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FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA RECOGNIZES CUP!

The Center for Urban Pedagogy

will be presented with nation's highest honor for creative youth development programs

(New York, NY) – On November 17th, 2015, Shaffiou Assoumanou, a senior at International Community High School in the Bronx, and CUP Executive Director Christine Gaspar will visit the White House to receive an award from First Lady Michelle Obama on behalf of the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP).

CUP will be recognized for its *Urban Investigations* Youth Education program, which enables high school students to use research and design to learn about how the city works, and who makes the decisions that shape their communities. The after-school program will receive the 2015 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, the nation's highest honor for these programs.

Assoumanou participated in CUP's *Urban Investigations* program in Spring 2015. In his project experience, he and his classmates investigated how New York's City Council works and how their decisions shape the city. Students created a 14-minute video, *Who Rules?*, to share what they learned.

The National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award is the nation's highest honor for after-school arts and humanities programs. The award recognizes and supports outstanding programs that lay new pathways to creativity, expression, and achievement outside of the regular school day. Chosen from a pool of more than 285 nominations and 50 finalists from 50 states—the programs will also be recognized for improving literacy and language abilities, communication and performance skills, and cultural awareness. In addition to the national recognition bestowed by receipt of the prestigious award, CUP will also receive \$10,000 to support its programming and engage more young people across New York City.

CUP is a nonprofit organization that uses the power of art and design to increase meaningful civic engagement, particularly among historically underrepresented communities. Through *Urban Investigations*, more than 600 public high school students from underrepresented communities have used research and design to explore fundamental questions about how their city works and gained the 21st Century and technology skills they need to succeed.



“We hope this award will draw attention to the importance of after-school programs like these to change young people’s lives and to give them meaningful pathways to civic engagement,” said Christine Gaspar, CUP’s Executive Director. “We’re incredibly proud of this achievement and hope to give as many students as possible the opportunity to be part of an *Urban Investigation* in their own neighborhood.”

This award is also celebrated by a number of CUP’s long-time partners and supporters, including Deutsche Bank, the Bay & Paul Foundations, the Lily Auchincloss Foundation, the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, and many of CUP’s partner schools across the city.

“CUP’s Urban Investigations program provides young people with the skills, relationships and knowledge they need to improve their communities,” said Jacques Brand, CEO of Deutsche Bank North America. “Deutsche Bank is proud to support such an innovative program that helps students be more active citizens and successful in their own lives as well.”

First presented in 1998, the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award is the signature program of the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH). The awards are presented annually in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

“These young people are the living proof of what research tells us; kids engaged in the arts and humanities are more likely to stay in school, to get better grades, to graduate from high school and to go to college,” said Rachel Goslins, executive director of the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. “And they’re also building the 21st century skills that will help them to be productive members of the workforce and active participants in their communities.”

To learn more about CUP and *Urban Investigations*, visit: <http://welcometoCUP.org> or <http://welcometoCUP.org/Projects/UrbanInvestigations>. For more information about the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Awards, visit www.pcah.gov.

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