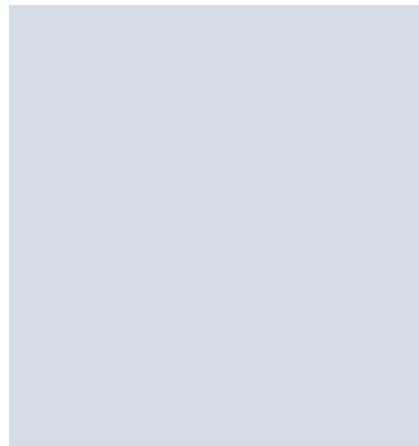
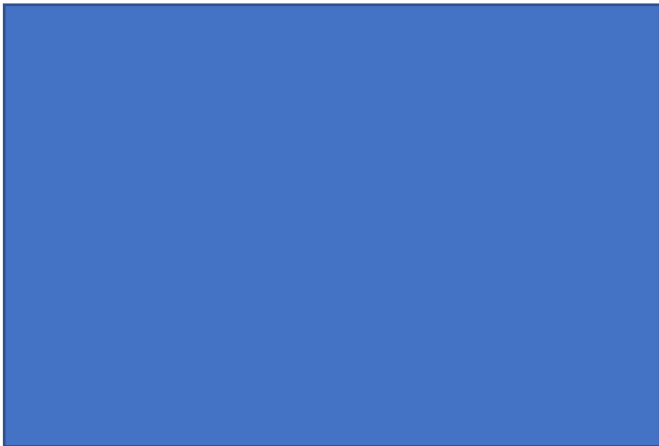


Connecticut Youth Employment Programs





Outline

- **Overview of Connecticut's Workforce Structure**
- **Connecticut youth program overview**
- **Current services**
- **Youth Voice, Youth Survey**
- **COVID adaptations**
- **State Partnerships...Mental health innovations**
- **Successes**

Connecticut's Workforce Structure





Youth Employment Funding

~ \$5M state general fund

~ \$500-700K DCF-DOL Youth Employment & Training, using Chafee and state funds

+funds from DADs, CARES, ARPA for subsidized wages, career awareness and exploration, training, job readiness and supports like bus passes

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
– federal youth program funds: \$7.5M**

Youth Employment Program Background in a typical year...

2019

2,000 - WORKERS

3,000

thousands of youth
participate in work activities
each year



1,500+ DEMAND

young people are on wait lists,
would like to work, or didn't
have all documents needed to
work



460+ BUSINESSES

receive subsidized workers --
at no cost to them. This
stimulus also offers work
experience and resume-
building for young people



WIOA Youth

- **Serves about 1200 youth per year**
- **14 youth program elements:**
 - Tutoring, Study Skills Training, and Dropout Prevention; Alternative Secondary School, Paid and Unpaid Work Experience; Occupational Skills Training; Leadership Development; Supportive Services; Adult Mentoring; Follow-up; Guidance and Counseling; Financial Literacy; Entrepreneurial Skills Training; Labor Market Information; Postsecondary Preparation and Transition

| WIOA PY 21 | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| Region | Youth |
| Eastern | \$ 1,291,598 |
| North Central | \$ 2,069,889 |
| Northwest | \$ 1,111,788 |
| South Central | \$ 1,412,075 |
| Southwest | \$ 1,633,881 |
| Total | \$ 7,519,231 |

Context: Opportunity Youth

- Prior to pandemic
~45,000 youth aged
16-24 were ***not in
school or work*** in
Connecticut
- Since COVID-19,
***nearly ¼ of those
aged 20-24*** in labor
force filed for
unemployment
benefits



High Rates of Unemployment among Youth



- During Great Recession, national unemployment rate for **16-24 year old's was 18.5%**
- July 2020, the unemployment rate spiked to **50% for BIPOC youth** in the same age group
- Youth most often not eligible for UC & most in this age group also not eligible for COVID stimulus

