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**MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF MENTORS MATTER,
INVESTING OVER \$1.5M IN NEW AND EXPANDED MENTORING PROGRAMS
ACROSS NEW YORK CITY**

Through the Young Men's Initiative (YMI), this expansion includes \$500,000 in application-based funding for nonprofits

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced the expansion of Mentors Matter, an initiative [launched in September 2020](#) that has provided mentoring, tutoring and social emotional support to thousands of young people in New York City throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is being expanded from \$850,000 in FY21 to \$1.58 million in FY22.

Mentors Matter was designed to help resource and structure New York City's human capital, particularly within Black and brown communities, to mentor, tutor, and support younger generations. This comprehensive set of initiatives include programs that pay CUNY students to tutor and mentor Department of Education (DOE) students, provide career exploration mentoring by connecting young people to professionals, and fund long-standing community-based organizations that offer enriching summer programming.

"Today, I am proud to announce this expanded investment into the young people of New York City. They are the future," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "By investing directly into the programs that support them and connect them to mentors in their community, we are telling young New Yorkers everywhere: we see you and you matter."

"I am where I am today because of incredible mentors who showed me my potential, helped me navigate systems, and opened doors. My mentors also helped me realize the power of collective movements towards black and brown liberation—empowering me to organize and work in the service of my community. The expansion of the Mentors Matter Initiative will ensure that more young people who grew up like I did have the chance to meet their full potential, and then pay it forward," said **J. Philip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives**.

"We cannot address racial inequality in New York City without empowering our young people to reach their full potential. By connecting our youth to leaders with similar lived experiences and perspectives, Mentors Matter is doing just that," said **Jordan Stockdale, Executive Director of the Young Men's Initiative (YMI)**. "As a key program of YMI, Mentors Matter recognizes that our communities have the human resources and talent to raise a generation of future leaders."

The expansion of Mentors Matter includes the following components:

- \$500,000 in funding opportunities to community-based organizations that offer summer programming to young people. Click [here](#) learn more or apply for funding!
- \$300,000 to extend the Mentors Matter program at the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) throughout FY22.
- \$239,000 to create a new Reading Rescue program within [NYC Men Teach](#). Through this new initiative, NYC Men Teach CUNY students will be trained in the evidence-based Reading Rescue model and offer one-one-one reading tutoring to struggling first and second grade students. *NYC Men Teach is the nation's most comprehensive program designed to increase the number of qualified men of color teaching in our public school system.*
- \$175,000 for a new CUNY-YMI Mentoring in Medicine initiative which offers academic, professional, and financial support to CUNY students entering the medical field.
- \$150,000 for an expansion of the Public Health Internship Program in partnership with the Department of Mental Health and Hygiene (DOHMH). This program provides students from Central Brooklyn with one-on-one mentoring and career exploration supports within the public health career sector.
- \$100,000 in FY22 and \$145,000 in FY23 to provide full-year academic tutoring to students at Horizon and Crossroads — NYC's two secure juvenile detention centers.
- \$50,000 to fund CUNY Tutor Corps — an innovative program that pays CUNY students to tutor DOE students in math and computer science.
- \$40,000 to expand the CUNY [Black Male Initiative's \(BMI\)](#) Ambassador program, which provides stipends to CUNY students to mentor DOE students and develop the CUNY Justice Series.
- \$30,000 to support an expansion of My Sister's Keeper at DOE. This funding will specifically support the development of a career-exploration and mentoring program within DOE's My Sister's Keeper.

“Our educators must reflect the beautiful diversity of New York City, and these programs have provided so much support and mentorship for New York City students. As we round the corner of the pandemic, now more than ever, our children need a caring role model to care and look out for them and I’m thrilled these programs are growing to reach even more kids,” said **Schools Chancellor Meisha Porter**.

“The programs that will be expanded under the Mentors Matter initiative will harness the power and potential of CUNY student-mentors, so they can provide crucial support to New York communities where such assistance is needed most,” said **CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez**. “Helping more young men of color become public school teachers, mentoring medical students, or working as near-peers with DOE students, epitomizes the University’s historic mission as a vital New York institution in the life of the city we are proud to call home.”

“The power of mentoring is profound, and it benefits both the mentor and the mentee. DYCD is proud to be part of ongoing efforts to keep young New Yorkers on track for success. With the expansion of the Mentors Matter Initiative, even more students in DYCD’s funded programs will benefit from being connected to responsible, caring adults—providing them with academic,

career, and general life guidance as they grow into New York City's next generation of leaders," said **DYCD Commissioner Bill Chong**.

"The most critical part of a city's public health infrastructure is the people doing the work," said **Health Commissioner Dr. Dave A. Chokshi**. "We are proud to partner with the Young Men's Initiative to fight inequities and build the skills of the next generation of public health heroes in New York City."

