Connecting Opportunity Youth With Jobs and Education

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AGENDA

• Introductions
• Overview of:
  • Education Systems Center (EdSystems)
  • Career Development Experiences
  • CDE Toolkit & Companion Piece
• Defining Opportunity Youth
• Equitable Practices for CDEs for Opportunity Youth
• Community Model: Business & Career Services, Inc.
• Conversation & Resources
SPEAKERS

Carl Schneider
Campus Governance Manager, Chicago Public Schools

Caroline D’Andrea
Policy & Programs Fellow, Education Systems Center

Eddie Perez
Youth Services Manager, Business & Career Services, Inc.
THE EDSYSTEMS MISSION

Shape and strengthen education and workforce systems to advance racial equity and prepare more young people for productive careers and lives in a global economy.

- College & Career Pathways
- Bridges to Postsecondary
- Data Impact & Leadership

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ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY

Taking active steps to reflect, learn, and make racial equity even more tangible in our work

Mirrors: Internal Goals
- Define the team’s core equity values
- Establish how we will apply the values as guiding principles in all of EdSystems work

Windows: External Goals
- Advancing racial equity within our community networks
- More strongly emphasizing racial equity in our state policy work
- Modeling and leading for racial equity

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WHAT IS A CAREER DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE (CDE)?

A supervised work experience relating to an individual’s career area of interest that:

1) Occurs in a workplace or under other authentic working conditions;
2) Is co-developed by an education provider and at least one employer in the relevant field;
3) Provides compensation or educational credit to the participant;
4) Reinforces foundational professional skills including, at a minimum, those outlined in the Essential Employability Skills framework;
5) Includes a Professional Skills Assessment that assesses skill development and is utilized as a participant feedback tool; and
6) Takes place for a minimum of 60 total hours.

Source: Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary
BUT REALLY THOUGH… WHAT IS IT?

Part of Illinois’ broader work-based learning continuum and refers to terms such as:

- Internship
- School-based Enterprise
- Supervised Agricultural Experience
- Cooperative Education
- Remote Work for a Client or Employer
- Student-led Enterprise
- Youth Apprenticeship

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WHAT IS THE CDE TOOLKIT?

Establishes expectations for implementing high-quality, rigorous work-based learning experiences that prepare young people to be college and career ready through the development of Essential, Entrepreneurial and Technical Employability Skills.

Provides guidance, tools, and frameworks to offer a Career Development Experience, which is a required component of the College and Career Pathway Endorsement framework and in the State’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) as a College and Career Readiness Indicator.

Highlights best practice examples of how organizations are accomplishing this on-the-ground and spark thinking for other communities about how these examples might be modified to fit into their own unique contexts.
WHY A COMPANION PIECE?

• While the original toolkit is meant to serve any organization that seeks to provide rigorous work-based learning opportunities to Participants, EdSystems is committed to creating career development experiences (CDE) resources with a focus on underserved populations, particularly Opportunity Youth.

• The purpose of this extension is to explore CDEs and provide resources to address the needs of stakeholders outside of a traditional high school setting, including: workforce development organizations, community-based organizations and alternative high schools. This companion piece targets these organizations and employers in order to serve youth more inclusively.

• In the United States and in Illinois, disparities in education and employment outcomes can’t be discussed without considering racism and poverty. We need to start by highlighting systemic disparities and model solutions in order to build context, empathy, and, ultimately, equity.

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WHO ARE OPPORTUNITY YOUTH (OY)?

16–24 year-olds who are not connected to education nor the workforce

- OY make up approximately 10% of all 16-24 year-olds in Illinois
- OY are more likely to be people of color, have a disability, and experience poverty than their peers who are in school or working
DISTRIBUTION OF OPPORTUNITY YOUTH NATIONALLY

Source: Measure of America, More than a Million Reasons for Hope, 2018.

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DISTRIBUTION OF OPPORTUNITY YOUTH IN ILLINOIS

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EQUITABLE PRACTICES

Payment/stipend

• Opportunity Youth are more likely experience poverty and homelessness than their peers. Without payment or stipend, Participants are forced to pick between a meaningful CDE experience and a job that covers essential costs.

• Even more, transportation is often a barrier to equitable access, especially in smaller cities and rural communities without public transportation. Can your organization include a transportation stipend?

Flexible scheduling

• Participants may have many competing priorities, depending on their circumstances. Assigning work that can be completed around their schedule increases capacity for participation.

• Some Participants have other childcare responsibilities. Can your Organization provide support around childcare, such an information about Head Start in the area?
Virtual Opportunities

- The various barriers Participants face can be lowered through virtual CDE opportunities. Offering opportunities to connect or work virtually whenever possible keeps equity at the forefront of the CDE.

- With advancing technology, such as video conferencing and online shared documents, organizations can consider fully or partly virtual engagements.

- Transportation needs of Participants will no longer be a barrier to their participation if conducted virtually. The financial burden and time commitment of commuting for Participants is eliminated.

Organizations must confirm that Participants have a device and internet at home, or other needed equipment. If they do not, can your organization offer them a device or stipend to meet these needs?
SUPPORTS AND SERVICES FOR PARTICIPANTS DURING & AFTER THE CDE:

- When working with OY, there must be an explicit connection to further resources, education, or employment throughout the program so that OY leave with clear next steps in their development towards career and/or education. This work can be furthered by supporting Participants even after the CDE.

- Focus on developing relationships, between Participants and Host Supervisors, Mentors, and other employees, to build Social Capital.

- Create networks for Participants to keep them engaged during and after the CDE with one another and with the organization.
WHAT DO PARTICIPANTS FIND HELPFUL?

