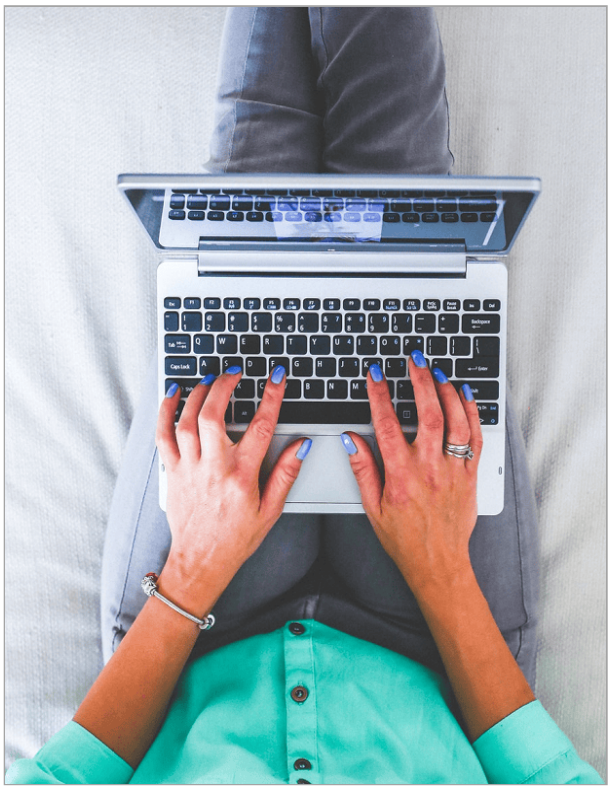


Commentary/Op-Ed - March 2018

Op-Ed: Bridge programs get big results, but little support

New York's bridge programs serve nowhere near the number of adults who would benefit from them. New York State should make investing in bridge programs part of its proposed $175 million workforce development plan.

by Naomi Sharp

Governor Cuomo's $175 million workforce development proposal, announced earlier this year, promises major new investments in the skills-building programs that New York needs. But for millions of New Yorkers who lack math and literacy skills—including 2 million adults without a high school diploma and 2.3 million who speak English less than very well—gaining entry to effective workforce programs will first require boosting their basic skills. That is the idea behind bridge programs, which help adults with limited formal education acquire the skills they need to transition into training and higher education.

In this *Gotham Gazette* op-ed, Center for an Urban Future Research Associate Naomi Sharp asserts that New York State should make investing in bridge programs part of its workforce development plan. Where the model has been implemented, the results are impressive. However, fewer than a dozen programs in New York City and just a handful upstate put the full bridge model into practice.

Read the op-ed here.

This op-ed is a continuation of the Center for an Urban Future's extensive research on workforce development in New York, including the groundbreaking study, *Seeking a State Workforce Strategy*.

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Center for an Urban Future (CUF) is an independent, nonprofit think tank that generates innovative policies to create jobs, reduce inequality, and help lower income New Yorkers climb into the middle class. For 20 years, CUF has published accessible, data-driven reports on ways to grow and diversify the economy and expand opportunity that are anchored in rigorous research, not preconceived notions about outcome. Our work has been a powerful catalyst for policy change in New York City and serves as an invaluable resource for government officials, community groups, nonprofit practitioners and business leaders as they advocate for and implement policies to address some of New York's biggest challenges and opportunities.



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