

# Expanding Economic Opportunity for Youth through Summer Jobs

Boosting Program Capacity and Partnerships



# Executive Summary

Every summer, millions of young people across the United States look forward to getting their first job—an important early work experience that can put them on the path to a meaningful career.

Despite signs of an economic recovery, nearly 20 percent of young people who want to work cannot get jobs.<sup>i</sup> Summer youth employment programs (SYEP) help to address this challenge by connecting youth to opportunities to build skills and gain work experience. However, most cities cannot keep up with the demand for positions, especially for summer jobs that are linked to career pathways.

To tackle these challenges, summer youth employment programs have implemented strategies to expand skills development opportunities and strengthen public and private sector partnerships. This report provides an overview of those efforts, which have laid the foundation for summer work experiences that prepare young people to thrive in a competitive global economy that requires a more skilled workforce.



*By supporting summer youth employment programs across 15 U.S. cities, JPMorgan Chase builds on a comprehensive program of philanthropic investment in promising approaches to increasing economic opportunity.”*

## U.S. cities that received our support for summer youth employment programs include:

Chicago	Milwaukee
Dallas	New York City
Detroit	Oakland
Jacksonville	Sacramento
Jersey City	San Francisco
Los Angeles	Seattle
Louisville	St. Louis
Miami	

## Summer Jobs Pave the Way to Economic Opportunity

Early work experiences play a critical role in healthy youth development. Through summer jobs, young people explore career options, discover personal interests and strengths, learn about work culture, build professional networks, develop skills and earn a paycheck. The benefits of summer jobs are well-documented – they contribute to short- and long-term employment success, increase the likelihood that students will graduate from high school and pave the way to a successful progression into adulthood.<sup>ii</sup>

## Program Investments Are Making a Difference

The 2014 report, *Building Skills through Summer Jobs: Lessons from the Field*, provided a set of recommendations for improving summer jobs programs, including: expanding private sector partnerships; improving program operations; increasing skills building opportunities; serving special populations; and connecting with local systems. This year’s report highlights the progress that has been made over the past year based on dozens of interviews, surveys, focus groups and an in-depth analysis of data from 18 summer jobs programs. The National League of Cities also contributed a special section on strengthening financial capability services in SYEPs.

## Key Findings: Progress Implementing Priorities

**Expanding Private Sector Engagement:** Cities and SYEPs have expanded partnerships with the private sector by strengthening operating and communications systems.

- ✓ Seventy-two percent of SYEPs partner with the private sector to provide jobs for youth.
- ✓ Programs also reported a slight increase in private sector funding from the previous year.
- ✓ SYEPs have implemented operational improvements, including online applications, streamlined payroll processing, use of customer relationship management software to manage data, and more refined systems to match youth with jobs based on interests and skills.

**Building Capacity for Skills Development:** Cities and SYEPs are making progress in linking summer jobs to technical skills building, training and education, and year-round employment.

- ✓ Eleven SYEPs partner with public schools, most often with Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs or departments that can assist with student recruitment.
- ✓ Almost half of all SYEPs have a sector focus and four offer structured career pathways linked to summer jobs.
- ✓ Thirteen SYEPs have a system in place to match youth career interests to summer job placements.

**Expanding Services for Special Youth Populations:** Cities continue to prioritize serving special youth populations.

- ✓ While some progress has been made, especially increasing services for opportunity youth, most SYEPs do not actively recruit or provide targeted services for youth in the justice or foster care systems or youth with special needs.
- ✓ Programs are making headway expanding services to young men of color (30 percent of SYEP participants).

**Connecting SYEPs to Local Workforce Systems:** Cities are aligning summer jobs programs with local workforce systems through new partnerships and organizational structures.

- ✓ Six cities are creating citywide youth employment initiatives.
- ✓ Seven cities are integrating youth employment into economic development strategies.
- ✓ Mayors and other local leaders continue to champion summer jobs programs and have helped to secure an almost 10 percent increase in public sector funding.
- ✓ Many mayors have also led efforts to recruit private sector partners.

But more can be done. Even though SYEP participants reported that they could not find work on their own, summer jobs programs only had slots for 38 percent of the youth who applied for jobs.

## Advancing Summer Youth Employment Priorities

Looking ahead, summer jobs programs can play a unique role in addressing the youth unemployment crisis by leveraging their expertise, partnerships, scale, and other resources to increase the number and quality of skills-based work opportunities. While SYEPs reported progress over the past year, they also emphasized the importance of building on the momentum to create high-quality, sustainable summer jobs programs by:

- Maximizing opportunities in federal policy, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.
- Making a stronger case for business investment.
- Adopting policies and practices that target services to populations that continue to face significant systemic barriers to education and employment opportunities.
- Expanding access to opportunities to develop early work skills through year-round training, career readiness credentials, and school-based options. In particular, recent research has emphasized the importance of working with youth in their early teen years to begin developing these skills.
- Strengthening connections between SYEPs and workforce systems, to better integrate services and maximize resources.

To advance efforts to build and sustain this progress, a national summer jobs agenda and network are needed to support investments in evaluation, research, resources and a playbook for cities that lays out best practices. In particular, cities would benefit from tools to help them form standards and benchmarks, access the latest research, share strategies and resources, and communicate the value of summer jobs programs. Young people have joined in calls for better web-based platforms, with a focus on making it easier to identify and apply for jobs across all sectors.

Working together, the public and private sectors have already contributed to strengthening summer jobs programs. But more progress is needed to equip young people with the skills and experiences that will help them access economic opportunity and succeed in the competitive global economy.



*I believe that talent is equally distributed across this world, but what is not equally distributed is opportunity. We have an enormous number of talented young people in Detroit who have not had the same kinds of opportunities as people in other communities."*

**Mayor Mike Duggan**

Detroit

# Summer Jobs Pave the Way to Economic Opportunity

Tackling the teen unemployment crisis and creating pathways to success for young adults are priorities for cities across the United States. JPMorgan Chase's philanthropic investment in summer jobs reflects not only its deep-seated commitment to providing economic opportunity to youth but also the growing recognition that summer youth employment is a critical component of the workforce pipeline.

