2019 Participatory Budgeting Youth Fellows

Lesedi Mataboge (she/her/hers)  
District 3, City Council Speaker Johnson  
Inspired by JFK's calls to service and Barack Obama’s message to “be the change you want to see in the world,” this Harvest Collegiate senior is most excited to meet her neighbors and get truly immersed in their ideas and experiences. Lesedi believes people are the lifeblood of democracy. She is the President of her school's Model UN Club and Founder/Producer of the Theater Club. After she graduates, Lesedi intends to study Political Science and get her JD. Lesedi hopes to be remembered for inspiring the next generation of presidents and humanitarians.

Mia Harris (she/her/hers)  
District 3, City Council Speaker Johnson  
An inquisitive junior at the Business of Sports School, Mia Harris hopes her colleagues and peers will remember her for being receptive to new ideas and perspectives. Mia was drawn to PBYF because she would like to help her community members advocate for themselves and make their voices heard. When she’s not engaging young people in PB, Mia is learning at the Employment & Technology Center in the Harlem Children’s Zone and playing in her school’s soccer team. In her spare time, Mia enjoys traveling to new places to better understand other people’s cultures, perspectives, and environments.

Rachel Guarneros (she/her/hers)  
District 4, Council Member Powers  
A firm believer in the importance of obtaining multiple perspectives, this year Rachel aims to get out of her comfort zone as much as possible. Rachel would like to be remembered for her kindness, which she tries to bring to every space in which she spends her time, including her guitar practice sessions. While currently a junior at St. Jean Baptiste High School, Rachel hopes to pursue a career path that makes her happy and allows her to help others.

Elijah Reyes (he/him/his)  
District 7, Council Member Levine  
Motivated by his family members who remind him to “keep fighting the good fight,” this senior from Talent Unlimited High School gives back to his city while having fun doing it. Elijah has sung for patients at Roosevelt Island Hospital as a Volunteer at Sing for Hope and has painted pianos that were placed in public parks throughout New York City. Elijah hopes to study, travel the world, join the Peace Corps, and do a few internships after graduation. He works toward being remembered as the guy who always puts a smile on people’s faces.
2019 Program Participants

**Louis Lin (he/him/his)**  
**District 10, Council Member Rodriguez**  
Louis finds inspiration in learning from any experience - even the small ones. He looks forward to meeting people who may have different perspectives and ideas to improve his neighborhood despite living in the same area. In addition to listening, Louis plans to apply what he learns from their experiences into his own life. After graduation, Louis is interested in pursuing a career in politics or business. Outside of PBYF, Louis enjoys spending time with his friends and reading. Louis is a senior at Pelham Lab School.

**Serena Prince (she/her/hers)**  
**District 15, Council Member Torres**  
Driven by the desire to fight against the systemic oppression of communities of color, Serena would like to be remembered for her compassion and for becoming the change she wants to see in the world. As the President of her school’s National Honor Society, Student Government member, and Generation Citizen participant, Serena is well on her way to making the spaces she inhabits more equitable. After graduation, this senior from Belmont Preparatory High School aspires to study Political Science and work in government where she can make change through policy and legislation.

**Zaida Boissiere (she/her/hers)**  
**District 15, Council Member Torres**  
Knowing full well that success is not synonymous with a person’s work ethic, Zaida’s experiences as an African American growing up in a working class family have anchored her passion for eliminating systemic barriers to opportunity. When she’s not engaging her community through PBYF, this Trevor Day School senior can be found leading her school’s Model Congress Club, serving as the Captain of the Varsity Volleyball Team, leading the Students of Color Association, and participating in the Slam Poetry Club. After graduation, Zaida hopes to eventually become a litigation or immigration lawyer, while also making time to learn French.

**Ifeoluwa Aluko (she/her/hers)**  
**District 16, Council Member Gibson**  
Motivated by the power of collaboration and partnership, this dedicated sophomore from the Beacon School is ready to see what can be made possible when her PBYF cohort works together with adults in City Council. Ifeoluwa is already used to serving as a vessel for communication between students and faculty as the Student Representative for her school’s Advisory. Having a love for talking to people about current events around the world, Ifeoluwa looks forward to connecting with her community members through PB.
2019 Program Participants

Adora Mitsakis (she/her/hers)
District 22, Council Member Constantinides
Having experienced a system that allowed student ideas to be heard through her time as President of her school's Student Council, Adora was drawn to PBYF because she wanted to help surface the voices of the people who make up her community. When she’s not engaging community members through PBYF, Adora can be found splitting her time as the Director of her school’s Drama Club and writing for the Journalism Club. Passionate about women’s rights, this curious senior from Saint Demetrios High School would like to be remembered as someone who always tries to learn something new from any opportunity that comes her way.