Current Services and Performance



CT Youth Employment Programs

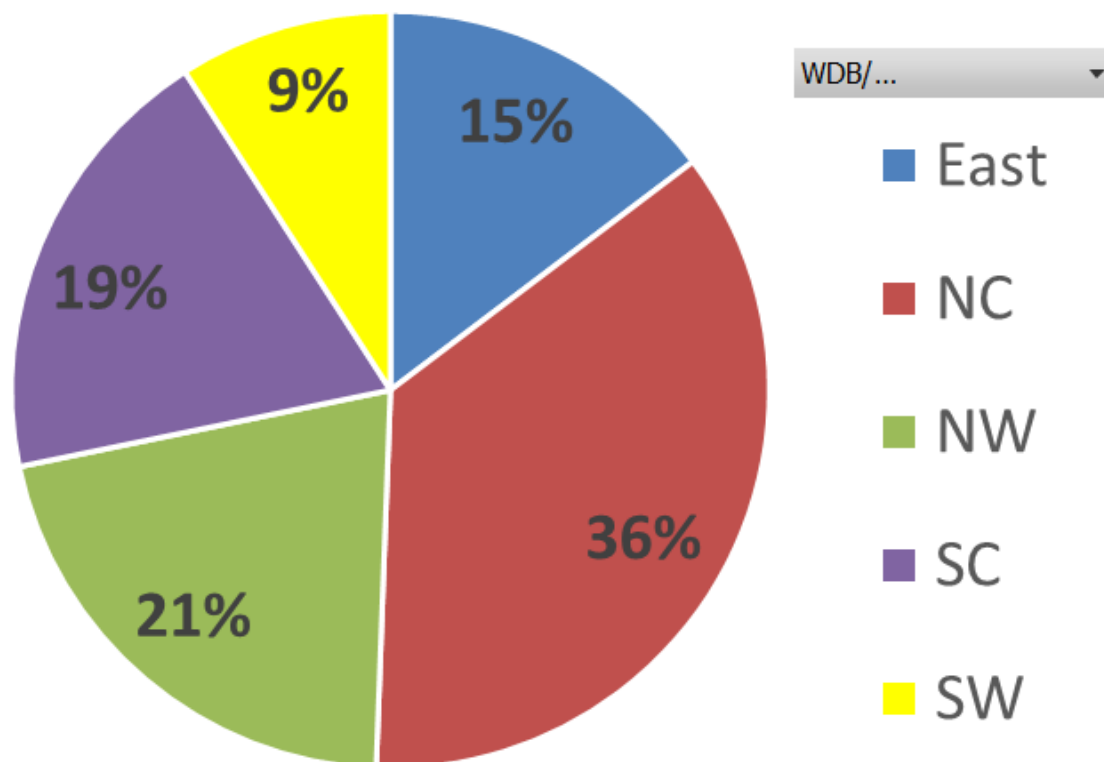
July 2020 – January 2021

- 2,259 youth participants
- 8% of youth are DCF* involved
- 80% are in high school
- ~80% are new to the program

| Youth Participant Earnings | |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Total | \$1,848,530 |
| Average | \$818 |
| High | \$9,378 |
| Low | \$19 |
| | |

**Department of Children and Families*

CT Youth Participants, By Region



July 2020 – January 2021 (WIOA not included)

| Top Jobs for Youth | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| | | |
| 1 | Virtual Career Awareness/Training | |
| 2 | Camp, Teaching Assistant | |
| 3 | Custodial | |
| 4 | Admin, Clerical | |
| 5 | COVID Testing Support | |
| 6 | Digital, Social Media; Graphic Design, IT Intern | |
| 7 | Stock Clerk | |
| 8 | Community Outreach | |
| 9 | Food Prep and Service Workers | |
| | | |



Top Sectors for Youth Jobs

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Child Care/Ed/Camp | 12% |
| Human/Social Serv | 11% |
| Agric/Landscp/Farm | 5% |
| Retail Trade/Sales | 5% |
| Health Care | 5% |

