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NOYN Newsletter

Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN) is New Jersey's leading advocate of opportunity youth with a body of replicable initiatives that are designed to address youth disconnection. NOYN's work is organized around four key elements of Education, Workforce Development, Policy Advocacy, and Systems Building.

Read how NOYN's initiatives are working together to re-engage opportunity youth while drastically changing systems that inhibit their success.



DoorDash donates \$5K to LEAD for Community Credits program

LEAD Charter School, an initiative of Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN) recently received a donation of \$5,000 in gift cards as part of DoorDash's Community Credits program. As a DoorDash partner, LEAD will be able to provide young people and their families the opportunity to order local meals virtually while navigating the ongoing pandemic.

Over the past year, Newark - along with the rest of the country - has been forced to reimagine how we work, interact and connect with one another. And local organizations have increasingly turned to virtual programming and other innovative means to continue supporting the community.

As a part of this evolution, DoorDash announced the DoorDash Community Credits program, providing DoorDash gift cards to organizations like LEAD Charter School that share in their mission to grow and empower a community's economy. [Read the full story below.](#)

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“
Most people of color, who I have known in my 15+ years of education, went into it for all the right reasons. They wanted to impact their community. They wanted to impact people who looked like them. However, part of our problem is that our applicant pool is depleted. You have to talk about the history of systemic racism that has incarcerated us and wondered why we didn't apply to be teachers.
”
- MARK COMESAÑAS, Newark Opportunity Youth Network

NOYN joins conversation on education equity and #TeacherDiversity

Project Ready, a Newark-based non-profit social justice organization has a long-term vision is to see a world where no community is left voiceless—a world where parents, guardians, and students in our most vulnerable communities feel heard, informed, and civically educated, and thereby powered to overhaul systems and policies in place that limit educational opportunities.

At the end of Black History Month, Project Ready invited leaders from NOYN, Braven Newark, BRICK Education Network, Great Oaks Legacy Charter School, and The Chad School Foundation for an important discussion on educational equity - specifically teacher diversity policies. The goal of the "State of Men of Color in the Classroom" series is to engage in a long-term conversation about teacher diversity, and how we, as a community, can ensure young people see more male teachers of color in Newark classrooms. [Watch Part 1 and 2 of the conversation.](#)

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Newark's Summer Youth Employment Program shines on national stage

In December 2020, The Aspen Institute's Forum for Community Solutions released its updated [Digital Summer Youth Employment Toolkit](#), a resource guide of best practices from successful Summer Youth Employment Programs (SYEP) designed to strengthen programs in communities across the nation.

Among the model programs is Newark Youth One Stop, whose unique design and success is turning heads across the country.

On February 24, Marsha Armstrong, Program Director of Newark's Summer Youth Employment Program, was a guest speaker during Aspen's peer-learning session, **"Expanding the Summer 2021 Youth Jobs Toolkit."** During the session, Marsha discussed the successes and challenges of creating Newark's Summer Youth Employment Program and what practices others can apply to their communities.

"When I came in," Armstrong said, "there was so much to do and no blueprint on how to do it. So I'm honored to say we created something out of nothing. It feels great to know that people are noticing what we're doing in Newark." [Read the full story below.](#)

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