

# THE PINKERTON PAPERS

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## Bridging the Gap Between School and Work

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*Introduction by* RICK SMITH

SUPPORTING CAREER internships has long been at the heart of The Pinkerton Foundation’s mission to help level the playing field for young New Yorkers. After all, internships build self-confidence, workplace skills, and personal networks as well as an appreciation for time management, teamwork and communication. Anyone who doubts their importance need only watch well-to-do parents scramble to find—and often pay for—early work experiences for their teenagers. To provide this first step on the career ladder to those who need it most, Pinkerton supports high-quality workplace internships—all either paid or offering academic credit—to 5,000 young New Yorkers from disadvantaged backgrounds each year.

We are proud of that commitment—but determined to do more. That’s why, when we began talking with Lucy Friedman about joining the foundation as a Visiting Fellow, we asked her to take a look at the city’s biggest youth employment project—the Summer Youth Employment Program or SYEP. The founding president of The After-School Corporation, now Expanded Schools, Lucy is an expert on out-of-school-time education and an overall world-class thinker. In discussions with Lucy and Laurie Dien, Pinkerton’s Vice President/Executive Director for Programs, we saw an opportunity to come up with a set of recommendations for transforming SYEP from a minimally ambitious jobs program into a truly robust, content-rich learning experience.

We got more than we bargained for. As Lucy began looking into SYEP and the 70,000 jobs it supports in a non-pandemic year, she began to think bigger. She not only saw a need to add career exposure sessions, mentoring and workplace skills training to the summer program, but the opportunity to go really big. As she argues in the pages that follow, work-based learning for every single New York City high school student is an idea whose time has come—again. Neuroscience research on the power of hands-on learning, the stellar performance of existing CTE schools (Career and Technical Education), and the urgent needs of the new economy all support the wisdom of strengthening the link between the classroom and the workplace. What’s more, a number of job-training programs run by community-based

organizations around the city are delivering skilled and credentialed graduates today—and offer models for much larger internship programs in the future.

Lucy proposes a three-tiered program starting with a career exposure course, followed by work on a well-supervised project and concluding with a well-structured paid internship. Anticipating criticism that the proposal will cost too much, she notes that the financial platform already exists—in the roughly \$500 million in federal, state, city and nonprofit spending currently supporting youth employment and training. And to those who worry that work-based learning will discourage students from going to college, she argues that CTE graduates are more likely to pursue college degrees than regular graduates and that seeing the connection between school and work will motivate even more to pursue higher education.

The obstacles are considerable. Dispelling longstanding prejudices against “vocational education” will require a significant cultural shift on the part of educators, political leaders and parents. Internship sites must be expanded dramatically. Employers will need to be enlisted and persuaded that the interns will be worth the effort. And, yes, it won’t be easy to redirect funds or raise new money to support the new programs.

The events of 2020 have created new challenges, but also a new sense of urgency. While current unemployment is painfully high, employers in the city reported facing severe shortages of skilled workers before COVID-19, and they expect to see similar shortfalls when the pandemic subsides. The economy will not fully recover until the supply of qualified workers meets the demand. Looking ahead, the new commitment to racial

*“Employers will need to be enlisted and persuaded that the interns will be worth the effort.”*

justice fueled by the death of George Floyd and others at the hands of the police offers a source of hope. The heightened awareness among business and industry of the need to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce is both noteworthy and long overdue, but the movement will be immensely more important if it is tied to the realization that true justice requires us to provide all the city's young people with the tools to shape meaningful and productive lives and careers.

In the pages that follow, Lucy details the case for introducing universal work-based learning in the city's high schools and offers a step-by-step action plan to make it happen. A companion piece looks at nine community-based internship programs that are already changing the lives and economic futures of their participants.

As with all Pinkerton Papers, we welcome your comments and further contributions to a continuing discussion. To share your thoughts, please visit [www.thepinkertonfoundation.org](http://www.thepinkertonfoundation.org)

RICK SMITH  
*President & CEO*



## Job#1: Bridging the Gap Between School and Work

SOMETHING IMPORTANT is missing in many New York City high schools: a strong and visible connection between what students learn in school and the employment opportunities that will fuel their economic future. That disconnect can lead to poor academic performance or, worse yet, disengagement. The result is that we risk losing the energy, intelligence, and creativity young people could and should bring to the lives of their communities.

Fortunately, we can take steps to bridge the gap between school and work. And we can do so in ways that recognize that all young people can benefit from work experience whether they plan to go to college, pursue a credential or career, go to work—or, as is increasingly the case, some combination. Our proposed strategy, which we offer for discussion, calls for the development of a three-tiered, work-based learning initiative that would be available to every New York City high school student.

Under our proposal, high school students would begin the sequence in their first or second years with a course that would expose them to an array of career and workforce opportunities. In the second phase, students would participate in a skill-building service or business learning project under the direct supervision of a teacher and a community educator. The projects might include anything from organizing an art fair or creating a social media presence for a restaurant to analyzing calls to 311 from their neighborhoods. But each project would be designed to instill important workplace skills: e.g. how to work well in teams, how to carefully follow instructions, and when and how to seek advice and ask questions. The initiative

would culminate in a paid, well-supervised and well-supported internship that would include both specialized skills training and at least 150 hours of work at minimum wage. The internships, which could be in government, nonprofit organizations or the private sector, would take place either during the school year or the summers between the school years. The benefits from all phases of the initiative would be amplified if high school teachers integrated work-based learning with classroom academics and helped students reflect on their internship experiences.

