

# NYC YMI CONNECTION

*News, Updates, and Stories from the NYC Young Men's Initiative*

Special Edition 2014

*NYC Young Men's Initiative (YMI) launched in August of 2011. Over the course of three years, the City will invest a combination of public and private funds to support new programs and policies designed to address numerous outcomes related to education, health, employment and justice. These programs and policies will break down barriers to help young Black and Latino men achieve their professional, educational and personal goals.*

## The Big Picture

*The Big Picture brings you up to speed on the status of NYC Young Men's Initiative*

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### **Introducing Deputy Mayor Richard R. Buery**

As a native New Yorker, Richard R. Buery, Jr. was raised in the East New York neighborhood of Brooklyn. The son of a retired New York City public school teacher and a retired lab manager, Mr. Buery has dedicated his career to improving the lives of America's most disadvantaged youth. His altruistic nature came to fruition while he was attending Harvard University as an undergrad; it was there where he founded the Mission Hill Summer Program. The still active program works with youth from the Mission Main and Alice Taylor housing developments in Boston to promote academic excellence, advocacy and non-violence. More recently, he co-founded iMentor-a technology education and mentoring program that each year connects New York City middle and high school students with professional mentors through on-line and face-to-face meetings.



Mr. Buery achieved another level of professional success when on February 4, 2014 newly elected NYC Mayor Bill DeBlasio announced him as the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives, a newly created position. The work will primarily focus on the implementation of some of the administration's most imperative initiatives such as the pre-k programs and the assembly of a new 'Children's Cabinet' to work across city agencies.

Mr. Buery is no stranger to community engagement; in October 2009, the Yale Law school grad was named the tenth President and Chief Executive Officer of The Children's Aid Society. Prior to that, he stood as the co-founder and executive director of Groundwork Inc., a nonprofit organization that serves the children and families of Brooklyn's public housing developments.

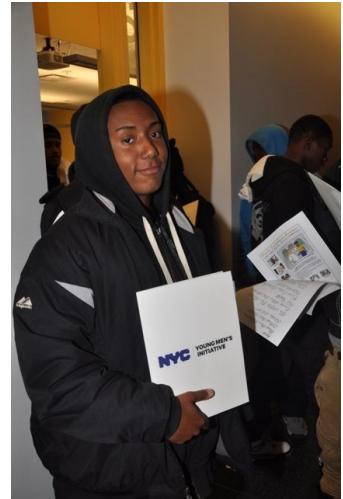
The NYC Young Men's Initiative (YMI) will now report to the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives. Deputy Mayor Buery will undoubtedly serve as an invaluable asset to the new administration and we are excited to see what developments the future holds.

## *YMI Host Their First Ever Youth Empowerment Summit (YES!)*

### ***YMI's Youth Empowerment Summit-YES!***

In collaboration with John Jay College's Urban Male Initiative (UMI) the NYC Young Men's Initiative (YMI) held its first ever *Making it Happen: Youth Empowerment Summit (YES!)*. The event held on November 9<sup>th</sup> was attended by over 200 hundred youth of varying ages as they spent the day hearing from keynote speakers, participating in specialized workshops and networking at a resource fair. The purpose of the summit was to celebrate the accomplishments of YMI participants, recognize youth as leaders and to build community amongst YMI stakeholders.

Upon arriving and checking into the Summit, the youth were able to enjoy a catered breakfast and view various youth run exhibits by LaGuardia Community College and Teen Application. The exhibits ranged from video production and air brushing techniques to a photography exhibition by *Photo Voice*. The youth were then ushered into the theater for the Summit to formally begin. The event hosts were Chaz Shepard, a local celebrity, as well as two YMI Youth Ambassadors, Ruben and Rich. After a warm welcome by special guest speakers such as Paul Forbes, the Director of the Expanded Success Initiative (ESI) and keynotes from dynamic youth speaker, Dariel Vasquez, the youth made their way to the youth selected specialized workshops.



