



Photo credit: Joshua Poyer

Over the past few months, COVID-19, George Floyd’s murder, and the ongoing protests have brought to the fore of this nation’s attention what many of us have always known: insidious racism exists, inequality exists, and an economy that many believed was flourishing was only flourishing for some. Led by our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, HERE to HERE affirmed our commitment to the ongoing importance of proclaiming that [Black Lives Matter](#) because achieving social justice and racial equity are central to our mission of creating more equitable futures for young people.

While these compounding inequities weigh heavily on our hearts, we remain inspired by the incredible adaptability, persistence, and brilliance of young people. We’ve heard their voices chant, rally, and scream louder than ever; we’ve seen their demand for a better, more equitable world; and we’ve felt their firm refusal to accept anything less during these tough times. Even as we grieve, we are reinvigorated by the young people of The Bronx and New York City with whom we have the privilege of working and learning alongside.

In the face, despite, and because of new and unprecedented challenges, HERE to HERE continues to champion Bronx and NYC youth by bringing leaders together to remove systemic barriers and create new ways to earn and learn. On behalf of the entire HERE to HERE team, we thank all our champions of talent—students, business leaders, educators, families, and local leaders—for your continued perseverance, spirit, and bull-headed dedication to seize disruption and help NYC prepare for a summer unlike any of us have ever seen.

Here’s the latest:

Network high schools and the students we serve

This year, our normal ways of operating were upended. COVID-19 prompted educators to rapidly develop new tactics for educating students as they sheltered in place, while employers faced uncertainty as the economy came to a halt and workplace discrimination could no longer be ignored. Through so much upheaval, HERE to HERE has remained committed to bringing together business, education, and community leaders so that all young people in The Bronx can achieve lifelong career success within a better, more equitable new normal. Now is the time to continue building these partnerships and amplifying the voices of students, not only as changemakers in talent development but also as leaders in New York City's recovery.

Uniting to Fight for Summer Youth Employment (SYEP)

Since launching the campaign [#SaveSYEP](#), HERE to HERE and a number of Summer Youth Employment advocates, including [Teens Take Charge](#), [DreamYard](#), [ExpandEd](#), [United Neighborhood Houses](#), [Beam Center](#), [Good Shepherd Services](#), and [Children's Aid Society](#) have been hard at work to reinstate the program, which was canceled in early April. On July 1, the city released its budget, which restored 35,000 slots for participants in what will be a largely virtual program this summer. Although we fought for a restoration to last year's 74,000 slots, we applaud the work of our partners, especially Bronx youth, who for many weeks tirelessly held public officials' feet to the fire and demanded nothing less than the NYC's full commitment to SYEP, which HERE to HERE and its partners know is an investment in the future well-being of all young people.

To the students of The Bronx and NYC—your voices were heard; your activism mattered. Thanks to you, we were still able to save the summer for tens of thousands of teenagers. We see you, admire you, and feel so fortunate to work alongside you!

We also appreciate the support of public officials, including City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, Youth Services Committee Chair Debi Rose, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, Comptroller Scott Stringer, Council Member Vanessa Gibson, and many others who fought to save SYEP, as well as the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development and Center for Youth Employment, who worked with providers to create an alternative, largely virtual program, that offers young people work-based

experiences in remote settings. Lastly, a special thank you to The Bronx Private Industry Council (Bronx PIC) employers, who wrote letters of support. Delivering meaningful summer experiences for Bronx and NYC youth has not been (and will not be) easy, but it is hugely important. We are grateful to all the individuals and organizations fighting for students.

HERE to HERE continues to build the case and advocate for better summer work programs and an enhanced SYEP by working closely with the city's greatest champions of talent: students. During a HERE to HERE virtual event, Adapting SYEP Teen Webinar, over 100 young people from The Bronx, including the HERE to HERE Ambassadors, brainstormed and strategized [how SYEP can better serve NYC youth](#).

HERE to HERE, in partnership with [The Bronx Community Relief Effort](#), also managed a series of grants to organizations in The Bronx for virtual summer internships, in order to help these organizations prepare for summer opportunities and to show city officials what was possible in terms of remote programming.



Image source: [Gotham Gazette](#)

A Summer Internship Season Unlike Any We've Known Before

Through this unprecedented time, we've mobilized our partners to create game-changing summer experiences that support Bronx and NYC public school students. We're happy to announce that after months of preparation, virtual summer internships are up and running!