**Why now?** Several developments make this a particularly opportune time to introduce a universal work-based learning initiative:

- 1) The pandemic and civil unrest of spring 2020 laid bare racial inequities and accelerated the job market's readiness to embrace young and diverse workers. Despite the economic upheaval, many jobs remain unfilled. New York City businesses continue to report that attracting and retaining talent is a challenge, and many are seeking new talent pipelines. But job readiness remains a challenge. The gap—in hard and soft skills—is real, and with job requirements changing at warp speed, too few people have transferrable work skills that prepare them for jobs that have yet to be created.
- 2) Career and Technical Education (CTE) schools have shown the way. Emerging evidence suggests that CTE schools have higher graduation and college-going rates than traditional comprehensive high schools. Students in CTE schools see purpose in their classes and, according to student focus groups, are much more likely to perceive their teachers as interested in their future careers than students in regular schools.
- 3) Recent advances in neuroscience have provided increasing evidence that students learn best through direct, deep experience in a meaningful activity. These findings have spurred a growing interest in CTE and apprenticeships at the national, state and local levels.
- 4) Proven work-based learning models already exist in programs run by nonprofit youth organizations throughout the city. These programs—profiled later in this report—have shown that they can successfully engage young people, prepare them with critical thinking, communication and job-specific skills, and place them productively in paid internships.

**The Basic Foundation Exists:** Much of the scaffolding for a work-based learning initiative—and even some of the funding—is already in place. More than 70,000 of the 328,000 public high school students are taking a broad range of career and technical education courses, e.g. fashion design, pharmacy technician, or accounting. Despite the financial constraints resulting from the pandemic, the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is expected to

employ 70,000 young people in the summer of 2021. SYEP could provide a platform for the internship program and, in fact, has been piloting new school-based models that deepen the connections between summer jobs, schoolwork and career preparedness.

Throughout the city, champions of work-based learning have emerged in business, city government, the school system and City University of New York (CUNY). Together they have developed CareerReadyNYC – an initiative committed to preparing young people, starting in middle school, to be successful in the world of work. Apprenticeships, too, are getting renewed attention, with several exciting demonstrations underway. And twenty-seven CEOs of New York’s largest companies have created a new organization to coordinate with educational institutions to ensure New Yorkers have the skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow. At the state level, the Board of Regents is reevaluating high school graduation requirements, recently offering students the option of substituting a set of career preparation activities for one Regent exam.

**Can the Initiative Work?** Is it feasible to provide every student with both work-based learning and a paid internship? To turn this vision into reality, it will require unprecedented collaboration, but above all, there needs to be a significant culture shift. For too long, work-based education has been a

disadvantaged stepchild, taking a back seat to traditional classroom learning. The city needs to take the lead in raising the status of work-based education, perhaps by holding principals accountable for their work-based learning programs. Without diminishing the emphasis on high-quality academics, educators, students, employers, funders and parents also need to be persuaded that work-based programs can lead to a better college experience and a satisfying,

well-compensated career. Parents, in particular, need to be convinced that their daughter or son will be more successful after graduation if they have a structured exposure to careers while attending high school.

Employers pose a similar challenge. They will need to be convinced that the internship program will be worth their effort. Above all, they must come to believe that students will arrive well-prepared, be supported by the adults implementing the program and perform meaningful work. In time, employers may find other tangible benefits, such as using the program to provide junior employees with supervisory experience. For their part, city agencies and nonprofit organizations must be encouraged to explore the boundaries of existing resources, tap into new funding streams and work more collaboratively with each other. Philanthropy

can also play a critical role at all levels by helping to support new models and strengthening the connective tissue that needs to grow between the constituents.

One of the more concrete challenges will be to dramatically increase the number of internships open to high school students. The initial targets are likely to be in the city’s growing industries—technology, health care, and green jobs—where the demand for employees is the highest. For other businesses, modest financial incentives may be required. One possibility is to consider a company’s level of commitment to expanding internship positions when awarding city contracts or giving tax relief. Despite displaying limited interest in the past, the public sector has room to grow in putting well-trained students to work in government offices and facilities, hospitals, and cultural institutions. Indeed, we can easily imagine students working to help with voter registration, environmental surveys and clean-ups, advising peers on college applications, and helping the elderly fill out rent forms, just to name a few.

**What Will It Cost?** The proposed initiative will not be inexpensive, but a surprising array of resources are already in place. SYEP alone has a budget of roughly \$130 million a year, while the annual investment in CTE exceeds \$200 million. When all federal, state and city funding is combined with spending by non-profits and community-based organizations for high school work-based learning programs, the annual amount is close to \$500 million. Our estimate is that \$465 million would allow every high school student in the city to participate in a course in career awareness, project-based learning and a paid internship. Almost half—close to \$200 million—is already supporting similar activities. Since the initiative would not start with all 500 high schools, the current financial base would be more than enough to support extensive pilot projects or geographic subsets while the city regains its economic footing.

