

National Youth Transitions Center

A Collaborative Community and Multi-Partner Nonprofit Center

February 2015



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center





National Youth Transitions Center

Community Charter

We, National Youth Transitions Center community partners, embrace our role as vital contributors in the collaborative community, which ultimately seeks to empower youth and young veterans with disabilities to create a self-directed path to adulthood and employment. We believe in a shared philosophy and know this community of organizations is stronger together.



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Preface: Lessons Learned

As a signature initiative of The HSC Foundation, the National Youth Transitions Center (NYTC), is at its core a collaborative learning community to benefit youth and young veterans with disabilities. But from the beginning, the Foundation was well aware that the NYTC, and its Youth Transitions Collaborative, were new territory and that the entire team would be learning as the Collaborative model evolved.

Reflecting back since the NYTC's opening in the fall of 2011, the Foundation's team has identified key elements that have made this endeavor a successful one, as well as opportunities for improvement.

Invest in Infrastructure, Especially Technology

The NYTC was fortunate to be developed as a state-of-the-art center with accessible and integrated technology. This included wireless internet access for all tenants and partners utilizing the building, a voice-over IP telephone system for tenants and visitors, large flat screen monitors in all three conference spaces with built-in cameras for video conferencing, and built-in sound systems in the conference rooms and the lobby.

However, after attempting to use these systems, especially in ways for which they were not originally programmed, problems began to occur. First, tenants and partners did not usually own hardware (computers, laptops and cords) that was compatible with the systems. Secondly, the systems were sophisticated to the degree that either on-site IT support had to

be provided or users had to be trained on the systems prior to use. Further, the touch panels that control audio and video in the rooms were not easily accessible to a person with limited hand/arm function and those with low vision. And finally, various functions, particularly the sound system, were requested in ways that were not originally intended (introduction of passed versus table microphones, shared and separate room sound, etc.). As a result, staff spent nearly two full years troubleshooting and making adjustments to ensure a fully stable system that meets the needs of the NYTC's tenants and partners.

Be Open to New Uses For the Building

Within a short timeframe, tenants and partners were requesting room configurations for events that were not previously anticipated. For example, one partner wanted to simultaneously screen a film in all three conference rooms and then have a panel discussion in the lobby following the viewing. The Youth Transitions Collaborative also outgrew all of the conference rooms for its annual meeting and had to hold it in the lobby, which needed to include a large screen for viewing videos and other presentations. NYTC tenants also wanted informal meeting space for small spontaneous meetings. To address these needs, a 50-seat theater space was created in one conference room that already had floor to ceiling black-out curtains with the purchase of a large portable, easy to store screen. Stanchions with ropes were purchased to separate the lobby area so events could be held during the day without

affecting tenants and visitors coming and going. And the cellar level lunchroom was opened for small meetings at times it was not in use by tenants for lunch/coffee breaks. No doubt the NYTC will continue to expand what it can offer as tenants and partners require additional needs.

Explore New Revenue Streams

Even with the building 93 percent leased, it was operating at a negative cash flow because of the rental subsidies offered to tenants and the free meeting space available to partners. In order to create a new source of income to offset the subsidies, leadership decided to use the space for commercial events during times it was not being utilized for mission-related activities. A brochure was developed on the building's capacity to host receptions, film screenings, dinners, retreats, and then hosted an open house for event planners. The building was branded with a different name (The Center @ 2013 H Street) to create an image that differentiated it from the nonprofit mission-driven space.

Be Sensitive to Tenant Cultures and Philosophies

Although all tenants share a similar mission of supporting youth with disabilities and young veterans in transition, they provide different services and have different approaches to their work. Some even have different philosophies about working with people with disabilities and use different language to describe their constituents. Certainly working in the same building promotes learning about other organizations and can foster mutual respect. However, working too closely in a limited physical space may create tension. Therefore,

since a goal is to become very familiar with tenants prior to their moving in, this allows a sense of what organizations would make the best neighbors. This understanding allows the creation of compatible “neighborhoods” on shared floors and prevents unwanted tensions within the building.

Empower Your Partners

In order to stay involved, tenants and partners need to have real opportunities to have their voices heard. Two standing committees have been developed that meet regularly, govern themselves, and make recommendations to the Foundation regarding a variety of issues. Although they are advisory in nature, Foundation staff take recommendations seriously and rarely are suggestions not implemented or incorporated, even when they require Foundation funding.

Meet Regularly to Stay Engaged

One committee hosts quarterly meetings that bring together 10 to 12 partners for informal updates and networking opportunities. Additionally, there are three Collaborative working groups. These working groups provide further opportunities for partners to work together on a variety of topics. The projects and products that result from the working groups are branded as products of the Collaborative and give partners additional outcomes that can further demonstrate the value of being a part of the Center and Collaborative. At the end of the year, members of both committees and the working groups are invited to a reception where they are recognized for their leadership roles.

National Youth Transitions Center Framework

Executive Summary

Youth and young veterans with disabilities confront severe obstacles as they transition from adolescence to adulthood, military to civilian life, and school to work. Youth with disabilities are more than twice as likely as their peers to drop out of high school; they can expect to face much higher adult unemployment rates; the adjudication rate of youth with disabilities is four times higher than for youth without disabilities; and they are three times more likely to live in poverty as adults than their peers without disabilities. These issues disproportionately affect youth from low-income and racial and ethnic minority communities, where there are the fewest resources but the greatest needs.

Without timely interventions, these young people may become dependent on government subsidies and services for their entire adult lives. Cross-systems collaboration is essential to providing young adults with disabilities all the interventions, supports, and opportunities they need to successfully transition to adulthood and the world of independent living. Some small steps are taking place to improve the linkages between workforce development programs and other core systems of care, such as education, health, mental health, juvenile justice and foster care. However, evidence from a variety of federal and state funded youth programs suggests that greater initiative from multiple participants to align these services is sorely needed.

The National Youth Transitions Center (NYTC) provides a single location in the nation's capital for modeling such cross-systems collaboration and improving the transitions services available to youth and young veterans, their families and communities. The NYTC exists as an innovative "collaborative community" and provides opportunities for nonprofits serving youth and young veterans to build capacity, create new partnerships, and benefit from the Transitions Center's national agenda. This national agenda is comprised of policy and advocacy efforts, innovative research, and cross-sector collaborations that stimulate new thinking and learning across the country.

The Youth Transitions Collaborative is the focal point of the NYTC community. This membership group, facilitated by The HSC Foundation, is comprised of regional and national organizations with a commitment to or interest in serving youth and young veterans with disabilities. These organizations provide direct services, expertise and guidance for the NYTC. The Collaborative also serves as the basis for The HSC Foundation's efforts to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations serving the disability community and to create a cohesive community among these organizations.

As the foundation behind the NYTC, The HSC Foundation conducts most of its capacity building efforts through the Youth Transitions Collaborative, and works to ensure capacity building efforts are tackling the complex issues

faced by young adults with disabilities. The Foundation has a long history of providing support for trainings, networking and partnership opportunities, and programming to ensure a dynamic network of nonprofit organizations work together to serve young adults with disabilities.

The HSC Foundation views the NYTC not only as an opportunity to strengthen individual organizations, but as an opportunity to create a strong community. By combining forces, the NYTC facilitates opportunities for organizations to align strategies, resources, commitments and actions toward achieving goals related to improving transitions for young adults. As a site of innovation, research, advocacy and models of cross-systems solutions, the NYTC supports the development of a national community of new thinking and learning.

