

# 2019 SNAPSHOT

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### OVERVIEW

New York City is the largest school system in the nation, serving 1.1 million students from five boroughs, including the Bronx. In the southernmost tip of the Bronx, known as the South Bronx, more than four in 10 residents do not have a high school diploma, 23 percent of young people are out of school and out of work, and half of those who are employed are working in low-paying jobs.<sup>1</sup> A multi-faceted community revitalization is under way in the South Bronx to improve outcomes for residents, including an investment from JPMorgan Chase & Co. targeting career preparation for youths.<sup>2</sup> In 2017, JPMorgan Chase invested \$6 million as part of the New Skills for Youth initiative to address equity gaps and to strengthen and expand workforce development systems for both in-school and out-of-school youths in the South Bronx. The work focused on strategies designed to:

- Support intermediaries in industries vital to the New York City economy (health care; information technology; and transportation, distribution and logistics) to increase employer engagement and support school- and system-level capacity and career pathway development;
- Support the development of a high-quality data system to measure and track the expansion of services and opportunities for work-based learning, internships, and community-based efforts that match young people to career pathways; and
- Build a new sustainable apprenticeship model that will lead to more registered apprenticeship opportunities in the South Bronx in transportation, distribution and logistics.<sup>3</sup>

### JPMORGAN CHASE NEW SKILLS FOR YOUTH INITIATIVE

Launched in 2016, New Skills for Youth<sup>4</sup> is a \$75 million, five-year global initiative aimed at transforming how cities and states ensure that young people are career ready. The overarching goals of the initiative are to:

- Dramatically increase the number of students who successfully complete career pathways that begin in secondary school and culminate in postsecondary degrees or credentials tied to high-wage, high-demand jobs; and
- Catalyze transformational approaches to the design and delivery of programs and policies to increase students' career readiness and disseminate lessons learned around the world.

This snapshot is part of a series documenting the progress of the local investments from across the globe that aim to identify and implement the most promising ideas in career education, with a special focus on communities with the greatest needs.

# THE SOUTH BRONX INITIATIVES


There are four New Skills for Youth investments in the South Bronx:

- Consortium for Worker Education (CWE) New York Alliance for Transport and Logistics Advancement Services Initiative (NYATLAS);
- New York Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (NYACH) Ready for Healthcare Initiative;
- New Visions for Public Schools Data Infrastructure for South Bronx Initiative; and
- Per Scholas Designing Transformative Tech Career Pathways in South Bronx Initiative.

Each initiative has its own set of goals, yet all four are collectively working toward broader systemic change. Grantees meet quarterly to share updates, brainstorm ideas for addressing challenges and discuss levers for systems change. Additionally, grantees are being invited to connect with other local and state coalitions to leverage their work and raise the discourse on related issues (e.g., incentivizing career readiness in high school graduation requirements, funding work-based learning activities). An overview of the components and lessons learned for each initiative are below, along with ways the grantees are helping each other to forward the work in the South Bronx.

## CWE NYATLAS

CWE is a private, non-profit agency that provides a wide array of workforce preparation, industry-specific training and employment services to 60,000 New Yorkers a year.<sup>5</sup> CWE also serves as the workforce development arm of the New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, whose affiliated unions represent more than 1.2 million workers in the metropolitan region. The New Skills for Youth invest-



**“The key to this is not leading with ‘no,’ and instead finding innovative ways to make this work.”**  
—*District Leader*

ment is providing CWE with an opportunity to expand ideas cultivated with adult populations to a youth demographic. Specifically, CWE is building a permanent, sustainable intermediary to connect young people — in and out of school — in the Bronx with opportunities in the transportation and logistics sector, with the goal of expanding city-wide in coming years. The NYATLAS initiative is a partnership of CWE, the New York City Department of Education, City University of New York (CUNY), and labor and youth service groups. It is designed to:

