

Harlem Children's Zone: FY 2011 Report

HCZ'S VISION OF SUCCESS

Through the success of our interlocking network of education, social-service and community-engagement programs, HCZ is teaching the world how to end the cycle of generational poverty.

While we are seeing a rise in academic achievement among our students, every milestone is a hard-won victory. But with the generous support of our donors and the hard work of our children, families and staff, we have proven that large numbers of poor children can be put on-track for success.

The past year has seen an expansion in the depth and breadth of our programming, with a commensurate boost in the academic achievement and well-being of our children and families. Below are some of our accomplishments from the past year.

HCZ Model: Inspiring Other Communities

We have shared what we have learned with scores of other communities that want to replicate our model. We have also been a catalyst for change by advising applicants for President Obama's Promise Neighborhoods Initiative. We are dedicated to helping other communities adopt a comprehensive approach to supporting the education of poor children and families.

- ▶ HCZ's Practitioners Institute, which shares our model with others, hosted 76 delegates representing communities from across the U.S. and from 16 countries – from Israel to Iceland, and from Brazil to Baltimore to the Cherokee Nation.
- ▶ HCZ provided technical assistance via webinars, conference calls and site visits to the 21 grantees of the federal Promise Neighborhoods Initiative, as well as to 17 high-scoring non-grantees. In partnership with The Center for the Study of Social Policy and PolicyLink's Promise Neighborhoods Institute, we worked to ensure that each community was provided helpful information to further their plans.

Evaluation: Creating Measurable Goals

Evaluation is at the core of all we do at HCZ. Our team of five full-time evaluators is deeply integrated with staff across all of our programs so that we are clear about our goals and our progress toward meeting them. Everyone is accountable for meeting or exceeding their goals.

- ▶ 350 program goals were monitored by HCZ's evaluation team – from Baby College parents reading to their children to college students on-track for graduation. Virtually all goals were achieved or exceeded.
- ▶ HCZ has partnered with Mathematica Policy Research, a nationally recognized research and evaluation firm, to implement the revised 10-year Longitudinal Study of HCZ Early Childhood Programs and Promise Academy Elementary Schools. We have finished our fourth year.



Early Childhood: Strengthening Foundations

HCZ has developed and refined a series of best-practice programs for parents of newborns and young children, ensuring all are “school ready” when entering kindergarten. This relationship-building between parent and child is the foundation for a child’s long-term success and productivity.

- ▶ The new Baby College GRADS program fills a much needed void for 110 families, augmenting the powerful work of the Baby College. GRADS helps parents create a literacy rich environment for their children, improve parent-child interactions, and maximize language development.
- ▶ 100 percent of the four-year-old students in our Harlem Gems program (200+) were “school ready” for kindergarten at the end of the year, based on the Bracken Basic Concept Scale – Revised. Despite more than 40% requiring early intervention and special education services, our Gems improved significantly over the year—over 60% finished the year “advanced,” much higher than the national norm.



Promise Academy Charter Schools: Closing the Achievement Gap

Our charter schools are unlike any other school. They not only have longer days and longer years (school ends in August), students participate in enriching after-school programs from photography to dance to robotics.

- ▶ 100 percent of the Promise High School students who took the English Regents exam passed, and 96 percent passed at least one math Regents. The Class of 2012 will be our inaugural graduating class.
- ▶ HCZ broke ground for a new \$100-million, K-12 Promise Academy I school building and community center in St. Nicholas Houses. This state-of-the-art, 135,000-square-foot building will be the new home for 1,300 students as well as serve as a vibrant community center for students and adults after school and on weekends.



The College Prep Program: Journey to Higher Education

HCZ creates a college-going culture for all of our youth, starting as early as possible. We start college prep in middle school, focusing our students on their path to college. HCZ serves 1,000 middle-school youth at five sites and 1,200 high-school youth at six sites, fostering academic achievement and personal growth.

- ▶ HCZ provided SAT prep sessions throughout the year for more than 200 high-school juniors.
- ▶ Hundreds of middle and high school students visited college campuses on the east coast.
- ▶ 95 percent of our 265+ public-school seniors were accepted to college and offered \$9 million in scholarships.

College Success: Supporting HCZ Students on Campus

HCZ has learned that we must be in regular contact with our kids throughout their college years to provide support to help them stay in school and graduate. Today, we have nearly 30 full-time staff who oversee our 700+ students in college.

