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**MAYOR DE BLASIO AND TASKFORCE ON RACIAL INCLUSION AND EQUITY
ANNOUNCE NEW YOUTH AND RESTAURANT REVITALIZATION PROGRAMS TO
SUPPORT COMMUNITIES HARDEST-HIT BY COVID-19**

Programs bring new supports for young people and their families, economic supports for restaurants and workers, and free meals to vulnerable New Yorkers

NEW YORK—Today, Mayor de Blasio, Taskforce on Racial Inclusion & Equity co-chairs First Lady Chirlane McCray, Deputy Mayor J. Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor Dr. Raul Perea-Henze, and Executive Director Grace Bonilla announced new community programs in neighborhoods that have suffered disproportionately during the COVID-19 pandemic. The City will provide free meals, economic support for restaurants and workers and a suite of new youth programming designed to build skills, strengthen community, and support young people and their families in communities of color.

"COVID-19 has impacted communities of color especially hard, and the Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity is stepping up to address these disparities," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "From providing local restaurants with new resources to engaging our youth, we're ensuring our city can re-open fairly and equitably."

"We must do everything we can to open more doors of opportunity for people of color in New York City, especially those in underserved communities," said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. "These new programs will move us forward in our fight for fair recovery and deliver economic relief to people who need it most."

The Taskforce brings an equity-based approach to COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. The new programs are designed to address the specific challenges of New Yorkers in communities of color. City agencies conducted a survey with community members and this feedback helped to inform the issue areas of the taskforce's work.

"This crisis requires us to think quickly and innovatively, particularly to serve our most vulnerable youth and their families," said **J. Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives and Co-Chair of the Racial Inclusion and Equity Task Force**. "These initiatives do just that; they provide needed financial stipends for thousands of youth and engage them in interactive learning opportunities throughout the summer."

Learn, Create, Prepare: Supporting Youth in NYC's Hardest-Hit Communities with New Summer Opportunities

The New York City Young Men's Initiative (YMI) in partnership with the New York City Department of Probation's (DOP) Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON) will leverage existing funding to offer a suite of new summer opportunities designed to support youth and their families throughout the hardest-hit neighborhoods:

The Community Crisis Response Initiative will provide \$10,000 in funding to 22 local youth-focused community organizations to support and expand existing community relief efforts with a focus on supporting at least 500 young people.

NeON (Neighborhood Opportunity Network) Summer will offer a remote learning summer immersion program for teens and young adults from some of the hardest-hit communities including: Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brownsville, East New York, Harlem, Jamaica, North Staten Island and the South Bronx. The program will connect 2,700 New York City youth between the ages of 14 and 24 with paid learning opportunities designed to build skills to succeed in the workplace, strengthen community, and support young people and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants will have the opportunity to explore career interests, develop work-readiness skills, and express themselves creatively through learning experiences designed to strengthen social, civic, and leadership abilities.

Youth will also have an opportunity to express themselves creatively through ***Each One Teach One***, a program designed to uplift the voices of young people. Under the guidance of mentors and media experts, youth will be paid stipends for the next four weeks to design media campaigns to encourage social distancing among their peers. These campaigns will be promoted via social media and other platforms to young people citywide. Approximately 120 young people have been selected from areas that overlap with NeON Summer neighborhoods.

Restaurant Revitalization Program

The Restaurant Revitalization (RR) Program will support unemployed and underemployed restaurant workers affected by the impact of COVID-19 and their employers, with a focus on NYC communities hardest-hit by COVID-19. This program aims to partner with restaurants committed to paying a full minimum wage with tips on top, increasing race and gender equity, and making their meals accessible to vulnerable community members (including those who are food insecure, essential workers, or others who are facing challenges in a time of need).

