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NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM HONORED BY FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Student Historian Internship Program is recognized for positive youth development

New York, NY – Earlier today, First Lady Michelle Obama presented Louise Mirrer, president and CEO of the New-York Historical Society, and Jonathan Brown, a senior at Frederick Douglass Academy in New York City, with a 2012 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. They received the award on behalf of the New-York Historical Society for its [Student Historian Internship Program](#), which was recognized for its effectiveness in developing learning and life skills in young people by engaging them in the arts and humanities.

Brown, 17, began the New-York Historical Society's Student Historian program in July 2011 and now serves as a Teen Leader and peer mentor for this year's Student Historians. This comprehensive internship and youth development program provides high school students with vocational and academic training, public speaking and leadership skills, and an increased understanding of American art and history. Project highlights include conducting research on the collections, creating review materials to help students prepare for the Regents U.S. History exam, and producing original tours of the museum for teens and adults.

Chosen from a pool of more than 350 nominations and 50 finalists, New-York Historical's Student Historian Internship Program was one of 12 after-school and out-of-school programs across the country to receive the award, which is the highest honor such programs can receive in the United States. The awards are administered by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH), in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The award honors community-based arts and humanities programs that make a marked difference in the lives of their participants by improving academic scores and graduation rates, enhancing life skills, helping participants develop positive relationships with peers and adults, and encouraging creative expression. Louis Vuitton is the corporate sponsor of the 2012 award program, and Fox Audience Strategy is the national media sponsor.

"In spite of all the challenges and obstacles our young people face, in spite of all their fears and doubts, you teach them to make art anyway," said Mrs. Obama addressing the awardees. "You teach them that no matter what life throws their way, if they draw on their own talent, creativity and courage...if they're persistent and tenacious and bold...then they can truly make something extraordinary out of their lives."

"The Student Historian Program has allowed me to become a more proficient researcher, an analyzer of historical data, a museum educator, a tour guide, and appreciator of the institution,"

said Brown. “Additionally, I have expanded my group of peers and friends from more than just those of my neighborhood and school. I feel more aware of other cultures and values, which has allowed me to develop into a better person.”

The New-York Historical Society’s Student Historian Internship program was created to introduce research, analysis, and interpretation skills to young historians. Through the examination of primary sources such as maps, photographs, and newspapers, and studying material culture such as works of art, furniture, and tools, students develop independent views of history. The powerful impact of the program is illustrated by the fact that since 2009, 100 percent of New-York Historical Society Student Historians have gone on to four-year colleges.

The award was celebrated by a number of its long-time partners and supporters, including Rick Smith, the President of **The Pinkerton Foundation**. “The New-York Historical Society’s Student Internship Program offers a diverse group of New York City high school students the opportunity to do the work of historians in a real-world setting,” said Smith. “Thanks to the internship program, these young people learn the skills they will need to succeed in school, work, and life.”

In addition to the national recognition bestowed by receipt of the prestigious award, New-York Historical will also receive \$10,000 to support its programming and engage more young people from the community.

“We hope this award will draw attention to the documented fact that programs like ours are essential investments not just in the lives of our young people, but in our community, as well,” said Louise Mirrer, president and CEO of the New-York Historical Society. “We’re incredibly proud of this achievement and of the young people, volunteers, supporters, board, and staff who made it possible.”

The National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award recognizes and supports outstanding programs that lay new pathways to creativity, expression, and achievement outside of the regular school day. These programs excite and engage a range of students, cultivating imagination, collaboration, discipline, and academic success, with demonstrable results. They also provide safe harbors after school, on weekends and evenings for children and youth in some of our country’s most at-risk urban and rural settings. For more information, visit www.pcah.gov.

For more information about the New-York Historical Society’s education programs, please visit www.nyhistory.org/education.