In order to continue to expand and energize capacity building efforts while simultaneously creating a transparent, highly-effective nonprofit community, the NYTC's operations incorporate a comprehensive infrastructure that facilitates and supports these efforts.

Organizational Culture and Philosophy

Establishing a clear and understandable organizational philosophy and setting values help to ensure that Collaborative members operate under the same assumptions and with the same expectations. Strategies to encourage collaboration include: incorporating spatial designs that are conducive to collaboration; hosting networking and community-building events; providing venues and tools for communication; and the adoption and signing of a "community charter."

Sharing Information and Outcomes

The NYTC provides a first-of-its-kind opportunity for partners to share outcomes, break down silos, and leverage each other's work. Furthermore, all use of public space, and all events, trainings and services provided within the NYTC contribute in some way to achieving the broader goal of improving transitions for young adults. To facilitate all these efforts, the NYTC utilizes an information dissemination process for outcomes, information and lessons learned so that Collaborative members will continually be informed of ongoing efforts and outcomes.

Joint Fund Development

As a component of the NYTC's capacity building nature, The HSC Foundation supports its partners in identifying and securing program funding, including seed and matching funds from the Foundation itself. The NYTC provides additional support by convening meetings to promote the development of partnerships, facilitating joint grant applications and communication of current RFPs, and organizing one-on-one meetings to identify new opportunities for partnership.

Leadership Council

The Youth Transitions Collaborative is guided by a Leadership Council, made up of a small group of senior executives from member organizations. The purpose of this Council is to provide a cadre of senior executives who can guide policies and procedures and act as advocates and spokespeople for the National Youth Transitions Center, as well as sustain the organizational culture.

Program Advisory Committee

The Program Advisory Committee brings together a diverse group of stakeholders who provide insightful, programmatic recommendations for the NYTC and its ongoing activities. The committee ensures that Collaborative members, youth and young veterans with disabilities, families and community members have a strong voice in determining the NYTC's direction.

Evaluation

The HSC Foundation works to measure the outcomes of the collaborative community created within the Transitions Center. Due to the collaborative nature, the encouragement of peer-to-peer learning, and the nurturing environment and capacity-building efforts, the NYTC (along with its administrative and programmatic infrastructure) stimulates desired outcomes. These outcomes take the form of new collaborations; expanded capacity of Collaborative members; expanded service provision due to availability of space and creative partnerships; and new or additional financial support.



Organizational Culture and Philosophy

The National Youth Transition Center's philosophy helps to ensure that all Collaborative members are operating under the same assumptions and with the same expectations. Optimistically, this "learning community" philosophy has become the glue that connects each individual program, unites the building into one community, and ensures that collaboration is a consistent, integral priority.

This philosophy is intended to impact organizational culture and guide the interactions and expectations of Collaborative members. In essence, The HSC Foundation and its partners create the culture, and the strength and visibility of that culture becomes an indicator of achieving the "learning community" philosophy.

Identifying a Culture

The NYTC worked with Collaborative members to define an organizational philosophy and principle values. The relationships and atmosphere that has developed among Collaborative members is a product of these philosophical ideals and other factors (described below), and together represent the NYTC culture.

*Culture is an explicit social product arising from social interaction either as an intentional or unintentional consequence of behavior. In other words, culture is comprised of distinct observable forms (e.g., language, use of symbols, ceremonies, customs, methods of problem solving, use of tools or technology, and design of work settings) that groups of people create through social interaction and use to confront the broader social environment.*¹

Philosophy

The National Youth Transitions Center is a community of individuals and organizations that share the goal of empowering youth and young veterans with disabilities to create a self-directed path to adulthood and independence, and to participate in and contribute to the community. Guided by their common mission and desires, community members commit to open dialogue, the provision of responsive services, continual growth, shared outcomes, and creating or enhancing partnerships that result in effective solutions benefitting youth with disabilities. The National Youth Transitions Center community is united by shared values and a desire to be stronger together.

Shared Values

The National Youth Transitions Center is a community of individuals and organizations that value:

Youth and Veteran Partnership

This community believes that the core value in all NYTC efforts is partnership with youth and young veterans with disabilities. Each Collaborative member believes in the necessity of full participation by young adults, through self-determination, informed choice and participation in decision making.

Collaboration

This community believes in the value of collaboration, in the increased efficiencies and effectiveness collaboratives can produce, and that partnerships are greater than the sum of their parts. Benefits of this collaboration include:

¹ Wuthnow R and Witten M. "New Directions in the Study of Culture," Annual Review of Sociology, 14: 49-67, 1988, www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.so.14.080188.000405.

- Shared knowledge and resources through expanded partnerships;
- Time and cost savings, as efficiencies are maximized and resources are leveraged; and
- Greater outreach to constituencies, as each partner brings its own network to the table.

Equal Access

This community values access for all individuals in inclusive settings and does its best to ensure that all information and resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the NYTC are accessible to and useable by all people.

Individualization

This community values the unique nature of each person and believes that decisions about someone with a disability are to be based on the individual strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities and capabilities of each person.

Innovation

This community values creativity, the entrepreneurial spirit, and the conversion of ideas into new solutions and services.

Openness

This community believes in the benefits of understanding its abilities and disabilities, breaking down silos, and that in sharing knowledge and resources, each unique member of this community can do a better job of serving young adults with disabilities.

Community Participation

This community values participation by individuals beyond the walls of the NYTC and believes that all people have the right and responsibility to contribute to their community in meaningful ways.

Diversity

This community values diversity and the worthwhile, unique viewpoints of people from varying backgrounds, and strives to reflect that diversity in each aspect of the NYTC.

Creating the Culture

Facilitating the development of an organizational culture occurs on several different levels, including in the design of physical space, in programmatic and administrative planning, in the managerial style of the “landlord” and its staff, in day-to-day communications, and in opportunities for side-by-side learning and collaboration.

As a result, the NYTC culture reflects the openness of its physical space, the values adopted by Collaborative members, and the beliefs and assumptions on which the community was founded. This culture is demonstrated through:

- Success in forming new partnerships and collaborations;
- Follow-through by partners in their responsibilities;
- Partnership retention;
- Populated spaces within the NYTC; and
- Feedback in meetings and in NYTC evaluations.

Space and Design

Design elements, structures and use of space help facilitate the kind of community envisioned for the NYTC:

- Glass walls provide openness and transparency—and convey a sense of dynamic energy.
- Unstructured spaces—such as open kitchens and modular furniture—are more accessible

to people with disabilities and are more conducive to community building than isolated meeting rooms.

- Message boards and tenant listings can foster a welcoming environment for open communication.²

Infrastructure

The foundation of the NYTC, or the programmatic and administrative infrastructure, helps to facilitate a positive community culture. Especially by obtaining Collaborative member input to this infrastructure in the development stage, they are more willing to buy into or adopt the desired behaviors. It is also essential that the infrastructure expressly addresses the expectations, rights and responsibilities for each member of the community. When most expectations can be defined, there is less room for uncertainty and disagreement. Moreover, these rights and responsibilities help to elucidate what is valued by the community as a whole. Essentially, these rights and responsibilities are what leadership pay attention to and measure and control, in order to reinforce the values and desired culture. For example, evaluation activities and satisfaction surveys should expressly address the collaborative environment and how to continually improve it.

