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Westchester County and Partner Agencies to Provide Young Adults with Job Training and Job Placement in Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon, NY (January 27, 2022)—Three Westchester agencies have been awarded state funds by the Westchester-Putnam Workforce Development Board as part of a \$16 million package of grants to provide job training, credentialing, and placement in good-paying jobs to 250 young adults between the ages of 18–24 who live in specific zip codes of Mt. Vernon

The effort is one part of Governor Hochul’s first-in-the-nation gun violence disaster emergency and comprehensive strategy to build a safer New York. This proactive initiative includes solutions and strategies focusing on community based plans to mitigate violence and destigmatize marginalized communities.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said: “I am pleased my hometown of Mount Vernon will be on the forefront of benefitting from this program. Growing up on the south side of the city, I know young people will be able to take advantage of this, be given better alternatives to make choices that will steer them on the right path to success. I applaud this proactive program.”

The Mount Vernon Youth Bureau, the Guidance Center of Westchester and Westhab, Inc. have been contracted to provide this program. The **Westchester Career Center Network**, operated by **The Westchester-Putnam Workforce Development Board**, and the **Westchester County Department of Social Services** will provide oversight and support for the three agencies who will conduct outreach in the community to participate in the program.

Deputy Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Social Services Katrina Alexander said: “Research shows that exposure to gun violence—whether as a victim or witness—makes it more likely an adolescent will commit a violent act within two years. This program zeroes in on this issue directly and we will be assisting the contracted agencies with outreach.”

Westchester-Putnam Workforce Development Board Executive Director Thom Kleiner said: “Workforce activities that connect young adults with stable jobs and training that upskills to the growing needs of sectors like Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, and Information Technology can lower the risk of engaging in violence, and reduce the risk of recidivism for previously justice-involved individuals. Our goal is to create a permanent solution, not just a temporary band-aid.”

Westchester County Youth Services Executive Director Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden said: “This program will also address the barriers to employment vulnerable young adults experience and help them attain credentials that lead them to a career path, not just a job, along with the soft skills they can take with them to any job. Career

exploration and counseling services as well as other wraparound supportive services will go a long way in ensuring long-term success for our participants.”

The agencies will provide access to services including:

- Utilize aptitude and skill assessment tests to identify skill and education gaps.
- Connect participants to comprehensive and customized occupational training such as literacy, job-specific skills, professional credentials, business-relevant computer literacy, and high-tech and job preparation workforce services
- Provide referrals to external providers to help with housing issues, legal and/or substance abuse issues, benefit programs, financial assistance, etc.
- Pre-apprenticeship programs meeting all standard criteria necessary for entrance into apprenticeship training for a specified trade
- Placement services for both jobs and registered apprenticeship programs

To ensure the program’s success, the agencies will also strictly track engagement, training, and participant activities in the state’s One Stop Operating System and will provide weekly progress reports to Gov. Hochul’s office.

For more information please send an email to ego9@westchestergov.com

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THE WESTCHESTER-PUTNAM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (WPWDB) is comprised of leaders and staff of state and county government agencies, non-profits, public education, and the private sector who work together to strengthen the partnerships between business, education, and service providers within the “Career Center Network” to meet the needs for a skilled workforce. The WPWDB pursues funding opportunities and develops model programs and leading-edge practices. The “Network” is made up of four Career Centers (White Plains, Mount Vernon, Peekskill, and Carmel) as well as partner agencies that provide state-of-the-art technology, training, resources, and services to youth, adults and employers. For more information, visit www.westchesterputnamonestop.com.

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