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**JACOBS SECURES \$100,000 FOR INNOVATIVE JOB TRAINING PROGRAM
FOR AT-RISK YOUTH**

Funds will expand number of participants in highly successful YouthBuild Program

(Buffalo, NY) – New York State Senator Chris Jacobs held a press conference today at The Service Collaborative of Western New York to announce that he has secured \$100,000 in state education monies in the current state budget to support the organization’s WNY YouthBuild program.

“The combination of academic and occupational skill training that YouthBuild provides to low income and at risk young people is exactly what our community needs to ensure that everyone in Western New York has an opportunity to participate in our region’s economic renaissance,” said Senator Jacobs. “The fact that students gain such valuable experiences while participating in projects that serve the City of Buffalo and the broader community reinforces the value of this great program.”

YouthBuild offers young people between the ages of 16 – 24 a full time education focused experience that better prepares them for in-demand industry careers. Students work in a team based setting and acquire hands on construction experience under the supervision of a skilled tradesman while they work on community revitalization projects like building or renovating low-income housing. Other valuable job skills they are exposed to include leadership development, work readiness and community service.

“We are thrilled to know that these monies are coming to the WNY YouthBuild program at The Service Collaborative,” said Executive Director Kate Sarata. “We currently only scratch the surface of addressing the needs of the young people in WNY. With this support, we will be able to increase enrollment and continue to build up the community while building up these future leaders.”

The current YouthBuild program serves approximately 32 students per year and each one receives a minimum of 12 months of follow-up services. In addition to earning a high school equivalency diploma, at the end of the program period students are placed in post-secondary education, into a career path, or both.

“I want to commend The Service Collaborative of Western New York on the success of the YouthBuild program, and I am very happy to be able to provide funding necessary to support it going forward,” said Jacobs. “The holistic approach that this program takes ensures better outcomes for students and the community as a whole,” the Senator concluded.

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