



## OPENING THE DOOR

HOW COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESS THE YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS

By Adria Steinberg and Cheryl Almeida | JUNE 2015



**JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**



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**Jobs for the Future** works with our partners to design and drive the adoption of education and career pathways leading from college readiness to career advancement for those struggling to succeed in today's economy. Across the country, we work to improve the pathways leading from high school to college to family-supporting careers. Our work aligns education and training to ensure that employers have access to a skilled workforce.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Under her leadership, JFF, with its partner, the Aspen Institute, is the recent recipient of a federal Social Innovation Fund Award to further develop the evidence base for and spread such efforts.

Ms. Steinberg also is the senior advisor to JFF's Students at the Center team; in that capacity she has co-authored and served as developmental editor of numerous papers produced or commissioned by JFF as part of a growing research base for student-centered approaches to learning and for deeper learning competencies. Under her guidance, Students at the Center has garnered increasing attention from policymakers as well as practice leaders for its well-formulated and actionable research products.

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# INTRODUCTION

Every day, young people in cities and towns across America walk into community-based organizations hoping to find help in going back to school or getting a job. Often the only safety net of support and opportunity for undereducated and unemployed young people, youth-serving community organizations are on the frontlines of helping young people overcome the many obstacles they are experiencing. Despite this important role, many of these organizations toil in obscurity, receiving little recognition for the vital contributions they make and struggling to raise adequate funding. Like large numbers of the youth they serve, many community-based organizations remain marginalized, underappreciated, and underfunded.

At this moment, the role of community-based organizations (CBOs) has never been more important. The country is facing a dual crisis in youth unemployment and low postsecondary completion rates. Both are especially prevalent among low-income and minority young people. Across the nation, nearly seven million young people are neither in school nor part of the labor market—17 percent of people ages 16 to 24 (Belfield, Levin, & Rosen 2012). This group includes both those who have a high school credential but have not continued into postsecondary education and/or the workplace, and those who have left school without a high school diploma and have few if any educational or job prospects. Federal support for local education and career-related services reaches only about 450,000 (less than 10 percent) of these young people (Civic Enterprises 2012).

While most young people are aware of the connection between education and employment and have aspirations to succeed in both, young people in the group described above typically find themselves with very limited opportunities. Many compete for low-wage jobs that are increasingly difficult to find; some enroll in community college only to find themselves caught in an endless cycle of remedial courses,

never accruing credits or reaching the degree or credential program they seek. Still others enter short-term adult job training programs that are neither comprehensive nor supportive enough to help them develop the skills employers are looking for. The lost potential in these young people has enormous costs to our economy and our communities for many years to come (Belfield & Levin 2012).

This paper shows the vital role of community-based organizations in addressing this dual crisis. The ideas and examples presented here are based on the groundbreaking work of four community-based organizations in California that participated in Opportunity Links for Youth, an initiative supported by the James Irvine Foundation. With support from Jobs for the Future, these CBOs are tackling the essential work of helping 18 to 25 year olds develop the skills and credentials they need for entry into and advancement in growth sectors of the economy.

This report highlights how in the current moment—with the renewed attention among policymakers, advocates and practitioners to the young people who are neither in school nor working and growing investment in career pathways—it is especially important to understand how community organizations contribute to making such pathways work for young people. The report then graphically presents the “on-ramps” being built by each of the Opportunity Links CBOs and describes how these organizations, drawing on their unique strengths and histories, each were able to develop programming that enables young people to take specific steps toward their future. In addition, the report provides information on the cost of such designs and the funding streams and strategies that could support them. The report concludes with an analysis of the potential return on investment of on-ramps, and the local, state, and federal actions that can make such investments possible.

# I. BRIDGING THE SKILLS GAP

News of youth unemployment and the paucity of educational and employment opportunities are permeating the media. By 2020, 55 million jobs will be vacant and analysts estimate that 65 percent of them will require postsecondary education or training beyond high school (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl 2013). Yet completion rates for two- and four-year degrees remain low.

For example, 31 percent of first-time, full-time community college students earn an Associate degree within three years (USDOE 2013). But only 1 percent of opportunity youth will complete an associate degree by age 28 (Belfield, Levin, & Rosen 2012). This mismatch between the rising skill requirements for entry-level jobs and the stagnant postsecondary completion rates among many young people has resulted in what's often called a "skills gap" of serious proportions.

The group most impacted by the skills gap is the young people trying to establish themselves in the workforce, particularly those with only a high school diploma or less. Youth employment rates have plummeted across the United States, resulting in rates of joblessness not seen since the onset of World War II: From 2000 to 2011, the proportion of young adults ages 20-24 with at least a part-time job fell from 72 percent to 60 percent. And among teenagers ages 16-19, employment fell even more sharply, declining from 45 percent to 26 percent overall (and as low as the single digits for some populations). Those who had dropped out of high school exhibited the largest drop in employment rates, from 51 percent in 2000 to 28 percent in 2011 (Sum et al. 2014).

Measures of labor force underutilization that include not only the officially unemployed, but also the hidden unemployed and underemployed, are even bleaker. For example, the labor force underutilization rates for young adults ages 20 to 24 rose from 14 percent in 2000 to 29 percent in 2011. In 2011, labor force underutilization was highest among black young people at 42 percent, followed by 32 percent among Hispanics, 24 percent among whites, and 22 percent among Asians (Sum et al. 2014).

## FROM DISCONNECTION TO OPPORTUNITY

Despite such alarming trends, two positive developments in the U.S. could help to alleviate the crisis: the renewed attention to the situation facing so many young people and growing investment among government, industry and philanthropy in building stronger career pathways.

One marker of a renewed optimism is the shift in terminology from “disconnected youth” to “opportunity youth.” Community leaders and advocates have begun using the latter term for the 6.7 million young people ages 16-24 neither in school or work, and the change evokes both the optimism many young people express in regard to their futures, and to serve as a reminder to policymakers that investing in these futures is critical for the workforce and the nation’s future.

At the national level, attention to opportunity youth is growing—in rising levels of public awareness of the crisis, concern from a wide range of policymakers, increased backing from philanthropists, serious attention from the research community and a growing number of initiatives. These initiatives include the 21-community Aspen Forum for Community Solutions Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund (OYIF) and the Jobs for the Future/OYIF seven-community Social Innovation Fund project, both of which are focused on improving education and employment for this group of young people.<sup>1</sup> In short, these young people are no longer invisible to many leaders and their problems are no longer considered intractable.

Also, states are taking steps to investment in providing clearer career pathways for students—a response to the need for qualified workers for the nation’s middle-skill jobs. A number of states have formed the Pathways to Prosperity Network to replicate career pathways that span high school and postsecondary education, preparing young people for growth sectors of the economy.<sup>2</sup> California has galvanized this growing movement, with its Linked Learning initiative that joins academic and technical learning and school and work, and the Career Pathways Trust, a large state investment to support such pathways.<sup>3</sup>

Postsecondary career pathway opportunities also are growing, fueled by innovative community colleges, employers in sector-based initiatives and partnerships, and community-based nonprofit organizations and workforce intermediaries. The best current career pathway efforts are informed by labor market intelligence, including analytics on which industry sectors and particular jobs in those sectors are growing, the skill requirements of those jobs, and which employers are hiring or anticipating a need for more employees. Another key aspect of such pathways is that they are transparent and navigable—made up of stackable credentials that individuals can earn as they gain the skills and work-based experiences that employers are demanding.