**Next steps:** The first priority is to gather stakeholders from government, business, education and nonprofit organizations to discuss how to make the work-based learning transformation a reality. A new or existing public/private partnership is a likely outcome, but in any case, an entity will be needed to help coordinate among employers, the city, schools, community groups, existing intermediaries, the philanthropic community, parents and students. Its functions could include data collection and analysis, setting standards, providing quality control and advocating for policy change. It could also coordinate with other organizations that would take the lead in identifying internships and building the capacity of nonprofits, schools and employers to match, prepare and support students. In the meantime, all stakeholders can help build the momentum for change by strengthening existing work-based learning programs to allow more young people to participate in career exploration, training and internships. The initiative could be implemented in one borough or one school network on a trial basis. Alternatively, the framework might be introduced one grade at a time starting in 9th grade on a district or borough-wide basis.

*“Is it feasible to provide every student with both work-based learning and a paid internship?”*



CAREER EDUCATION IS an idea whose time has come—again. Some will argue that work-based learning will divert young people from pursuing a college degree. Quite the contrary: Nothing in the proposed initiative would prevent,

*“Nothing in the proposed initiative would prevent, foreclose or discourage any student from going to college.”*

foreclose or discourage any student from going to college. Indeed, middle class families arrange for or even pay for internships for their teens in the belief that it will strengthen their college applications and begin to build their networks. Our goal is to ensure that young people from every community have equitable access to choice-filled and productive lives and that early decisions do not preclude later options. To do this will require nothing less than reimagining and redesigning the traditional education, summer jobs and

youth workforce fields. But the effort is worth it: to offer every New York City high school graduate, whether college-bound now, in the future or not at all, the opportunity to develop the skills and confidence to succeed in careers that exist today—and ones that they can’t yet imagine.



### **An Action Plan for Bridging the Gap**

**T**HE GOAL OF BRIDGING the Gap is to offer every NYC high school student a three-step program that would prepare them for productive work and meaningful careers. Early in high school, students would take an in-school course, or Career Lab, focusing on career awareness and exploration (Tier 1); followed by a project-based learning activity to build teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills (Tier 2); and culminating in a paid internship in the public, private or nonprofit sectors (Tier 3). At the school level, to ensure quality and minimize the burden on teachers and principals, the program at each school would be under the direction of a work-based learning coordinator. At the system level, a deputy mayor or deputy chancellor invested with the authority and resources to organize and oversee the work of the public agencies and to coordinate with the nonprofit and the employer community would be critical to the successful implementation of this plan.

**Here’s how the program could be implemented:**

**Strengthen New York City’s work-based learning field.** To develop a high-quality work-based learning system,

we need to build the capacity of private, public and non-profit employers, principals, teachers, school-based work coordinators and community educators. Fortunately, several organizations are already engaged in aspects of this work, including CareerReadyNYC, City University of New York (CUNY), NYC Department of Education (DOE), Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), ExpandedED Schools, Futures and Options, HERE to HERE, Jobs for the Future, New Visions, OppNet, and PENCIL. Together, these organizations and others should develop the capacity to:

- 1) Prepare teachers to deliver the career awareness/exploration course and related activities—interest inventories, expert panels, workplace site visits and the like. The training would build on existing curricula such as Career Fluency, Career Essentials, and Possible Futures. It could also offer guidance on helping students navigate Hats and Ladders, Xello and other online learning tools.
- 2) Deliver professional development and in-service coaching to teachers and community educators on how to facilitate quality service-based learning projects. Of particular importance will be the ability of teachers to weave work-based learning into academics and help students reflect on and process their work experiences.
- 3) Provide the training, tools, and resources to schools, community-based organizations (CBOs), employers and public agencies (DOE) to effectively collaborate in designing quality internships and then match, prepare and support students and employers in those internships.
- 4) Develop protocols and outreach materials to help schools and CBOs engage and encourage parents to embrace work-based learning as a critical component in their child’s education.

**Roll-out Career Lab and Project-based Learning.** As the initial steps in preparing for successful internships, the Career Lab and project-based learning would be developed and introduced as pilot programs at selected high schools. DOE, DYCD and CareerReadyNYC would work in partnership to design the components. These partners would also establish the criteria for selecting the schools, districts or networks to launch the roll-out as well as the protocols for choosing teachers, curriculum, trainers and community counterparts. In Year 1, the Career Lab would be introduced in up to 50 schools. In Year 2, the pilot schools would add project-based learning and another cohort of schools would introduce Career Lab. The first steps:

- 1) **Tier 1 - Career Labs:** At the outset, the plan for the Tier 1 roll-out would identify the participating schools and teachers and designate time frames for implemen-

tation and evaluation. It would also establish the range of choices for principals: e.g. in the 9th or 10th grade; the balance between instructional hours and field work; for academic credit or not; and the structure of the curriculum, teacher training and quality assurance.

