



Summer Youth Employment Programs:

National Models Research

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I. The Context

Since 2012, United Way of Northeast Florida (“United Way”), with the support and involvement of the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, has implemented a Summer Youth Employment Initiative. Designed to provide high school youth with their first employment experiences, the program worked with community partners to recruit, train and place approximately 100 youth in jobs with local employers each summer. In 2016 this program migrated to the Mayor’s Office with United Way playing a supportive training and evaluative role. In addition to this change, several other youth employment partners and initiatives are becoming active in Jacksonville. Finally, in this shifting environment, United Way is beginning a strategic planning process that is creating the space to reimagine its role in Jacksonville’s youth employment landscape.

Given the dynamic and changing nature of Jacksonville’s youth employment environment, United Way and the duPont Fund felt it would be useful to take a close look at a series of successful youth employment models from around the country. After taking into account a variety of factors (size and type of program, involvement of United Ways, engagement with public partners, and geographic diversity) four programs were chosen for review:

1. AchieveMpls – Minneapolis, MN
2. MatchBridge – San Francisco, CA
3. StlYouth Jobs – St. Louis, MO
4. WorkReady – Philadelphia, PA

This report contains in-depth profiles of each of these organizations. Of note, each of these profiles details a complex organism comprised of multiple public, private and nonprofit partnerships. At times these profiles refer to both an initiative or set of activities (e.g. “YouthJobs+”), and simultaneously to the home organization or program (e.g. “MatchBridge”). In addition, two of these efforts self-describe as a collective impact model where, by definition, the whole is intended to be greater than the sum of

its parts. In these cases, the program title can refer to the entity that is the collaboration.

Regardless of the specific title or terminology describing the program, each profile contains information on the type of youth involved, the specifics of the program model, the funding sources and strategies, the type and role of employer partners, and the impact data that has been collected.

II. The Organizations at a Glance

This section provides a brief description of each organization, as well as chart comparing the key components of the four programs.

- **Achievempls/STEP-UP:** Achievempls is a **nonprofit partner** of the Minneapolis Public Schools. In conjunction with the Mayor’s Office, Achievempls runs the STEP-UP **initiative** which places youth in a range of employment settings. STEP-UP has several divisions which include: STEP-UP Explore, STEP-UP Discover, and STEP-UP Achieve.
- **MatchBridge/YouthJobs+:** MatchBridge is a **program** of the United Way of the Bay Area. This program serves as the **“backbone”** (or central organizing unit) of a collaboration of public and private partners that together make up the YouthJobs+ **initiative** that centralizes San Francisco’s youth employment efforts. This organization self-describes as a collective impact model.
- **StlYouthJobs:** StlYouthJobs is the name for a **civic collaboration** that is technically a **program** of the Greater St. Louis Community Foundation. Working in close coordination with their local Goodwill affiliate, staff specific to StlYouthJobs help to coordinate the youth employment process with a variety of local employers and local youth.
- **Philadelphia Youth Network/ WorkReady:** WorkReady is a **programmatic initiative** of a collaboration of organizations working in a collective impact mode in Philadelphia. Philadelphia Youth Network is the **“backbone” nonprofit organization** that serves as the central organizing hub of this effort.

Chart 1: Organizational Snapshot

Program	# of youth	Youth Served (i.e. target populations and/or requirements)	Overall budget	Public Sector Leadership
Achievempls/STEP-UP <i>Minneapolis</i> <i>[Information in chart related to STEP-UP Achieve]</i>	Approx. 750	Youth with barriers to employment Risk factors include: homelessness, parenting teen, English language learner, IEP. Over 21, not enrolled in college	\$800,000	Minneapolis Public Schools, mayor's office STEP-UP Achieve: no, nonprofit
St. Louis Youth Jobs <i>St. Louis</i>	Approx. 400	Geographic: youth applying must live within one of the 10 communities served by StYouthJobs programs	Approximately \$1 million	No, nonprofit
MatchBridge/YouthJobs + <i>San Francisco</i>	6,628	Geographic, age requirement	\$1,296,655	No, nonprofit (within United Way of Bay Area)

Philadelphia Youth Network/ WorkReady	Approx. 8,500	School and age requirements	\$23,295,385	Yes, mayor's office
<i>Philadelphia</i>		Focus in on students who are "likely to disconnect"; High-school youth attending Philadelphia schools		

III. Over-arching Themes and Trends: An Analysis

As will be evidenced in the profiles, each effort developed in a response to its unique, local context. That said, there are several crosscutting trends and themes that can be observed across programs and may be worth special consideration given Jacksonville's context. To begin with, it is worth noting that Jacksonville is out ahead of these models on two key points:

- 1) **Soft Skills Training:** Each of the models highlighted here offers soft skills training for all youth in their program, with training for various technical skills left to employers. Jacksonville's focus on soft skills from interviewing, to workplace behavior, to financial literacy is on par with the stronger programs that have an intentional, centralized training effort in place.
- 2) **Community Partners/Case Management:** All programs profiled here intentionally work through community partners to recruit and support youth through their summer employment experience, although this support is in varying capacities, and much less so in the case of the MatchBridge program. Since the beginning of its program, Jacksonville has been mindful about the holistic supports youth need to succeed in their first job. Relationships with the Career Academies and/or local nonprofit organizations have been forged to help youth deal with housing, transportation, childcare, and other emotional or psychological needs that youth exhibit. This strategy has also been useful for recruiting.

These models suggest that it is clear that Jacksonville should continue with both its soft skills training and its wrap-around approach to supporting youth. There are, however, several other crosscutting trends from which its program could benefit. These trends are listed below, with special attention to the implications for how these issues could play out in Jacksonville's context.

Tiered Models

Both AchieveMpls and WorkReady Philadelphia intentionally offer a tiered approach wherein younger youth (early high school) or first time employees, are placed in a program level apart from older youth with more experience. These “first time” levels tend to be highly supported with additional classes and coaching, and often locate youth in a learning-friendly environment such as a nonprofit organization, day care center, or camp setting. As youth progress through these models, they are then placed in more intensive corporate settings where the expectations are higher.

