

Introducing Transportation Careers to Youth in NJ

Rutgers Employment Success Program

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RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation
School of Engineering

Mission of our Program

- Provide strengths-based case management & training by experienced staff to youth and emerging adults, using transportation and infrastructure careers to create employment opportunities and contribution to the surrounding community.
- Develop partnerships with employers and industry professionals, social service systems, and training partners including community colleges to implement job readiness and attainment in transportation industry related careers.

Pre-apprenticeship in Auto Tech



BRIDGES, PACE, YTTW

BRIDGES to Employing Youth:

- 16-24 year olds impacted by the justice system (current or previous), not currently enrolled in school (with or without a high school diploma).
 - Served over 350 young people in the past 5 years with 85% average benchmark attainment of employment or academic completion.

PACE, YTTW:

- 16-24 year old HS students or graduates interested in heavy equipment operating or auto tech, committed to intensive training cycle and employment or apprenticeship.
 - Recruited 80 participants, many entering the transportation sector with jobs in garages, warehouses, auto retail shops, and construction.

Relationships with Community Colleges, Chambers of Commerce, employers including NJTransit, Autozone, and Trade Unions including Local 825, IAM-CREST, and ATU.



The Who

- Young people aged 16-26, mostly un- or under-employed
- Many of these youth and emerging adults were previously unengaged in career paths, or are first generation college students or candidates
- Motivated young people eager to contribute and develop their own pathways toward overcoming poverty and other challenges
- Supportive education and job/career opportunities increase positive behaviors and generate overall community involvement

Metrics count (86% overall attainment)

- In 2022 we enrolled 148, with 118 benchmarks achieved
- In 2023 we enrolled 139, with 125 benchmarks achieved
- In 2024 we enrolled 111, with 99 benchmarks achieved

Benchmarks included:

- academic remediation/completion
- Job attainment
- Entering Apprenticeship or Pre-Apprenticeship
- In 2024 we engaged an additional 200+ adults in job readiness and career exploration, with similar results

Laying the foundation

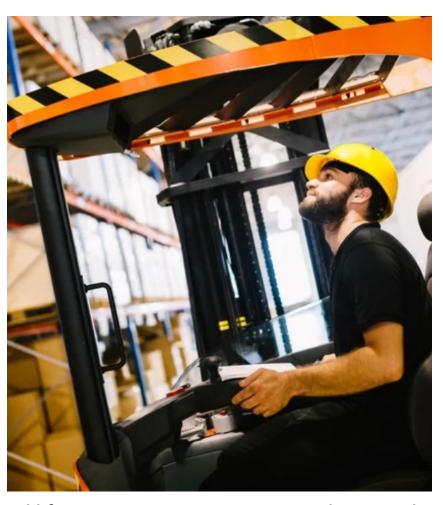


Hands-on experiences



Classroom learning

The Why



- With caring functional professional supports, youth and emerging adults demonstrate growth and success
- Programs that focus on youth vary in approach, funding, and focus—very few target transportation sector
- Workplace readiness strategies are localized and mostly regional, reflective of the communities served
- Helping youth explore transportation careers benefits them and us
- Providing job-specific training and certification increases the chance for longterm success for young people

Forklift Operator careers are expected to grow by 7% from 2020-2030

Case Management Activities

- Meet with families at school, in their homes, or virtually
- Provide transportation options--bus passes, Uber giftcards
- Engage participants in job & career readiness activities
 - Resume writing
 - Practicing interview skills using mock interviews
 - Linking youth to potential jobs and internships
 - Attending job interviews
- Connect to Rutgers, Rowan, Community Colleges for training, internships, jobs, volunteering
- Referrals to community-based pro-social activities

The How?



- Determine funding for these programs, grants from NJDOL, OMH
- Partner with local training experts and employers, including Community Colleges, unions
- Provide targeted recruitment to identify youth with interests in the trades, partner with schools and local system partners
- Utilize CAIT program staff including credible messengers, to provide supports and training

OSHA certified! Always Safety First



What we've learned

- 1-Individualized attention and planning crucial
- 2-Supports should culturally reflect participants
- 3-Credentials must be job opportunity specific, safety as a baseline helps employers trust
- 4-Infrastructure & transportation not usually the focus of youth work readiness
- 5-Training focus varies depending on location and available job/career options
- 6-Success is clearly defined—job retention and attainment, school and training engagement, increase in positive community contribution





THANK YOU

For additional information, please contact:

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