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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 1, 2020

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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, WITH SUPPORT FROM PHILANTHROPIC COMMUNITY,
ANNOUNCES SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM TO SERVE THOUSANDS OF NEW
YORK TEENS**

NEW YORK— Mayor de Blasio today announced SYEP Summer Bridge 2020, a \$51M public-private partnership that will provide constructive engagement and enrichment activities to keep 35,000 New York City youth active and productive this summer. Beginning in late July, the program will engage teens in a series of career exploration and project-based learning activities that will help them build their skills and prepare them for their next steps in the fall.

"Our city's young people have sacrificed so much during this crisis and they deserve opportunities to learn and grow. We thank the City Council and the philanthropic community for ensuring our kids have a positive, productive summer," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

"SYEP Summer Bridge is a new innovative model that was developed to meet the needs of NYC youth as the City recovers from the impact of COVID this summer," said **J. Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives**. "Now more than ever young people need opportunities to explore career paths, gain skills for the workforce and start to envision and plan for their futures."

"SYEP Summer Bridge is exactly that—a pathway this summer between tens of thousands of New York City young people and opportunities to learn, grow, and stay safe and engaged. I join Mayor de Blasio, the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City and the City Council in thanking our providers and philanthropic partners for helping to make this program a reality," said **Department of Youth and Community Development Commissioner Bill Chong**.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented an acute challenge for young adults from low-income households, which has been compounded by the shift to remote learning for the last three months of the school year and the cancellation of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). The Mayor and City Council announced funding yesterday for a total of 115,000 slots in youth and community programs, including SYEP Summer Bridge, to provide young people with enrichment opportunities and safe, engaging activities this summer.

"Restoring the Summer Youth Employment Program was an absolute must for the Council this year and I am so proud we fought to save summer for New York City young people in a very difficult year. This program is a lifeline for so many New York City children and its impact can last a lifetime. I thank Council Member Rose for her steadfast leadership on this issue during tough budget negotiations and for championing this program over the years," said **Speaker Corey Johnson**.

Although SYEP Summer Bridge is distinct from the traditional SYEP, it will leverage the program's partners and program infrastructure to quickly deliver a valuable experience for participating youth through career exploration, project-based learning and management, and civic engagement skill building. City officials—in partnership with the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City and with \$6M in philanthropic support from the Ford Foundation, Donald A. Pels Foundation, JPB Foundation, Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, Jennifer & Jonathan Allan Soros Foundation, Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund, The JPMorgan Chase Foundation, Gray Foundation, The Neuberger Berman Foundation, the NYC COVID-19 Response & Impact Fund in The New York Community Trust, and CIT Group—aim to serve approximately 35,000 participants through the program.

Summer Bridge 2020 will offer approximately 60-90 hours of activities over a five-week period. The program will prioritize low-income, justice-involved, foster care, runaway and homeless, NYCHA residents and young adults from communities hit hardest by the pandemic.

All participants will engage in online career exploration through an application developed by Hats & Ladders, a nationally recognized education software provider. This will incorporate online interaction with professionals, including well-known personalities and industry leaders from public service, business, technology, the arts, and more, aligned to participants' interests.

SYEP Summer Bridge will also feature project-based learning related to community service, COVID-19 recovery, and careers in STEAM, which will be delivered by nonprofit organizations. Some youth will also participate in a "Workplace Challenge," in which participants work in teams to solve real-world business problems presented to them by private employers, community-based organizations, and government agencies.

"These past months, the young people of New York City have endured a uniquely difficult situation unlike anything the adults in their lives have experienced," said **Toya Williford, Executive Director of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City**. "The resilience, tenacity, and creativity young New Yorkers have displayed is what makes me confident in the future of this great city. We must do everything in our power to support them in building toward that future, and Summer Bridge is one vital component of our city's plan to keep them enriched, engaged, and connected. Thank you to our partners for affirming that in New York City, every young person deserves access to the tools and experiences they need to thrive."

"Summer Bridge will provide invaluable resources for our young people during the COVID-19 crisis -- a path to opportunity and much-needed income," said **Peter Hatch, COVID-19 Public-Private Partnership Czar**. "By working with corporate, foundation, and individual donors, the City will serve thousands more youth during this critical summer."

"I am glad to see that the Mayor is supporting critical youth services," said **NYC Council Finance Chair Daniel Dromm**. "We cannot forget our youth this summer. NYC is still in the middle of a pandemic and many of the summer activities they would normally participate in remain off limits. The need for Summer Bridge 2020 and other programs that will give young people a productive summer is greater than ever."

“Our hope is that Summer Bridge will be a lifeline to young people in the city whose communities have been hardest hit by this crisis. This crisis has exposed, deepened and widened the severe gaps in equality in our society. With opportunities like Summer Bridge, we aim to help close those gaps and give the youth of our city the tools to become the future leaders of this city,” said **Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation.**

“Our longtime collaboration with Cities for Financial Empowerment is more critical than ever as the impacts of COVID-19 are making it more challenging to obtain a summer job,” said **Brandee McHale, Head of Citi Community Investing and Development, President of the Citi Foundation.** “Through Summer Jobs Connect, we are ensuring that young people across New York City develop their professional and financial skills and stay on track towards achieving their career aspirations.”

“Nothing is normal this summer! The jobs and fun teens would typically be seeking, meaningful growth experiences that inform life-long career paths are not available,” said **Jennifer Allan Soros.** “With Summer Bridge 2020, the Mayor’s Fund is pushing back on this grim reality by providing vulnerable teens with meaningful connections and community while reducing summer learning loss.”

“New York City’s youth have endured months of isolation, which has interrupted opportunities for skill development and engagement,” said **Laurie M. Tisch, President of the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund.** “Summer Bridge’s particular dedication to youth in difficult life circumstances – including young people from communities that have been hardest hit by the pandemic – will not only bridge the summer, but accelerate opportunities.”

“Without intentional interventions, we know that systemic racial inequities, made worse by the current pandemic and economic crisis, will have a disproportionate and long-lasting impact on the City’s youth,” said **Abby Marquand, Program Officer, Global Philanthropy, JPMorgan Chase.** “That’s why we at JPMorgan Chase are committed to supporting NYC’s Summer Bridge program and the opportunity our City’s young people deserve for high quality, paid, career-oriented summer experiences.”

“In this challenging time, ensuring that NYC youth have opportunities to work and learn this summer is critical. We are proud to be part of this public-private partnership and to support Summer Bridge’s mission of enabling young New Yorkers to explore careers, lead projects and engage in civic opportunities,” said **Mindy and Jon Gray.**

“CIT is committed to making positive impacts in our communities, and we are pleased to continue to support the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City,” said **Chairwoman and Chief Executive Officer of CIT Ellen Alemany.** “The Summer Bridge program, through its valuable career exploration and learning opportunities, is helping to build the future of New York City, and we are proud to support a program that aligns with our values and strengthens our community.”

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