The City of Charlotte Mayor’s Youth Employment Program (MYEP) celebrated its 35th year of operation this year. Over the course of the year, more than 700 Charlotte youth participated in work-based learning opportunities managed by the City of Charlotte’s Youth Programs division.

COVID-19 still significantly disrupted standard business practices and a sense of normalcy across our country. The Mayor’s Youth Employment Program was determined to continue its commitment to providing impactful work experience for Charlotte youth. After receiving accolades from the N.C. Department of Commerce and Bloomberg Report for piloting our virtual pathways last year, we continued to grow the program, offering an additional pathway in Sports Marketing & Entertainment.

We provided six virtual pathways, while we continued to partner with excellent organizations that provided traditional or hybrid work-experiences for youth. We grew our capacity from last year, working with 52 organizations to provide 168 traditional placements this year.

Youth who were not assigned to a specific employer were placed in a robust, virtual internship experience that combines asynchronous and synchronous elements, engaging students on multiple platforms including Linkedin Learning (asynchronous) and Radius Learning (synchronous). The MYEP team developed 287 paid work-based learning opportunities that were managed virtually. MYEP participants engaged in work for approximately five hours each day for four days each week.

This work wouldn’t be possible without the valuable contributions from our stakeholders. We are grateful for the contributions of new partners Truist and Duke Energy, as well as our established partners Bank of America, Accenture, Atrium, Sealed Air, Siemens Energy and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

As we celebrate 35 years of the Mayor’s Youth Employment Program, we reflect on the challenges and achievements throughout the year. We are grateful for your continued support.
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INTRODUCTION

The Mayor’s Youth Employment Program (MYEP) mission is to provide all Charlotte youth with equitable career development opportunities to explore the world of work, build social capital, and enhance economic mobility.

To accomplish this mission, the MYEP team builds partnerships with businesses and organizations in the private, public, and non-profit sectors across Charlotte Mecklenburg’s Metropolitan area who provide career experiences for MYEP participants.

These partners deliver paid work-based learning opportunities that help youth develop career goals, stay in school, achieve academically, and enhance social skills that enable them to succeed in life.

This report details programs, partnerships, and initiatives that MYEP cultivated over the 2020-2021 school year to bring innovative and meaningful opportunities to students.

287 youth completed paid virtual pathways

168 youth completed paid work-based learning

762 youth completed job & career readiness training

MORE THAN 47,000 HOURS WORKED

MORE THAN $480,000 EARNED IN WAGES

40 STUDENTS OFFERED EXTENDED EXPERIENCES

“I have learned a lot about the professional work environment, as well as about myself. My experience has taught me what to expect and what I need to improve on.”

-Roopasree Velraja, MYEP Participant
The MYEP offers a safe, quality experience that builds on the MYEP legacy of building skills while building social capital.

The MYEP team set a goal to serve 500 Charlotte area youth through paid work-based internship experiences during the 2021 fiscal year. In the fall of 2020, 762 youth participated in the MYEP’s prerequisite Job & Career Readiness Training. These youth were invited to apply for a placement in the summer 2021 internship. To apply students completed a drug screening and background check, provided their resume, and participated in a virtual interview. This virtual platform provides the modern interviewing skills that youth need in today’s job market. Of these, more than 500 completed all requirements making them eligible for placement with a MYEP host employer.

### PROJECTS

**Job & Career Readiness**

Prepares young adults for the rigor of their first job and provides training on financial literacy, customer service and soft skills required to go from job applicant to employee.

**MYEP Process**

Match youth who have been carefully interviewed, paired with a company based on specific needs and interests.

**MYEP Outcomes**

Youth gain perspective that help them determine their potential college and career paths.

### DETAILS

- Youth who are confident in their skills ready for the workplace
- Youth receive a paid internship
- Gain firsthand career development
- Students confident in their self-efficacy skills
- Social capital in competitive fields

The MYEP partnered with University of North Carolina - Charlotte Center for Education Measurement and Evaluation to learn more about the habits and success of participants. They found that youth 86% of youth intend to use their earnings for savings.

43% Plan to use their MYEP earnings for college savings

43% Plan to use their MYEP earnings for savings/investments
Work-based learning programs provide both social and academic benefits for students. In a seven-year study of one California work-based learning program, researchers found that minority students participating in the program entered college at twice the rate of non-participating minority students, and that college enrollment rates were higher for all students in the program when compared to local and state student populations (CART, 2011).