Finally, putting these expectations out into the community for everyone to see continues to reinforce the values, beliefs and behaviors.

COMMUNITY CHARTER

Each Collaborative member has signed a community charter that acknowledges their commitment to the shared values, their

responsibilities, and being a member of a community.

Executive/Managerial Style

In many organizations where culture is key, there are champions of the philosophy. These champions are typically responsible for training, assessing, encouraging and rewarding partners. This effort could even be rationalized as an investment in the overall “learning community.” Ultimately, however, these champions’ primary mission is to guarantee successful facilitation of the collaborative environment and are key to a comprehensive, enduring collaborative community.

The managerial style that champions employ is one that emphasizes the royal “we.”

To continually develop this collaborative community, NYTC champions work against the traditional tenant vs. landlord relationship by emphasizing “we’re in it together.”

Furthermore, the champions are responsible for building partnerships with and among tenants and partners. It is essential to invest time and effort in building relationships with tenants, to support them in self-organized activities, and to make those face-to-face connections.³ One visible demonstration of this managerial style is to introduce tenants and visitors to each other whenever possible – during tours, meetings and other events.

Operationalizing Collaboration

Not only do The HSC Foundation staff and the “culture champions” introduce community members to each other, they create opportunities for collaboration to occur among them. Collaborative process and behaviors are

² The Nonprofit Centers Network. Building Blocks for Success: Building a Vibrant Tenant Community, 2008.

³ The Nonprofit Centers Network. Building Blocks for Success: Building a Vibrant Tenant Community, 2008.

demonstrated and put into practice through different membership groups and regular, ongoing meetings:

- The NYTC established a Youth Transitions Collaborative, which is made up of more than 45 local, regional and national organizations that are responsible for providing direct services, expertise and guidance.
- The NYTC also assembled and facilitates a Program Advisory Committee made up of Collaborative members, young adults with disabilities, family members, and community members to inform NYTC programming. This group operationalizes the collaborative philosophy and demonstrates the values upheld by the community.
- The NYTC formed a Leadership Council, made up of the CEOs or high-level staff of selected Collaborative organizations, which helps to provide sustainability of the organizational culture as staff turnover. The Council is responsible for reviewing evaluation results of collaborative efforts, inviting experts and researchers to present best practices related to transitions to the NYTC community, and more.

Additionally, The Nonprofit Centers Network suggests that multi-tenant nonprofit centers offer a variety of programs that help to operationalize collaboration and learning, including those that are for socialization, professional development and networking. Each of these gatherings provides opportunities for deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching around the organizational philosophy and desired culture.

The following list describes the series of meetings regularly held at the NYTC.

YOUTH TRANSITIONS COLLABORATIVE ANNUAL MEETING

Occurrence: Annual

Purpose: To share new information on programs and collaborative development, and to elicit feedback on areas for NYTC service improvement

Attendees: Members of the Collaborative and invited speakers and guests

Format: Facilitated by Foundation staff and the chair of the Leadership Council, and focused on obtaining reactions and feedback from Collaborative members

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEETINGS

Occurrence: Quarterly

Purpose: To review ongoing NYTC and Collaborative policies and procedures and make strategic recommendations for the future

Attendees: Leadership Council members and The HSC Foundation staff

Format: Facilitated by Foundation staff and focused on obtaining reactions and feedback from the Leadership Council

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL-HOSTED LUNCHEONS

Occurrence: Ad-hoc basis

Purpose: To engage Collaborative members on an ongoing basis and capture their feedback on ongoing Collaborative efforts

Attendees: Two Leadership Council members, a selection of five to 10 Collaborative members and Foundation staff

Format: An informal lunch where the Leadership Council hosts Collaborative members for friendly discussion

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Occurrence: Quarterly

Purpose: To review ongoing NYTC and Collaborative programs and make recommendations for Foundation grants

Attendees: Committee members and Foundation staff

Format: Facilitated by a Foundation staff member and focused on obtaining reactions and feedback from committee members

TENANT ORIENTATION

Occurrence: Ad-hoc basis

Purpose: To orient new tenants to the building, the community, the policies and procedures, IT systems, and their rights and responsibilities

Attendees: new tenants are required to participate

Format: This session is provided one-one-one between a Foundation staff member and the new tenant(s). During this session, tenants are provided the Tenant and User Manual. Opportunities for questions and discussion are essential

SPECIAL EVENTS

Occurrence: Ad-hoc basis

Purpose: To provide additional social and networking opportunities, such as open houses, networking socials and leadership appreciation receptions

Format: The format and attendees are dependent on the type of event.

Facilitating Collaboration through Communication

In addition to physically bringing community members together, the NYTC facilitates further collaboration through a series of communication tools and methods in order to utilize creative communication strategies and give tenants different ways and spaces to connect, share and communicate.⁴ Empowered by their common mission to be stronger together, community members commit to open dialogue, shared outcomes, and discovering new partnerships.

The following list describes a series of communication tools and methods both in place and in development for the NYTC. These communication methods have implications for other constituencies and components of the NYTC; however, for this report, discussion is limited to implications on the collaborative environment.

NYTC WEBSITE (THENYTC.ORG)

Purpose: To share information about the NYTC, Collaborative members and services, and promote the work of the NYTC and its partners

Availability: Available to the public, with a private log-in for Collaborative members

Functionality: This is a general purpose, fully accessible website that is the hub of all NYTC communication modes, including social networking

⁴ The Nonprofit Centers Network. Building Blocks for Success: Building a Vibrant Tenant Community, 2008.

SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKING

Purpose: To provide virtual modes of communication

Availability: Available to the public; Collaborative members and tenants are invited to share information for posting

Functionality: The NYTC Facebook and Twitter accounts share announcements and other key information

HEATH RESOURCE CENTER (HEATH.GWU.EDU)

Purpose: A web-based clearinghouse that serves as an information exchange of educational resources, support services and opportunities

Availability: Available to the public

Functionality: A national clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities, managed by The George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development, that gathers, develops and disseminates information in the form of resource papers, fact sheets, newsletters and resource materials

INFORMATION FOR YOU EMAIL LISTSERV

Purpose: To share general information, make announcements, etc.

Availability: Collaborative members are automatically added to the common email listserv; it is not available to the general public

Functionality: The listserv provides an easy mechanism to “blast” the entire Collaborative community with current events and emergent issues/information

In order to achieve this organizational philosophy, the NYTC works to inspire a collaborative and learning culture among its tenants, Collaborative members and the greater community. From ensuring an open physical space, to using motivating managerial techniques, to providing a wide variety of communication methods, the NYTC employs numerous techniques to facilitate the desired culture. Furthermore, acknowledgement, evaluation and reward of the collaborative culture guides the efforts of Foundation staff, with the hopes of role modeling, teaching and coaching on the desired culture.

Sharing Information and Outcomes

The National Youth Transitions Center (NYTC) is a community of nonprofits that is mission-driven, meaning that although these organizations may provide different services and serve the disability community by advancing different agendas, they share a broader mission – a desire to empower youth and young veterans with disabilities thrive in the workplace and within their community.

