

**Workforce Investment Board of Merced County
Youth Council**

**Merced County Office of Education – Bldg M
632 W. 13th Street, Merced, CA
Wednesday, February 8, 2006 – 4:00 p.m.**



Meeting Agenda

<http://web.co.merced.ca.us/wi/youth/meetingpkts/meetingpkts.html>

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1. Call to Order and Roll Call
 2. Approve Agenda
 3. Approve Minutes (January 11, 2006)
 4. Public Opportunity to Speak
 5. Announcements
 6. Action Agenda
 - a. Selection of Vice Chair
 - b. Retreat
 7. Presentations
 - a. YEOP Nancy Mendoza/Wendy Lomeli
 - b. WIA Funding Jackie Walther-Parnell
 - c. CWA Youth Conference Attendees
 8. Information
 - a. Career Industry Days.....
 - b. Youth Program Quarterly Reports
 9. Chair Comments/Roundtable/Future Agenda Items
 10. Date/Time and Location of Next Meeting – March 8, 2006, 4:00 p.m., MCOE, Newbold Room, 632 W. 13th Street, Merced
 11. Adjourn

Workforce Investment Board of Merced County

Youth Council

Merced County Office of Education – Newbold Room

632 W. 13th Street, Merced, CA

Wednesday, January 11, 2006 – 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes



<http://web.co.merced.ca.us/wi/youth/meetingpkts/meetingpkts.html>

Members Present: Bob Bittner, Stephanie Busbea, Mary Cavazos, Natalie Culver, Ben Duran, Evelyn Eagleton, Robert Harmon, Kathy Hassett, Mary Jane Hawkes, Taide Hernandez (Vice Chair), Charlie Lambert, Rebecca Lincoln, Richard Mahacek, Edgar Perez, Mayra Ramirez, Vann (Mike) Smith, Nathan Timmerman, Rev. Craig E. White

Members Absent: Rennise Ferrario, Alexander Hall, Rick Osorio (Chair)

Others Present: Dave Davis, Patricia Hinson, Alfredo Mendoza

1. Call to Order/Roll Call: The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., and asked for Mayra Ramirez to facilitate the meeting. Roll call was taken.

2. Approve Agenda: It was *M/S/C Duran/Bittner* to approve the agenda with added informational items CWA Conference and Conference for Transitioning Youth.

3. Approve Minutes: It was *M/S/C Hassett/Lambert* to approve the December 14, 2005 minutes.

4. Public Opportunity to Speak: None

5. Announcements:

a. Ms. Becky Lincoln extended an invitation to the Youth Council to attend Stakeholder Training for Youth-Serving Professionals on January 12, 2006, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

6. Action Agenda:

a. It was *M/S/C Mahacek/Duran* to accept the application for membership on the Youth Council from Isabel Nash and forward to the WIB for approval.

7. Presentation:

a. **Update on Search Institute Training.** Mr. Richard Mahacek provided a hand out and made a power point presentation regarding the "Youth Asset Developments –A Focus on the Positive Instead of the Problems" and gave an overview of Youth Development Models. He shared with the group that the Children's Summit is scheduled for April 7, 2006 at the Boys & Girls Club. They are planning on providing the Search Institute training and are looking for support from other agencies.

8. Information/Discussion:

a. **Youth Council Goals & Other Youth Programs Discussion:** The Youth Council goals were reviewed and possible links between the goals and the upcoming Children's Summit were explored. The Council again confirmed their goals were sound, but made no decisions concerning future interaction between the Youth Council and the Children's Summit. A discussion ensued suggesting that individual workgroups be formed to support each of the Council's four (4) goals. One

subgroup concerning Goal 1 was formed.

b. Youth Council retreat: Ms. Mayra Ramirez requested to add this topic as an action item for the February meeting.

7. Chair Comments/Roundtable/Future Agenda Items: Vice Chair Taide Hernandez resigned from the Vice Chair position she will remain as a Youth Council member.

8. Date, Time and Location of Next Youth Council Meeting: Next meeting is February 8, 2006, 4:00 p.m, at Merced County Office of Education – Bldg M, 632 W. 13th Street, Merced.

9. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Patricia C. Hinson

TO: Youth Council

DATE: 02/08/06

FROM: Youth Council Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: Selection of Youth Council Vice Chair

PROPOSED MOTION(S): That the Youth Council select a new Vice Chair.

DISCUSSION: During the January 11, 2006 Youth Council meeting, Ms. Taide Hernandez resigned from her position of Youth Council Vice Chair. Volunteers and/or nominations will be solicited with an immediate election to fill the Vice Chair office.