Implications for Jacksonville: Evaluations of the Summer Youth Employment Initiative have demonstrated that employers are often challenged by a youth’s lack of experience. In addition, the Summer Youth Employment Initiative has often had a surplus of nonprofit organizations offering to serve as employer host sites, and has struggled to get a commensurate number of private sector employers. By offering private sector employers a slightly more qualified youth, Jacksonville may be able to more successfully recruit them, and may simultaneously be able to make better use of strengths of its nonprofit employers.

Customized Placement

Given that three of the organizations detailed in this report—AchieveMpls, StYouthJobs, and WorkReady—play an administrative or clearinghouse function for youth applying for jobs, they have the resources necessary to help customize the placement process. In some cases this looks like efforts to place a youth based on their interest and needs, and in other cases this looks like efforts to place youth in designated “target” industries identified as important by stakeholders. In particular, AchieveMpls and StYouthJobs commit to getting to know individual youth and placing them intentionally based on their interests. Through MatchBridge, youth apply via a common application to subsequent “partner” organizations of their choice, which will then offer employment opportunities specific to their organizational focus. In either case, the ability to customize the placement process appears to be a benefit to youth and employers alike.

Implications for Jacksonville: In past Summer Youth Employment Initiatives, United Way has served as the primary recruiting agent for employers, and the primary matchmaker between youth and employers. Given that its effort has not been staffed for large-scale program implementation, efforts to place youth or to prioritize certain industries have

had to necessarily fall by the wayside. If United Way were to move into more of a clearinghouse role, with the majority of its involvement happening on the front end (centralized applications, training) it would likely have more time and resources to customize the placement process.

Significant Public Sector Involvement

All four of the efforts profiled for this report rely heavily on involvement from public sector partners. This involvement can take the form of promotion from public sector leaders (i.e. mayors), connections to public sector entities (i.e. city departments for employment, public school systems for recruiting youth), and most importantly, significant public funding from a variety of public funding sources including Department of Labor, Office of Economic and Workforce Development, and various Mayor's Offices. Moreover, public sector involvement helps to both entice and anchor corporate partners. It appears that this element is indispensable to strong large-scale youth employment initiatives.

Implications for Jacksonville: Until this year, United Way's youth employment efforts have run concurrent to, but separately from, the public sector youth employment efforts in Jacksonville. As the 2016 summer effort draws to a close, it will be useful to assess how the City's role and existing program might be most successfully integrated with United Way's efforts.

Systems Change Missions

Three of the four organizations profiled have explicit goals of providing pathways to employment for disconnected youth (or youth at risk of becoming disconnected). In particular, StlYouthJobs names crime prevention as a primary programmatic goal. In all cases, the missions of these efforts aim at the systemic causes of poverty and violence affecting youth. And while youth remain the central focus of these programs, each program prefaces a systems change lens over and above a youth development lens.

Implications for Jacksonville: Evaluations of the Summer Youth Employment Initiative highlighted an evolving agenda for the program. While launched with a systems change

mission focused on regional economic development (“build the pipeline of Jacksonville’s future workforce”), the program gradually grew to adopt more of a youth development mission (“provide youth with the soft skills necessary to succeed”). Profiles of these successful efforts suggest that it may be worth asking what the longer-term *systems challenges* are that the program is trying to address *on behalf of youth*. Is the program trying to close the opportunity gap, prevent crime or address some other root cause of poverty?

Value-Add to Private Sector

While the profiled programs have done an excellent job of highlighting their systems change mission, two in particular have also found particular and specific “sells” for employers. MatchBridge notes its value in screening applications and surfacing qualified youth, thereby delivering employers a potentially valuable employee. Achievempls has done an excellent job of articulating STEP-UP’s value to employers, noting that participation brings them into a network full of Fortune 500 employers, and that managing a youth intern is an excellent training experience for new managers.

Implications for Jacksonville: The Summer Youth Employment Initiative has searched for the right messaging to share with its private sector partners. Over time, the program has defaulted to a “right thing to do” appeal to employers. Two of the programs profiled here have similar, somewhat vague, messages for their employer population, but these are mitigated in some ways by a strong systemic change message. If Jacksonville were to develop a compelling systems change mission, and couple it with some specific benefits for private sector employers, it would likely have an easier time bringing them to the table.

IV. Organizational Profiles

The remainder of this report offers detailed explorations of four distinct but similar youth employment models in major urban centers around the country. Each profile captures program highlights – including training strategies, key partners, funding sources, intended impact and data collection approach.

Profile #1: AchieveMpls/ STEP-UP

STEP-UP is a nationally recognized youth employment model that trains and matches Minneapolis youth ages 14-21 with paid summer internships. Youth complete a competitive application process and work readiness training to be considered for a position with one of over 230 participating businesses. [<http://www.achievempls.org>]

Overview

AchieveMpls serves as the nonprofit partner of Minneapolis Public Schools, and “provides personalized career and college planning services, work readiness training, on-the-job experience, and professional mentors to help students become career and college ready for our global knowledge-based economy.”

When the program was founded, AchieveMpls was engaged by the city of Minneapolis, in large part by Mayor R. T. Rybak and the President and CEO of U.S. Bancorp, Richard Davis, to develop youth employment programming and act as a liaison with the private sector. A large part of Rybak’s political platform had been focused on better education and increasing youth employment, and this was his first step to working towards these goals.

The STEP-UP program, which was built in partnership with AchieveMpls and the city of Minneapolis, is currently in its thirteenth summer of operation. To date, the program has hosted 21,000 internships. Interns have earned a total of \$2.6 million, and an additional \$1.2 million has been paid out in private investments. Mayor Rybak and Richard Davis co-chair the STEP-UP board.

Betsy Hodges, the current Mayor of Minneapolis, has continued to the city’s commitment to this work. She emphasizes the need to reduce the achievement gap for youth of color and underprivileged youth in Minneapolis, and works to ensure that STEP-UP receives funding from the city budget. There has been an effort to replicate the program in other cities throughout the state of Minnesota.

Program Highlights

The program targets youth with any type of barrier to employment. This includes low income youth or youth with risk factors such as homelessness, pregnant or parenting teens, English Language Learners, or youth with IEPs (Individualized Education Program). If they have one of these risk factors, their income is not a factor in admission. Youth served are 14 to 21 years old. The program also serves older youth who are not currently enrolled in college. The aim of the program is to catch youth without a plan.

