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NEWS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Joseph A. Zayas
Chief Administrative Judge**

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New York State Court System Launches “Explorers” Community Service Program for Teens

NEW YORK—As part of the New York State Courts’ ongoing community outreach and civic engagement efforts, the court system’s Department of Public Safety is launching an “Explorers” youth leadership and community service program in Brooklyn and currently recruiting students ages 14 through 17 to participate in this interactive, volunteer program. The after-school initiative incorporates leadership-building exercises, fitness training, community service, and field trips, among other activities. Additionally, awards and scholarships are available to student participants of the program, with the court system planning to expand the Explorers initiative to uniformed commands beyond Brooklyn.

“The new Explorers initiative offers teens a wonderful opportunity to learn about their local courts and get to know and gain important skills from members of the court system’s corps of uniformed officers. It’s a win-win for everyone, with the officers also benefiting from their interaction with the youngsters,” said Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas. “I’m so proud of Captain Vincent Sinclair, Captain Jessica Herrera, and Court Officer Andrew Labosco for their hard work and ingenuity in developing this exciting program and grateful to Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives Edwina G. Richardson, Chief of Public Safety Michael Magliano, and Chief of Training Joseph Baccellieri for their leadership on this important effort.”

“This program is what civic engagement is all about, and I eagerly await the arrival of our Explorer recruits,” said First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George. “I am immensely thankful to the court system’s Department of Public Safety and Court Officers Academy for their coordinated efforts in developing this community-building initiative and working to get it off the ground.”

“What an inspiring way to build a connection with the courts and instill a sense of civic pride in our young people,” said Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Richardson. “A lot of thinking, planning, and collaboration went into the creation of the Explorers initiative, and I couldn’t be more thankful to our Department of Public Safety and Court Officers Academy for their tremendous efforts in turning this great idea into reality.”

“The new Explorers program offers an opportunity for our court officers to forge enriching connections with young people,” said Chief Michael Magliano. “Our officers consider themselves privileged to carry out this new mission that will uplift teens and help educate them about our judiciary and its vital public workforce while underscoring the importance of access to justice for all. We are proud to begin a program—one that represents not only an investment in each individual participant but also in our collective good—and look forward to expanding it over time.”

“As Explorer advisers, our court officers will mentor and work to help the student participants build their confidence and hone their skills to succeed in careers in law enforcement and the judiciary or some other field,” said Chief Joseph Baccellieri. “I applaud Judge Richardson and our court leaders for their support and commend Captains Sinclair and Herrera and Officer Labosco for their collaboration with our stakeholder partners in implementing this new civic engagement program aimed at teens.”

The pilot Brooklyn program will comprise 10 student participants and four Court Officer mentors when it launches this fall.

The court system is now seeking applications from students ages 14 through 17. To qualify for the program, students must be U.S. citizens and have a minimum GPA of 2.5 (C+).

To register for the program, go to <https://nycourts.questionpro.com/signup>

Applications are due Wednesday, September 18, 2024.

Inquiries about the program and the application process may be directed to Explorers@nycourts.gov.

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