## *NEWS*

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**New Settlement Awarded $150K Grant to
Expand Youth Workforce Development Programs in the Bronx**

*Funds from New York State Department of Labor enable Bronx nonprofit to strengthen employment and educational opportunities for local youth*

**BRONX, NY – July 13, 2021 –** [New Settlement](https://newsettlement.org/) and Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner (D-Bronx, 77th AD) today announced a $150,000 grant from the New York State Department of Labor that will enable the organization’s Young Adult Opportunity Initiative (YAOI) to expand its reach to Bronx youth as they seek employment and educational opportunities.

The awarded funds will create employment and educational opportunities for 160 out-of-school, out-of-work youth ages 17-24 in the Southwest Bronx-Mount Eden community, and serve 150 alumni in 2021. Ninety of these youth will be placed directly in permanent jobs and/or internships.

“Young people in the Southwest Bronx are facing higher rates of poverty, underemployment and housing insecurity, particularly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it’s critical that they receive the opportunities they need to realize and achieve their full potential,” said **Rigaud Noel**, **executive director of New Settlement**. “We are grateful to the New York State Department of Labor for recognizing this need in our community and to Assemblywoman Joyner, who was instrumental in securing the funds to support our Young Adult Opportunity Initiative. We look forward to expanding upon this initiative that helps ensure our young people have agency around employment, education and ultimately, their futures.”

New Settlement commemorated the expansion during a special ceremony at its YAOI Center in the Bronx with Assemblywoman Joyner, YAOI participants and alumni. Following the ceremony, Assemblywoman Joyner toured the YAOI Center with New Settlement representatives.

“Enhancing skills and expanding opportunities, New Settlement’s Young Adult Opportunity Initiative is preparing Bronxites for the highly competitive job market and I am very happy to have secured $150,000 for this valuable program,” **Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner** (D-Bronx, 77th AD) said.

YAOI is a youth-oriented program that provides support and services to Southwest Bronx community members to ensure long-term self-sustainability and success. The program offers young people who were once disconnected from their family and community with guidance and tangible opportunities, including sector-specific workforce development, internships, pre-employment training, post-secondary education and more.

YAOI also extends High School Equivalency (HSE) instruction to students ages 17-21 on-site in its “Pathways to Graduation” classrooms through a partnership with the Department of Education. Job development staff and advisors assess and counsel participants individually to help develop vocational/professional interests and provide realistic appraisals of employment opportunities and goals.

Since 2005, YAOI has successfully prepared, guided and placed over 1,200 out-of-school opportunity youth in education and employment opportunities. For more information about the initiative, visit [newsettlement.org/](https://newsettlement.org/).

**About New Settlement**

Rooted in the Bronx, New Settlement stands with community members to break systemic barriers, advance justice, promote leadership and strengthen neighborhoods. By ensuring agency around education, employment, housing, wellness and creative expression, we help cultivate an equitable society where individuals and families have the power to use their voice to create the change they wish to see. To learn more or get involved, visit [newsettlement.org/](https://newsettlement.org/).

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