There are three programs within STEP-UP, each of which serves a different age group or sub-population. **STEP-UP Explore** is the inclusive program component, designed for individuals (across the 14 to 21 age spectrum) who fall within key targeted populations: recent immigrants, youth with special needs, and needs within specialized school program. Each summer, approximately 300 interns participate in this program and job placements are in nonprofit organizations and in schools. Their work readiness training is incorporated into their summer work experience, which pays them a wage subsidy over 6 to 9 weeks, for approximately 20 hours a week (less than the other STEP-UP programs).

STEP-UP Discover is designed for a younger subset of youth (14 and 15 year olds). 700 host agencies (largely churches, daycare centers, and similar nonprofit organizations) host the interns. The City provides wages, and supervisors at host organizations mentor the youth and support them during their first job experience. Prior to employment, youth receive 8 to 14 hours of training, which focus primarily on soft skills.

STEP-UP Achieve is the program that youth move onto after completing the STEP-UP Discover program. In this program, businesses or organizations hire interns and generally take on the responsibility of paying them. These internships are around 6 to 10 weeks long, and the weekly commitment can range from 20 to 40 hours. This summer, around 750 youth were placed through this program. While it is not mandatory for these youth to have participated in the Discover program prior to the Achieve program, it is often a logical next-step for them.

Before any youth is connected with a host organization through STEP-UP Achieve, they go through an extensive work readiness training and receive credentialing. If youth don't complete the training process, they will not get a job. This training is contracted through AchieveMpls. In addition to the training, youth engage in mock interviews. The entirety of the training is overseen by STEP-UP with particular portions contracted out to experts in the community. These experts generally include

professionals (including current or future employers) that are connected through AchieveMpls' wide-reaching network.

Through this training, staff have an opportunity to get to know the youth so that they can be placed, through mentoring, into jobs that will provide more or less support as needed. A great deal of time is spent on the intentional placement of the youth, and leadership aims to give employers the best possible intern who will step up and do well in the given setting. Interestingly, STEP-UP does not place youth into retail or restaurant types of jobs. Instead, jobs are designed to be very career-focused and impactful.

Soft skills are greatly emphasized in AchieveMpls' work readiness training. Youth are trained on skills such as how to take feedback from a supervisor, how to draft an email, how to offer opinions and criticism, what proper cell phone use looks like, and "code switching" in order to be mindful of how to communicate in the workplace as opposed to outside of it.

Technical skills training is generally left up to the employer, but an online Microsoft Excel training (with certification available) is also offered through STEP-UP. Supervisors or youth can opt into this training, and the program pays it for. Financial literacy training is also offered, as well as specialized healthcare training for youth going into a healthcare-related placement. Additionally, an advanced IT exploration curriculum is made available to youth who are interested, and to whom it applies.

Throughout the summer, younger youth (enrolled in the STEP-UP Discover program) take a class for three hours a week during the summer on professional and personal skills. Program leaders at STEP-UP lead this class. Youth are paid a small stipend to attend and they receive a high school elective credit for completing the class. Most of the more career-focused- and technical development opportunities are designed for older youth. Supervisors are also given communication and tips on how to mentor and work with youth. This is delivered via a supervisor training, a handbook, and weekly emails.

With regard to the sectors of job placement, STEP-UP tries to give their team a portfolio that is representative of every industry, so that youth can be placed in a variety of internships that suit their individualized interests. These sectors include the outdoors, IT, healthcare, legal, financial, the arts, and more. As was previously mentioned, youth are often able to receive training that is specific to their industry.

Key Partners

Collaboration is a high priority of STEP-UP, and something that the program emphasizes so as to avoid competition and territorialism among key stakeholders and other organizations. **A key component to the success of the STEP-UP programs is buy-in from both the public and private sector.** The former mayor, R. T. Rybak; current mayor, Betsy Hodges; and Richard Davis, CEO of U.S. Bancorp, are all highly supportive advocates for the program. The current mayor engages in conversation with CEOs and other influential members of the community (particularly the business community) to ensure the communication of the importance of their role in the youth employment landscape of the city of Minneapolis. Engaging the private sector has been crucial to programmatic success.

To help sustain this engagement, an appreciation breakfast and an employer recruitment event are both held annually to bring together all of STEP-UP's supporters, and at the end of the summer all of the interns and supervisors are convened for an end-of-summer celebration. There is continual re-affirmation in order to highlight how important and vital this program is to the community of Minneapolis.

Training, too, is collaborative with contracting occurring through the parent organization, AchieveMpls, which receives funding from the city through the STEP-UP program. Jeremiah Brown, Director at STEP-UP, is also an employee of AchieveMpls helping to insure strong organizational linkage. AchieveMpls entered this work through a contract with the city focused on developing the STEP-UP program and positioning them to act as the conduit between the city programming and the private sector. AchieveMpls staff recruits for the STEP-UP programs, and also conducts 85% of youth job training. The remainder of youth (largely middle school youth) participating in the STEP-UP Explore or Discover) are trained by the Project for Pride and Living (PPL). Additionally, PPL provides specialized healthcare training for STEP-UP Achieve interns who are matched with positions in healthcare. Directed by STEP-UP, AchieveMpls helps employers to come up with positions, train, and supervise supervisors, train and supervise interns, and support internships throughout the entire summer.

While wages are not paid for directly for any interns (but rather are paid for by employers), wage subsidies are provided for some of this program's partners. Similarly, a number of nonprofit partners provide opportunities that are subsidized because the organizations would not otherwise be able to pay interns.

Minnesota Public Schools (MPS) is another natural partner given its relationship to Achievempls. These organizational entities have the shared goal of every student becoming career and college ready. Achievempls supports MPS through fundraising for

programming that supports career and college readiness, early literacy, STEM education, and other strategic district priorities. Individual school funds are managed, including the administration of over 60 college scholarships and mini-grants for classroom projects and staff development.

A number of large companies also support this initiative. Target, the large private retail company, offers strategic thought and leadership, financial support, professional expertise. Thrivent Financial is a key donor for STEP-UP Achieve and offers board and staff support as well. U.S. Bank also supports STEP-UP by offering more internships than any other private sector employer.

