Building the Next Generation of Teachers and School Leaders:
The Urban Teacher Residency and the Teaching Hospital Model

Since 1989, New Visions has served as a laboratory of innovation within New York City, driving significant achievement gains for tens of thousands of students through a multifaceted approach to school reform: school creation, school support and human capital development. Focused on closing the achievement gap in the city’s public high schools, New Visions works in 73 district schools and our own emerging charter schools to design and scale instructional practices and operational systems that improve student outcomes.

The New Visions-Hunter College Urban Teacher Residency Program
Nearly one-third of New York City teachers leave the profession before completing their third year of teaching, citing lack of adequate preparation and support to succeed in high-need schools. To confront this reality and prepare effective teachers in the high-priority areas of mathematics, science and special education, New Visions and Hunter College created the Urban Teacher Residency (UTR) program in 2009. Based on the medical residency model and prioritizing clinical learning and team-based collaboration, this master’s degree program removes teacher learning from the academy and places it where it belongs – in the classroom. Key components include:

- **Intensive classroom practice** through a full-year apprenticeship in a mentor teacher’s classroom within a New Visions school, including lead responsibility for teaching one class per day.
- **Data-driven instruction** informed by continual student assessment.
- **Inquiry-based teaching** that brings grade-level or subject-area teachers together to assess student progress.
- **Alignment of master’s degree curriculum** with classroom practice, grounding pedagogical theory in actual instructional planning, student assessment, and data analysis.
- **Accountability for student performance**, with strong evidence of impact on student achievement a requirement for certification.
- **Induction support** for graduates through their first three years of teaching.
- **Initial New York State teacher certification**.

New Visions works with The New Teacher Project to recruit and select a talented, diverse and high-achieving pool of UTR candidates. Mentors are carefully selected and receive extensive ongoing training, contributing to their own professional development and building their leadership capacities. Since the program launched in 2009, more than 50 residents have graduated to become teachers, with the majority hired to serve in New Visions schools. Initial external evaluations show that the UTR program results in higher levels of student performance; *students in residents’ classes significantly outperformed their comparable peers on the NY State Regents exams in English Language Arts and Living Environment.*
The Teaching Hospital Model
Building the foundation for sustainable teacher and leadership development, the UTR model involves the transformation of a select number of UTR host schools into “teaching hospitals.” The teaching hospitals will provide the framework and support for spreading the collaborative, inquiry-based and data-driven practices of the residency model across grade level and content teams, facilitating the development of a critical mass of like-minded, driven educators within a school environment. This process will be guided by a New Visions-trained and supported site director within each school: a veteran teacher with demonstrated capacity to coach and lead peers who will act as a liaison among New Visions, Hunter, school leadership, and resident/mentor pairs.

One of our original UTR host schools, the High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology, became our first teaching hospital site in 2011-12. Two additional schools will become sites in 2012-13. Our goal is for teaching hospital sites to increase student performance, improve teacher retention rates, and create a tiered professional development ladder for teachers.

Fundraising and Sustainability
New Visions’ initiative builds upon research showing that a cohort model of teacher development fosters increased collaborative learning and teacher satisfaction, which in turn leads to increased retention levels. Urban districts currently spend upwards of $20,000 for the recruitment, hiring, training and ongoing support of each new teacher. Increasing retention rates – and ensuring that the teachers who remain are highly effective and consistently supported – will result in a continued return on the NYC DOE’s investment in its teachers.

The New Visions-Hunter College UTR program benefits from major support by the Carnegie Corporation, the United States Department of Education, and several small family foundations. New Visions is now seeking support from foundations, corporations and individuals to continue training a critical mass of residents, establish additional teaching hospital schools, and continue to conduct external evaluations of our work. This support will allow us to expand and continually refine a rigorous, classroom-based teacher preparation experience that significantly increases student and teacher learning.