

**Academy for Urban Leadership Charter School – Program Abstract**

*The AUL School is a parent and community-driven school developed with the institutional partnership and resources of Rutgers University, in collaboration with parents, youth, nonprofits, and other key stakeholders who share a common conviction for children and youth.*

In January, 2008, a group of concerned individuals, parents, community organizers, business owners, and educators, including Rutgers University, came together to provide an alternative system of education for high school students in Perth Amboy. The result – ***the Academy for Urban Leadership Charter High School***. Our mission – *to employ an educational design and experience that merges the highest standards of academic excellence with fostering convictions and commitment to social and economic justice*. Serving 400 Perth Amboy students in grades 9-12, the Academy for Urban Leadership (AUL) Charter School is a **collaboration of Rutgers University, our state’s largest institution of higher learning with local stakeholders** who share the common goal of connecting the potential and aspirations of Perth Amboy’s high school aged-youth to the opportunity to excel and succeed. In July, 2010, our collective hard work and compassion for our youth led to securing **approval from the New Jersey Department of Education to open the AUL School for this upcoming school year – the AUL School will open its doors on September 8, 2010 with its initial 9<sup>th</sup> grade class of 100 students.**

The AUL School intends to be an option that provides a different educational alternative with the following core values: *educational approach that goes beyond the classroom; utilizing experiential and service-based learning; creative, student-centered, and team-oriented teaching methodology; promoting cross-cultural acceptance; employing a holistic approach; and establishing a collaborative spirit with parents, the community and all pertinent stakeholders.*

***Our basis*** – the Perth Amboy community cannot continue to accept large class sizes and the warehousing of so many children in one high school building when studies have consistently shown that “***small***” equals “***big***” results – smaller classrooms; smaller teacher:student ratios; and smaller community schools. The AUL School will practice an educational approach that will center on each individual student assuring his or her academic success. In addition the school will establish a learning environment that encourages an enthusiasm for learning and for teaching.

**The specific theme of the charter school is the integration of service learning with the community school model.** The service learning basis will serve as the fundamental theme driving the design and thrust of our academic and support activities, including structured service learning opportunities – in the AUL School, *the classroom and the community will be one in the same*. The theme of service will be fully reflected within our core curriculum, however, within well-structured and defined small learning communities that integrates this core theme while accomplishing well-conceived and planned academic objectives. Working from the community school model will allow the AUL School to maximize available resources and services for our students, their families, and the overall community – *our School, in great part, will mirror the operations of a community center.*

As further outlined herein, the Board seeks grant funds to support our continued post-award capacity building efforts to build the educational, operational, and personnel capacity of the AUL School. As our partner institution, Rutgers University will provide the professional and technical resources to guide the implementation of the AUL School vision. We have also engaged the state and region’s leading education leaders and experts to provide the research-based framework essential to realizing our student achievement goals and our overall vision.

**The AUL School will operate as a long-term mini-community where our young people and their families will learn, grow, and excel together in a cohesive, supportive environment.**