ATTACHMENTS: N/A

TO: Youth Council

DATE: 02/08/06

FROM: Youth Council Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: Youth Council Retreat

PROPOSED MOTION(S): That the Youth Council decide whether to hold a retreat – date and time to be determined at a later date.

DISCUSSION: There has been a suggestion made that the Youth Council consider having a retreat later in the year. The subject was briefly discussed during the January Youth Council meeting with both pro and con statements of support from Youth Council members.

The following should be considered:

- 1. Retreats are held to accomplish specific work that cannot be accomplished within the time constraints of a normal meeting. What is that specific work?**
- 2. Having a non-biased facilitator is key to a successful retreat. Finding that individual will take time and should cost in the \$1,800 to \$2,500 range.**
- 3. Time and date must be considered. The WIB is planning for a June/July retreat. The time and date have not been finalized.**

ATTACHMENTS: N/A

TO: Youth Council

DATE: 02/08/06

FROM: Youth Council Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: ROP Career Industry Days

PROPOSED MOTION(S): Information only.

DISCUSSION: A request for support for the ROP Career Industry Days for Agriculture and Healthcare was made during the Youth Council's November 2005 meeting. The WIB and Youth Council Chairs felt that the WIB could financially support the two events since Ag Manufacturing and Healthcare are selected "Industry Clusters."

A request for an unspecified amount of funding was presented to the WIB's Program Planning & Development Committee on January 26, 2006, but no quorum was present. It is to be presented to the WIB Executive Committee, Monday, February 6, 2006. A verbal report on that Committee's action will be presented to the Youth Council.

ATTACHMENTS: N/A

TO: Youth Council

DATE:02/08/06

FROM: WIB Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: EMPOWER Quarterly Report

PROPOSED MOTION(S): Information Only

DISCUSSION: EMPOWER Quarterly Report, Oct, Nov, Dec 2005 is attached

ATTACHMENT(S): EMPOWER 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- EMPOWER Program

Date: October 2005 (Jul-Aug-Sept)

A. Overall status of the program:

The EMPOWER program enrolled 20 (twenty) new participants this quarter and exited 28 (twenty-eight); this brings the total number active to 280 EMPOWER participants. The Empower advisors continue to track the number of participants enrolled in structured program activities to ensure that the majority of youth are receiving intensive services (as opposed to case management services). The status on all WIA-Client action reports for goals, activities, exits and follow-ups (phase II) remain up to date.

B. Past Quarter Highlights:

1) EMPOWER Workshops:

- a) EMPOWER Orientation: Conducted on the second Friday in the months of July and September; approximately 25-30 participants attended each session;
- b) EMPOWER Workshop I: Conducted on the third Friday of July and September; approximately 20 participants attended Workshop I;
- c) EMPOWER Workshop II-Job readiness was conducted in the months of July and September; 40 (forty) participants successfully completed an ROP employability portfolio, and practiced interviewing techniques.

2) Bldg K-Computer Lab: EMPOWER participants use the computer lab daily to work on résumés, portfolios, and conduct job search. Ed Souza, an adult schoolteacher, is available for six hours per week in the computer lab to assist EMPOWER participants with PLATO educational software designed to increase math and reading skills. Sign-in sheets are used to track the number of participants using the computer lab daily.

3) Career Industry Days: These ROP sponsored events provide youth with detailed information and exploration of specific career pathways. Career Industry Days include tours of local businesses, guest speaker presentations, and hands-on activities related to various careers within a pathway. Career Industry Days are held from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm at the Merced County Fair Grounds in the Exhibit Building. The EMPOWER advisors are encouraged to invite those participants whose career goals or technical training aligned with these pathways.

The following is the list and dates for the upcoming **Career Industry Days:**

- a) Careers in Business, Marketing and Computer Information Systems, Oct 27, 2005

- b) Careers in Arts and Communications, on Thursday, November 17th, 2005
- c) Careers in Education held on Thursday, January 26, 2006
- d) Careers in Agriculture (at the World Ag. Expo in Tulare) on February 15, 2006
- e) Careers in Health held on Tuesday, February 28, 2006.

4) **Quarterly EMPOWER Partners meeting** was not held this past quarter. Partners agreed that a meeting was not needed.

5) **Opportunity Club:** is an ongoing activity that provides bi-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. Sessions are conducted in Bldg K at the MCOE campus. All participants are invited and encouraged to attend. A meeting was held on September 26th, 2005; Susan Bubenchik and Julie Price both gave a presentation from “A Woman’s Place” of Merced County. They provided brochures and handouts to the group on services, as well as facilitated a lively discussion on questions and concerns from the group.