With funding from [The Bronx Community Relief Effort](#), more than 500 students from the HERE to HERE high school network and two high schools on the Taft campus [began virtual internships on July 6](#). Over the next eight weeks, interns will earn valuable summer income and career-connected skills in internships with [Duro & Third Avenue Labs](#), [Educational Video Center](#), [Children's Arts & Sciences](#)

[Workshops](#), [United Activities Unlimited](#), [DreamYard](#), [The Knowledge House](#), [The Urban Assembly](#), [HERO High School](#), [Bronx Documentary Center](#), [The Point](#), Music Theater Company, and [Mentoring in Medicine](#). Thank you to our partners for working with us to design unique, adaptive summer experiences—and thank you also to HERE to HERE’s Student Ambassadors, who reviewed virtual internship proposals and provided critical input.

For example, [The Thinkubator](#) is providing 40 internships. During this season of the Thinkubator, Innovators (Bronx students) will work alongside Bronx businesses to solve or address COVID-related business challenges and racial inequities in The Bronx. Students will focus specifically on obstacles around school safety, school design, and restaurant operations. At the end of each cohort, students will provide implementable recommendations to the clients.

For more information on the summer 2020 virtual internships, read our press release [here](#). For details on virtual internships overall, including best practice, read our [working paper](#), and our [Key Distinguishers for Virtual Paid Work Experiences](#).

Continuing to Refine and Enhance Remote Learning

Even while we are focused on creating a set of unique, impactful summer work opportunities, we’re also looking ahead to the fall, when NYC public schools will face the potential of another semester working and learning remotely. To prepare for this, HERE to HERE’s Learning Communities, which gather school leaders invested in work-based learning, have stepped up over the last few months to provide critical insight into which remote learning strategies are working, where educators are facing challenges, and where school leaders see opportunities to build-out students’ academic and work skills.

At our May 21 Virtual Learning Community event, which focused specifically on best practices for remote learning through the 2019-2020 school year, we continued to imagine and activate new, adaptive systems that provide young people with real-work contexts to explore career paths, apply academic learning, develop technical skills, and prepare for a new landscape of work. Our May event followed a series of sessions: Documenting Work-Based Learning; Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP); and Rethinking WBL in 9/10 Grade.

This month, from July 6 through July 23, founding HERE to HERE partner, Big Picture Learning is hosting its annual [Summer Fest](#), which is operating virtually this year for the first time. Registered attendees have the opportunity to join [Headliner Sessions](#) like School Organization with Taylor Harper, and Parent and Family Engagement with Andrew Frishman, build new passions through Jam Sessions, learn from Big

Picture Learning partners and initiatives in the “Friends' Tent,” and attend evening sessions hosted by members of BPL’s international network. Special call out to Fannie Lou Hamer grad Naseem Haamid who hosted a session with basketball star and activist Rashid Williams.

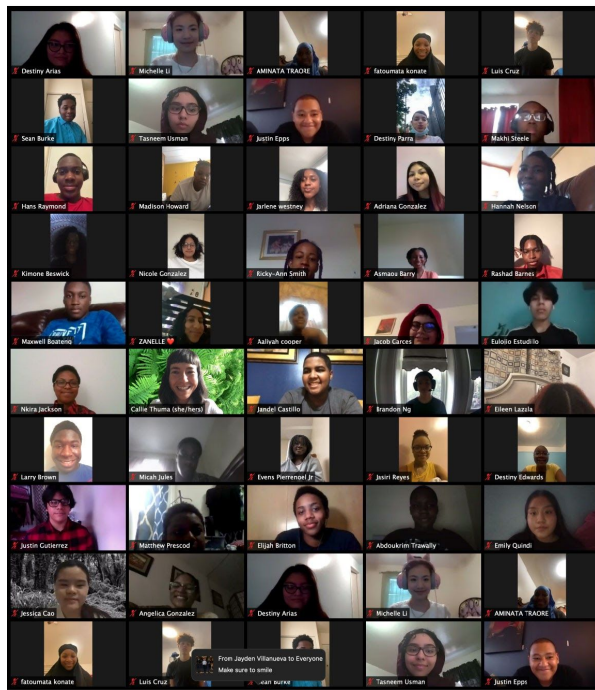
You don't want to miss this! [Register here.](#)

Young People and Employers Affirm and Expand Their Commitment to Apprenticeship

Now more than ever, the experience, industry-valued credentials, and mentorship provided by apprenticeship are critical to ensuring young people are ready to enter the workforce and contribute to NYC’s economic recovery. We are thrilled that students, educators, and employers continue to embrace and expand youth apprenticeship in these uncertain times.

As we continue to find virtual expressions of work-based learning models, we’re thrilled that CareerWise New York apprentices began working remotely as of early May. We recognize all the dedicated CareerWise New York employers who continued to provide their apprentices critical income through this transition, and excited to have our young people back at work, including HERE to HERE’s apprentices, Tasnia and James!

