

Annual Report: Workforce Training Program

State Submission Annual Reporting Period: October 2018 - September 2019

Executive Summary

Columbia University, via the Office of Government and Community Affairs (GCA), issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on September 14, 2017 to eligible not-for-profit organizations to support and maintain impact driven education and workforce development training programs for disconnected and at-risk youth in Northern Manhattan.

Disconnected and at-risk youth, as defined in the RFP, are 16-24 year olds who have not completed high school nor obtained a high school diploma or GED (TASC) equivalent degree. As of 2014, there were an estimated 5.5 million young people in the U.S. ages 16-24 who were not employed or in school. The special circumstances of these individuals may be those transitioning from welfare to work, with special needs, veterans, and/or formerly incarcerated.

After a stringent review process of all proposal received, a grant in the amount of \$75,000 was awarded to Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) in April 2018. This grant, approved by the proposal review committee for a period of one year, was awarded to support capacity building of Friends of Island Academy's youth-centered career readiness programming of the Youth Reentry Network.

In April 2019, the decision was made to renew the grant to Friends of Island Academy for one additional year and another payment of \$75,000 was awarded in June 2019. The decision to renew the grant was based on the FOIA's success with meeting the objectives set forth in the initial RFP response. The proposal review committee was satisfied with the progress made after one year and anticipate continuing to work with FOIA for the foreseeable future.

| Organization | Payment Date | Amount Awarded |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Friends of Island Academy | Apr-18 | \$75,000 |
| Friends of Island Academy | Jun-19 | \$75,000 |
| TOTAL TO DATE: | | \$150,000 |

Report from Friends of Island Academy (October 2018 - August 2019)

| Outcome Indicators | All participants | Local participants | Local % |
|--|------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Youth engaged | 135 | 38 | 28% |
| Enrolled in job readiness workshop | 104 | 25 | 24% |
| Completed job readiness workshop | 96 | 23 | 24% |
| Received professional attire | 34 | 9 | 26% |
| Participated in weekly job club | 60 | 22 | 37% |
| Placed in employment (total) | 88 | 26 | 30% |
| Placed in subsidized, transitional employment (aka internships) | 71 | 22 | 31% |
| Placed in unsubsidized employment | 41 | 12 | 29% |

Additional Supporting Documentation

- Friends of Island Academy Goals and Objectives

Friends of Island Academy: Goals and Objectives for Grant Period June 2019 - July 2020

During the second year of funding, we will continue to offer the Career Readiness program, which includes:

- Engagement
- Week-long job readiness workshop
- Placement in paid internships and permanent jobs
- Mentoring
- Retention follow-up

and propose to serve 50 young people in the identified local zip codes.

We will use the capacity-building funds to support outreach in the Grant and Manhattanville Houses and to develop a Credible Messenger component to our work.

The Credible Messenger approach “works from the inside out: justice involved/at-risk young people who have a higher risk of re-offending are matched with specially trained adults with relevant life experiences (often previously incarcerated, Returned Citizens) called Credible Messengers, who share their background. ... The Credible Messenger movement, (is) an innovative approach to restorative justice that relies on the unique relationships that Credible Messengers form with justice-involved youth, and others, to modify individual behavior and strengthen disadvantaged communities. Central to the approach, Credible Messengers are individuals who are able to connect with and motivate the most at-risk young people to successfully challenge and transform destructive thinking, attitudes and actions. “

- Credible Messenger Justice Center (<https://cmjcenter.org/approach/>)

We believe this will significantly increase our effectiveness. Our outreach efforts will be led by [REDACTED], a Violence Interrupter who has extensive experience as a Violence Interrupter in Queensbridge Houses and citywide. In addition, through his personal life experience [REDACTED] has a deep knowledge of the Grant and Manhattanville Houses and credibility in both projects,

We will engage consultants from the Credible Messenger Justice Center and/or other organizations doing this work in New York City to help us develop curriculum and to train our staff in the approach.

- Our Career Center will serve 50 people from the targeted zip codes;
- We will train our Career Center staff in the Credible Messenger approach;
- We will develop a Credible Messenger curriculum for work with young people in our Career Center;
- 10 young people will complete the Credible Messenger training in this first year

Specifically, as noted above, we will:

- Conduct targeted outreach in Grant and Manhattanville houses;
 - Offer four week long job readiness workshops at the CB9 offices on Old Broadway or another location in the immediate area;
 - Offer Credible Messenger training to young people from Grant and Manhattanville Houses
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