WorkReady Defined

This report explains WorkReady from two perspectives: as a collective city-wide effort and as the singular experience for each participant. The format reflects this dual approach. Either of the two distinct, but complementary, sections can be read first.

WorkReady Defined

noun, collective

1: A unified system of programs engaging thousands of young people in employment-related experiences that offer career exposure, develop work skills and help participants understand the connection between education and economic success.

2: A collaborative effort to improve educational and economic outcomes for Philadelphia’s youth that involves dozens of funders, more than fifty youth-serving organizations, several hundred employers and over 1,000 worksites across the city and region.

3: The collective investment of government agencies, foundations, employers and non-profit organizations to help local youth get work experience – compare WORKREADY PHILADELPHIA (n. singular)

Begin here
to read about WorkReady 2010 System

Begin here
to read the stories of WorkReady Summer 2010 participants
WorkReady Defined
2010 Report

WorkReady Philadelphia

noun, collective

1: A unified system of programs engaging thousands of young people in employment-related experiences that offer career exposure, develop work skills and help participants understand the connection between education and economic success

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The Philadelphia Youth Network is the managing partner of WorkReady Philadelphia and contracts with several dozen youth-serving organizations to operate WorkReady programs on behalf of the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board and the Philadelphia Council for College and Career Success.

The WorkReady Philadelphia employer recruitment partners are:
**WorkReady Philadelphia: collective**

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This report explains WorkReady from two perspectives: as a *collective* city-wide effort and as the *singular* experience for each participant. The format reflects this dual approach. Either of the two distinct, but complementary, sections can be read first.
WorkReady Philadelphia is the City’s coordinated set of programs designed to introduce youth to careers, expose them to a professional environment and prepare them to be successful members of the workforce. WorkReady programs allow local high school students and young adults ages 14-24 to become acquainted with the professional world through hands-on work experience, mentoring relationships, shadowing opportunities, and 21st Century Skills training.

Record Expansion

While more than 1,000 youth participated in WorkReady programs during the school year, many more are involved in the summer. Thanks to the remaining youth employment dollars originally appropriated through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and new resources made available under the ARRA TANF Emergency Contingency Fund, a record number of youth were served by WorkReady Summer 2010 programs. These sources, combined with major support from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Development Fund as well as on-going investment from the business community and local foundations, enabled the delivery of the City’s largest youth employment program in more than a decade.

Overview

Total Youth Served
11,180

Average Attendance
84%

Youth Applications Completed
21,107

Wages Earned By Youth
$8,643,874

Youth Feedback
97%

96%

Female
53%

Male
47%

21st Century Skills
All programs focused on the following 21st Century Skills:
• Teamwork and Collaboration
• Oral Communication
• Receiving Feedback
• Professionalism and Work Ethic

Skill Attainment
81%

Youth demonstrated gains in at least one of the four targeted 21st Century Skill areas

Program Models / #’s
Internships
32
Work Experience
37
Service Learning
48
Yr-round (In-school Youth)
13
Yr-round (Out-of-school Youth)
5
135
Coordination with Other Systems

Summer 2010 saw the first-time coordination of two major youth-serving initiatives with WorkReady Philadelphia Summer programs: the City’s Out-of-School Time (OST) system and the School District of Philadelphia’s Summer Learning and More (SLAM) program. This unprecedented connection of previously disparate systems meant that over 1,000 youth did not have to choose between learning and earning over the summer and that hundreds of older youth, for the first time, were able to engage in motivational work-connected and wage-bearing activities as their out-of-school time programming.

Project-Based Learning

Participants were engaged in Project-Based Learning through work-based projects or portfolios, which all participants completed. Projects and portfolios that received a passing grade qualified youth to earn academic credit through the School District of Philadelphia.

77%
Participating youth recommended for academic credit

Data Summary

Providers
Community-based youth-serving organizations (see page 10) were contracted to operate WorkReady Summer 2010 programs.

56

Worksites
Youth were placed at locations across the city and region. Types of worksites included corporate offices, colleges/universities, hospitals, small businesses, schools, and outdoor environments (see page 11).

1,388

Worksite Type
Non-Profit Organizations 55%
For-Profit Companies 32%
Government Agencies 13%

SCHOOL STATUS
In-School (ISY) 91%
Out-of-School (OSY) 5%
Post-Secondary School 3%
Unidentified 1%
*Most OSY (out-of-school youth) programs operate year-round or refer participants to summer programs.
Summer Programs

Internships provide older youth with career exposure and the opportunity to make connections with public and private sector employers. College and career awareness and readiness skills are reinforced through off-site weekly seminars.

Work Experience Programs combine employment at a non-profit organization or public sector agency with enrichment activities, allowing youth to see first-hand how work and education are linked.

Service Learning Programs involve youth in team-based projects that identify community needs and provide visible, active service to address those needs. These programs also include a career exploration component.

In addition to the daily work experience built into WorkReady summer program models, all participants work in groups or individually with guidance from WorkReady Facilitators to develop projects or portfolios that are tied to academic and career readiness skills. Each facilitator, a certified teacher hired by the Philadelphia Youth Network, provides weekly instructional support and coaching to the students and their supervisors. Facilitators are also responsible for grading the projects. Projects that receive a passing grade qualify youth to earn elective credit through the School District of Philadelphia.