But these promising career pathways are least accessible to those who could most benefit from them: young people who represent a significant proportion of the future workforce yet are only marginally connected or disconnected altogether from local education and workforce systems. While some innovative community colleges offer bridge programs for underprepared students, such programs are too few and far between. And when such programs are available, they are typically short-term and focus mostly on remediation in specific skills such as reading and basic mathematics rather than the more comprehensive and intensive supports that many young people need.

Without adequate bridge programs, many young people will continue to lack the educational background, credentials, and skill levels to prepare them for career pathway programs. Some may lack



the stability in their lives and maturity to persist and complete a degree or career certificate and they have little to no connection to social networks and relationships that could help smooth the way to credentials and meaningful employment. New research in cognitive science and neuroscience suggests that brain development continues well beyond age 20. The expectation that young adults should be self-motivated and focused may not fully align with reality (National Institute of Mental Health 2011; Settersten & Ray 2010). Many of them have attended underperforming schools and some have had interrupted educational experiences. Most opportunity youth have little or no experience with adult workplaces.

## ON-RAMPS TO CAREER PATHWAYS

The key challenge in helping more young people find their way toward meaningful educational experiences and career pathways is twofold: how to connect more opportunity youth with the growing but still-scarce education and career training opportunities that are available, and how to provide the necessary supports to ensure their progress and success.

There is an increasing recognition of the need for intentionally designed “on-ramps” toward career pathways that culminate in postsecondary attainment and a good career. In many cases, CBOs are best positioned to provide such on-ramps to the young people that need to access the growing opportunities in education and training emerging around the country. CBOs are rooted in the community and neighborhoods, have credibility, are trusted partners, and already serve as the entry point for young people looking for ways to reconnect with education or in finding a job.

These young people enter pathways at different points, and therefore need multiple on-ramps that recognize how people can be disconnected from education and career opportunities at various ages and stages of their lives, and for a variety of reasons. Young people often need considerable support on their journeys. The essential elements and qualities of on-ramp programs include:

- A “front door” that young people can find and where they feel welcome
- Education that helps them close gaps in their foundational skills within the context of career exploration/possibilities
- Guidance and training in the 21st-century skills many employers need (e.g., communication, critical thinking, creativity)
- Opportunities for career exploration, work-based experiences and work-based learning
- Support in stabilizing their lives and developing the tenacity and grit required for the sometimes bumpy road to gainful employment
- Postsecondary bridge programs and related supports that build students’ college- and career-ready skills, and provide informed counseling and services to ensure postsecondary persistence and support

Some community-based organizations already provide the key components of effective on-ramp programs. But their efforts often are unknown to civic and community leaders, policymakers and funders. This creates ongoing challenges for community-based organizations in developing, expanding, and sustaining on-ramp programming and limits their ability to help the growing number of young people searching for education and employment.

## II. THE VITAL ROLES COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS PLAY

Through the Opportunity Links initiative, JFF worked with four California-based community-based organizations to help them build on-ramps for young people who lack access to career pathways. These organizations entered what is essentially an “invention space”—around how best to prepare young people with the academic, professional, technical and employability skills they need to begin work and succeed in college and training programs. The Opportunity Links programs point the way to a new generation of solutions to a growing crisis. They also suggest a set of critical roles that CBOS are well suited to play in addressing this crisis.

### COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AS INNOVATION LABS FOR ON-RAMP DESIGNS

Over three years, each CBO in the project conceptualized, piloted, and started (with varying degrees of partnership with postsecondary institutions and employers) a potentially scalable on-ramp for opportunity youth. The flexibility and agility of these CBOs made them excellent choices for serving as innovation laboratories. With deep roots in their communities, they drew on their extensive experience with vulnerable populations, along with their deep knowledge of youth development and relationship building, to invent new ways to reach and help prepare underserved young adults for work and further study.

With different missions, histories, and partnerships, each of the CBO's on-ramp designs evolved at their own pace. From the start, the intent was to design for expansion and scale—an ambition that played out somewhat differently in the different sites. In several cases, CBOs now are poised to implement each on-ramp in an expanding number of places. In several other cases, the breadth of the on-ramp programming? itself has grown, reaching back further to start earlier with young people and/or carrying them farther along the pipeline toward credentials and careers.

## FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH

### ALICIA'S STORY

For Alicia, getting into her own apartment (with the help of First Place for Youth) was the first step in becoming responsible for her own life. Growing up, Alicia's home life was chaotic, and an abusive family member drove her away from home at the age of 13. She spent her teen years in foster care. With a three-year-old son to care for, she knew it was important to have a concrete plan for the future, beginning with a place to call home.

## FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH: CAREER PATHWAY INITIATIVE

### ORIENTATION & ASSESSMENT

### ENRICHED COLLEGE & CAREER PREP/BRIDGING

### CAREER PATHWAY CERTIFICATION

#### ORIENTATION & ASSESSMENT

Enroll transition-age foster youth (ages 18-24)

Administer multiple assessments to determine readiness/skills/interest in career pathway:

- > Holland Codes/ Holland Occupational Themes
- > Learning Styles
- > CASAS

Encourage youth to explore both stated career interests as well as those that align with assessments of interest/personality style

#### EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOP SERIES

Empowerment Workshop Series—9-week workshop series focused on:

- > Job expectations
- > Computer literacy
- > Job search preparation
- > Resume building
- > First impressions
- > Interview Skills
- > Accepting personal responsibility
- > Goal setting and motivation
- > Job retention

#### ACADEMIC TRAINING & CAREER EXPOSURE

Youth complete academic prerequisites to assure readiness for certification programs (e.g., adult schools and training programs)

Job shadows

Informational interviews in career path

Development of career portfolios: cover letter, resume, certificates, job shadow and volunteer summary, recommendation letters

Job search/job retention building

Stipends for a subset of youth

#### CAREER PATHWAY CERTIFICATION

Youth enroll in an industry-recognized certificate program

Potential placements—community colleges, adult schools, technical/trade schools—vetted for “fit” with First Place including financial stability, credibility in community, strong success rate, clear value to youth, and strong interest in First Place

Tuition covered for subset of youth

Stipends for a subset of youth

#### SUPPORT SERVICES

In addition to accessing safe, affordable housing, youth receive intensive support services while at First Place including: weekly case management from Youth Advocate; and biweekly support from their Career and Education Specialist and the Career Pathway Coordinator.

Alicia came to First Place in the spring of 2014, determined to move forward in life. She worked with her own youth advocate at First Place to learn how to budget and pay her bills, child-proof her home, and cook nutritious meals for her son. As part of her work with the First Place Career Pathway Initiative, Alicia settled on nursing as a long-term career goal and quickly enrolled in a Certified Nursing Assistant program. Her job at a nearby nursing home gives her the flexibility to further her studies and to care for her son. She recently graduated from the program and plans to enroll in a Registered Nursing program to continue her education.

Located in five California counties and headquartered in Oakland, First Place for Youth works to prevent poverty and homelessness among the growing population of transition-age foster youth. The organizational mission is to help young people like Alicia obtain safe, affordable apartments and receive educational and employment support in moving toward self-sufficiency and responsible adulthood.

Through the Career Pathway Initiative, First Place has added a focused set of services to help launch transition-age foster youth into postsecondary programs that lead to a family-supporting career. Building on its strong case-management approach, First Place trains education and employment specialists to assess the job readiness and specific career pathway interests of the young people, to help them explore a range of careers and develop their job-readiness skills, and to support them in developing the prerequisite skills and attributes they will need for an industry-recognized certificate program. Potential learning partners (community colleges, adult schools, technical trade schools) are vetted for their “fit” with the First Place program approach.