The City of Charlotte's Youth Programs team provides high school students the opportunity to participate in career readiness training free of charge. The Job & Career Readiness Trainings (JCRT) prepare youth with the skills and experiences to confidently enter the workforce. This virtual experience covers job readiness, interview preparation, and essential skills. This training is the first required step an interested student must take in order to pursue MYEP eligibility.

**STUDENTS GREW THEIR UNDERSTANDING**

Through JCRT, students were more confident in their skills for the workplace, including:

- Developing their soft skills set
- Best methods to effectively communicate in the workplace
- Preparedness for job interviews
- Ability to compose a professional resume

"From the very start of the application process, all throughout the career trainings and interviews, I felt as if I was preparing myself for something more than just the MYEP. I believe that the program is structured in such a way that it sets students up for any and every job opportunity they may have in the future."

- Arushi Vaish, MYEP Participant
**Program Demographics**

**Grade**
- 12th Grade: 20%
- 11th Grade: 58%
- 10th Grade: 22%

**Ethnicity**
- Black or African American (including Africa and Caribbean)
- White (including Middle Eastern)
- Asian (including the Indian subcontinent)
- Decline to Identify
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Two or More

**Post Graduation Plans**
- Attend Four-year College/University
- Attend Two-Year College/University
- Work Full-time
- Don't Know
- Work Part-Time
- Military Service
- Gap Year
- Other

Students are not required to identify their gender.

**Age**
- 18: 12%
- 17: 17%
- 16: 18%
- 19: 19%
- 25: 34%
- 53: 53%
- 100: 100%

**Hispanic/Latinx**

**Gender**
- Female: 63%
- Male: 36%

Students are not required to identify their gender.
FACTS & FIGURES

MYEP participants explore careers, hone skills, and gain exposure to models of professionalism, which creates pathways to attainable career goals. The MYEP provides all Charlotte youth with career development opportunities.

Schools Represented

Student Career Interest Cluster

Industry experiences provided

"The fact that I was able to work with other people that had the same interests and passion as me was so fulfilling and encouraged me to keep on working hard!"

-Jana Pak
The MYEP continued to work with businesses and organizations able to provide valuable work experience for youth either in-person, virtually, or a hybrid. Although the program lost partners due to Covid-19 last year, we grew opportunities for youth this year. The program prioritized safety through all experiences and students earned over $480,000 in wages from June to July.

**Quadrupled**
the number of host employers providing placements from 2020.

**52 businesses**
helped to simulate jobs in demand with industry leaders across Charlotte’s major sectors.

**100% earned above minimum wage**
Paired with a financial literacy app, students set up a budget-saving over $36,000.

**Doubled**
the number of traditional placements for youth from 2020.

**169 positions**
designed to expose students to potential careers and better understand the world of work.

**19,143 hours worked**
Gaining meaningful time and experiences in the workplace. These hours were completed by July 23, 2021.

### Traditional Pathway Partners

- 100 Gardens
- Accenture
- Atrium Health
- Balfour Beatty
- Bank of America
- Blumenthal Performing Arts
- Brownstone Construction
- Builders Bridge
- Camp North End
- Inlivian
- Carolina Panthers
- Carolina Youth Coalition
- Central Piedmont Community College
- Charlotte Bilingual Preschool
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools
- ClickFold Plastics
- Corsan
- CREED (Center for Racial Equity in Education)
- CRVA
- Developmental Disabilities Resources
- Digi-Bridge
- Discovery Place
- Firstlight Home Care
- Freedom School Partners
- Harvey B Gantt Center
- Heart Math Tutoring
- Hope Haven
- Hunter | Everage
- Iris Solutions
- LAWA (Latin American’s Working for Achievement)
- LS3P
- Matthews Free Clinic
- Mecklenburg County Clerk of Superior Court
- North Carolina Business Committee for Education
- Carolina Raptor Center
- Red Ventures
- RJ Leeper Construction
- Robinson Bradshaw
- Sabor
- Smith Family Wellness Center
- South End Dentistry
- Speedway Children’s Charities
- Studio 345
- The Firehouse Casual Living Store
- The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company
- Tilman Insurance Advisors
- Trial Court Administrator’s Office-26th Judicial District
- Turner Construction
- United Mechanical Corporation
- Wilson Air Center
- Wurth Wood Group

"I wanted to get the job experience, as well as to see what organizations here in Charlotte focus on my interests. I remember on the application it gave you options for what you’re interested in, and there are so many options, I think [the MYEP] is a great opportunity for anyone."