- 2) **Tier 2 - Project-based Learning:** Open only to students who had completed the Career Lab, these projects could be delivered by teachers, CBO educators or co-facilitated by teachers and community educators in 10th or 11th grade or in the summer in between. DYCD would be consulted on how best to incorporate the Younger Youth SYEP option into this component. Decisions would be needed about how many hours to require and how to schedule and select teachers, community educators, curricula and trainers. Projects could offer academic credit, stipends or both.
- 3) **Tier 3 - Internships:** In Years 1 and 2, the infrastructure for a high-quality internship program would be constructed. The planning would involve the expansion of existing internships and the creation of additional programs. (See below.)

#### **Increase the number—and quality—of paid internships.**

Data show that high school students benefit from internships, particularly when they see the connection between the job and what they are learning in school. This is true for students whether they are headed directly to college, a post-secondary credential or beginning a career. To ensure that internships meet their potential, we need to:

- 1) Revamp and revitalize the Summer Youth Employment Program. SYEP has built a strong foundation with 75,000 young people participating in 2019. The uncertainty caused by the pandemic and related fiscal constraints forced a reduction to 35,000 virtual internships in 2020, but the program is expected to return to the 70,000 level in summer 2021, thanks in part to the effective advocacy of young people. Several changes could transform SYEP into a more robust and productive internship program: limiting or eliminating the employment lottery; matching student interests to worksite placements; increasing per-participant spending to cover additional training and support for interns and employers; reducing unnecessary paperwork; streamlining compliance protocols; and offering an opportunity to reflect on the work experience as part of school.
- 2) Increase municipal government placements from the 6,000 DYCD/SYEP slots in 2019. New York City has a strong vested interest in better preparing students for college and careers and in creating pathways to civil service. Publicly funded childcare, educational services and parks are excellent settings for high school interns. The public employee unions, particularly DC

37, would need to be enlisted to partner in this effort. The city's cultural institutions (museums, zoos and botanical gardens) are also excellent work sites for high school students—and many of those institutions have acknowledged that they would benefit from welcoming a more diverse workforce.

- 3) Develop strategies to place students in private sector positions that match their interests. Consider distinct approaches for large and small companies. Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of placements in various industries: food, health, technology, green jobs, retail, finance, business, law, entrepreneurship, real estate, advanced manufacturing etc.
- 4) Launch a fundraising campaign to underwrite additional slots in existing high-quality programs. Rather than starting new initiatives, many effective internship programs could support more placements if they had the resources. Philanthropic dollars could be pooled to create challenge grants to stimulate additional private and public investment in internships.
- 5) Develop plans to ensure that all students have internship opportunities including those who are without stable homes, justice-involved, in foster care, English Language Learners or have special needs.

**Create a strong public/private partnership.** The ultimate goal of the partnership would be to reinvent the youth

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talent development process and integrate work-based learning into a student's academic journey. If successful, the new system would align NYC's high schools, CUNY and employers with the overall economic development needs of the region. Many components are already in place, but roles and responsibilities are fragmented. The result is the duplication of some functions and the absence of others. The partnership would be staffed by an entity that could work with existing intermediaries—CareerReadyNYC, Expanded Schools, Grant Associates, The Partnership for New York City, The New York Jobs CEO Council, HERE to HERE, Industry Partners, JobsFirstNYC, NYCETC, UNH, WPTI and YDI, among others. HERE to HERE, with its commitment to career success for NYC public school and CUNY students

and ties to leading employers, is a potential intermediary, but whoever is chosen, the coordinating body will play a critical role. Through convening, contracting, or its own activities, the partnership would be responsible for keeping the project moving and carrying out a long list of action items. The partnership's staff would:

- 1) Build a data collection and quality assurance system and establish common baseline metrics.
- 2) Develop criteria for best practices and identify the essential elements in high-quality work-based learning programs. Over time, it might create a Good House-keeping-style seal of approval as a guide for schools, community-based organizations, post-secondary programs, and employers.
- 3) Create processes that help convert best practices into common practice, emphasizing, among other things, the integration of work-related learning with classroom academics and the importance of engaging students in reflecting on their work experiences.
- 4) Develop a computerized system for matching student interests, skills and geographic constraints with employer needs.
- 5) Mobilize private sector employers to offer more paid internships. This campaign should be led by the Mayor and start with a core of CEO champions. The newly formed New York CEO Jobs Council might well be the right vehicle.
- 6) Organize students through Teens Take Charge and other student voice groups to advocate for universal work-based learning. A parallel effort to organize parents would complement the student campaign.
- 7) Mount a communications campaign to persuade educators, students, parents, employers, unions and political leaders of the value of work-based learning. This would include organizing and participating in conferences and town halls, developing an active social media presence, and writing op-ed columns.
- 8) Create and execute a policy agenda for advancing work-based learning in public education. Early action items might include: expanding the use of Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS), an alternative to one Regent which requires career exploration and work experience; encouraging the Regents Commission on Graduation to introduce more flexibility into graduation requirements; making principals accountable for including career readiness opportunities in a school's Comprehensive Education Plan and adding career readiness activities to student data files. The policy group might also explore whether the city could offer tax relief or incentives to companies

that hire interns. These incentives could apply to all companies doing business in NYC or just those that contract with the city.