The variety of workshops that were offered for the day appealed to every dynamic of the participant's interest. The session topics included though were not limited to, *How to be Prepared for Your Next Interview*, *Know Your Rights: Removing Legal Barriers* and *Where Am I Now & Where I Want To Go*. The workshops were conducted by YMI partnering agencies such as Urban Tech, ABLE Program-Osbourne Association and Friends of the Island Academy and The CUNY Fatherhood Academy. Each youth had the opportunity to attend several workshops and select the ones that interested them most.

After a filling lunch and some afternoon entertainment performed by Harlem NeON, Young Men in Dance, Voices On The Island and David Rush, Performing Artist and Motivational Speaker the final and most interactive part of the day began. The Resource Fair provided the youth participants free range with the opportunity to engage with and receive information from thirty different vendors, each selected by YMI Youth Ambassadors. The resource fair vendors focused primarily on the central pillars of YMI; education, employment health and justice. Some of the Resource Fair participants were Cornerstone Mentoring, the New York Police Department, Ashoka Change Makers, and Children's Aid Society. The event ended with participants completing brief surveys and then receiving not only Metro Cards but also American Express gift cards, and YMI gift items all provided by YMI.

The informative and engaging day proved to be a success for all-from participants to attendees. The coming year will surely bring even greater developments for YMI and an even larger Youth Empowerment Summit (YES!).



## One on One

*One on One highlights participants in some of the YMI programs throughout NYC.*

**Name:**Jeffery Trejo-Hiraldo      **YMI Program:** YAIP

**YMI: How did you learn about the YAIP Program?**

**Jeffery:** I was working at the Queens Dance Studio and my boss was talking to me about the program and she eventually brought me here.

**YMI: What do you like most about the program?**

**Jeffery:** Well, I really like the whole team at YAIP because when I started I was so scared because I didn't know English, but with them I was able to improve my English and make new friends. They are like my second family.

**YMI: We know that you were interested in attending college, have you started yet?**

**What is it that you hope to study?**

**Jeffery:** No. I would like to start as soon as possible, hopefully when my English improves. I would like to study Graphic Design.

**YMI: We see that your working as well, how is that going?**

**Jeffery:** I work at a dance studio as a dance teacher. I really like it because it is my passion. I teach contemporary, ballet, jazz and hip-hop.

**YMI: What are your plans for the future?**

**Jeffery:** I want to have my own dance studio in New York City because I want to help poor people and I love to teach people as well.



**Name:** Mirafore Joseph      **YMI Program:** DigitalWork NYC: NYC Parks

**YMI: How did you find DigitalWork NYC and what brought you to that program?**

**Mirafore:** I was going to graduate soon and I needed to start getting my life together and the best way to start that is through internships. I pulled up Google and began typing digital internships, technology internships, health informatics internships, and eventually Parks website came up with DigitalWorks.

**YMI: What are you currently doing with Parks?**

**Mirafore:** I'm the community assistant but I am also the CRC coordinator. I do some mild hardware repair, but for the most part I teach the youth. I'm currently teaching intermediate Microsoft Word as well as intro to Excel. I'm also doing a class called Fables and Storytelling but I'm switching it up a little bit so that it's more based on literacy education while using the computer as back up.



**YMI: How long have you been with NYC Parks?**

**Mirafore:** I've been with NYC Parks since around Thanksgiving.

**YMI: Where do you see yourself in the coming years?**

**Mirafore:** At this point I would love to continue with Digital Works-I love the skills that I'm gaining but I do have grad school in mind and I'm strongly thinking about going to grad school for Public Health.

**Name: Alice Trye      YMI Program: YMI Intern**

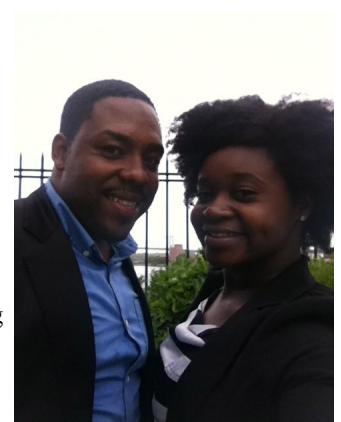
**YMI: What skills did you learn during your YMI internship?**

**Alice:** I learned how to manage social media and I also learned how to plan events. I was there throughout the planning of the Youth Summit and there were a lot of things I did in regards to that.