6) **Working Professional Curriculum Update:** In the 2004-2005 program year, EMPOWER staff revised the ROP Working Professional course outline, which is the framework for all EMPOWER workshops, work experience activities, and the locally approved youth credential. Last month, staff met again to begin work on our 2005-2006 ROP Working Professional Objectives to include ESLR’s alignment to the new course outline; create an updated program brochure; training plans for community classroom and create one lesson plan. These new developments will be brought before an Advisory committee for approval on April 6th, 2006.

7) **The REAL GAME CALIFORNIA:** Cyndie Bray, Blanca Rodriguez, Becky Lincoln (EMPOWER Staff) and Brad Eagleton, (YOP Mentor); attended training in Stockton at the San Joaquin County Office of Education for the *Real Game California* pilot curriculum on September 15th, 2005. A team of Career and Workforce Development experts and educators from California created the *Real Game California* prototype. All activities, learning objectives and performance indicators have been aligned with California Academic Content Standards; SCANS; National Career Development Guidelines and ASCA National Standards for School Counseling Programs.

Merced County Office of Education was selected as a pilot site to provide the Real Game California to approximately 30 WIA youth program participants. This includes both the in-school youth program (current enrollment 350+ students) and the out-of-school youth program (current enrollment 300+ participants). The Merced team will introduce the pilot curriculum to our participants and provide feedback and completed student, parent and teachers evaluations to the steering committee by January 31, 2006.

8) **TEEN SCENE:** YOP and EMPOWER participants from throughout the county were invited and attended the Second Annual Children’s Summit ‘TEEN SCENE’ event held at Merced College on September 24th. This years Teens Educated and Energized Now

(TEEN) Scene's theme *"about providing access for our youth today"*. The agenda included several break out sessions on topics of interests for youth to include; career assessment; healthy relationships; health 101 to name a few. A session was presented on the EMPOWER program by staff and a session was given on Career Technical Education Opportunities by personal from Merced Office of Education ROP, Career and Alternative Education Department.

Youth also had an opportunity to visit a Resource Fair that provided information from partnering agencies throughout the county. The highlights of the program included a fashion show, where several of YOP and EMPOWER participants modeled clothes from local merchants. A Free Style Hip Hop Dance and Rap Competition provided an arena for Merced County youth to show off their talents. An evening meal was provided and the event ended again with a dance. EMPOWER Staff assisted with the planning and volunteered on the day of the event.

9) Community Service: Coat Drive

Last year, the Merced County Office of Education EMPOWER/ YOP Programs sponsored a coat drive as a community service opportunity for the participants of these two programs. Because we strongly encourage our participants to become involved in community service, we thought this would be an excellent way for them to give back to the communities in which they live. When choosing a school to sponsor, we try to choose a school that is "most in need" and where our efforts will truly benefit. Last year, we chose to sponsor Bellevue Elementary in Atwater. Although, the coat drive was successful, we had minimal support from the participants.

This year, we chose to sponsor Planada Elementary School. The YOP mentors and EMPOWER advisors are working hard with their participants to involve them in the coat drive. The participants will do the work, by finding people to sponsor a child or by fundraising. They will also be involved in the purchasing and distribution of the coats; so that they can visually see who is benefiting from their efforts. We plan to distribute the coats on November 17th, at Planada School.

It is the hope of our program to make this an available community service activity every year. With each passing year, we hope to have the full support of the community and active participation of all the participants.

10) EMPOWER Success Stories:

Juan Olvera was a participant that started with Jobs for California Graduates. When EMPOWER took over, Juan was already enrolled into the General Business Occupations class offered at Central Valley Opportunity Center. It was soon determined that this was not the class that Juan was interested in attending; he was missing classes and was advised that he would be dropped from the program. Eventually, Juan did complete the class and received a certificate. Afterwards, Juan attended an EMPOWER Employability



Workshop where he displayed that he had excellent verbal and communication skills. He completed the workshop and began looking for work.

After a couple of meetings with his advisor, Rebecca Garcia, it became apparent to her that Juan was not doing what he loved to do. "He was really interested in working on computers and not working with computers." Rebecca then enrolled Juan into the ROP Computer Repair and Maintenance class. Juan received his A+ Certification in less than 4 months. While enrolled in the CR & M class, Juan also had to opportunity to complete work experience hours. He completed his work experience hours at Merced Adult School as a Computer Technician.

Several months later, Juan gained full-time employment with Cingular Wireless as a Customer Service Representative, but after couple of months, Juan was not working at Cingular anymore and out looking for work again. Ms Garcia was concerned, and tried to contact Juan at home; at that time Juan's mother told Rebecca that he had applied for a job with Merced City School District.