With the NYTC as the physical hub, there is a first-of-its-kind opportunity for these organizations to share outcomes, break down silos, and leverage each other's work. Furthermore, all use of public space, and all events, trainings and services provided in this building – in some way – contribute to achieving this broader mission. To facilitate this process, the NYTC utilizes an information dissemination process for all outcomes, information and lessons learned so Collaborative members will continually be informed.

Purpose of Information Sharing

Breaking Down Silos

The NYTC is a community of nonprofits, each committed to helping young adults with disabilities achieve their greatest level of independence and accomplishment. This multi-partner center provides a unique opportunity for organizations to share outcomes, break down silos, and leverage each other's work. By sharing information, these groups learn from each other, avoid duplication of services, leverage communal resources, and build on lessons learned. Through a continual process

of sharing and learning, the community is becoming more efficient and effective than ever before.

Evaluation of the Collaborative Effort

Due to the NYTC's collaborative nature, and the nurturing environment and capacity-building efforts, it is anticipated that Collaborative members and the Foundation will all experience new outcomes. These outcomes will take the form of: new collaborations; expanded capacity of Collaborative members; expanded service provision due to availability of space and creative partnerships; new or additional financial support for the NYTC or Collaborative members. In order to ensure that the Collaborative is achieving its defined goals, the Leadership Council recently formed an evaluation committee to design methods for understand the long-term impact of the Collaborative and the NYTC.

What Information Should Be Shared?

Ongoing efforts result in outcomes, lessons learned, and the generation of new information. As much as possible, this information is shared with Collaborative members. Not only does this provide an opportunity for ongoing learning, but it also provides new methods of marketing and outreach for NYTC community members.

- Private Trainings, Meetings, Lectures:
To the extent possible, training modules, outcomes of Collaborative meetings, and lectures hosted by community organizations are shared. It is recognized that some of this information is not disclosed in the

best interest of the organization, as it is considered proprietary or confidential information.

- **Public Events Taking Place in NYTC:** The content, or a summary of the content, of all public events are made available to public on the NYTC website.
- **Reports, Findings, Outcomes:** Non-event information should also be communicated to the NYTC community. All users of the NYTC are encouraged to share new reports released, research project findings and other relevant information.

Who Is Responsible for Sharing Information?

All users of the NYTC are asked to share information on the NYTC website's calendar of events. Furthermore, some of these groups are asked to share additional information on organizational activities and successes.

The HSC Foundation

The HSC Foundation oversees the operations of the NYTC and is responsible for sharing general information about its ongoing activities and operations, including information on the Leadership Council and Program Advisory Committee. The Foundation also shares information on funding initiatives and grant-funded programs related to the NYTC mission.

Youth Transitions Collaborative

Members of the Collaborative are invited to apply to use NYTC space free-of-charge, with the caveat that they share information on outcomes, trainings, etc., taking place. Members are also invited to share other useful reports, research findings or publications that might be useful in promoting the NYTC mission.

How Is Information Shared?

Information and outcomes are shared with the NYTC community using the following mechanisms.

Email Communications

The HSC Foundation (as managers of the NYTC) sends out periodic emails with information and outcomes from NYTC-based events and shares news from Collaborative members. Not only do the emails include summaries of NYTC events, but they also advertise upcoming events that are open to the public. Links to reports and publications are provided when available, along with contact information for organizations mentioned.

Social Media

The HSC Foundation (as managers of the NYTC) posts information about ongoing and upcoming NYTC meetings and events.

Accessibility

The HSC Foundation staff works with Collaborative members to ensure that all information is fully accessible and electronic communications are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The National Youth Transitions Center is a community of individuals and organizations that share a goal of improving transitions for young adults with disabilities and helping them to participate in and contribute to community life. In order to best serve this group – efficiently and effectively – organizations that are a part of the NYTC community are asked to share outcomes and learn from each other's work. Using the processes and functions described, information is disseminated to the Collaborative and NYTC community with a goal of breaking down silos, building new partnerships and leveraging resources.

Joint Fund Development

The NYTC is a site for collaborative efforts on every level. One of the most critical aspects of capacity building and supporting local and regional organizations is fund development. While many benefits are to be gained in this process, there are also several challenges present. It has been demonstrated that the planning process significantly alleviates these challenges.

Defining “Joint Fund Development”

Joint fund development refers to the effort of two or more organizations working together to apply for and obtain funding. The joint approach varies depending on who might provide the funding. In general, most joint fund development efforts are targeted at foundations, but the opportunity still exists to approach agencies and corporations for grants and contract opportunities. These organizations come together for a variety of reasons including but not limited to:

- Developing and obtaining funding for a collaborative project or program;
- Offsetting the cost of shared services or shared staff; and
- Raising more money together (for program and operational costs) than the organizations could raise on their own.

At the NYTC, the following stakeholder groups may be involved in joint fund development:

- The HSC Foundation – leads efforts (coordinated by a fund development manager) to develop concepts,

relationships and proposals, though will generally not be an applicant on the request submissions.

- Collaborative Members – have access to joint fund development efforts with some restrictions on their fund development efforts (e.g., if taking part in joint efforts, will be asked not to compete for that same grant as an individual organization).

Benefits to Joint Fund Development

Joint fund development can offer many advantages, including:

- Demonstrating collaboration among local, regional and national nonprofits;
- More efficient and cost effective programs and services;
- Avoiding duplication of efforts, programs and services;
- Making more comprehensive, coordinated local and regional services available;
- Enabling collaborative organizations to approach bigger funders and go after larger grants than would be possible for most independently;
- Giving funders “more bang for the buck” by providing an opportunity to fund multiple organizations with one grant or leveraging the funds to achieve greater accomplishments;
- Decreasing competition among potential applicants;
- Making efficient use of limited fundraising and administrative resources; and
- Providing mutual support among members.

Challenges of Joint Fund Development

To overcome the challenges of joint fund development all partners are engaged in the planning process. For example:

- The process for setting priorities and allocating funds raised must be mutually agreed upon in advance and viewed as fair;
- Coordination of joint fund development can take a great deal of time and energy, and depending on the opportunity, members can take on different workloads and receive different levels of credit;
- Discussions should include whether funds will meet priority needs or be shared equally among the partners;
- Lead agencies that take on financial management, and thus greater responsibility, may receive equitable compensation for the extra workload.
- The lead organization may suffer financially if it typically seeks individual funding from sources that are now targeted by or funding the Collaborative; and
- All partners must deliver or fulfill grant terms and conditions so that no other partners are put in jeopardy.

Meeting the Challenge

To maximize positive results of joint fund development, a collaborative might consider the following actions:

Utilizing a Fund Development Manager

The Fund Development Manager is a part-time staff member within The HSC Foundation or a contractor who serves as an independent

facilitator of the joint fund development process. This individual is responsible for coordinating all joint fund development activities and for relationship building with Collaborative members. Specifically, the manager is responsible for:

- Creating Joint Fund Development Efforts
 - Identifies potential funding opportunities for joint projects
 - Develops relationships with Collaborative members to best understand potential for joint projects
 - Connects organizations that might form successful collaborations
- Overseeing the Process of Joint Fund Development
 - Handles administrative duties to bring together potential Collaborative members
 - Operates as the facilitator or lead coordinator for each effort
 - Ensures the Collaborative members agree to pursue the grant opportunity in a collaborative format and not as individual organizations
 - Guides the Collaborative through the planning process
 - Maintains all key documentation (MOU, etc.)
- Monitoring and Evaluating Joint Fund Development Efforts
 - Maintains an independent position so that all Collaborative members can approach with questions/comments/concerns

- Tracks the efforts and outcomes of all joint fund development efforts
- Observes the characteristics and/or participants of successful collaboratives (and those that do not succeed)
- Makes recommendations on how to improve the infrastructure and processes related to joint fund development

Agreeing Not to Compete

When Collaborative members are approached to participate in a joint fund development effort, and they take part in comprehensive discussions about the joint application, they are asked to agree not to compete as an individual organization against the Collaborative for that grant.