**YMI: What lessons did you learn from your internship, either personally or professionally?**

**Alice:** I learned how important it is for me and my future career to work for people who are not being spoken for in terms of minorities. YMI is all about working for young black men and working there really solidified that for me.

**YMI: What has changed in your life since being a YMI intern.**



**Alice:** After leaving YMI I definitely was more open to public health and I was more aware of the things that NYC Health publishes around the city. I have a greater appreciation for it.

**YMI: Now that you've completed your internship what are your plans for the future and what are your ultimate goals?**

**Alice:** Well, I'm considering getting a degree in Public Health but I'm still not sure which direction I want to go with that. While working with YMI I was able to see more of the policy side and also how YMI contributes to programs, so I'm still not sure if I want to work directly with the people or with the government. I am hopefully going to also apply to medical school in the future.

**Name: Shuba Maniram      YMI Program: YMI Intern**

**YMI: What skills did you learn during your YMI internship?**

**Shuba:** I learned how to be more proficient in terms of speaking with other people and being on time for everything and also more organized. I learned how to interact more with people from different fields. It also made me more aware of other people and their thoughts.

**YMI: What has changed in your life since being a YMI intern?**

**Shuba:** It made me more motivated to pursue the career that I want to do. I want to be in educational policy.



**YMI: What stood out most to you from your internship?**

**Shuba:** How much work is involved! When you're behind the scenes it's different from what you see on the outside. There is so much work to do because it is such a big city and being there made me more aware of all the work that goes into it.

**YMI: What did you do before YMI and why did you select to be an intern for YMI?**

**Shuba:** I was actually part of an internship with the Harlem Youth Corp, CCI, and the Mayors Youth Leadership Council. It was piloted in 2012 and they were recruiting for applicants. I took a shot at applying and was accepted. From there, I did training for a year and then I did policy training working with the Health and Hospitals Corporation. After that, I applied for other positions that had partnerships with CORO which lead me to the opportunity to intern at YMI.

## **Special Edition of Beyond NYC: My Brothers Keeper**

*Beyond NYC provides information about the reach the Young Men's Initiative has outside of the city.*

The recent years have seen an uprising of programs aimed at helping young men of color achieve their full potential. Many of these programs have the long term mission of reducing the disparity gap in education, justice, health and employment that impact young men of color when compared to their White and Asian counterparts.

As one of the oldest municipal efforts, The New York City Young Men's Initiative (YMI) has paved a path to success with innovative programs, services and policy based solutions. NYC YMI has displayed an unprecedented dedication to helping young men of color reach their goals, thereby breaking the poverty cycle and building stronger communities.



As a public and private partnership that was founded in 2011 by then New York City Mayor, Michael R. Bloomberg, NYC YMI has casted a bright light with regards to what can be accomplished when strong motivation and the right efforts align. This bright light has just ventured into the larger arena of The White House with President Barack Obama's launch of My Brother's Keeper (MBK).

It was on February 27, 2014 when the national initiative was publically announced. It will focus primarily on young men of color and reducing the negative interactions they have with the criminal justice system as well as focusing on businesses and foundations joining together to test strategies aimed at ensuring young people arrive to school ready to learn.

The timing of the launch is of no coincidence; the deaths of Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin and Jordan Davis only amplified the current plight of our country's young men of color and the systemic adversities that are faced in their every day lives. Changing not only the circumstances but also the general outlook of boys and men of color is a responsibility that needs to be bared upon the shoulders of not only individuals, but entire communities. My Brother's Keeper will dedicate the 90 days subsequent to the official launch to designing strategies and appropriate infrastructures to ensure the program aligns with additional commitments from an array of other sectors.

Additionally, the Obama administration will launch an internal administration during the latter part of the initiative in an effort to more rigorously evaluate existing policies and programs and make note of those that are most effective at improving the indicated outcomes for young men of color. The initiatives task force, led by Broderick Johnson, Assistant to the President and Cabinet Secretary, will seek to assess the impact that regulations, Federal Policies, and programs have in order to develop appropriate proposals that offer the greatest outcome. Furthermore, incentives will be recommended for local, state and national public and private decision makers for effective strategies and practices; as well as the creation of an administrative wide 'What Works' online portal to disseminate successful programs to the greater audience.