On 10/19/05, Ms. Garcia received an E-mail from Juan to let her know that he was employed as the Computer Lab Coordinator at Hoover Middle School. Rebecca is very happy and excited for him, "Juan, like many participants in our program, had barriers that he had to overcome. I know that Juan will go far in life because he is highly intelligent and determined young man."

Yuridia Fernandez and Sara Fernandez were both enrolled into the EMPOWER Program in May 2004. They both decided to attend the Medical Assistant Program offered through the Merced College Extension on Ashby Road. At that time, there was a waiting list for the Medical Assisting Program, and the girls had to wait until August to start the class. While they waited, both Sara and Yuridia completed the Employability Workshop and participated in The EMPOWER Zone. At The EMPOWER Zone, where the participants have a chance to present their employment portfolios to community members, both girls scored high on all the rubrics.

When both the girls started the Medical Assisting Program in August, they were faced with several barriers. The girls overcame the barriers that they were faced with and continued to move forward towards their goal of becoming Medical Assistants. Yuridia was the first to complete the class. She completed the class hours and her externship in June 2005. Sara fell behind in the class, and did not complete her class hours and externship until July 2005.





Yuridia was the first to successfully obtain full-time employment with Mercy Urgent Care where she started on July 2005. Sara followed right behind her sister by gaining full-time employment with Dr. Munnangi in August 2005. I recently spoke with Sara and Yuridia and they are both very happy at their places of employment. Yuridia has a busy schedule, working full-time and being a single parent of two young boys. Sara is busy as well, working full-time and looking forward to continuing her education.



Mai Kay Lee was enrolled into the Empower program on 10/26/04. When she first came to the Empower program, Mai did not have any work experience or knowledge of work expectations. She was also “Basic Skills Deficient” in reading. We invited her to attend our Portfolio Workshops, which she gladly attended all three. She learned various foundations of work readiness through these workshops. I then placed Mai at Anberry Rehabilitation Hospital as a part of her work experience. Mai was

able to demonstrate what she had learned from our workshops and quickly adapted to Anberry's daily routine. Mai made such an impression through her work skills and work ethics that after her work experience hours ended, Anberry offered Mai part-time employment. During this time, Mai also worked on her reading through our Plato Lab. She was able to help herself achieve a higher level of reading. Mai has expressed her gratitude with the help of the Empower program and with her success.

C. Past Quarter Deficiencies: none

D. Past Quarter recruiting and marketing efforts:

Recruiting efforts for EMPOWER were limited. The contract specified that as participants exit, new participants will be enrolled in the following quarter after exits dependent upon availability of funds.

E. Participant Enrollments and Follow-ups as of September 30th, 2005:

Total number of active participant enrollments:	280
	(273 in August)
Total number of participants in follow-up:	94
	(244 in August)

F. Next quarter challenges: WIA Common Measures Policy

G. Technical assistance needed: Available training on WIA Common Measures

H. Number of clients receiving social services and examples of services received.

Numerous referrals have been made to agencies to assist with food, clothing, housing and transportation.

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-** Empower Program
Date: **January 2006** (October, November and December 2005)

A. Overall status of the program:

The EMPOWER program enrolled 9 (nine) new participants during this quarter and exited eighteen; this brings the total number active to 264 EMPOWER participants. The Empower advisors continue to track the number of participants enrolled in structured program activities to ensure that the majority of youth are receiving intensive services (as opposed to case management services). The status on all WIA-Client action reports for goals, activities, exits and follow-ups (phase II) remain up to date.

B. Past Quarter Highlights:

1) EMPOWER Workshops:

- a) EMPOWER Orientation: Conducted on November 4, 2005 had 18 participants in attendance
- b) EMPOWER Workshop I: Conducted on November 18th, ten participants in attendance
- c) EMPOWER Workshop II-Job readiness was conducted in the month of November, ten participants successfully completed an ROP employability portfolio and practiced interviewing techniques.

2) Bldg K-Computer Lab: EMPOWER participants use the computer lab daily to work on résumés, portfolios, and conduct job search. Ed Souza, an adult school teacher, is available for six hours per week in the computer lab to assist EMPOWER participants with PLATO educational software designed to increase math and reading skills. Sign-in sheets are used to track the number of participants using the computer lab daily.

3) Quarterly EMPOWER Partners meeting was not held this past quarter. Partners agreed that a meeting was not needed.

4) Opportunity Club: is an ongoing activity that provides bi-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. Sessions are conducted in Bldg K at the MCOE campus. All participants are invited and encouraged to attend. A meeting was held on November 21st, 2005 where ten participants from through out the county viewed the HBO Documentary *Smashed- Toxic Tales of Teens and Alcohol*. The presenter, Cyndie Bray, an EMPOWER Career Educator from Merced Office of Education, asked provoking questions after the video to our participants regarding the dangers of drinking and driving. Pre and post surveys are given to provide feedback for future sessions. Most participants tell us they come away with a different outlook on the dangers of drinking & driving and partying in general.