The summer jobs programs funded by JPMorgan Chase in 2015 helped to provide over 3,200 youth jobs and work-related opportunities. The programs are located in 15 cities in every major region of the United States. They also represent a variety of organizational models:

- Twelve programs are private nonprofit organizations including three that serve as the local coordinating body for citywide youth employment initiatives that are open to all youth.
- The other nine programs are managed by public entities, including city governments, workforce investment boards, and a school district.



JPMorgan Chase's commitment to summer youth employment complements its broader efforts to expand economic opportunity for youth by supporting research, innovative program models and systems building, including:

## NEW SKILLS AT WORK

JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

*New Skills at Work* is a five-year, \$250 million global workforce readiness initiative designed to help people get the training they need to compete for jobs. *New Skills at Work* collaborates with regional leaders, uses research to identify the skills local employers need and supports effective nonprofit programs that provide skills training. Through this effort, the firm is supporting proven strategies to provide young adults with high-quality postsecondary training and work experiences.

## NEW SKILLS FOR YOUTH

JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

Launched in early 2016, *New Skills for Youth* is a five-year, \$75 million global career readiness initiative. The initiative will provide a select group of state and local partnerships with the opportunity to design and implement rigorous, demand-driven education systems that dramatically increase the number of students who complete career pathways beginning in secondary school and culminating in valuable postsecondary credentials.

## THE FELLOWSHIP INITIATIVE

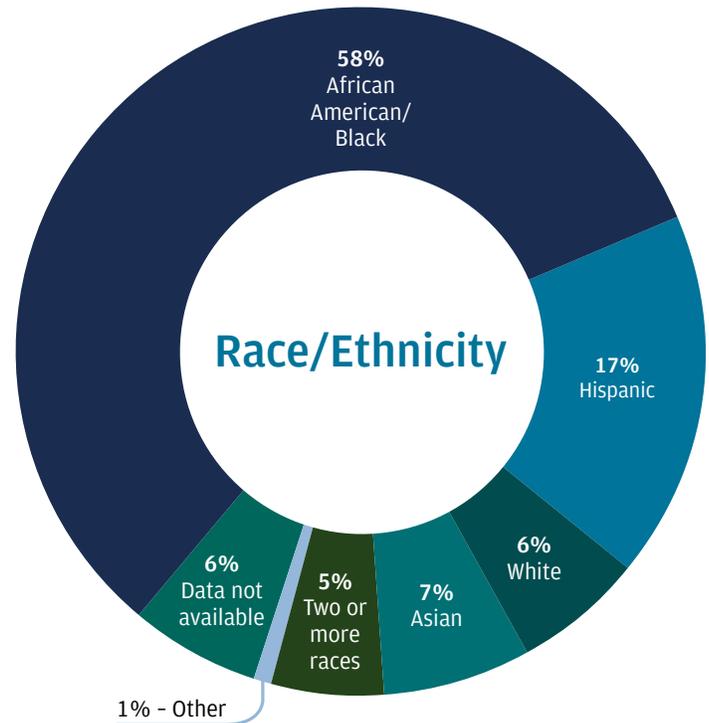
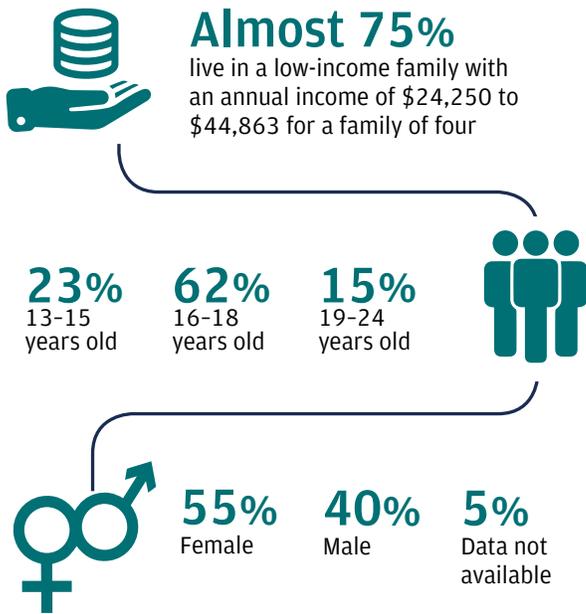
JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

*The Fellowship Initiative*, (TFI) a program launched in 2010 to improve education outcomes for young men of color, combines promising youth development interventions to prepare students for college and career success. TFI serves high school students from economically distressed neighborhoods in Chicago, Los Angeles and New York City. More than 120 JPMorgan Chase employees volunteer for TFI, primarily by serving as mentors.

Social  
Mobility  
Foundation

Through the *Social Mobility Foundation*, J.P. Morgan is enabling low-income students from around the U.K. to participate in residential internships. More than 50 students each year are placed in revenue-generating roles at the firm, connect with a J.P. Morgan mentor, participate in workshops and earn the opportunity to return for a paid internship the following year.

Snapshot of SYEP Participants in 2015\*



\*Demographic data was collected from 18 of the 21 programs funded by JPMorgan Chase, i.e., those programs that provided direct services to youth; data availability varies slightly by demographic category.

List of Cities and Programs Supported by JPMorgan Chase in 2015

CITY	SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM	COORDINATING ORGANIZATION
Chicago	One Summer Chicago	Chicago Public Schools - Early College and Career Education
Dallas	Mayor's Intern Fellows Program	Education is Freedom
Detroit	Grow Detroit's Young Talent	City Connect Detroit
Jacksonville	United Way of Northeast Florida Youth Employment Program	United Way of Northeast Florida
Jersey City	Jersey City Summer Works	City of Jersey City Mayor's Office
Los Angeles	Center Theatre Group Workforce Development Program	Center Theatre Group
	YOLA Workforce Development	Los Angeles Philharmonic Association
	Jumpstart TMC	The Music Center - Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County
Louisville	Early Workforce Development Program	Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
	Mayor's SummerWorks	KentuckianaWorks
Miami-Dade County	NAF/JP Morgan Scholars Youth Employment Internship Program	Miami-Dade County Public Schools - Department of Career & Technical Education; Magnet Educational Choice Association
Milwaukee	Earn & Learn Community Work Experience	Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board
New York City	Center for Youth Employment	Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City
	Futures and Options Summer Internship Program	Futures and Options
	PENCIL Fellows Program	PENCIL Inc.
	Virtual Enterprises Summer Internship Program	Virtual Enterprises International
Oakland	Classrooms2Careers	City of Oakland
Sacramento	Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Initiative	City of Sacramento
San Francisco	Youth Jobs +	United Way of the Bay Area
Seattle	Youth Employment Initiative	City of Seattle - Office of Economic Development
St. Louis	STL Youth Jobs	STL Youth Jobs

# Advancing Summer Jobs

In the United States, summer jobs have long represented a rite of passage for young adults.