A Consistent Planning Process

Whenever the Fund Development Manager initiates a joint fund development effort, the group that is brought together will go through this process and answer the following questions. It is anticipated that addressing these issues up front and developing a group consensus will prevent confusion and conflict later.

1. The Fund Development Manager identifies potential funding opportunity.
2. The Fund Development Manager decides if funding opportunity is applicable to joint project/program (this may require initial conversations with potential partners).
3. The Fund Development Manager seeks out Collaborative members to participate in the activity, and then convenes a meeting (or series of meetings) for the Collaborative

team to brainstorm the project and funding opportunity. During these meetings, #5-10 are addressed.

4. The Collaborative team adopts a decision making process.
 - a. Develop a clear mechanism for collaborative decision making that all members agree is fair and equitable. Decide what decisions must be made by the full Collaborative, and what will be delegated to a working group or other smaller body. Agree on a process for setting priorities. Decide whether majority votes will be used for decision making or if another decision-making model informs consensus.
5. The Collaborative team brainstorms the goals and objectives of the program, along with individual organization's roles and responsibilities.
 - a. In particular, define and agree on responsibilities for fund development to keep the program sustainable. Resource development is likely to be an ongoing task, even if a significant amount of funding comes from a single source, at least for the first few years. The Collaborative should clarify and put in writing who is in charge of what – how work will be divided in making funder contacts, preparing proposals and doing other fundraising. Decision making should be joint, so the Collaborative has a process for prior approval of fundraising activities even if one organization makes the contacts.

6. The Collaborative team decides how the funds are managed (this happens in concert with #8).
 - a. Establish a mechanism for obtaining and managing funds. Consider both short-term and long-term plans. Will one member serve as the lead organization, receiving grants on behalf of the Collaborative? If so, what decision-making and management responsibilities will the lead organization undertake?
7. The Collaborative team selects a lead organization.
 - a. Agree on a program management and oversight structure. Once funds are received, there will be a need for ensuring program and financial oversight and communications within the Collaborative. Some of this work can be done by staff, and some will be the lead organization's responsibility. However, the Collaborative will need a process through which issues can be raised by members to avoid conflict.
8. The Collaborative team decides how funds are allocated and how budgeting issues will be handled.
 - a. Decide how funds raised will be allocated (equal; percentage based on responsibilities; etc.). The process needs to be considered fair by all members, so that they will accept the decisions made even if they do not receive desired funding. If funds are distributed among members, on what logical basis will they be dispersed? How will the project be scaled down if fewer funds are raised than budgeted? It may not make sense to simply give each entity less money, since that could mean that no organization will have enough resources to hire staff or provide needed services.
9. The Fund Development Manager summarizes goals, objectives, roles and responsibilities in an MOU that all members of the Collaborative team are asked to sign.
 - a. Develop a written agreement that includes the decisions made about program collaboration. Consider giving the agreement an expiration date; for example, if joint funding will last for three years, have a three-year agreement. Clearly state the scope of collaboration, decision-making procedures and how the collaboration will be implemented. Be clear on what fundraising will be done jointly and separately. Specify the limits of collaboration, including if there be limits to sharing of materials, concepts and techniques that are developed jointly. Who makes decisions on such issues if they are not specified in the agreement?
10. The Collaborative team decides how to ensure everyone participating in the project receives credit and recognition for their work.
 - a. Finalize arrangements for publicizing the contributions of each member as well as the Collaborative. Ensure that proposals, capability materials and presentations, and public statements are agreed upon by all members, using a pre-determined approval process. An important objective should be to increase the credibility and visibility of Collaborative members; this requires deliberate planning and attention.⁵

⁵ Concepts in this section adapted from Mosaica: The Center for Nonprofit Development and Pluralism. Joint Fundraising: Promises and Pitfalls for Coalitions; Klein, K. Collaborative Fundraising. National Housing Institute, Shelterforce Online, 105, 1999, www.nhi.org/online/issues/105/fundraising.html.

Youth Transitions Collaborative

The Youth Transitions Collaborative is the focal point of the National Youth Transitions Center's collaborative community. This membership group, facilitated by The HSC Foundation, is comprised of regional and national organizations with a commitment to serving youth and young veterans with disabilities. These organizations provide direct services, expertise and guidance, and also serve as the basis for the Foundation's efforts to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations serving the disability, veterans and youth communities.

Description of Membership

The Youth Transitions Collaborative consists of organizations (including youth-led organizations) that have a history of working with transition-age youth and young veterans with disabilities or have a desire to assist these populations. Membership in the Collaborative is by invitation only. Organizations may support the youth, disability or veterans communities through provision of direct services, advocacy and public policy leadership, research and evaluation or other services. Collectively, all Collaborative members share a desire to work together to improve the lives of youth and young veterans with disabilities.

This community shares a desire to be stronger together, with a goal of empowering youth and young veterans with disabilities to create a self-directed path to adulthood and employment, and to participate in and contribute to the community. Guided by their common mission and desires, Collaborative members commit

to open dialogue, the provision of responsive services, continual growth, shared outcomes, and creating or enhancing partnerships that result in effective solutions that benefit youth and young veterans with disabilities.

Collaborative Members Responsibilities

- Be an active participant in the Collaborative, which includes but is not limited to attending meetings and providing feedback.
- Embrace the Youth Transitions Collaborative philosophy.
- Maximize the NYTC space to provide transitions-related services, programs, research and meetings.

Applying for Membership

All Collaborative members are asked to complete a member profile and commitment letter when first signing on to the Collaborative. These documents assist Foundation staff in collecting data on the membership and securing formal commitments from the organizations (see Appendix).



Leadership Council

The Youth Transitions Collaborative is guided by a Leadership Council, made up of the senior executives in the Collaborative.

The purpose of this Council is to provide a cadre of senior executives who can guide policies and procedures and act as advocates and spokespeople for the National Youth Transitions Center, as well as provide sustainability of the organizational culture. In addition, this Council assists in the invitation and hosting of influential speakers, researchers, advocates and policy makers.

This high-level group is responsible for specific tasks such as: reviewing the results of evaluations of collaborative efforts; inviting experts and researchers to present best practices related to transitions to the NYTC community; bringing policy makers to the NYTC to inform them of youth transition issues; and more. As members of the Collaborative, Leadership Council members have already signed the community charter that states:

We, Youth Transitions Collaborative members, embrace our role as vital contributors in the collaborative community, which ultimately seeks to empower youth and young veterans with disabilities to create a self-directed path to adulthood and employment. We believe in a shared philosophy and know this community of organizations is stronger together.

Policies and Procedures

Membership

As much as possible, Leadership Council membership reflects and is representative of the cultural, educational, ethnic and economic makeup of the NYTC community. When a mid-term vacancy occurs, for whatever reason, a replacement member will be appointed based on the procedures of the constituency group they are representing.

