Capital One Foundation

Y-PLAN (Youth – Plan, Learn, Act, Now)

New York City, New York

Challenge

The Y-PLAN (Youth – Plan, Learn, Act, Now) is driven by two key needs: (1) connecting young people to the transformation in their communities, and (2) breaking down historic siloes between schools and their larger communities to create a more seamless connection and collaboration.

Innovation

Y-PLAN NYC is an award-winning community development and educational strategy that empowers young people to tackle deeply rooted city planning challenges in their communities through authentic, project-based civic learning. Y-PLAN has a strong social justice and equity focus designed to impact local communities and young people's life trajectories.

Overview

In Y-PLAN, high school students are "Consultants for Change." Teams of high school students work for civic leaders on projects focused on improving public transportation, housing development, access to green space, public art and civic space, healthy eating and active living, and more. By establishing partnerships, Y-PLAN connects young people with unique and powerful civic leaders who serve as "clients" posing real problems for teams of students to solve. These relationships fundamentally strengthen democracy and community impact as students see first hand how government works, while civic leaders actively bring young people into local community development decisionmaking. Y-PLAN is recognized nationally as an evidence-based model of community development and participatory planning. Y-PLAN NYC has engaged more than 2,500 high school students, 70 educators, and 50 civic partners across more than 40 different New York City public high schools during the past 5 years and has inspired Y-PLAN city-school leadership initiatives in five other USA cities.

PUBLIC-SECTOR PARTNERS

New York City Department of Education, University of California Berkeley.

OTHER PARTNERS

50 civic partners across more than 40 different New York City public high schools.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT