For 18 months, our definition and approach to school has been challenged and reimagined thanks to the pandemic. The word “Zoom” certainly has a new meaning for all of us, and we have found ways to adapt and keep pushing forward.

Now, with schools and offices reopening in person in the fall, many of us have had to re-learn how to be in the company of others again (in fact, 12th graders are the only class in our high schools today to know what it is like to be in school, in-person, for a full year). But thanks to the hard work of our educators, parents, and students to get everyone back to school this year, we’ve again proven how resilient we all are—and reminded how great it is to be together again.

Returning to classrooms this fall doesn’t mean reverting back to the “old way” of doing things. As many of us know too well, the “old way” was working for far too few of our young people. Instead, we are taking the lessons learned over the past year-and-a-half to better braid learning from work and school, forge stronger partnerships between educators and employers, and create a thriving, inclusive economy powered by our students.

Now let’s get to work.

The HERE to HERE Team
We are thrilled to award $600,000 in grants through our Braided Pathways Fund to 15 New York City public high schools, CUNY institutions, and their community-based organization (CBO) partners that are committed to braiding work-based learning into students’ academic experiences.

With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation, the fund recognizes high-quality, existing programs as highlighted by the Key Distinguishers.

We created the Braided Pathways Fund to promote best practices by work-based learning practitioners, elevate exemplars of braided pathways, and mobilize all stakeholders to champion shared criteria to guide how to position NYC DOE and CUNY students for career success.

The response we received was overwhelming, with 76 institutions indicating they are ready to lead the way to a new talent development system that effectively braids learning from work into the classroom and creates equitable pathways to family-sustaining careers for all NYC youth beginning at least in high school.
The awards also mark the formation of a Community of Practice, a learning opportunity targeted to NYC-based high schools, CUNY institutions, and CBOs to share strategies to improve and expand work-based learning opportunities, benefit more students and employers, and help transform youth talent development overall.

A special thanks to our Review Committee—composed of nearly thirty practitioners, field experts, young people, and HERE to HERE staff members—for their careful review of each application!

We’re excited to collaborate with our grantees this year to codify best practices and share their lessons so the important work they’re doing can be replicated across the city!

Pathways to Prosperity NYC is getting attention

The Pathways to Prosperity NYC campaign has been under full swing the last few months, highlighting best practices of braided pathways at work across the City and continuing to make the case for centering NYC’s economic recovery on NYC students and investing in youth talent development strategies. Highlights include:
• **Crain’s New York Business** ran an article about our Bronx employer partners’ letter advocating for the next mayor to reimagine our youth talent development system. It features Johnson Security’s Jessica Johnson-Cope and DURO UAS’s Gabriel Foreman.

• **Gotham Gazette** ran an op-ed from Jessica Johnson-Cope and Naseem Haamid about the need to create more work-based learning opportunities in NYC.

• **THE CITY** featured the campaign and our partners DURO UAS’ Gabriel Foreman, Montefiore’s Dana Politis, and Montefiore intern and Hostos Community College student Francis Catalino-Rosario in a recent story about the current state of New York City’s economy

• **PIX11** featured Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School’s school-based SYEP program

• The **Brooklyn Daily Eagle** ran an op-ed from Arielle Seecham, a student who participated in PENCIL’s Career Explorers program. It’s a great example of the impact work-based learning can have in shaping interests and preparing students for college.

• **Inside City Hall** featured CUNY Chancellor Félix Matos Rodríguez talking about the important role CUNY plays in engaging young people in NYC’s economic recovery.

**Help us keep the momentum going** and showcase the amazing work you are doing to braid learning through work and school this fall! **Send student stories, partnership announcements, reports, op-eds, and more to Stephanie Ramirez at sramirez@heretohere.org.**
We joined our friends at Big Picture Learning for Big Bang 2021, where they served up a masterclass on how to make a virtual conference engaging and demonstrated work-based learning in action around the globe! Key moments included:

- **Elevating student career success** through inspiring panels (the Breakthrough session featuring Harbour Freight Fellows is a must-see),
- Showcasing the value of **place-based work** with an in-person Leaving to Learn at the Bronx’s own Black Joy Farm (a small but powerful community garden/urban farm that helps to serve the community and educate youth about agriculture, health, and farming),
- Reminding us to **make time for joy** while transforming our youth talent development system with an energetic Encore session featuring Stories With Sisters (with HERE to HERE Policy Advisor La’Toya Beecham) and a performance from drummer Anthony M. Anderson at Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School.

Altogether, it was a refreshing week that reminded us that an equitable and inclusive future for our young people is within our reach.
Our Work Based Learning Labs team is carrying the energy and spirit from Big Bang to HERE to HERE’s High School Network this fall with a deeper partnership with Big Picture Learning! With their support, we’ll bring extra knowledge and capacity to support our schools in **generating and fostering partnerships**, making sure schools have the **infrastructure and systems** to braid learning from work into the classroom, and use **data and student voice** to identify and celebrate opportunities and successes. Our High School Network is kicking off again this month, so keep an eye out for great insights and learnings in the near future. If you’re interested in partnering with us in this work, contact Brandon Slaughter at bslaughter@heretohere.org.

