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Kennedy Children's Center Grows Its Own Special Education Teacher Workforce

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Introduction

Kerri Ann Chin was working as a home health aide when she first heard about the Grow Your Own (GYO) program at Kennedy Children’s Center (KCC). She had long been interested in working with children but lacked information on how to enter the education field. “And that’s why I stuck with home care for so long...because I didn’t know the route to take to start,” she recalled. That all changed when she sought assistance in finding child care for her new baby and told a staff member of her desire to find a new line of work. One of the workers told her about the GYO program at KCC and that information helped start her journey to becoming a teacher assistant, and hopefully one day, a certified special education teacher.

Located in the neighborhoods of East Harlem in Manhattan and East Tremont in the Bronx, Kennedy Children’s Center has served pre-school-aged children with developmental disabilities for the past 64 years. Like many other early education providers, KCC faces challenges in hiring and retaining qualified and certified staff. KCC enrolls nearly 400 children annually and employs 38 teachers and 76 teacher assistants across the two sites. Lead teachers are required to have a master’s degree and certification in early childhood special education, while teacher assistants must have a high school degree or equivalent, pass the New York State Assessment of Teaching Assistant Skills (ATAS) exam, and take numerous required workshops in order to be certified.

Since the requirements to become a certified teacher assistant do not include training specific to early childhood or special education, many staff members entered KCC unequipped to support this population and ended up leaving their positions. Staff attrition was disruptive to student learning and exacerbated the center’s existing challenges in creating a high-quality learning environment for young children with disabilities. To help break this pattern, the center’s leaders decided to grow their own teacher assistants, which allowed them to develop the workforce they needed on their own terms.

This brief will describe the development of the GYO training program at KCC, highlight key features and ongoing improvements, explore how the program is expanding to help staff members achieve their long-term career goals, and discuss lingering challenges impacting the sustainability and reach of the program.

A homegrown training program

Kennedy Children’s Center is located in a former warehouse in East Harlem nestled among bodegas, clothing stores, restaurants, and other businesses. The center resembles many other early childhood settings, with tricycles parked in a wide and open hallway, rows of classrooms, and visuals all over the walls. A guided tour of the center showcases the services available to students, including bilingual speech therapists, a large physical therapy room, occupational therapy, counseling, and social service referrals.

All of the children served at KCC are three to five years old and have a developmental disability, with about 50 percent exhibiting characteristics of autism spectrum disorder. A majority are Latinx (70 percent) and from low-income backgrounds (80 percent). KCC is a publicly funded and state certified special education preschool which serves children whose learning needs cannot be met by their local public schools and are thus referred by the New York City Department of Education. The goal is for students to be ready to enter the city’s public school system at kindergarten in the least restrictive environment possible.

Nationally, around 7 percent of children between the ages of three and five receive special education services, under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as do about 10 percent of students aged 6 to 21.¹ While the law specifies that children receiving special education services must have access to qualified and certified special education teachers, localities across the country have experienced long-standing shortages that negatively impact students.²

Jeanne Alter, executive director of KCC, has worked in early education for over 30 years and noted that there has always been a shortage of special education teachers. There is no shortage of individuals who love children and want to work with them, she said, but “when it’s you facing 12 children, you need more than love. You need training and skills.” In 2017, Alter and her team took a deep dive into their data to better understand their retention rates and why staff members were leaving. They discovered that a third of teacher assistants had left that year, largely due to the demands of the job. “The work was too hard and they were not prepared for how hard it was,” she told us.

At the same time, finding a way into the profession can be difficult, due to the requirements and cost—in New York state, becoming a certified teacher assistant costs at least \$600 due to workshop and exam fees. A majority of program participants are employed in low-paying jobs and/or receiving public assistance, which can make paying for certification challenging. While GYO programs are often framed as a teacher development strategy, it is also a mechanism for helping teacher assistants, who are some of the lowest paid staff in early childhood education programs, start on a pathway towards higher pay.

