



*Fresh Youth Initiatives*

**For Immediate Release**

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**LEADING UPTOWN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION  
FINALIZES MERGER WITH UPPER WEST SIDE TUTORING PROGRAM  
Fresh Youth Initiatives will expand its program to include tutoring and other  
critically needed academic supports to scores of Manhattan youth.**

**New York, NY** - Fresh Youth Initiatives (FYI) has absorbed the operations of The Cornerstone Learning Center, Inc. as of January 2013. The New York State Attorney General's office finalized the merger in late March. Esteban "Steve" Ramos, MSW and Linda L. Watrous, M.Ed., Executive Directors of the two organizations began collaborating on this project in late 2011. Responding to the overall low academic achievement rates in upper Manhattan, Director Steve Ramos saw the merger with Cornerstone as a tremendous opportunity to bring this essential support to the youth population at FYI. "Our kids deserve to be on the same playing field with others in the city, and helping them succeed in school is one of the best ways we can help with that."

In addition to completing this merger and boasting its' first-ever Director of Education, FYI will also be marking its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this June. As a result, the organization will be revising its mission statement and marketing materials to reflect its commitment to this service expansion.

School District 6, where the majority of FYI youth live, is amongst the lowest performing elementary and middle school districts in NYC for both reading and math scores according to the 2013 Citizens Committee for Children report.

**About Fresh Youth Initiatives (FYI):** Founded in 1993, FYI is a second home to more than 300 young people ages 10 -18 each year. Collectively, FYI youth provide more than 10,000 hours of service to the community annually. FYI complements its community service core with academic support, college preparation, arts and cultural enrichment activities, exposure to meaningful new experiences, and personal guidance from our staff.

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