



85 Broad Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10004
646-237-4090
www.opportunitynetwork.org

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Contact: Amy Plotch 201-741-5946; amy@sutnickplotch.com

**Citi Foundation Selects The Opportunity Network for Grant to Expand Programs
That Prepare New York City's Youth for Careers**

\$4 million fund to support youth employment organizations across 15 U.S. cities

New York, NY (October 24, 2017) – [The Citi Foundation](#) today announced that [The Opportunity Network](#) has been awarded a grant from the 2017 Youth Workforce Fund to expand its Career Fluency® Fellows program, which works with students over six years to build the exposure, experiences and skills for career success.

The grant is part of Citi Foundation's [Pathways to Progress](#) initiative, which provides youth in the U.S. and around the world with training and access to jobs, including paid apprenticeships and internships. In partnership with [America's Promise Alliance](#), 15 nonprofit organizations across the U.S. will further expand their programming to provide a range of employment opportunities. Collectively, the Youth Workforce Fund is expected to reach more than 5,000 youth across the country.

As the only grant recipient in New York City, The Opportunity Network will receive \$250,000 to expand its six-year career readiness and college success program to serve nearly 800 students. In addition to expansion, the grant will also fund workshops, campus visits and internship preparation, and will underwrite stipends that allow students to take on unpaid internships.

“Every summer, our students intern at a broad spectrum of organizations ranging from Deloitte to the Mayor's office to Legal Aid. We make sure that they are fully prepared to make the most of the opportunity and to expand their skills and interests through the process. With this grant we will be able to do more and do it even better,” said **The Opportunity Network's Founder and CEO, [Jessica Pliska](#)**.

Access to apprenticeships, internships and vocational training is essential to empowering youth and preparing them to compete in today's economy. According to the Citi Foundation's [Global Youth Survey 2017: Economic Prospects & Expectations](#), 78% of young people surveyed believe that internships and apprenticeships are critical for career success; however, 60% say there aren't enough of these opportunities.

“While there is much focus on the skills mismatch among today's youth and the jobs available, there are a lot of community organizations across the U.S. that are changing the dynamics around youth employment in their communities,” said **[Brandee McHale](#), President of the Citi Foundation**. “Through the Youth Workforce Fund, we're supporting those organizations that are expanding the skills of young people, building their networks, and connecting them to jobs.”

America's Promise Alliance, the largest coalition of youth-serving organizations across the United States, will help us promote the adoption of new ideas that arise from Youth Workforce Fund programming. “We know that for many youth there is not one straight line to success and that the more opportunities young people have to work in

real-world environments, the better chance they have for future economic mobility and success” added **John Gomperts**, **President & CEO of America’s Promise Alliance**. “The programs supported by the Youth Workforce Fund reflect different pathways into the workforce that are essential for young people.”

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About The Opportunity Network

The Opportunity Network connects high school and college students from underrepresented communities with career opportunities, professional networks and colleges. One hundred percent of students graduate from four-year colleges and eighty-five percent secure meaningful employment or graduate school admission within six months of graduation. For more information, visit www.opportunitynetwork.org.

About the Citi Foundation

The **Citi Foundation** works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. We invest in efforts that increase financial inclusion, catalyze job opportunities for youth, and reimagine approaches to building economically vibrant cities. The Citi Foundation’s “More than Philanthropy” approach leverages the enormous expertise of Citi and its people to fulfill our mission and drive thought leadership and innovation. For more information, visit www.citifoundation.com.

About America’s Promise Alliance

America’s Promise Alliance leads an alliance of organizations, communities and individuals dedicated to making the promise of America real for every child. As its signature effort, the GradNation campaign mobilizes Americans to increase the on-time high school graduation rate to 90 percent by 2020 and prepare young people for postsecondary enrollment and the 21st century workforce. For more information, visit www.americaspromise.org.