Jahin Rahman (he/him/his)
District 22, Council Member Constantinides
Jahin looks forward to engaging youth in participatory democracy at the local level. He is already running an organization that builds small schools for low-income youth in Bangladesh called Efforts in Youth Development of Bangladesh. Jahin would like his legacy to center on his dedication to his communities. This junior from the Academy of American Studies in Queens hopes to major in Economics and Mathematics, then put these skills to practice working for the World Bank.

KeJuan Duval (he/him/his)
District 33, Council Member Levin
KeJuan is curious to learn his community’s vision for improvement through Participatory Budgeting. When he’s not planning how to engage young people in the PB process, KeJuan can be found working hard as a junior at City Polytechnic High School and spending time with friends. After graduation, KeJuan would like to pursue a career in Engineering and architecture.

Elon Reid (she/her/hers)
District 33, Council Member Levin
Elon is excited to get to know New York City better by engaging people she wouldn’t typically get the chance to connect with through PBYF. Entering her senior year at Brooklyn Tech, Elon is a member of the Linguistics Club and T.E.L.L (Cultural Club), and she serves as the Editor in Chief of a political magazine, as well as Secretary of ‘Women in Need.’ When she’s not juggling community outreach with her school club involvement, Elon is typically playing lacrosse, trying new food, or spending time with friends and family. After graduation, Elon would like to pursue a career in Government.
2019 Program Participants

Angel Torres (he/him/his)
District 34, Council Member Reynoso
Angel finds inspiration in seeing community members come together to work towards a common goal. He has participated in his district’s PB process for several years and hopes to inspire those he meets to continue to “pay it forward.” A junior at the Lyons Community School in Brooklyn, Angel is the co-founder of an after-school tutoring program for middle and high-school students. After graduation, Angel hopes to study Biology and Mathematics.

Miranda Dobles (she/her/hers)
District 34, Council Member Reynoso
A rising junior at Williamsburg Prep, Miranda is passionate about law, robotics, and dance. Miranda is looking forward to focusing on community outreach, since she enjoys listening to what her neighbors would like to improve in their district. She hopes her peers will remember her as someone who put in the work to help her community. In the future, Miranda would like to go into the field of Criminal Psychology.

Darlene Uzoigwe (she/her/hers)
District 35, Council Member Cumbo
Darlene strives to make any space she occupies better than it was before. She finds motivation in persevering through challenging situations to learn how she can best use her skills to bring solutions. While she’s not planning new ways to engage youth in PB, Darlene can be found participating in Brooklyn Technical High School’s Fencing Team, singing in the alto section of her school’s Women’s Chorus, and volunteering her time at a pediatric office and local soup kitchen. In her spare time, Darlene enjoys writing. She has already published her first prose poem through her Creative Writing & Journalism class at Columbia University titled “Roots.” After graduation, she hopes to pursue a career in Law.

Herman Xie (he/him/his)
District 35, Council Member Cumbo
As a junior at Brooklyn Technical High-School, Herman tries to give everything he’s involved in his all, including his role as Vice President of his school’s Stock Market Club. Passionate about providing a more equitable environment for public housing residents, Herman is eager to finally have the opportunity to engage youth in NYCHA communities to obtain some of the resources they need to be successful. Post graduation, Herman hopes to study Finance and Accounting.
2019 Program Participants

**Javohir Abdurazzakov (he/him/his)**
**District 38, Council Member Menchaca**
Javohir aspires to be known as someone who is energetic, dedicated to a given task, and who will go the extra mile to make things run efficiently. Enthusiastic about gathering community input, Javohir is most excited to learn from residents who are working together to identify the most pressing needs in their community. Currently a sophomore at Stuyvesant High School, Javohir is a member of the Model UN and Key Club. In his spare time he can be found playing sports and spending time with friends.

**Future Owens (he/him/his)**
**District 39, Council Member Lander**
A junior at Urban Dove High School in Brooklyn, Future Owens is most excited to do everything he can to help his community, viewing PB as a vehicle to improve it. Future strives to bring his dedication and creativity wherever he goes, while also making it a point to brighten other people’s days (especially when they might be in need of some motivation). In his spare time, Future can be found playing in his school’s basketball team. After graduation, Future hopes to become a realtor.

