

Capital Workforce Partners 2009 Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program

FINAL REPORT: Executive Summary

I. DESCRIPTION: The 2009 Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program funded up to 2,006 participants, and had two major programming and funding areas:

A. WIA Youth American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Economic Stimulus Funding and Programming. The WIA ARRA funds were programmed to 719 In-school Tier III youth, and 385 Out-of-School Tier III youth.¹ All youth received a career competency instructional component, with the majority of their program activity focused at worksites with work experience activities. An employee performance review and portfolio checklist were used to measure work-readiness skills learned. The in-school program was for 6 weeks and the out-of-school program was for 11 weeks.

B. Non-WIA City, Foundation Funding and Programming. The non-WIA funds [City of Hartford, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, American Savings Foundation] were programmed to 390 Tier I students and 512 Tier II students. Tier I and II programming were in non-work-experience settings with a focus on simulated work environment learning and project-based experiences. The career competency learning plan, dream resume development, career-interest exploration and other traditional SYELP strategies were used to place youth in a 6 week summer experience.

| Region | TOTAL Number of Applications | Number of Applications WIA-Certified | Number of Participants ARRA | Participants with Leveraged Funds | ALL Summer Youth Employment Participants | Number of Applicants Not Served |
|--------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| CWP | 3,735 | 2,454 | 1,104 | 902 | 2,006 | 1,729 |

II. REVIEW OF RESULTS FOR TIER III: WIA ARRA YOUTH

A. Description of Youth Served

Overall of the 1,104 youth the following demographics and profile presents those young people that were served. A complete table of youth demographics can be found in ATTACHMENT C. Some of the major changes to the youth served in this year's program, as compared to previous years, is that a higher percentage of high-risk youth were served this year. In addition a significant number had disabilities (12%) and were pregnant or had children (17%).

B. Results

1. REVIEW OF RESULTS FOR TIER III: ARRA Funds

Summary. The three major performance measures included:

| TIER III PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS | ISY | OSY | TOTAL |
|---|-----|------|-------|
| 80% Average Daily Attendance Overall (Serves as Completion Rate) | 97% | 94% | 96% |
| 90% of youth will receive a 15% gain from the initial evaluation to the final evaluation on their Employee Performance Evaluation and/or obtain the maximum score of 20 points | 69% | 71% | 70% |
| 90% of youth will complete a portfolio that includes a: real time resume; cover letter; sample job application; mock interview experience proof; Harrington O'Shea Career Decision Making Tool; Personal Development Profile. | 84% | 101% | 89% |

¹ The Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) defines home-schooled youth as out-of-school, however CWP placed two of these youth at ISY programs. Numbers included in this report are based on provider enrollment, and may differ from reports to CTDOL.

Average Daily Attendance Overall and Program Completion. Approximately 87% of ISY and 65% of OSY completed the summer program, defined as having an average attendance rate of at least 80%. Overall, the average attendance rate for all youth was 96%.

Gain from Initial to Final Employee Performance Review. The Employee Performance Review was used to measure gains in youth’s work readiness skills. Youth could receive a rating of 1 (unsatisfactory) to 4 (exceeds expectations) in 5 skill areas, with a total possible score of 20 points. Worksite supervisors were responsible for assessing youth in the first two weeks and last week at their worksites. Overall, about 70% of youth gained at least 15% between the initial and final reviews.² OSY had a lower average gain than ISY.

Portfolio Checklist. The Portfolio Checklist focused on 7 job-seeking items, as listed in section C above. Youth had to complete all 7 items to meet this measure.

2. REVIEW OF RESULTS FOR TIER I & II: Non-WIA

A. Results

Summary. The three major performance measures included:

| TIER I AND II PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS | TIER I | TIER II | TOTAL |
|--|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| 80% Average Daily Attendance Overall (Serves as Completion Rate) | 94% | 97% | 96% |
| 80% of youth will gain Career Competencies in: computer literacy; problem solving and decision making; interpersonal communications; personal qualities; job seeking skills; and customer service | 68% | 79% | 74% |

Average Daily Attendance Overall and Program Completion. Approximately 82% of Tier I and 90% of Tier II completed the summer program, defined as having an average attendance rate of at least 80%. Overall, the average attendance rate for all youth was 96%.

Competency Learning Plan. Each tier level has a corresponding Competency Learning Plan, which assesses youth’s skill levels in the seven different competencies. Youth can be rated as “just beginning,” “needs development,” and “competent.” Total possible scores are 84 in Tier I and 111 in Tier II. The table below details average scores and gains, along with the number of youth who made gains (increased their score by 1 or more points) in each competency.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The Future Workforce Services Committee reviewed the results of this summer’s program and found the report to exhibit significant progress attained with this year’s summer youth employment and learning program. Additional lessons learned (see **ATTACHMENT A**) and considerations for program improvement were made (see **ATTACHMENT B**). In addition the Committee made suggestions for further follow up to the Final Summer Youth Employment Report (see **ATTACHMENT C**). Altogether it was concluded that the CWP SYELP Program is headed in the right direction as a ‘youth development/career competency development strategy.’

