



# NEWS RELEASE

For Release:

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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA TO PARTNER WITH COALITION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS TO HELP THE ORGANIZATION ACHIEVE ITS VISION TO FORM THE LARGEST YOUTH ORGANIZATION IN THE REGION

PHILADELPHIA – The Coalition of African American Organizations in Philadelphia (NCAAO) today announced a partnership with the School District of Philadelphia to find high school aged students who are interested in participating in the “Generation Next Youth Council,” which is intended to become the largest youth council in the history of the Greater Philadelphia Region.

The Generation Next Youth Council will consist of students from all District high schools, community youth groups and faith-based youth organizations. The various groups will personally select their delegates to serve on the Generation Next Youth Council, which will be overseen by the NCAAO. Community youth groups and faith based-youth organizations have already begun identifying members of the Generation Next Youth Council.

The District will begin selecting delegates for the Generation Next Youth Council when the 2004-05 school year begins this coming September. All Youth Council members will be required to serve at least one year on the council.

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The Generation Next Youth Council will be charged with educating, organizing and mobilizing their peers to become active in the variety of community initiatives sponsored by the coalition's member organizations.

“The NCAAO should be commended for taking a leadership role in establishing a group to help high school and college aged students get involved in the civic affairs of the Greater Philadelphia region,” said James Nevels, Chairman of the School Reform Commission. “The SRC is committed to supporting the New Generation Youth Council.”

“The School District of Philadelphia looks forward to the Generation Next Youth Council becoming an important ally in improving the lives of all children in our city,” said Paul Vallas, CEO of the School District of Philadelphia. “Supporting such a Youth Council is consistent with the mission of the School District of Philadelphia to empower all students to achieve their full intellectual and social potential in order to become lifelong learners and productive members of society.”

NCAAO Operations Director Emmanuel Bussie said the partnership with the School District of Philadelphia will open the doors for adults, college and high school students to work together to help improve the Greater Philadelphia Region, which includes public education.

NCAAO will also have college students serving as mentors to the high school students on the Generation Next Youth Council. Bussie said the first meeting of the Generation Next Youth Council is expected to happen before the end of the year.

The Generation Next Council is an outgrowth of NCAAO's “Generation Next Project.” The Generation Next Project will support and encourage young people to take charge of their communities through activism and other positive activities.

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“The Generation Next Project is designed to establish an elevation of activism within our youth of tomorrow to improve the region through committed cooperation,” Bussie said. “ The project will challenge and engage our youth like never before. Among their peer constituencies, these young people will serve as the mouthpieces and foot soldiers of our member organizations and they will be rewarded for their community activism.”

One of the goals of the Generation Next Project is to build and open a \$20 million youth recreation center in Philadelphia. The center would offer high-tech access, after school educational activities and youth and family programs. It would also serve as the coalition headquarters. The complex would include biology and chemistry labs; television and radio and recording studios, two gymnasiums, a mock courtroom for legal studies, a day-care facility, and an auditorium.

The NCAAO was founded in the early 1990s by Philadelphia businessman Cody Anderson to unify efforts of the city's black civic, religious and community-based organizations. Today, the Coalition is focused on galvanizing the resources of Philadelphia's most influential leaders along with the city's young professionals and high school aged students to make Philadelphia the national model for youth development.

For more information on the Generation Next Youth Council or the NCAAO, contact 215-235-7001 or go to the group's Web site at [www.ncaao.org](http://www.ncaao.org).

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