

# YOUTH PROGRAMS 2018 2020



workforce  
SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON



# The Future Workforce

Educating and training youth and young adults – the workforce of the future – is vitally important to our regional economy.

In 2017-2019, Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW) will invest more than \$3.75 million in youth workforce education programs. These programs include degree completion, career exploration, work-based learning and subsidized employment.

As the Local Workforce Development Board for Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties, Workforce Southwest is uniquely positioned to bring together the private sector with education and training partners to identify emerging needs and develop strategies and programs to educate and inform the region's youth about the myriad options and opportunities available to them.

Programs funded through WSW help young adults, ages 16 to 24, attain educational goals, prepare for college or post-secondary training and entry into the workforce. These education, job training, career exploration and employment opportunities help to increase their competitiveness for in-demand careers while at the same time providing businesses with qualified, local employees.

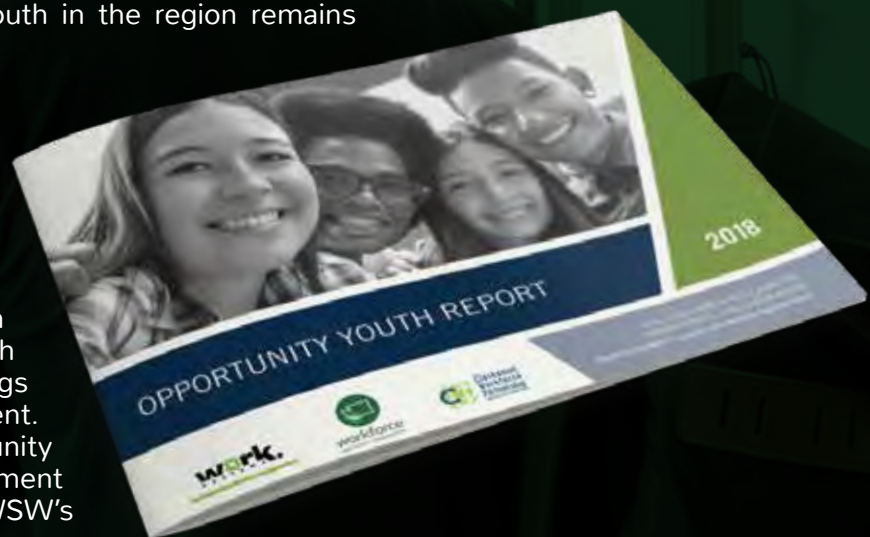
## Opportunity Youth

Opportunity Youth are defined as individuals between the ages of 16 to 24, who are not working and are not enrolled in school.

A 2018 report commissioned by WSW and its partners in the Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative found nearly 30,000 Opportunity Youth in the six-county Portland-Southwest Washington metro area. Despite a strong regional economy, in which nearly 71,000 jobs were added between 2014 and 2016, the share and number of Opportunity Youth in the region remains stagnant.

Assisting youth that exist in a state of transition between the workforce or post-secondary education illustrates one of the most effective approaches to strengthening the local workforce.

The region faces long-term economic costs if future prospects for these youth remain unchanged. For each year an Opportunity Youth remains out of the labor force, future earnings become reduced by two to three percent. Consequently, past the age of 25, Opportunity Youth often face higher rates of adult unemployment and poverty throughout their lives. Many of WSW's programs serve these youth.



## Next Step for Success

After more than two years of planning and preparation, WSW opened Clark County's first and only youth employment and training center in July 2018. Called Next, it is a central location for local industry and others to integrate employment and education services in one physical space.

At Next, we help young adults get set for success by providing the holistic support and training they need to create the future they want. We provide a safe space where youth can connect and socialize, get something to eat or access health services, and get the education and career help they need. Partners in the space include: Partners in Careers, Educational Service District 112, Job Corps, WorkSource, Clark County Food Bank and Clark College.



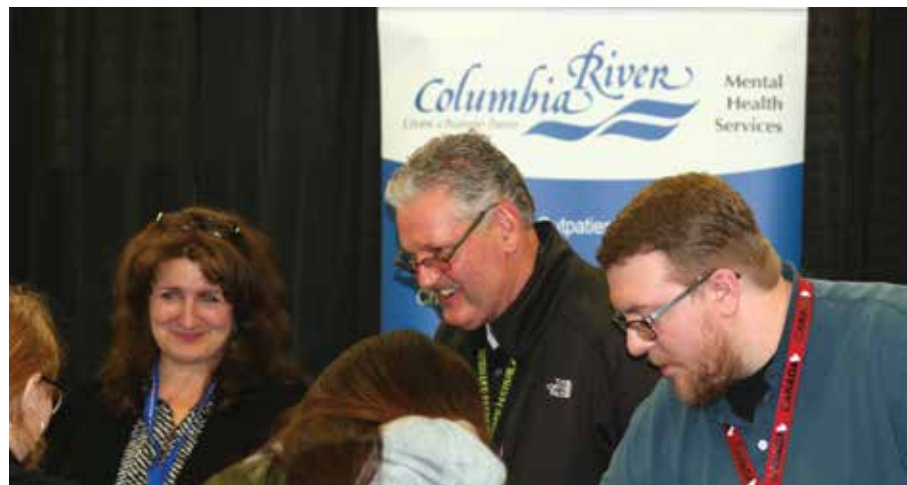


### **Success Starts in the Summer – Summer Works**

Youth need opportunities to learn critical workplace skills that can only come through work experience. Summer programming enables businesses and other community partners to address this crisis. Over the next two years, WSW will invest \$1 million to develop and launch a summer employment program for 220 Southwest Washington youth.