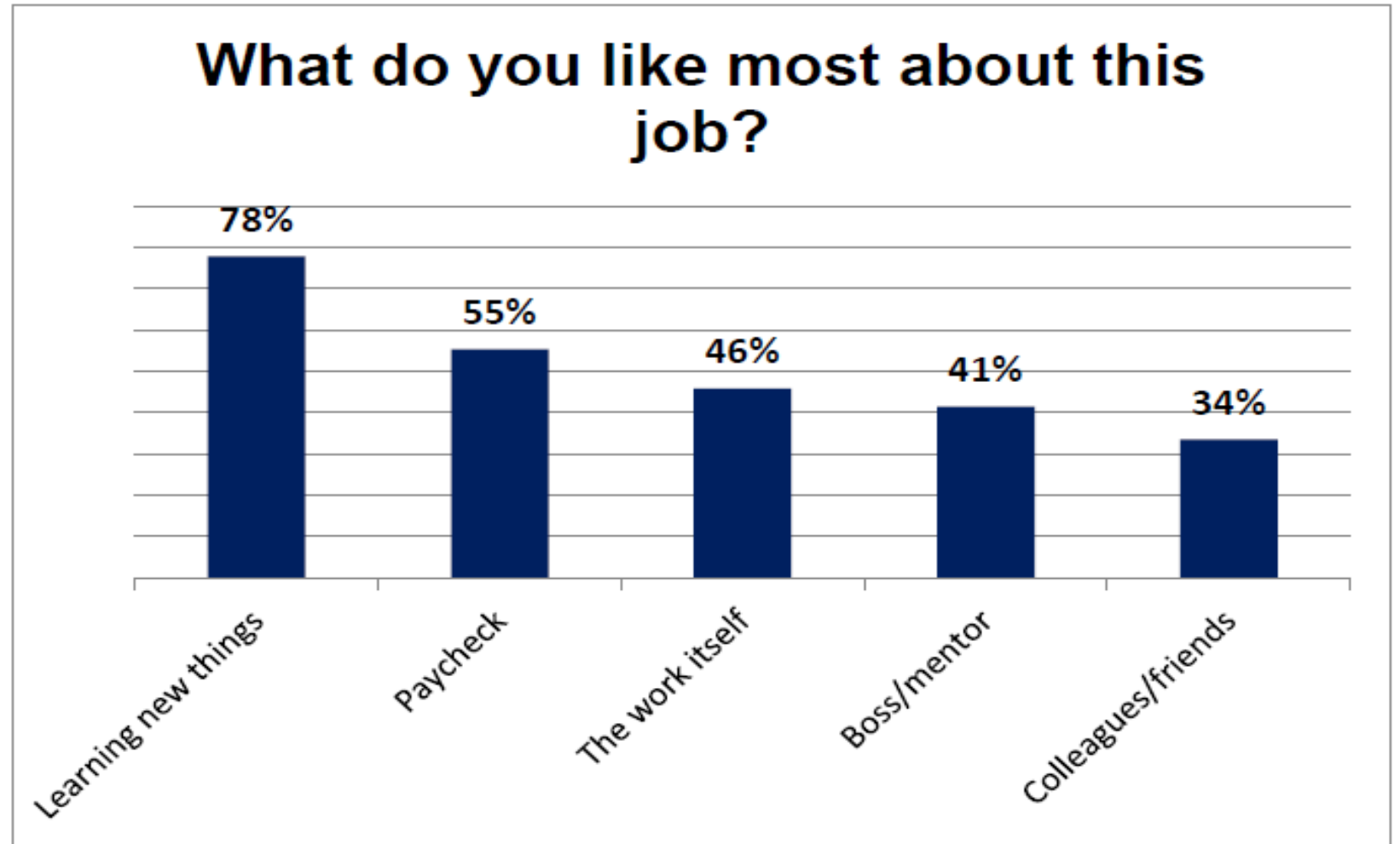


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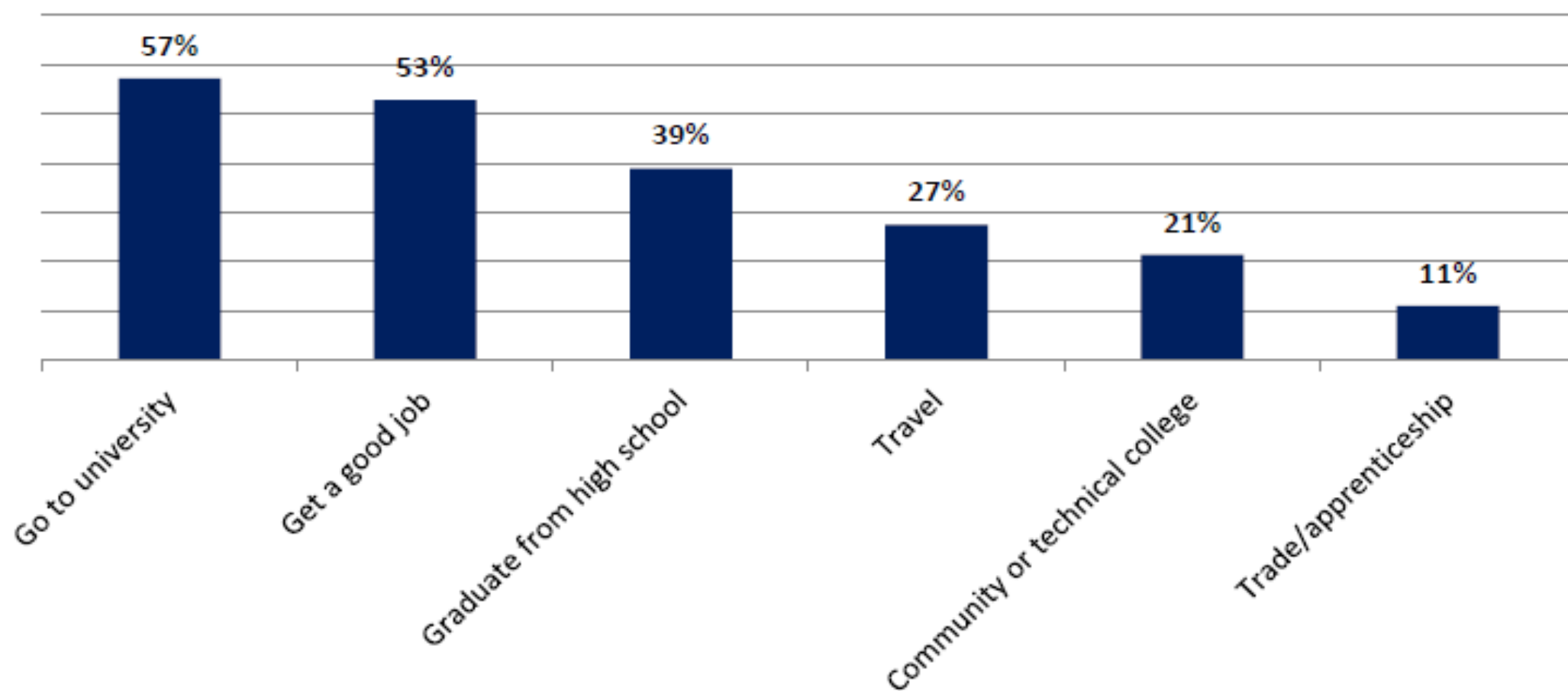
Youth Voice, Youth Survey |

~80% of youth said that *learning itself* – not the paycheck – was what they liked most

~ 90% reported being extremely or somewhat satisfied



What would you like to do when you finish high school, college or current program?



What I learned...

how to apply to scholarships and how to apply for student loans

how to code programs and games

a lot about photography and about myself and my future

a lot about the US 2020 Census and I never knew about that

about some history and how it connects to food and poverty

That whenever comes that time for the job interview, I know what to say and write a thank you letter afterwards, and I'll go far with my strengths

a great deal in regard to entrepreneurship and how to both create and manage my own business

how to build a resume in a way that is attractive to companies I might apply to and how to increase my chances of receiving a job

a lot of new ways to protect myself from COVID-19

Career awareness, exploration & occupational training were **PAID** activities due to COVID. More than 1/2 of participants did remote/ virtual work/training



...During COVID

Food assistance was ranked as the #1 type of support needed for youth employment participants, after cash/wages

***Every* provider cited concern about mental health of youth participants**



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Expanding Partnerships