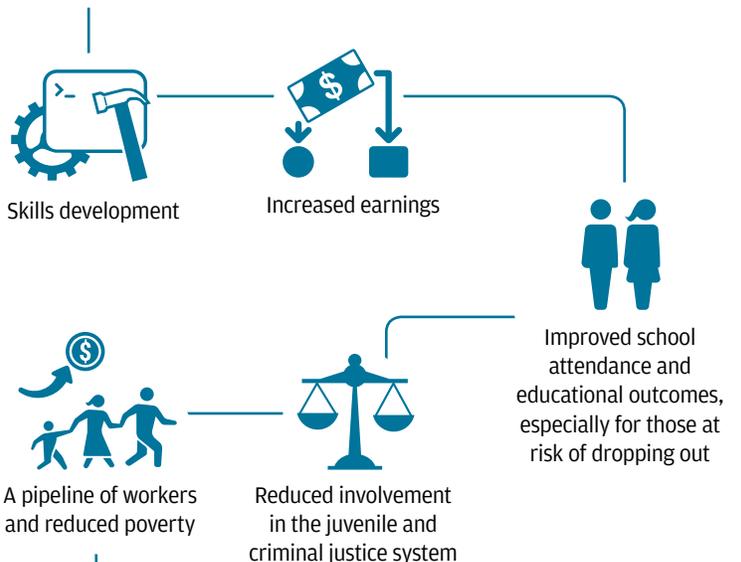
For many teens, these jobs offer their first glimpse into adulthood – the experience of having responsibilities and earning a paycheck. Despite the benefits of early work experiences, every year many youth are turned away from summer youth employment programs because most cities do not have the funding, partnerships or infrastructure required to meet the demand. In 2015, SYEPs surveyed for this report had positions available for only 38 percent of the youth who applied for a job. These challenges have also made it difficult for cities to develop robust summer youth employment programming that focuses on skills development and prepares youth for an increasingly competitive global workforce. This section briefly summarizes the benefits of summer jobs and highlights local strategies to expand and improve summer youth employment programs.



Since 2000, U.S. Department of Labor youth funding has decreased by nearly **33%** from \$1.25 billion to \$831 million.<sup>iii</sup>

For low-income youth, early access to economic opportunity is critical – 43 percent of Americans raised at the bottom of the income ladder remain stuck there as adults.<sup>iv</sup> This lack of mobility threatens to limit the options available for young people and puts a drag on the nation’s economic growth as millions of jobs remain vacant because employers cannot find skilled workers. By 2025, 65 percent of jobs in the United States will require some postsecondary education, training or credential – up from 28 percent of jobs in the 1970s.<sup>v</sup> These heightened expectations mean that it’s more essential than ever for young people to gain work experience and develop skills today to enable them to compete in the global workforce in the future.

## Summer jobs contribute to...



### Summer jobs can contribute to better long-term employment outcomes for young people:



Teens who work are **86%** more likely to be employed the next year.<sup>vi</sup>

Participation in a work-based learning activity can increase a young person's salary by as much as **11%** for up to eight years after high school.<sup>vii</sup>



Older youth have almost a **100%** chance of being employed if they worked more than 40 weeks the previous year.<sup>viii</sup>



*I decided to apply to Futures and Options because I wanted to take control of my life and take success into my own hands. My internship connected me to individuals who opened my eyes and exposed me to aspects of business I had little or no knowledge about. I believe that when an opportunity like this presents itself, you should take it, because you never know when it will come around again."*

**Martin**

*Futures and Options*

Internship: Interactive Corporations (IAC), New York City

Recognizing the importance of these programs, local leaders – especially mayors – have increased their commitment to summer jobs programs. Programs report that mayors have been particularly effective in recruiting private sector employers and hosting public events to recognize their participation in summer jobs programs. Elected officials are in a unique position to convene potential business partners and make the case for hiring youth.

Mayors also are designing summer youth programs within their own agencies. For example, in Jersey City and Oakland, government agencies are hiring summer interns, creating a pipeline of future public sector workers. Other cities integrate youth into economic development strategies such as the *Complete Milwaukee* model,

a five-part program to connect the private sector with the labor market supply. Mayors can use the influence of the office to drive coordination between youth employment programs, leverage public and private resources, organize events and publicly promote the importance of youth employment, and recruit employers.

Business and corporate leaders, including members of SYEP boards of directors or business partners who had positive youth employment experiences, have also been great champions and spurred success in peer recruitment efforts. Sharing personal experiences with other employers is an especially important way that businesses can affirm the benefits and value that youth employees can offer the private sector.

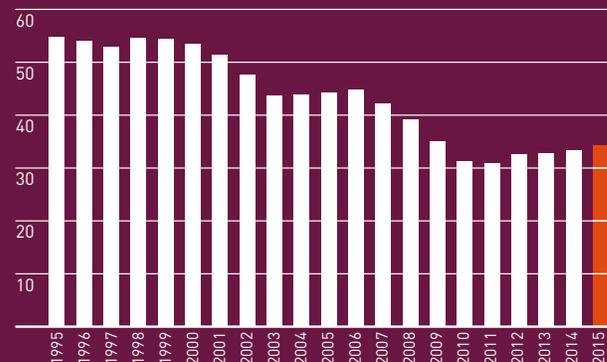
As a result of these local efforts, public funding for summer jobs from a variety of sources increased by almost 10 percent between 2014 and 2015, although the demand for summer jobs still exceeds the supply. Programs also reported progress in other key areas identified as priorities in 2014:

1. Expanding private sector engagement
2. Building capacity for skills development
3. Expanding services for special youth populations
4. Connecting SYEPs to local workforce systems

Exemplary practices piloted by SYEPs are included below to support learning and innovation across cities and spark a conversation about what is working in the field.