## TALLER SAN JOSE

### ERIKA'S STORY

Erika enrolled in Taller San Jose's Medical Careers Academy in April 2014. She was 24 years old and struggling to raise her two young sons without a stable job. She worked night shifts, cleaning local businesses, to try and make ends

meet. Erika recalls many difficult nights when she had to take her sons to work—they were forced to sleep in office chairs while she cleaned. She knew she wanted more for her family, but with no education or job skills, she felt trapped. Then she learned about Taller San Jose.

As a participant in the Medical Careers Academy, Erika began her 20-week training in clinical medical assisting. The program helped her improve her reading and math skills by learning to measure vital signs, administer medications, give injections, and perform basic laboratory tests. She met weekly with her Taller San Jose case manager to set career and education goals and address social and emotional issues. After 16 weeks of skills training, Taller San Jose placed Erika into a four-week externship with a local medical office. She completed her externship and with the support of her case manager enrolled in a postsecondary certificate program that Taller San Jose developed in partnership with Phlebotomy Training Specialists of California. In September 2014, Erika completed the accelerated two-week training program at Taller San Jose to become a Certified Phlebotomist. She recently accepted a full-time medical assistant job with MemorialCare Medical Group earning \$13.50 per hour.

Erika benefited from Taller San Jose's 20-year history of helping young adults gain the job training and life skills needed to support themselves and their families. Building on that history, Taller San Jose developed a career on-ramp of academic and technical training and professional experience that launched Erika and her cohorts of 18-to-28 year olds on a pathway to postsecondary credentials and livable-wage careers in health care.

The program begins with 20 intensive weeks of hands-on skill development in clinical or administrative medical assisting that simulates the workplace, pays a weekly stipend, and embeds basic math and language remediation into the curriculum. In addition to a focus on college and career readiness, the training also addresses life skills, including professionalism, financial stability, and personal development. Upon enrollment, participating youth are matched with a support specialist—the case manager mentioned in Erika's story—who over a 28-month period provides case

# TALLER SAN JOSE (TSJ): MEDICAL CAREERS ACADEMY

RECRUITMENT & ORIENTATION

FIRST 16 WEEKS OF PATHWAY

4 WEEKS

2 YEARS

RECRUITMENT & ORIENTATION

ENRICHED COLLEGE & CAREER PREP/ BRIDGING

MEDICAL ASSISTING & ADMIN MEDICAL & BILLING CLERK TECHNICAL TRAINING

MEDICAL ASSISTING & BILLING EXTERNSHIP

EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT & EDUCATION PATHWAYS

Recruit 18-28 year olds (5th-8th grade math or reading), un/underemployed, low-income, ready for change, and who are either or both of the following: pregnant/parenting, impacted by violence  
Initial interview  
Assessment for support services needs  
Assessment for employability skills  
Intro to education Pathways  
Profile medical academy careers

Prep/Bridging embedded in technical training

Career readiness skills (e.g., communication, behavioral expectations)  
Education Pathways 101: includes academic prep, college tours, financial aid, goal-setting, study and research skills, life skills, including financial planning/ stability, time and stress management

Paid hands-on technical skills development in Medical Assisting front and back office (e.g., dosage calculations; basic phlebotomy; HIPPA; medical billing/ coding, terminology)  
Credited technical writing course via Santa Ana Community College

4-week externships at partnering doctor's offices and medical clinics  
Interns work full-time Monday-Thursday  
Friday at TSJ to review skills; address questions or concerns  
Program manager conducts site visits to monitor performance  
At completion of externship, site supervisor evaluates interns in Performance, Initiative, Professionalism and Patient/Staff Relations

Phlebotomy training on site provided by external instructor from Phlebotomy School of CA, leading to certification  
TSJ covers tuition  
Subset of young people enroll (about a third of those who completed training)

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Intensive support services throughout on-ramps programming and two-years post-completion with Support Services Specialist includes regular case management meetings, support group, and workshop participation

Support Service Specialist signs off before they can go into phlebotomy training

Young people work with Support Service Specialist and participate in programming to remain eligible for services

Workshops are offered every 2-3 months throughout 2-year period on for example, social emotional development, education pathways

Participants can earn \$100.00 a week during the 16-week technical skills training by meeting key benchmarks.

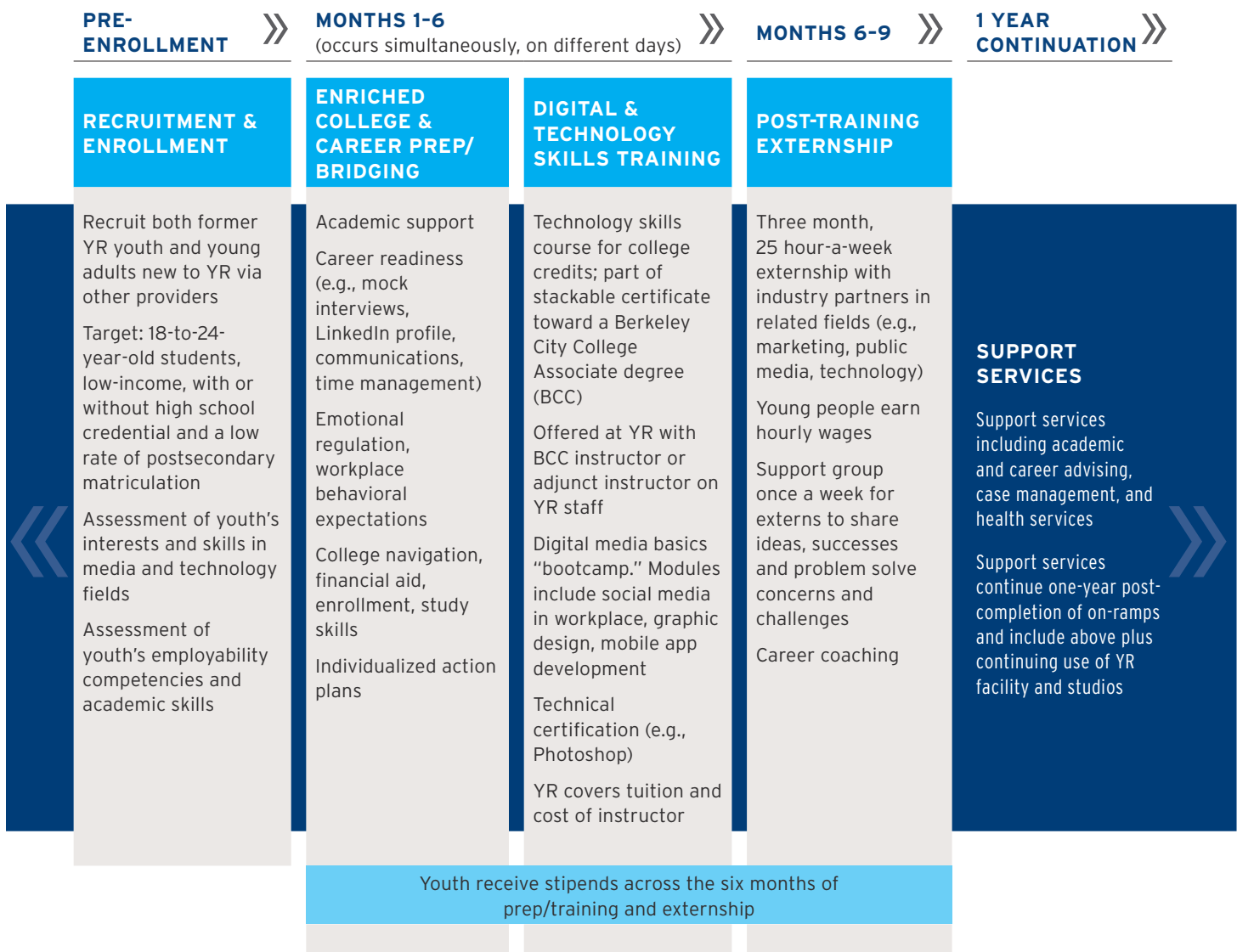
management to help youths successfully transition to the workforce or postsecondary training. Students spend the first 16 weeks attending classes and workshops and meeting with their support specialists. Then they enter four-week externships with partnering medical clinics. After their externships, Taller San Jose's Employment and Education teams link students to jobs and/or postsecondary programs and provide retention and progression services, job coaching, and education support to help youths complete a credential and advance their careers