- Direct referrals to/from DMHAS Young Adult Services/youth providers. YASBIZ is helps young people develop businesses
- CT DOL direct marketing to employers & youth via social media
- Collaborations w/ DADs & CSSD to increase the numbers of justice-involved youth & w/ disabilities
- “ w/ DEEP to recruit seasonal workers
- Enhanced partnerships, supports, trauma-informed trainings for providers build in more equity for marginalized youth

Training: Building in Equity

- Youth Mental Health First Aid for providers and WDBs designed to teach parents, family members, school staff, peers, and others how to help adolescents experiencing mental health/addiction challenges
- This year: mobile crisis services, suicide prevention, Turning Point.Org, racialized trauma + for providers
- Direct training support for YOUTH on mental health, self-care and racialized trauma

Success Stories, Innovations

- EWIB partnerships with AHEC and DEEP
- COVID responsive
- Career pathway oriented; links to WIOA Youth programs
- CWP partnerships with local youth agencies such as Our Piece of the Pie, Ebony Horsewomen, local arts organizations and community mental health agencies



Career Pathway Example: Health Care



What's Next...

- Collaborations with other state agencies
- Career pathways
- Continued research on best practices across US
- More emphasis and funding for in-demand sector training, mentorship, employer engagement, support for food security

Questions

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