5) Working Professional Curriculum Update: In 2005 program year, EMPOWER staff revised the ROP Working Professional course outline that is the framework for all EMPOWER workshops, work experience activities, and the locally approved youth credential. In December, staff met again to update the ESLR's Competency Assignments/ Alignments to the new course outline. The task was to match the competency in the Working Professional to the assignment met through our workshops or program activities. This alignment process will assure that the Working Professional credential awarded is based on

rigorous state standards. Next quarter the staff will create program brochures, update training plans for community classroom and create one lesson plan. These new developments will be brought before an Advisory committee for approval on April 6th, 2006.

- 6) The REAL GAME CALIFORNIA:** Cyndie Bray, Blanca Rodriguez, Becky Lincoln (EMPOWER Staff) and Brad Eagleton, (YOP Mentor) attended training in Stockton at the San Joaquin County Office of Education for the *Real Game California* pilot curriculum on September 15th, 2005. A team of Career and Workforce Development experts and educators from California created the *Real Game California* prototype. All activities, learning objectives and performance indicators have been aligned with California Academic Content Standards; SCANS; National Career Development Guidelines, and ASCA National Standards for School Counseling Programs.

Merced County Office of Education was selected as a pilot site to provide the Real Game California. On November 7, 8 and 9, the EMPOWER staff introduced “The Real Game California” Workshop to fifteen EMPOWER participants. The curriculum provided valuable information in the areas of budgeting, career assessments, career search, and real life situations that may occur on the job. The students provided feedback that indicated to the staff that they enjoyed the workshop and the information was beneficial.

- 7) Community Service: Coat Drive:** This year, the YOP mentors and EMPOWER advisors worked hard with their participants to involve them in raising money for the Planada Coat Drive. The participants found people to sponsor a child or held fundraisers; also the participants were involved in the purchasing and distribution of the coats. On November 16th, 97 new coats were delivered and distributed to 97 smiling K-5th grade Planada elementary youth. It is the hope of our program to make this an available community service activity every year. With each passing year, we hope to have the full support of the community and active participation of all the participants.

The following pictures are highlights from the day:



Mentors, Advisors and participants worked hard for Planada's children to stay warm this winter.



- 8) **EMPOWER Success Stories:** Alicia Cervantes was a participant that started with the Jobs for California Graduates. When Alicia became a part of the EMPOWER program she was not working or attending college, but had completed the Medical Assisting Program. Since Alicia had her certificate, she was offered work experience hours at Livingston Medical Group. While she worked, she was able to save some money to attend the Phlebotomy class offered at Abrams College. She completed the Phlebotomy class in November 2005 and then in late December she decided to apply with *BloodSource* in Merced. She immediately contacted her advisor Rebecca Garcia to make an appointment with her to assist in updating her portfolio and to practice her interviewing skills. On the day of the interview, she called Rebecca to tell her that she was hired. Alicia will be in training for about a month; she is not able to draw blood until she receives her certification from the state.

Rebecca is excited for the success of her participant; she added "I believe that Alicia did not want to seriously look for a job after completing the Medical Assisting because she was not confident in her abilities and there were some self-esteem issues. Alicia has come a long way from the person that I met back in October 2003. She has become a confident and responsible young adult. I am very proud of her."

- 9) **Focus Group:** On December 2nd, Jean Lamming, a Research Associate from the Department of Human and Community Development at UC Davis, conducted a Focus Group with 11 (eleven) EMPOWER participants. This is a statewide survey conducted by UC Davis on WIA Youth program that will be presented to the Governor at a future date. She asked the participants question on what they think are good and bad jobs, and how the EMPOWER program has helped them better prepare for the world of work. Jean provided snacks and gave

each student a \$25.00 Target gift certificate for their participation. Comments provide by our EMPOWER participants on benefits for the EMPOWER Program are as follows

“The EMPOWER Program - breaks the cycle, we now have the opportunity to work at jobs that are not minimum wage or be on welfare.”

“The EMPOWER program help us to aspire to higher education. Most of us are the first one in their family to attended college. We recognize the correlation between the lifestyle we want with higher paying jobs & education.”

10) Current Drugs and Gang Trends- “What are they going to do next?” Empower staff attended training hosted by Merced County Office of Education on November 10th, 2005 at the Merced Civic Center. Staff received a crash course on the latest trends of illegal drugs and gangs from experts on the front lines; everything from new slang words for illegal drugs *Ecstasy* to movies that offer insight to the gangster mentality was presented. The seven hour workshop was facilitate by John Vigallon, director of Help Adolescent Recovery and Educational Services and Rod Little an ex-narcotic officer and Certified Post Instructor on Drugs.

