

Press Release: GOSO Visits the White House: Promoting Innovation in Civic Engagement Convening

June 02, 2014



Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO) attended a convening in Washington, D.C. dedicated to “Promoting Innovation in Civic Engagement” to talk about GOSO’s participation in the participatory

budgeting (PB) process in New York City. PB is a democratic process where community residents decide how to spend at least \$1,000,000 of discretionary funding set aside by City Council members on physical improvements in their communities. Beginning in Brazil in the 1980s, PB has begun spreading in the United States from Boston, MA to Vallejo, CA, Chicago, IL to St. Louis, MO, and to New York City. GOSO has participated in the past two annual PB cycles in NYC, specifically in City Council District 8 where its East Harlem office has increased its community presence over the past decade.



GOSO participant Corin Mills and staff member Mark Leonida traveled to the White House Complex in D.C. to participate in a national conversation on best practices for PB with elected officials,

researchers, and community based organizations in cities across the United States. Mr. Mills spoke in front of the audience to talk about his personal experience as a budget delegate, which helped launch a personal crowdsourced funding campaign to enroll in college. His speech shared his personal growth, his desire to give back to his community, and how participating in the process “built character”. In the past two years, GOSO budget delegates have advocated for community projects totaling over \$500,000 that have gone towards capital improvements in public schools in District 8, including providing laptop carts to 10 different schools.