The program will provide restaurants with short term payroll support now, funding subsidized wages to employ displaced restaurant workers who will prepare meals (including some free) for their communities. Under the RR Program, participating restaurants will be eligible for funding up to \$30,000 each, to be used to pay wages of \$20/hour to subsidized employees for at least six weeks. In addition the City is collaborating with One Fair Wage (OFW) – a nationally recognized advocacy organization working to raise the standards and equity across the restaurant industry – which will launch its High Road Kitchens program in New York City, making \$1 million available to support local restaurants with funding of up to \$35,000 per restaurant. Both RR and the OFW programs are open to restaurants which commit to moving toward a full \$15 minimum wage with tips on top and to increasing race and gender equity among employees within three-five years.

Collectively, the City and OFW will direct \$3 Million into hardest-hit communities to support approximately 100 restaurants and 1,000 displaced restaurant workers, as well as provide

hardest-hit communities with approximately 53,000 meals over 6-12 weeks. The Restaurant Revitalization Program will be implemented by NYC Opportunity and the Human Resources Administration, and is supported by the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City. Special thanks to Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams for his support and input on development of this program. To apply visit nyc.gov/opportunity or click [here](#).

"Today's announcement is yet another representation of the Race Inclusion and Equity Taskforce responsibility to ensuring that our hardest-hit neighborhoods come back stronger than ever.

When we support our young people and provide a second chance to an employer that can hire from the very neighborhood their business calls home we know we can start breathing life back into neighborhoods that desperately need it," said **Grace Bonilla, HRA Administrator and Executive Director of the Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity**. "It has been a long road but our commitment to get resources into our communities is stronger than ever."

"COVID-19 has revealed the racial and economic inequity that is deeply embedded in our city's socio-economic infrastructure," said **New York City Department of Probation**

Commissioner Ana M. Bermúdez Esq. "I was pleased to share with the Task Force the impact of our Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON), which has aimed to be the opposite of that. NeON's serve as engines of equity by working with neighborhood residents to develop ground-up solutions for what their community needs. The NeON model has allowed us to invest valuable resources and help restore a sense of agency in these communities by being rooted in partnership with both residents and service providers. Though there is still a lot more work to do, I am proud of this Department's long-standing commitment and contribution towards ensuring that a person's zip code does not define justice system outcomes."

"This partnership is an innovative and collaborative approach to solving the City's most pressing issues for our vulnerable communities and the restaurant industry," said **Department of Small Business Services Commissioner Jonnel Doris**. "NYC is home to a vibrant restaurant industry and this initiative will enliven our corridors by celebrating these establishments and strengthen our residents who need it most."

"Through programs like the Restaurant Revitalization program, our City is strategically and creatively tackling two of the most pressing challenges we face – unemployment and food insecurity," said **Department of Social Services Commissioner Steven Banks**. "Putting unemployed and underemployed restaurant workers back to work serving meals to their local communities helps uplift this vital industry and address food security challenges in neighborhoods across the five boroughs."

"Our City's restaurants are vital partners in our pledge that no New Yorker go hungry due to the COVID-19 crisis, and this new program is an important development in supporting them. We also have an active [RFP for businesses](#) seeking to join our efforts, and urge all interested restaurants to review the requirements," said **Kathryn Garcia, Food Czar and Department of Sanitation Commissioner**.

"This partnership, which supports essential workers, vital restaurants, and vulnerable communities, will help New York City come back stronger -- and fairer," said **Peter Hatch, COVID-19 Public-Private Partnership Czar**.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has had a ripple effect throughout New York City, but its impact has been the most pronounced for our Black and brown neighbors, whose communities are grappling with the physical, emotional, and financial manifestations of the disease," said **Toya Williford, Executive Director of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City**. "Our recovery efforts must be equitable so that these neighborhoods have the chance to thrive in the post-COVID

economy we are building together. The Mayor's Fund is proud to invest in employers who are active in correcting longstanding racial inequities in the restaurant industry by committing to a living wage for all."