#### **Summer Works will provide:**

- Work-readiness training prior to placement
- Screening and matching youth based on the skills and preferences specified in the position description
- Ongoing job support for the youth and the supervisor throughout the process
- Employer of record services to include payroll processing, taxes and insurance



### **Annual Youth Employment Summit**

WSW’s annual Youth Employment Summit (YES) is sponsored by local industry and promotes a variety of career pathways to high school juniors and seniors. The event offers employment connections and career pathway exploration by enabling youth to speak with businesses and apprenticeship training programs. Apprenticeship workshops and sector trainings are available for teachers and parents. The 2018 event combined two events: the Y.E.S. event led by community-based organizations and WSW, and the Construction Career Day led by Lakeside Industries, the District Council of Laborers and the Washington State Dept. of Transportation.

### **Kelso Mural Collaboration**

With a \$20,000 grant from the Honorable Frank L. and Arlene G. Price Foundation, WSW’s Next programming in Cowlitz County will help youth learn work-related skills through design and creation of a community mural. The young adults will simultaneously work to complete their high school diploma equivalence and begin planning for their post-secondary steps into the workforce or continued education. In partnership with Goodwill in Longview, Educational Service District 112 (ESD112) and Urban Artworks, the youth will work with artists and muralists to execute a large-scale piece of public art, while learning teamwork, leadership and soft skills.



# CAREER CONNECTED LEARNING

## Career Exploration & Work Experiences

### Career Exploration

WSW works in partnership with the business community to provide career exploration opportunities for area youth. Businesses can volunteer for a variety of activities that expose youth to careers in their industry such as speaking in a classroom, conducting mock interviews or hosting a company tour – and we make it easy to participate through our Business Solutions Consortium comprised of representatives of WorkSource, the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce and the Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce.

### Work Experience

WSW's investments fund meaningful, paid work experience to help young people learn and develop the skills necessary to succeed in today's world of work. We offer work experiences year-round for youth ages 16-24 who are out of school and not working and expand the number of employment opportunities for current students during the summer months through our Summer Works program. An added focus is on our high-growth and in-demand sectors of healthcare, manufacturing, construction and technology.

### CareersNW.org

A public-private partnership of business, economic development and workforce boards that is focused on exposing youth to the region's high-growth, high-demand sectors developed a website, [www.CareersNW.org](http://www.CareersNW.org), to provide information on career pathways, salary ranges, required skills, education and training to make these industries more accessible to youth and develop a pipeline of skilled workers for the region's businesses.

### Career Exposure Events

With thousands of people projected to retire in the coming years, many industries will face labor shortages. Ensuring today's young adults are aware of their options for jobs and careers is a priority. WSW, WorkSource and various organizations partner throughout the year to host events that bring more than 2,000 high school students together with industry and businesses to learn about potential career opportunities, apprenticeships and jobs. The goal of these events is to expose students to local companies and potential future jobs and careers. Events have included Manufacturing Day and career fairs with school districts in Battleground, Castle Rock, Toutle Lake and Wahkiakum. In learning about the work, young adults can explore fields of interest to help inform their career track choices.





# DEGREE COMPLETION & TRAINING

## Construction Pre-Apprenticeship

Cascadia Technical Academy and WSW's Next programming will offer training opportunities in the summer for 20 Opportunity Youth. This partnership will incorporate 21st century skill development with curriculum taught at Cascadia Tech. In addition, students will complete their high school diploma equivalence and either be hired or enter post-secondary training at the culmination of the program.

## CNA Training

WSW's Next programming has offered consistent and strong assistance to local hospitals for years, specifically for their CNA positions. Local employers approve this programming as a fast track to employment for more than 30 Opportunity Youth a year.

## Industrial Internship

Operated by Goodwill, our industrial internship in Longview has enabled more than 30 young adults to complete their high school diploma equivalence, develop soft skills and gain local employment with a livable wage upon completion of the internship. The program is offered several times a year and other local manufacturing companies are interested in engaging with our Next programming to increase their emerging workforce pipeline.

