

## **Workforce Development Board Family & Human Services Presentation May 2017**

### **WIOA Youth Programs**

On July 22, 2014 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law. WIOA was implemented on July 1, 2015, replacing the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. Key changes under WIOA for serving youth include increasing the minimum percentage of funds to be spent on out-of-school youth from 30% to at least 75%, increased focus on work-based learning and career pathways, extending the out-of-school age limit from 21 to 24 years and streamlining the eligibility process. These changes are consistent with DOL's commitment to delivering high-quality services for disconnected youth and young adults beginning with career exploration and guidance, continuing support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in high-demand industries/occupations and culminating with a high quality job along a career pathway or enrollment in post-secondary education.

The Department of Labor (DOL) estimates that nearly 14 percent of 16-24 year olds in this country are not employed or not in school. In many cases, they face additional challenges, including being low-income, homeless, young parents, in foster care or involved in the justice system. These disconnected youth and young adults are twice as likely to live in poverty, three times as likely to not have a high school diploma or its equivalent and three times as likely to be disabled. Disconnected girls and young women are more than three times as likely to have a child as their connected counterparts. Strategies to reach and engage these vulnerable young people are a priority for the Workforce Development Board.

The Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa (WDB) and its Youth Committee issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) every three years. By partnering with Community Based Organizations other Public Agencies and School Districts, the WDB maximizes impact in the communities most in need by leveraging match funding. For instance, WIOA funding in contracts with current service providers Contra Costa County Office of Education/Ryse, Bay Area Community Resources/Opportunity Junction, and Mount Diablo Unified School District is matched dollar for dollar. WIOA funds allocated to youth service providers are used for the following program design areas:

- Outreach, Recruitment, Orientation
- Intake, Eligibility, Registration
- Objective Assessment and Referral
- Individual Service Strategy
- Case Management
- Access to a Range of Services.

It is the intent of the WDB's youth program to connect more young people in Contra Costa County with broader work opportunities, increase work readiness and competitiveness in future employment and build career planning capacity and skills development through various means including post-secondary education. Funded youth providers program designs must include the following 14 required elements:

- Tutoring, study skills training
- Alternative secondary school offerings
- Meaningful work experience opportunities
- Occupational skills training
- Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services for a minimum 12-month period
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial Literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training

The WDB's service provider's delivered intensive wrap-around services to 400 youth and young adults in FY 2017/18. For example, 107 of those youth have a disability, 42 are connected to the justice system, 227 are basic skills deficient, 72 are in, or aged out of, Foster Care, 77 are homeless youth and 66 youth who are pregnant or parenting.

The WDB strives to be diversified in our funding for youth programs and has positioned itself to receive financial support from the California Department of Education Career Pathways Trust grants. With that funding, the WDB launched Earn & Learn East Bay, an engagement and recruitment campaign bringing partners throughout Contra Costa County and the East Bay together to expose youth and young adults to local careers and hands-on work experiences. Earn & Learn recognizes the value of collaboration to support our region's economic vitality. This innovative initiative maximizes success for both businesses and youth and has successfully connected thousands of youth to Work-based learning experiences in the community.

WIOA funding has seen a steady decrease over the past 3 program years. For fiscal year 2017-18, significant decreases in funding are expected to impact the WDB's ability to serve the most vulnerable youth in Contra Costa County. The graphic below demonstrates the severe funding reductions that the WDB has already seen in just the youth program, which has resulted in an almost 50% reduction in contracted services. These contracted services are the heart of our youth program.

## WIOA Youth Allocation & Contract Reductions