## YOUTH RADIO

### DE'MARKUS'S STORY

With a focus on making music, De'Markus entered Youth Radio while in high school. After completing initial training, he stopped coming for a period of time, during which he became a father at age 17 and spent time in incarceration. At age 20, De'Markus reengaged with Youth Radio: "Youth Radio did a lot for me and I always wanted to come back," he says. Youth Radio's Digital Media and Technology Pathways Program for older youth gave him that opportunity.

## YOUTH RADIO (YR): DIGITAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY PATHWAY



Much more mature, he found “motivation to do better,” he says. After successfully completing the training, he entered an internship with Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) in the Office of External Affairs.

“I knew I had to stay motivated for my daughter and myself, and represent Youth Radio.” De’Markus not only successfully completed his internship, but was promoted to chief intern and then hired full-time at BART. He now supervises the next round of interns from Youth Radio’s Digital Media and Technology Program and guides them toward success

Joining a well-known and highly-regarded youth-media production company, De’Markus became invested in Youth Radio’s on-ramp to careers in digital media, arts, and design for 18-to-24-year-old opportunity youth. In the first six months, while earning a modest performance-based stipend, young people like De’Markus take a critical first step toward a postsecondary credential and an entry-level job by completing a technology skills course (e.g., Photoshop) for college credit, offered at Youth Radio. During that period they also participate in professional development, which includes a combination of academic support, college and career readiness, professional behavior and college and work navigational skills.

Participants then enter a three-month, 25 hour-a-week internship with industry partners in marketing/advertising, digital media and technology. During the internship, students transition from a performance-based stipend to a competitive hourly wage. By the end of the internship, the goal is for the young people to have the momentum to complete stackable certificates towards an associate degree and the tools to prepare them for the workforce. The last phase of the program is a year of follow-up services, including continuing use of the Youth Radio facility and studios, academic and career advising, and case management to help them gain access to other needed support services.

## YOUTH UPRISING

### EDUARDO’S STORY

Eduardo had wanted to be an EMT from the time he was in high school, but had never taken the right steps. After graduating from high school, he enrolled at California State University, East Bay but did not finish, and at age 20 decided to pursue his EMT goal after attending the graduation ceremony for Youth UpRising’s first EMT cohort in 2013. Eddie joined the second Career Pathways cohort in fall 2013, and after learning of the career-advancement opportunities available to EMTs decided he wanted to become a firefighter.

Eduardo graduated from the Bay EMT certification program in July and went on to enroll in a fire-safety course at Merritt College. From there, he decided that earning his bachelor’s degree was important to him and that he would do so while pursuing a firefighting career. He has reenrolled at CSU East Bay studying criminal justice while preparing for the NREMT and CPAT exams that will allow him to work as an EMT and firefighter.

Eduardo is one of the many East Oakland’s at-risk young persons ages 13 to 24 that Youth UpRising has offered integrated and comprehensive programming in the past decade. Its Career Pathways Initiative, with its focus on older youth and young adults, recruits young people primarily from two of Youth UpRising’s core programs: Achieve, a summer and afterschool program offering jobs for high school students, professional development (employability and life skills) and academic advising; and Excel, an intensive yearlong fellowship that stabilizes older youth ages 18 to 24 and connects them with educational and work experiences.

Young people in the Career Pathways Initiative participate in bridge-to-credentials and career programming that prepares them to succeed in technical postsecondary certification programs.

## YOUTH UPRISING (YU): PATHWAYS IN HEALTH

### RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, & ORIENTATION

### ACADEMIC & CAREER PREP/ BRIDGING

### TECHNICAL TRAINING

### INTERNSHIP

#### RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, & ORIENTATION

##### Recruitment

Recruit from 2 YU programs Achieve (high school aged) and Excel (older youth) as well as through external referrals

Target: 18-to-24-year-olds with high school credential and 7th grade reading/math level, un/under employed and first in family to enroll in postsecondary education

##### Enrollment

Career Pathway application and YU interviews

CASAS assessment

##### Orientation

Introduction to program: overview of bridging and technical training and behavioral expectations

#### ACADEMIC & CAREER PREP/ BRIDGING

4 months: 3 days a week for 4 hours

College courses for credit through University Now/ Patten University: Academic strategies (setting goals, getting organized, staying motivated and managing stress), math and reading

Career pathway planning

Academic coaching

Social emotional development

Stipends provided to participating youth

#### "ACADEMY STAGE"

##### Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)– 20 weeks

- > In partnership with Bay Youth EMT
- > Offered on-site by Bay EMT instructor

- > Life support skills for trauma, respiratory, and cardio problems

- > CPR and First Aid certificates

- > Physical fitness with Oakland Fire Dept. volunteers

##### Medical Assisting

- > 18-week certificate program at Merritt College

- > Classroom instruction at Merritt

- > CPR and First Aid certificates

- > Skills to perform patient care functions under supervision

##### Across both Pathways

- > Life skills coaching
- > Academic tutoring
- > Job readiness and career development training
- > Stipends provided

#### INTERNSHIP

##### Emergency Medical Technician

- > 20 hours of subsidized clinical experience in hospital and ambulance settings

- > Young people completing the EMT certification have fulfilled prerequisites for Bay EMT's Fire Academy

##### Medical Assisting

- > 3 month, 20-hour-a-week subsidized clinical internship in a health clinic or local hospital

- > Youth completing the Medical Assisting certification will have met prerequisites to enroll in an associate degree program in nursing at Merritt College

#### SUPPORT SERVICES

Support services include case management, wraparound support, career coaching, health/wellness services



The initiative's coursework, offered in conjunction with an online university partner, strengthens participants' math and English skills and allows them to earn their first college credits. The slightly older young people in the bridge program also take part in career coaching and personal development activities. Once young people complete the bridge program, they can choose from two technical training programs leading to a first credential: an EMT program offered on-site in collaboration with Bay EMT, and the medical assisting program at Merritt College. As part of Youth UpRising, participants have access to a variety of support services, including on-site clinicians offering health/wellness services and referrals to other agencies.

## DIFFERENT DESIGNS, SIMILAR GOALS

Each of the community organizations participating in the Opportunity Links Initiative built or enhanced a supported on-ramp for opportunity youth. This included an ordered progression of educational and employment experiences offering a pathway toward credentials with value in the job market. As the diagrams on pages 23-26 show, the designs differ in a number of key ways, reflecting the different missions, expertise and histories of the organizations leading the work.

For example, two of the organizations recruit and enroll young people still in high school but who are highly at risk for becoming opportunity youth.

