



The Urban Assembly

Press Release

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Urban Assembly to Host Panel Discussion on Expanding Opportunity for Youth through Career Readiness, Internships, and Employment

New York, NY, (February 23, 2021) - Advocates and experts across NYC will join the Urban Assembly on March 3rd at 4pm EST for a panel discussion on expanding youth career readiness and employment opportunities at this vital time when young people need more support and access to workforce development. The conversation, which will be moderated by Rachael Arthur, Deputy Director of Career Readiness at the Urban Assembly, will feature Phillip Ellison, Manhattan Borough Advocate; Lazar Treschan, Vice President of Policy and Impact for Here to Here; Jorge Morales, Student Advocate with Project 14 24 and Teens Take Charge, and Estefany Carmona, Work-Based Learning Manager for the Urban Assembly. The event is open to the public. All are invited to register at bit.ly/youth-opp.

During this conversation, panelists will explore how career readiness and paid opportunities promote access and equity, as well as examining the ways in which City agencies and partners can connect young people to employment opportunities during the COVID crisis. Policy and budgeting around citywide initiatives like the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) will be at the center of this conversation, as well as ways in which community organizations, schools, families, and students can advocate to expand these programs.

“Career development opportunities are essential to the growth and development of our young people. This is the time to partner with community organizations and industry leaders to expand opportunities for young people across NYC and elsewhere,” states Urban Assembly CEO, David Adams. “ Internship and youth employment programs increase exposure to high-demand sectors and provide students with much needed mentorship, career guidance, and financial support.”

Programs like SYEP have long served NYC’s city’s youth by connecting them to opportunities to develop job skills and build experience while also earning income. Traditionally more than 75,000 NYC youth between the ages of 14 and 24 participate annually in SYEP. Due to the pandemic, the number of participants allowed to participate in SYEP was drastically reduced in 2020, despite virtual redesign efforts and advocacy from community based organizations,

students, school networks, and families across NYC. Many advocates believe that now, more than ever, we must adopt innovative approaches and expand virtual opportunities for youth employment in 2021.

Urban Assembly Senior Director of Postsecondary Success Lindsey Dixon asserts that we have to think about expanding programs like SYEP now more than ever. "With youth employment back at crisis levels, there is no better investment than the proven model of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which benefits young people, communities, and businesses alike. With outcomes like increasing graduation rates and economic mobility, and decreasing youth mortality, there's never been a more important time to invest in our young people, especially when young workers under 25 have been the hardest hit by COVID-related job loss," Dixon shares.

Students, families, and members from community-based organizations are especially welcomed to participate in this conversation. The public can register at bit.ly/youth-opp to attend. The panel discussion will begin at 4 PM EST.

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The Urban Assembly is a model provider of innovative school support services. For more than 20 years, the UA has been raising rates of achievement for public school students through support services that help school leaders and educators with data-focused and student-centered programming in academics, social-emotional learning, postsecondary access, and alumni success.

Founded in 1997, the UA created more than 20 small, career-themed middle and high schools in collaboration with the New York City Department of Education. Today the UA network includes 23 schools, serving 9,000 students, and 4,000 alumni. The Urban Assembly outperforms other schools in the system with higher English and math college readiness scores, a higher graduation rate, and more UA graduates enrolling in college within six months.

With the success of UA schools in NYC, the Urban Assembly is now a model provider of school support services, serving schools and districts in Los Angeles, Washington DC, New Jersey, Wisconsin, and Tennessee.