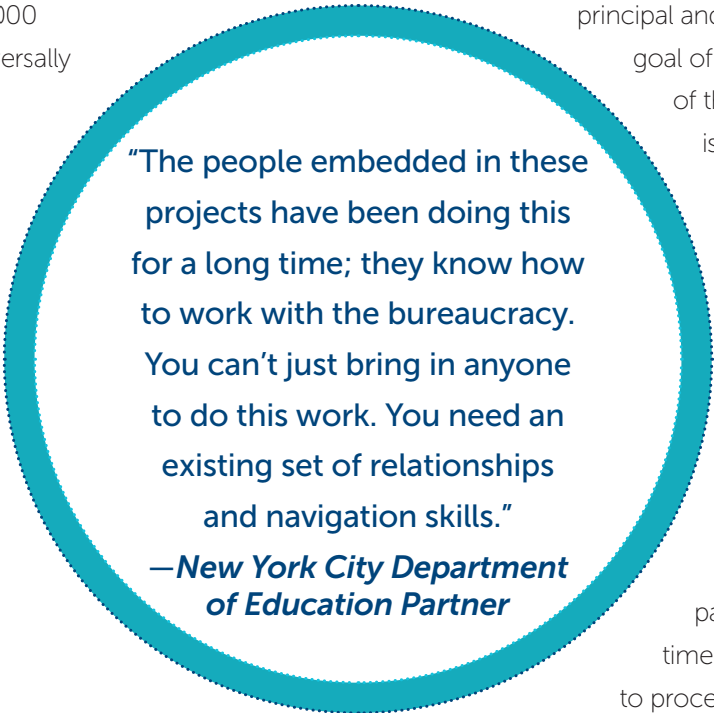
- Expand the capacity, employer base and job pathways of the New York State Department of Labor-registered New York Mechanic’s Apprenticeship Program (NYMAP);
- Enhance employer engagement to identify in-demand occupations in the transportation sector, develop relevant training and credential courses and implement subsequent job placement and retention activities;
- Deepen the programmatic partnership among CWE, sector employers, and the New York City Department of Education Career and Technical Education Division to drive industry awareness, job-specific curricula and activities into Bronx-based Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, 11th and 12th grade classes, separation prevention programs, and select Bronx-based youth service providers; and
- Recruit, train, place and track emerging South Bronx-based young adults in full-time careers with signatory employers.

To give a sense of scope of the transportation and logistics sector, CWE estimates that the New York City metropolitan area has 50,000-60,000 jobs in the public transportation

sector alone, which includes 1,000 entry-level jobs that almost universally have a career ladder attached. CWE is halfway through the three-year implementation timeline for its New Skills for Youth investment and initially has focused on building a strong foundation with partners and launching the programs.

On the partner front, CWE has focused extensively on building relationships and navigating how to work with bureaucracies:

- **New York City Department of Education.** From the outset, CWE set a goal to establish a relationship with the New York City Department of Education and has since positioned itself as a known and trusted entity. Establishing viability as a program with the New York City Department of Education was a bigger lift than anticipated because it was a new bureaucracy to navigate for CWE, requiring a substantial amount of one-on-one time to establish relationships. This accomplishment was important for CWE, given the goal of expanding the career pathway models from the South Bronx neighborhood to the entire city.
- **High schools.** Navigating high schools has been a challenge, but there have been early successes in building trust — for example, the relationship with the Alfred E. Smith CTE High School, which offers the only automotive CTE program in the Bronx. CWE has worked to learn the ins and outs of becoming a known entity in the school by helping stakeholders understand the postsecondary options available to students and the requirements for entry into the profession. CWE focused on building one-on-one relationships — getting to know the principal, the assistant



**“The people embedded in these projects have been doing this for a long time; they know how to work with the bureaucracy. You can’t just bring in anyone to do this work. You need an existing set of relationships and navigation skills.”**  
—**New York City Department of Education Partner**

principal and individual teachers — with a goal of becoming a permanent part of the school’s landscape. CWE is also connecting the dots for school officials to help them better understand industry requirements. For example, early on in the implementation, CWE learned that many high schools students did not have a driver’s license, which is an entry-level requirement in the transportation career pathway. CWE spent significant time navigating various solutions to proceed with the planned program objectives for the initiative. To date, CWE has successfully helped approximately 450 students obtain a driver’s license.

- **Postsecondary institutions.** Navigating postsecondary education has also been a challenge. Whenever possible, CWE is trying to include postsecondary exposure for students. Meeting this goal requires negotiating contracts with CUNY and other postsecondary partners that provide training onsite and also negotiating college credits for students participating in the apprenticeship. Contract negotiations were ultimately successful but were more time consuming than anticipated, requiring CWE to learn the ins and outs of the postsecondary bureaucracy and to build in more time in the future for these negotiations.
- **Other partners.** Strong relationships with local Bronx community-based organizations have been helpful in launching programs such as SoBro, which aids in recruitment efforts and training. CWE also has leveraged its long-standing industry partners, such as the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, UPS, Ryder and Pence, to offer apprenticeships.