- Located adjacent to a high school, Youth UpRising is now including in its pathway juniors and seniors who are enrolled in the school but too far off track to graduate. By combining online credit recovery with career on-ramp programming—including paid work—young people will not only graduate, but also be ready for the bridge program Youth Uprising offers in conjunction with an online college.
- For First Place for Youth, the population of young people transitioning out of foster care includes many still in high school—but not necessarily on track to graduate. As a result of Opportunity Links, First Place has adapted its case management model to focus from the start on ensuring young people in their program gain the skills they need to succeed in career pathways.

Focused primarily on older youth and young adults with—and without—a high school credential, the on-ramps offered by two of the organizations extend through the first part of a “stackable credential” certificate and/or credits) and paid internships that help them use the skills they are learning.

- Youth Radio has an agreement with Berkeley City College to offer the first in a sequence of media design courses at Youth Radio for the pathway cohort. Credits earned count toward a two-year degree or other credential in multimedia. Upon completion of the first course and additional professional development offered by Youth Radio, participants move into 25-hour-a-week internships with employers where they can enhance their skills and make valuable connections in the field.
- A longtime provider of technical training in medical assisting, Taller San Jose has become more intentional in building both college preparation and bridging into its training. And through partnerships with postsecondary institutions, they also offer two steps towards a stackable credential: a certificate in medical assisting and one in phlebotomy. Through TSJ's close relationships with medical clinics and providers in the area, participants who complete the 16 weeks of training (a high percentage), then participate in four-week externships where they use and enhance their skills.

Although the on-ramps differ in both how far they reach back into high school and how far toward a stackable credential they help students reach, these examples show the extent to which these four organizations have become intentional and strategic in their approaches. All have planned backward, from the end goal of ensuring that young people will succeed in attaining the credentials—and ultimately the good careers and healthy lives they seek. These organizations have also carefully assessed their own strengths and determined how they can work most effectively to help young people build momentum in their educational pursuits—and which obstacles they are best positioned to help young people overcome. Finally, all have worked hard to increase the connections of youth to the labor market—both to enhance their current income and their future employability and career opportunities.

## III. INVESTING IN ON-RAMPS

The Opportunity Links community-based organizations are doing vital work to help young people move from disconnection into pathways toward good careers. But many more young people need access to such pathways. Thousands of community-based organizations—in California and across the country—are attempting to address these needs despite limited resources for this work.

The expansion of high-quality educational on-ramps is unlikely to occur without stable funding. Unlike school district and postsecondary institutions, community organizations are often loosely affiliated and do not have a steady stream of public funding. Instead, they typically operate as entrepreneurial entities doing work that often goes unrecognized at the state and national level. They cobble together public and private dollars from year to year—often in competing with one another for limited local funding.

### TOWARD A TYPOLOGY OF CBO ROLES

Making the case for more stable funding for CBOs is to help local and national leaders, philanthropies and the business community better understand the vital roles they play—and could fill in many communities. The preliminary recommendations offered here, developed in partnership with the Opportunity Links organizations, provide a framework that can be used by CBOs and their partners as they undertake or expand this critical work.

## Four Critical Roles Played by Community-Based Organizations

**Enriched College and Career Prep/Bridging:** Lay the groundwork for success in postsecondary education and/or adult career pathways through providing or ensuring youth have access to foundational academic and metacognitive (thinking) skills, as well as navigational knowledge, and professional skills and attributes (such as perseverance).

**Stabilization and Supports:** Form a relationship with each young person and offer and/or refer youth to critical support services—housing, counseling, health and others—and provide wraparound academic and social-emotional supports, as needed.

**Technical Training:** Provide opportunity for youth to develop specific occupational/technical skills needed for selected career pathway(s), usually in conjunction with a community college, ideally allowing young people to simultaneously earn college credits and/or complete a first “stackable” credential in a career ladder.

**Internship/Employment:** Help young people build employment experience and earn income through connecting them with valuable internship, mentorship and employment opportunities with partnering employers.

## WHAT IT COSTS

As the Opportunity Links organizations show, CBOs make a number of critical decisions in designing on-ramps for opportunity youth about the specific roles they should play, how many young people they can serve, how to deliver the services, and which partners to choose. In making such decisions, CBO leaders assess their organization’s strengths and expertise, and keep watch of the bottom line. With funding scarce, they must keep costs reasonable.

A key factor for the Opportunity Links sites in controlling costs is that the on-ramps are embedded in larger community-based organizations that view the work as core to their mission. The benefits of such arrangements are that on-ramp programs can include reduced or free rent and facility-maintenance fees, support from the executive director, and in-kind staff assistance with development, finance, and technology.<sup>4</sup>

Not surprisingly, the most expensive aspect of the on-ramps is technical training—especially when combined with college credits or first credentials—along with stipends for the young people over an extended period of time that include in-class and on-the-job/internship experiences. Holding aside those

expenses, the cost of providing on-ramp programs in these organizations ranges from \$3,200 to \$4,100 per youth.

This cost covers a variety of services that these and other community-based organizations know to be critical to enabling young people to participate and succeed in career pathways. Chief among the costs is staffing, associated both with providing the personal attention that help young people stay focused and overcome difficult life circumstances, plus the teaching, tutoring, mentoring and career readiness skills that helps them close gaps in their learning. The costs also include modest financial support for young people to help them with transportation, testing fees, and other costs associated with getting an internship or job (such as background checks). These additional costs can be major hurdles for low-income young people.

When the technical training is included, the costs for this work are considerably higher: about \$8,800 to \$10,600 per youth. Costs escalate when the CBO covers full community college tuition and fees, and/or on-site instructors. But access to college credits is critical for students, and continuing education or

contract education services of a local community college are often the best option.

Another factor in on-ramp program costs: Programs that offer technical training often subsidize stipends or pay hourly wages that help young people to take the time they need for classes and to complete internships. Such stipends are essential for opportunity youth, many of whom are living on their own, helping to support their family, and/or trying to support a family of their own.

Costs can be lowered when CBOs can negotiate partnerships providing for community colleges to cover up to half of the costs for instructors and tuition, for and employers (or Workforce Investment Act funds) to cover portions of internship salary or stipends.

## THE SEARCH FOR PARTNERS

To help defray such costs, on-ramp program leaders are working with community colleges and local employers. Several CBO leaders said that helping pay for students' tuition and associated costs are important. But they find that many employers are reluctant to hire young interns who have had interruptions in their schooling, been in trouble, and/or lack significant work experience. For at least some of these employers, certificates and/or college credits can serve as a proxy for other indicators of work readiness and make them more willing to hire these young people.

A few of the CBOs have turned to entrepreneurial online colleges. Although these colleges often cost more per credit, they have been more willing to partner with CBOs and to share some of the costs.

In some cases, businesses providing internships pay a percentage of stipends, and/or make a donation to CBOs to defray some of the stipend costs. One CBO received robust donations from employers covering 35 percent of training program costs. But on the whole, the CBOs have taken on most of these costs. Otherwise, CBO leaders said, many or most of the young people they serve would not have access to the essential preparation, training and work experience needed to pursue good jobs.

If CBOs cannot afford the full costs of helping students earn college credits, they still find ways to provide some connections to technical training and professionals in the field—and stipends for at least some young people. For example, CBOs try to at least expose young people to technical vocabulary and training modules in a high demand career field by bringing in professionals to lead workshops; by supporting youth in choosing a career pathway and sequencing the training and finding the coursework they need; by defraying some of the costs of tuition and transportation; and through stipends for internships for at least some students.