Congratulations **2020 Apprentices!**



While Cohort 1 apprentices and supervisors settle back into the evolving workplace, the CareerWise New York team is finalizing recruitment for Cohort 2. The majority of our Cohort 1 employers committed to participate in Cohort 2, with many upping their hiring from last year, signaling the positive effect apprentices are having in the workplace. This summer, we welcomed more than 85 new apprentices!

Over the next few weeks, we’ll be hosting a series of robust trainings to prepare young people, supervisors, and coaches for another year of apprenticeship. Included in this schedule is CareerWise New York’s signature Apprentice Bootcamp, which this summer will be a seven-week

virtual, part-time apprentice training in collaboration with [Grads of Life](#). We'll also be hosting a learning community session with [Genesys Works](#), during which the Genesys Works team will share adaptive training models that address the challenges of training high school students via remote learning. Our summer sessions not only help everyone involved gear up for apprenticeship, but also seek to build a deep and caring community—something we could all use a little more of right now as we work and learn remotely.

For more CareerWise New York Updates, visit our [CWNYP Program Updates page](#).

Channeling Resources to Support Our Community

To respond quickly to the pandemic here in The Bronx, dozens of community leaders, philanthropists, nonprofits, and the private sector built a coalition—[The Bronx Community Relief Effort](#) (BxCRE)—raising and deploying over \$14 million of private funding in just eight weeks to meet the emergency needs of Bronxites and support the community's longer-term priorities.

HERE to HERE, as an integral member in establishing The Bronx Community Relief Effort, actively works in three of the effort's eight workstreams: EdTech, Microgrants, and Food Insecurity. Our team identified the seed funding to launch BxCRE and helped to deploy funds for virtual internships for young people as detailed above, for microgrants for over 4,000 City University of New York (CUNY) students (more on this below), and for technology for our high school partners to facilitate online learning.



Image source: [Daily News](#)

With funding from The James and Judith K. Dimon Foundation, HERE to HERE in partnership with the BxCRE Edtech vertical secured, purchased, and delivered more than 600 Chromebooks and 750 hotspots, providing tech resources for our 26 partner schools to meet the technology gap facing students.

Through its community-based partners, the BxCRE has served over 1.5 million meals to date in a borough where one in four residents reported suffering food insecurity well before the virus struck. As a part of our efforts to address immediate food insecurity, The HERE to HERE Bronx PIC team has led the BxCRE food workstream working with [World Central Kitchen](#) and [RAP4Bronx](#) (Relief Access Program for the Bronx) to secure, cook, and deliver more than 31,000 World Central Kitchen meals per day, and more than 2000 bags of groceries and boxes of produce per week. HERE to HERE has helped steward this effort by activating Bronx PIC businesses to participate, while providing the coordination to effectively aid as many Bronx individuals and families as possible.

Thank you to all the partners that have helped facilitate this effort to date. It's a testament to our community-driven collaboration that we were able to pivot our business efforts to address an immediate and dire need here in The Bronx.

Supporting CUNY as an Integral Part of NYC's Economic Recovery

Educator-employer partnerships that connect businesses to skilled, local talent have never been more important: right now, employers face uncertainty as business operations remain radically altered, and students are experiencing new uncertainties about their future, including how they will achieve the next steps in their education and secure meaningful, rewarding employment. HERE to HERE recognizes that [no one institution is better positioned to deliver the immediate and long labor needs of businesses than the City University of New York](#) (CUNY), which serves more than half a million students and has 25 campuses across NYC's five boroughs. CUNY and its students are the heart and future of our city and a vital piece in creating a thriving, inclusive economy, through COVID and long after.

As a part of our effort to champion CUNY as a leader in preparing young people for a post-COVID workforce, CUNY, with early support from The James and Judith K. Dimon Foundation and the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation, launched the Chancellor's [Emergency Relief Fund](#) for students in April. We're happy to share that other funders, including Robin Hood and NY Community Trust, contributed to the fund, enabling CUNY to deliver more than 4,000 microgrants to CUNY students. This funding directly

helps students facing financial hardship during this extraordinary public health emergency, particularly those that were not eligible for cash assistance grants through the federal CARES act.

Additionally, this summer many of our apprentices are taking select CareerWise New York course offerings at CUNY. Participating students will not only earn up to six credits toward high school graduation but also have the opportunity to critically apply academic learnings at their apprenticeship sites, further bridging classroom learning with the development of in-demand work skills.

We continue to work closely with CUNY's Career Success team to make sure students are supported at this time and that CUNY is recognized as an essential partner in providing the fast, job-focused upskilling that is vital to NYC's economic recovery. Only when we put young people and the institutions that promote their mobility at the center, can our city recover and rebuild.