- 9) Identify funding sources to underwrite work-based learning. Possible new sources: Federal stimulus funds; Title XX for teacher training; Americorps to cover partial wages; Federal programs such as Youth CareerConnect and industry specific funds, e.g. NOAA, US Fish and Wildlife Service and NSF. Additional funding could come from expanding the boundaries of existing programs and redeploying resources. Reducing SYEP paperwork, for example, would free up funds for preparation and supervision. And if the new programs proved to reduce high school drop-out rates, Out-of-School Out-of-Work funding could be redirected to school-based learning activities. Foundations would, of course, be encouraged to increase their commitment to work-readiness programs and/or open new funding streams. To the extent that private employers cover student wages, the costs to the public coffers will be reduced.
- 10) Work with schools of education to introduce work-based learning into the curriculum for high school teachers and principals.

**Get Organized—Now.** Each action item deserves thoughtful review and discussion. Some will take longer to implement than others, and new insights—particularly from students—will be added along the way. The most important message of this proposal is that it is time to get started. This is the moment to begin building a consensus around the value of work-based learning for the future of our young people and the future of our city—and to begin taking concrete steps to make work-based learning programs a reality. New systems that braid education and employment will hasten the city's recovery while creating a thriving and more inclusive economy.

To drive the agenda forward the public/private partnership will require a dynamic leader committed to the vision and an equally dedicated governing board representing the corporate, labor, civic, education, workforce and philanthropic sectors, as well as parents and students.

**Let the discussions—and the work—begin.**

*“Develop a computerized system for matching student interests, skills and geographic constraints with employer needs.”*

# MAKING INTERNSHIPS WORK: NINE PIONEERS

*While work-based learning won't reach its full potential until brought to scale throughout the New York City Public Schools, several pioneering nonprofit organizations are proving that forging a link between education and employment pays off for young people, employers and the city. In the process, these well-structured programs are contributing to a growing consensus about what makes a successful internship experience—namely, thoughtful training, meaningful work, exposure to active professionals, ongoing mentoring and support and either cash compensation or academic credit. There are, of course, other pioneers in the field, but the programs below are prime examples of how to make internships work.*

*Profiles were researched and written by Morgan Daniels*

## The Brooklyn Museum

**T**he Museum Apprenticeship program is the oldest and longest running teen program at the Brooklyn Museum.

Each year fifteen apprentices from NYC high schools provide program assistance and create original curricular experiences for museum visitors. The teens are supervised by the museum's education staff, with oversight from museum curators.

First-time interns are paid minimum wage; returning apprentices earn \$16 an hour. After successfully completing the first November-August session, students may be invited to join the next cohort as a Senior Museum Apprentice. All training and activities take place at the museum. Apprentices are expected to work one evening during the week, every Saturday and Sunday afternoon, and occasionally through the week for popup events. Students can work up to 222 hours a year.

The program aims to strengthen essential workplace skills. In addition to communication, teamwork and time management, supervisors emphasize educating the ap-

prentices so that they can educate others.

The students assist with weekly Family Art Magic workshops, work in the Creativity Lab and provide support for other events.

Eventually they lead tours on their own and create lesson plans for museum visitors of all ages. Their most challenging responsibility is teaching up to 900 campers ages 4-18 during a six-week summer program.

By integrating work-readiness training with the exposure to the museum's staff and collections, the program supports both the career and educational goals of the participants. Apprentices meet with curators to learn about the exhibits they'll be helping to share with other high school students and the general public. Under the guidance of the museum's education staff, the students also learn about museum operations, child development, and how to research objects and exhibit themes. These tasks not only prepare students for their responsibilities as apprentices, but also complement their studies back in the classroom and potentially shape post-secondary choices.

## CareerWise New York

**L**unched in 2019, CareerWise New York is a collaborative venture between CareerWise Colorado and HERE to HERE, a Bronx-based nonprofit dedicated to enhancing career opportunities for residents of low-income neighborhoods. Borrowing methods from widely praised Swiss apprenticeship models, its three-year program for NYC high school students started with 86 apprenticeships in three career tracks: information technology, financial services, and business operations. The positions are paid, and apprentices are employees of their host companies. The model offers opportunities for apprentices to earn college credit in related instruction through a partnership with CUNY. Apprentices can also earn nationally accredited certifications in project management and other fields. CareerWise is currently working with the NYS Department of Labor to register the apprenticeships. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, 80 percent of the initial cohort completed their first-year apprenticeships.

Prospective apprentices are drawn from a list of participating high schools and apply directly to companies through the Hiring Hub, an online portal available to CareerWise partner schools, employers and students. Through the portal, students create an online profile, upload their resumes, and view available apprenticeship opportunities. CareerWise has a host of online resources to help students create an effective profile, craft a professional resume, and prepare for successful interviews. It also offers a quiz to help students determine their career interests and assess their skills. Companies review student applications and hire apprentices

who they feel would be a good fit; there are no forced placements. While this means that some students may not get a position, the process ensures a high-quality placement with meaningful work. Partner companies include JP Morgan Chase, Mastercard, EY, Accenture, and Amazon.