In New York City, certified teacher assistants earn between \$30,000 and \$33,500 annually, plus benefits, based on their level of experience and certification. KCC outlines a 10-step process to earning a master's degree and professional certification in special education, which aligns with the certification options available in New York state. Starting at an entry level 1:1 paraprofessional position that provides direct support to one child and only requires a high school degree, the steps include TA positions, substitute positions, and uncertified teaching positions that can be obtained as individuals progress through their undergraduate and graduate degree. Along each step come opportunities for higher pay. Fully certified teachers with an MA earn a starting salary that ranges from \$68,000 to \$77,000 per year, depending on where they work.

With seed money from the Robin Hood Foundation, the team members at KCC pooled their knowledge in order to design and implement a six-week GYO training program that would equip teacher assistants with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in their role. The focus would be on recruiting individuals from the community who share the background and culture of the children, and who also may be more committed to the work. “If you’re teaching your neighbor’s kids, you’re more invested in the community,” asserted Alter. Recruitment focuses on word of mouth, local Facebook groups, local schools, workforce and community organizations, and even the city’s youth employment program.

GYO programs as a rule seek out community members interested in becoming educators and they help remove the barriers to certification. GYO offers a mechanism for finding and preparing individuals who can succeed as educators, and who have the motivation and skills to manage the challenges of the work (see **Figure 1**). Around 15 percent of KCC program participants have children with developmental or other disabilities, which help inspire them to enroll.

Often consisting of partnerships between community-based organizations and educator preparation providers, GYO programs are designed to address local workforce needs.³ KCC’s program has been developed completely in-house, but their mission is much broader; the goal is to equip individuals with the tools they need to work at early childhood centers across New York City.

Figure 1: GYO Program Poster

Growing Teachers

Grow Your Own is a **local response** to the **national teacher shortage**—a pipeline program that **empowers diverse, low-income community members** to gain their **teacher certification** and **become leaders in their communities**.

Working with kids feels so much more meaningful and important to me than any other job. I love being able to give back to them and to the community. If I didn't have a program like GYO, I couldn't go forward. GYO was truly a blessing.

— 2019 GYO Graduate

Grow Your Own...

- Builds capacity in local communities by providing a pathway to a stable career in education;
- Increases diversity in the workforce and provides role models for young children of color;
- Strengthens early childhood programs by providing a source of well-trained, certified teaching staff.

GYO participants in front of KCC

GYO Graduates with their diplomas

Kennedy Children's Center
www.kenchild.org
Facebook.com/KennedyChildrensCenter

Figure courtesy of Kennedy Children’s Center

Program design and implementation

The curriculum for the six-week training program was developed by Alter, associate executive director Mary McKillop, workforce coordinator Mira Handman, and human resources director Victorio Milian. The weeks are sequenced using a road map (see **Figure 2**) that outlines the full scope of content, including mandated workshops, the practicum, and test preparation. Participants attend the program five days per week (M–F), from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., where they spend time in class learning content, such as how to manage challenging behaviors and the laws that govern special education, but also observing and participating in classroom instruction and activities.

Figure 2: GYO Program Road Map (2022)

