

To Members of the Executive Committee,

I am writing to express strong support for a summer extension of CityServe and to urge approval of the resources required to sustain this work through the summer months.

At 155 Neptune Drive, Toronto Community Housing is serving as a program site for CityServe: Neptune, delivered in collaboration with the City of Toronto. CityServe: Neptune provides six youth aged 16–24 living in the Neptune community with paid, hands-on exposure to workplaces and community service to build skills and meaningful connection to the labour market. This program has provided a consistent, structured pathway for local youth to build routine, confidence, and next-step planning.

Since January, Neptune youth have participated in a mix of workforce exposure and community contribution, including skill-building sessions (leadership and consistency, storytelling/interview skills, habit-building, wellbeing, and financial literacy), career paths and post-secondary exposure (including visits to York University and Centennial College), and practical placements at GTA Habitat for Humanity and North York Community House. Youth have also been connected to City resources such as the public library to support education and employment planning.

Equally important is the individualized, wraparound support being delivered alongside skill-building. Across the cohort, youth are navigating challenges such as family instability, newcomer settlement barriers, limited financial and social supports, health-related obstacles, and uneven motivation. In response, the program has focused on practical supports that remove barriers to success by connecting youth to community social services and local resources, supporting access to scholarships and bursaries through TCHC, providing resource navigation through the library, tailoring exposure opportunities to youth interests, and strengthening workplace readiness through ongoing coaching.

Our youth are beginning to THRIVE! This cohort of youth has demonstrated strengths in confidence and communication, leadership, and relationship-building, with clear growth areas in problem-solving/conflict resolution and mentorship skills. We are actively strengthening successes through consistent expectations and applied learning. A notable success included leadership being recognized by a third-party agency, and youth taking initiative to connect with additional resources after workforce exposure opportunities.

A summer extension for younger youth is a targeted, high-impact use of public resources turning youth potential into workforce readiness, strengthening neighbourhoods through service, and delivering lasting returns for community safety and economic participation. This responds directly to the community call for more



employment and leadership opportunities for young people and strengthens long-term stability through credible labour-market pathways.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to investing in young people and the long-term wellbeing of Toronto communities.

Regards,

Chezlie Alexander

Director, The Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People