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National League of Cities: Innovation and the City: Upcoming Webinar Highlights Local Innovations.

NLC, in partnership with Citi Community Development, is hosting a webinar on Thursday, September 5th from 2:00 – 3:00 pm ET to showcase the growing vitality, experimentation, and creativity of cities in the U.S. “Innovation and the City” will highlight examples from two recent reports by the Center for an Urban Future and NYU Wagner Innovation Labs, including:

- Seattle’s Sector Panels to foster workforce alignment;
- San Francisco Kindergarten to College Savings program; and
- Denver’s Peak Academy, which promotes city staff-level innovation.

At a time when local budgets are strapped and city leaders are looking for creative ways to meet current needs of their community and promote sustainable growth and economic development, these examples provide an outside-the-box approach that can be adapted and scaled to other communities.

“Urbanization, digitization and globalization are shaping the way we create, participate in, and deliver public services,” Bob Annibale, Global Director of Citi Community Development and Microfinance. “[This report] highlights how cities will continue to be the wellsprings of our best ideas.”

Marlena Sessions, Chief Executive Officer of the Seattle Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County describes the Sector Panels program as an initiative that targets education and job skills development around what the local industry needs are. Their approach is to “...listen to industry and let them lead us.” Traditionally, job skills development programs have prepared job seekers, but not in ways that are nuanced to what the local demands are. Sessions adds that “targeting programs around individuals without asking what the industry needs is missing the boat.” By letting the region’s industry partners voice their needs, job seekers know what will be required of them and allows the Workforce Development Council to develop a more focused training program.

The Kindergarten to College Savings program drives innovation in a new way by being the first-ever universal college savings account in the country for the City of San Francisco’s public school kindergarten students. The program is a unique public-private partnership between the City and County of San Francisco and Citi. Kindergartners at participating schools are given a savings account containing its first \$50 that parents and family members can then contribute to. The program, which kicked off in 2010 and was fully up and running in the fall of 2012, benefits residents by not only incentivizing children to go to college but providing the financial backing they need for this investment in their future.

The Peak Academy program in Denver provides training and education for city staff to help them better serve their communities. City staff attend a five-day training to develop performance measurement skills and tools for continuous improvement of city services and programs. This program has allowed city departments to realize cost savings by reassessing the way they operate

programs, and by gaining efficiencies through collaboration with other departments.

The presenters on the webinar will delve into more detail about how these initiatives got off the ground and what factors are contributing to their success. These examples from Denver, Seattle, and San Francisco will also be explored in more detail at NLC's National Summit on Your City's Families and annual Congress of Cities taking place in Seattle, Wash., from November 12-16.

To register for the webinar, click here:

<http://www.nlc.org/build-skills-and-networks/education-and-training/event-calendar/innovation-and-the-city>

For more information about the webinar or the examples in the report, contact Julia Pulidindi at pulidindi@nlc.org or (202) 626-3176.

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