Week	Community Building	Program workshops (appr. 60 minutes)	Workforce (30 to 90 minutes)	Mandated / Certification (Length varies)	Internship	ATAS	Homework
1	Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name game About the Group Starbursts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Impact of Teachers Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professionalism and Code of Conduct Program overview Program Rubric Resumes Part 1 GYO 1.0 Pre-Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set Up TEACH account E-Mail Diploma to NYSED Complete and submit OSPRA 104 form Mandated Reporter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tour schools 1 hour classroom observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review NYSTCE Guide TA Role Session 1 Math & ELA Tutors Session 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify I Can quote Document Teach Username/Password Job descriptions: Big Pic/Accomplishment Math + ELA worksheets
2	Getting to Know You <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Truths and a Lie Year of the Coin Speed Interviewing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Importance of Play Engaging Children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Job Accomplishments Resumes Part 2: Summary of Qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Health Workshop (Instructions) Foundations in Health & Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainees receive internship assignment Trainees register in Paycom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math & ELA tutors Session 2 TA Role Session 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish Job Accomplishments Begin Summary of Qualifications Take ATAS practice test
3	I am Interesting! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airplanes Think Fast About You 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) Introduction to Mindfulness in ECSE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cover Letter Slide Presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOH Workshops: Prevention / Identification of Brain Injuries Preventing SIDS Infectious Disease Control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet Ed Director and classroom team for internship 3 days in classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math & ELA Tutors Sessions Sign up and take ATAS exam (1st attempt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Draft of Resumes (past experiences) First Draft Cover Letters
4	Pay Attention to Each Other. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like/Dislike Count to 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TEACCH System for working with children with ASD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock Interviews Add TA position accomplishments to resume 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Violence Prevention and Intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 days in classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra Math & ELA sessions as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Answers/Practice (cont.) 2nd draft Resume/Cover Letter
5	Are you Listening? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blind Directions If I was.... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging Behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews: Practicing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dignity for All Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 days in classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra Math & ELA sessions as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit final draft Resume and Cover Letter
6	Team work makes the Dream Work! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoom Puzzle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wrap-Up: What have you learned? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock interviews, Resume Cover Letter review Thank you notes, apply to outside agencies GYO 1.0 Post-Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign up for ATAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 days in classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra Math & ELA Assignments Take ATAS Test (2nd attempt) 	

Source: Kennedy Children's Center
NEW AMERICA

KCC's classrooms are all self-contained, so all of the students served are identified as preschool students with disabilities. Each classroom is staffed by one certified special education teacher and two certified teacher assistants. Some students also have a one-to-one paraprofessional who provides them with additional support as specified in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Teacher assistants are responsible for leading and supporting activities that are developed by the classroom teacher, assisting with observation and evaluation of children, helping maintain a healthy and safe classroom environment, participating in planning and preparation of the classroom (e.g., cleaning and care of materials), and more. Bilingual teacher assistants are also asked to translate communications between teachers and families.

Given these responsibilities and expectations, a key component of the curriculum is providing participants with 60–90-minute-long workshops on key aspects of early childhood education, with attention to the policies and practices most relevant to working with children with disabilities. For the first week, participants are oriented on the impact of effective teachers on students with disabilities, the scale and consequences of teacher shortages, and where participants themselves fit into this context as future educators. These discussions are meant to help candidates better understand their own passions driving them to become teachers and their role in supporting student learning. From there, participants explore topics on everything from the importance of play to supporting mindfulness and positive behaviors in classrooms to strategies for supporting children with autism. Participants also spend time learning content mandated by New York state, such as school violence prevention or student dignity.

Program candidates begin observing different classrooms during the second week of the program, and by the fourth week, they spend three full days each week interning in a classroom under the mentorship of KCC teachers and teacher assistants. The internship component is paid, with candidates classified and paid as per-diem substitutes at a rate of \$130/day.

As a workforce development program, funded in part by the New York City Human Resources Administration, the curriculum also includes professional skills training. Each week, at least an hour of class time is dedicated to helping participants write resumes and cover letters, manage and send job application paperwork, and improve their interviewing skills.

Since the goal of the program is to help participants become certified teacher assistants, time is also spent on preparing for the state's Assessment of Teaching Assistant Skills (ATAS) exam. This preparation includes tutoring in English language arts and math concepts and reviewing practice tests. In the early days of the program, participants waited until the end of the six-week training period to take the exam, but that was modified after conversations with the city's Human Resource Administration. Now, "all of the participants take the teacher system certification exam in week three. And if they don't pass it that first time, they receive additional tutoring and take it again in week six," according to Carolyn Cleveland, chief operating officer at KCC. This change means that participants graduate from the program as certified teacher assistants, rather than earlier iterations where people graduated prior to officially being certified. The cost of taking the ATAS exam is covered by KCC.