Apprentices split their time between the classroom and the workplace. As the program progresses, they spend more time at work than in classes. In the second half of the three-year apprenticeship, students are eligible to take college classes based on their personal goals, interests and academic readiness. The classes are free to the apprentice, and as a result, they can earn college credits debt-free before they've even begun their higher education. Apprentices are paid roughly \$15 an hour to start. Each occupation is accompanied by a competency rubric that is designed by industry, and supervisors use it as a roadmap for training the apprentice and selecting project assignments. The expectation is that at the end of the three years, the apprentice will achieve mastery in the competencies tied to their chosen occupation.

Before placing apprentices CareerWise works with partner organizations to ensure they are equipped to manage the students effectively. Throughout the program CareerWise acts as a helpful intermediary between the students and their employers. It works with both parties to ensure that all academic and professional duties are fulfilled. Designated supervisors monitor apprentices throughout. All participants are encouraged to take what they've learned in the workplace back into the classroom and to graduate on time.



## Cristo Rey Brooklyn

**C**risto Rey Brooklyn High School is a Catholic high school that educates students of limited economic means and all religions to become people of faith, purpose, and service. The hallmark of the school is a unique work-study program in which all students spend one day a week doing paid work for participating employers. By offering the work-study experience, a rigorous curriculum, and the support of an inclusive school community, it prepares students to succeed in college and beyond. Cristo Rey Brooklyn is a member of the 37-member national Cristo Rey Network. Starting with an initial class of 43 students in 2008, the school today enrolls about 300 young men and women.

The majority of Cristo Rey students come from the most marginalized neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens. 100 percent of its students are young people of color, predominantly African-American, Caribbean-American, and Hispanic. Each family pays some tuition; contributions average slightly more than \$1,300 per year. No family pays more than \$2,500, significantly below the cost of their schooling. The difference is offset partially by student wages and the rest from fundraising.

The unique Corporate Work Study Program gives students the opportunity to earn up to 50% of the cost of their education. Equally important, they gain valuable experience in the real world. Cristo Rey students are motivated to finish high school, enter and complete college, and join the workforce as

productive citizens. The students work at 100 businesses including: American Express, Brooklyn Hospital, Morgan Stanley, Blackstone, Brooklyn Law School, and Paul Weiss. Younger students provide these companies with needed services such as filing, copying, data entry, and reception duty. In later years, they are enlisted to conduct more advanced research, special projects and analysis.

Before beginning their first job placement, incoming freshmen are required to attend an intensive three-to-four week “Business Boot Camp” to prepare them for their professional roles. During their placement, the Work-Study Office at the school maintains an active connection with corporate supervisors to ensure that students are adequately supported and that business needs are met. Each marking period, partner supervisors are required to submit a performance evaluation that provides students with consistent and long-term professional feedback. This evaluation forms a part of a student’s final grade, highlighting to students the importance of the links between education, professional performance and long-term success.

Since its initial 2012 graduating class, Cristo Rey Brooklyn has graduated 500 students and achieved a 100 percent college acceptance rate, with nearly all those students receiving full financial support from at least one four-year college. The college persistence and graduation rate of its alumni exceeds the rate of other students from the same socioeconomic cohort.

## ExpandedED Schools

**E**xpandedED Options, an initiative of ExpandedED Schools, boasts an innovative program structure that provides skills training that earns academic credit and leads directly to paid summer work. In the 2019-2020 academic year, more than 200 students from 30 schools participated in the program. ExpandedED Options has served more than 1,700 young people since its inception in 2012.

Prospective interns apply through an online portal. Applicants must be 16 or over and enrolled in a partner school to be eligible. If selected, participants undertake an apprenticeship at one of ExpandedED's partner organizations. The partners are: Beam Center; City Parks Foundation; Education Video Center; Henry Street Settlement; Mentoring in Medicine; NYSCI; NYU Tandon School of Engineering; Studio Institute and Sylvia Center. Together these organizations cover an array of professional fields and offer training in sports and recreation, STEM, new media arts, urban agriculture, culinary arts, and financial literacy. The apprenticeships are overseen by teachers and are credit bearing. Paid summer work is guaranteed to all who successfully complete the training. In the Spring, apprentices meet at their designated organization weekdays after school or on weekends, depending on the type of work. Apprentices learn both the fundamentals of their chosen field, and how to teach and effectively communicate that knowledge to younger students. Learning is hands-on and project based, allowing apprentices to

master specific subject matter and gain practical experience.

The Options program emphasizes work-readiness training throughout. Though the career tracks vary, every program incorporates the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) standards. Under CDOS, students first explore a range of careers, learn about the world of work, and begin to consider their personal aptitudes and skills and how they relate to future careers. Second, they engage in integrated learning, in which participants synthesize academic knowledge and skills with the workplace and other real-world scenarios. Third, students focus on "universal foundation skills," in which participants demonstrate their mastery of basic skills—such as leadership, collaboration and problem-solving—required to be successful in the workplace.