² Please see CWP Policy 09-01, WIA Youth Work Readiness policy, for more information on how gains are calculated.

ATTACHMENT A
Lessons Learned

1. This summer provided a robust, positive set of summer youth employment experiences for over 2000 youths in the state's north-central region. This year's program continued to focus on a 'content-rich career competency program,' while also serving a new WIA program element. With the new WIA ARRA youth programming through SYELP (in-school and out-of-school), 3,735 youth were recruited for SYELP 2009 (with only 8-10 weeks notice), which provided CWP with the clarity that the level of interest, need and demand from the community for summer youth employment is very significant, and that a federal program such as the ARRA initiative could be implemented 'quickly and wisely.' This include certifying 2,454 WIA youth further demonstrating that a high level of WIA eligible youth have interest in this program.
2. The ability to develop 430 worksites was a significant accomplishment, and the importance to further maintain and cultivate these worksites to be used for future years is a strategy that CWP must continue to foster in the weeks and months ahead. Continued focus on maintaining and building relationships that fosters and builds on these worksites is critical throughout the year. An significant proportion of these worksites (ie.: 75%) continue to be with public agencies, and a need exists to get a greater number of private sector sites committed to this program.
3. This was the first year that a significant number of special needs youth participated in the SYELP program. Some of the larger programs had adequate capacity to serve these youth, but smaller agencies had more difficulties. While CWP attempted to collaborate with the Bureau of Services to the Blind and the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services to provide additional services, CWP had to rely on SYELP-funded programs to provide their own services to the special needs population. Further review will need to occur in the upcoming year as to whether more specialized procurement needs to occur to serve large numbers of special needs students. A further review of policy as to how future workforce services will include special needs students will need to be conducted.
4. The work-readiness skill attainment overall was seen as a positive accomplishment. CWP established a very rigorous work readiness skill attainment goal and standard (see preliminary results above). Significant workforce readiness gains were made by a 'very high risk youth population,' that were evidenced through 70% of Tier III youth realizing 15% gains on the employee performance reviews. Further examination by CWP will need to occur to further assess how CWP should continue to use this tool compared to the WIA accountability measurement. Altogether it was further recognized that the employee performance review was more subjective as an assessment tool. In addition the worksite supervisors did not get sufficient training on the assessment tool, and further did not really have adequate knowledge of the SYELP participant in the first two weeks of placement when the initial review was done. The portfolio checklist was a more objective tool that most all youth were able to meet.
5. A significant 'un-served' (i.e.: waiting) list resulted, where up to 1,729 youth applied and were not able to be served by the program. A significant number of the un-served youth were from suburban areas where there were not municipal or foundation funds to supplemental the WIA ARRA funds. Also, a priority was given to matching applicants with programs in close proximity to where young people resided. The program capacity was far less in suburban locations, providing fewer suburban student placements. Overall the biggest contributing factor to the large waiting list was the lack of resources. The traditional major funding program was the State of Connecticut's Youth Employment Program, which given the state budget was severely cut and not passed until summer was over.

ATTACHMENT B
Considerations for Program Improvement

- Consideration of setting attendance rate outcomes higher than the 80% completion rates; and that perhaps a higher standard of 100% as should be considered.
- Consideration of further recruiting youth through a more rigorous process that includes family/parental participation and some formality to a registration process.
- Continue to support a rigorous work readiness goal where the goals were established to assure 15% improvement from each youth as the target. (meeting both a 15% gain in work-site performance evaluation and completion of the portfolio check-list).
- Considerations of making it a contractual requirement(s) that providers not completing valid and timely data input and records would not receive some level of reimbursement for services (subject to the completeness/timeliness of their data recording accuracy); further monitoring of sites for data/record-keeping will be an expectation for present and future contracts.
- Further consider (and assure evidence of) providers' staff competencies and whether they possess or are able to model the skills/competencies that they (ie.: the agencies) expect the youth participants to attain. Program(s)' scope of work need to ensure that providers provide more orientation and training to staff.
- In future contracts for Tier III programming -- programs should be required to report on the number of participants that continue to be employed by their worksite and/or other employment opportunity(s) related to the summer jobs program (upon program completion).