School-Connected / Year-Round Programs

21st Century Skills Continuum provides a developmental set of work-related experiences over multiple years.

Career Exposure Opportunities connect area businesses, organizations and individual volunteers to Philadelphia high school students to provide first-hand exposure to the working world and an understanding of how school is connected to career success.

Industry Pipeline Programs are multi-year, employer-driven experiences that provide industry-specific training, specialized academic support, and connections to employment and post-secondary education upon high school graduation.

Internships offered during the school year are designed to: expose students to career opportunities, provide them with work experience, and connect classroom learning to real-world applications.

Out-of-School Youth Programs

The E³ Employment Pathway is available at the City’s five E³ Centers and includes job readiness training, service projects, and sheltered work experience.

Job Placement assists participants in OSY programs with connections to post-program employment.

Occupational Skills Training provides industry-specific training that leads to employer-recognized certification.
The 2010 WorkReady Philadelphia summer program clearly demonstrated the strength and agility of the city's youth workforce preparation system and also underscored the importance of its large and diverse funding base.

In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, commonly called the “stimulus package,” provided approximately $7.5 million locally for summer and year-round youth employment. These funds, along with support from government, foundations and area employers, enabled Philadelphia’s Workforce Investment Board and Council for College and Career Success to provide more than 8,500 local youth with high-quality employment and service learning opportunities last summer.

As 2010 dawned, however, Recovery Act youth employment funds were nearly spent down as intended by Congress. To address the impending funding gap, federal and state governments made another Recovery Act resource – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Emergency Contingency Funds (TANF ECF) – available to support jobs for the 2010 summer.

This was welcome news – but there was an important hitch. Unless they were matched with new funds, TANF ECF could only pay for youth wages, and was not allowable for employer costs, payroll taxes or contractor expenses.

But because of the variety and extent of WorkReady Philadelphia’s funding base and the capacity of its infrastructure to manage the rapid development of new high-quality work and service opportunities, it was possible to draw down almost $9 million in TANF ECF wage funding and to cover the non-allowed costs by redirecting other available funds from WorkReady’s funding base. Furthermore, an additional contribution of $250,000 from the William Penn Foundation provided a match that enabled Philadelphia to draw down $750,000 more through TANF ECF to further expand WorkReady programming.

As a result, Philadelphia’s 2010 summer program employed more than 11,000 young people, the most in a decade.
WorkReady Summer 2010 Internship Supporters*

**Platinum** (Hired or sponsored 25 or more interns)

- PECO
- St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children
- TD Bank NA
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District
- United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania
- University of Pennsylvania
- The Wachovia Wells Fargo Foundation
- William Penn Foundation

**Gold** (Hired or sponsored 10-24 interns)

- Drexel University
- Elliot-Lewis
- Hahnemann University Hospital
- Independence Blue Cross
- Lincoln Financial Foundation
- Mercy Philadelphia
- Philadelphia Coca-Cola Bottling Company
- Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation
- SEPTA

**Silver** (Hired or sponsored 1-9 interns)

- Ernst & Young
- ESM Productions
- Family Planning Council
- Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia
- Fox Chase Cancer Center
- Fox Rothschild LLP
- Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Philadelphia Tourism and Marketing Corporation
- Health Partners
- Hilton Hotel Corporation
- Holy Family University
- Inglis Foundation
- JEVS Human Services
- Johnson & Johnson - Merck Consumer Pharmaceuticals
- Keystone Mercy Healthplan
- KPMG LLP
- La Salle University
- Langan Engineering and Environmental Services
- Lankenau Hospital
- Macy’s, Inc.
- Marketplace Philadelphia Management
- The Mill Spring Foundation
- NHS Human Services
- The Patricia Kind Family Foundation
- Peirce College
- Pennoni Associates
- Pennsylvania Convention Center
- The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
- The Philadelphia Area Project on Occupational Safety and Health
- Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO
- Philadelphia Federal Credit Union
- Philadelphia Federation of Teachers Health and Welfare Fund
- Philadelphia Gas Works
- Philadelphia Golf Management, LLC
- Philadelphia Parking Authority – Office of Fleet Management
- Philadelphia Phillies
- Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board
- Philadelphia Youth Network
- PNC
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- PRWT Services, Inc.
- REIT Management & Research
- Rohm and Haas / Dow Chemical
- Saint Joseph’s University
- Sales University
- Samuel S. Fels Fund
- Schaff & Young, PC
- The Seybert Institution
- Simpson House Inc
- Stradley, Ronon, Stevens & Young
- Temple University
- Thomas Jefferson University Hospital
- Tierney Communications
- Turner Construction
- Universal Health Services
- University City Science Center
- The University of the Arts
- UPS
- US Facilities, Inc.
- Xerox Corporation
- Young Friends of PYN
- Young Professional’s Network
- Widener University
- The Wister Institute

*List current as of 10/20/2010. For updates visit: [www.workreadyphila.com/investors.html](http://www.workreadyphila.com/investors.html)
Providers

Youth-serving organizations selected by the Philadelphia Council for College and Career Success and contracted by PYN to operate summer-only WorkReady programs:

Allegheny West Foundation
American Cities Foundation
ASPIRA, Inc. of Philadelphia
Attic Youth Center
Big Picture Philadelphia
Boat People SOS, Inc.
Boys and Girls Club of Philadelphia
Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia
Caring People Alliance
Catholic Social Services
City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program
Communities in Schools of Philadelphia, Inc.
Community Action Agency of Delaware County
Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc.
Corinthian/JAMMA Empowerment Program
Cyberhood Initiative
District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund
Diversified Community Services
EducationWorks
Foundations, Inc.
Free Library of Philadelphia
Girard College Development Fund
Intercultural Family Services, Inc.
LULAC National Educational Services Centers, Inc.
Lutheran Children and Family Services
Management & Environmental Technologies, Inc.
MEE Productions, Inc.
Methodist Services for Children and Families
Multicultural Youth eXchange
New Foundations Charter School
Norris Square Neighborhood Project
North Light Community Center
One Bright Ray
PathWays PA
People for People, Inc.
Philadelphia Academies, Inc.
The Philadelphia Department of Recreation
Please Touch Museum
Resources for Human Development, Inc.
The Salvation Army Learning Zone
Say Yes to Education, Inc.
The School District of Philadelphia
SEMAAAC
Student Conservation Association
Sunrise of Philadelphia, Inc.
Temple University - The Information Technology and Society Research Group (ITSRG)
Temple University - The University Community Collaborative of Philadelphia (UCCP)
To Our Children’s Future with Health, Inc.
United Communities Southeast Philadelphia
University City District
University of Pennsylvania - The Netter Center for Community Partnerships
Urban Affairs Coalition
Valley Youth House
Variety - The Children’s Charity of Greater Philadelphia
Welcome New Jersey
Women’s Christian Alliance

56
Organizations contracted to run programs

11
Training sessions held

515
Provider staff members trained
## Worksites by Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Worksites</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and Environmental Services</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, Construction and Engineering</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment and Recreation</td>
<td>96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automotive Technology</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications and Media</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Development and Support</td>
<td>138</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Insurance</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare, Life Sciences and Social Assistance</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Services</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and Technical Services</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Logistics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,388</strong></td>
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"Green Jobs"  
175 Worksites  
1,516 Youth  

Worksites by Sector

- Private/For Profit: 32% (441 worksites)
- Public/Non-Profit: 55% (770 worksites)
- Government Agency: 13% (177 worksites)

Total: 1,388 worksites
Youth Applications and Enrollment

For the first time, the initial application process was internet-based. More applications than ever were submitted and completed. Following submission of the on-line application, youth were invited for in-person appointments at the WorkReady Enrollment Center in the Gallery at Market East to provide all required documentation. Rental space for the center was again generously donated by the Pennsylvania Real Estate Investment Trust (PREIT).
Youth Survey and Test Results

**Overall Program Satisfaction**
- 97% would recommend this program to a friend
- 96% were satisfied with their entire experience
- 92% were satisfied with their worksite or placement

**Impact on Academic Skills and Education Goals**
- 95% felt more confident that they now know what it takes to be successful in school or in an educational setting
- 92% felt that participating in the program increased their interest in furthering their education
- 90% felt that they are now better able to identify their education goals as a result of participating in the program
- 86% felt that their academic skills improved as a result of participating in the program

**Impact of Work Readiness Competencies and Career Goals**
- 96% felt more confident that they now know what it takes to be successful in a job
- 95% felt that their work skills improved as a result of participating in the program
- 95% felt better prepared to get a job as a result of participating in the program
- 89% felt that they are now better able to identify their career goals as a result of participating in the program

**Work Readiness Skill Gain (Pre and Post Tests)**
- 81% demonstrated skill gain in at least one of the following 21st Century skills: Teamwork & Collaboration, Oral Communication, Openness to Receiving Feedback, Professionalism and Work Ethic
Over 1,000 youth and adults gathered at the Pennsylvania Convention Center for the WorkReady Philadelphia 2010 Closing Celebration on August 11, marking the successes of the young people who participated in high-quality, academically-enriched work and service experiences this summer. The morning began with more than 600 students showcasing their highly-rated work-based learning projects and portfolios. Each project and portfolio presented at the event was specially selected to be exhibited during the Closing Celebration. Judges from area businesses, organizations, and universities evaluated the projects and portfolios, and awards were presented to the top three winners in each category at the awards presentation held later in the day. (See list, far right, p.15)

During the awards presentation that followed, the PYN Youth Ambassadors led the audience on a retrospective journey that highlighted key events and milestones over the 11-year history of WorkReady Philadelphia programming. In addition, the Rightful Place Ensemble – comprised of youth who participated in WorkReady programming and adults who worked with them this summer – performed inspirational song and dance pieces that underscored the importance of preparing for career success. The energy and enthusiasm displayed as each award-winning team was announced made it clear that youth valued their own and each other’s achievements.

