



## **Coordinating Youth Services in Philadelphia through WorkReady Philadelphia**

**Youth Council:** Philadelphia Youth Council working through the Philadelphia Youth Network

**Element:** Career Preparation

**Function:** Coordinate Youth Services

### **The Challenge**

A number of separately funded and independently administered work-related programs and services existed in the City of Philadelphia, but there was little or no coordination between or among them. As a result, considerable duplication and inefficiency existed in terms of youth enrollment procedures, employer engagement and program management and oversight.

### **The Strategy**

In 2003, the Philadelphia Youth Council, working through the Philadelphia Youth Network, launched "WorkReady Philadelphia," a unified and coordinated approach that brought together all major youth employment-related programs into a single, coordinated system. Since the creation of WorkReady Philadelphia, more than \$40M from government, the School District of Philadelphia, area foundations and private employers has been brought together and administered through a single structure that significantly increases both efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Outcomes**

Since the advent of WorkReady, more than 10,000 young people annually have participated in work experience, service corps, academically-enriched after school programs and a variety of career exposure opportunities. Importantly, all Youth Council programs must follow rigorous guidelines which call for all youth participants to complete either a project or portfolio, either of which are eligible to earn academic credit with the School District of Philadelphia. Over the last three years of WorkReady, more than 12,000 young people have been recommended for such credit. Furthermore, the coordinated employer outreach component of WorkReady has enabled a strong employer-paid internship program to emerge, which holds considerable promise for future growth.

### **Next Steps**

Next steps include expanding employer-supported internships; increasing the academic rigor and career preparation of all funded programs; bolstering and extending relationships with City social services agencies and extending the reach of WorkReady programming to more youth who are either out-of-school or otherwise disconnected from their schools and communities.

# *YCideas from around the Nation*



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## **Links**

[www.workreadyphila.com](http://www.workreadyphila.com)

[www.pyninc.org](http://www.pyninc.org)

[www.osyphila.org](http://www.osyphila.org)

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