ATTACHMENT C
Updates to the Final Summer Youth Employment Report

In regards to the overall final report, it was suggested:

- Need to review the comparison between how new participants compared to previous participants;
- Need to review worksite to worksite how participants compared; need to consider how those providers who spent more time at orientation with worksite supervisors compared to those who did not.
- Need to review provider to provider how participants compared; important to look at the trends from year-to-year in terms of which providers are making gains and which provider(s) are not (and are struggling); what do the trend lines suggest;
- Personal Qualities and Communications continue to lag (compared to other competencies) and remain to be issues. Some concern that this might reflect on staff needing to provide strong mentoring and quality curriculum; and/or if programs focus enough time on this;
- Further review of the '1 point gain' for the 'competencies goal' as a sufficient goal and whether this is sufficiently rigorous? Should different weighting be given to some of the seven skill areas;
- There was some concern for the need for updated standard assessments for some of the skill areas, such as customer service (for providers to be able to do a more thorough job of review);
- Further consideration of the overall demographics, accounted for such variables as a high percentage of participants with pregnancies and special needs: how did these participants compare to other participants, and what might be the fiscal and social implications related to good outcomes for these individuals to be successful (as a result) vs. those who are unsuccessful (with repeated issues resulting).
- It was suggested that Final Report's Attachment B be further updated to show the completion rates of youths by provider.

ATTACHMENT D

| TIER | CONTRACTOR | SLOTS | REGION |
|----------------|--|--------------|------------------------------------|
| I ISY | Blue Hills Civic Association | 45 | Hartford |
| | Capital Community College | 45 | Hartford |
| | Central AHEC | 30 | Hartford |
| | Hartford Communities That Care | 30 | Hartford |
| | New England Farm Workers Council | 30 | Hartford |
| | Our Piece of the Pie | 45 | Hartford |
| | Restoring Lives Ministry | 45 | Hartford |
| | SAND Corporation | 30 | Hartford |
| | Sheldon Oaks Johnson-Stewart Center | 15 | Hartford |
| | West End Community Center | 30 | Hartford |
| | Pathways/Senderos Center | 21 | New Britain |
| | YWCA of New Britain | 21 | New Britain |
| | | 387 | |
| II ISY | Artists Collective | 90 | Hartford |
| | Blue Hills Civic Association | 55 | Hartford |
| | Boys & Girls Club | 60 | Hartford |
| | CREC Teen Teach | 45 | Hartford |
| | Ct Rivers Boy Scouts | 30 | Hartford |
| | Our Piece of the Pie | 90 | Hartford |
| | Urban League of Greater Hartford | 100 | Hartford |
| | Village for Children and Families | 45 | Hartford |
| | | 515 | |
| III ISY | Blue Hills Civic Association | 60 | Hartford |
| | Community Renewal Team | 60 | Hartford |
| | CT. Puerto Rican Forum | 120 | Hartford |
| | Urban League of Greater Hartford | 60 | Hartford |
| | Our Piece of the Pie | 60 | Hartford |
| | Consolidated School District of New Britain | 60 | New Britain |
| | Human Resources Agency of New Britain | 60 | New Britain |
| | Opportunities Industrialization Centers of New Britain | 60 | New Britain |
| | Bristol Community Organization | 60 | Bristol |
| | Capital Region Education Council | 129 | East Hartford, Enfield, Manchester |
| | | 729 | |
| III OSY | Blue Hills Civic Association | 30 | Hartford |
| | Capital Region Education Council | 30 | Hartford |
| | Community Renewal Team | 30 | Hartford |
| | Corraro Center for Careers | 30 | Hartford |
| | Hartford Communities That Care | 30 | Hartford |
| | New England Farm Workers Council | 30 | Hartford |
| | SAND | 30 | Hartford |
| | Urban League of Greater Hartford | 30 | Hartford |
| | John Driscoll United Labor Agency | 45 | New Britain |
| | Human Resources Agency of New Britain | 45 | New Britain |
| | Bristol Community Organization | 45 | Bristol |
| | 375 | | |
| TOTAL | | 2,006 | |

ATTACHMENT E

Description of Youth Served

Overall of the 1,104 youth, the following demographics and profile presents those young people that were served.

| Participant Characteristics | | |
|--|----------|----------|
| Gender | # | % |
| Female | 626 | 57% |
| Male | 478 | 43% |
| | | |
| Education status at intake | # | % |
| In-School Youth (ISY) – High School (HS) | 662 | 60% |
| ISY – Post-secondary | 55 | 5% |
| Out-of-School (OSY) – HS graduate | 203 | 18% |
| OSY – HS dropout | 184 | 17% |
| | | |
| Barriers documented at WIA intake | # | % |
| Basic Skills Deficient | 79 | 7% |
| Disabilities | 131 | 12% |
| Dropouts | 184 | 17% |
| Foster | 62 | 6% |
| Homeless | 7 | 1% |
| Limited English Proficient | 16 | 1% |
| Offender | 22 | 2% |
| Pregnant/Parent | 188 | 17% |
| Needs Additional Assistance | 793 | 72% |

Some of the major changes to the youth served in this year's program, as compared to previous years included a higher percentage of high-risk youth. In addition a significant number (12%) had disabilities and (17%) were pregnant or had children.