U.S. labor force data reveals far too many teens are not working. Over the past 20 years, peak summer employment for teens has fallen to 34.3%, which is a 37% decline and near record-low.

#### Employment-Population Ratio of 16- to 19-Year-Olds (Annual percentages during the month of July)



Source: Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey. Series Id: LNU02300012 (Unadj) Employment-Population Ratio of 16-19 years. Data extracted on December 2, 2015.

## PROGRESS IN MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING PROGRAMS

# 1 Summer Jobs Boost Skills

The best summer jobs for teens provide a mix of skill building – from learning about workplace culture and professional behaviors to opportunities to master technical skills that can lead to meaningful career pathways.

Recent research has confirmed the importance of the foundational or “early work skills” training provided by most SYEPs. Over the past few years, summer jobs programs have integrated a range of progressive career-related options, such as technical training and the opportunity to earn industry specific certifications that may lead to participation in a formal career pathway.



## Challenges to Increasing Access to Meaningful Skills Development

Even though many SYEPs reported progress developing new approaches to skills development, several noted significant challenges, such as:



The short time available during the summer to earn specific credentials

The cost of training and testing for certain credentials



Difficulty matching every youth to a summer job that aligns with their career interest



Lottery systems that allow for broader access to summer jobs but may limit opportunities for young people to have consistent, progressive skills building experiences over multiple years



## Cities Are Exploring Varied Models and Strategies

To improve the quality of skills development available in summer employment programs, cities are strengthening linkages to work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and career and technical education.

SYEPs also are creating career- and industry-specific partnerships and work experiences to expose youth to a wide variety of fields, many of which are connected to high-demand sectors within their regional economy. Examples of models considered by cities to increase skills building opportunities:

- A growing number of SYEPs are **working directly with CTE programs** at school districts and community colleges to create career-specific summer job opportunities aligned with CTE courses, especially those in high-growth industries.
- **Year-round entry into training and internship programs** for high-demand sectors such as manufacturing, health care and information technology.
- **Industry certifications** or credentials that prepare youth for work in specific jobs or industries.
- **Dual high school and college academic credit** that gives youth a jump-start for college.

## Employers continue to value early work skills

In an analysis of more than 380 studies from around the world,<sup>ix</sup> *Child Trends* identified the skills most “frequently sought by employers”, which included



Most summer youth employment programs offer training in these areas, but more research is needed to assess the quality and effectiveness of these trainings.

## Field Notes

### Examples of innovative skills development programs

#### Teens in Miami Earn Dual High School and College Credit for Their Summer Internship

Partnerships with local school districts that connect CTE programs with summer youth employment programs expand the employment opportunities for youth enrolled in a CTE program. It also provides employers with a pipeline of employees who have a career interest in their industry sector, along with the hard skills and knowledge learned in the high school CTE courses. In **Miami-Dade County Public Schools**, for example, youth in a CTE program earn high school academic credit while some students also earn dual college credit if they meet eligibility requirements for their internship experience. They can make useful connections within their career field and get a jump-start in both college and career readiness.

#### St. Louis Launches IT career Pathway

STL Youth Jobs piloted a career pathway in Information Technology (IT) in cooperation with CTE programs in local school districts. Local IT companies hired 22 youth over the summer, while a technology nonprofit organization trained another 16 youth in technology skills that will allow them to pursue future part-time employment in IT as they continue their formal education. Additionally, St. Louis started laying the foundation for a healthcare career pathway by developing partnerships with local healthcare organizations and colleges, and linking its efforts to existing sector-based business workgroups. The program is set to launch in 2016.



**Julius**

High school student

Internship: Advanced Orthopedics & Neurosurgery Group, Miami

“The internship opened my eyes to the many opportunities available in this career path. And the health sciences courses I took in the CTE program prepared me to take advantage of this opportunity. I got so much hands-on experience - even observing up to four surgeries per day. I also learned the importance of timeliness and punctuality, because they reflect commitment to the job.”

“This program was a great opportunity for me and it allowed me to get three hours of college of credit too!”

**Dynasty**

High school student

Internship and Certification: Manufacturing, Welding Certification Program, Chicago

## PROGRESS IN MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING PROGRAMS

## 2 Expanding Private Sector Partnerships

These partnerships are highly valued because of their potential to increase the number and quality of jobs available to youth, provide training and skills-building opportunities, and connect to year-round employment. Private sector partners can also contribute other resources, such as financial assistance, technical expertise and volunteers. In the cities surveyed for this report, private sector investment accounted for 56% of total funding for summer jobs programs.



### Challenges to Expanding Private Sector Partnerships

For youth employment programs, challenges to increasing private sector engagement include:

- Identifying the right contact within the business.
- Ensuring sufficient capacity to recruit and manage employer partners.
- Setting realistic employer expectations.
- Providing support to employers and youth to troubleshoot challenges and help youth succeed.

### Progress Engaging the Private Sector

Despite these challenges, SYEPs reported progress increasing private sector partnerships in 2015. The number of private sector worksites increased by 8 percent, and 75 percent of programs now place youth in private sector jobs. Between 2014 and 2015, private sector funding also increased by 4 percent in cities across different programs. Some cities successfully launched new initiatives – for example, Detroit recruited more than 100 new private sector employer partners to focus on youth employment.

“Hiring high school students as summer interns is a win-win. CSX Transportation benefits from having bright, committed youth who are eager to do a good job; and youth benefit from the real-life experience and work skills they develop during their employment. CSX Transportation believes that hiring youth is a good business practice and our civic duty to mentor the next generation of workers.”