Summer interns work 25 hours a week and are paid \$15 an hour. The internship lasts six weeks, and training begins in late June. Students are placed in summer camps around the city and teach their chosen field to young people in elementary and middle school. In addition to providing meaningful pay, the teaching component solidifies their learning, provides real-world experience and establishes professional connections. Adults at the summer camps act as supervisors, and apprenticeship partner organizations stay on as mentors, bringing participants together and completing site visits to ensure summer interns are supported adequately.

## Futures and Options

**S**ince 1995, the Futures and Options Internship Program has connected more than 7,000 New York City high school students to engaging career development workshops and paid, mentored internships at over 500 nonprofits, government agencies, and for-profit businesses.

Futures and Options interns are primarily students of color from low-income households who attend under-resourced schools. (Annually about 95 percent of Futures and Options students identify as non-white, and about 75 percent come from low-income families.) Prospective interns may apply through an open application process, or through referrals from partnering nonprofits and schools. Interested students complete an online application and are then invited to in-person interviews with the Futures and Options team. Students are accepted to the program based on their ability to meet program expectations and potential for growth. They are then matched to a potential employer based on their skills, interests, schedules, and geographic variables. Students interview with their potential internship supervisor who makes the final hiring decision.

The Futures and Options Business Engagement Team recruits employers interested in supporting a young person through an early work experience. Together they develop a job description for the student's role. The intern is expected to contribute meaningfully to the organization and be held accountable like any paid employee. Internships are available in a variety of industries across the city. In FY2020, 753 Futures and Options interns worked at 319 employers representing professional and business services, healthcare, financial services, social services, arts and culture, community development, communications, fashion, media and entertainment, and technology. Intern respon-

sibilities vary, but can include administrative tasks, presentation preparation, data analysis, proofing and editing, data entry, and calendar management, among others. The internships are monitored closely by the Futures and Options Program Team, who regularly check in with both the supervisor and intern to provide support and ensure a successful experience.

Interns must participate in three two-hour orientation and work-readiness trainings with Futures and Options prior to starting their internships, as well as six two-hour career development workshops during their employment. Orientation sessions focus on proper business demeanor, attire, interviewing, resume writing, and computer skills. At the work-readiness workshops, interns discuss interpersonal situations, practice communication, problem solving, and teamwork, and learn how to network and create personal budgets. The workshops also offer opportunities for interns to discuss their successes and challenges at work, and to receive peer and staff feedback. At least one workshop is a career exploration field trip that includes an office tour, a career panel featuring the hosts' employees, and an industry-focused activity.

The internships are not credit bearing but all interns are paid at least minimum wage, typically for 150 hours of work. Foundation, school, nonprofit, and government partners, as well as the internship employers, contribute to cover the interns' pay and Futures and Options program services.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, all Futures and Options applicant interviews and career development workshops are being hosted virtually. The overwhelming majority of internship opportunities are also remote, with interns and their supervisors connecting via phone, email, and video meetings.

## NYSCI (New York Hall of Science)

**C**reated in 1986, the Science Career Ladder is an education and employment program at the NYSCI. Since its inception it has served more than 4,000 young people. The program hires New York City high school and college students to act as ‘explainers’ on the museum floor. As part of their training, the Explainers learn to interact with hands-on exhibits, facilitate workshops, and perform scientific demonstrations. They are also required to attend a series of professional and career development sessions. On the job, Explainers are customer service representatives, welcoming school groups and visitors of all ages and presiding over the museum’s exhibits, the Design Lab, and Preschool Place.

Candidates must be enrolled in high school or college in New York City. Eighty-five percent of Explainers are young people of color, with the cohort skewing slightly female. Prospective Explainers apply online via the Hall of Science website application portal, which is open three times a year. The volume of applications received is high, and candidates are encouraged to reapply if they are not successful the first time. The museum looks for students who demonstrate a genuine interest in science, technology, engineering and math, as well as good communication and interpersonal skills.

Explainers complete a three-day orientation at NYSCI. The program requires a

one-year commitment, including working through summer vacation. Hours vary depending on the students’ ages. High school students are expected to work at least five hours a week. College students can work up to 20 hours a week, including both weekday and weekend shifts. While the program is not credit bearing, Explainers are paid for their time. Since they must learn scientific concepts and explain them in live demonstrations, the program bolsters professional and career-related skills and gives participants a leg up in science classes when they return to school. In fact, of the 95 percent of all Explainers who go to college, 70 percent declare STEM majors.

Regular workshops include content on communication, teaching, science topics and exhibits, as well as providing professional development and career opportunities through field trips, networking events and STEM nights. During STEM nights students meet with science professionals and learn about education and internship opportunities. The workshops are specifically designed to keep Explainers and other local youth updated on an array of STEM career options. Field trips range from visits to research labs and technology companies, to food industry vendors and financial service companies. The workshops also support the college application process and retention.