- ▶ Over the summer, 149 HCZ college students received paid internships – some with major corporations such as American Express, Goldman Sachs, HBO, NBC, Wells Fargo and Showtime. Internships help young people establish a future networking base, earn money for college and gain important job skills.

Student Achievement: Arts, Sports & Culture

Beyond academics, HCZ has strong after-school programs that offer clubs, sports and more to provide safe, enriching alternatives to the streets, and expose them to diverse experiences so they become well-rounded young men and women.

- ▶ For more than a decade, our TRUCE Fitness karate club has been winning competitions. In FY 11, middle school students won 135 trophies, including 62 first-place trophies and three Grand Masters.
- ▶ For years, our public-school kids have played competitive chess. This year, HCZ students participated in the New York City Chess Championship tournament, winning 6th place in the High School Novice section and 5th place in the Junior High School Novice section.

Healthy Living Initiative: Community Health & Wellness

Working with the whole child, HCZ is stepping up its efforts to combat obesity, which is at epidemic proportions in Harlem. We have made great headway over the past year, and continue to pilot programs to develop best practices.

- ▶ HCZ opened the Harlem Armory Sports Center, a 50,000-square-foot health and fitness facility serving more than 1,000 children per week. Even our 3-year olds are participating, learning tennis and yoga.
- ▶ The “Get Fit” Challenge, a 7-month health-and-wellness competition was held across all of HCZ’s middle and high school sites. Eleven teams with 334 youth participated with the goal of losing weight, increasing their exercising, and learning about nutrition. Of the total, one-third (119) began the competition overweight or obese; of these participants, 48% lost or maintained their weight, which is an excellent result, particularly since many were still growing.
- ▶ Our 9th annual HCZ Summer Games were held in July with 4,500 youth participating in track and field competitions. All sites, all ages participated.



Promoting Peace in Our Zone

HCZ has long worked with families to defuse the stresses that can lead to unstable and even violent home environments. With the escalation of street violence recently, we developed new approaches to help keep our children safe as they walk to and from our program sites:

- ▶ Safety Knights, composed of HCZ staff members, monitor a ten-block “safety corridor,” from 125th Street to 135th Street along Fifth Avenue, which is a hot spot for violence. We are also working closely with the community, the NYC Police Department and local businesses to assist us.
- ▶ At the 17th HCZ Annual Peace March in August, more than 3,600 youth, parents, and community residents marched through Harlem in solidarity to speak out against violence in the community.

Financial Stability: Contributing to a Vibrant Economy in Harlem

Beyond HCZ's investment in children and families, we are an economic engine in the community. HCZ is one of the largest employers in Harlem, supporting local businesses, and ensuring much-needed funds are brought back into the community.

- ▶ For the past 10 years, HCZ has provided a free tax-preparation program, ensuring families take advantage of the various credits for which they are eligible. Last year, we helped 4,375 residents receive refunds and credits totaling \$7.4 million.
- ▶ Approximately half of our 2,000+ HCZ employees live in the community or surrounding neighborhoods and support local businesses daily.



Media Highlights: HCZ at the Forefront of the Education Reform Movement, Nationally and Internationally

Harlem Children's Zone is reshaping the debate on education and poverty in the United States and the media has taken notice.

- ▶ Geoffrey Canada was named to the TIME 100 list of the most influential people in the world.
- ▶ The critically acclaimed documentaries *Waiting for "Superman"* and *The Lottery* premiered last September, alerting Americans to the terrible state of public education. Geoffrey Canada was featured in both films.
- ▶ HCZ was featured in national and international press, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Toronto Star*, *The Financial Times* (UK), *TIME Magazine*, *The Economist*, and *Parenting Magazine*, among many others.

Looking forward to FY 2012

It is already a busy fall, and there is much to look forward to. A few highlights below. We will be:

- ▶ Serving more than 9,000 children within our 97 blocks – and thousands more in other programs.
- ▶ Expanding our Healthy Living Initiative and Get Fit Challenge to 500 children.
- ▶ Graduating the inaugural class of Promise Academy high school students, on their way to college.
- ▶ Overseeing more than 700 students in college.
- ▶ Building our endowment to help sustain the work of HCZ for decades to come.



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