# NYATLAS PROGRAM TRACKS



## Program Tracks

### Minimum Program Requirements

- Must be 18 years or older
- High School Diploma or GED Equivalency
- Valid Clean Drivers License
- An ability and desire to work with your hands
- Ability to communicate in English
- Read and write at or above 9th grade level, basic mathematics connected to industry
- Must be comfortable standing for extended periods of time, and able to lift 30 pounds
- Employment in this field universally requires drug screening by employers

Source: Consortium for Worker Education

CWE has made tremendous progress in developing and launching training programs such as NYMAP, which takes three years to complete; the 80-hour auto technician track, which takes approximately four weeks to complete; and the commercial driver's license track, which takes approximately 10 to 14 weeks to complete. CWE has registered the programs with the appropriate government agencies, negotiated credits and credentials across secondary and postsecondary partners, and developed and launched a web portal for NYATLAS to recruit and support students.<sup>6</sup> CWE points to early success in that half of the new recruits are female – a demographic that is often under-represented in the transportation field.

For NYMAP, CWE partnered with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers to create a new diesel engine mechanics apprenticeship program, the first of its kind in New York in 30 years. The first class of apprentices have become full journey-level workers at New York logistics corporations, and the program is recruiting new young workers and companies to participate. NYMAP is now working with its second cadre of students. The commercial driver's license program is already training its third cadre of students.

Looking forward, CWE is exploring offering an externship for teachers, as well as a pre-apprentice program, in partnership with the New York City Department of Education.

## NYACH Ready for Healthcare Initiative

NYACH is an industry partnership at the New York City Department of Small Business Services focused on building an effective, integrated and accessible health care workforce development ecosystem in New York City.<sup>7</sup> To meet this goal, NYACH convenes employers and health care leaders to identify workforce needs and trends, helps education and training organizations adapt their approach to better meet those needs, and builds accessible onramps and community pipelines to ensure that low-income and unemployed New Yorkers have access to viable career pathways in health care. NYACH is supported by the New York City Workforce Funders and JPMorgan Chase. NYACH accomplishes its work through a partner's council, as well as advisory groups organized by sub-sectors including hospital/acute care, primary/ambulatory care and long-term services and supports.

A cornerstone of NYACH's work in recent years is the design of the Core Competencies for Today's Healthcare Workforce, a set of foundational, cross-functional competencies identified by employers and industry leaders as essential for working in today's redesigned health care system. NYACH worked with the New York City Department of Education to redesign and update the Healthcare Core Curriculum — a requirement for all New York City Department of Education health care CTE students — to be aligned with the Core Competencies. The redesigned curriculum is currently in use at 13 CTE programs across the city. This work with CTE schools served as the foundation for NYACH's New Skills for Youth initiative, which focuses on expanding and improving work-based learning opportunities in CTE high schools by:

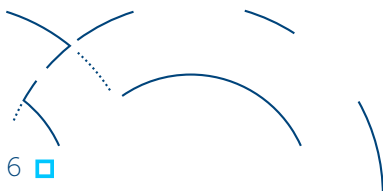
- Convening an advisory council of health care employers to identify challenges and opportunities in working with high school students;
- Developing employer- and educator-informed solutions and models to expand career exploration and work-based learning; and

- Working in partnership with education, employer and youth development partners to launch the solutions in a staggered fashion, allowing for real-time feedback loops between program years.

Structured and meaningful exposure and on-the-job competency building through work-based learning experiences are critical in preparing young people for careers and higher education in health care and in building a pipeline of qualified health care workers who are prepared for employment in the evolving health care industry. NYACH is examining the intersections of the K-12 system, postsecondary education and the health care sector to carve out work-based learning opportunities for high school students. NYACH is at the mid-point of its three-year timeline for the New Skills for Youth initiative and to date has made significant progress on all three goals, particularly the first two: convening the advisory council and developing an employer-informed work-based learning model.

NYACH convened an advisory council of health care employers to identify the challenges in working with high school students in health care settings. Industry partners included Northwell Health, Mount Sinai Health System, Maimonides Medical Center, Housing Works Community Healthcare, Montefiore Medical Center, Community Care of Brooklyn PPS, NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, The New Jewish Home, Greater New York Hospital Association, Union Health Center and Visiting Nurse Service of New York. Challenges identified by the advisory council fall into four main categories:

- **Legal restrictions.** For students under 18, legal restrictions include using certain equipment, a cap on working hours and handling blood.
- **Collective bargaining agreements and scope of work for union title employees.**
- **Liability and risk management related to patient safety and satisfaction.** There are liability and risk management challenges and concerns when dealing with students, such as a less developed sense of judgment, a lack of professionalism, no margin of error for clinical or administrative errors and patient perception and discomfort.