Also during the presentation, two dozen students received the Michael J. Walker Award, named in honor of the former director of the Nicetown Boys & Girls Club. Recipients are nominated by their provider organizations and recognized for exemplifying four leadership traits during their internships:

1. Perseverance
2. A positive attitude
3. Compassion for others
4. Dedication to improving themselves professionally and personally

A list of recipients and the providers that nominated them is provided in the box to the right (p.15).
Michael J. Walker Awards

Rolande Augustin  
Urban Affairs Coalition

Whitney Christie  
To Our Children’s Future with Health, Inc.

Mailisa Crews  
University City District

Aichatou Dagnoko  
Management & Environmental Technologies, Inc.

Kyhir Davis  
Communities in Schools of Philadelphia, Inc.

Ronald Evans  
EducationWorks

Jamila Fisher  
Girard College Development Fund

Lawrina Hallie  
Community Action Agency of Delaware County

Nyehima Hawkins  
Foundations, Inc.

Kenjah Hughston  
Philadelphia Youth Network

Jade Jenkins  
Diversified Community Services

Stephanie Kan  
Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia

Lakia Laws  
PathWays PA

Jacklyn Lee  
North Light Community Center

Khalif McBurrows  
Community Action Agency of Delaware County

Kingia Phillips  
University City District

Kamilla Philson  
Intercultural Family Services, Inc.

Tariq Reid  
United Communities Southeast Philadelphia

Diedre Smith  
Temple University - The Information Technology and Society Research Group

Patrick Vinh  
Boat People SOS, Inc.

Project Awards

21st Century High-Tech Careers and Career Exploration

1st Financial Literacy: It’s All About the Paper  
Provider: Urban Affairs Coalition - Nu Sigma  
Worksite: Ben Franklin High School

2nd Prosperity in Cosmetology  
Provider: Sunrise of Philadelphia, Inc.  
Worksite: Bok High School

3rd Community Boat Building  
Provider: Big Picture Philadelphia  
Worksite: Wooden Boat Factory

The Arts, Culture & the Beautification of Our Communities

1st New Era Mind of Dance, Film and Media  
Provider: ASPIRA, Inc. of Philadelphia  
Worksite: DeHostos Charter School

2nd Impacting and Improving My Recreation Facility  
Provider: The Philadelphia Department of Recreation  
Worksite: Papa Recreation Center

3rd Impacting and Improving My Recreation Facility  
Provider: The Philadelphia Department of Recreation  
Worksite: Mallory Playground

Business and Entrepreneurship in the Global Economy

1st The Flea Market  
Provider/Worksite: Say Yes to Education, Inc.

2nd Mass Marketing  
Provider: Urban Affairs Coalition  
Worksite: Wall Street International

3rd Sweets Water Ice Stand  
Provider: Diversified Community Services  
Worksite: Academy at Palumbo

Civic Engagement and Social Action

1st Outreach for LGBT Youth  
Provider/Worksite: Attic Youth Center

2nd Summer Community Assessment Project  
Provider/Worksite: MEE Productions, Inc.

3rd Celebrating Cultural Diversity to Increase the Peace  
Provider: United Communities Southeast Philadelphia  
Worksite: High School for the Creative and Performing Arts

Education and Mentoring

1st Promoting Literacy Among Youth  
Provider/Worksite: Free Library of Philadelphia

2nd College Access Fair  
Provider: University of Pennsylvania - The Netter Center for Community Partnerships  
Worksite: West Philadelphia High School

3rd Strength Within  
Provider/Worksite: Women’s Christian Alliance

Health and Wellness

1st Exploring the Human Body  
Provider/Worksite: District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund

2nd From Ground to Plate  
Provider: University of Pennsylvania - The Netter Center for Community Partnerships  
Worksite: Urban Nutrition Initiative

3rd Healthy Green and Clean  
Provider: Urban Affairs Coalition - Nu Sigma  
Worksite: Ben Franklin High School

Internships

1st Justo Jesus  
Provider: Valley Youth House

2nd Jordan Powell  
Provider: North Light Community Center

3rd Stephanie Kan  
Provider: Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia

Saving Our Environment/Going Green

1st Yearly Cobbs Creek Stream Project  
Provider: Communities in Schools of Philadelphia, Inc.  
Worksite: Cobbs Creek

2nd Going Green: Self-Sustainability  
Provider: Caring People Alliance  
Worksite: R.W. Brown Girls Club

3rd Unlitter Us  
Provider: EducationWorks  
Worksite: Germantown High School
Looking Forward

1. **Filling Funding Gaps for Youth Employment**

   Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds have been primarily responsible for the significant growth in high-quality summer youth employment opportunities in 2009 and 2010. With these funds now depleted, it’s possible that 4,000 to 5,000 young people face the loss of WorkReady opportunities in summer 2011.

   However, it is important to remember that Philadelphia has successfully addressed significant short-falls in funding and summer slots twice in the past decade. When WIA was first implemented, its focus on comprehensive, year-round services meant that the total number of summer slots available for the 2000 summer would reach only 40% of the total in previous years. Finding this unacceptable, the Philadelphia Youth Council (now called the Council for College and Career Success) and the Workforce Investment Board successfully leveraged new funding by working with the Commonwealth and local public agencies to leverage and realign funding in ways that addressed most of the shortfall.