## Opportunity Network

**F**or the last fifteen years, Opportunity Network (OppNet) has been on a mission to reimagine career networks and redress structural injustices in college access and professional mobility. Empowering historically underrepresented students through its six-year Fellows Program, OppNet has evolved from originally serving ten students to 1,000 this school year. Diversity is an essential component in the program's model, with 60 percent of interns identifying as female and 70 percent as Black or Latinx; 90 percent are the first in their family to graduate from college.

OppNet Fellows are recruited in the 10th grade and complete a paid internship, as well as attend enrichment programs, for the next five summers. Students apply online via the OppNet website. New Fellows are matched to partner organizations to meet skill needs specified by the partners. OppNet also pre-trains future interns if technical and/or specific skills are required. During following summers, Fellows are exposed to a multitude of industries and professional experiences, creating robust career

networks and a wealth of work experience. Partner organizations include PR firms, Fortune 500 companies, venture capital firms, consultancies, fashion houses, political campaigns, film companies, theaters and non-profit programs. Beyond simply matching talented interns to appropriate employers, OppNet coaches its partners on how to welcome and retain this diverse workforce.

In addition to organizing the annual paid internships, the Fellows Program is integrated with OppNet's Career Fluency curriculum, which provides students with the skills and strategies for college and professional advancement. The content is spread out over the five summers and includes individualized college advice, essay writing, budgeting, college tours, meetings with industry executives, networking opportunities, SAT/ACT prep, job search coaching and salary negotiation. The personal attention does not end when the Fellows move on to college. OppNet staff make campus visits and regularly call first-year students to track personal, academic and career progress.

## PENCIL

**F**rom its beginnings in 1995, PENCIL has worked to raise awareness of public education by creating opportunities for civic and business leaders to engage with New York City public schools. PENCIL now operates several programs—including internships for 500 young people—designed to fulfill its mission of connecting students to success.

The PENCIL internship program is primarily funded by DYCD's Ladders for Leaders Initiative. Prospective interns are NYC public school students, ages 16-22, who are chosen through a competitive online application process. Actively recruited by PENCIL through high schools in its network, students must have a 3.0 GPA and previous work or volunteer experience. Seventy-four percent of participants are low-income; the majority are students of color. While open to college students, junior and senior high schoolers are given priority in the admission process. More than 4,000 students apply each year, over 1,000 are invited to PENCIL pre-internship training, and about 500 young people are offered slots.

Internships are not credit bearing but are paid at minimum wage. Students must complete at least 20 hours of pre-employment training prior to embarking on their paid internship. The training covers crucial life and workplace skills such as financial literacy, office technology, networking, personal

branding, interview skills and professionalism. Sessions are interactive, and students receive one-to-one feedback from a PENCIL staff member. After the training, PENCIL sends student resumes to organizations which have expressed an interest in hosting an intern and works with both parties to schedule an interview. The host organization is ultimately responsible for the hiring decision, having submitted a job description and desired qualifications to PENCIL prior to interaction with any candidates. The internship covers 150 hours over six weeks, typically from June until August. Interns are placed in a variety of businesses and non-profit organizations, startups and governmental agencies. PENCIL routinely recruits business partners from outside of its network to respond to student interests. PENCIL staff members support interns through onsite visits, coaching and mentoring.

PENCIL's Summer 2020 Internship Program played out in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, but it still managed to place over 350 students in paid work experiences—total wages: \$300,000—

while connecting more than 400 to virtual career panels and other programming. PENCIL's internship program included direct virtual placements at 75 companies and additional simulated placements with authentic workplace challenges through its Career Explorers program.

## The STEAM Center at Brooklyn Navy Yard

**T**he STEAM Center at Brooklyn Navy Yard offers technical and career training and industry-specific work experience to 11th and 12th grade students from eight participating New York City high schools. The Center is located in the heart of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where over 400 businesses including media, technology, food and manufacturing companies operate and train students onsite. Students apply to the Center and are selected by their individual high schools. The schools continue to provide their traditional academic education while the students receive technical training in one of five potential career tracks: computer design/I.T., design and engineering, construction technology, culinary arts and hospitality, and film and media. Students complete work placements in their field of study at the Navy Yard or in other local businesses. The program also provides work shadowing and networking opportunities.

Students come to the Center from George Westinghouse High School, Benjamin Banneker Academy, Bedford Academy High School, High School for Global Citizenship, Science Skills Center High School for Science, Technology & the Creative Arts, STAR Early College

High School at Erasmus, Boys and Girls High School, and Medgar Evers College Preparatory High School. There is no grade point average or testing requirement for admission. The Center's student body is diverse: 93 percent are Black or Latinx, and 74 percent are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Students are monitored throughout the program with ongoing check-ins, during their time at the Center and any work placements.

Training is given onsite at the Center's state-of-the-art industrial installation at the Navy Yard before students embark on work placements and shadowing opportunities. The students divide their time equally between the Center and their academic high school. The Center teaches what it calls 21st Century success skills, focusing on cultural workplace practices such as time management, interview skills, office communications and effective collaboration. The STEAM Center model provides its graduates with an immediate next step to further employment or education by arming students with an industry-ready portfolio of work, at least one industry-recognized credential, a network of professional contacts, specific technical skills, and meaningful, real-world work experience.