- Emely Hernandez, MYEP Participant
The MYEP received numerous accolades for piloting the virtual pathways last year. While Covid-19 continued to pose challenges in 2021 to create meaningful work-experience for eligible candidates in-person, the MYEP was able to expand its virtual pathway opportunities in partnership with Radius Learning. In addition to pathway-specific learning, youth attended civic leadership, financial literacy, life skills, and master class workshops each week.

6 pathways
designed to simulate jobs in demand with industry leaders across Charlotte’s major sectors.

50+ professionals
contributed to pathway-specific learning through Master Classes, Life Skills, and Civic Leadership workshops.

15 companies
engaged with students in virtual pathways.

28,700 hours

6 pathways
Advanced Manufacturing
Business & Finance
Technology
Healthcare
Innovation
Sports Marketing & Entertainment

21 youth created 3D models and infrastructure solutions to reduce carbon emissions.

41 youth designed a financial app concept for residents facing wage loss.

49 youth designed an app to help small businesses succeed in the new economy.

78 youth developed a solution to expand access to remote healthcare.

48 youth developed a solution to significantly improve quality of life in Charlotte by 2030.

50 youth created a marketing strategy to ignite the next generation of NASCAR fans.

"The pathway has taught me more about proper time management, meeting deadlines, and given me a taste in the professional workplace."
- Geoffrey Gribbs III, MYEP Participant
The virtual pathway participants completed synchronous and asynchronous work specific to their pathway. To provide youth with a holistic experience youth also participated in weekly live sessions focused on financial literacy, life skills, industry masterclasses, and civic leadership. More than 50 Charlotte professionals engaged virtually to provide lessons from the world of work in real-time.

Students shared that their favorite live sessions were the weekly Industry masterclasses. Here, youth learned from and built social capital with industry leaders across the six pathways.

30 Industry Masterclasses
Notable guests included:

- Nicholas Rinz, Technology Strategy & Advisory Consultant at Accenture
- Phil Read, CEO at Read | Thomas LLC
- Rick Scot, Vice President of Global Information at Bank of America
- Hynek Lettang, Generator Technical Services Manager at Siemens Energy, Inc
- Sheria Richardson, University Recruiter at Truist
- Dr. Michael Ruhlen, Vice President of Medical Education at Atrium Health
- Debra Jones, LCMHCA, NCC, Mental Health Therapist at Smith Family Wellness Center
- Justine Tobin, Managing Owner of Tobin & Company Investment Banking
- Dave Dabson, Director of Asset and Property Management at Beacon Partners
- Pete Jung, Chief Marketing Officer at NASCAR

“Sometimes in the corporate world, with our normal inward focus on business matters and tactical decision making, we can forget the impact that outreach can have on young people. Your program reminds us of the importance of outreach. I think all of us can remember someone who spent the time with us during that period in our forming lives. Sometimes it just takes several moments of silence to remember, acknowledge, and develop the desire to pay it back.”

- Hynek Lettang, Siemens Energy, Inc.
REAL-LIFE APPLICATIONS

In the virtual pathways, youth worked to develop solution concepts for real-life projects and presented them to the lead employers. Youth met with subject matter experts each week to better understand their industry needs. At the end of the program, youth submitted their final projects. Below are a few solutions youth proposed.

**Innovation Pathway**

**ReScan**
ReScan is an app that helps you recycle the right way. My solution is to make sure every single product sold has a QR code that when scanned shows if the product is recyclable or not.

Megan O’Donnell, Ardrey Kell High School

**Sports Marketing & Entertainment Pathway**

**Eco Merchandise**
Create a line of products using recycled items from NASCAR tracks (tires, cans, etc.) to appeal to a new crowd of fans.

Mary Berger, North Meck High School

**Technology Pathway**

**FoodWeb**
Similar to the Nextdoor app, which focuses on houses rather than restaurants, this app will be a great place for local businesses to connect, collaborate, and reinvent with other small business owners.

