

TO: Youth Council

DATE:09/12/07

FROM: Youth Council Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: YOP Quarterly Report

PROPOSED MOTION(S): Information Only

DISCUSSION: YOP Quarterly Report, Apr, May, Jun 2005 is attached.

ATTACHMENT(S): YOP Quarterly Report

To: **Dave Davis:** Special Projects Manager, Department of Workforce Investment
 From: **Rebecca Lincoln:** Career Educator, Merced County Office of Education
 Re: **Merced County Youth Council Quarterly Report-** Younger Youth Program
 Date: **August 2007 (April, May, June 2007)**

A. Overall status of the program:

There are presently 231 active participants in the Youth Opportunity Program at the end of the third quarter; this past quarter the program had six new enrollments and eleven exits. The status on all WIA-Client action reports for goals, activities, exits and follow-ups (phase II) remain up to date. The outcomes for the YOP programs fourth quarter results are as follows:

| Performance Measurement | Negotiated Performance Level with State of CA. & Merced County Program Year 06-07 | Merced County office of Education YOP 4 th quarter Performance Results |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| In- School Youth (14- 18) | | |
| Skill Attainment | 85.7 % | 94.0% |
| Diploma or Equivalent | 67.0 % | 92.1% |
| Retention Rate | 65.0 % | 74.2 % |

B. Past quarter highlights:

1) **The YOP summer employment** component began on June 11, 2007; approximately eighty participants worked this summer with local employers and agencies. The Mentors met with site supervisors to develop training plans for the participants who worked up to 32 hours per week. *The Entrepreneur Workshop*, an 18 hour course was facilitated to all the participants in three-hour per week segments through-out the six-week summer component. By participating in *The Entrepreneur Workshop*, participants explored the advantages and opportunities of becoming a business owner. The youth took part in assessments to help them find their strengths and interests. Then with staff's assistance, students came up with a "Big Idea" for a company, service or product. Each participant then developed a business plan and a marketing plan to include a logo, a flyer and business cards. The participants also completed an updated business résumé and a budget for start- up costs. The six week course ended with presentations given by the participants to MCOE staff, site supervisors and fellow participants.

2) **Opportunity Club:** The Opportunity Club is an ongoing activity that provides monthly sessions on current job, educational, community, and leadership opportunities, as well as

information regarding life skills for EMPOWER and YOP youth in Merced County. All participants are invited and encouraged to attend.

The Opportunity Club met on April 19; eighteen YOP & EMPOWER participants had the privilege to view a DVD presentation by Father G. Boyle, who visited Merced County Office of Education on March, 23rd. Father Gregory Boyle, S.J, a Jesuit priest and Founder/Executive Director of *Jobs-For-A-Future/Homeboy Industries*, gave a rousing presentation on “kinship”. Father Boyle is a nationally renowned speaker at conferences for teachers, social workers and criminal justice workers about the importance of adult attention, guidance and unconditional love in preventing youth from joining gangs.

- 3) **Youth Transitions Conference** – On April 27th, YOP and EMPOWER staff attend a Youth Transitions Conference held in Visalia that focused on foster youth. Staff learned that within the first 18 months of aging out from foster care, 24 to 50 percent of the youth become homeless. The (ITFH) Interagency Task Force on Homelessness has determined that there was an urgent need to provide current and former foster youth with mental health, housing, educational and employment training services that are easily accessible and obtainable. Thus the following pilot programs were implement; Project HOPE, Alameda County WIB; Project TRENDS, Ventura County WIB; The Foster Youth Pilot Project of the Northern Central Counties Consortium. All three programs have successfully collaborated with the (DSS) Department of Social Services, (EDD) Development Department, and (WIA) Workforce Investment Board in their area.

In conclusion, the message from the Youth Transition Conference revealed a need for all agencies to collaborate with each other for the good of aging-out foster youth; emphasizing the vital role that each partner plays in a foster youth’s future.

- 4) **McNamara Park Resource Fair** on May 4th, Merced City held a 'Cinco de Mayo' celebration at McNamara Park from 4-8pm. Rebecca Garcia and Toula Moua joined other agencies in celebrating the holiday with the citizens of Merced. Ms. Garcia & Ms. Moua represented Empower/YOP by providing brochures and ROP related information.

5) YOP: Success Stories

Update: Jenny Vang, a June 07 Graduate



Jenny Vang & Penny Sawyer

On February 8, 2007, Jenny Vang (Youth Opportunity Program participant) received a Violet Richardson Award for the amount of \$250 from the Merced Soroptimist International. This award is given to one applicant who takes the time to make the community and world a better place through volunteer work. Jenny is an active member of *KiWins* (junior Kiwanis). She is currently serving as Vice President for the organization at Merced High School.

Then in April 2007, Jenny received a 4-year scholarship for \$26,000.00 from the Merced Kiwanis Club. She graduated from Merced High School in June 2007, and is currently attending California State University, San Jose where she plans to pursue a career in graphics.

YOP Success Story: Alfonso Velasquez



At his enrollment in August 2004, Alfonso set three goals he planned to achieve within four years. His goals were to graduate from high school, attend college and get a job. YOP is thrilled to announce he has accomplished all his goals within three years instead of four.

Alfonso is a proud graduate of Buhach Colony High School's class of 2007! After graduation, Alfonso attended the Entrepreneur Workshops and his work experience at Atwater's City Parks and Recreation. His responsible, hard-working personal qualities earned him a recommendation for hire from his work-site supervisor. Upon the completion of his work experience hours Alfonso obtained a position with Atwater City's Parks and Recreation. Alfonso is currently attending Merced Community College where he intends to obtain a certificate in Automotive Technology.

YOP Success Story: Agapita Vargas-Ramirez



Agapita enrolled into the YOP program in March of 2005; she has worked hard on fulfilling all her goal to earn a High School Diploma from Dos Palos High School, on June 8, 2007. During her years with YOP she was very active in the YOP Opportunity

Club, she volunteered at the canned food drives, local blood drive, Red Ribbon Week, and for the “Coats for Kids” fundraiser.

After graduation, Agapita gained her work experience hours at the Dos Palos Community Center as an activity assistant. Agapita’s duties included assisting elementary students with their reading and facilitated summer activities at the center. Agapita attended the Entrepreneur Workshops where she learned the advantages and opportunities available to become your own boss. She loved working with the students at the center and became inspired to move forward with a business and marketing plan to open an after school program in the fall.

Finally, Agapita fulfilled a lifelong dream by enrolling at Merced College, Los Banos Campus, where she is now attending classes. She is the first girl in her family to attend college. It is her goal to continue her college education to earn a degree and become a school teacher. Agapita is a very exceptional young lady. She has come a long way from being that shy, quiet, young girl to being a voice for youth in the future

- C. Past quarter deficiencies:** none
- D. Past quarter recruiting/marketing efforts:**
There were no recruiting efforts for YOP in the fourth quarter.
- E. Next quarter challenges:** none
- F. Technical assistance needed:** none