

YouthWorks 2020

Summary: This year YouthWorks will offer approximately 4,500 young Baltimoreans the opportunity to earn, learn and grow through a virtual summer job. The program will operate 20 hours per week for 5 weeks starting on July 13th and serve youth between the ages of 14-21.

Background: Traditionally, YouthWorks has operated a five-week summer jobs program with youth working at one of over 600 sites across the city. While the program has been around for decades, each of the last five years, YouthWorks has offered over 8,000 youth a summer job. COVID has made a traditional summer jobs experience impossible this year. While this has led to many cities discontinuing their program, the program is too important to consider this in Baltimore. Thousands of households across the city count on YouthWorks to provide needed income for young people and their families. Young Baltimore needs engagement, skills enhancement, and the opportunity to earn, learn and grow.

YouthWorks 2020 through existing partnerships: Approximately 200 of our partners will offer virtual programming for about 75% of our youth (over 3,000 youth). This includes private sector sites such as Johns Hopkins, University of Maryland, Southway Builders as well as nonprofit and community partners such as Banner Neighborhoods, Code in the Schools and the Judy Center.

YouthWorks Edge: MOED created a platform that the other young adults will be to access that will be a blend of job readiness, career exploration, academic enrichment, and essential skills training. There will be over 20 modules for youth to choose that include time management, goal setting, resume building, conflict resolution, and successfully applying for a job and interviewing for the position. In addition, youth will be able to learn more about opportunities within industries such as health care, IT, and construction. MOED partnered with HeartSmiles to employ 19 youth to test the virtual platform. The young adults offered specific recommendations and even developed their own videos that will be used on the Baltimore site.

Job Coaches & Managers: Youth will not go on this journey alone. MOED will hire nearly 100 Job Coaches and Managers to work intensively with youth in groups of 15-20 to help them navigate the offerings and get the most of the experience. Coaches will offer instructions and guidance each morning to their group of youth in a short video conference. Youth will work independently from there while receiving a 1x1 check in with their coach to make sure they are making progress before a wrap-up video conference to conclude the day.

Youth engagement and addressing the digital divide: Over 8,500 youth were verified to participate in YouthWorks despite the impact of COVID. Youth in families receiving TCA, SNAP or in the foster care system were prioritized for placement. MOED surveyed all youth to make sure they had the technology they needed to participate. Partnering with BCPS, city school youth are able to pick up a free laptop directly on any Tuesday or Thursday (10 am – 2 pm). The Bloomberg foundation and other partners have supported non BCPS youth to obtain the technology they need to participate in this year's program.

Financial partners include: The Abell Foundation, Annie E. Casey, Bank of America, the Bloomberg Foundation, Cities for Financial Empowerment, Johns Hopkins, JP Morgan Chase, Weinberg as well as our public partners the City of Baltimore, Baltimore City Public School System, Department of Social Services, and the State of Maryland's Department of Labor.