## LIMITED ACCESS TO PUBLIC FUNDING

For the most part, funding for the critical work of youth-focused CBOs is scarce. The success of the CBOs in the Opportunity Links for Youth project can be attributed to the savvy of the organizations' leaders in raising and combining funding from multiple sources. This requires them to navigate a labyrinth of funding systems and operating within a variety of state and federal frameworks and regulations. Sometimes called "braiding," this approach combines a variety of public and private dollars including: federal and state workforce and social service funds, federal and state funding targeted to specific populations (e.g., foster care, court-involved youth), local funds for youth programming, and private philanthropic grants.

To address these funding challenges, on-ramp programs must devote considerable time and costs to development, fundraising, and reporting. As a result, even the best CBOs face ongoing uncertainties in sustaining their work. The issue of sustainability is especially acute for CBOs precisely because they have access to so few public funding streams. Even though the on-ramps put in place by the CBOs address key education needs at both the K-12 and postsecondary level, they lack access to state and local K-12 per-pupil funds. Nor do they have access to federal and state Perkins Act funding, which cover some of the costs of career pathways at the K-12 and postsecondary levels.

Despite these challenges, the CBOs highlighted here have tapped into some public funding, most notably from the Workforce Investment Act. This funding typically covers staff salaries and stipends for youth internships and other related work experiences. The following table summarizes major public funding streams the CBOs in this report currently use to support their work with youth.

Typically, CBOs leverage the public funding streams closely aligned with their core missions. For example, First Place for Youth’s mission includes the provision of safe and stable housing for young people transitioning from foster care. Not surprisingly, much of their funding comes from the Transitional Housing Program Plus, which covers housing costs and staff salaries. This includes salaries for case managers who also support young people through First Place’s on-ramp to career pathways.

Similarly, Youth Radio’s on-ramp to careers in digital media, arts, and design for 18-to-24-year-old opportunity youth is part of its core focus on media production, allowing the organization to successfully leverage Workforce Investment Act dollars from

their regional Workforce Investment Board for the first time. The funds help pay for stipends for students in technical training and externships.

Decisions by federal and state or regional officials to shift or discontinue funding can have an immediate impact on on-ramp programs. For example, the Alameda County Social Services Agency recently reduced the eligibility age limit for federal Title IV dollars from 19 to 17, making most of the youth in on-ramp programs ineligible. And the Department of Mental Health recently discontinued its non-clinical intervention approach.

Smaller CBOs are especially vulnerable to such shifts and must weigh the benefits of public funding with the related costs. Such funding typically requires staffing to manage increased tracking and reporting requirements on youth eligibility, services and performance. Such issues are exacerbated when organizations try to braid or blend multiple public funding streams. In addition, CBOs that combine multiple public funding streams must be vigilant to avoid any appearance of “double-dipping” across streams—making them cautious when considering such funding.

### Public Funding Streams Leveraged for Career Pathway On-Ramps

Funding Stream	Pays For
Workforce Investment Act (WIA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Participant stipends</li> <li>&gt; Staff salaries</li> </ul>
Transitional Housing Program Plus—federal and state matching funding stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Housing, food, staff salaries</li> </ul>
Department of Children and Family Services/ Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Staff salaries</li> </ul>
Department of Mental Health (federal) for non-clinical intervention for at-risk youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Staff salaries for relationship-building approach to youth resiliency</li> </ul>
County Social Service Agency funding through Title IV-E waiver dollars for probation, foster care youth, parenting youth/young adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Participant work experiences</li> <li>&gt; Academic stipends and work experience for youth</li> </ul>

## IV. SCALING AND SUSTAINING ON-RAMPS

State and community leaders can do more to create more stable funding for the vital work of CBOs in youth development. This would encourage more CBOs to help young people prepare for and enter career pathways vital to economic mobility and financial and social stability. Why should leaders take action, and how can they show the value of this work?

### THE COST OF INACTION

First, there is the high cost of inaction for the millions of young people not connected to school or the labor force. But inaction also results in well-documented costs to the economy, society, and communities where the young people are most concentrated. (Belfield, Levin, & Rosen 2012)

On average, the lifetime economic consequence of disconnected youth for taxpayers in lost tax payments and the costs of law enforcement, Medicaid, and other public resources is estimated to be \$235,680 (in 2011 dollars) for every 20 year old who is not served.<sup>5</sup> This includes an immediate annual fiscal burden of \$13,900 for every year between the ages of 16 and 24 that a young person is unattached to school or work—plus a \$170,740 long-term cost associated with permanent disconnection in adulthood beginning at age 25.<sup>6</sup> There are also broader social costs (lost earnings, health care costs, lost economic gains from a less-educated workforce), and these are even greater than the fiscal burden. In total, one study found the immediate and lifetime social costs to be a staggering \$704,020 for each disconnected youth.<sup>7</sup>

## THE POTENTIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The fiscal and social consequences of not changing the life trajectories of opportunity youth are clear. At the same time, the personal and socio-economic benefits of higher educational attainment are well documented. Each additional year of education increases a worker's earnings by 11 percent (Rouse 2007). Early work experience is also crucial for young people, as such experience is a strong predictor of future employment. And recent employment history is a strong predictor of current employment (Sum et al. 2014).

The comprehensive on-ramp programs provided by the CBOs profiled here address not only academic skills but also professional competencies (e.g., communication, time management and workplace expectations) and nonacademic skills such as navigating through a course of career study, developing strong study skills, and persisting through challenges and building a sense of efficacy.

In addition, young people in the on-ramps can earn their first college credits and/or first career certification toward stackable credentials in a career path—leading to family sustaining wages.<sup>8</sup> As evidenced by the work of the CBOs, such credentials can open doors to a first professional work experience in a career path.

The cost for one young person to complete all phases of an on-ramp program—including the enriched college and career preparation/bridging, on-site technical training and internship/work experience—is considerably less than the fiscal burden incurred by taxpayers each year when a young person remains disconnected from school and work (\$8,800-\$10,600 per student vs. \$13,900 for the annual fiscal burden of disconnection). Clearly, the investment in helping young people complete on-ramp programs can quickly pay off for taxpayers.

Here is how those investments could pay off on a larger scale: A modest scale-up of on-ramps for 500 young people a year, with half of those youth completing and earning a first credential and finding employment, would yield about \$58.9 million in additional taxpayer revenue and cost savings. **This is a return of nearly 10 times the**

**initial investment, or about \$10.10 for every dollar spent.** Even if only 25 percent of the 500 young people completed a credential and became employed, it would still yield \$29.4 million in cost savings, or \$4.50 for every dollar spent.<sup>9</sup>

And, if 25 percent of on-ramp program costs—tuition, instructors and stipends—are shared among community college and employer partners, the return increases to more than 10 times the initial investment to \$11.30 for every dollar spent at a 50 percent success rate among the youth. And it still pays off five times over, to \$5.10 for every dollar spent, at a 25 percent success rate.

Even a very modest scale up of CBO on-ramps would result in sizeable return on investment. More importantly, it would change the life trajectories of many hundreds of young people. But such scale is unlikely to happen without changes in decision-making and policies at the community, state and federal levels to foster and support implementation of these programs.

## LOCAL-LEVEL ACTION

Policy action at the local level among community colleges and employers—key partners for CBOs in providing on-ramps—can play a key role in helping to sustain and scale on-ramp these programs. This is especially true when institutional policies and decisions result in substantial cost sharing.

There are only a few examples of “win-win” partnerships between CBOs and community colleges. Typically, the CBO organizes a cohort of young people who are ready and motivated to earn a first stackable credential or take the first courses in a technical pathway. The college sends an instructor to the site or certifies a teacher to serve as an adjunct professor, and reduces or waives tuition and other fees. The young people continue to receive personalized support from program counselors or advisors. These arrangements can result in higher completion rates, benefitting both the young people and the community college.