- **Capacity constraints.** Limited staff are available to supervise and develop meaningful experiences, physical space is limited and there are competing priorities (e.g., college interns).

NYACH worked with the advisory council to craft a work-based learning model of cohesive experiences with increasing intensity for students that addresses the challenges of working with high school-age youth in the health care industry while still providing meaningful experiences for both the learner and employer. The council included members with extensive experience in providing high school students work-based learning experiences in health care settings. Working with health care employers to craft solutions based on need was familiar territory for NYACH. But working with high schools has not historically been a focus of NYACH's work. NYACH saw the CTE system as a good onramp for the work-based learning model but at the outset had to navigate how to help schools fine-tune objectives and structures around work-based learning experiences for high school students.

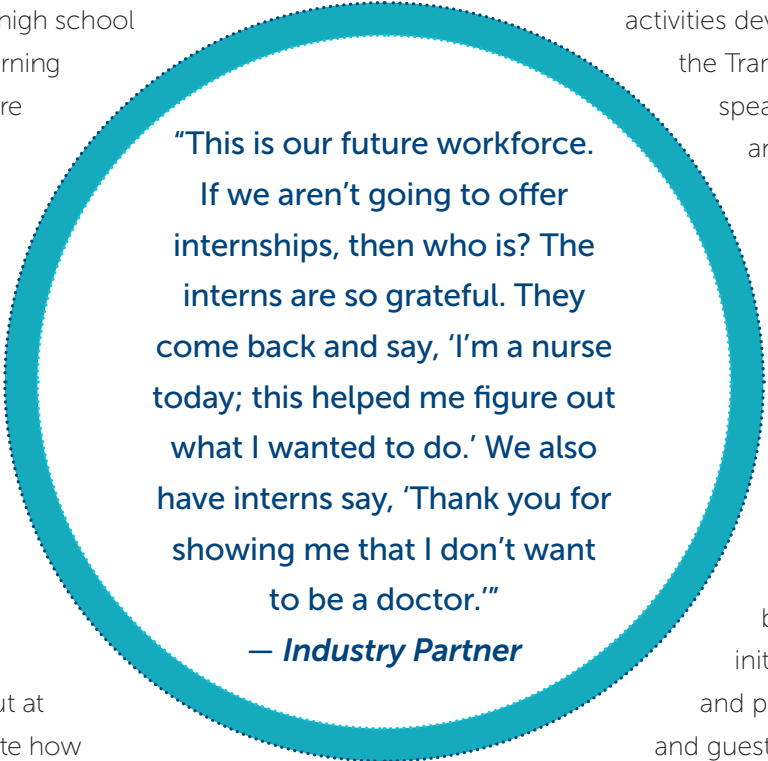
NYACH is using a scaled approach to roll out the work-based learning continuum, launching each progressive stage of the model independently over a two-year time-span. The first stage of the model provides students in health care career pathways with the redesigned Healthcare Core Curriculum aligned to NYACH's Core Competencies, which were discussed earlier. Launched in 2017, the curriculum covers Core Competencies topics, such as new models of care and health care trends; working in interdisciplinary teams; the importance of person-centeredness and communication; chronic disease and social determinants

of health; cultural competence; ethics and professional boundaries; and health information technology, documentation and confidentiality. These topics address the challenges and concerns identified by the advisory council and better align school-based learning with current changes in the health care industry workforce.

Stage two of the work-based learning model, which launched in 2018, focuses on career exposure through a diverse menu of experiences designed for seamless employer participation and aligned to emerging occupations and anticipated growth. The exposure activities developed with employers include the Transformation of Healthcare guest speaker series, the Not Just Nurses and Doctors Career Expo event, the Defining Your Career Goals mentorship program and Care Delivery Environments employer site visits. NYACH has received positive feedback from student and employer participants about the guest speaker series, in particular. Using the associated work-based learning toolkit being developed as part of this initiative, students review materials and prepare questions in advance, and guest speakers are given guidelines about what to share with students. Participants point to the value of building understanding of the wide range of medical careers beyond the traditional nurse and doctor jobs that are familiar to most students.