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**Emerging Leaders Hard at Work**

In close partnership with now four of the HERE to HERE Network Schools, the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) continues its effort to empower students to be agents of their own success! This summer 32 students spent 6 weeks earning high school **credit for paid work** through the Summer Youth Employment Program. Additionally, ELP partnered with My Money Workshop & Opportunity Network to help students to develop **in-demand professional skills**—including social impact & social media, financial literacy, and college and career readiness—and get a jump on fall college applications by drafting 650-word personal statements. The program culminated with student presentations to a panel of industry professionals from JP Morgan Chase, Shapiro Institute, the NYCDOE, Cambridge Associates, and others.

The work continues in the fall as ELP expands its **career exposure opportunities**, incorporating more programming on alternative career pathways, corporate sector pathways
(driven by student interest), community service projects, and experiential learning opportunities for ELP alumni, as well as more private sector partnerships. **To learn more about ELP, contact John Garibaldi at jgaribaldi@elpbx.org or Mariyamou Drammeh at mdrammeh@elpbx.org.**

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### Student Ambassadors as Advocates for Change

Join us in congratulating HERE to HERE Policy Intern and Student Ambassador La'Toya Beecham for being named to **City & State’s inaugural "The Community Engagement Power 50"** list! La'Toya was recognized for her incredible advocacy work last year to #SaveSYEP with **Teens Take Charge**, and we don't know anyone more deserving!

Speaking of Student Ambassadors, HERE to HERE will launch our third cohort in November! We’re excited to continue leading alongside our young people and schools, centering student voice and agency.

To learn more about our work centering youth voices, check out the wonderful **Student Ambassador Fellowship Program case study** written by **Equitable Futures**, a project of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This piece highlights the experiences of HERE to HERE Student Ambassadors and the pivotal role they played in steering the HERE to HERE vision of creating equitable work-based learning opportunities for young people in the Bronx and throughout New York City. It features many stories from our amazing student ambassadors over the years.
Like many of you, HERE to HERE recently hosted four interns virtually over six weeks, and our young people proved how they can still accomplish so much even in a virtual environment:

- Khadija K., who is entering Cornell University this fall, developed an Social-Emotional Learning Mentorship resource guide along with the framework for the creation of a Mental Health Club.
- Samra M., now a senior at Bronx Center for Science and Mathematics, created the foundation for an Alumni network, which will help connect students to continued WBL opportunities including training and jobs.
- Tahfimul L., studying Computer Science at Hunter College, designed employer, student, and school-facing surveys to help align efforts between stakeholders; and
- Saima M., who recently accepted a full time position at Success Academy, developed a mentorship guide with our Policy & Impact team to help ensure young people receive meaningful coaching and guidance from adults and employers.

We are incredibly grateful to have worked with such a wonderful group of young professionals and look forward to supporting them as they continue on their career journey! Watch our Annual Summer Internship Celebration.
Several informative reports and articles came out the last few months highlighting the challenges our young people are facing as a result of the pandemic, as well as strong solutions to invest in young people and support NYC’s economic recovery.

- The Robin Hood Foundation, in partnership with The Century Foundation, released a bold, exciting report about ways to tackle poverty in NYC, “From Crisis to Opportunity: Creating High-Quality, Inclusive, and Equitable Educational Experiences for All of New York City’s Students”.
- The Center for an Urban Future (CUF) issued a blueprint for New York City’s economic recovery, featuring concrete ideas from more than 175 New Yorkers (including many of you! We see you, Jessica Johnson-Cope, Liz Neumark, Eddie Summers, Marlene Cintron, Marjorie Parker, and many, many others!).
- Harvard Business Review recently featured Braven CEO and Founder Aimée Eubanks Davis in the article "How to Find a Strong First Job After College" discussing many topics we’re all enmeshed in daily, like social capital, economic mobility, and quality jobs.
- JobsFirstNYC issued a report, “1 in 4 Young Adults in New York City Were Out of School and Out of Work in 2020” assessing how the pandemic affected young adult New Yorkers in 2020.
- HERE to HERE joined leading education organizations from across the country as an #InvestForward collaborator. Check out 20+ shovel-ready strategies district leaders can use to maximize their stimulus money and improve higher education access and success.
In our own research, we’re finding that many New Yorkers, particularly Black and Latinx born in New York, are at a disadvantage in competing for high-wage jobs compared to US-born jobseekers from other states. Our latest report, “The Key for an Inclusive NYC Economy,” which features new labor market analysis, found that only 14% of NY residents employed in mid-high wage occupations are NY-born Blacks or Latinxs. However, labor market projections show that we have a chance to steer our policies in a new direction. By braiding learning from work and school, we can ensure that young people born and raised here have a chance to compete for good jobs.

The Kicker

CITY ARTIST CORPS POP-UP

Friday, October 8th, 5-8PM
Saturday, October 9th, 1-5PM
BDC Annex, 364 E. 151st St,
Bronx, NY 10455

Looking to do something fun this weekend that supports local artists? Check out the Bronx Documentary Center and their City Artist Corps Pop-Up show casing the work of NYC photographers, including HERE to HERE’s own Joshua Poyer.