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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

### Grant Will Help Prepare MTA's Next Generation of Workers

#### *US DOT Awards More Than \$700K for Workforce Investment*

The future is looking brighter for young people hoping to embark on a career with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). That's because the U.S. Department of Transportation has awarded the MTA a \$739,605 grant to work with the Transportation Diversity Council to establish the Workforce Investment Now – New York program. The grants are provided through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The program will focus on preparing high school students at the Bronx Design and Construction Academy (BDCA) in Melrose for careers in transportation, design and construction.

The workforce investment program builds upon characteristics of a program developed by the Denver Regional Transportation District, and expands it in response to local New York City metro needs and opportunities. The initiative is focused on high school juniors and seniors in career and technical education programs and underrepresented populations who will assume duties and responsibilities required for various trade and technical positions in transportation, design and construction.

BDCA students complete four years of a public high school education which includes 21st century trade training, innovative sustainability practices and rigorous academics. Those enrolled in the electric concentration, graduate with 600 hours of education in electromechanical and electrical technology as well as 200 additional hours in a relevant internship.

MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas F. Prendergast, who, in June, spoke at BDCA's inaugural graduation ceremony, is once again proud to be working with the innovative high school: "As the MTA's system continues to grow, we will need more and more skilled men and women, such as BDCA graduates, who are excited about the industry and are committed to working on future projects at the MTA," said Prendergast. "These funds will ensure that we will have the best-trained and highest achieving employees to meet the challenges of the job."

Transportation Diversity Council President and CEO Dwayne C. Sampson said: "This FTA and MTA Ladders of Opportunity Grant provides a much needed shot in the arm for workforce development in the New York region, it provides promise for the future transportation and infrastructure technical skills pool which is tremendously needed due to increasing retirements. TDC is geared and ready for the challenge."

Transportation Workers Union, Local 100 Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips said: "Blue collar labor is responsible for America's status as a superpower; by focusing on guiding and developing our young blue collar workers we strengthen America's future. The FTA's Innovation program is an important component of preparing local youth for the world of transportation industry. TWU Local 100 stands in support of building a well-educated workforce that comes from the communities which are served by the New York City transit system. This program supports and guides young people in a valuable way by showing them the length and breadth of the transit system and preparing them for a future in this industry."

Representative Jose E. Serrano (Bronx) said: "By supporting a highly-skilled transit workforce, we are building ladders of opportunity for Bronx residents to move into the middle class and maintain the critical skills needed for an efficient public transportation system. This investment is critical both to the Bronx and to New York City's workforce preparedness and competitiveness in the 21st Century."

Representative Joe Crowley (Bronx/Queens) said: "This grant is an investment in the future of New York's workforce and in the future of our transit system." "These federal funds will help provide the training, skills development, and other educational opportunities BDCA graduates need to gain entry into well-paying careers in the transportation industry."

In order to meet current and emerging service needs, the MTA determines that it will have to make \$105.7 billion in capital investments over the next 20 years. Coupling major capital investments with workforce development will improve job access and job quality, increase system efficiency, enhance customer-oriented service delivery and promote ongoing industry sustainability.