**Shannal**

Records Compliance Manager CSX Transportation, Jacksonville

### Best Practices for Employers

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation identified five best practices for employers in supporting youth employment.



Link their youth employment strategy to their business strategy and find champions

Identify the right partners to expand talent sources



Review company policies that may pose a barrier to youth hiring

Prioritize early work skills development and partner with nonprofits and others to support youth in coaching and mentoring



Measure outcomes and improve strategy through continuous improvement<sup>x</sup>

### Enhancing SYEP Capacity

Expanding the number of private sector partners has required SYEPs to implement a variety of operational improvements and communications strategies to make it easier for employers to hire youth for summer jobs.

OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS	PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT TOOLS	COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS TO ENGAGE EMPLOYERS
Online applications and sign-up	Worksite supervisor handbook	New employer recruitment events
Payroll processing by the summer program or an external staffing agency	Formal memorandum of understanding with employers to clarify roles and responsibilities	Annual reports that highlight program outcomes and accomplishments
Customer relationship management software to manage data and reports	Work-based learning plans for youth to evaluate performance and help supervisors make jobs a meaningful work experience	Year-round communication - monthly newsletters; weekly updates during summer jobs period
More refined systems to match youth with employers and specific jobs based on interests and skills	Employer satisfaction surveys to provide feedback that can improve the employment experience	Recognition events hosted by the mayor
Hiring experienced job coaches that serve as a resource and support for both youth and employers	Training for supervisors	Regular communication with job coaches

### Employer Satisfaction

Over half of the SYEPs featured in this report administered surveys to employer partners to assess levels of satisfaction. Overall, results show that employers have had a positive experience and intend to participate again in the future. A sample of employer responses includes:

**ST. LOUIS**  
94% of employers agreed that youth were prepared for the job

**JERSEY CITY**  
95% of employers intend to host interns again next year

**DALLAS**  
89% of employers agreed that youth were prepared for the job

**NEW YORK CITY**  
- PENCIL (youth employment program): 25% of employers extended a permanent job offer to youth after summer employment

**JACKSONVILLE**  
93% of employers expressed overall satisfaction

### Strategies for Moving Forward

SYEPs also are pursuing strategies to make a stronger business case for the private sector to participate in summer jobs programs. For example, many SYEPs are collecting success stories and highlighting the role youth can play in addressing workforce needs. Youth assets - such as cultural diversity - may benefit businesses by helping to diversify their talent pipeline, keep them competitive, attract new markets, and offer fresh ideas. Finally, financial incentives, such as wage subsidies can also help to expand private sector partnerships.



**Michaela**  
United Way of Southeast Florida  
Internship: CSX, Jacksonville

*“Being in this summer jobs program for three years has shaped my path in the right direction and empowered me. This positive and nurturing workplace at CSX has increased the development of my character and built my confidence. All the skills I have learned prepare me to conquer working.”*

## PROGRESS IN MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING PROGRAMS

## 3 Increasing Access to Jobs for All Youth

Summer jobs programs are especially important for youth who face significant challenges to entering the workforce.

Many of these teens – including young men of color, foster care youth, court-involved youth, youth with disabilities, and youth who are out-of-work and out-of-school – struggle to overcome systemic barriers. Often, these young people need extra support to join or re-connect to the workforce.

Nationwide, there are **5.5 million** “**opportunity youth**”<sup>xi</sup> – young people ages 16 to 24 who are not attached to school or work.

As SYEPs increase the number of slots for internships in the private sector, one consideration is whether those employers will hire at-risk youth.

“My job built me into a stronger man and showed me another part of life. It gave me a sense of accomplishment and taught me perseverance. Knowing I had a job to do was important to me. Without this job, I’d still be struggling.”

**DeAndrae**

SummerWorks

Internship: Food Literacy Project, Louisville

## Cities Implement Strategies to Support Youth with Barriers to Employment

Many cities and SYEPs are adopting policies and practices to serve more opportunity youth and other teens that are struggling to enter the labor force. Promising practices for better serving these populations include the following:

- Cities are partnering with community-based organizations that have a track record of recruiting and working with these populations
- SYEPs are targeting services to meet the needs of special youth populations such as conducting training sessions at area high schools to help more youth complete an application for program participation and recruiting in specific neighborhoods
- SYEPs are recruiting employers from local neighborhoods to minimize difficulties in transportation to jobs

While many of these youth face challenges, they are eager to gain new skills and work experience that will tap into their talents, fulfill their aspirations and lead to a meaningful career.



**21.6%** of black youths are neither working nor in school, compared with **11.3%** of whites.<sup>xii</sup>

At least **20%** of Latino youth in metro areas are disconnected from work and school.<sup>xiii</sup>



### Field notes

#### Louisville Teens Become Software Entrepreneurs

In 2015, the Louisville Mayor’s Office and KentuckianaWorks piloted a project called *Coding at the Beech* to train high school-aged youth in technology skills, targeting the training to young men and women of color from disadvantaged neighborhoods. Through this program, youth met for weekly classes at the Beecher Terrace housing project over a 12-week period with support from two mentors provided by Code Louisville. In addition to hosting the training at a familiar and accessible neighborhood site, youth also received free bus passes so that they had reliable transportation. Youth who participated in the project learned how to code HTML, CSS, and Java Script.

The youth who completed the training then formed a new company called **Beech Technologies** that uses their newly acquired technology skills to create custom websites and provide tech support for small businesses and organizations.

PROGRESS IN MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING PROGRAMS

## 4 Strengthening Linkages

Cities are expanding efforts to link summer jobs programs to local workforce systems. Because of their scale and complexity, summer youth employment programs engage a wide range of partners, including local government agencies, workforce development boards, nonprofit organizations, school districts, colleges and universities, training providers and private sector employers.

A coordinated system can be a key factor in establishing youth employment as a citywide priority that requires the involvement of multiple local entities. However, it can be complicated to create collaboration across different organization lines with different performance reporting requirements and revenue sources. Some cities are addressing these challenges by designating one organization to serve as an intermediary that convenes key stakeholders and coordinates local efforts. For example, Detroit and Seattle each launched a citywide initiative to bring together public and private partners, and New York City created a new entity (see sidebar) to support coordination across agencies.



