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ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL SPRING COLLEGE TOUR FOR NYC YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

Campus Visits Prepare Youth in Care for College and Bring Awareness to Various Fields of Study as a Possible Career Path

New York, NY – Today, NYC Administration for Children Services (ACS) Commissioner David A. Hansell announced that nearly 20 youth in foster care had the opportunity to tour local colleges with ACS staff, as part of the agency's second annual Spring College Tour. The week-long experience aims to encourage youth in foster care to pursue a college education all while exposing them to variety of opportunities and career pathways.

The ACS College Tour features visits to schools within CUNY and SUNY systems, including Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), SUNY at Old Westbury, and City College of New York (CCNY) as well as Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey. In addition to the College Tour, ACS has worked to improve education and employment outcomes among youth in foster care in several ways. Specifically, ACS coordinates a college internship program that offers foster care youth enrolled in a college exposure to careers in public service. The internships are full time positions within ACS that pay \$15 per hour for undergraduate students and \$23 per hour for graduate students. Students are mentored by ACS professional staff and, if eligible, given guidance in how to apply for civil service job openings. In addition, youth learn about other mentoring and college support programs like, the Year-Up Program, Foster Care Initiative, Youth Matter, and ACS/CUNY Dorm Project are all designed to provide services for college-bound youth in care through peer-to-peer support, academic counseling, career development, and housing assistance throughout their academic tenure.

"ACS is committed to expanding opportunities for youth in foster care by putting them on a path to academic success and economic independence. The Spring College Tour encourages youth in foster care to pursue a higher education by allowing them the opportunity to better visualize what it would be like to attend college. After sitting in college classrooms and walking around college campuses, it is our hope that youth will be encouraged to reach their full potential," **said ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell.**

Nationally, youth aging out of foster care have poorer educational outcomes than their peers and face high rates of unemployment as adults. The ACS College Tour is part of a larger initiative to boost college enrollment and graduation rates for young people in foster care.

ACS has significant college and career initiatives underway designed to improve outcomes for post-secondary and employment outcomes for older youth in foster care including:

- ACS' Office of Education Support and Policy Planning engages stakeholders throughout a child's academic career to prepare them for post-secondary educational success. In 2017, the office released *A Foster Parent's Guide to Education*, which provides detailed

information regarding educational services, students' rights and foster parents' responsibilities, and includes specific, actionable information to help foster parents work with the young person in their care, the foster care agency and the child's school to support the student's path to higher education.

- In 2017, ACS launched a new program in partnership with First Star CUNY Staten Island that is designed to support a group of rising ninth grade students successfully through high school to college. The program's goal is to build academic and life skills through tutoring and professional mentoring to prepare young people in foster care for higher education. This summer First Star Academy will host a week-long tour of campuses including Howard University, Lincoln University and Virginia State University among others.
- ACS provides financial supports for college room and board payments along with daily stipends for living expenses not covered by traditional financial aid.
- In the summer of 2016, ACS launched a partnership with the City University of New York (CUNY) to establish the Fostering College Success Initiative ("ACS/CUNY Dorm Project"). The ACS/CUNY Dorm Project was developed to provide year-round housing and academic supports to foster youth attending CUNY schools. In FY17, the program started with 50 students, expanded to serve 93 in FY18, and today is serving 122 students.

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