• The best way to assess what participants will find meaningful is to ask them. Using Participant engagement surveys, you can invite Participants to identify areas they could use additional information and support.

• Oftentimes, the requests may be to cover topics that might not feel as directly connected to work, but rather workforce participation. For example, How do I file my taxes? Where can I find childcare? How can I access emergency housing? How do I make the most of my bank account?

• Addressing the potential challenges identified by current and former Participants increases organizational credibility and Participants’ access to continued CDEs and education.
COMMUNITY MODEL

A community model refers to a partnership between a Host and a Managing Organization. Usually, the Managing Organization identifies and trains Participants and the Host provides work-related tasks and oversight through supervision and mentoring by a designated Host Supervisor.
Work-Based Learning: A Promising Strategy for developing a Promising Career Path for Opportunity Youth
What is MCIP?

• The Manufacturing Careers Internship Program enables opportunity youth 18-24 years of age the ability to find a meaningful and productive career in manufacturing.

• At the same time, the program addresses the critical shortage of qualified workers in the manufacturing sector.
Recruitment

Youth

• Area service providers, secondary schools and community colleges
• Social media and workforce system websites
• Info sessions at area manufacturing companies
• Focus on older out of school youth looking for career direction

Manufacturing Employers

• Economic development organizations
• Community colleges
• Industry associations and manufacturing groups
• Workforce system customers
• Manufacturing Career Expos and Job Fairs
Manufacturing Ambassadors

• Serve as “champions” of the program
• Provide guest speakers and host company tours
• Recruit other companies to participate
• Ambassadors are passionate about the manufacturing industry—serve as inspiration to prospective interns and reinforce the value of this opportunity
Boot Camp or Foundational Skills Training

- Business Tours to area employers
- Learn about the different career paths and opportunities
- Resume Writing
- Interview Preparation
- Work Ethic Training
- OSHA Certification
- Forklift Certification
- Financial Literacy Workshop
- Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Workshop
- Basic Shop Math
- Introduction to Blue Print Reading
Internship Selection Day

• Hold “mini” job fair (Selection Day) at the conclusion of the Boot Camp
• Manufacturers and interns each select top 5 choices
• Match Interns to manufacturers based on needs of employer, interests of the youth and transportation
• Draft Day
Internship Selection Day
Logistics of the 8 Week Internship

- Employer of Record
- Liability and Worker’s Compensation
- Transportation Assistance
- Job Rotation
- Frequent contact and site visits
- Worksite Agreements
- Safety Equipment Provided

Frequent contact and site visits

Job Rotation

Transportation Assistance

Liability and Worker’s Compensation

Employer of Record

Worksite Agreements

Safety Equipment Provided
Recognition Event

- Recognize the efforts of ambassadors, employers and youth.
- Promote manufacturing jobs and career opportunities.
- Invite employers, interns, family, career counselors, instructors, state and local elected officials, media, and other key stakeholders.
Why it Works-Employers

• Simple, easy-to-understand program design that offers real value to employers.
• Creates a pipeline of qualified applicants to address industry shortage.
• Ability to reach a section of the population that employers traditionally do not have access to.
• BCS covers liability insurance.
• Boot camp helps prepare participants for transitioning into the workplace.
• Employers become aware of additional workforce services.
Why it Works-Interns

• A clear career path and access to opportunities of which they were unaware.
• Provides an opportunity to obtain credentials—Forklift and OSHA 10hr.
• Develop real job skills in a real work environment.
• Offers a way to get their “foot in the door.”
• Boot camp prepares interns for the realities of work.
• Internships provide real-world view of careers and opportunities in the industry.
Lessons Learned

• Vetting youth is critical.
• Attendance is important.
• Tours are key.
• Mentors are essential.
• Employers interested in finding a person with a positive attitude and good character.
• Rapid response to employer concerns and/or intern issues.
Program Evolution

2011

- 2-Week Boot Camp
- 6-week internship
- No industry recognized credential
- No Boot Camp incentive

Pre-COVID

- Up to 5-week Boot Camp
- Up to 8-week internship
- Safety and Industry Recognized Credentials (exploring welding)
- Benchmark Incentives
- Financial Literacy
- Basic Shop Math
- Mentorship Program
Questions? More Information?

Eddie Perez
Youth Services Manager
Business and Career Services, Inc.
eperez@bcsillinois.org
224-538-1039
How will your organization embed equitable practices into all the components of the Participant experience?

How will you provide the necessary training to prepare Participants to continue on a successful pathway?

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<tr>
<th>Components of the CDE</th>
<th>Your Organization’s Equitable Practices</th>
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<td>Recruitment and Engagement</td>
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<td>Training and Participation</td>
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<td>Connecting with Career Pathways</td>
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<td>Ongoing, Personal Support</td>
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ILLINOIS WBL INNOVATION NETWORK (I-WIN)

- Highlight and explore innovative models for work-based learning with a focus this first year on virtual work-based learning
- Engage in conversations on creating sustainable, high-quality models that ultimately provide broader and more equitable access to work-based learning with a focus on building social capital for Black and Latinx students
- Build connections among communities to share best practices, learnings and resources
- Identify needs for state policy changes or support systems

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USING THESE RESOURCES

Are you interested in utilizing the resources from the Toolkit?

Are you interested in joining I-WIN?

Please contact Caroline D’Andrea (cdandrea@niu.edu) to:
  • Learn more about the Toolkit
  • Receive direct support to adapt and implement Toolkit components and resources
  • Learn more about I-WIN

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RESOURCES

- Career Development Experience Toolkit
- Recommended Technical and Essential Employability Competencies
- State of Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary
- Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Site
- I-WIN Resources
THANK YOU

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