Stage three of the work-based learning model, which launched in spring 2019, focuses on internship experiences designed to develop professional skills. Finally, stage four, which is set to launch in fall 2019, will hone technical skills through a more advanced internship aligned with the clinical hour requirements for medical assistants and certified nursing assistants.

NYACH is piloting the model in four schools, one of which is in the Bronx. The goal is to start small and strong,



determine whether the work-based learning model works for employers, and then expand it so that it becomes the new norm for students in health care career pathways throughout the city. NYACH also is working with employer partners to develop a toolkit for teachers, students and employers that spans the full work-based learning sequence. The toolkit is currently being tested and refined based on stakeholder feedback.

### ***New Visions for Public Schools Data Infrastructure for South Bronx Initiative***

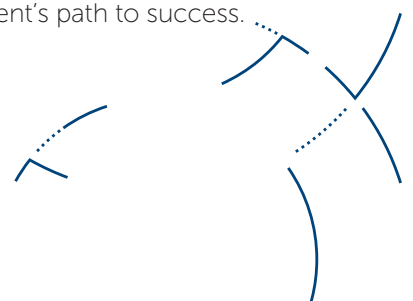
New Visions for Public Schools is a non-profit school support intermediary organization serving more than 350 schools throughout New York City.<sup>8</sup> New Visions has been a driving force for improvement in New York City's public education system for three decades. Graduation rates in New Visions' core network of 70 New York City Department of Education public high schools and 10 New Visions public charter schools surpassed 84 percent in 2018, dramatic improvement at scale in a system that had a graduation rate of less than 50 percent citywide barely two decades ago.<sup>9</sup> To achieve these gains, New Visions applies a systems-building approach to four core areas: establishing shared infrastructure, equipping teachers and leaders, cultivating school communities and developing systems for success.

A cornerstone of New Visions' efforts to improve graduation rates is to modernize a shared data infrastructure. The existing system-wide infrastructure limits the ability of school staff to incorporate timely and accurate information into a wide range of decisions and reduces the leverage that school and district leaders have in coordinating and influencing activities system-wide. The New Visions Data Portal, a full-stack web application designed and built in house, represents new thinking about the type of modern tools that educators should be able to access to inform and support decisions. As graduation rates have improved among the schools using the data portal, New Visions has expanded its focus to students' postsecondary success, including career exposure and preparation during high school. The New Skills for Youth investment is helping New Visions for Public Schools by:

- Supporting the design, development and implementation of data portal features to manage the assignment and progress monitoring of South Bronx students participating in career skill-building activities provided by industry partners, including defining key career readiness milestones and experiences that should be universal;
- Identifying New Visions schools to pilot career readiness features, including helping schools identify which of their students meet performance criteria for participation in workforce development activities; and
- Developing data dashboards that provide a comprehensive overview of student participation, attendance and milestone completion to share with program partners to inform discussions of program performance and refinement.

New Visions is halfway through the implementation timeline of its New Skills for Youth initiative and to date has made progress on all three goals. The end result of the data infrastructure development will be a more resilient system that shifts postsecondary planning and preparation from the often-solitary work of a counselor or adviser to structured, shared work that is consistent across schools.

To identify career readiness measures that can be monitored in the data portal, New Visions used an approach it developed as part of its focus on improving high school graduation rates: working with students, educators and workforce experts to identify a set of high-leverage decisions and milestones on the path to career readiness; using spreadsheet tools to rapidly build and test light-weight prototypes with real users; and incorporating the most essential elements into the more robust and scalable infrastructure of the data portal. In the early stages of design, the focus is on identifying an ambitious but manageable set of milestones and experiences that students should have and developing tools that capture student progress in ways that empower school staff and workforce partners by providing them critical information to support decisions about each student's path to success.





A central piece of this work has been leveraging existing credentialing systems, including Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS), a graduation credential recognized by the New York State Board of Regents showing that a student has the knowledge and skills necessary for entry-level employment.<sup>10</sup> The hook for school users is simplifying the process for monitoring student progress toward the CDOS requirements. Schools must maintain an ongoing record of student skills related to CDOS learning standards and a career plan, but currently the approach and tools to support those tasked with maintaining these records are generally left to each school. Building common infrastructure, such as the New Visions Data Portal, lifts a burden from individual schools, while simultaneously reinforcing more structured, shared ways of managing student progress.