Funding Sources

Funding for the overall STEP-UP initiative comes largely from public funding. STEP-UP Achieve is between 40% and 50% funded by the City. The program also raises additional funds from corporate and private foundations, the philanthropic community, and donors. Additionally, there is a sub-grantee social innovation fund, sourced from the federal grant to support AmeriCorps programming. Given that STEP-UP Achieve and STEP-UP Discover are nonprofit subsidiaries, they are also engaged in additional fundraising.

STEP-UP Achieve has applied for a Department of Labor grant, which would allow them to recreate their curriculum in order to better align it with the MPS curriculum. According to Peterson, this would be a major step forward, as it would enable all youth-serving entities in Minneapolis and the whole of the Twin Cities utilizing the same resources to advise, train, and assess youth.

Finally, some private funding has been allocated to provide subsidies to employers if they are unable to pay interns enough (though they are expected to take on at least some portion wages). Occasionally, nonprofit partners will also fundraise to help fund new positions at their organizations.

Intended Impact

Jeremiah Brown, Director of STEP-UP Achieve, notes that over the short-term, the program aims to **help youth discover their talents and their place in their community, and to develop effective networks and strong social capital to propel them towards post-secondary success**. Immediate impacts are focused on gaining longer term or permanent employment with internship employers, as well as heightened academic

achievement and improved goal-setting strategies. Additionally, 91% of STEP-UP's participants are youth color, the program is designed to help youth see themselves as a more essential part of the workforce.

STEP-UP is beginning to look at its longer-term impact through a longitudinal research study led by the University of Minnesota. The program is interested in exploring the ways in which program alumni are putting the soft and technical skills honed from their internship experiences to work in their lives and in their communities.

STEP-UP has learned through its evaluation efforts that it has a higher job retention rate among 14 and 15-year old participants. This is likely because they are unable to get a job on their own due to child labor laws and liability to employer, and additionally because parents may be more involved at this age. The overall student retention rate has remained at 68%, in spite of a number of different recruitment efforts. STEP-UP hopes to bridge the gap with the youth and more effectively encourage their continued participation in the program.

Data Collection Approach

STEP-UP collects a great deal of demographic data on its youth, including metrics such as: neighborhood, race, immigration status, enrollment in free or reduced lunch, household income, and whether participants have ever had a job with a paycheck in the past. They also track outputs such as: number of hours worked, number of credentials earned for academic credit, training attendance, and wages earned are also tracked. Data is frequently used to demonstrate progress and impact, particularly through the use of infographics¹ that are shared with employers, funders, and prospective employers.

Additionally, AchieveMpls has data sharing agreements with Minneapolis Public Schools and access to some college clearinghouse systems, which enable those within the program to track academic performance in middle and secondary school, college attendance, performance, and completion rates.

Data is collected through a Microsoft Dynamics CRM online database system, which has been customized with a database to meet their programmatic needs. This database has

¹ Infographics such as one showing employer retention can be seen in their cohort sheet:

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmssp-173453.pdf>

been extremely useful to STEP-UP, and it allows them to be on the same database platform as all contracting nonprofit partners.

Messaging to Employers

The STEP-UP recruitment team runs akin to the functioning of a sales team. Program Associates recruit students, assist with the training, recruit employers, and coach youth and employers throughout the summer. To recruit employers, Program Associates engage in practices such as networking, cold calling, and hosting and attending industry events. They also reach out to long-time employers (some of whom have been with the program since 2004), and use this referral system to widen the employer recruitment reach. These employers introduce Associates to referrals in order to help STEP-UP get its foot in the door. The program has over an 80% employer return rate because of the strong relationships built.

Both the longevity of the program and engagement with a growing number of Fortune 500 and local companies who participate in the program are motivating factors for prospective employers. Program Associates also point out that their interns are benefitting companies as they get important and substantive work done.

STEP-UP staff also highlight the way in which the program has an added benefit for those who act as supervisors for the interns. These individuals gain new management experience from working with the youth, as well as knowledge from the training and support offered by mentors. Additionally, they report that they grew on a personal level from learning more about the youth of Minneapolis and what they go through. Employers develop new perspectives, and are often impressed by how much youth are able to achieve within the internship context.

Profile #2: MatchBridge/ YouthJobs +

MatchBridge is United Way of the Bay Area's youth employment program, focused on placing young people in jobs and internships that enable work-based learning. The mission is to create pathways for youth to gain early work experiences so they will become financially secure as adults. The program coaches MatchBridge youth participants throughout the job search process, helping them gain exposure to careers and a positive future. Not only does this help them build professional skills, confidence and a stronger work ethic, it also builds motivation to complete high school and go on to college or other types of education and training. [<https://uwba.org/Match-Bridge>]

Overview

MatchBridge, launched in 2005, is a program developed by and within the United Way of the Bay Area ("United Way") with the goal of increasing youth employment in the city of San Francisco. Conceptualized by a cross-sector group of nonprofit, public, and private partners, Mayor Ed Lee played a key role in launching the YouthJobs+ initiative (originally named SF Summer Jobs+), under the auspices of MatchBridge (within the United Way).

While MatchBridge appears to operate as a single department within the United Way (and houses the YouthJobs+ employment initiative), MatchBridge actually operates as a partnership comprised of five major partners: The San Francisco Unified School Districts, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, the Mayor's Office of San Francisco, and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). This partnership enables YouthJobs+ to have an expansive reach as it connects young people with critical employment experiences.

Program Highlights

Last year MatchBridge placed 7,000+ youth through YouthJobs+. Youth apply to the program through a common application found online. They are then directed to one of seven "doorway" organizations to go through an onboarding process, which varies by organization. These organizations are contracted by MatchBridge to work directly with youth as MatchBridge is not a direct service organization. These "doorways" offer a number of services, including access to the SF Summer Jobs+ online system, resume review, interview preparation, and job application help. They are located in strategic locations in order to be accessible to a wide range of youth. These organizations include Guardian Scholars at City College of San Francisco program, OMI/Excelsior

Beacon Center (part of the Program of Urban Services through the YMCA), and the nonprofit Young Community Developers (YCD).