Lastly, the Department of Education will maintain a public website on a continued basis to assess critical indicators of life outcomes for boys and young men of color.

The launch of My Brother's Keeper represents not only a positive change for the young men of color it stands to serve, but also a positive change for the communities in which these men reside-leading to a stronger future for all. A national expression of the NYC Young Men's Initiative, NYC YMI continues to be a contributing thought partner to the frame and structure of MBK and we are excited to be a part of a national change for our young men of color.

## MBK: In The News

*In The News contains links to articles and other mentions of YMI in the media*

### ***President Obama to Launch Major New Effort to Help Young Minority Men***

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/president-obama-to-launch-major-new-effort-on-young-men-of-color/2014/02/11/cc0f0a98-92cd-11e3-b227-12a45d109e03\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/president-obama-to-launch-major-new-effort-on-young-men-of-color/2014/02/11/cc0f0a98-92cd-11e3-b227-12a45d109e03_story.html)

### ***Obama Launches "My Brother's Keeper" Initiative***

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/obama-launches-my-brothers-keeper-initiative/>

### ***Obama Starts Initiative for Young Black Men, Noting His Own Experience***

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/28/us/politics/obama-will-announce-initiative-to-empower-young-black-men.html>

### ***Obama Strives to be My Brother's Keeper***

<http://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/199406-obama-strives-to-be-my-brothers-keeper>

### ***Obama Unveils 'My Brother's Keeper,' Opens Up About His Dad, Drugs and Race***

<http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2014/02/27/obama-announces-my-brothers-keeper/>

### ***Obama Launches 'My Brother's Keeper' to Help Young Minority Men***

<http://news.yahoo.com/obama-launches--my-brother-s-keeper--to-help-young-minority-men-025659695.html>

### ***Obama Administration Calling for 'My Brother's Keeper' Mentors***

<http://time.com/#139240/obama-my-brothers-keeper/>

### ***President Obama Introduces 'My Brother's Keeper' Plan***

<http://www.ebony.com/news-views/president-obama-introduces-my-brothers-keeper-plan-304#axzz33VGBFAke>

### ***Obama's My Brothers Keeper Initiative Takes Crucial Next Step***

<http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/next-steps-my-brothers-keeper>



Photo Credits; Top left to bottom right:

**The Nation:** <http://www.thenation.com/blog/178581/obama-himself-my-brothers-keeper-admirable-flawed#>

**Ebony:** <http://www.ebony.com/news-views/president-obama-introduces-my-brothers-keeper-plan-304#axzz33VGBFAke>

**Clutch:** <http://www.clutchmagonline.com/2014/02/obamas-brothers-keeper-targets-young-black-males-women/>

**SF Gate:** <http://www.sfgate.com/politics/joegarofoli/article/Obama-Brother-s-Keeper-program-inspired-by-5275076.php#photo-5948360>

## In The Spotlight

*In The Spotlight highlights an agency or provider working with the city to accomplish the goals of YMI.*

### **Dr. Michelle Knight: Making Cultural Relevance an Educational Standard**

Developing college and career ready Black and Latino young men requires thoughtful and deliberate pedagogical practice for anyone interested in ending the achievement gap. Dr. Michelle Knight, a professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, and a former middle school teacher and high school college advisor, is currently serving as the Director of Culturally Relevant and Career Readiness for the Expanded Success Initiative (ESI) schools; established as part of NYC YMI. Her insight is helping to address how schools create Culturally Relevant Education (CRE) programming. Year one, 2012-2013, Professor Knight engaged in a school-wide systemic approach that offered select ESI schools an opportunity to participate in workshops focused on defining CRE within their school. The second year, 2013-2014, ESI is deepening its commitment to CRE within the domains of youth development, academic and professional development. CRE topics this year included creating an intensive lens for becoming culturally relevant professionals, cultivating a school wide college going culture for both successful and unsuccessful negotiators of a school environment and establishing environments of resiliency, care and success while marrying these topics to readily available metrics to scale up to city-wide high schools.