"The New York City Department of Probation applauds the expansion of 'Mentor Matters,' and the continued commitment to providing community-based resources and opportunities to serve youth of color," said **Probation Commissioner Ana M. Bermúdez, Esq.** "As we have seen in our own programs, mentoring is an impactful tool for our City's young people. The connections to positive, relatable role models from one's community and the feeling of belonging are essential to the road to recovery from the pandemic."

"Providing mentorship is one of the most important things that we do for our children. There is not one successful person who did not benefit from the tutelage of another. Given where we are with COVID-19, the pandemic, and nationwide racial unrest, it becomes even more important that our children have good role models and good examples to follow as they come of age. The NAACP applauds Mayor De Blasio and the Young Men's Initiative for having the foresight to put significant resources towards such important work. We at the NAACP support mentorship and its generational benefit to children, race, and humankind," said **Dr. Hazel N Dukes, President, NAACP New York State Conference**.

"The One Hundred Black Men of New York, Inc. is extremely honored to have participated in this initiative of Mayor de Blasio and equally excited to see that he has committed additional funding to expand it. This past year marked an epoch when our youth needed city, state, and community partners to create and fund programs that expanded on their academic learning in such areas as leadership, mentoring, and character development. Mayor de Blasio, through the Young Men's Initiative, rose to the occasion with Mentors Matter. Through this effort, he leaves a legacy of tremendous impact for generations to come," said **Aldrin K. Enis, President, One Hundred Black Men, Inc.**

"I can't think of a better way for young people to learn the ropes as they begin their working lives than Mentors Matter. The timing could not be more urgent as we exit the coronavirus crisis. Additionally, Mentors Matter is critical to helping us to level the playing field while ensuring equal opportunity for youth across socioeconomic lines, as it is a program that is focused on directly tackling the factors that lead to disparities in unemployment, incarceration and education inequity that so many of our young people of color face. Mentors Matter will help many of our young people in communities of color receive the support that they often lack but need and deserve in order to realize their full potential. I am very happy to see that the City is providing more resources to the program this year, and I am hopeful for the change that it will bring," said **New York State Senator Brian Benjamin**.

"Mentors Matter is an exceptional investment in New York City's youth and those who are selflessly showing the way," said **New York Senator Roxanne J. Persaud**. "Mentorship nurtures a young person's intrinsic potential to achieve, persevere and succeed".

“The expansion of Mentors Matter will positively impact thousands of young people who need guidance, support, and tutoring, especially coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said **Council Member Adrienne Adams**. “Investing in our youth and community-based organizations, particularly in Black and brown communities, is how we create a more equitable City, and I fully support expanding this initiative to reach even more students.”

“I applaud and I thank the Mayor for its Mentors Matter partnership initiative that helps programs provide mentoring, tutoring and social emotional support for youth throughout the City. We are facing critical times where our youth need role models in the daily lives. The Funding is an Investment in the saving of Lives. I agree with this quote from John Crosby, ‘Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction,’” said **Council Member Fernando Cabrera**.

“I want to pause to acknowledge some of the incredibly progressive ideas that New York City has implemented recently. Just before I became a Council Member, I was a credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor, and opened a residential treatment center. I was committed to finding ways that people of Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights could enter professional careers instead of prisons. This new suite of programs is exactly the vision we need to leverage the brilliance of otherwise neglected men and women,” said **Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.**

“As the former Chair of the Committee on Youth Services and a lifelong advocate for increased opportunities and support for our young people, I appreciate the Mayor’s efforts to expand the Mentors Matter initiative,” said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene**. “In order to build a stronger future, we need to continue to invest in our students and guide them towards success. I have always believed it is our moral obligation to provide them with every available resource and tool that will promote their growth as individuals and make positive contributions to our society. The expansion of this program, which focuses on mentoring, tutoring, and providing social emotional support to our city’s youth is especially important as we continue to reemerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our students need the extra support they will be receiving from this initiative, and I am hopeful that it will make a profound difference in the lives of the next generation of New Yorkers.”

"We are glad to see that there's investment being made in our youth and their future. Often times this is the population most in need of guidance and leadership on the path to adulthood. I applaud groups like One Hundred Black men and others for their work pouring into young men in communities of color for years, and look forward to them bringing their expertise to the program as well. This investment is long overdue, and I thank the Administration for recognizing the need to lift up our young people," said **Council Member I. Daneek Miller, Co-Chair of the Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus**.

"Since its inception in September, the Mentors Matter Initiative has served as a critical lifeline for thousands of Black and brown students throughout New York City. This significant expansion is exactly the sort of community-focused investment our City must prioritize in order to ensure not a single New Yorker is left behind in our pursuit of a just and

equitable pandemic recovery," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera**. "I congratulate the Young Men's Initiative, One Hundred Black Men, and all partners involved on their tremendous and ongoing success in strengthening our communities and uplifting our youth."

