



CUNY Career Launch Interns completed more than 6,500 hours of outreach across the five boroughs with Mayor's Public Engagement Unit

Interns informed more than 250,000 New Yorkers about job opportunities and transit benefits

Photos available here: <https://we.tl/t-DKjU4rsSW4>

Media Contact: PEUpres@hra.nyc.gov

New York, NY - September 30, 2024 - The Mayor's Public Engagement Unit (PEU) provided extensive career training to CUNY students, boosting their professional development before returning to school, while expanding the City's capacity to reach over a quarter of a million New Yorkers about job opportunities and other benefits.

During the eight-week internship, approximately 45 CUNY students, working alongside PEU, completed more than 6,500 hours of proactive outreach to screen New Yorkers for benefit eligibility and help connect them with resources and programs.

The interns attended 160 events and completed 2,063 shifts, demonstrating their dedication to community outreach. They also texted over 250,000 New Yorkers to promote job fair events, messaged more than 50,000 people to offer ride-share discounts, and called over 4,000 people to share information about transit discounts to create a more affordable city.

Throughout the program, interns were partnered with a PEU Outreach Specialist who provided one-on-one guidance and support during outreach activities. Interns and staff conducted proactive outreach in person, over the phone, and via peer-to-peer texting to identify and screen New Yorkers for benefit eligibility and to help connect them with services.

This initiative is part of a larger citywide effort to make a more affordable city for New York City families, including putting more than \$8.2 million back into our young people's pockets through paid work-based learning experiences this past school year.

“While working with the New York City Mayor's Public Engagement Unit this summer, these interns were not just helping — but changing the lives of New Yorkers,” said **New York City Mayor Eric Adams**. “They are the difference between people getting health care or not, between people affording subway fare to work or not, between someone losing their home or not. Anyone can become academically smart, but these interns are becoming emotionally intelligent when they knock on the door and stand face-to-face with someone who is experiencing hardship. They are peeking into the lives of everyday New Yorkers and leaning into the experience.”



“When facing New Yorkers in their most challenging moments, PEU interns exemplified the true essence of public service,” said **Mayor’s Public Engagement Unit Executive Director Adrienne Lever**. “This summer internship was not just about gathering data or sharing information – it was about making real connections and delivering hope. The work of these interns has been nothing short of exemplary, showcasing their promise as the next generation of public service leaders.”

To commemorate the conclusion of this impactful summer internship, PEU hosted a graduation ceremony at Gracie Mansion, where interns’ contributions were celebrated. During the ceremony, interns were awarded certificates recognizing their hard work and dedication. The event featured speeches from several interns who shared personal stories of growth and achievement.

Among those who spoke was CUNY student Cross Elizardo, who reflected on how the internship not only provided invaluable professional experience but also introduced him to the vital services that PEU helps New Yorkers access every day. Through his work, Cross discovered he was eligible for the Fair Fares program, which offers a 50 percent discount on transit for eligible New Yorkers – a benefit that has significantly impacted his daily life as a college student.

"As a student living in New York City, every dollar counts, whether it's for textbooks, rent, or just getting around the city," said **CUNY student Cross Elizardo**. "I encourage other students and New Yorkers to explore what benefits they might be eligible for because it really can make a difference."

About NYC Mayor’s Public Engagement Unit

The NYC Public Engagement Unit (PEU) was created to develop a new model for government outreach, using community organizing principles to re-envision how the City provides services to its most vulnerable communities. Rather than expecting constituents to navigate a complex City bureaucracy to get the help they need, PEU adopts grassroots tactics to meet residents where they are – at their doors and on their phones, in their social media feeds, and in their communities. We marry this proactive outreach with comprehensive case management to provide New Yorkers with personalized, passionate care. For more information, visit nyc.gov/PEU and stay connected on [Facebook](#) at or [Twitter](#).

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