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**Governor Baker Highlights Record \$11.5 Million for YouthWorks
Summer Jobs Program**

*Program provides over 4,000 teenagers invaluable work experience in public, private,
non-profit sectors*

BOSTON – Highlighting the importance of early work experience and its correlation to long-term career success, Gov. Charlie Baker today met with nearly 100 young people benefitting from the Commonwealth's YouthWorks summer jobs program.

Approximately 4,000 teenagers across the Commonwealth are participating in the YouthWorks program this summer, which provides summer jobs in the public, non-profit and private sectors to lower-income young people ages 14 to 21.

YouthWorks is a state-funded program administered by Commonwealth Corporation – a quasi-public state agency – on behalf of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. The Fiscal Year 2016 budget signed by Governor Baker earlier this month allocated \$11.5 million to YouthWorks – the highest amount ever for the program – for next summer's programming.

Massachusetts is one of the only states in the nation to invest in state-funded early work experiences and work-readiness programs for low-income young people.

Since 2007, more than 33,000 young people have been employed through YouthWorks.

Gov. Baker on Thursday visited a neighborhood center in Mattapan operated by Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) – one of the non-profit organizations that facilitates the YouthWorks jobs program.

“With YouthWorks, we are aligning what employers tell us they need in future workers with experience, education and skill-building programs,” **Governor Baker said**. “We need to replicate what works and do more of it so young men and women can find a path that leads them to a job and ultimately a career.”

Governor Baker was joined by Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Ronald Walker, II, and Boston Red Sox’s Chief Operating Officer Sam Kennedy, along with Boston Police Superintendent William Gross. The Boston Police Department employs approximately 60 teenagers every summer.

“Companies tell us again and again they cannot find enough skilled workers to fill available jobs,” **Secretary Walker said**. “By supporting young people in acquiring the skills they need to enter and be successful in the workforce, we’re also meeting the needs of businesses for a pipeline of skilled workers.”

“We are tremendously grateful to Governor Baker and our state legislators for their support of state funding for youth summer jobs, including expanded funding for next summer,” **said John Drew, president and chief executive officer of ABCD**. “That increase is a critical step in serving the needs of thousands of Boston teens from low-income families who are eager to work, learn and succeed.”

ABCD, through its SummerWorks program, partnered with 250 employers to provide 1,050 Boston teens jobs this summer. The young people are working in museums, health centers, and day camps, among other places. The Boston Police Department employs young people every year, offering teenagers mentorship and class discussions in order to strengthen relationships between inner-city teens and police.

The rigors of the program were raised this year with new requirements aimed at ensuring teens leave with a plan to help them find their next job in the private sector. Young people who get jobs this summer must have a résumé, and a portfolio describing the skills they earned when they finish working.

They must also participate in “Signal Success,” a new hands-on work readiness education program overseen by Commonwealth Corporation.

Work experience is critically important for the long-term success of young people. Research shows teens who work have long-term gains in employment, future earnings, and educational outcomes.

Students who work up to 20 hours per week during high school are more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than students who do not work, research shows. Teens with early work experience also tend to attain work in higher-level occupations later in life, and tend to have jobs with pension plans and employer-provided health insurance.

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