Council Member Responsibilities

- Be an active participant in the Council, which includes but is not limited to attending meetings (quarterly) and providing programmatic input and feedback.
- Serve as an ad-hoc executive committee when issues emerge that requires immediate attention.
- Be an advocate and spokesperson for the National Youth Transitions Center and the Youth Transitions Collaborative, fully embracing the NYTC philosophy.
- Identify problems, changes and enhancements in the area of Council charge.
- Acquire knowledge required to make effective decisions and recommendations.
- Engage in Council activities and communication at a level of professionalism that reflects positively on representative stakeholder groups.

- Complete a commitment statement to represent the individual's formal commitment to the Council (see Appendix).

Membership Terms

The Leadership Council follows an annual cycle from January 1 to December 31. Each member of the Council is invited to serve a term of two years, which begins on January 1 of the appointed year. Members may serve an unlimited number of terms. If a member has three consecutive unexcused absences or does not attend 50 percent of meetings held within an annual cycle, the member is deemed to have resigned and a replacement will be sought. If this member is a tenant, a replacement within that organization will be sought. A nominating committee, with members appointed by the chair, meets annually to review membership qualifications and characteristics and make recommendations for new members.

Council Chair

A chair is selected by a consensus of Council members as soon as possible after the beginning of the year and may be selected electronically. The term is two years; members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. If consensus is not possible, a majority vote determines the chair. Responsibilities include:

- Prepare and distribute meeting notifications (with support from Foundation staff).
- Solicit input from Council members on meeting agendas items and distribute meeting agendas at least two weeks in advance of scheduled meetings.
- Conduct Council meetings.
- Have an appropriate staff member take meeting minutes, or request that they be taken by another member, and submit to

Foundation staff for sharing, as needed.

Vice Chair

Assumes responsibility in the chair's absence. The term is two years; members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.

Assumes responsibility in Chair's absence. Term is one year; members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.

Operations

The following guidelines are intended to promote Committee effectiveness and continuity.

- Frequency of Meetings: Meetings occur on a quarterly basis. Committees meet both electronically and in person at the NYTC.
- Recommendations: Recommendations set forth by the Committee are brought to the NYTC Staff member within The HSC Foundation. All recommendations are thoroughly reviewed and considered but are not guaranteed to be approved or implemented.
- Meeting Documentation: Meeting agendas and minutes of the prior meeting must be shared with the Committee members at least two weeks prior to the next meeting.

The HSC Health Care System Hierarchy

The Leadership Council is staffed by the COO of the NYTC/Vice President of Program and Partnership Development for The HSC Foundation. Recommendations from the Leadership Council are considered by the COO/Vice President; when necessary, the President/CEO or the Board of Directors of The HSC Foundation is consulted. The Leadership Council has no governing authority within The HSC Health Care System. The HSC Foundation greatly values the input of the Leadership Council and seriously considers the recommendations it sets forth.

Program Advisory Committee

The Program Advisory Committee brings together a diverse group of stakeholders and obtains from them insightful, programmatic recommendations for the NYTC and its ongoing activities. The Program Advisory Committee ensures that Collaborative members, youth and young veterans with disabilities, families and community members have a strong voice in determining the NYTC's direction.

Charge to the Program Advisory Committee

The committee is charged with fostering and enhancing communication, representing and advocating for constituencies, advising on existing programs and recommending new programs, and overall providing a forum for discussing the NYTC's progress and development within:

- Youth Development and Leadership
- Career Exploration and Development
- Family Supports and Advocacy
- Research and Evaluation

Meetings and Feedback

The Program Advisory Committee is convened as a full group but also in sub-sets to address specific topics. Strengths of committee members are considered in soliciting feedback on particular subjects. Feedback is also solicited electronically and not always in person. This group is less structured than the Leadership Council, which provides overall guidance and oversight.

Membership

The membership of the Program Advisory Committee includes:

- Collaborative members (staff members)
- Youth or young veterans with disabilities
- Family members of youth or young veterans with disabilities
- General community members

Member responsibilities include:

- Identify problems, changes and enhancements in the area of committee charge.
- Attend and be prepared for all committee meetings.
- Solicit input from constituents on committee issues.
- Acquire knowledge required to make effective decisions and recommendations.
- Engage in committee activities and communication at a level of professionalism that reflects positively on representative stakeholder groups.

Membership Terms

The Program Advisory Committee operates on the calendar year. Each member is invited to serve a term of two years. Once the member has been off the committee for one year, he or she is eligible to serve again. If a member has three consecutive unexcused absences or does not attend 50 percent of meetings held within a year, the member is deemed to have resigned and a replacement will be sought.

Committee Chair

A chair is selected by consensus of the committee members as soon as possible after the beginning of the year and may be selected electronically. The term is one year; members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. Responsibilities include:

- Prepare and distribute meeting notifications (with support from Foundation staff).
- Solicit input from other committee members on meeting agendas items and distribute meeting agendas at least one week in advance of scheduled meetings.
- Conduct committee meetings.
- Have an appropriate staff member take meeting minutes, or request that they be taken by another member, and submit to Foundation staff for public posting.

Vice Chair

Assumes responsibility in the chair's absence. The term is one year; members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.

Operations

The following guidelines are intended to promote committee effectiveness and continuity.

- Frequency of Meetings: Meetings occur on a bi-monthly basis; committees meet both electronically and in person at the NYTC.
- Recommendations: Recommendations set forth by the committee are brought to Foundation staff and thoroughly reviewed and considered, but are not guaranteed to be approved or implemented.
- Meeting Documentation: Meeting agendas and minutes of the prior meeting must be shared with the committee members at least one week prior to the next meeting.

Evaluation

Overview

The HSC Foundation seeks to measure the outcomes of the collaborative community created within the National Youth Transitions Center (NYTC). Due to the collaborative nature, the encouragement of peer-to-peer learning, and the nurturing environment and capacity-building efforts, the NYTC (along with its administrative and programmatic infrastructure) stimulate desired outcomes.

These outcomes take the form of new collaborations; expanded capacity of Collaborative members; expanded service provision due to availability of space and creative partnerships; and new or additional financial support for the NYTC or Collaborative members. In order to collect, analyze and monitor outcomes of the NYTC and its programming, The HSC Foundation has worked with a University doctoral student to analyze its social networking around sharing information and resources, joint projects and referrals.

Specific Aims

The NYTC operates with two overarching goals:

- To create a collaborative environment within the NYTC that brings “added value” to the organizations working within it (model); and
- Build capacity within Collaborative members in order to improve transitions for youth with disabilities and young veterans (program).

Purpose

Evaluation of the Collaborative Effort

The evaluation process is designed to capture the “added value” the Collaborative brings to its members. Initially, the assumption was that Collaborative members experience capacity building through:

- free or discounted physical space;
- support in developing new funding sources;
- access to information; and
- vehicles for information dissemination/ program promotion.

However, as a first step to this evaluation process, and in order to understand all the potential benefits of the NYTC and Collaborative, an independent researcher surveyed Collaborative members to understand their perceptions of the value of the Collaborative. The outcomes of that survey have guided the development of the next phase of evaluation.

