



HARLEM RBI

PLAY • LEARN • GROW

PRESS RELEASE

May 22, 2012
Harlem RBI
www.harlemrbi.org

Contact: Elz Cuya, Harlem RBI
Phone: 212.722.7105 ext. 247
Cell: 415.290.5048
Email: ecuya@harlemrbi.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HARLEM RBI RECEIVES \$200,000 PROPELNEXT GRANT FROM THE EDNA MCCONNELL CLARK FOUNDATION

EAST HARLEM, New York – Harlem RBI was recently awarded with a PropelNext grant of \$200,000 over 18 months as well as expert strategic consulting assistance to help strengthen the organization's program design and build a performance management system. PropelNext is a new venture of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation that seeks to advance the programmatic impact of promising, primarily local youth-serving organizations across the country. Harlem RBI is one of 15 organizations in ten states that were selected, out of 102 nonprofits invited to apply, to participate in PropelNext's first cohort.

Year round, Harlem RBI serves more than 1,200 boys and girls, ages 5-22. With its unique approach to youth development, including participation on a baseball or softball team and engagement in group-based academic and enrichment programming, the ultimate goal is for youth to graduate from high school and college and build the concrete skills needed to break the cycle of poverty. Since 2005, 98% of Harlem RBI graduates have received a high school diploma or GED, and 94% were accepted to college.

"Harlem RBI is thrilled by the opportunity to join the first cohort of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation's PropelNext venture. We are thankful for the Foundation's generous gift and know their grant will enable us to strengthen our performance measurement systems and processes, creating greater program accountability and while preparing Harlem RBI for bigger and better opportunities as we expand and replicate our services."

"Harlem RBI is doing innovative and inspiring work with kids who desperately need help," said Lissette Rodriguez, EMCF's Director of Capacity Building, who developed and oversees PropelNext. "We are pleased to help this organization ensure, increase and broaden the impact of its work in East Harlem and beyond."

The PropelNext grant of EMCF will help allocate resources to the work related to program design and performance measurement capacity. The grant will also help Harlem RBI develop and implement a plan that will enable it to sharpen its theory of change and program design through technical assistance and consultations.

ABOUT HARLEM RBI AND DREAM CHARTER SCHOOL

Harlem RBI, a 501(c)3 non profit organization, began in 1991 when a group of volunteers transformed an abandoned, garbage-strewn lot into two baseball diamonds for the youth of East Harlem. Since then, Harlem RBI has grown to serve more than 1,200 boys and girls, ages 5-22, with year-round academic, sports and enrichment programs. Harlem RBI's comprehensive approach to youth development replaces the barriers inner-city youth typically face with concrete opportunities to build the skills and confidence needed to graduate high school, matriculate to college and break the cycle of poverty. Since 2005, 98% of Harlem RBI seniors have graduated high school, 94% of seniors have been accepted into college and 99% of participants have avoided teen parenthood.

In 2008, after 17 years of working in East Harlem and producing exceptional results, Harlem RBI opened DREAM Charter School. DREAM's mission is to prepare students for high-performing high schools, colleges and beyond through a rigorous academic program that develops critical thinkers who demonstrate a love of learning, strong character, and a commitment to wellness and active citizenship. DREAM Charter School inspires all students to recognize their potential and realize their dreams. Today the school serves 250 students and will grow one grade each year until it reaches capacity at 450 students, grades K-8.

ABOUT EDNA MCCONNELL CLARK FOUNDATION'S PROPELNEXT GRANT

The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (EMCF) seeks to transform the life trajectories of America's most vulnerable young people and help them become independent, productive adults. Since 2000, EMCF has challenged the systemic undercapitalization of effective youth-serving organizations by making substantial, long-term investments – in partnership with other funders – to expand nonprofits with compelling evidence that their programs work, so that more economically disadvantaged youth can overcome the obstacles to realizing their full potential.

Building on what has been learned over the past decade, EMCF has launched a new venture called *PropelNext* to help the next generation of promising nonprofits connect their passion for transforming young lives with the ability to use data for learning, self-evaluation and ongoing improvement so they can achieve greater impact.

In contrast to EMCF's large, long-term investments focused primarily on growth, *PropelNext* makes smaller grants to organizations whose programs are promising but not yet fully formed or codified. The goal is to help these grantees refine their program models, strengthen their capacity to collect and use data to inform decision-making, and develop effective business practices. By coupling *PropelNext* grants with the establishment of a dynamic learning community, EMCF hopes to create a larger pool of organizations with the tools, capacity and programs to serve more effectively our nation's most disadvantaged youth.