Candidates are evaluated on their performance using a 100-point rubric developed by KCC staff. In order to be awarded a certificate of completion from the program, they must receive a score of at least 75 on the rubric. The program and workforce coordinator evaluate attendance, promptness, the quality of classwork assignments, and active class participation. The classwork component makes up the largest share of points on the rubric. Candidates are expected to be present and attentive during all workshops, and to communicate challenges and needs to program leaders so they can receive support along the way.

For the internship component of the rubric, candidates are evaluated by their assigned classroom teacher or the program's education director. In addition to maintaining good attendance and being on time, participants must cooperate well with the classroom teacher and other school staff; interact with children respectfully, appropriately, and energetically; and demonstrate an ability to implement their training to meet children's needs. Program leaders must confirm that they would recommend each candidate for hire in order for that candidate to receive a certificate of completion. Candidates not recommended for hire may still seek NYSED teacher assistant certification, just without recommendation from program leaders.

Perspectives of program participants

We spoke with four program graduates—all of whom now work at KCC—to learn more about how they came to the program, their experiences in it, their current work, and their career goals.

The educators we spoke with have a range of experiences and heard about the program in a variety of ways. Michelle Brown had been working with children for 14 years, most recently serving as a 1:1 paraprofessional for a special education student in a public school. She lived in the neighborhood and noticed a flier advertising that a new cohort would soon be starting. Brown was eager to work at KCC and so was grateful for the opportunity to be trained there. Nateah Staine experienced KCC first as a parent. She would attend the parent workshops, where a KCC staff member approached her to gauge her interest in enrolling in the GYO program. She said the skills she has developed as a teacher assistant have informed how she supports her son at home. “Having a child that’s on the spectrum,” she said, “I actually learned a lot.” She added, “I still learn...I see techniques that I can do better...different things that I’m taught in the classroom, I take it home a lot of times.”

The wraparound supports offered by the GYO program were invaluable and integral to the success of the participants we interviewed. Lackesha Squire, who graduated in 2022, explained that resources like paying for exam and fingerprinting fees, tutoring, and help finding a babysitter when needed allowed her to successfully complete the program. Handman and Milian, the workforce coordinator and human resources director, teach some of the training courses. They were both lauded in our interviews for their commitment to supporting candidates. Chin told us, “they just do everything possible for you to be successful.” Her colleague Staine concurred, noting that the resume preparation and job application coaching “to get into the field” was extremely helpful.

The program boasts a 90 percent completion rate, with three-quarters of participants securing a job in the early education field. Around a third of graduates go on to work at KCC, which has proved to be key to sustaining staffing at the center. These outcomes are evidence that the program is successfully addressing the problem it was designed to solve. Now both Chin and Staine are enrolled in KCC’s next iteration of the program, which offers support for participants while they take college courses for full teacher certification.

Growing from short-term training to college coursework

In the spring of 2021, KCC launched GYO 2.0, which is a second phase, and extension, of its program. GYO 2.0 is geared towards supporting GYO graduates as they earn an undergraduate degree in early childhood special education. In partnership with the City University of New York (CUNY) the cohort is offered assistance with admission and enrollment, financial aid application, and tailored study plans. KCC offers supplemental financial assistance, help with child care and tutoring, and one-to-one guidance to help solve problems as they arise.

Most of the financial costs of attendance are covered by scholarships and federal financial aid, but for KCC employees participating in the program, KCC can step in to cover existing Bursar holds. Those costs are deducted over time from the employee's paycheck. In addition, it provides participants with a stipend of \$250 per 3-credit course, paid at the end of the semester, as long as participants maintain an overall GPA of 2.5 or above.

Thirteen participants are currently enrolled in the program and taking classes at CUNY. Chin, who is enrolled in GYO 2.0, described the role that KCC staff play in helping her navigate the transition to college, offering help in real time, she said. "With [CUNY], you'd have to make appointments...[but] sometimes you just need something right now, and you guys offer that," she said. KCC staff members encourage her to let them know what she needs, like an English tutor, for example.