Partnerships between CBOs and employers can also make it possible for young people to earn and learn. With youth unemployment at an all-time high, such partnerships are especially important. The

## Co-Enrollment in CBO Classes and Community College

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) has pioneered a co-enrollment approach with several highly effective community-based training providers. Through a tightly integrated academic planning process, NOVA ensures its partners' curriculum and instructors meet a set of benchmarks.

As a result, participants in these programs co-enroll in NOVA, receiving substantial college credit upon completion of their programs. NOVA shares the majority of the tuition collected to help fund nonprofit partners' cost of instructional faculty, facilities, and support services. The college uses tuition and state credit enrollment funds to augment its support for its nonprofit partners.

CBO can promise the employer that young people are ready for an adult work environment, while the employer subsidizes a stipend during the internship component of their training, and, in some cases, even during the preparation for that internship.

Such partnerships can prove challenging for CBOs, however. One potentially mitigating factor is the growing number of communities in California and across the country that—as part of initiatives such as the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund—are forming cross-sector collaboratives focused on improving outcomes and options for opportunity youth. Leadership of these collaboratives includes community college leaders, employers and employer organizations, and school district and city officials, leaders of public agencies and systems, and the CBOs.

Community-based collaboratives are still in the early stages of learning how to work together to have a collective impact on the lives of young people. But they have the potential to develop more cost-sharing partnerships between CBOs and the community colleges and employers that could enable them to gain the credentials and careers they seek.

## LEVERAGING STATE/REGIONAL AND FEDERAL POLICY

State, regional and federal policy also have a key role in supporting CBO on-ramp programs. A few states, most notably Oregon and Washington, allow per-pupil funding to flow to community-based organizations. Washington's *Open Doors Youth*

*Reengagement* law provides a host of services to older youth (ages 16 to 21) that have quit or are not on track to graduate from high school by age 21. The law is ambitious in scope and provides a framework for a statewide dropout reengagement system. Open Doors allows school districts, community colleges and nonprofit organizations alone or ideally in partnership to offer high school diplomas, high school equivalency credentials, and/or postsecondary certificates—complemented by a range of supports based on individual need.

Another example: The groundbreaking Career Pathways Trust in California could similarly open new doors for youth. The trust is a \$250 million state investment in regional consortia to provide high school-to-postsecondary education pathways aligned with regional economies. But thus far, CBOs have not been at the table as equal partners with school districts, community colleges, and employers.

State policy could also help foster more equitable cost sharing to sustain and scale this work. Tax deferments for employers and performance-incentive funding for community colleges directed to low-income youth facing multiple barriers to education and employment could lead community colleges and employers to share costs for tuition and fees or on-site instructors and stipends for interns—essential steps in cost efficiencies and in sustaining on-ramp programs.

Historically, the federal government has not provided adequate funding to address the needs of opportunity youth. A report by Civic Enterprises (2012) shows that many of the federal programs that serve opportunity youth are spread thin because of



inadequate funding from Congress. As a result, the study estimates, federal support for local education and career-related services reaches only about 450,000 (i.e., less than 10 percent) of the nation's opportunity youth.

A recent federal action focused on opportunity youth that bears watching is the Performance Partnership Pilot. Localities selected as one of ten pilot sites will gain new flexibility to blend funds from different discretionary programs administered by federal agencies (e.g., the Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services) to improve outcomes for youth.

Another recent development at the federal level is the passage of the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014. The law presents an important opportunity to expand services for out-of-school youth and raise expectations for postsecondary and career outcomes for these youth. The new law makes a major shift in state and local resources by requiring that 75 percent of WIOA Youth funds to be spent on out-of-school youth—providing significantly more resources than such programs have seen in the past.

While overall WIOA resources remain limited, this flexibility in funding between WIOA populations

creates a new opportunity to expand services for opportunity youth. The federal law increases the age of eligibility for out-of-school youth from 21 to 24. This provides an opportunity to continue serving students through postsecondary education pathways—and to re-engage young adults who may not have completed a postsecondary pathway by age 21.

The CBOs providing on-ramps are a part of a growing movement to create more pathways to career credentials and open the door to family-supporting wages for opportunity youth. This trend can benefit not only the young people themselves, but also their children and neighborhoods—and ultimately improve the economic and social health of our nation. Even modestly scaling up on-ramp programs would result in significant fiscal benefits.

Yet on-ramp programs are unlikely to spread and reach any scale unless cost-sharing arrangements and supportive public policies become the norm rather than the exception. As a nation, we have an unprecedented opportunity to invest in programs that not only help the millions of opportunity youth turn their lives around—but also greatly reduces the fiscal and costs of disconnection for generations to come.

# APPENDIX: ON-RAMP DESIGN DIAGRAMS

First Place for Youth: Career Pathway Initiative

Taller San Jose (TSJ): Medical Careers Academy

Youth Radio (YR): Digital Media and Technology Pathway

Youth Uprising (YU): Pathways in Health

## FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH: CAREER PATHWAY INITIATIVE

ORIENTATION & ASSESSMENT	ENRICHED COLLEGE & CAREER PREP/BRIDGING	CAREER PATHWAY CERTIFICATION
<p><b>ORIENTATION &amp; ASSESSMENT</b></p> <p>Enroll transition-age foster youth (ages 18-24)</p> <p>Administer multiple assessments to determine readiness/skills/interest in career pathway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Holland Codes/Holland Occupational Themes</li> <li>&gt; Learning Styles</li> <li>&gt; CASAS</li> </ul> <p>Encourage youth to explore both stated career interests as well as those that align with assessments of interest/personality style</p>	<p><b>EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOP SERIES</b></p> <p>Empowerment Workshop Series—9-week workshop series focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Job expectations</li> <li>&gt; Computer literacy</li> <li>&gt; Job search preparation</li> <li>&gt; Resume building</li> <li>&gt; First impressions</li> <li>&gt; Interview Skills</li> <li>&gt; Accepting personal responsibility</li> <li>&gt; Goal setting and motivation</li> <li>&gt; Job retention</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACADEMIC TRAINING &amp; CAREER EXPOSURE</b></p> <p>Youth complete academic prerequisites to assure readiness for certification programs (e.g., adult schools and training programs)</p> <p>Job shadows</p> <p>Informational interviews in career path</p> <p>Development of career portfolios: cover letter, resume, certificates, job shadow and volunteer summary, recommendation letters</p> <p>Job search/job retention building</p> <p>Stipends for a subset of youth</p>
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### SUPPORT SERVICES

In addition to accessing safe, affordable housing, youth receive intensive support services while at First Place including: weekly case management from Youth Advocate; and biweekly support from their Career and Education Specialist and the Career Pathway Coordinator.