"As a former teacher, I know firsthand the importance of mentoring and educating the next generation. I am happy to hear that Mayor de Blasio in partnership with the Young Men's Initiative (YMI), One Hundred Black Men, CUNY, DOE, and other City agencies has expanded the Mentors Matter initiative. I hope that this program develops to include more Black and Brown youth from underserved and low-income communities," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez**. "I look forward to continuing to work alongside Mayor de Blasio, my colleagues at the Council, City agencies, and partnering organizations to continue expanding initiatives that will help our youth succeed."

"Young people are our future, and we want to give them the tools to reach for their full potential," said **ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell**. "ACS is pleased to be part of the expansion of the Mentor Matters initiative, which will provide additional support for academic tutoring for students at our Horizon and Crossroads Juvenile Centers. Quality education is a critical component of our juvenile justice system, and implementation of the Mentor Matters initiative is just one more way that we are achieving that."

"As New York City begins to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is investments in programs like Mentors Matter that will determine whether our recovery is equitable and accessible to all New Yorkers but especially for those who were hardest hit. By prioritizing academic support, mental health, and job training while partnering with local CBOs and bedrock New York institutions like CUNY, we are caring for and fortifying both those in need and the crucial infrastructure that they rely on," said **Dr. Sarah Sayeed, Chair & Executive Director of the New York City Civic Engagement Commission**.

"The NYCDOE MBK Team is thrilled at today's announced expansion of Mentors Matter. This partnership initiative embodies the MBK ethos and is exactly what our boys and young men of color need to achieve their dreams. President Obama launched the My Brother's Keeper initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential. Through MBK, we are joining with school districts throughout NYC, community-based organizations, businesses, and foundations who are taking important steps to connect young people to mentoring, support networks, and giving them the social, emotional, and academic skills, they need to be successful in school, find a good job and become productive community members," said **George Patterson, Senior Director, NYC DOE, My Brother's Keeper**.

"The funding we received from YMI allowed for us to provide a platform for underserved youth to design their own programs, receive leadership development, lead their own town halls and feel empowered during a time when the world around them was changing due to the pandemic. The momentum from this project made it possible for our services to expand into the school year and serve 162 high school students from over 25 different schools in Brooklyn," said, **Katrena Perou, Executive Director, Inspiring Minds NYC**.

“The Young Men's Initiative is having a meaningful impact on the lives of Black and Latino youth and families in the Bronx. The funding has enabled us to support youth with tutoring and emotional support in the wake of the immense social and economic pain resulting from Covid-19. BronxConnect is proud to partner with New York City to uplift youth and families who stand to benefit from additional educational and emotional support,” said **Rev. Wendy Calderón-Payne, Executive Director, BronxConnect.**

“The funding we received from the Young Men’s Initiative (YMI) as it relates to mentorship provided us with the resources to elevate how we impact the lives of our student-athletes in underserved neighborhoods. From mental health awareness to social emotional learning YMI has demonstrated they stand with our community in transforming the lives of youth athletes,” said **Faullin Brannon, Co-Executive Director, Youth Sports Partners.**

“At MENTOR New York, we believe every child in NYC deserves a caring adult, beyond a family member, supporting their growth and development wherever they live, work, learn and play,” said **Brenda Jimenez, CEO of MENTOR New York.** “Mayor de Blasio’s expansion of the YMI Mentors Matter Initiative is a smart, transformative investment, and MENTOR New York is proud to partner and supports this initiative. As we navigate this global pandemic, NYC’s young people deserve adults who are paying attention to their needs so they can get back on track academically, emotionally, and socially.”

The Young Men’s Initiative (YMI):

The Young Men’s Initiative is the nation’s most comprehensive municipal effort to tackle the broad disparities slowing the advancement of Black and Latino young men. Through innovative partnerships, YMI offers targeted programming aimed at addressing disparities across education, health, employment, and the criminal justice system. Throughout this administration, YMI has achieved many milestones including:

- Launching [NYC Men Teach](#) in 2015 — which has since increased the number of men of color on the path to teaching in DOE schools by nearly two thousand.
- Partnering with the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) to launch their [first public education campaign](#) in the agency's 27-year history.
- Partnering throughout the pandemic with the Department of Probation's Neighborhood Opportunity Network NeON Nutrition Kitchens to distribute weekly groceries to more than 500,000 New Yorkers, including children and seniors, as well as personal protective equipment including masks and sanitizer and multi-lingual health guidance. *Free groceries are still available to families in need. For more information click [here](#).*
- Designing and launching the Public Health Internship Program with DOHMH to support young people in entering the public health sector with a special focus on non-traditional careers.
- Launching #MentorsMatter — a comprehensive set of programs designed to provide role models, tutors and social emotional support to thousands of young people across New York City during the pandemic.
- Designing and launching License to Careers (L2C) with the Center for Youth Employment (CYE) which supports disconnected youth in receiving their NYS Driver’s License as well as places them into careers within the transportation sector.

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