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***KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPENING DOORS LEARNING
COMMUNITIES HIGHLIGHTED IN NATIONAL PUBLICATION***

Brooklyn, New York, December 10 -- The American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF), a Washington DC-based nonprofit, nonpartisan professional development organization, recently released *Success at Every Step: How 23 Programs Support Youth on the Path to College and Beyond*. This publication identifies programs that have been proven to help young people successfully complete high school and be prepared for success in postsecondary education and careers, based on the results of recent, high-quality evaluations. Kingsborough Community College (KCC) Opening Doors Learning Communities was identified as one of 23 effective programs that address the critical imperative to improve the college- and career-preparation of all youth.

Obtaining a high school diploma is no longer sufficient for young people who hope to land a job that pays a family-sustaining wage in today's economy. Without some type of education beyond high school, most young adults will find themselves out in the cold in the current labor market. Yet far too many youth never even earn a high school diploma; graduation rates hover at approximately 50 percent for African American, Latino, and Native American youth. Low-income students and those whose parents never attended college remain substantially less likely to enroll in postsecondary education. Many youth also lack the critical skills needed by employers in high-growth industries.

The programs in this publication address this crisis by increasing the number of young people who graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and employment. The vast majority of programs (20 out of 23) improved students' academic outcomes at the middle and high school levels, and 10 programs were associated with increased enrollment and success in college.

The Opening Doors Learning Communities at KCC improved participants' course passing rate, average number of credits earned and GPAs during the program semester. Participants passed more quickly through developmental English requirements. Program participants reported higher levels of engagement and integration, and were more satisfied with their overall college experience.

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Youth need a continuum of supports to develop the knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal resources necessary for success at each level of the educational and developmental pipeline. Programs like Opening Doors Learning Communities play an important role in ensuring that more students reach the long-term goals of career success, civic engagement, and the capacity for lifelong learning.

Learning Communities have demonstrated that the barriers to student success are complicated and too numerous to be wholly addressed by one or two best practices alone. Kingsborough's learning communities programs are emerging as a comprehensive institutional effort that addresses all barriers; academic, economic social and personal.

The report is available at: <http://www.aypf.org/publications>

The American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF), a nonprofit, nonpartisan professional development organization based in Washington, DC, provides learning opportunities for policy leaders, practitioners, and researchers working on youth and education issues at the national, state, and local levels.

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