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YOUTHDOORS BUSINESS COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITY FOR CITY OF BOSTON YOUTH

Community engagement delivering opportunities, outcomes and resources for students

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Businesses that want to give back to the community have a new option to engage employees directly with Boston youth. YouthDOORS (Delivering Opportunities, Outcomes and Resources to Students), a Community Call program, provides collaboration to open doors for disadvantaged youth to expand learning outside the classroom through teaching, mentoring, and networking opportunities. The goal is to facilitate community collaboration to maximize opportunities and positive outcomes for Boston youth.

YouthDOORS is a free, innovative program that allows companies of any size, higher education, government agencies, and nonprofits to breakout of silos and work collaboratively on behalf of Boston youth. Whether a start-up or large company, Community Call's YouthDOORS matches company resources to youth needs. Sample collaborations may include: introduction to coding, resume writing, introduction to chess, video game networking event, financial literacy, moot court, or robotics. Any idea that relates to education, self-esteem, job readiness skills, leadership development or networking can be shared with Boston teens. Community Call manages matching opportunities, event coordination, and youth participation. Each company decides what level of involvement best fits their resources.

Based upon the company's input and resources, youth programs are developed with Community Call and launched in conjunction with Boston's Health & Human Services, Centers for Youth & Families, and/or Boston Public Schools to target specific youth that would benefit from the program.

“Engagement with multiple community partners provides the best learning opportunities outside of the classroom for our young people,” said Carolyn Edwards, Executive Director of Community Call. “It is vital for youth to experience things above and beyond the daily obstacles they face and discover opportunities for the future.”

One example of YouthDOORS programming, in collaboration with Microsoft New England, Boston’s Health & Human Services and Boston Youth and Families (BCYF), was held for Boston teens during February break at City Hall. The program brought a team of Microsoft employees together with teens from across Boston for a mentoring event to discuss career opportunities in technology with a focus on females and diversity.

Rashad Cope, Director of Boston’s Division of Youth Engagement & Employment emphasizes the importance of youth interaction with the community, “BCYF and the Division of Youth Engagement & Employment cares about young people and we care about the opportunities and resources we are able to provide to the youth in our city. This event with Microsoft was an amazing effort to give young people the space to explore their potential and interest in technology, and build relationships to better position them to do incredible things in the future.

Tamara Maniscalco, a Microsoft Application Development Manager, approached Community Call about providing opportunities for Boston youth. The event culminated over February school vacation with a technology demonstration and mentoring opportunity, including a diverse representation of Microsoft speakers meeting over thirty Boston teens. “Microsoft recognizes the importance of engaging students with technology, and encouraging our professionals to work with the next generation to accomplish their goals,” states Ms. Maniscalco. “It is our mission to empower every person on the planet to achieve more.”

Young people from BCYF community centers across the City and members of the Mayor’s Youth Council had the opportunity to meet with a diverse group of Microsoft employees for mentoring, career advice, and a technology demonstration. Aureanna Miller, a high school senior from Dorchester who attended the event said, “I found this experience really intriguing and different because I didn’t know there were so many different technology fields and ways you could work in the field. This event was really insightful.”

Organizations can contact Community Call with their level of interest to join the YouthDOORS Network through the Community Call website at www.communitycall.org. or by contacting Carolyn Edwards at ceo@communitycall.org.

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About Community Call:

Community Call is dedicated to building equitable, safe and successful communities in Boston by providing pathways for disadvantaged youth to become self-sufficient, valued, and productive

members of their communities. Our vision is One Boston through community collaboration and engagement to maximize opportunities and positive outcomes for Boston youth.

Community Call's (www.communitycall.org) mission is to develop life, leadership, and job readiness skills through civic engagement and empowerment for Boston high school at-risk and opportunity youth. We provide student-centered, civic engagement learning in a safe space for youth and empower them to have a positive impact on their lives and the community through their community action projects. Our program brings together youth, businesses, educational institutions, nonprofits, and government partners to expand student learning outside the classroom to provide opportunities for life.

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Photos attached:

1. YouthDOORS Breakout Mentoring Session
2. YouthDOORS Microsoft technology demonstration