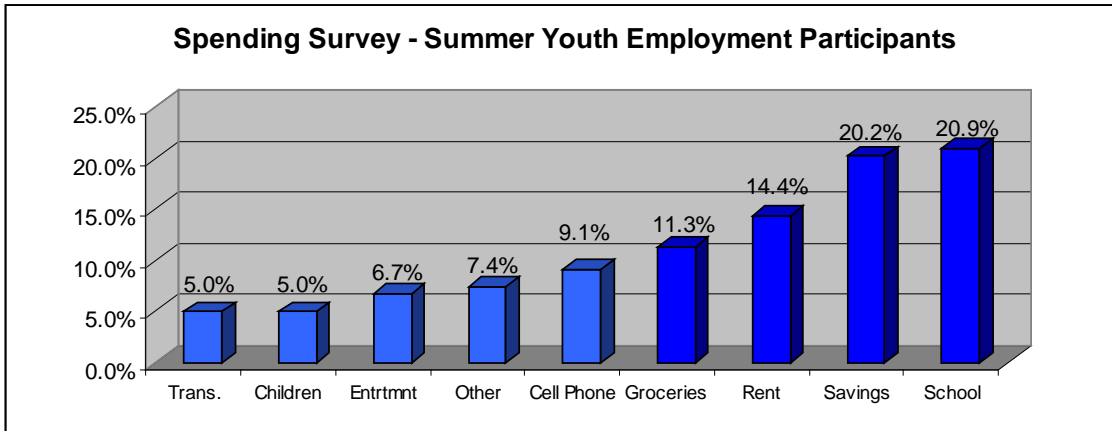
ATTACHMENT F

2009 Summer Youth Employment – Spending Survey

The following survey result sample was collected from 976 or 48.7% or of the total base of 2,006 Summer Youth Employment Participants who participated in the 2009 Capital Workforce Partners Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program.

The youth represent a broad cross-section of all participants, Tiers I – Tier II programming, were 14 – 24, either in-school or out-of-school and worked at a variety of agencies and worksites throughout the Hartford and New Britain region.

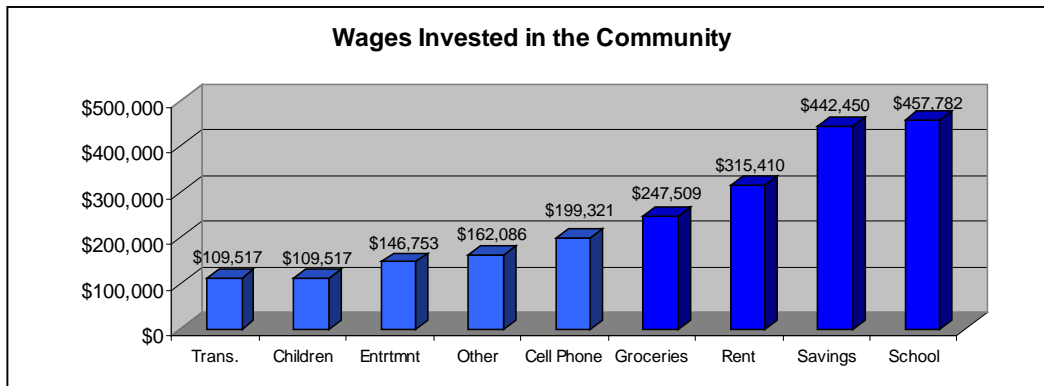
How did the Youth Participants Spend their Paychecks?



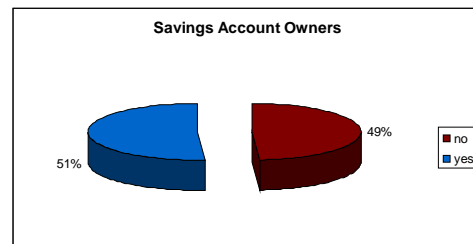
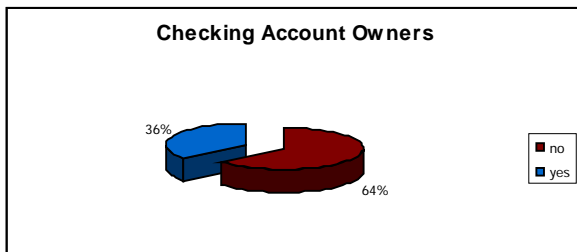
Note: Other represents expenses such as, clothes, computer, insurance, beauty, storage, pets and gifts.

TOTAL WAGES and STIPENDS returning to the community

\$2,190,345



Financial Management – Did they have Savings or Checking Accounts?



What were their savings targeted for:

The majority of savings were targeted for college, transportation (car), housing and emergencies.