



Coordinating Youth Services in Tri-County Workforce Area of Colorado

Youth Council: Tri-County Workforce Youth Council of Colorado (Tri-County)

Element: Career Preparation

Function: Coordinate Youth Services

Subjects: Youth One-Stop, Electronic One-Stop

The Challenge

In 2001, there was a gap in workforce services, including job readiness assistance, due to diminished funding, changing regulations, and disjointed partnerships. The region needed a comprehensive and cost-effective model to ensure that job readiness assistance was available to all youth and to promote and increase employer engagement, in support of Youth Council goals.

The Strategy

The TRICO YouthWorks Program, with Youth Council guidance, established a Youth One-Stop model to respond to the local needs of youth, employers, and community partners across this large workforce region. Initially, the emphasis was on job readiness and business development services. With grant funding, Tri-County implemented a marketing strategy, developed a web site and job search curriculum, and cross-trained TRICO YouthWorks staff to provide core, WIA, and business development services.

TRICO YouthWorks developed and professionally produced the "Get a Job" Toolkit, a comprehensive curriculum designed for trainers and educators and includes experiential lessons that can be customized to the needs of the audience. This Toolkit has been distributed to more than 200 partners and last year, staff conducted nearly 120 community-based job readiness workshops.

In addition, Tri-County created an electronic system, including a web site, to ensure job readiness services are available to all youth. The system includes an online job matching process along with an Access database of employers with current job opening information. The "Job List" records current labor market information for nearly 500 employers, thereby improving services to job seekers and employers. This list, updated bi-weekly, is the primary resource for youth to get current information on job openings in the region. Last year, this database provided 4,300 job referrals.

As members of the Jeffco Business Development Consortium, including economic development and education as well as TRICO YouthWorks, participated in hiring events, implemented an account management system, and planned annual youth job fairs averaging 1,400 youth and 80 employers and schools.



Building on this success, the Youth Council blends staff and in-kind resources for joint projects that could not be accomplished independently, such as sustainable, accredited career camps involving multiple employers, education, and industry-specific partners.

The Outcomes

Since these programs have been instituted the region has consistently met or exceeded Workforce investment Act (WIA) performance standards, including the percentage of out-of-school youth. In 2004, Tri-County provided job readiness services to 7,000 youth 31 percent of Workforce Center customers, with 59 percent entering employment. In comparison, in Program Year 2001, slightly fewer than 3,400 youth were served with 19 percent entering employment.

The web site, including the online registration and job matching system, averages 42,000 hits, 95 registrations, and 207 job referrals monthly.

In 2004, Tri-County secured three discretionary grants totally \$379,100 to develop and promote career pathways in the emerging industries, in partnership with schools and businesses, and to improve the workforce system for youth with disabilities and foster youth.

Next Steps

The current focus is on creating a high quality workforce development system for youth by merging Office for Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) Principles, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Visions, WIA guidelines, and customized needs assessments into a relevant Youth Council strategic planning process. Youth Council workgroups, including TRICO YouthWorks staff, have established goals and action plans related to transition, leadership, and career pathways. For example, Workforce, Human Services, Mental Health, and Education are collaborating to conduct formal life skills assessments and teach independent living classes for a universal population, train facilitators, and create an instructional Toolkit. Workforce, Education, and Division of Youth Corrections are aligning their workplace competency skills training programs and sharing expertise on career technical training programs. For performance measurement, the Youth Council is using a balanced scorecard approach, common databases, and other success factors to validate direction and track results of services provided within their network. The Youth Council is implementing a pilot project to strengthen assessment, secondary education/remediation, and the transition process to foster youth and offenders at two residential facilities.

Links

www.tricoyouthworks.org

Contact Information

Youth Council Tri-County Workforce Youth Council of Colorado

Location Tri-County region serving Jefferson, Gilpin, and Clear Creek Counties

Contact Person Dani Crane

Job Title Youth Coordinator

Email dcrane@jeffco.us

Phone (303) 271-4719

YCideas from around the Nation



Address 730 Simms, Suite 300 / Golden, CO 80401

Web Address www.tricoyouthworks.org