   In 2007, enactment of federal and state legislation increasing the minimum wage, while an overall benefit to working Pennsylvanians, threatened to reduce the availability of summer youth opportunities by as much as 40%. Once again the Council rallied local and state leaders and area employers to find new resources to offset the threatened reductions. As a result, the numbers of high-quality summer youth employment opportunities actually increased by more than 1,000.

   Looking toward the 2011-12 program year, we expect to muster all of the energy and creativity demonstrated throughout the decade – and more – in order to continue to expand opportunities for our young people.

2. **Building on Successful Collaborations**

   As discussed earlier in this report, the Council established strong working relationships between and among the WorkReady Philadelphia youth workforce development system, the School District’s Summer Learning and More programs, and the City of Philadelphia’s Out-of-School Time system. These connections produced new wage-earning opportunities for hundreds of young people in the 2010 summer.

   In the year ahead, the Council will continue to strengthen these relationships. In particular, Philadelphia’s summer coordination efforts have been recognized with a planning grant – one of only three nationally – from the National Summer Learning Association. With these funds, the Council and School District will continue to explore opportunities for enhanced coordination and program efficiency with the goal of serving as many young people as possible.

3. **Sustaining and Expanding Innovative WorkReady Programs**

   The Council’s comprehensive portfolio of WorkReady programs continues to provide important benefits for young people. Of all these innovative approaches, none show more promise than the Industry Pipeline model (funded through WIA In-School Youth allocations) and GED-to-College programs (funded through Recovery Act dollars).

   While infusions of annual WIA funding should enable the Pipeline programs to remain stable, it is difficult under current circumstances for the Council to consider expanding this popular approach to reach more young people and entice new employers to participate in the model. Furthermore, despite their early successes, GED-to-College models face an uncertain future because Recovery Act dollars are no longer available. Regular WIA youth funds for out-of-school youth represent a possible lifeline, but any final decision will await careful consideration by the Council as it establishes priorities and develops a new competitive procurement process in Spring 2011.

   The Council and PYN will continue to pursue new investments in the WorkReady system that will enable these two exemplary models to serve expanding numbers of young Philadelphians.
End of
WorkReady Defined as a collective noun

Click Here
to view
WorkReady Defined as a singular noun
WorkReady Defined

2010 Report

noun, singular

WorkReady Philadelphia

\,wɔrk-'red-ə ,fil-o-'del-fe-ə\n
n. singular

1 : the unique experience of each program participant
2 : the connection of a young person to a workplace mentor
3 a : a “first break” in the working world
   b : the initial development of a professional network
   c : the first job on the resume of a future professional
4 a : exposure to previously unconsidered career opportunities
   b: exploration of career areas of interest to the participant – compare WORKREADY PHILADELPHIA (n. collective)
The “Go Green” theme for WorkReady Philadelphia 2010 summer programs was selected by youth participants themselves. It reflects their interest in environmental issues and the role they hope to play in addressing these concerns. The theme also responds to Mayor Michael Nutter’s goal of making Philadelphia the “greenest city in the nation.” Numerous WorkReady programs expose youth to “green jobs,” recycling, farm-to-city businesses and other environmental awareness activities. Other WorkReady green efforts include a new paper-saving, on-line youth application, and organic cotton and recycled materials used for participants’ t-shirts.

1green ˈɡrɛn adj 1: of the color green  
<He wore a green tie to his WorkReady interview.>  
2: lacking experience  
<I was green before my service learning project gave me some real skills.>  
3: YOUTHFUL, VIGOROUS.  
<Young people bring a fresh, green perspective to the workplace.>  
4: environmentally sound or beneficial  
<WorkReady is helping Philadelphia become the greenest city in the nation.>

2green n 1: MONEY; esp. GREENBACKS  
<I got a job through WorkReady and now I have some green in my pocket!>  
2: a common or park in the center of a town or campus  
<Her WorkReady internship is in the University’s administrative office, just across the green from the library.>

3green vi 1: REJUVENATE, REVITALIZE  
<Having WorkReady students here has really greened our office environment.>
This report explains WorkReady from two perspectives: as a collective city-wide effort and as the singular experience for each participant. The format reflects this dual approach. Either of the two distinct, but complementary, sections can be read first.
Patrick Vinh, a senior at Central High School, knew that he wanted to make a good impression, so he arrived in his best professional attire for his WorkReady internship interview. He participated in the program through Boat People SOS, a national Vietnamese-American community-based organization that aims to “empower, organize, and equip” the Vietnamese community. This past summer, Patrick worked at UCI Architects in Center City. When he learned where he would be working, he was excited at the prospect of expanding his graphic design skills to the world of architectural design.

When he began his internship, he admits, “at first, it was a little scary because I was the youngest one there. Everyone there has an architectural degree and they’re older, but they were really friendly. It was like a family.”

Patrick appreciated the warm atmosphere of the office and the hands-on approach of his supervisor, Fon A. Wang, a principal at the firm. Each day she would check-in with him about his projects to give him guidance and determine what support he needed. Patrick was also pleased to learn that her concern for him went beyond his job duties. “She was interested in not just work, but in me as a person. I think that’s really important. A supervisor needs to connect with the people and she did that.”

