Annual Report: Workforce Training Program

As part of the initial design and development phase of this commitment, Columbia University (CU), at the request of the West Harlem Development Corporation (WHDC), conducted various focus groups between November 2012 and June 2013 to determine the best way to develop and implement an “industry response” (skills-based) education and workforce development training platform. These focus groups also provided information with regard to Outreach for Disconnected Youth (see 5.07(c)(xv)).

The University fully funded these focus groups, including all preparation of materials, publicity, space, etc. Please note that these activities were preparatory to the implementation of the program by the University. These focus groups were requested by and developed in collaboration with the WHDC consistent with the Community Benefits Agreement.

A report was provided to the WHDC reviewing details from the focus groups and providing recommendations for next steps. This information could impact the type of curriculum to be developed and will be taken into consideration in conjunction with WHDC members.

As a result of that work, CU has determined to issue an RFP to provide a grant(s) to identify a qualified not-for-profit entity to design, develop and implement a program consistent with the focus group results. It is anticipated that the total amount of the initial grant(s) would be $75,000 for an initial two year pilot period. CU is working with the WHDC to issue this RFP so that CU’s efforts and the WHDC’s efforts might complement each other.