mers Goodwill St. Louis Youth Jobs Program as a Funeral Director at the Ronald Jones Funeral Chapels. His experiences as a Funeral Director allowed him to work in his desired future profession and gain valuable work experience along the way.