MatchBridge (and YouthJobs+) serves 16 to 24 year olds. Matchbridge places a high value on connecting youth with potential employers, and thinks creatively about how to provide such opportunities. For instance, a mock interview night with youth and employers was recently put on by Jennielyn Dino Rossi's team (Dino Rossi is Director of Workforce Development at the United Way who oversees the MatchBridge program.) Programming such as this has been an effective way to connect employers with youth in a relatively less formal setting; often it enables employers to gain better connections with and understanding of youth.

Payment to participating youth is not uniform across the program. Some employers pay youth directly for jobs. In other cases, youth would be on payroll too brief of a period to be worthwhile for the employers. In these cases, employers provide funding to YouthJobs+, which then pays youth (similar to a temp agency). All youth receive at least minimum wage; first-time employers are able to take advantage of wage supplements if they cannot meet the wage requirements. However, they are required to provide their own funding later and on an ongoing basis in order to continue their participation.

In order to move the youth along their educational and career pathways, MatchBridge is hoping that in the future it will be able to offer academic credit for these internships. This may prove challenging, as it would require increased collaboration with school and academic partnerships

Key Partners

As noted previously, Matchbridge is an initiative with 5 key partners. Because of these partnerships, YouthJobs+ has had an extensive reach – both in terms of participants served, number of employers engaged, and donors making contributions to the program. While acknowledging the benefits of these partnerships in terms of reach, Dino Rossi also noted this can complicate efforts such as marketing: “Because there are so many partners, we have to make sure we all agree on how we spin ourselves.” Marketing efforts are collaborative; for example, all partners' logos are on marketing materials. Weekly meetings that bring together all five partner organizations also help ensure that all key players are on the same page.

Matchbridge engages various public sector entities on a regular basis, including as job providers for youth. These public sector placements are managed by DCYF, which provides work-order money to departments in order to employ interns (therefore

subsidizing them). Involved city departments include the airport, utilities, municipal transportation agency, and sheriff's department. Additionally, Mayor Lee's office – another Matchbridge partner – runs a youth education program that places a lot of youth.

Additionally, the Office of Workforce & Economic Development receives grants, primarily from the federal or state government, and occasionally from foundations. In addition it coordinates with the school district through various programs in order to feed youth into post-secondary institutions (such as community college) or vocational training through the Sector Bridge Program.

Funding Sources

MatchBridge has budget of \$1,296,655. Key investors include, among others: PG&E, JP Morgan Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Enterprise, Citi Foundation, Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, Salesforce, Kresge Foundation, Bank, AT&T., and the IRS (Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communications). Some of these key funders have also sponsored events to help market the program and engage stakeholders.

MatchBridge operations are largely funded through donor dollars that are directed to them (under the auspices of the United Way). However, partner organizations also fund a portion of the work of YouthJobs+.

Intended Impact

The program is focused on providing work-based learning opportunities that will prepare youth for their future job or career. While this can range from connecting them to an opportunity to go see a guest speaker, a job shadow, or a project-based learning assignment in class, MatchBridge's hope is that these opportunities will ultimately enable youth to graduate from high school, receive a post-secondary education, and build a career. Over the long-term, Matchbridge is interested in moving the needle on some large-scale social issues. "I think employment can reduce recidivism, and can help in getting access to post-secondary education," Tosiello noted.

Matchbridge's intended impact has a dual focus - helping youth succeed in the workplace as well as building a youth employment pipeline. Nikki Tosiello, Business Services Specialist in the Office of Economic & Workforce Development notes, "Youth are the workforce we need. It's smart to get them ready for and exposed to the world of work. The goal is to help youth understand how they can set themselves up for

success.” The initiative is designed to help meet the corporate sector’s demand for an engaged and ready future workforce. If these demands are not met, Tosiello suggested that that companies may be forced to relocate, thereby also disrupting the “support clusters” that surround specific industries. Should this happen, young people will miss out on these jobs.

Data Collection Approach

MatchBridge tracks basic information about its participants in Salesforce CRM. It currently collects youth demographics, household income level, employment history, and employers. Matchbridge also collects data on the number of youth being employed by key partners. Sharing this data with employers has been beneficial, as it has helped Matchbridge highlight the rapid growth in new partnerships secured.

Data collection on outcomes has been challenging in part because of the significant range of internship opportunities. The Office of Workforce & Economic Development (one of key partners) collects data that is relevant to the program, but that said, there has not been any rigorous impact analysis done to date.

Messaging to Employers

The intentional engagement of the corporate sector has been instrumental in promoting the effectiveness of the YouthJobs+ initiative to prospective employers. Due to the wide-reaching of the five key partners, there are multiple pathways to the corporate sector. Whether it is the mayor speaking with CEOs of organizations like J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., Starbucks, Bank of America, or Enterprise Rent-a-Car, or connections held by other partners, there is often a foot in the door .

The City plays a large role in encouraging employers to offer job opportunities through YouthJobs+. **The Mayor encourages and challenges employers to offer summer jobs to youth, noting the community and economic development benefits.** Some of the program’s top employers are Target, American Eagle, and other retail services companies. “Retail has been a big boom for us, but we are really trying to focus on expanding the sectors and bring in other groups,” noted Tosiello. YouthJobs+ been challenged to break into the small business sector.

Part of the key to gaining employers is engaging in long-term relationship building. Tosiello noted that it boils down to introducing an employer to a new way of thinking, about who is their potential workforce. Employers tend to become invested over time,

once they have seen the positive effects that working with YouthJobs+ initiative can have on the company, the youth, and the community at large.

One key strategy has been to offer private sector businesses different levels of possible involvement in the program. Companies that may not want to be employers right away may want to do a sight visit, or be part of a panel hosted by a partner organization. Regardless, Matchbridge makes its value clear to employers – not only do they screen resumes but they also train and resource the youth.

Profile #3: STL Youth Jobs

STL Youth Jobs bridges the divide between our region's youth and the growing skills gap in our workforce. STL Youth Jobs bridges the divide between unemployed, and unskilled, youth and employers ready to hire by training our youth to be ready for the jobs of tomorrow through individualized career assessment, financial literacy and job readiness training, employment experience and continuing career support. Research proves that youth employment programs are one of the most effective ways to transform youth outcomes – benefiting the economy and targeted communities across St. Louis.

