Connecticut Youth Employment Programs
Overview

• Connecticut’s workforce structure
• Connecticut youth employment programs funding,
• Current services
• Disconnection/opportunity Youth
• Connecticut Participant Highlights
• Youth Voice, employer survey
• Successes & Career Pathways
Connecticut’s Workforce Structure

We develop a competitive workforce to meet the needs of our partners in Connecticut businesses by creating opportunities through education, training and job readiness. Workforce Boards Keep Connecticut Competitive.
# Youth Employment Funding

**2022 - 2023**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fed WIOA Youth, est</td>
<td>$7,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOL CT Youth Employment, GF est</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCF Youth Employment (Chafee and state)</td>
<td>$637,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fed ARPA DOL</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWC ARPA Youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DADs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEFA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipalities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$15,137,500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activities

Career Awareness, Exploration, Occupational Training, Mentorship, Follow Up, Post-Secondary Transition, Subsidized Work Experience, Financial Literacy, Job Readiness, Resume Prep, Job Shadow, College Visits

Changes to enhance career development

Increased flexibility on expenditures, work experience, training, hours/weeks esp for those <16, w/ summer school, vacation plans
CT Youth Employment Program in a typical year...

- Pre Covid participation was 2500-3000 youth, with significant unmet need:
  - During Covid, approximately 2250 (down 10-25%. Statewide demand not available but was at least 430)

Business Demand

1,500+ young people are on wait lists, would like to work, or didn’t have all documents needed to work

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

- Direct referrals to/from DMHAS Young Adult Services/youth providers.
- CT DOL direct marketing to employers, youth via social media
- Collaborations w/ DCF to reach foster parents to increase DCF youth participation
- Enhanced partnerships, supports, trauma-informed trainings for providers build in more equity for marginalized youth
On the eve of the pandemic, the number of youth disconnected from both work and school in the US was lower than it had been in over a decade.

Between 2010 - 2019, the youth disconnection rate fell 27%.
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
Connecticut Disconnected Youth

- 41,700 youth 16-24 are not in school or working
- 15.4% of Latinx/Hispanic youth; 12.2% of Black youth 7.5% of white youth are disconnected
- During the height of COVID-19, nearly \( \frac{1}{4} \) of those aged 20-24 in labor force filed for unemployment benefits

Being disconnected as a young person has long-term consequences: lower earnings, less education, worse health, and even less happiness in later adulthood
Risks of Disconnection

- 2x as likely to live in poverty
- 3x as likely to have a disability
- 20x as likely to live in an institution
- 8x as likely to have dropped out of high school

Disconnected women are 4x more likely to be mothers
## Measure of America, Disconnected Youth

### Table 8: Youth Disconnection in America's Most Populous Metro Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Metro Area</th>
<th>Youth Disconnection (%)</th>
<th>Youth Disconnection (#)</th>
<th>Youth Disconnection by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, CT</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>12,900</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, CT</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>10,300</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>New Haven-Milford, CT</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>12,900</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CT Participant Highlights

- 2250 youth in CT's publicly-funded youth programs
- 94% were in high school
- 85%+ were paid hourly wages over stipends
- 68% new to program
More Participant Highlights

- Large plurality between 14-17 years of age
- Like US, growing number identify as multi-racial
- 6% were DCF involved
### Top Sectors for Youth Jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Care/Ed/Camp</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human/Social Serv</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agric/Landscp/Farm</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade/Sales</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</tbody>
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*May add some value for childcare capacity crisis*
Youth Voice, Youth Survey
Youth Survey (N=538)

What made you decide to do the training/work?

- 90% of respondents were satisfied or extremely satisfied with their experience
- About one quarter of respondents said feeling down, depressed or unmotivated got in the way of their experience
- More than 17% said lack of confidence, self-esteem, “feeling unsure of myself” got in the way of their employment experience
- 23% said transportation was problematic
More Youth Feedback

• 62% agree or strongly agree what they do at work makes a difference

• 90% agreed, strongly agreed or agreed somewhat that “What I did in this program will improve my job choices and options in the future”

• 66% said they learned more about work they’d like to do/not for careers

• 86% agree, somewhat or strongly agree - (31%) that as a result of this “program and job, I have more people I can go to for a reference, job leads, bounce ideas, help me make decisions, give me advice about jobs or education choices”
What I learned...

- what working is like and not just taking somebody else's word for it
- about the technical impact of marketing, and how to best utilize techniques to best reach the target audience
- a great deal in regard to entrepreneurship and how to both create and manage my own business
- how the angle of a picture matters in telling a story
- more of an understanding on what I want to do as an occupation
- how to actively listen, ask open ended questions and learn how to help someone in an efficient and positive way
- how to advocate for the community
Food assistance consistently ranks as a top support needed for youth employment participants, after cash/wages. Due to limited state funds & WIOA disallowed costs, many providers are hesitant to provide such aid.
Youth Plans

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

Answered: 533   Skipped: 5

- get a good job
- University
- graduate from high school
- travel
- Community/ttech college
- Trade or apprenticeship
- other/don’t know
- enroll in military
Employer Survey

Career/Professional Development Still Lacking. In terms of professional development opportunities for young workers, businesses still offer relatively few opportunities:

- Only 12 out of 72 respondents provided “leadership development” opportunities.
- At least 10 out of 72 businesses said they anticipated hires from youth programs. Others indicated they’d be willing to keep youth on part-time.

Employers are Very Satisfied. The overwhelming majority – more than 94% of business respondents said they would participate in the program again.

“...we were extremely pleased with the contributions made by our youth interns to our arts programming. They provided critical support during a challenging time and we, in turn, were able to focus on keeping them safe and giving them a meaningful work experience that allowed for significant growth.”
Success: Career Pathways: Health Care – Eastern Region and Area Health Ed Ctr
What’s Next...

- Career pathways
- Continued lessons from best practices across US
- Continued evolution of youth programming to support career connections and education

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