Process

In a recent evaluation, a doctoral student conducted a social network analysis of the Youth Transitions Collaborative. This analysis examined each organization (nodes) and the links between organizations (ties). It evaluated what ties exist, or do not exist, and the strengths and weaknesses of the ties. The results of the analysis demonstrated a well-connected network, with many relationships between members, regardless of their size or geographic location. Further, it concluded that the network

would remain strong even if any of the individual members no longer participated. Finally, it substantiated the critical role of The HSC Foundation as the facilitator and convener.

The HSC Foundation also requires that each individual using space within the NYTC complete a space evaluation form after the conclusion of their event. This form captures information on both the logistics of using the space and the content of the meeting hosted (see Appendix).

Collaborative Capacity Building

After five years of collaborative development and almost four years of operating experience, the National Youth Transitions Center already has key lessons learned to share with the nonprofit community.

Start Small

The HSC Foundation felt strongly about developing the Youth Transitions Collaborative in a way that would guide the concept of the NYTC and its programming. It was decided early on that membership in the Collaborative would be by invitation only. By initially engaging organizations with which the Foundation had a working relationship, it could rely on these organizations to be forthcoming and honest about their experiences in the development and launch of the project. Being located in the Washington metropolitan region, the Foundation not only had access to local and regional organizations, but also to headquarters and offices of national organizations. Knowing each of these organizations allowed the Foundation to move past the “get to know you” phase and more quickly to the “buy in” phase, which was critical to creating ownership among the Collaborative members.

The buy-in process was supported by involving members in each phase of the Collaborative infrastructure development. After each component of the infrastructure was drafted, eight to 10 members were invited to an informal working lunch. The draft component was presented for discussion and members provided their feedback, which was then incorporated into the final document. By the time this process and the

infrastructure manual were completed, members understood they had truly been instrumental in the development of the Collaborative model. Today, that active participation in the Collaborative is maintained through a dynamic Leadership Council, Program Advisory Committee and Collaborative membership.

Maintain Flexibility

When first conceptualized, the Collaborative was focused on direct service to young adults with disabilities experiencing life transitions. Since that time, the Collaborative has evolved to focus more on capacity building of Collaborative members and creating opportunities to address the larger issues surrounding transition. While the Foundation initiated the Collaborative and continues to provide the resources for operations, the Collaborative is very much in the hands of its members. These organizations have naturally evolved the Collaborative so that it would better serve their needs and the needs of their constituents. This evolution was critical to making the Collaborative a desirable opportunity for members, and The HSC Foundation believes that it is a characteristic critical to sustaining the Collaborative over the long term.

As a more specific example, The HSC Foundation was challenged to maintain flexibility when considering the target population for the NYTC. Helping to break down silos among disability organizations and between disability and veteran organizations were original goals; however, in communicating with organizations serving these distinct communities, it was clear that young adults with disabilities and young veterans with

disabilities had different understandings of their needs. In response, the Foundation developed the National Veterans Center, housed within the NYTC, to serve the unique veterans population. The mission of the National Veterans Center is to provide career-oriented employment and community-based job preparation training to veterans with disabilities, with an emphasis on veterans with physical disabilities, post-traumatic stress disorder, and traumatic brain injury. In addition, the National Veterans Center provides guidance to veterans who wish to pursue post-secondary education. Its development was necessary in order to successfully engage veteran organizations and create opportunities for collaboration between all groups.

Move Beyond “the Choir”

It was important that the Youth Transitions Collaborative engage organizations outside the disability community. The HSC Foundation and its partners indicated the necessity of working with non-traditional groups and organizations that were not solely focused on serving young adults with disabilities or young veterans. Therefore, the Foundation worked to build relationships with organizations serving young adult populations, or operating in the employment, health and educational fields that could bring added value to the Collaborative. This effort has been instrumental in expanding and broadening the dialogue to reach and develop new stakeholders and advocates.

Commit to “Nothing About Us, Without Us”

This slogan is used to communicate the idea that no policy or program designed for a specific group should be designed without the full and direct participation of members of the group it impacts. “Nothing About Us, Without Us” is a

basic tenet of the disability rights and independent living movement. Therefore, the Youth Transitions Collaborative makes sincere efforts to continually involve young adults and young veterans with disabilities, and their families in NYTC development and programming. The Program Advisory Committee is specifically designed to do this by including young adults with disabilities, their families and their community in a consultant role.

Develop Shared Branding

Early in the process of developing the Youth Transitions Collaborative, The HSC Foundation recognized a need for identifying what specifically unites its member organizations. Furthermore, it became clear that Collaborative members needed a way to communicate their involvement in the Collaborative without losing their individual identities. Therefore, the Foundation created a Collaborative brand and tagline for Collaborative members to use in their own way, in addition to their own organization logos and style guides. This brand is also used to identify products (reports, white papers, forums, webinars, etc.) of the Collaborative.



Offer Real Opportunities

While there are some capacity building opportunities inherent to membership in the Collaborative and to affiliation with the NYTC, it was important that The HSC Foundation offer clear capacity building opportunities to its Collaborative members. The organizations participating in the Collaborative gave a great deal of time and energy to the process of developing and implementing this concept. Therefore, the Foundation believes capacity building opportunities are what keep these organizations continually engaged. In particular, it has offered:

- joint fund development opportunities where organizations have access to a fund development/ grant writing staff member;
- space for hosting meetings, programs and trainings;
- networking opportunities and events;
- a university researcher to evaluate the impact of the Collaborative on its membership; and
- staff support to research and assist in the creation of Collaborative products that support the work of Collaborative members and educational outreach to their audiences.

These resources are offered free-of-charge to Collaborative members. In addition, the Foundation has developed strategic alliances with the National Council on Disability, U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services and U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. These alliances give credibility to the Collaborative and provide members with access to federal technical assistance and communication with critical decision makers.



Appendix

Youth Transitions Collaborative: Member Profile

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Website: _____

Executive Director or CEO: _____

Email: _____

Contact Person and Title (if different from CEO): _____

Email: _____

Type of Organization (select one): nonprofit / for profit / government entity

Years in Operation: _____

Mission: _____

Brief Description of Services: _____

Youth-led Organization (circle one): yes/ no

Regions Served (circle one)

DC Only

Metro DC Area

Other Region (specify): _____

National



Youth Transitions Collaborative: Commitment Letter

You have been invited to join the Youth Transitions Collaborative. The purpose of this Collaborative is to provide direct services, expertise and guidance for the National Youth Transitions Center. The Youth Transitions Collaborative also serves as the basis for The HSC Foundation's efforts to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations serving the disability, youth and veterans communities and to create a cohesive community among these organizations.

As a member of the Youth Transitions Collaborative, you must pledge to:

- Maximize the NYTC space to provide transitions-related services, programs, research and meetings.
- Be an active participant in the Collaborative, which includes but is not limited to attending meetings (quarterly) and providing feedback.
- Embrace the philosophy of the NYTC:
- The National Youth Transitions Center is a community of individuals and organizations that share the goal of empowering youth and young veterans with disabilities to create a self-directed path to adulthood and employment, and to participate in and contribute to the community. Guided by their common mission and desires, community members commit to open dialogue, the provision of responsive services, continual growth, shared outcomes, and creating or enhancing partnerships that result in effective solutions which benefit youth and young veterans with disabilities. The National Youth Transitions Center community is united by shared values and a desire to be stronger together.

