



Another great resident-opportunity program is growing and building even more momentum.

Last month, HUD, the “Department of Opportunity,” announced a \$24 million investment for the next four years to nine public housing authorities and their partners to help residents increase their earned income and become self-sufficient. HUD’s ***Jobs-Plus Pilot Program*** supports work readiness and connects public housing residents with employment, education and financial empowerment services—and it’s a model proven to help public housing residents find and keep jobs.

With energy and enthusiasm, representatives from HUD’s new Jobs Plus grantees, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cuyahoga, Houston, Memphis, Roanoke, St. Louis, and Syracuse, recently gathered in New York City to attend the 2015 Jobs Plus Learning Network Convening, along with all the other Jobs Plus sites, including those currently running the program in New York City and San Antonio.

The new HUD-funded sites were invited to join in the discussions with those who have been running other Jobs Plus programs for several years now. HUD’s new grantees benefitted from candid advice on a variety of program details, from tips on outreach and sustaining contact with residents (called “members”), to engaging local employers, maximizing rent incentives, and creating an environment that leads to innovation and results. The group was also able to hear from a panel of employers who have employed many Jobs Plus members and have pro-actively committed to making their work culture welcoming to Jobs Plus employees.

“We are excited about the Jobs Plus program and the convening in New York was eye-opening. It was very helpful to learn from programs that are already on the ground doing this work.” said David Paccone, Assistant Executive Director and Director of Development at Syracuse Housing Authority.

“One of the conference presenters said something that was particularly memorable, ‘Innovate but fail fast’. Jobs Plus provides an opportunity to design innovative, local opportunities, and to be flexible with ideas that prove successful, and to move past those that may not work in our community,” said Paccone.

The Convening was hosted by the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), the Mayor’s Fund to Advance NYC, the NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA), the NYC Young Men’s Initiative (YMI), the NYC Office of Consumer Affairs and the NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA). CEO administers Social Innovation Fund dollars granted through the Center for National and Community Service (CNCS) that funds Jobs Plus sites in the Bronx and San Antonio and CEO partners with YMI to manage Jobs Plus sites in eight other New York boroughs.

HUD's new grantees also had an opportunity to meet each other and exchange ideas about the programs they are about to begin. This was a chance to start the cohort of learning that HUD will support throughout the four years of the pilot grants.

The HUD grantees will be gathering again in June 2015 for a three-day start-up conference and will be starting to recruit participants by this fall.

[Jobs Plus](#) is just one of many resident opportunity programs offered by HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing. For information about this and other related programs, contact Ron Ashford, at Ronald.T.Ashford@hud.gov or 202-402-4258.

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