In addition, some programs are taking incremental steps toward creating a coordinated system by developing or strengthening partnerships with the CTE programs in local school districts that allow youth to gain practical summer employment experience that can enhance their high school course of study. For example, One Summer Chicago partnered with Chicago Public Schools to provide more than 100 CTE students with up to seven weeks of training, an employment experience and industry certification or credentials in four high-growth, high-demand industry sectors (information technology, manufacturing, transportation and health care) that matched with their field of study in high school. The program focused on both education and employment and connected students to employers at the end of their training. Other programs such as those located in Dallas and Jersey City have longtime partnerships with local school districts to recruit youth for summer jobs at area high schools.

This coordination can help to maximize funding streams, address gaps in youth services and provide appropriate support to vulnerable youth that are hardest to serve.

### Field notes

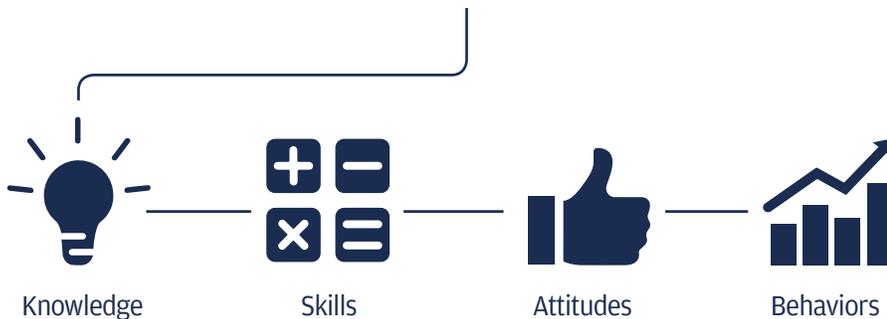
#### NYC Creates Youth Employment Center

In 2015, New York City launched the Center for Youth Employment, a public-private initiative charged with helping to develop an expanded and improved set of employment services for young New Yorkers. A project of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, the Center's specific goal is to support 100,000 unique work-related experiences each year, including high-quality summer jobs, career exposure, skills-building, and supportive mentorships, by 2020. In collaboration with city agencies, employers and other stakeholders, the Center is focused on increasing private sector involvement in these programs as well as evaluating the city's youth workforce system as a whole, with an eye toward expanding programs that are effective and filling in gaps with new programming where necessary. In less than a year, the Center helped to provide approximately 70,000 unique work experiences to youth - an increase of nearly 15 percent over the previous year.

# Financial Capability

Summer jobs provide many teens with their first paychecks. While some youth employment programs currently include a financial education component, only a very small number of programs offer access to the products and services that can promote positive financial behaviors over the longer term.

## Financial capability refers to...



...needed to make sound financial decisions that support one's health.

Financial capability programming includes financial education and information in conjunction with access to appropriate services and products delivered at relevant moments in the lives of individuals.

To assess the integration of high-quality financial capability services in youth employment programs, the National League of Cities conducted 13 interviews and site visits with city leaders and practitioners and coordinated a national convening (held in partnership with the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the U.S. Department of Labor) that brought together representatives from more than 30 cities.

## Key findings are listed below and others can be found at [www.nlc.org/financialinclusion](http://www.nlc.org/financialinclusion)



### Use of Innovative Technology

New interactive technologies have the potential to enhance the effectiveness of financial capability efforts in youth employment programs. Mobile apps, interactive games and online platforms can enliven learning and move educational programs beyond traditional classroom settings. Technologies that incorporate realistic goal-setting, social media and peer sharing among youth as they receive their first paycheck may be particularly successful in sustaining young people's interest in and attention to financial capability topics.

### Payroll Strategies

Accessibility, flexible options for account opening and transactions, and a savings component all represent key features of a strong payroll system for youth participating in summer or year-round employment programs. A payroll card with low access fees and a savings component or a bank account with mobile access are good options for young people. Some of these alternative products can also begin to develop a "banking mindset" in a young person, providing a pathway toward a safe account at a financial institution and a long-term banking relationship.



### Cross-Sector Partnerships

Aligning financial capability and youth employment programming necessitates a diverse set of partners that includes workforce agencies; financial empowerment service providers; financial institutions; youth-serving organizations; and local employers. A coordinating body or "backbone" organization, either within or outside of municipal government, can play a particularly effective role in helping to align partner activities, prevent fragmented or duplicative efforts, and promote coordination in areas such as data sharing.

While these findings reflect the *potential* of financial capability efforts in youth employment programs, this segment of the larger financial inclusion field still is relatively new. Not surprisingly, service providers and program leaders need more training and capacity building so that they can move beyond traditional financial literacy programs and directly enhance young people's financial health and efficacy. In addition, the field needs more experimentation and program evaluation to shed light on the relative effectiveness of different program models and approaches.

*Note: The National League of Cities gathered information from a broad network of youth employment programs, which included but was not limited to the SYEPs surveyed for this report.*

*JPMorgan Chase supported The National League of Cities, through its Institute for Youth, Education, and Families in a year-long effort to explore promising practices in cities that are seeking to incorporate financial capability programming into municipal-led youth employment initiatives.*

## LOOKING AHEAD

# Building on the Momentum

In 2015, the youth unemployment crisis captured headlines around the world resulting in renewed calls to increase workforce preparation and opportunities for young adults.

Cities can build on this momentum to engage practitioners, policymakers, private sector partners, and national stakeholders in developing strategies to strengthen summer jobs programs and local youth employment systems.



**This section highlights ways to build on the progress that was made by those programs over the past year and implement new methods to continue expanding economic opportunity for youth through high-quality summer jobs programs across the country:**

### Boost skills building for youth

- Continue to scale up promising models that provide year-round employment, connections to career education training and work experiences, and other technical training opportunities.
- Expand access to opportunities for youth to develop early work skills through year-round training, career readiness credentials, and school-based options. In particular, recent research has emphasized the importance of working with youth in their early teen years to begin developing these skills.
- Invest in evaluation methods to assess the effectiveness of different program approaches.
- Engage industry-specific associations and local chambers of commerce to help develop career-specific summer jobs.

