

LIFEWORKS PROGRAM

In June, a group of Lifeworks youth participants set out on a transformative college tour to New York City, the first time many had traveled out of state. More than sightseeing, the journey offered an opportunity to imagine futures beyond their current environments.

Throughout the week, students explored a range of college campuses, including The New School, where they discovered new academic pathways in the arts. They engaged with admissions staff, joined guided tours, and asked thoughtful questions, beginning to see higher education as both accessible and achievable.

Cultural exchange and personal connections made the experience even more meaningful. Youth met Bay Area native and now NYC-based artist Mincho Vega, who shared his journey of pursuing art and teaching. At REFORM Alliance, they connected with formerly incarcerated leaders transforming probation and parole systems, expanding their understanding of careers rooted in advocacy and community change.

Beyond the academic and professional insights, the tour immersed youth in New York's vibrant culture. They navigated the subway, sampled diverse cuisines, explored landmarks, and visited historic sites. These moments sparked conversations about independence, diversity, and personal growth, while building soft skills like adaptability, communication, and self-awareness.

This trip was more than a tour, it was a week of inspiration, connection, and envisioning new possibilities.