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## **Exclusive New Data Analysis Shows Black and Latinx Students in NYC Underrepresented in Creative Careers, Despite Projected Industry Growth and High Earning Potential**

*Black and Latinx students make up 76% of the students in city's arts-focused high schools, but less than 25% of students in its leading arts-focused colleges*

*Creative training programming provides valuable soft skills employers across industries look for; New York has the opportunity to encourage these skills in high schools and at CUNY*

**NEW YORK, NY** -- Today, HERE to HERE, CareerWise New York, Pathways to Creative Industries, The Thinkubator and DreamYard released a new report, "[Creative Career Pathways: Beyond STEM: Emphasizing the Arts in Career Pathways.](#)" revealing that Black and Hispanic workers are underrepresented in New York City's high-paying creative occupations, an exclusion that begins in high school. Through both quantitative and qualitative analysis, the report authors examined how Black and Hispanic low-income students are discouraged from pursuing creative careers, and how mentorship and internship opportunities for high school and CUNY students can close these gaps. The report was released in conjunction with the [Pathways to Prosperity NYC](#) campaign.

The report authors analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, New York State Department of Labor, American Community Surveys and conducted in-depth interviews with educators at DreamYard Arts Center and Lehman College, as well as Black and Hispanic students. Some of the report's major findings include:

- Black and Hispanic students make up the vast majority of arts-focused NYC high schools (76%), **but make up less than 25%** of students at the city's most well-known arts-focused colleges, like Parsons School of Design and Pratt
- Black workers make up 20% of New York City's workforce, but they make up **less than 10% of workers** in the fashion, creative goods and products, architecture and related services industry groups
- Black and Hispanic low-income students **report feeling discouraged** from pursuing creative occupations, as opposed to their white counterparts who may have more support exploring these paths
- Nine of the top ten creative occupations that pay more than \$50,000 a year are growing, in large part because these are **jobs and skill sets that aren't bound to one industry**, such as graphic design, web development and architecture

"Every young person in New York City deserves to pursue the skills and careers that interest them, and unfortunately from our conversations with students, that is not the case," said **Apurva**

**Mehrotra, report co-author and Vice President of Research and Analytics at HERE to HERE.** “Parents and educators may be concerned about the economic viability of creative paths, but our research indicates that creative skills, especially in visual arts, are in-demand in a range of high-paying industries. If young New Yorkers are given internship and mentorship opportunities starting in high school, it can help them launch into meaningful careers doing creative work they are passionate about.”

“In the cultural capital of the world, no young person should be discouraged or boxed out of creative career paths if that’s where their passion lies,” said **Dr. Joiselle Cunningham Smith, report co-author, CEO of Pathways to Creative Industries and Vice President at CareerWise New York.** “Many of these occupations and industries offer tremendous opportunity. Low-income and students of color should be empowered to explore their interest in these fields, and real-world work opportunities and investment in creative and arts programming can accomplish that.”

The report also indicates that creative career pathways could be especially meaningful for students from the Bronx, which has the lowest employment rate—among both adults and youth—in the city. The Bronx is widely regarded as a creative hub, where a range of cultures have made their imprint on the city through a variety of art forms and mix in very dynamic ways. Aligning meaningful career pathways to the creative interests that many young people in the Bronx possess can serve as an important gateway for all young people, and could particularly resonate with those who may otherwise face challenges in the transition from high school to postsecondary spaces and/or careers.

“I’ve been lucky enough to work with CareerWise, B.O.S.S, and AvancPCI. Without them, I probably wouldn’t have understood how the business world and my creativity coincide. I wish all youth could be doing that right now, it really helped me figure out what I want to study and what kind of career I want to take up. I was doing all of this when I was young, so it really helped shape me as I became a young adult,” said **Jayden Villanueva, a Senior at Fannie Lou Hamer High School in The Bronx.**

The report also includes a number of recommendations to City leaders, educators and creative industries on how to address this gap and ensure Black and Hispanic young people are able to explore creative careers, including:

- Increase messaging to students, teachers, and caregivers on the viability of creative careers,
- Provide opportunities for advising and mentorship from professionals of color in creative fields,
- Devote greater resources to support low-income young people in arts programming,
- Explore a Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) creative career pathway in New York City Department of Education high schools,
- Create more creative pathway linkages at CUNY, and
- Focus creative industry and pathway investment in the Bronx.

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### **About HERE to HERE**

HERE to HERE champions young people by working to redefine the systems that unfairly burden Black and Brown students as they pursue their career ambitions. We understand that the issues are complex and interrelated. That's why we create effective partnerships, prioritize the thoughts and opinions of young people, and mobilize people and organizations—demonstrating how our collective efforts to create a just and inclusive talent system will create lasting change. We believe the talent of young people fuels our economy and our world. How we reinvent these systems determines our future. For more information, visit <https://www.heretohere.org/>. HERE to HERE is a member of Pathways to Prosperity NYC.

### **About Pathways to Creative Industries**

Pathways to Creative Industries partners with designers, educators, business leaders fashion, music, & tech executives, to create greater access and opportunities in creative and STEAM fields. Learn more on [pathwaystocreativeindustries.com](http://pathwaystocreativeindustries.com).

### **About CareerWise New York**

CareerWise New York is a youth apprenticeship system based in New York City. CareerWise New York offers a three-year applied-learning environment for high school students and an innovative talent-acquisition strategy for businesses. With apprenticeship, students earn debt-free college credit and nationally-recognized industry certificates through their meaningful work experience in fields such as IT, financial services, and business operations...all while graduating on-time.

### **ABOUT PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY NYC**

*Pathways to Prosperity NYC: Building a Thriving, Inclusive Economy Powered By Our Students* is a public awareness campaign that brings together employers, schools, educators, young people and non-profits focused on improving racial equity and New York's talent pipeline by strengthening career pathways for young people across New York City. An effective youth talent development system must work for all students, contribute to employers' success, and benefit the regional economy. Our current system fails to do this, with young people of color disproportionately left behind. Through an integrated braided learning approach, educational institutions and employers share responsibility for talent development and students have multiple pathways to success. Learn more at [heretohere.org/Initiatives/Pathways-to-Prosperity-NYC/](https://heretohere.org/Initiatives/Pathways-to-Prosperity-NYC/).