C. Past Quarter Deficiencies: none

D. Past Quarter recruiting and marketing efforts:

Recruiting efforts for EMPOWER were limited. The contract specified that as participants exit, new participants will be enrolled in the following quarter after exits dependent upon availability of funds.

E. Next quarter challenges: WIA Common Measures Policy

F. Technical assistance needed: Available training on WIA Common Measures

G. Number of clients receiving social services and examples of services received.

Numerous referrals have been made to agencies to assist with food, clothing, housing and transportation.

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: **January 2006** (Oct. Nov. Dec. 2005)

A. Overall status of the program:

This quarter YOP enrolled thirty-nine new participants and exited fourteen participants for a total active enrollment of 391 YOP participants. Ninety-eight percent (176/ 172) of the basic skills, work readiness, and/or occupational skills goals were attained. The status on all WIA-Client action reports for goals, activities, exits and follow-ups (phase II) remain up to date.

B. Past quarter highlights:

1) **Career Industry Days:** These ROP sponsored events provide youth with detailed information and exploration of specific career pathways. Career Industry Days include tours of local businesses, guest speaker presentations, and hands-on activities related to various careers within a pathway. Career Industry Days are held from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm at the Merced County Fair Grounds in the Exhibit Building. The YOP mentors are encouraged to invite those students whose career goals or technical training is aligned with these pathways. The following two career days were attend by our participants:

- A) Careers in Business, Marketing, and Computer Information Systems, Oct 27, 2005
- B) Careers in Arts and Communications, on Thursday, November 17th, 2005

2) **Community Service:** The YOP mentors and EMPOWER advisors worked hard with their participants to involve them in raising money for the Planada Coat Drive. The participants found people to sponsor a child or held fundraisers. They also were involved in the purchasing and distribution of the coats. On November 16, 97 new coats were delivered and distributed to 97 smiling K-5th grade Planada Elementary youth. It is the hope of our program to make this an available community service activity every year. With each passing year, we hope to have the full support of the community and active participation of all the participants.



3) High Concentration of Youth Award: The Merced County Local Workforce Investment Area was awarded \$62, 500 from the Governor’s 15% WIA Discretionary Funds. Merced County Office of Education (MCOE) is providing \$33,917.00 in matching funds to provide services for an additional 30 in-school youth with disabilities. The grant funds must be spent by December 31st, 2006.

4) YOP Success Story: Jackie Maldonado is a 2005 graduate from Le Grand High School, she was enrolled in the YOP Program for the program year 2004-2005. While enrolled in the program, and she had the opportunity to choose a worksite in which she would work her 192 hours. She originally had picked Footlocker or Footaction at the Mall; unfortunately those slots had been taken. The next option she had was Costco Wholesale. She was not too excited about working there, but with Jackie being so cooperative, gave it a try. Jackie started working there and sure enough, the first week she called her mentor Ramiro Govea and told him that all she was doing was pick up trash and move in shopping carts. Mr. Govea talked to her and told her to hang in there for another week before she decided to look for another site. Well, she stuck it out and the rest is history! She completed all of her 192 (YOP) hours there and before the program was over the store supervisor told Mr. Govea that they were going to hire her as soon as the program ended.

Jackie is now part of the Costco Wholesale team. She was hired in August of 2005 and started with a wage of \$10.00 per hour. Even though she works many hours she really enjoys working there. The last time she saw her mentor, she told him that she is grateful for the Youth Opportunity Program. She feels that with the Work Experience that the program was able to give her she was able to be hired. When she is at work, customers sometimes tell her that she is too young to be working there. They ask her how she was able to get hired at such a young age and she always replies, “I was able to get hired because the Youth Opportunity Program gave me the chance to work here”.



C. Past quarter deficiencies: none

D. Past quarter recruiting/marketing efforts: Recruiting efforts for YOP are limited.

F. Next quarter challenges:

G. Technical assistance needed: Available training on WIA Common Measures Policy

TO: Youth Council

DATE:02/08/06

FROM: WIB Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: YOP Quarterly Report

PROPOSED MOTION(S): Information Only

DISCUSSION: YOP Quarterly Report, Oct, Nov, Dec 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- EMPOWER Program

Date: October 2005 (Jul-Aug-Sept)

A. Overall status of the program:

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B. Past Quarter Highlights:

1) EMPOWER Workshops:

- a) EMPOWER Orientation: Conducted on the second Friday in the months of July and September; approximately 25-30 participants attended each session;
- b) EMPOWER Workshop I: Conducted on the third Friday of July and September; approximately 20 participants attended Workshop I;
- c) EMPOWER Workshop II-Job readiness was conducted in the months of July and September; 40 (forty) participants successfully completed an ROP employability portfolio, and practiced interviewing techniques.