[<http://stlyouthjobs.org/>]

Overview

StlYouthJobs was designed to become the primary employment resource for youth in St. Louis, but is currently an organization in transition. Ultimately, the organization hopes it can move from being primarily a direct service and employment provider, to being more of a resource and referral network. To this end, for the first time this summer some employers partnering with the StlYouthJobs effort will provide funding for their youth's job placements instead of working through StlYouthJobs to provide funding.

In addition to leading the organization's fundraising efforts, the Executive Director Hillary Frey is currently reconfiguring the advisory team, developing a longer term strategy, leveraging more resources, and "looking at the program beyond the program." Frey noted in the interview that they hope to move from a one-time service for youth to becoming, "a part of that larger pipeline of developing young people and helping get them interested in the right careers and sectors for the region."

The geographic area of focus is the city and the county of St. Louis, as well as Ferguson, Missouri. The bulk of StlYouthJobs's work is done in the city of St. Louis, largely because of the Mayor's focus on decreasing youth violence and promoting youth employment. In 2011, there were several spikes in crime rates, particularly involving youth in northern parts of the city. Gun violence and inequitable educational opportunities are key issues for St. Louis. The mayor convened the Youth Violence Prevention Task Force in 2011 to bring together funders and nonprofit organizations. An outcome of this task force was a heightened focus on providing jobs to youth ages 16 to 20. The founders of StlYouthJobs believed that this entity would be an instrumental resource to those seeking to address youth employment issue in St. Louis as well as build a pipeline for employers.

The initial summer StlYouthJobs began offering 50 jobs using MERS Goodwill as an implementation partner, as it operated a lot of programs across many ages and has a

large footprint in the city and nationally as a component of Goodwill Industries. The program grew from 50 at the onset to 400 jobs at present, all of which have been funded through StlYouthJobs and operated by MERS Goodwill. StlYouthJobs is not incorporated, and utilizes the St. Louis Community Foundation as its bank, or fiscal agent. Payroll for youth, for instance, is processed through the Foundation.

StlYouthJobs increasingly provides coordination of partnerships as well programmatic and fundraising support, acting as the backbone for youth employment programming for the city of St. Louis. While there are many other organizations in the city that also provide youth employment services, StlYouthJobs hopes to become the go-to organization for this type of work. moving towards acting as more of an overseer, fund allocator, and partnership coordinator. The Mayor's Office and the CEO of Emerson Electric are some of the public and private partners that have helped move the organization in this direction.

Program Highlights

There are two distinct programs within the StlYouthJobs umbrella: StlYouthJobs summer employment (operating in specific areas within the city of St. Louis and St. Louis county), and Ferguson Forward, which is located in Ferguson and designed for youth aged 18-24. Ferguson is actually outside of the normal operating area of the program, however the organization has received additional funding for the implementation of programming for a more wide range of youth in this area.

The recruitment, application, and on-boarding process is carefully designed and implemented by StlYouthJobs. Youth recruited through the public schools, local community colleges, and other youth serving organizations can begin the application process as early as February. The application asks some basic information related to typical employment barriers such as childcare and transportation. Additionally, it asks what fields youth are interested in, and if there is any particular interest in healthcare as StlYouthJobs now has a strong relationship with a local hospital.

Once the application is complete, a job coach (of which there are 19 employed seasonally by MERS Goodwill) schedules a one-on-one with the youth at MERS Goodwill, for an in-depth conversation to learn about individualized goals of youth. Youth also complete a basic career assessment survey. Following this, the job coach considers which job the youth should be placed at. A local credit union also offers non-custodial bank accounts to the youth at that time.

Once this intake process is complete, youth are given resources and attend an 8-hour job readiness training pre-employment and a financial literacy training. As part of the training, StIYouthJobs focuses on soft skills. Job placements generally begin the first week of May, and run through the end of summer. They are paid \$8 an hour and work about 20 hours a week for the duration of their position. Issues that have come up most often in the employment scenario are related to attendance, punctuality, cell phone etiquette, and dress code. StIYouthJobs works to provide youth with the resources they need to ensure they are able to address these issues.

Employers also have a one-on-one orientation with the job coach who is the liaison between youth and their worksite supervisor. The job coach connects with employers each week via phone or in person. For youth interested in longer-term employment, coaches assist with conversations with employers about extending a youth's work experience. According to recent numbers, 13% of employers hire youth out of the program, and 7% of youth find other full-time positions while employed through StIYouthJobs.

While it can be difficult to follow up with and track youth after they exit the program, the Program Director and some job coaches maintain relationships with youth by checking in on them, and supporting youth should they need resources such as a reference, resume critique, or simply someone to talk to for advice. In addition, professional network building events are held twice per year. These events are designed to cultivate professional relationships built through the program. Attendees generally include program partners, donors, mentors, youth, and directors. The face to face connections at these events have been particularly meaningful.

Key Partners

MERS Goodwill is far and away StIYouthJobs most important partner as it provides many of the actual services offered through St. Louis's youth employment program. They also employ Patrick McCullogh, Director at StIYouthJobs who leads efforts related to coordination of job coaches, building and maintaining relationships between employers and youth, and operations and planning.

Other important partnerships include the Mayor's Office, which provides office space, the Incarnate Word Foundation, and the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE), the city's employment agency.

Funding Sources

The program's largest funders include the City of St. Louis, the Incarnate Word Foundation, and Emerson Electric (the primary funder of Ferguson Forward), J.P. Morgan, Goodwill, the Archdiocese of St. Louis., the Greater St. Louis Community Foundation, the United Way of Greater St. Louis, Monsanto, Wells Fargo.

As previously mentioned, all funds are directed to StYouthJobs which is not incorporated, and utilizes the St. Louis Community Foundation as its "bank," or fiscal agent. StYouthJobs engages in its own fundraising. It is currently working to grow its partnership with SLATE in order to leverage additional resources.

The total budget for StYouthJobs in 2015 was approximately \$1 million. The calculated cost per youth is about \$2,500; and they are currently serving approximately 400 youth.

Intended Impact

StYouthJobs is focused on providing resources and support for youth, and helping youth develop a better picture of their future career pathway. Interestingly, this youth employment work is done service of a **longer-term goal of preventing youth violence**. Programming is designed to help youth develop and hone skills that will be used in positive ways to better themselves and their communities, and limit involvement in negative activities that could lead to gang involvement and criminal activity.