Image Source: [Daily News](#)

HERE to HERE Updates

An Update on The Bronx Private Industry Council

Adapting to a shifting work and talent development environment, largely brought on by COVID and City and State budget constraints, The Bronx PIC, originally conceived as a stand-alone organization resourced through membership dues and public funds, is not currently feasible. In a couple of meetings this Spring with Bronx PIC members, we discussed possible strategies about how best to move forward.

Throughout this organizational evolution, Bronx PIC members have remained eager to engage with HERE to HERE on relevant policy issues, and youth talent development in The Bronx overall. This dedicated coalition of Bronx businesses remains an invaluable voice and partner to HERE to HERE. We are currently working with members to determine how they can play a formal advisory role.

At the meeting in June, the current Executive Director of The Bronx PIC, Eddie Summers, shared his vision of the Thinkubator. Building on the work over this past year, the summer 2020 Thinkubator programs, and the compelling need to engage Bronx students in the city's economic recovery, the Thinkubator would continue to place young people at the core of solving critical local, organizational, and societal challenges. The Thinkubator would continue to work with current Bronx PIC members and as an entity independent of but working closely with HERE to HERE.

Stay tuned for more updates. In the meantime, you can learn more about the Thinkubator [here](#).

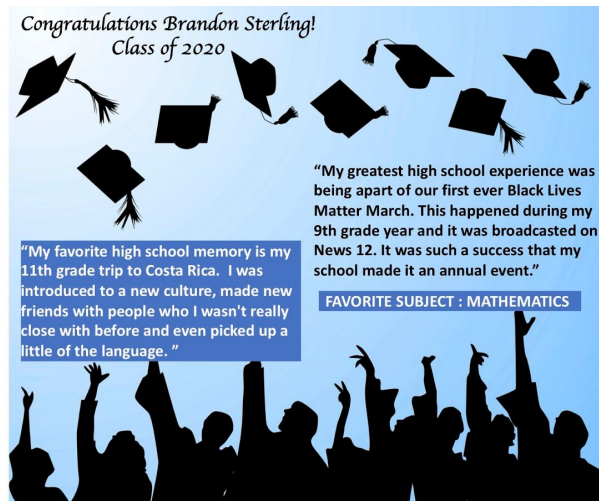
Shout Out to Our CUNY Fellows!

This spring season, the HERE to HERE team was joined by five CUNY fellows. During their four months at HERE to HERE, CUNY fellows offered several of our high school partners additional capacity by assisting students with the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) application process. On behalf of the whole HERE to HERE team, we'd like to thank Cilqui Grant, Jennifer Hernandez, Jesus Rojas Rodriguez, Nathalie Vargas, and Quardear Harris for your hard work, flexibility, and support during this unprecedented time. You continue to push our work forward with your ambition, unwavering advocacy, and vision.

Welcome, HERE to HERE Interns!

As virtual summer internships kick-off, HERE to HERE would like to welcome our Summer 2020 interns LaToya, Ramatoulaye, Linda, Claribella, Brandon, and Nathalie, who will be supporting HERE to HERE's Policy & Impact, Operations, and The Thinkbuator teams. With our interns, we'll be pioneering a new HERE to HERE virtual summer experience. We look forward to learning together about how we can build increasingly flexible, engaging remote workspaces that set up young people for the next step in their career.

Highlighting 2020 Graduates



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT



BRANDON STERLING

FUTURE MENTAL HEALTH THERAPIST/
RESTAURANTEUR

"The advice I would give 9th grade Brandon is to try new things. I had a lot of opportunities to experience new things and meet new people and I just decided to stick to what I was comfortable with. Now I love stepping out of my comfort zone."

Brandon, a South Bronx Community Charter High School senior, joined HERE to HERE as an Operations intern in January and has returned to the Operations team for a summer internship. Since starting at HERE to HERE, Brandon has provided critical support for events like HERE to HERE's

inaugural Student Summit, helped manage the front desk and address staff needs, and ensured that management systems like Salesforce were up to date and running smoothly. Congratulations to Brandon and other graduated seniors!

Let's Go to Work

These past few months haven't been easy, yet in the face of mounting challenges HERE to HERE and its partners have uncovered opportunities: together, we've managed to adapt quickly, problem solve on the fly, and work to meet the immediate needs of our community. We're as strong-willed as we've always been, as fixed in our urgency to build a thriving, inclusive economy, but we're also increasingly more dexterous and more connected.

All of us at HERE to HERE are incredibly thankful for your continued partnership. We're so glad you're here with us, advocating for young people, investing in students, and energized to keep moving toward our shared goal: supporting young people in The Bronx and NYC to achieve lifelong career success. The road to equitable systems of work and learning won't be easy, but when we work together to unlock the talent of an entire generation, our community is stronger, our businesses benefit, and all of New York City thrives. The time is now to get to work.