"What we envision is that if you're struggling with writing a paper, don't struggle," Alter said. "You call someone," since she "can help, Mira can help, or we can get a tutor...so...you don't just feel like this is impossible." She added, "I never want any of these women to get to that point, because we have all been there, going back to school and working full time." Her sentiment reflects the grow-your-own ethos that helps to drive the program and the larger goal of impacting the community.

Moving the program to the next level requires attention to how KCC's work integrates with the work happening at the CUNY campuses where participants are enrolled. Participants attending different institutions have a variety of circumstances that make it difficult to develop support strategies that fit everyone. "With such a unique set of circumstances,"

Milian explained, “it’s hard to group them together in a way where we identify patterns and support them.” He said, “We need somebody that knows the ins and outs of the college process enough to say, ‘Okay, here’s how you work toward that next step.’ Or, ‘I don’t have the answer. But give me a week, and I will get the answer.’”

**If you want to change communities,
you change them from the bottom up.**

- Jeanne Alter

The program would likely benefit from a more formalized partnership with CUNY that would allow for designated staff members to offer support and academic advising, help align coursework with candidate experiences in the classroom, and help create a shared vision for the program. GYO programs are strengthened by formal agreements where partners designate roles and responsibilities and co-create comprehensive support structures. ⁴ While this level of partnership may not be feasible given the context and design of KCC’s program, the center would like to explore opportunities to strengthen its connection with CUNY.

While GYO is often framed as a strategy to help solve teacher shortages, a central goal of the approach is to promote pathways to higher paying jobs, and in turn, help boost community development. “If you want to change communities, you change them from the bottom up,” Alter said.

Looking forward and lingering challenges

As of the summer of 2022, KCC has graduated nearly 200 teacher assistants from 14 cohorts of its GYO training program. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program was offered completely virtually and without the practicum, which meant that it “lost a little bit of the magic,” according to Cleveland. One of the program’s strengths is the sense of community and connectedness that is developed in each cohort, and GYO 2.0 was designed to keep people together so that they can support each other while working full time and going to school.

While the program is in an exciting growth phase where it is able to prepare 60 to 80 teacher assistants a year, Alter and colleagues believe that they need to train double, or even triple, that number to really feel the impact in the broader early education sector. But to meet this goal, more funding is needed.

In January 2022, New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced a range of investments focused on recruiting and preparing K–12 educators, including partial scholarships so that paraprofessionals (also called teacher assistants) can earn a teaching degree while still working.⁵ The state has also made investments to support the early educator workforce, including tuition reimbursement.⁶ However, these investments fall short of providing direct support to GYO early educator programs that provide wraparound services to participants, and other GYO investments exclude teacher assistants who work outside of public school settings.⁷ The lack of public investment means that KCC must rely on private philanthropy to support its GYO program. The Stella and Charles Guttman Foundation, the Pinkerton Foundation, and the TD Charitable Foundation are the program’s primary funders. But, said Alter, the early educator shortage is a public problem and there should be “a publicly funded solution.”

Funding for special education is slowly improving. The Biden administration and House Appropriations Committee proposed historic investments in IDEA at \$16.3 billion—a \$3.3 billion increase from FY21.⁸ In addition, funding for special education personnel development would be doubled to \$250 million to help localities address shortages of special education teachers.⁹ The Preschool Development Grant program, which can also be used to support early educator preparation, would also see an increase, to \$350 million.

The federal government has also elevated GYO, through programs such as the Teacher Quality Partnership grants, for which high-need early childhood programs are eligible, in partnership with other entities, such as higher education institutions and local education agencies. While these efforts are laudable, many of these funding streams come from competitive grants that require significant staff capacity to apply for and win. In addition, these grants have a set end date or may be one-time opportunities, which creates funding instability for programs. At the state level, funding for GYO programs has grown, but much of this funding is earmarked for K–12 educators. More efforts are needed to include early childhood educators within strategies to strengthen the educator workforce.