StYouthJobs is also focused on neighborhood and community development. Their programming is restricted to 10 neighborhoods in the city—those with the highest poverty and crime rates and the lowest educational attainment in the city. When possible, youth are placed in businesses located within these communities. That said, many of the organization's hoped-for employers are larger, more recognizable organizations, many of which are not located in those neighborhoods.

StYouthJobs has a comprehensive and holistic vision—the development of a new workforce, which thereby stimulates local economic growth by provision of employees as well as customers who support businesses within their communities.

Data Collection Approach

StYouthJobs conducts evaluations of youth, job coaches and employers. The youth evaluate themselves, the job coaches evaluate the youth, and the employers evaluate

the youth and the program as a whole. Focus groups are held with job coaches and employers at the end of each session. Assessments explore such things as communication between youth and employers, problem solving, anger management, and time management.

Outputs such as number of youth who have opened up a bank account and number who have received clothing are also measured. This particular data collection enables the staff at StlYouthJobs to respond real-time to the needs of youth and make changes to the program as needed.

Long-term measurement and evaluation has been difficult due to limited staff capacity. That said, there is interest in measuring the long-term effects of the program such as youth ability to maintain long-term employment or pursue career pathways.

Messaging to Employers

The key message to employers their role in developing a future workforce. Youth are being given the skills they need to get their own jobs and be productive members of society. Additionally, Patrick McCulloch, Director at StlYouthJobs, notes that the program can “impact and build the business community in huge ways. If we don’t grow our economy locally, and if we don’t utilize the resources here, they will fill these corporate positions in other places, and we will still have violence, crime rates and poverty in the same rates we have today.”

Additionally, Patrick emphasized the fact that, “It’s not going to do you harm to give someone a chance.” Essentially employers are able to try out a potential employee for eight weeks. If the placement does not turn out to be a good fit, youth can be moved to a different placement. To date, the program has a high degree of employer satisfaction, with 95% of employers come back year over year.

Profile #4: Philadelphia Youth Network/ WorkReady Philadelphia

Cross-sector, city wide initiative dedicated to improving the economic outcomes of the region's youth by attracting, aligning, and investing resources in coordinated, youth workforce-development programs. Utilizes a collective-impact model, grounded by intermediary principles and maintained by a successful convening of partners.

[<http://workready.org>]

Overview

The Philadelphia Youth Network initiative is the backbone of the collective impact model of which WorkReady Philadelphia is a part. PYN's approach to the collective impact model is to maintain committed partnerships in order to work collaboratively towards positive impact on youth in the city of Philadelphia. PYN is self-described as a "convener... (making) it easier for systems to impact Philadelphia's youth by connecting policy to practice, elevating local and national research and aligning promising approaches that prepare youth for future success."

The Philadelphia Youth Network initiative ("PYN") was created in 1999 in an effort to maintain the school-to-career initiatives that had been developed over the course of that decade, and to further enhance efforts to help disconnected youth. Leaders within the public and private sectors came together to create a separate nonprofit known as PYN. This entity served as a centralized effort to coordinate different youth programming for the entire city.

PYN works to connect the resources, systems, and investments to make programming for youth possible. It manages all of the city's summer jobs programs. While infrastructure is managed by PYN, direct service is left to partner organizations. There is a historically strong private sector commitment to summer jobs programming in Philadelphia, and there are strong champions for the program, including the Mayor, which have been built over time.

WorkReady Philadelphia is a campaign geared specifically to promote "career-connected education." This program connects youth to jobs throughout the city during the summer, and serves 12 to 24 year olds. Last year, 8,800 were served, an increase over the previous summers.

Program Highlights

WorkReady targets youth who are “likely to disconnect.” Young people need to meet TNS eligibility requirements, meaning they must be below poverty level. The goal of this particular effort is to serve young people who have the most economic need and are in the highest crime areas, the foster system, and have been a part of the juvenile crime system.

PYN has a centralized application process for the entire city, which all young people go through to be involved in the programs, including WorkReady. Recruiting is done by the Philadelphia-based providers, that are then able to either hire youth themselves or send them to private employers. Although youth use a common application, but they apply directly to a specific provider. These organizations range from small to large, and utilize a direct service process. They are selected through a competitive selection process.

Within summer programming, there are four program models. The **career exposure program** is designed for middle school students to give youth early exposure to careers. In a second model, **service learning** is also implemented via community service projects. Youth work in groups on an issue in their community and collectively come up with solutions. The **work experience** model places youth in positions such as working as a camp counselor for the summer. The **summer internship program**, meant for generally older students (high school aged), offers a variety of opportunities. These include internships in small businesses, nonprofits, and corporations across the city. Professional development is offered weekly. Employers for this model include major banks, local hospitals, educational institutions, insurance companies, law firms, nonprofits, and government locations.

Across the programs there are approximately 1,400 worksites. This includes high-growth industries such as healthcare, education, banking, and city government jobs. Since the program’s conception there have always been 6,000 to 8,000 spots available to youth. About 150 employers pay for interns, and the rest are subsidized. Those subsidized typically include small businesses and nonprofits. The interview process is specific to the different program models named above. In the internship program, youth interview with prospective employers. In the service learning program, the interview is more focused on youth interest and available options (given that 15-20 youth can be at each site). Often, a provider will let PYN know how many youth they need or would like to manage, specific to a certain category (zip code, age group, interest). Youth can decline their placement at any point within this process.

The target population of the summer internship program is high school youth with prior work or leadership experience (typically 16 to 18 year olds). This is a six-week experience. According to Farrah Farnese, the Director of Partnerships for Employment Pathways at PYN who works specifically within the realm of programming for the summer internship program, they do not expect a fully transformed student to emerge from their programming and training. Rather, training is viewed as an opportunity for youth to engage in interviews with prospective employers.