At his internship, Patrick was introduced to AutoCAD, a computer program used to create 2D and 3D designs in the architecture field. After becoming familiar with the program, he employed his new-found skills to design the renovations for a house. “You have to be accurate. The drawings have to be correct because contractors will use them to build.” The house renovation project gave Patrick a great sense of accomplishment; he completed it on his own from start to finish.

Patrick was also able to work on an assignment that merged his passion for serving the community with his internship duties. Along with a co-worker, he designed an addition for a homeless shelter in Camden, NJ. “It was big and important. What I did will help many, many people.” This experience also allowed him to collaborate with a colleague, something he knows is a necessary skill in the workforce.

Patrick feels that his WorkReady experience has benefited him both personally and professionally. It enhanced his social and verbal skills, exposed him to an office environment, and showed him the importance of asking for help when needed. “Participating in WorkReady puts you ahead of the game.”

“ I was really nervous; I’m not used to doing interviews. A lot of people didn’t know that they had to dress up for an interview, but I came dressed up. I was really prepared.”

To learn more about Patrick’s provider organization, Boat People SOS, visit www.bpsos.org.
When asked what he took away from his participation in WorkReady through Cyberhood Initiative’s service learning program, 15-year-old Karlan Browne did not hesitate to respond. “I learned to take initiative, the importance of planning ahead and how to work in a group.” Cyberhood Initiative develops and implements educational programming designed to increase participants’ exposure to, and understanding of, technology. The tenth-grade student at Parkway Northwest worked to restore the landscape surrounding the historical Johnson House, a site that was once a stop on the Underground Railroad.

As a part of the restoration process, Karlan and his fellow program participants learned about the plants that are native to the area. “Native plants have advantages that non-native plants don’t have. They cost less to maintain, they’re better for community health, and they bring back the native wildlife to the area, which keeps things thriving,” he explains. Before planting, Karlan used SmartDraw, a computer-aided design program, to create a schematic of their landscape plan, which included hostas, royal candles, lilies and swamp milkweeds. Flip cameras were used to document the group’s progress.

Karlan noted that he enjoyed “working with the technology. That’s another thing that I am interested in and that I’m good at.” His other interest is sports; he aspires to go into a sports-related field as a trainer, agent, commentator, journalist, or owner of a sporting goods store. He also valued working within a team. “I like working with my group. We’ve gotten really close.” Karlan appreciated that he and each of his four team members were able to capitalize on each other’s strengths to successfully complete their tasks.

Prior to working with Cyberhood Initiative on the Johnson House project, Karlan, a resident of the Northwest section of the city, was unaware of the landmark’s role in the Abolitionist Movement. “I pass the Johnson House everyday to and from school and I never paid attention to it. I never knew it was a part of the Underground Railroad. I never knew the significance it had.” His work experience allowed him to discover the rich history of his own community and to play a role in maintaining its cultural heritage.

Karlan’s first venture into the working world has introduced him to valuable skills as well as a historic gem in his own backyard. “I really didn’t know what to expect when I came here on the first day, but I’ve really enjoyed what I’ve experienced.”
Thanks to this summer’s unprecedented coordination of youth initiatives in the City, Ronald Evans participated simultaneously in WorkReady Philadelphia through EducationWorks and in the School District of Philadelphia’s Summer Learning and More (SLAM) program. This allowed him to gain real-world work experience and to earn the credits he needed to graduate from high school. His WorkReady summer internship at Alper Automotive was the perfect match to his career interests: Ronald attended Jules E. Mastbaum Area Vocational Technical School, where he trained in the automotive maintenance vocational shop. He plans to be a mechanic and eventually start his own auto repair business.

Ronald’s summer consisted of mornings at school and afternoons at his internship. This required him to develop time management skills and discipline in order to achieve his educational goals and get the most out of his work experience. “It was a little tough at first, but then I got used to it and did pretty well,” he recalls.

On his first day, Ronald expected to be given a tour of his new job, introduced to his co-workers, and perhaps perform some minor car services. His worksite had other plans: “When I got to Alper, they had me working within two minutes. They had me do an axle job, a serpentine belt and other jobs. It was my first day and I was really nervous, but I really appreciated that they trusted me to do the work.”

Throughout the summer, Ronald formed relationships with his co-workers, who he feels were very supportive and helped to develop his skills. “They taught me a lot that I didn’t know.” Ronald was introduced to computer systems and more efficient ways to perform services. He also learned the value of customer service. As a result, he is now more confident in his abilities because he was “trained by such skilled people.”

Ronald’s hard work and eagerness to learn paid off: the company hired him as a part-time mechanic trainee. “I really didn’t expect to keep the job. I just thought that it was a summer job. But when I found out that they wanted to keep me, I felt really good.” Ronald recently started post-secondary training, so Alper Automotive has arranged his work hours around his schedule. He is now a few steps closer to realizing his dreams.

“I came in knowing that I would learn a lot and hoping that I could leave a mark. I got a chance to use my skills and have fun.”
I’m helping the environment. And I am doing something that is very productive.”

Vincent Gaeta, Taelor Johnson and Danielle Tatum spent their summer caring for the three miles of trails that surround the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education. They participated in WorkReady through the Student Conservation Association (SCA), a national organization that provides conservation service opportunities to youth and young adults ages 14 to 25. Their experience gave them a chance to increase their environmental awareness, learn about jobs in the environmental science field, and contribute to the preservation of the city’s natural green spaces.