2) Bldg K-Computer Lab: EMPOWER participants use the computer lab daily to work on résumés, portfolios, and conduct job search. Ed Souza, an adult schoolteacher, is available for six hours per week in the computer lab to assist EMPOWER participants with PLATO educational software designed to increase math and reading skills. Sign-in sheets are used to track the number of participants using the computer lab daily.

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The following is the list and dates for the upcoming **Career Industry Days:**

- a) Careers in Business, Marketing and Computer Information Systems, Oct 27, 2005

- b) Careers in Arts and Communications, on Thursday, November 17th, 2005
- c) Careers in Education held on Thursday, January 26, 2006
- d) Careers in Agriculture (at the World Ag. Expo in Tulare) on February 15, 2006
- e) Careers in Health held on Tuesday, February 28, 2006.

4) **Quarterly EMPOWER Partners meeting** was not held this past quarter. Partners agreed that a meeting was not needed.

5) **Opportunity Club:** is an ongoing activity that provides bi-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. Sessions are conducted in Bldg K at the MCOE campus. All participants are invited and encouraged to attend. A meeting was held on September 26th, 2005; Susan Bubenchik and Julie Price both gave a presentation from “A Woman’s Place” of Merced County. They provided brochures and handouts to the group on services, as well as facilitated a lively discussion on questions and concerns from the group.

6) **Working Professional Curriculum Update:** In the 2004-2005 program year, EMPOWER staff revised the ROP Working Professional course outline, which is the framework for all EMPOWER workshops, work experience activities, and the locally approved youth credential. Last month, staff met again to begin work on our 2005-2006 ROP Working Professional Objectives to include ESLR’s alignment to the new course outline; create an updated program brochure; training plans for community classroom and create one lesson plan. These new developments will be brought before an Advisory committee for approval on April 6th, 2006.

7) **The REAL GAME CALIFORNIA:** Cyndie Bray, Blanca Rodriguez, Becky Lincoln (EMPOWER Staff) and Brad Eagleton, (YOP Mentor); attended training in Stockton at the San Joaquin County Office of Education for the *Real Game California* pilot curriculum on September 15th, 2005. A team of Career and Workforce Development experts and educators from California created the *Real Game California* prototype. All activities, learning objectives and performance indicators have been aligned with California Academic Content Standards; SCANS; National Career Development Guidelines and ASCA National Standards for School Counseling Programs.

Merced County Office of Education was selected as a pilot site to provide the Real Game California to approximately 30 WIA youth program participants. This includes both the in-school youth program (current enrollment 350+ students) and the out-of-school youth program (current enrollment 300+ participants). The Merced team will introduce the pilot curriculum to our participants and provide feedback and completed student, parent and teachers evaluations to the steering committee by January 31, 2006.

8) **TEEN SCENE:** YOP and EMPOWER participants from throughout the county were invited and attended the Second Annual Children’s Summit ‘TEEN SCENE’ event held at Merced College on September 24th. This years Teens Educated and Energized Now

(TEEN) Scene's theme *"about providing access for our youth today"*. The agenda included several break out sessions on topics of interests for youth to include; career assessment; healthy relationships; health 101 to name a few. A session was presented on the EMPOWER program by staff and a session was given on Career Technical Education Opportunities by personal from Merced Office of Education ROP, Career and Alternative Education Department.

Youth also had an opportunity to visit a Resource Fair that provided information from partnering agencies throughout the county. The highlights of the program included a fashion show, where several of YOP and EMPOWER participants modeled clothes from local merchants. A Free Style Hip Hop Dance and Rap Competition provided an arena for Merced County youth to show off their talents. An evening meal was provided and the event ended again with a dance. EMPOWER Staff assisted with the planning and volunteered on the day of the event.

9) Community Service: Coat Drive

Last year, the Merced County Office of Education EMPOWER/ YOP Programs sponsored a coat drive as a community service opportunity for the participants of these two programs. Because we strongly encourage our participants to become involved in community service, we thought this would be an excellent way for them to give back to the communities in which they live. When choosing a school to sponsor, we try to choose a school that is "most in need" and where our efforts will truly benefit. Last year, we chose to sponsor Bellevue Elementary in Atwater. Although, the coat drive was successful, we had minimal support from the participants.