## Apprenticeship

A four-year degree isn't the only path to a fulfilling career. WSW will invest \$740,000 to increase internships and work-based learning opportunities for young adults. WSW will use the grant to help community-based organizations, Lower Columbia College and Clark College identify and recruit youth for apprenticeships with PeaceHealth, Rebound Orthopedics, Kaiser Permanente and Great Rivers Behavioral Health. It will use the funds to expand the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) registered apprenticeship program in Cowlitz County and assist high school youth in Wahkiakum County with work experience placements and internships.

WSW and its partners are investing in the development of apprenticeships to meet the needs of manufacturing and health care employers and connect young adults to employers and job training. Regional events are also being planned to demystify apprenticeship for youth, educators and parents.

- Medical Assistant Apprenticeship: Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers & Employers
- Manufacturing Apprenticeship: Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee & Employers
- Behavioral Health Apprenticeship: Great Rivers Behavioral Health & Lower Columbia College
- Myth-busting Events: Extend Pathways to Apprenticeship Regional Event, Youth Employment Summit, WSW Workforce Workshops Series



# SUPPORT & TOOLS

## For Teachers, Parents & Influencers

Teachers, counselors and parents are in positions to provide information and guidance to youth. WSW provides tools and information for these adults, so they can share the variety of options with youth about school, work and career pathways.

### Teacher Externships

WSW has invested in more than 15 paid externships for teachers to experience that aligned with their field of teaching. The externship experience helps teachers connect classroom content to current industry standards to enable teachers to provide instruction in both the academic and technical skills required for their students' future career interests.

*Hi! I'm Allie, the extern.  
Or, as my students call me, Miz Cowen.  
I am a high school teacher, spending some of  
my precious summer vacation being an extern at  
Gravitate Design.*

An extern is a professional looking to deepen their knowledge of related fields through a temporary work placement. Currently, I teach under the umbrella of Career and Technical Education (CTE), a federally-funded program to have courses aimed at preparing students for the workplace.

I have taught graphic design, advanced graphic design, and yearbook for the last six years and taught studio art for five years before that. Imagine the changes in technology, design trends, and market needs that have happened since then! To prepare my students for a future career, whether in design technology or another field, I need to touch base with the 'real world' and catch up.

Gravitate was kind enough to step up and agree to adopt me for a few weeks this summer! I was excited for this placement for many reasons—Gravitate is focused on web design and digital marketing which is a whole new sector to me, it is local and close to the students I teach.

During my time here, I have gotten to participate in a variety of activities and got a feel for what a designer, project manager or sales rep may do during a website project. I sat in on a sales meeting, dove into client research, listened to phone conferences dissecting site maps, composed mood boards and logo redesigns, and reviewed developing sites for bugs.

Several staff members have also sat with me for one-on-one interviews as I dig for insight on how best to prepare my students for the real world.

CTE programs are essential for turning out well-rounded students who are prepared for college, career and life. They rely on community and business support to provide real-world knowledge and feedback so that teachers can provide as authentic an experience as possible. I'm excited about my new connection to Gravitate Design and look forward to introducing them to my world in the fall.



Allie Cowen  
High school CTE Teacher  
*graphic design and yearbook*



## CareersNW.org

To increase awareness of Southwest Washington's high-growth, high-demand sectors and encourage youth and job seekers to learn about these industries for employment, WSW and its partners launched the [www.CareersNW.org](http://www.CareersNW.org) website and social media campaign. In addition to information about career pathways, education requirements, salary ranges and trainings provided through WorkSource, the site contains downloadable documents that can be used by teachers, counselors and parents to introduce these industries to young adults.

## Apprenticeship Trainings for Educators

At the Youth Employment Summit, apprenticeship workshops are available for teachers and parents to learn about new options and opportunities for their students to earn while they learn. Important adults in a position of influence understand the variety of options available so they can provide guidance and support to their students.



## Career Counselor Trainings

Participating educators receive STEM Clock Hours from the Vancouver School District to attend trainings in Pathways to Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship 101. Career guidance tools are also available.

## Connecting Business and Education

To help align the goals of business with education to ensure young workers receive the skills and training to meet industry needs, WSW regularly brings together industry and education panels. We are continually looking for businesses that are interested in getting involved with the emerging workforce.

## Regional Labor Market Information

At a school's request, WSW provides information and data on the region's current and projected labor market. We gather information and analyze workforce needs and trends, offer analysis on employment statistics, wages, projected demand for occupations and sectors and more.

## Emerging Workforce Committee

Representing the private sector, workforce, nonprofit and education, the committee advocates for and supports youth services in alignment with the local area workforce plan.



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SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

## Our Mission

To prepare and promote a skilled and adaptive workforce for a thriving economy in Southwest Washington.

Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW), a nonprofit organization founded in 2002, contributes to regional economic growth by providing investments and resources to improve the skills and education of the workforce in Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties.

WSW-funded programs help businesses find and hire the employees they need and provide people the skills, education and training to find work or advance in their careers. WSW partners with employers, community colleges and universities, labor groups, government and economic development agencies, high schools and community organizations.

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