Knight emphasizes that students bring multiple, racial, cultural, linguistic, family and economic backgrounds to a school environment. Integrating CRE policies and practices into the classroom supports the forming of a true college going identity for all students and helps to support achievement by nurturing a student's socially conscious development. A first point of entry for educators, counselors and administrators developing a cultural competent lens for them is a willingness to learn about the students' cultures, communities and ideas about college readiness.

Other first steps to consider toward developing a cultural relevant pedagogy is to consider how one internally views diverse populations, and whether one is truly using an asset or deficit based view; looking at strengths or weakness of the individual and constantly questioning how one focuses on building upon the strengths of participants who are involved in programming.

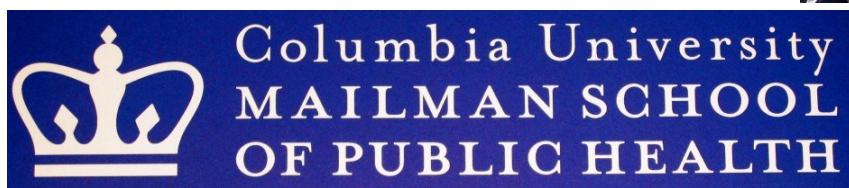
Knight adds that "the existing educational inequity in college readiness for Black and Latino youth is not going to be remedied solely through the development of more rigorous academic curricula, such as those informed by the Common Core State Standards, or other curricular changes. Rather, Critical reflection of one's own professional identity as an educator and administrator within a school context, and organization structure will better prepare youth to ready them for a college bound future." Building on the cultural background and daily lived experiences of youth will ensure that they have access to learning opportunities while strengthening their college readiness.

### ***Dr. David Bell: Young Men Matter Too***

Growing up in Port Arthur, Texas, Dr. David Bell realized early on that adolescent and young adult males were not as connected to health care and health care services as females were, which lead him down a career path in medicine. Through the years Dr. Bell has transformed into an advocate for this socially sequestered group. Currently an active NYC YMI advisory board member, Dr. Bell serves as the medical director of the Family Planning Clinic and its male subsidiary, the Young Men's Clinic, which is a part of the Ambulatory Care Network of New York Presbyterian Hospital. He is also the director of a school based program treating students in various districts located in upper Manhattan. The clinic not only stands to provide low-cost primary care services to adolescent and young men, but also to develop the next generation of health professionals. His dedication to service has brought about some imperative lessons learned, with one such being that "there is no such thing as a young man who won't open up despite the thought that most guys won't talk. Most guys want to talk and want to open up it's just sort of the place, the time and the person that needs to be had. It needs to be someone that is open, someone that is genuine, someone that has a genuine concern for who they are as opposed to someone who is just putting them down the same way society does overall". In his work, Dr. Bell treats all men equally regardless of identities or sexual behaviors.

The growth of the Young Men's Clinic and the advocacy for including adolescence and young adult males in the health care forum leads us to ask Dr. Bell what aspect of male health did he find to be the most imperative in regards to contributing to a better society or marginalized young men for that matter, he noted that "it's probably not one thing for adolescence and young adults primarily, but rather paying attention to sexual and reproductive health overall for them and for their future is an important piece. Engaging them at a young age around and in health care and around something that they're interested in I think hopefully can engage them in healthier behaviors overall for their broader health. Particularly because adolescent and young adult men of color are developing higher rates of chronic illnesses earlier than others, so it is important to hopefully influence positive healthy behaviors earlier".

Having produced numerous publications on adolescent medicine and health, Dr. Bell has been recognized for his work by numerous syndicated forums including BET, CBS, and NPR. The future of young men's reproductive health is promising and it is Dr. Bell's hope that in the future people won't be surprised that we're talking about males and reproductive health and that it'll be a norm to include it.