In order to acquaint prospective participants with the work they would be performing in the program, SCA holds an event open to all applicants. “Many students are interested because they want a summer job. We invite them to a day of service to get an idea of what it’s going to be like during the summer. From there, the program and the students have the opportunity to decide if it’s a good fit. We do this so that there are no questions about what they have to do or what is expected of them,” Corrin Omowunmi, Program Manager, explains. “Through our experience here, youth get a holistic view of the importance of taking care of their environment and their community.”

Vincent Gaeta, an 11th grader at Bishop McDevitt High School, is well aware of the commitment necessary to making an impact; this is his second summer working in SCA’s WorkReady program. “I came back this year because I felt good about what I was doing for the environment.” Their days began at 7:30 AM on Mondays through Thursdays. Fridays were designated as “Environmental Education Days,” where students were introduced to green-related topics and careers. They were also able to visit other parts of the Schuylkill Center, including the Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic and the Organic Community Gardens. Because the worksite was in a secluded location inaccessible by public transportation, youth were picked up by buses at locations throughout the city. Vincent, Taelor, Danielle, and the other youth at their worksite were divided into groups of ten and, led by experienced crew leaders, worked on projects that addressed the needs of the trails. Their assignments included installing stone staircases to make the trails easier to maneuver, constructing water bars to prevent erosion of the trails, and building retaining walls to prevent the erosion and movement of soil. Youth also helped to organize an exhibit for the Schuylkill Center.

“What we are doing is important because if we don’t do it, there’s no one else to take care of these trails. I think it’s really cool that we can do it,” says Danielle, a 2010 graduate of Central High School and a freshman at Virginia Commonwealth University. Danielle was introduced to the program by her environmental science teacher. “My teacher recommended me for this because I enjoyed the environmental science class, so she thought that I would be good for this job.” Danielle was excited that she was able to make connections during her work experience with topics that she had studied in school, including sustainability, the impact of invasive species, solar energy, and wind energy. This summer has also influenced what she plans to study in college: she originally planned to major in Secondary Education, but is now considering shifting her focus to Elementary Education as a result of interacting with the young visitors of the Schuylkill Center. She also intends to incorporate environmental education in her classroom. “I want to teach young kids so that they learn about it early and it becomes a way of life for them.”

This was Taelor Johnson’s first work experience, but not her first introduction to lessons on the environment. A junior, Taelor is a part of the Environmental Academy at Abraham Lincoln High School. “In school, we learn about plant types.” This enabled her to be able to identify poisonous plants on the trails so that she and her crew members could avoid them. “What I learned in the classroom helped.” Taelor values that this experience both afforded her the opportunity to explore a subject that appeals to her interests and gave her something productive to do this summer. “I like it. It’s different from just staying in the house or going to play basketball every day or hanging out with friends. And with this particular job, I know that I’m doing something with the environment and I’m learning more about something that I’m interested in.” Taelor also recognizes that participating in WorkReady has provided her with skills that will prove vital as she travels along her educational and career paths. “This teaches me how to be a better leader, the importance of being on time, and how to dress for a particular work environment.”

Taelor, Vincent, and Danielle all agree on one thing: they would jump at the chance to come back next summer.

To learn more about Vincent, Taelor, and Danielle’s provider organization, Student Conservation Association, visit www.thesca.org.
On the 23rd floor of PwC's Philadelphia office, Symphany Kennedy is beginning a career journey that all began with a movie. “In the movie, one of the characters was an accountant. It looked interesting. I like handling money and I’m really good at math, so being an accountant makes sense.” She was thrilled when a WorkReady representative notified her that she had an interview at PwC. “I was shocked when I got the call. Ever since I found out that PwC is an accounting firm, I’ve said that I want to work here when I get older. Getting an internship here was a good match.”

This summer, Symphany worked on populating a database that captures the company’s community service activities. Through this assignment, she learned two very important lessons: always be consistent and pay attention to detail. “Mary, my supervisor, gave me a lot of constructive criticism when I started working on the database. I listened to what she said and corrected the way I was doing things. We have a good working relationship.”

Upon beginning her internship, the eleventh grade student at Delaware Valley Charter High School expected to be doing what she refers to as “typical intern things: filing and running errands.” She was pleasantly surprised when her assumptions were dispelled: “I had my own desk, my own phone and they trusted me to enter information in the database.” Once Symphany understood how important the database is to PwC’s commitment to being good corporate citizens, she was proud to be a part of such a significant project. “Working on something this big makes me feel important. It feels good to know that I am helping the company.”

Through a WorkReady portfolio assignment that required her to collect business cards from people in the workplace, Symphany was able meet and speak with one of the firm’s partners. “I told him that I want to be an accountant. He talked to me about the steps he took to get to where he is in his career and about his education. Our conversation was helpful.” Symphany's internship at PwC proved to be helpful in other ways as well. Her supervisor introduced her to a program that will prepare her for college and connect her to scholarship opportunities. She was also able to interact with interns from PwC’s college internship program; they talked to her about college life and made school suggestions based on her interests.

