

Hudson Youth Center Awarded Scholarships to Attend the Harlem Children's Zone Conference in November

Trudy Beicht, Director of the Hudson Youth Department, just learned that The City of Hudson's Youth Center received funding to send community leaders who are focused on Hudson's youth to the "Changing the Odds: Learning from the Harlem Children's Zone" conference. This national two-day conference, scheduled for November 9th and 10th, will bring together more than 1,000 leaders from non-profit, community, government and philanthropic organizations to learn how to replicate the Harlem Children's Zone's, (HCZ) successful models for breaking the cycle of generational poverty for thousands of children and families.

Geoffrey Canada, President and CEO of HCZ, was named to this year's "Top 50 Power and Influence" list by The Nonprofit Times. Canada speaks about using a "conveyor belt" of programs to nurture a child through each stage of development. The Harlem Children's Zone works with families, from the time that they are expecting a baby until college graduation, with the goal of changing the climate of the community so that even children not involved with the Children's Zone benefit. HCZ's programs, which include asthma prevention, dental, medical and psychiatric care, early childhood education; charter schools, and after school activities reach about 8,200 young people out of 11,300 in Central Harlem.

Even though Canada was raised in a poor family the South Bronx, he went on to earn a graduate education degree from Harvard. His frustration that his successful after-school program was not decreasing the number of Harlem's high school dropouts, juvenile arrests and unemployed youths led him to devise interlocking programs to improve the lives of poor children in a standardized and reproducible way.

In Harlem, it is estimated that 73 percent of children are born into poor families. The area has the highest rate of foster care placement in the city. Its unemployment rate is about twice that of the city as a whole. The Children's Zone's programs have already had a significant impact. Math test scores of sixth-graders entering the Children's Zone's charter school have risen 35 percentage points in just a few years. In the Zone's middle school, students, who are largely African American, score as high as white students in the city in math. In a neighborhood with low high school graduation rates, about 550 alumni of HCZ's after-school program are in college.

The Obama administration has singled out the Harlem Children's Zone as a model for other cities to boost poor children, and first lady Michelle Obama recently called Canada, "one of my heroes". Now the Obama administration

seeks to replicate Canada's model in 20 cities in a program called Promise Neighborhoods and has set aside \$10 million in the 2010 budget for planning.

For further information, contact Youth Director, Trudy Beicht at 518-828-0017.