## Check It Out

*Check It Out includes links to articles and resources of interest to our partners and allies*

### ***CEO Announces 2013 Data-Driven Provider Award Winners***

NYC CEO and the NYC Young Men Initiative (YMI) are pleased to announce the winners of the 2013 Data-Driven Provider Awards, recognizing providers of CEO and YMI programs that improve services for low-income New Yorkers through data-driven decision-making. The awards celebrate both robust data collection and high performance that met or exceed program targets during the period of July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. Utilize the links below for descriptions of the programs and to see more information about the providers. An (\*) indicates a program expanded or created with support from the NYC Young Men's Initiative.

CEO and YMI are committed to using performance management and evaluation to ensure program participants receive the highest quality services and target outcomes are achieved. High performing community-based providers were invited to apply for an award if a program had a minimum of five providers. They were asked to assess how they use data to improve their program performance. City agency partners in collaboration with CEO reviewed all applications and selected the winners. This is the first annual award and we hope to expand the process in the future. CEO and YMI thank its partners and all providers who submitted applications.

Advocate, Intervene, Mentor (AIM) Program administered by the NYC Department of Probation\*

**Winner:** [Good Shepherd Services](#)

Arches: Transformative Mentoring Program administered by the NYC Department of Probation\*

**Winner:** [Harlem Commonwealth Council](#)

CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) administered by the City University of New York

**Winner:** [Bronx Community College ASAP](#)

Financial Empowerment Centers administered by the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Financial Empowerment

**Winner:** [Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation](#)

Teen ACTION administered by the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development\*

**Winner:** [WHEDco](#)

Young Adult Internship Program administered by the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development\*

**Winner:** [Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens](#)

Young Adult Literacy Program administered by the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development



**Winner:** [BronxWorks](#)



## MY-YMI

*MY-YMI is our list of ways that young people can utilize apps and connect with influential social media networks*

### *Apps to Try!*

**Yik Yak:** See what people are saying around you in real time on this virtual bulletin board.

**TED:** Watch short powerful talks on new ideas in most topics, from science to business to global issues, in over 100 languages with the TED app.

**NYC Pride:** A comprehensive guide to the annual NYC Pride celebration each June, including events, photos, and interactive features.



### *Who to Follow on Twitter!!*

**HAF @Hispanic Access:** HAF helps improve the quality of life of Latinos in the U.S through community & faith leaders, local service providers and information.

**LGBT @LGBTProgress:** LGBT Progress is a project of the Center for American Progress Action Fund providing timely, strategic research on #LGBT issues.

**Fatherhood Factor @FatherFactor:** Musing, epiphanies, and altogether useful stuff for active dads and their families.

**Ali Forney Center @AliForneyCenter:** The Ali Forney Center provides services for LGBT Homeless Youth between the ages of 16-24 years old.

## On The Ground

*On The Ground brings you updates on our programs what's new, what's expanding, and important milestones.*

### *Fatherhood Initiative Report*

In New York City, approximately 33% of children under the age of 18 are growing up in fatherless households. It was in 2010 when the Fatherhood Initiative, a subsidiary of NYC YMI, was launched in order to uncover and remove barriers that fathers may face when interacting with City agencies, assist in the creation of memorable moments between fathers and their children, support fathers as they increase their capacity to be good dads and to make all City agencies as ‘father friendly’ as possible. In order to transform these dreams into reality, numerous City agencies conducted an extensive review of their programs, policies and frontline practices to ensure that fathers were not being unintentionally excluded. The Fatherhood Initiative Annual Progress Report serves as a textual highlight of some the accomplishments or events that have occurred throughout the year. Examples of this years accomplishments can be seen with The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Division of Family Services expanding their Fatherhood program from 10 to 16 facilities in the ongoing efforts to engage fathers via onsite support groups; or the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) conducting a Fatherhood Empowerment Video Conference to capture the success of the *Dad’s Take Your Child to School Day Initiative* and to discuss the Fatherhood Empowerment programs being implemented in each of the boroughs. To read the full report click here: <http://tinyurl.com/lb6epgl>.



# **NYC** YOUNG MEN'S INITIATIVE PARTNERS



Department of  
Youth & Community  
Development



Department of  
Probation



NEW YORK CITY  
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NEW YORK CITY  
HOUSING  
AUTHORITY



Human Resources Administration  
Department of Social Services



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Department of  
Education



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