The feeling of independence Symphany enjoyed from getting paid also came with a dose of reality: “Getting a paycheck is not what I thought it would be. I thought I was going to have money all the time. Then I realized I have to buy a transpass every week, I have to put money in my savings account, and I want to buy things. This has definitely helped me to learn how to manage my money and prioritize. I’ll have to help my clients to the same thing when I’m an accountant.”
Mailisa Crews

“Working on a college campus gives me a preview of what being in college will be like.”

In a roundabout way, Mailisa Crews would not have known about WorkReady summer programs if it weren’t for Mayor Michael Nutter. “The Mayor spoke at my sister’s school and he mentioned WorkReady. My sister came home, told me about it, and encouraged me to apply.” After the application and interview process, a representative from University City District, which operated a WorkReady internship program this summer, contacted Mailisa to inform her that she would be working at Drexel University.

“I work in the Human Resources department. I use Excel and a program called Banner that holds information on employees and their dependents that are enrolled in the tuition remission program.” Mailisa also performed research for the department on best practices for conducting interviews. Her research will be used to develop a seminar for management staff. “It’s important for managers to know what they can and cannot ask in an interview. I learned that asking the wrong question can lead to a lawsuit.”

Mailisa wants to pursue a career in Information Technology. Once her supervisor became aware of this, she made it a point to connect her to people at Drexel who are in that field. “Kristen, my supervisor, introduced me to the head of the IT department. I was able to spend a few days in IT. I got a chance to install new operating systems.” Mailisa also shadowed some of the IT students who worked in the department. “I have been able to talk to them about the IT program here and about what student life is like.”

A junior at Mercy Vocational High School, Mailisa admits that this work experience has motivated her to begin looking at colleges and universities. As a result of the time she spent on Drexel’s campus during her internship, she is considering the school’s five-year co-op program. “This summer has really helped me figure out what I want to do and where I want to go. And working is beefing up my resume. Being able to say that I was an intern at Drexel means a lot.”

Participating in a WorkReady internship has inspired Mailisa to think beyond the present and begin planning for her future. “It’s a really good program. I suggest that others get involved with it.”

For more information on Mailisa’s provider organization, University City District, visit www.universitycity.org.
“Having Jasmine in our department was fun. She was a good reminder of how light things need to be from time to time.”

Peirce College became involved with WorkReady in response to the mayor’s call to Philadelphia’s colleges and universities to provide opportunities for the city’s youth. “The mayor’s message was compelling and spoke to the very nature of who we are and what we do at Peirce which is to promote access to education. Our president felt it was the right thing to do, a good investment in young people, in the city, and in workforce development, in general,” explains Uva Coles, Dean of Career Development Services at Peirce.

Through the interview process, Uva and her colleagues met many promising students that they could potentially consider for an internship position. But when 15-year old Jasmine Ross began her interview, Uva and her team knew she was the candidate for the job. “When she came in and started to speak, I thought, ‘She’s the one, she’s definitely the one.’”

As a Career Services intern, Jasmine supported the administrative needs of the department, took notes at internal and external meetings, and served as a writer for the college’s blog. “I really liked writing for the blog. I feel like it’s a big achievement to write for a college website, giving my take on different things and being able to promote the Career Development Services department.”

“Before Jasmine came, we were looking for ways of being more consistent with posting to our blog. It was really helpful to have someone who was dedicated to doing research on our industry, coming up with articles that we could highlight, thinking about how it could benefit a student, and creating an angle from her perspective,” notes Uva.

Handling the responsibility of blogging along with her other tasks helped Jasmine to discover the importance of multitasking. “I had a lot of assignments and I would have due dates for each of them. I would be sure to get them done efficiently and ahead of the due date.” The fact that she “was able to manage a whole bunch of things, still go to meetings, still get my assignments done, and still have a life outside of this internship” left her with a great sense of pride and accomplishment.

Throughout the internship, Jasmine was able to contribute her thoughts and ideas in many ways. She made recommendations on how to make the WorkReady Friday Seminar activities more engaging for youth. She also gave suggestions on a new focus at Peirce. “Peirce previously concentrated on serving working adults, but we are now trying to target the traditional student as well. It was great to have her voice at the table. She gave us some really good ideas on things that we can do to target that younger population,” Uva acknowledges. “In a working relationship, it’s supposed to be give and take. If you go into it with the understanding that as a supervisor or as a mentor you’re going to not only educate the other person, but you’re also going to be educated, then it’s going to be mutually beneficial.”

Jasmine, who plans to combine her passions for psychology and children to one day be a pediatric neuropsychologist, recognizes that working at a college in career services is a great way to be exposed to the college-going process and career development. “Because I’m 15, I wasn’t really sure whether or not I knew where I was going to go after high school. As a 10th grader, I just felt like I wasn’t ready to think about that. But this has opened my eyes to doing college research, looking at the programs that are out there, thinking about what I want to do with my career, and how important it is to have a good career.”

By the end of the six-week experience, it was evident that Uva’s instinct to hire Jasmine was spot on. “Jasmine is a gem and just really thoughtful and mature beyond her years. It was a privilege working with her. For us, it was a win and a reward much larger than what we expected from the program.”

To learn more about Jasmine’s employer, Peirce College, go to www.peirce.edu.
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