## TALLER SAN JOSE (TSJ): MEDICAL CAREERS ACADEMY

RECRUITMENT & ORIENTATION

FIRST 16 WEEKS OF PATHWAY

4 WEEKS

2 YEARS

RECRUITMENT & ORIENTATION

ENRICHED COLLEGE & CAREER PREP/ BRIDGING

MEDICAL ASSISTING & ADMIN MEDICAL & BILLING CLERK TECHNICAL TRAINING

MEDICAL ASSISTING & BILLING EXTERNSHIP

EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT & EDUCATION PATHWAYS

Recruit 18-28 year olds (5th-8th grade math or reading), un/underemployed, low-income, ready for change, and who are either or both of the following: pregnant/parenting, impacted by violence  
Initial interview  
Assessment for support services needs  
Assessment for employability skills  
Intro to education Pathways  
Profile medical academy careers

Prep/Bridging embedded in technical training

Career readiness skills (e.g., communication, behavioral expectations)  
Education Pathways 101: includes academic prep, college tours, financial aid, goal-setting, study and research skills, life skills, including financial planning/ stability, time and stress management

Paid hands-on technical skills development in Medical Assisting front and back office (e.g., dosage calculations; basic phlebotomy; HIPPA; medical billing/ coding, terminology)  
Credited technical writing course via Santa Ana Community College

4-week externships at partnering doctor's offices and medical clinics  
Interns work full-time Monday-Thursday  
Friday at TSJ to review skills; address questions or concerns  
Program manager conducts site visits to monitor performance  
At completion of externship, site supervisor evaluates interns in Performance, Initiative, Professionalism and Patient/Staff Relations

Phlebotomy training on site provided by external instructor from Phlebotomy School of CA, leading to certification  
TSJ covers tuition  
Subset of young people enroll (about a third of those who completed training)

**SUPPORT SERVICES**  
Intensive support services throughout on-ramps programming and two-years post-completion with Support Services Specialist includes regular case management meetings, support group, and workshop participation  
Support Service Specialist signs off before they can go into phlebotomy training  
Young people work with Support Service Specialist and participate in programming to remain eligible for services  
Workshops are offered every 2-3 months throughout 2-year period on for example, social emotional development, education pathways

Participants can earn \$100.00 a week during the 16-week technical skills training by meeting key benchmarks.

## YOUTH RADIO (YR): DIGITAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY PATHWAY

**PRE-ENROLLMENT** >>> **MONTHS 1-6** (occurs simultaneously, on different days) >>> **MONTHS 6-9** >>> **1 YEAR CONTINUATION** >>>

PHASE	MONTHS	ACTIVITIES	DETAILS	SUPPORT SERVICES
RECRUITMENT & ENROLLMENT	PRE-ENROLLMENT	Recruit both former YR youth and young adults new to YR via other providers	Target: 18-to-24-year-old students, low-income, with or without high school credential and a low rate of postsecondary matriculation	<b>SUPPORT SERVICES</b> Support services including academic and career advising, case management, and health services  Support services continue one-year post-completion of on-ramps and include above plus continuing use of YR facility and studios
		Assessment of youth's interests and skills in media and technology fields	Assessment of youth's employability competencies and academic skills	
ENRICHED COLLEGE & CAREER PREP/ BRIDGING	MONTHS 1-6	Academic support	Career readiness (e.g., mock interviews, LinkedIn profile, communications, time management)	Digital media basics "bootcamp." Modules include social media in workplace, graphic design, mobile app development  Technical certification (e.g., Photoshop)  YR covers tuition and cost of instructor
		Emotional regulation, workplace behavioral expectations	College navigation, financial aid, enrollment, study skills	
DIGITAL & TECHNOLOGY SKILLS TRAINING	MONTHS 1-6	Technology skills course for college credits; part of stackable certificate toward a Berkeley City College Associate degree (BCC)	Offered at YR with BCC instructor or adjunct instructor on YR staff	Three month, 25 hour-a-week externship with industry partners in related fields (e.g., marketing, public media, technology)  Young people earn hourly wages  Support group once a week for externs to share ideas, successes and problem solve concerns and challenges  Career coaching
		Technical certification (e.g., Photoshop)	YR covers tuition and cost of instructor	
POST-TRAINING EXTERNSHIP	MONTHS 6-9	Three month, 25 hour-a-week externship with industry partners in related fields (e.g., marketing, public media, technology)	Young people earn hourly wages	Support services continue one-year post-completion of on-ramps and include above plus continuing use of YR facility and studios
Youth receive stipends across the six months of prep/training and externship				

# YOUTH UPRISING (YU): PATHWAYS IN HEALTH

## RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, & ORIENTATION

## ACADEMIC & CAREER PREP/BRIDGING

## TECHNICAL TRAINING

## INTERNSHIP

### RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, & ORIENTATION

**Recruitment**  
 Recruit from 2 YU programs Achieve (high school aged) and Excel (older youth) as well as through external referrals  
 Target: 18-to-24-year-olds with high school credential and 7th grade reading/math level, un/under employed and first in family to enroll in postsecondary education

**Enrollment**  
 Career Pathway application and YU interviews  
 CASAS assessment

**Orientation**  
 Introduction to program: overview of bridging and technical training and behavioral expectations

### ACADEMIC & CAREER PREP/BRIDGING

4 months: 3 days a week for 4 hours  
 College courses for credit through University Now/Patten University: Academic strategies (setting goals, getting organized, staying motivated and managing stress), math and reading  
 Career pathway planning  
 Academic coaching  
 Social emotional development  
 Stipends provided to participating youth

### "ACADEMY STAGE"

**Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)** – 20 weeks  
 > In partnership with Bay Youth EMT  
 > Offered on-site by Bay EMT instructor  
 > Life support skills for trauma, respiratory, and cardio problems  
 > CPR and First Aid certificates  
 > Physical fitness with Oakland Fire Dept. volunteers

**Medical Assisting**  
 > 18-week certificate program at Merritt College  
 > Classroom instruction at Merritt  
 > CPR and First Aid certificates  
 > Skills to perform patient care functions under supervision

**Across both Pathways**  
 > Life skills coaching  
 > Academic tutoring  
 > Job readiness and career development training  
 > Stipends provided

### INTERNSHIP

**Emergency Medical Technician**  
 > 20 hours of subsidized clinical experience in hospital and ambulance settings  
 > Young people completing the EMT certification have fulfilled prerequisites for Bay EMT's Fire Academy

**Medical Assisting**  
 > 3 month, 20-hour-a-week subsidized clinical internship in a health clinic or local hospital

> Youth completing the Medical Assisting certification will have met prerequisites to enroll in an associate degree program in nursing at Merritt College

### SUPPORT SERVICES

Support services include case management, wraparound support, career coaching, health/wellness services

# ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> For more information about the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund, please see <http://aspencommunitysolutions.org/the-fund/>. For more information about the Social Innovation Fund, please see <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/social-innovation-fund>

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the Pathways to Prosperity Network, please see <http://www.jff.org/initiatives/pathways-prosperity-network>

<sup>3</sup> For more information on Linked Learning and the Career Pathways Trust, please see <http://linkedlearning.org/policy/california-career-pathways-trust/>

<sup>4</sup> The costs to the community-based organization resulting from embedding programs are not included in the cost model.

<sup>5</sup> The \$235,680 figure represents a present-value lump sum. It is expressed when the youth is age 20 but paid back over the youth's lifetime (Belfield, Levin, & Rosen 2012).

<sup>6</sup> To account for the fact that many youth do not become disconnected until later in their teens, Belfield, Levin, and Rosen (2012) assume that the average age of an opportunity youth is 20, meaning they will incur an immediate annual fiscal burden of \$13,900 for about five years instead of for nine years.

<sup>7</sup> Belfield and Levin (2012) have calculated the immediate social loss per young person at \$37,450 annually, with a corresponding lifetime lump sum social loss of \$529,030 beginning at age 25.

<sup>8</sup> Recent research demonstrates the benefit to young people of participating in such postsecondary “bridge programs”; see for example: Barnett et al. 2012; Bragg 2010; Karp 2011; and Moore & Shulock 2009.

<sup>9</sup> The ROI is calculated as follows:

[Total additional revenues gained] minus (-) [cost of delivering the program]

divided by (÷)

[The cost of delivering the program] to get to (=) the [return on investment].



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