Candidates in the internship program are recruited throughout the months of May and June, and are placed based on zip code, interest area, resume, age, and subject of focus in school. Interviews are set up and students are matched with employers. At the end of June, the organization does a large-scale orientation. Every student in the program goes through a half-day orientation before beginning his or her work. Students work four days a week at their worksite, and every Friday attend a professional development session. In addition to the Friday sessions, youth also must complete a project, presenting on a career of their choice and the steps required for them to enter it. Session facilitators monitor youth progress throughout the duration of the summer program through the Friday sessions, and the last Friday of the program is dedicated to student project presentations. Program leadership is interested in building in more room for direct feedback and evaluation of youth.

21st Century Skills (akin to “soft skills”) are emphasized in trainings. The focus on teamwork and collaboration, problem solving, and other skills that are generally necessary in the current context. Providers do an orientation prior to the start of the program, which serves as an introduction to work expectations. The specifics can vary based on the provider, but there is a general focus on workplace readiness and responsibility.

In addition to training youth, PYN also trains youth-serving practitioners. In 2014, they provided professional development to 2,319 practitioners (often those in the roles being contracted with at organizations in the provider network). This training generally covers topics needed to be understood to better train and mentor youth in employment programs offered by the Philadelphia Youth Network. Providing these types of resources allows the program to have a further reach and to increase its effectiveness, just as it does by contracting with local providers, doing so in a variety of ways including through online training.

Key Partners

The school district, local workforce system, and community nonprofits have been engaged in programming overseen by PYN since its inception. PYN works with a wide-ranging provider network of nearly 70 youth-serving community organizations which directly provide job opportunities to Philadelphia youth. These are located strategically and often rooted in the communities of the youth being served. Some of the organizations include: GED to College, Occupational Skills Training Programs, and E³ Power Centers which provide support around education, employment, and empowerment for 16 to 21 year olds who have dropped out or are returning to high school from juvenile placement. Referrals come from the Reintegration Initiative.

PYN is also deeply engaged in the corporate sector. The Chamber of Commerce has been a key partner, helping to provide internships and make key connections. In addition, one of the ways that PYN connects with businesses is through a team called Business Partnerships Specialists, who are responsible for managing business partnerships, and cultivating and managing partnerships with employers for the internship program.

Funding Sources

PYN oversees funding for WorkReady, 72% of which is from the public sector, and 28% of which is from the private sector. In total, PYN-supported programs work with a total of \$23,295,385 in support and revenues (including grants and contracts, contributions, and other fees.) There are over 120 investors, and this is steadily increasing. As the funding of PYN programming increases, so does that of WorkReady.

Funding is also allocated from WIA and TANF funds², which is administered to Philadelphia youth programming on the behalf of Philadelphia Works and the Philadelphia Council for College and Career Success. As an intermediary that serves these types of roles (such as redistributing allocated public funds), PYN is able to “blend public dollars with funding secured through our generous investor network.”

Champions for the program must provide a minimum direct investment of \$100,000 and/or have a network that increases opportunities for youth. Notably, these include the City of Philadelphia, Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, Philadelphia

² WIA: Workforce Investment Act. TANF: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant; is the major source of funding for cash welfare for needy families with children throughout the U.S.

Works, the School District of Philadelphia, and the United Way. High level champions such as the mayor and large businesses emphasize the importance of the programs, but having local, national, and state resources are equally as important. Quality programming is offered by partners and nonprofits, along with the district and the city.

Intended Impact

WorkReady aims to provide access and early exposure to quality job opportunities for Philadelphia youth, and ensure that all youth seeking opportunities are able to access them. Ultimately, the hope is that young people are able to be prepared for economic, educational, and personal success – and become good citizens for their communities. Because of the cross-sectorial collaborative efforts of PYN, programs have an extensive in reach and engage a wide range of constituents across the city.

The long-term impact is focused on **increasing opportunities and life success for disconnected youth**—meaning youth who have dropped out of school or are in danger of dropping out, largely due to income and/or learning barriers. Currently, there is an annual waitlist of 8,000 to 10,000 students who meet these qualifications. While every year the pool begins anew (no applicants get preferential treatment), programs are working to increase capacity in order to meet this growing demand.

Farrah Farnese, Director of Partnerships for the Employment Pathways program (one of the partner organizations that does direct service with youth through PYN notes, “It’s really about (asking), How do we ensure that the young people coming through our program are becoming equipped to become part of the workforce down the road? Our intent is that by providing these exposure opportunities, you’re sending them down a pathway for future success.” The main offering of the summer internship program in particular is exposure to the real world of work and the ability to make connections with caring adults.

Data Collection Approach

Data is collected about youth participants in order to better understand program impact and communicate with donors and other key stakeholders. Currently, a study entitled the Philadelphia Research Pilot is being conducted by University of Pennsylvania professor Dr. Sara Heller and Michael A. Nutter of the Mayor’s Office to explore the impact of the WorkReady program. While youth changes can be hard to measure, this research pilot will hopefully provide impact data to inform the program and better document its impact.

Current program evaluation efforts (pre and post tests) also highlight the ways in which supervisors are observing skill acquisition and change in youth mindsets over the course of the program.

Messaging to Employers

PYN conveys a strong message to employers in its 2014 report: “If you believe Philadelphia’s future workforce should be strong, prepared and capable of tackling tough challenges as part of an economically competitive and flourishing city—connect with us!” It seems that the value proposition to employers (and the belief of leaders and those involved in Youth Network programs) is that being involved in this work is the “right thing to do” – it is good for the city *and* for businesses.

The organization communicates the need to have an employer community that supports future workforce generations. If employers are not investing now, they won’t have a prepared workforce in the next seven to ten years. While the youth being placed may not necessarily become long-term employees of their respective employers, they can still help build a city-wide workforce, now and in the future.

APPENDIX: List of Interviewees

Jennielyn Dino Rossi – Sr. Director of Workforce, United Way of the Bay Area

Nikki Tosiello – Business Services Specialist at the Office of Economic & Workforce Development, San Francisco

Stephanie Gambone – Executive Vice President, Philadelphia Youth Network

Farrah Farnese – Director, Partnerships for Employment Pathways at Philadelphia Youth Network

Hillary Frey – Executive Director, StYouthJobs

Patrick McCullogh – Director, StYouthJobs at MERS Goodwill

Anna Peterson – Director, STEP-UP Youth Employment Program

Jeremiah Brown – Director, STEP-UP Youth Employment Program