### Expand and strengthen private sector engagement

- Engage business partners in both summer and year-round activities directly with youth.
- Develop an employer feedback loop for program evaluation and planning, as well as a rapid response system to answer questions quickly during the hiring process.

- Build a strong customized business case for hiring youth. Examples include promoting personal stories from employers that have had a positive experience with youth employment, and sharing data about youth hired full-time or promoted into leadership roles within the company.

### Expand and tailor services to the needs of youth with barriers to employment

- Increase public-private investments and adopt policies and practices that target services to more youth of color, opportunity youth, and other youth who face obstacles to entering the labor force.
- Set benchmarks and service goals for opportunity youth and youth of color.

### Improve coordination with local workforce systems

- Continue to build capacity of organizing entities that are responsible for coordinating with employers and youth serving systems, blending and braiding resources, and establishing benchmarks and standards to improve quality.

This report also offers strategies to advance youth employment based on insights from recent research and trends in the workforce field, and the experiences of local leaders and programs.

#### Maximize opportunities in federal policy

- Organizations that implement SYEPs could benefit from engaging with local planning processes in support of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA and the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act promote efforts that are coordinated across public sectors, build career pathways, and help youth to learn skills, earn credentials, and enter careers. WIOA targets 75 percent of youth funding to out-of-school youth and requires 20 percent of youth activities funding to be spent on providing work experience; the 20 percent work experience set-aside is a potential funding source for summer jobs programs.<sup>xiv</sup>

#### Establish a public agenda to advance youth employment and promote sustainability

- National field building is still needed to assist cities, programs, and leaders in sharing learnings, forming standards, connecting relationships and opportunities across cities, and influencing national policy.
- A menu of local policy options, strategies and budget ideas that cities can deploy to advance and sustain youth employment and summer jobs. Many cities have already taken steps to direct financial and human resources to support youth employment, but summer programs express interest in exploring options that open up new funding sources and create new policy solutions.

#### Further explore innovations in financial capability

- Support research, pilots, and program evaluation to provide high quality financial capability programming.

#### Leverage summer youth employment programs to expand career pathway opportunities

Cities are taking the lead in developing progressive approaches to building early work skills and career-specific experiences that can lead to a more structured career pathway for youth. This includes a greater focus on career awareness, exploration, preparation and training. It also allows for the development of age-appropriate programming and builds on existing research that shows having more work experience and starting earlier has lasting benefits for youth.

City leaders in partnership with employers, workforce development boards, local secondary and postsecondary institutions, and youth development providers can advance summer jobs and youth employment more broadly by:



Developing a comprehensive framework that incorporates a tiered design approach to employment competency development, beginning with project-based and service learning activities and progressing to subsidized employment experiences and internships in the public and private sectors



Building the capacity of employers and nonprofit partners to create project-based work and learning opportunities for youth. This involves employers (work-site supervisors) creating specific work plans in cooperation with youth and establishing specific goals and skills for youth to master through the work experience<sup>xv</sup>



Creating career-based internships and work experiences for youth



Incorporating trainings to enhance employability skills for youth while they are engaged in subsidized employment



#### Story from Umique, Youth Jobs+ Intern, BART Civil Rights Office, San Francisco

*The fear that my little brothers couldn't look up to me" – that's what led Umique to seek help through United Way's youth jobs program. Umique says he sees a lot of students where he was before he found Youth Jobs+ full of initiative but in need of what he calls a road map. "When that knowledge comes alive," he says, "they can reach their potential."*

The first in his family to go to college and a role model to his younger brothers, Umique says he was empowered by the internship he got in the BART Civil Rights Office, which led him to declare a major in business management. Now an intern with SFMade, a nonprofit organization that promotes the manufacturing industry in San Francisco, Umique wants to help others – to give students like him the boost he got from Youth Jobs+.



## Summer Jobs Programs Surveyed for this Report

### Chicago

**One Summer Chicago** is a citywide initiative led by Mayor Rahm Emanuel that brings together government institutions, community-based organizations and companies to offer more than 24,000 employment and internship opportunities to youth and young adults ages 14 to 24. In 2015, in partnership with JPMorgan Chase, Chicago Public Schools provided over 100 youth enrolled in career and technical education programs the opportunity to gain certifications and work experience in specific industries.

### Dallas

**The Mayor's Intern Fellows Program** introduces Dallas high school students to future careers, professional employment opportunities and valuable workplace skills, while providing area companies, nonprofits and government entities a meaningful way to make an investment in the youth of Dallas and its future workforce. Sponsored by Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings and facilitated by the nonprofit organization, Education is Freedom, the program is an eight-week, paid summer internship program modeled after the White House Internship Program.

### Detroit

**Grow Detroit's Young Talent** is a collaboration between Mayor Mike Duggan and community partners to ensure that approximately 5,000 young people have meaningful work experiences in the City of Detroit during the summer of 2015. Facilitated by City Connect Detroit, this citywide effort gives young adults ages 14 to 24 early exposure to the world of work and enhances their educational, work readiness and leadership skills. Each young adult receives a 120 hour paid work experience, 12 hours of pre-training and 24 hours of ongoing training throughout the summer.

### Jacksonville

**The Youth Employment Program** is administered by United Way of Northeast Florida and connects teens ages 16 to 19 with job readiness training, financial literacy workshops, individual coaching and exposure to careers matching their talents and interests. Youth are matched with local companies and nonprofit organizations for paid, six-week internships. Internship site supervisors serve as mentors and coaches and provide interns with career and education guidance, as well as job shadowing opportunities.

### Jersey City

**The Jersey City Summer Works** summer youth employment and enrichment initiative is coordinated by the Office of Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop. It includes the Jersey City Summer Internship Program, the City Youth Jobs program and the Summer Works Arts program. JC Summer Works partners with nonprofit, public and private sector partners to provide paid summer jobs and extensive professional development for youth ages 16 to 24.