"Restaurant workers have been among the most economically impacted by COVID-19, and as the City works to support a fair recovery, we are proud to support local establishments that want to lead in advancing equity within their industry," said **Matthew Klein, executive director of the Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity**. "Through this collaborative effort with the Mayor's Fund, HRA and One Fair Wage, we are helping restaurant staff get back to work now and strengthen restaurant workplace conditions for the future."

"We know that giving our young people learning opportunities this summer is paramount to their future success, and our mission towards greater equality. That is why we are very proud of our initiatives announced today. These initiatives will provide paid learning opportunities for thousands of youth this summer as well as strengthen our community-based organizations that have provided an important lifeline in this time of crisis" said **Jordan Stockdale, Executive Director of the Young Men's Initiative**.

"The Restaurant Revitalization Program is an innovative public-private initiative that will help ensure our City's recovery is inclusive of all New Yorkers," said **Acting HRA Administrator Gary Jenkins**. "HRA is proud to administer this program, and we look forward to working with all of our partners to make sure this initiative is a success."

"The treasure that is New York's restaurant community, with all its diversity and world-renowned richness, happens to be a sector of poor working conditions and low wages. The recovery of the city's restaurants must address this unequal reality. The City of New York commits to helping the restaurant community come back to life, but come back with better wages and conditions for its thousands of workers through the Restaurant Revitalization Program," said **Kate MacKenzie, Mayor's Office of Food Policy**.

"It's great to see Mayor de Blasio heeding our call from the early weeks of this COVID-19 crisis for the need to financially support restaurants who are supporting their neighbors in need, including so many of our essential workers," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**.

"Our #FeedingFirstResponders initiative has delivered tens of thousands of meals prepared by dozens of our local establishments, and our partnership with Jeffrey Wright's #BrooklynForLife campaign has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to expand these efforts. Now that City Hall is expanding upon this effort with the Restaurant Revitalization Program, we can feed the need for more of our small businesses that are the economic backbone of our communities."

"As we navigate the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, I am pleased that the City is committed to supporting communities of color that have been hardest hit by this deadly virus," said **Council Member I. Daneek Miller, Co-Chair of the Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus**. "Investing in our commercial corridors and engaging youth on a local level is commendable, and I thank the Administration and the Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity for their commitment to investing in communities of color."

"It is important that we continue to work towards recovery for New York City, especially for communities hardest hit by the pandemic," said **Council Member Adrienne Adams, Co-Chair of the Black, Latino and Asian Caucus**. "I applaud this initiative that will give our young people an outlet and the opportunity to learn valuable skills while providing economic relief."

"City government and nonprofits have worked together for decades to provide positive programming that offers young people support, guidance and opportunity. After months of remote learning with disparate impacts on low-income communities and communities of color,

these programs are needed more than ever. The mayor's announcement today is a significant step toward meeting those needs. In the days ahead, I will be working with my colleagues and the mayor's office to ensure greater educational and workforce development programs this summer that will foster learning, provide economic stability and help our young people develop to their full potential," said **Council Member Debi Rose**.

"The pandemic has created a moment of both terrible crises for hundreds of thousands of New York City restaurant workers and also an incredible opportunity for transformation of the industry toward increased sustainability and equity for workers, employers and consumers. We commend Mayor De Blasio's Office for collaborating with the High Road Kitchens program, which supports independent restaurants, re-hires workers, provides free meals to those in need, and most importantly, supports these restaurants in increasing their wages and increasing equity for the future," said **Saru Jayaraman, President, One Fair Wage**. "Because the pandemic has revealed severe challenges in the restaurant industry that existed prior to the crisis, we cannot go back to the way things were. This partnership represents what every city and state government should be doing: shaping relief in a way that re-shapes the future."

"The Restaurant Revitalization Program is a powerful example of how we should approach our city's recovery from the pandemic: by simultaneously supporting workers and ensuring that employers committed to equity survive the crisis, said **Maria Torres-Springer, Vice President of US Programs, Ford Foundation**. "We are thrilled that One Fair Wage and the City of New York are partnering on such an important initiative that will lift up families and provide a lifeline to our city's restaurants."

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