New Visions is partnering with 12 transfer high schools that are currently developing career pathways as pilot schools in the development phase of the career readiness portal. New Visions also has supported the three other intermediaries working on South Bronx initiatives to navigate the range of challenges that can arise in partnership efforts with schools.

### ***Per Scholas Designing Transformative Tech Career Pathways in South Bronx Initiative***

Per Scholas is a national non-profit that provides rigorous, tuition-free training and professional development to help unemployed or under-employed adults move into careers as technology professionals, creating onramps to businesses in need of their talents. While the work with adults has been impactful, the organization wanted to explore ways to help ensure that learners receive



**"All of the incentives are there for schools to pay attention to academics, but the incentives are not there on the career side. Career pieces need to be as visible as academic pieces."  
—Intermediary Partner**

support before becoming adults. The New Skills for Youth investment is providing Per Scholas with an opportunity to expand on ideas cultivated with adults to design employer-informed, work-based learning curriculum modules that will be used in high schools to expose students to careers in technology. Per Scholas plans to:

- Design three to five simulated work-based learning curriculum modules that will be employer informed and aligned to current and predicted entry-level tech skills across a variety of employment sectors.
- Pilot the curriculum modules in three to five Bronx high schools to assess impact on the school's overall technical and career programming, as well as students' postsecondary plans. The pilot sample size is 125 students and six to 10 teachers.
- Disseminate the work-based learning curriculum modules to other high schools and to key stakeholders to inform tech and career readiness in high school, as well as highlight an innovative approach to scale work-based learning.

Per Scholas is only at the mid-point of the first year of the initiative, so progress and lessons learned are limited in scope in comparison to the other South Bronx initiatives. To date, Per Scholas has engaged a range of employer partners to identify the topics for the modules based on in-demand and predicted future tech careers. So far the identified topics include information technology support, cloud networking, cybersecurity and software engineering. Per Scholas also has engaged with employer partners to identify entry-level skills and tasks to construct simulated tasks that teachers can execute in their classroom. Each module will consist of (1) a narrative from the person in the field; (2) context about the particular company, the team, roles and responsibilities; (3) a task with

lessons and an assessment; and (4) information about career pathways. Per Scholas is also developing a summer externship for teachers who will be facilitating the curriculum modules. The externship will take teachers to worksites so they can visualize the ways that tech is used in the workplace. This experience will allow educators to unpack the skills their students will need to prepare for their future careers. The goal is for Per Scholas to be a conduit between schools and employers so that both can actively engage in a dialogue about how talented young people from overlooked communities can access careers in tech.

Per Scholas is working with New Visions to identify partner schools. Per Scholas decided early on to work with all high schools, including CTE schools, as a way to reach as many young people as possible and demonstrate ways to scale tech career readiness. The pilot schools have been selected to beta test the modules during fall 2019, with full implementation set for fall 2020.

Looking ahead, Per Scholas is in the process of identifying challenges as the work progresses from curriculum design to implementation. These challenges include, for example, differentiation for English language learners, hosting the materials for dissemination, and how to track and measure long-term outcomes.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Advance CTE would like to thank the lead staff on these projects, along with key partners and stakeholders who participated in interviews and provided information on the projects. The interviews were conducted in person during a two-day site visit in New York, NY, on February 4-5, 2019. In addition, follow-up phone interviews were conducted in March 2019. The interviews included discussions of key activities, successes and challenges to date. Supporting documentation was provided by individual organizations, when available.

This resource was developed with generous funding from JPMorgan Chase as part of the New Skills for Youth initiative

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/corporate/news/pr/chase-announces-6million-to-prepare-south-bronx-youth.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <https://chalkbeat.org/posts/ny/2018/10/12/bronx-schools-to-get-innovation-funds-as-part-of-big-new-york-city-investment-in-the-borough/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/corporate/news/pr/chase-announces-6million-to-prepare-south-bronx-youth.htm>

<sup>4</sup> For more information about New Skills for Youth, see <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/corporate/news/stories/newskillsforyouth.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> For more information about CWE, see <http://www.cwe.org>.

<sup>6</sup> For more information about NYATLAS, see <https://www.nyatlas.org>.

<sup>7</sup> For more information about NYACH, see <http://nyachnyc.org>.

<sup>8</sup> For more information about New Visions, see <https://www.newvisions.org>.

<sup>9</sup> Data provided by New Visions for Public Schools.

<sup>10</sup> For more information about CDOS, see <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/gradrequirements/CDOS-QA-1113.htm>.