### Los Angeles

**The Center Theatre Group Workforce Development Program** provides internships to high school students that help them to develop skills by studying and learning alongside professionals and gaining practical, hands-on work experience. Students are placed in a part of the theatre operation that matches their skills and interests.



**The YOLA Workforce Development** program at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association partnered with the local community organization Heart of LA (HOLA) to pilot a program that connected underserved youth with seasonal jobs at the Hollywood Bowl. Jobs were promoted among high school seniors participating in HOLA's College Success program, and youth received paid employment over a 14-week period.

**The Jumpstart TMC** program at The Music Center (Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County) is a new internship program that provides training and part-time paid positions for at-risk young adults from low-income families in a range of positions at the Center. Youth receive training in early work skills that will prepare them for future employment, as well as on-the-job professional development during their placement.

**Early Workforce Development Program** at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County provides early workforce development opportunities to 280 low-income students annually through internships, volunteer positions and work/study fellowships. Students learn about public-facing, research-based and administrative functions in the Museum and gain nationally-recognized credentials that qualify them for a variety of work and volunteer opportunities at museums and other institutions.

### Louisville

**The Mayor's SummerWorks** program is led by KentuckianaWorks, Greater Louisville's Workforce Development Board, under the leadership of Mayor Greg Fischer. The program places youth ages 16 to 21 in a paid seven-week summer job with public and private sector employers. Youth receive training and are supported by a job coach, who works with them and their employer to ensure a successful work experience. The program is operated in partnership with Jefferson County Public Schools Adult and Continuing Education through the Kentucky Youth Career Center.

### Miami

**The NAF JP Morgan Scholars Youth Employment Internship Program** provides summer internships for students enrolled in career and technical education programs in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Students prepare for the internship in their academy themed class and apply their classroom knowledge at a worksite. During the five-week summer employment, students complete written assignments and are assessed by their employer for work-based competencies. All students earn high school academic credit, while some students also earn dual college credit if they meet eligibility requirements for their internship experience.

### Milwaukee

**Earn & Learn Community Work Experience** is a summer youth employment program initiated by Mayor Tom Barrett. The program's major partner is the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board and includes other partners, such as nonprofit and for-profit businesses and community- and faith-based organizations. Earn & Learn assists young people in making a successful transition from adolescence to adulthood by providing them opportunities to enhance their work-readiness skills and job experiences. Youth participating in the Earn & Learn program choose among several employment tracks and receive financial literacy training.



### New York City

**NYC Center for Youth Employment** was launched by Mayor Bill de Blasio and the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City in 2015. A public-private initiative charged with helping to develop an expanded and improved set of employment services for young New Yorkers, its specific goal is to support 100,000 unique work-related experiences each year, including high-quality summer jobs, career exposure, skills-building and supportive mentorships by 2020.

**Futures and Options** offers paid summer internships to underserved youth ages 16 to 19 who are recruited from area high schools. Youth are placed in public and private sector jobs that match their career interests and receive ongoing mentorship throughout the job period. Youth participate in extensive ongoing training in work readiness, life skills and career exploration. Each intern attends at least one career-focused field trip as part of the mission to expose them to meaningful professional careers.

**The PENCIL Fellows Program** provides youth with extensive training and on-going support for a six-week, paid full-time summer internship. PENCIL Fellows gain 240 hours of direct experience as well as 38 hours of training in early work and career skills. PENCIL works with its extensive network of businesses to develop internships so that youth can be placed in jobs that match their skills and career interests.

**Virtual Enterprises International (VEI)** provides career-minded juniors and seniors who participate in the VEI program in their high school for at least one year with work experiences through school-year (part-time) and summer (full-time) paid internships. Students gain daily workplace experience while creating and running businesses in their classroom, and are placed in jobs related to their course of study. VEI staff provides ongoing support to students and business partners through workshops, workplace visits and supervisory assistance.

### Oakland

**Classrooms2Career** places youth ages 16 to 21 in summer job opportunities, partnering with both public and private sector employers. With strong support from Mayor Libby Schaaf, the internship program is based on the Earn & Learn initiative, a national model that prepares students for successful careers by combining career-focused academic curriculum and relevant work experience. Students experience a professional work environment, earn money, build quality employment experiences and receive on-the-job training.

### Sacramento

**The Summer Youth Employment Initiative** sponsored by the Office of Mayor Kevin Johnson brings key stakeholders together to provide meaningful employment opportunities for high school-aged youth. The initiative seeks to develop a comprehensive expansion plan to extend partnerships across other programs to support more jobs and services, especially for opportunity youth and young men of color.

### San Francisco

**Youth Jobs Plus** is a citywide initiative that helps youth and young adults ages 16 to 24 find employment. The initiative is a partnership between the City of San Francisco, United Way of the Bay Area (UWBA), Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, the Office of Education and Workforce Development, San Francisco Unified School District, youth-serving non-profits and the San Francisco business community. UWBA serves as the lead coordinator for this citywide initiative which funds several community-based organizations called "Doorways" to serve as the direct service partners toward the city's Youth Jobs+ initiative.

### Seattle

**The Seattle Youth Employment Initiative** is a citywide effort led by Mayor Ed Murray to increase meaningful internship and job opportunities for Seattle's youth so that they gain knowledge and skills for academic and professional success. In partnership with Seattle's employers, funders, and youth serving organizations, the Mayor's initiative works to expand the number and variety of internships available to youth and deepen the connection to career and education. In addition, Seattle is launching an employer intermediary to offer a more streamlined and effective way for employers to connect with youth.

### St. Louis

**St. Louis Youth Jobs (STL Youth Jobs)** provides youth from low-income neighborhoods with early employment experience through a unique public-private partnership that is a cross-sector collaboration between the corporate and philanthropic community, the private sector and the local government. The public side of the partnership is managed by the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment, with oversight from the City of St. Louis Workforce Development Board. The private side is managed by a collaboration of community stakeholders including the office of Mayor Francis Slay, the Incarnate Word Foundation, the Greater St. Louis Community Foundation and MERS/Goodwill.

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