



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

## Senator Montgomery Applauds YouthBuild Graduates' Renovation of Antioch Baptist Church's Neighborhood House

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY June 26, 2018

| ISSUE: **YOUTHBUILD, YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, YOUTH EMPOWERMENT, YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP**





## SENATOR MONTGOMERY APPLAUDS YOUTHBUILD GRADUATES' RENOVATION OF ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH'S NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

Last week, Senator Montgomery congratulated DREAMS YouthBuild at their 10th anniversary and commencement ceremony at Antioch Baptist Church.

YouthBuild is a comprehensive program for unemployed, out-of-school youth ages 17-24, to obtain high school equivalency diplomas, job and leadership skills, secure employment, and go on to college or vocational school. It is also one of the most effective and successful youth diversion programs in New York State. Additionally, Youthbuild students deliver hundreds of hours of community service while producing and preserving affordable housing in their communities. Since 1994, 41,000 units of affordable housing have been produced or upgraded by 150,000 YouthBuild students across the US. Over 5,000 of those students have been New Yorkers.

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*“Raise the Age is more than a slogan, it’s about creating pathways for all of our young people to succeed. YouthBuild is a major part of that opportunity pipeline. Young men and women who are out of school and out of work are particularly susceptible to getting caught up in the criminal justice system, even though they have all the potential in the world,” said Senator Velmanette Montgomery. “We don’t do nearly enough in our state for young people. However, YouthBuild does it right. We need this program, we need to talk about it and support it and expand it. This is why I introduced the New York State YouthBuild Act.”*

After addressing YouthBuild graduates, Senator Montgomery joined Reverend Robert M. Waterman, Pastor of Antioch Baptist Church, for a walkthrough of the landmarked adjoining brownstone owned by the church. Under the supervision of Construction Supervisor Dathan Freeman, YouthBuild students honed their skills by renovating the aging brownstone from the ground floor up. This included deep fixes such as the gut renovation of bathrooms, the relocation of pipes and water lines, electrical upgrades and building cabinetry. They also skim coated and repainted the walls, retiled floors, installed hard wood floors and installed new windows.

“During the beginning not knowing how to do many things at first was extremely challenging, but the process and experience of learning the different trades became one of my biggest accomplishments” expressed Cailan Lee Riviears, a YouthBuild student who worked on the project.

“This project was instrumental in introducing YouthBuild students to the history of brownstones and the intricacies of renovation and restoration. As they restore this brownstone and give it a second chance, their lives are also being restored through the YouthBuild program,” said Reverend Robert M. Waterman. “I was more than happy to turn over Antioch Baptist Church’s Neighborhood House to give them the opportunity they

needed to be successful.”

“Rehabbing the Neighborhood House at the historic landmarked 100-year old Antioch Baptist Church of Brooklyn instills a sense of pride and accomplishment to the DREAMS YouthBuild students who reside in the Bedford Stuyvesant community,” shared Ditashiah Kohn, Director of YouthBuild Programs.

Nonprofit organizations who are interested in having DREAMS students take on a project in the community may contact the Director, Ditashiah Kohn at 718-455-4308 or [dkohn@shfinc.org](mailto:dkohn@shfinc.org).

To continue building support for YouthBuild programs, Senator Montgomery has introduced the “New York State YouthBuild Act” (S8073A/A13A-Cahill) which passed the Senate last week. This legislation would codify into law a new grant program under the New York State Department of Labor to create a permanent funding stream for the expansion and creation of YouthBuild Programs statewide.

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Enacts the "New York state YouthBuild act"

March 26, 2018

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Velmanette Montgomery**

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