This year, we chose to sponsor Planada Elementary School. The YOP mentors and EMPOWER advisors are working hard with their participants to involve them in the coat drive. The participants will do the work, by finding people to sponsor a child or by fundraising. They will also be involved in the purchasing and distribution of the coats; so that they can visually see who is benefiting from their efforts. We plan to distribute the coats on November 17th, at Planada School.

It is the hope of our program to make this an available community service activity every year. With each passing year, we hope to have the full support of the community and active participation of all the participants.

10) EMPOWER Success Stories:

Juan Olvera was a participant that started with Jobs for California Graduates. When EMPOWER took over, Juan was already enrolled into the General Business Occupations class offered at Central Valley Opportunity Center. It was soon determined that this was not the class that Juan was interested in attending; he was missing classes and was advised that he would be dropped from the program. Eventually, Juan did complete the class and received a certificate. Afterwards, Juan attended an EMPOWER Employability



Workshop where he displayed that he had excellent verbal and communication skills. He completed the workshop and began looking for work.

After a couple of meetings with his advisor, Rebecca Garcia, it became apparent to her that Juan was not doing what he loved to do. "He was really interested in working on computers and not working with computers." Rebecca then enrolled Juan into the ROP Computer Repair and Maintenance class. Juan received his A+ Certification in less than 4 months. While enrolled in the CR & M class, Juan also had to opportunity to complete work experience hours. He completed his work experience hours at Merced Adult School as a Computer Technician.

Several months later, Juan gained full-time employment with Cingular Wireless as a Customer Service Representative, but after couple of months, Juan was not working at Cingular anymore and out looking for work again. Ms Garcia was concerned, and tried to contact Juan at home; at that time Juan's mother told Rebecca that he had applied for a job with Merced City School District.

On 10/19/05, Ms. Garcia received an E-mail from Juan to let her know that he was employed as the Computer Lab Coordinator at Hoover Middle School. Rebecca is very happy and excited for him, "Juan, like many participants in our program, had barriers that he had to overcome. I know that Juan will go far in life because he is highly intelligent and determined young man."

Yuridia Fernandez and Sara Fernandez were both enrolled into the EMPOWER Program in May 2004. They both decided to attend the Medical Assistant Program offered through the Merced College Extension on Ashby Road. At that time, there was a waiting list for the Medical Assisting Program, and the girls had to wait until August to start the class. While they waited, both Sara and Yuridia completed the Employability Workshop and participated in The EMPOWER Zone. At The EMPOWER Zone, where the participants have a chance to present their employment portfolios to community members, both girls scored high on all the rubrics.

When both the girls started the Medical Assisting Program in August, they were faced with several barriers. The girls overcame the barriers that they were faced with and continued to move forward towards their goal of becoming Medical Assistants. Yuridia was the first to complete the class. She completed the class hours and her externship in June 2005. Sara fell behind in the class, and did not complete her class hours and externship until July 2005.





Yuridia was the first to successfully obtain full-time employment with Mercy Urgent Care where she started on July 2005. Sara followed right behind her sister by gaining full-time employment with Dr. Munnangi in August 2005. I recently spoke with Sara and Yuridia and they are both very happy at their places of employment. Yuridia has a busy schedule, working full-time and being a single parent of two young boys. Sara is busy as well, working full-time and looking forward to continuing her education.



Mai Kay Lee was enrolled into the Empower program on 10/26/04. When she first came to the Empower program, Mai did not have any work experience or knowledge of work expectations. She was also “Basic Skills Deficient” in reading. We invited her to attend our Portfolio Workshops, which she gladly attended all three. She learned various foundations of work readiness through these workshops. I then placed Mai at Anberry Rehabilitation Hospital as a part of her work experience. Mai was

able to demonstrate what she had learned from our workshops and quickly adapted to Anberry's daily routine. Mai made such an impression through her work skills and work ethics that after her work experience hours ended, Anberry offered Mai part-time employment. During this time, Mai also worked on her reading through our Plato Lab. She was able to help herself achieve a higher level of reading. Mai has expressed her gratitude with the help of the Empower program and with her success.

C. Past Quarter Deficiencies: none

D. Past Quarter recruiting and marketing efforts:

Recruiting efforts for EMPOWER were limited. The contract specified that as participants exit, new participants will be enrolled in the following quarter after exits dependent upon availability of funds.

E. Participant Enrollments and Follow-ups as of September 30th, 2005:

Total number of active participant enrollments:	280
	(273 in August)
Total number of participants in follow-up:	94
	(244 in August)

F. Next quarter challenges: WIA Common Measures Policy

G. Technical assistance needed: Available training on WIA Common Measures

H. Number of clients receiving social services and examples of services received.

Numerous referrals have been made to agencies to assist with food, clothing, housing and transportation.