

ARRA Summer Youth Program

The WDC of Seattle-King County contracted \$2.8 million to two consortia of service providers after a competitive RFP process: **King County Work Training Program** (with Multi Service Center and Metrocenter YMCA) and **Seattle Youth Employment Program** (with Metrocenter YMCA, YouthCare and Center for Career Alternatives).

Objectives

- Provide meaningful paid work experiences for King County youth ages 16-24
- Increase summer employment program size by a factor of 8
- Connect older out-of-school youth to these opportunities
- Expose youth to high-growth industries, green jobs and post-secondary options
- Have youth demonstrate work-readiness skills and as a result increase their employability

Who received services?

- 891 youth were enrolled
- 366 were 19 to 24 years old
- 403 were out-of-school youth per WIA definition
- 617 were deficient in basic skills (math and/or reading skills below 9th grade level)
- 65 were homeless, 109 had Limited English proficiency, 115 were offenders
- 47 were parenting or pregnant, 138 were youth with a disability
- 589 (66%) were non-white, 467 (53%) were Black/African American, 112 (13%) were Asian, 109 (12%) were Hispanic/Latino, and 47 (5%) were American Indian /Alaska Natives
- 59 were receiving TANF and 27 were receiving other types of emergency assistance

What types of jobs or projects did they participate in?

Young people participated in projects or internships at 373 different worksites with 260 different employers representing a wide variety of government agencies, private companies and nonprofit organizations. Examples: In the SoDo Inc. program at South Seattle Community College, 90 youth got pre-apprenticeship training, earning workplace safety and skills certifications, then learned on the job in paid internships, many with private-sector employers that ended in job offers. In other group projects, youth learned technology and communication skills while developing materials for a community-awareness website; restored forest habitat in urban green belts; and designed public-health messages.

Comments from the Youth

“I told my mother that the next time she needs something fixed around the house she doesn’t have to pay someone. I have skills now.”

*“I now understand how all the systems in a house work together.
This will really help me get the construction job that I want.”*

“I am not going to waste this chance.”

“I will be able to get a decent part-time job while I go to community college.”

“I want to get into the Electrical Apprenticeship program. This program and the people here will help me.”