Alter and her colleagues attempted to interest the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) in supporting their GYO program, but those efforts were unsuccessful. As a result, KCC shifted to considering GYO a workforce program, which allows the center to receive some public funding through New York City's Human Resource Administration (HRA), which coordinates workforce training for individuals receiving public benefits.¹⁰ Alter would prefer, however, that the need for and benefits of community-teacher development were recognized by NYSED and NYCDOE, and that those entities invested in GYO programs to address the decades-old staffing shortage in early childhood special education.

In the meantime, the staff at KCC will continue exploring ways to expand. This fall KCC has a new coordinator for the program. Staff members are investigating how to create a parallel training program at their site in the Bronx, with plans to pilot GYO off-site with a partner community-based organization in 2023. Program graduates such as Chin will continue towards their goals and leverage the support offered. "I was so appreciative of everything that they put right in front of me. And I'm taking it and running with it," she said.

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Notes

¹ Office of Special Education Programs, “OSEP Fast Facts: Children 3 through 5 Served under Part B, Section 619 of the IDEA,” October 16, 2020, <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/osep-fast-facts-children-3-5-20>; Shreya Paul, M. C. Rafal, and Andrew J. Houtenville. “Section 13: Education.” In 2021 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium, Durham, NH: Institute on Disability, 2021. <https://disabilitycompendium.org/compendium/2021-annual-disability-statistics-compendium-a?page=18>

² Lee V. Gaines, “Students with Disabilities Have a Right to Qualified Teachers—But There’s a Shortage,” All Things Considered, NPR, April 20, 2022, <https://www.npr.org/2022/04/20/1092337446/special-education-teacher-shortage>

³ For more on Grow Your Own educator programs, see: Amaya Garcia, “Why Grow Your Own Teachers is a Strategy Worth Sustaining,” EdCentral (blog), New America, July 28, 2020, <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/why-grow-your-own-teachers-strategy-worth-sustaining>; and Sarah Wood, “What to Know About ‘Grow Your Own’ Teacher Programs,” U.S. News & World Report, March 2, 2022, <https://www.usnews.com/education/articles/what-to-know-about-grow-your-own-teacher-programs>

⁴ For more on GYO program design and the role of partnerships, see Amaya Garcia, Raven DeRamus-Byers, Elena Silva, Julie Brosnan, Ann Duffett, Richard Dunn, Kevin Entrekin, et al., Grow Your Own Educa-

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⁵ Governor Kathy Hochul (website), “Governor Hochul Announces New Investment in New York’s Students, Teachers and Schools,” January 5, 2022, <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-new-investment-new-yorks-students-teachers-and-schools>

⁶ Governor Kathy Hochul (website), “Governor Hochul Highlights Historic Budget Investments in Early Childhood Education During Visit to Long Island School,” June 15, 2022, <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-highlights-historic-budget-investments-early-childhood-education-during-visit>

⁷ New York State Education Department, “Teacher Diversity Pipeline Pilot Program Grant Application,” 2019, <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/funding/2019-teacher-diversity-pipeline-pilot/2019-teacher-diversity-pipeline-pilot-grant.pdf>

⁸ House Appropriation Committee, “Appropriations Committee Releases Fiscal Year 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Funding Bill,” press release, June 22, 2022, <https://appropriations.house.gov/news/press-releases/appropriations-committee-releases-fiscal-year-2023-labor-health-and-human>

⁹ Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Summary (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2022), <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget23/summary/23summary.pdf#page=9>

¹⁰ KCC’s GYO program is recognized as an innovative training provider by the NYC Human Resources Administration. Individuals who qualify for public assistance programs may also qualify for an Individual Training Account (ITA), which allows them to choose a workforce training program from a variety of options. KCC is paid directly with public dollars from HRA, but only for those students who qualify.