**Silas Gaughran-Bedel (he/him/his)**
**District 39, Council Member Lander**
A firm believer in “the power of the people,” Silas believes modern society has failed to make space for youth to meaningfully contribute to their communities. Through PBYF, Silas hopes to help provide a different perspective from those already present in local politics. This junior from Midwood High School is passionate about coming across as someone who is not scared to contribute to discussions, and he’s sure to lead by example. In his spare time he can be found playing baseball, spending time with friends, and playing his guitar.

**Stacey Jiang (she/her/hers)**
**District 49, Council Member Rose**
A junior at Susan E. Wagner High School in Staten Island, Stacey is a member of the Key Club, Math Team, and the International Festival (a cultural club that celebrates diversity). She is also the Secretary of “Loving Bones,” a club supporting the March of Dimes. Stacey strives to be reliable and easy to talk to, which will come handy when facilitating community meetings. After graduation, Stacey would like to study Pre-Med and Public Health Services.
2018 Program Participants

Jagdesh Ram (he/him/his)
Central, Central Office
Energized by the hard work and sacrifices made by the change-makers that came before him as well as the transformative work already being done by those younger than him, Jagdesh does his best to show up and rise to any task, since he would like youth to have examples of people who embody perseverance. A senior at William Cullen Bryant School High School, Jagdesh is a member of the Key Club and serves on the Advisory Board of Global Kids (an organization that educates and inspires youth to take action on critical issues). After graduation, Jagdesh plans to pursue a career in Pediatric Surgery, and influence government to improve healthcare in the United States.

2019 Program Participants

Manahil Jafri (she/her/hers)
District 49, Council Member Rose
Having a zest for life and taking genuine pleasure in keeping busy, Manahil can be found looking for new things to do, writing for her school’s newspaper, leading her school’s Feminist Club, or founding her own (she created a club that donates prom attire for seniors)! Currently a senior at Curtis High School in Staten Island, Manahil hopes to be remembered as someone who has defied society’s expectations and has done everything in their power to facilitate the change they want to see in the world.

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Courtney Aubain (she/her/hers)
Senior Youth Fellow
A PBYF veteran from the 2018-19 cohort, Courtney returns as a Senior Youth Fellow to train this year’s cohort. A busy senior at Pelham Lab, Courtney balances her PBYF work while serving as her school’s Student Government president, Debate Team Captain, and helping with Ritchie Torres’s congressional campaign. Courtney plans to study Environmental Sustainability & Policy, and eventually attend law school because the Earth needs a good lawyer! Courtney would like others to remember her as a fighter for topics that tend to get left out of meaningful policy or budgets, including advocating against displacement, and the environment.

Amiya Miller (she/her/hers)
Senior Youth Fellow
Amiya returns to PBYF from the 2018-19 cohort to help train the new cohort of PB change-makers. A senior from Achievement First Brooklyn High School, Amiya splits her time between PBYF and being her school’s Debate Team captain. In her spare time, Amiya likes to dance, journal, and catch up on politics. After she graduates, Amiya would like to study Business and Journalism, and hopes to one day start her own political magazine.
Laura Rendon (she/her/hers)
Senior Youth Fellow
A Participatory Budgeting Youth Fellow from the 2018-19 cohort, Laura returns as a Senior Youth Fellow to help the cohort carry out this year’s special outreach projects. This senior from Monsignor McClancy Memorial High School is a member of various clubs at her school, including Student Government and the National Honor Society. Additionally, she’s a Youth Insights Leader at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Laura plans to study Politics, because the world needs more women in charge. This year, Laura’s goal is to make the PB process more accessible for non-English speakers, striving to be remembered as someone who worked hard for those whose voices have been left out of politics.

Leo Lin (he/him/his)
Senior Youth Fellow
Originally a PB Youth Fellow from the 2018-19 cohort, Leo returns to PBYF as a Senior Youth Fellow to help the cohort carry out this year’s special outreach projects. This senior from the Lab School in Manhattan is excited that the age range for people participating in the PB process is so vast, and he looks forward to continue helping to engage NYC’s youngest residents. Leo finds motivation in his age, seeing it as an opportunity to make change. Although he would like to explore different career options, Leo would like to study Business Management.