

## **Dear Fellow New Yorkers,**

When we launched the Center for Youth Employment in May 2015, we set out ambitious goals to provide career exposure and experiences for thousands of young New Yorkers. We believed that the key to success would be working with the private sector to harness opportunities and connect our companies to the diverse talent that we have here in our City.

We are pleased to present this Best Practices Playbook, a resource developed for employers that shares the successful tools and strategies employers across the five boroughs have used to deliver great results for their own companies, as well as transformational experiences for the young adults involved.

From my own experience as President and COO of Haskell Jewels, I know firsthand what a positive impact young talent can make. Each year, the interns we brought onboard from New York City schools provided a deep resource to draw upon. Their creativity and energy helped drive our growth, but the experience was not without its challenges. For a busy company, finding and hiring young people takes time and resources, and developing a quality experience for a young person that delivers real results for the business is a must. These are the realities and shared experiences that we've heard from dozens of employers as we developed this employer playbook—and we hope the lessons and strategies here help you better utilize our local talent looking for that one great opportunity to shine.

The Mayor and First Lady are committed to expanding opportunity for all New Yorkers, starting with the young people who will drive our economy for decades to come. We know that connecting them to early work experiences has powerful positive effects on their subsequent employment and earning power. This Playbook can help businesses see the other side of the story—that utilizing the talents of youth is also a great way to strengthen their bottom line and workplace culture.



**Gabrielle Fialkoff**

Director, Mayor's Office of Strategic Partnerships