For your participation in the Collaborative, you will be eligible for capacity building opportunities as provided by The HSC Foundation. This will include access to:

- Networking opportunities among regional organizations that serve youth and the disability community;
- A comprehensive communications process that seeks to promote the work and brand of Collaborative members within the NYTC;
- An e-networking environment (including social media) for NYTC participants, Collaborative members and other transitioning youth;
- Youth and family feedback on opportunities to improve programs and services offered through the NYTC;
- A comprehensive evaluation system that collects, analyzes and monitors the outcomes of NYTC programming; and
- Joint fund development opportunities.

We, Youth Transitions Collaborative members, embrace our role as vital contributors in the collaborative community, which ultimately seeks to empower youth and young veterans with disabilities to create a self-directed path to adulthood and employment. We believe in a shared philosophy and know this community of organizations is stronger together.

Signature (s) of the Executive Director or CEO:

On Behalf of (name of organization):

Date:



Leadership Council: Commitment Statement

You have been invited to join the Youth Transitions Collaborative Leadership Council. The purpose of this Council is to provide a cadre of senior executives who can act as advocates and spokespeople for the National Youth Transitions Center. In addition, this Council will assist in the invitation and hosting of influential speakers, researchers, advocates, media representatives and policy makers at the NYTC. Furthermore, Council members will provide feedback on a variety of topics related to the NYTC over the course of their term(s).

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Date: _____

Length of Term: _____

Contact Information

Email: _____

Telephone Number: _____





National Youth Transitions Center: Space Evaluation Form

Name of the person requesting space: _____

Organization: _____

Email: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Details of Event:

1. Date:
2. Room:
3. Length of event
4. Number in attendance:

Logistics Evaluation

1. Was the room available and properly set up at the time of your reservation? If not, please explain.
2. How would you rate the space on a scale of 1-5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent?
3. Would you use this space again?
4. Can the NYTC do anything to make your next experience better?

Content Evaluation

5. Were your event objectives achieved? Please describe.
 - a. Did you measure attendee satisfaction? If so, what were the results?
6. Were there any unexpected successes, new information, lessons learned?
7. Were there any unexpected deterrents or challenges?



THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The HSC Health Care System is a nonprofit health care organization committed to serving families with complex health care needs and eliminating barriers to health care services. The System combines the resources of a care coordination plan, pediatric specialty hospital, home health agency and parent foundation to offer a comprehensive approach to caring, serving and empowering individuals with disabilities.

The HSC Foundation

The HSC Foundation is dedicated to improving access to services for individuals who face social and health care barriers due to disability, chronic illness or other circumstances that present unique needs. Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc., The HSC Pediatric Center and HSC Home Care, LLC are subsidiary organizations of the Foundation.

2013 H Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20006

www.hscfoundation.org | facebook.com/thehscfoundation | Phone: 202.454.1220 | Fax: 202.454.1251

National Youth Transitions Center

Developed by The HSC Foundation, the National Youth Transitions Center brings together multiple organizations that focus on transitions-related services, research, policies and best practices to help youth and young veterans with disabilities transition from adolescence to adulthood, military to civilian life and school to work.

2013 H Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20006

www.thenytc.org | facebook.com/thenytc | twitter.com/The_NYTC | Phone: 202.454.1220

Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc. (HSCSN)

HSCSN is a dedicated health plan for Supplemental Security Income-eligible youth and young adults in the District of Columbia. Providing a comprehensive set of benefits for Medicaid recipients up to 26 years of age, the plan offers health, long-term care and social support services for members that include individualized care coordination, behavioral health services, outreach programs and respite care.

1101 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20005

www.hscsn-net.org | Customer Care Services: 202.467.2737 | Outreach Services: 202.580.6485

Congress Heights Life Skills Center

As a behavior health clinic, Congress Heights Life Skills Center offers an array of services for HSCSN enrollees, including screening for therapeutic and rehabilitative services, identifying and applying treatment goals, and medication management. The Center is a collaboration between HSCSN and Urban Behavior Associates.

3029 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, SE, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20032

Phone: 202.487.6996

The HSC Pediatric Center

The HSC Pediatric Center is a pediatric specialty hospital that provides rehabilitation and transitional care to children and young adults from infancy through 21 years of age. The hospital is guided by a family-centered philosophy to not only help youth with complex medical issues, but assist the entire family in understanding and living with the challenges ahead.

1731 Bunker Hill Road, NE, Washington, DC 20017

www.hscpediatriccenter.org | Switchboard: 202.832.4400 | Admissions: 202.635.6113

The HSC Outpatient Center

An extension of The HSC Pediatric Center, The HSC Outpatient Center offers physical therapy, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, assistive technology evaluation and training, and an equipment clinic to provide individualized support and services.

4500 Forbes Boulevard, Lanham, MD 20706

Assistive Technology, Bracing & Equipment: 202.635.6167 | Therapy Services: 202.461.3701

www.hsctherapy.org

HSC Home Care, LLC

HSC Home Care, LLC is a CHAP accredited Medicare/Medicaid home health organization located and licensed in the District of Columbia that provides home care services to infants, children and young adults with complex medical conditions and disabilities. Care services are provided to clients in a familiar environment, in their home and in their community.

1731 Bunker Hill Road, NE, Washington, DC 20017

Phone: 202.635.5756 | Fax: 202.461.3687

HSC Home Care also operates as a residential service agency in Maryland, **HSC Health & Residential Services**, and provides focused care services in the home and in residential settings, such as skilled nursing care inclusive of well mom and baby visits and auxiliary services from certified nursing assistants and home health and personal care aides.

8201 Corporate Drive, Suite 700, Landover, MD 20785

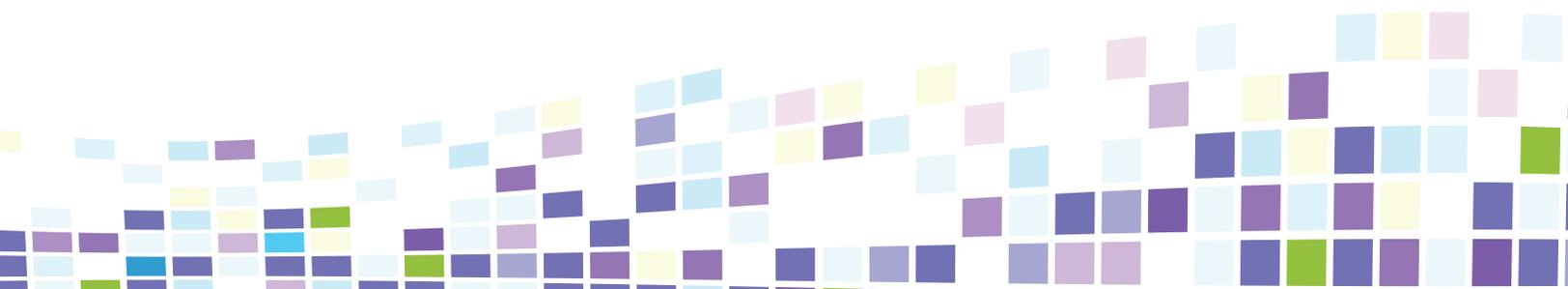
Phone: 301.760.3350 | Fax: 301.760.3348

www.hsc-homecare.org



THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Caring. Serving. Empowering.







National Youth Transitions Center

A Collaborative Community and Multi-Partner Nonprofit Center

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THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

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