Amrita Pathak, William A. Hough High School

**Healthcare Pathway**

**COPD Now**
This app supports individuals with pulmonary diseases to manage their condition in the wake of COVID.

Khushi Patel, Hopewell High School

**Business & Finance Pathway**

**The Give Network**
Helping unemployed individuals find the right benefits, programs, and services to navigate into their next life chapter. Users can connect with financial professionals, find suitable services, and read up on informative articles as well as submit their own.

Danielle Deavers, Hopewell High School

**Advanced Manufacturing Pathway**

**Electric Air Taxis & Vertiports**
My solution is a Vertiport that will allow for electric transportation through Lilium aircrafts. Electrical air taxis transport passengers while producing no carbon emissions. It is more efficient as there's no traffic and can go faster than a car.

Nu Ka, Phillip O. Berry High School
We are excited to welcome the inaugural class of Mayor’s Youth Employment Ambassadors this year. The program recruits alumni to share their MYEP experience and benefits with their peers, parents, and the public.

The MYEP Ambassadors program is open to all participants who have completed at least one full year of the MYEP and received accolades from their host employer and/or the MYEP staff. These Ambassadors provide a diverse representation of the program. They must be a second-year participant or a graduate from high school and the MYEP in good standing; meaning, they completed the program and received accolades from their host employer and or the MYEP staff.

**WHAT THEY DO?**

- Speak at local, regional and national events
- Address students, parents, clubs and neighborhoods about the MYEP
- Share their experience with community partners
- Represent MYEP as an event volunteer
- Share MYEP material with peers to encourage registering for the program

"MYEP opened doors for me that I never even knew existed!"

- Soukhena Hunter, MYEP Ambassador

Please welcome our first class of Ambassadors!

- Danya Hussein
- Tylan Deams
- Jordyn McManus
- Soukhena Hunter
- Ryan Stukes
- Emely Hernandez Urbina
- Aleah Kersey
- Anukul More
- Sarah Jung
- Tigest Aboye
- Shrika Renganathan
- Arushi Vaish
- Lys Ishiari
- Dwight Boone
- Ruiling (Amy) Zhang
27 teachers across Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools joined in to guide youth towards pathway completion.

Teachers from CMS, Career and Technical Education served as Team Leaders.

We appreciate their time and dedication in serving as mentors and monitors to participating youth.

Jean Brendel  
NW School of the Arts

Brain Broadie  
West Meck HS

Alexis Broome  
North Meck HS

Alice Christian  
Mallard Creek HS

Kaysi Clark  
West Meck HS

Terrance Daniels  
West Meck HS

Doc Dillard  
South Meck HS

Terri Donegan  
Sanchez  
South Meck HS

Dion Duke  
Hawthorne Academy

Ivanna Guitierrez  
Phillip O. Berry HS

Keith Hargrave  
Phillip O. Berry HS

Demetre Harris  
Myers Park HS

Shadava Jackson  
Julius L. Chambers HS

Dawn James  
Hough HS

Vinese Judd  
Julius L. Chambers HS

Kendra Keith  
Garinger HS

Jennifer Kennedy  
Cochrane Academy

Tangee Kizer  
MLK Jr. Middle School

Pam Kromah  
Rocky River HS

Chris Lowe  
Garinger HS

Christopher McKnight  
Phillip O. Berry HS

Robin Nelson  
West Charlotte HS

Altrenna Patterson  
Marie G. Davis

Tasha Sherrill  
Ardrey Kell HS

Brooke Spells  
Independence HS

Elijah Watson  
Ranson IB Middle

MeMee Winston  
Olympic HS

"I did not want to leave the visit because I was learning so much. The interns learned about hardware this summer and how to install Promethean boards. What made my visit special was the passion for teaching from Mr. Moss and the interns’ willingness to learn. Mr. Moss said he loves working with the MYEP interns. In particular, he said they are intelligent, and the interns love to work together."

- Elijah Watson, Team Leader sharing his experience at Encore Technologies
THANK YOU!
We'd like to give a BIG thank you to all of our host employers and sponsors as we celebrate 35 years of the MYEP! Your commitment to our youth is a commitment to Charlotte's success!