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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**New Report Critical to Successful Workforce Development Efforts  
--Year Up Model Offers Lessons for Education and Community Programs--**

**Boston, MA - November 10, 2009** – With millions of federal stimulus dollars being allocated to upgrade the skills of the nation’s workforce, new research released today from the New York-based think tank Workforce Strategy Center (WSC), offers important lessons for workforce development practitioners on the importance of effectively engaging employers in their efforts.

WSC studied the Year Up model, recognized in June by President Barack Obama for its proven track-record in providing technical skills and professional training to low-income young adults in urban areas. WSC’s research focuses on the social enterprise program’s business-like approach to working with employers. The Year Up model offers education and community programs several important lessons:

- Develop a sales approach that cultivates relationships with employers:
  - Year Up researches employers thoroughly and manages its partner relationships with regular check ups.
- Make a business case for youth services to employers:
  - Year Up sells the value of investing in the education and training of young adults to broaden the talent pipeline.
- Establish a relationship with employers:
  - Year Up invites employers to take part in all aspects of its program, including assisting with the design of curricula.
- Provide top quality and customized services:
  - Year Up conducts a rigorous assessment of each student’s aptitude and needs and works closely with employers to find the right fit between the student’s skills and training needs and the needs of the business.
- Use business tools:
  - Year Up uses the same business tracking tools that its employer partners use, which allows for close coordination and continuous improvement.

“Year Up is a great example of the headway we can make in preparing urban young people for jobs if we treat our business partners as customers,” said Shawn Bohlen, National Director of Strategic Growth and Impact of Year Up. “We do so by demonstrating the value to businesses of well-trained and skilled urban young adults as a new pipeline of talent.”

Year Up offers one-year training programs to urban young adults (18-24) to provide them with a unique combination of technical and professional skills, college credits, an educational stipend and corporate internships. Founded in 2001, Year Up has supported over 1,000 students to complete internships with 95 employers.

“Our research shows that employers are the lynchpin to connecting education and training programs to the demand in local labor markets,” said Julian L. Alssid, executive director of Workforce Strategy Center.

WSC’s Year Up research is part of a larger endeavor it is undertaking to capture how employers are contributing to the success of public and private workforce development efforts across the country. A report funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation highlighting the role of employers in helping low-income young adults attain postsecondary credentials was released earlier in the fall.

WSC’s research on Year Up, ***Effective Employer Engagement: The Year Up Model*** can be found at [www.yearup.org](http://www.yearup.org)

### **About Year Up**

*Year Up’s mission is to close the Opportunity Divide by providing urban young adults with the skills, experience, and support that will empower them to reach their potential through professional careers and higher education. Year Up achieves this mission through a high support, high expectation model that combines marketable job skills, stipends, internships, college credit, a behavior management system and several levels of support to place these young adults on a viable path to economic self-sufficiency. Year Up currently serves more than 1,600 students a year at sites in Atlanta, Boston, Providence, New York City, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.*