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**ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES,
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CARNEGIE HALL,
SHOWCASE NYC YOUTH IN WINTER PERFORMANCE**

After Working Alongside Professional Musicians, Youth Who Are Justice-Involved Perform Their Original Music in Front of a Live Audience at Carnegie Hall

NEW YORK, NY – Today, NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner David A. Hansell applauded the New York City teenagers, all juvenile justice-involved, who performed their original songs at Carnegie Hall's Winter Showcase "Where I'm From." The youth-led performance was the culmination of an eight-week long program, 'Future Music Project,' in which the teens had the opportunity to create, produce and perform their own music in collaboration with professional Carnegie Hall musicians.

"Too often society cannot see beyond the labels that are placed on young people when they become involved in the juvenile justice system. Carnegie Hall's collaboration with ACS allows these youth the opportunity to make their voices heard through music," **said ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell.** "I want to thank Carnegie Hall and the Future Music Project for its partnership. I know that the effect of this important program will be long-lasting."

Workshops began last fall with weekly sessions at the Belmont School in Brooklyn and Bronx Hope School in the Bronx. Over the course of the semester, students were prompted to write original songs about their home, family, culture, and ancestry and collectively record and produce an album uploaded to SoundCloud, a music streaming platform that enables users to upload and share music. In addition to song writing, students learned about performing, hosting and presenting in front of an audience.

Today's winter concert took place at Carnegie Hall's Resnick Education Wing, alongside Carnegie Hall artists: Orson Benjamin, Okai, Parris Lewis, Aynsley Powell, Frankie Leroux, Bridget Barkan, and Zephyr Doles, backed by the Brooklyn-based world roots band, Brown Rice Family.

"Our partnership with Carnegie Hall, one of New York City's most renowned music venues, is an example of why the Close to Home program is so special. Not too long ago, these youth would have been placed in prison-like facilities hundreds of miles north of the City with little access to resources of this caliber. Now, young people can remain connected to programs like the Future Music Project well after they leave our care, which has shown to help them transition back into the community," **said Deputy Commissioner Felipe Franco.**

“These young people are talented and have powerful stories to tell. We could not be more proud to showcase their original music at Carnegie Hall,” said **Sarah Johnson, Chief Education Officer and Director of Carnegie Hall’s Weill Music Institute**. “Through the Future Music Project, teens have the opportunity to explore their creativity, collaborate with peers from across the city, and find inspiration. We believe that the arts have the unique potential to amplify voices and break down barriers, and we look forward to continuing to support these young people in their musical journey.”

The youth who performed at today’s concert currently reside in ACS’s “Close to Home” program. Youth placed in Horizon Juvenile Detention Center and Crossroads Juvenile Detention Center had the opportunity to participate in this program, however, their work is being performed by Carnegie Hall musicians on their behalf. They also had the opportunity to present a final concert for friends and family at their facilities.

Approximately five years ago, New York City launched “Close to Home,” an innovative juvenile justice program that shifts away from sending New York City youth to large, geographically isolated institutions far from New York City and instead places them in residences near their home communities where they receive rehabilitation programs that include education and counseling. In contrast to traditional detention halls and placement facilities, “Close to Home” residences have been intentionally designed to ensure participation in programming while preserving the safety and security of youth, staff, and the surrounding community. Since it was launched in 2012, the administration and operation of “Close to Home” has been improved and refined. It is operating efficiently and effectively. “Close to Home” is also succeeding in improving outcomes for youth through services and education that can help youth who have been involved with the juvenile justice system rehabilitate and transition to productive adulthood.

To listen to the teens’ music, click here: [Bronx Hope](#) & [Belmont Academy](#).

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