



YouthBuild USA

A Toolkit to Help YouthBuild Programs Navigate Workforce Systems

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Introduction

Understanding and accessing workforce systems is critical for YouthBuild programs to build new employer partnerships, find additional workforce funding opportunities, and create opportunities for participants to access jobs, apprenticeships, and training. This toolkit offers an overview of workforce systems and includes links to additional resources so you can learn how to better navigate and partner with the systems. We invite you to explore those (and others you find along the way!) as you develop and strengthen partnerships.

Since 2016, after the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ([WIOA](#)) was signed into law, Department of Labor ([DOL](#)) YouthBuild grantees became required partners with American Job Centers ([AJC](#)), and were encouraged to partner with local Workforce Development Boards ([WDB](#)).

As a required partner, every YouthBuild grantee must develop and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) to formalize this partnership with the AJC network. Learn more about these on page 8.

This Toolkit Offers Resources to Help YouthBuild Programs Understand:

- How federal, state, and local workforce systems function
- How to engage with workforce systems
- The mutual benefits that can come from healthy partnerships
- Strategies to overcome areas of challenge
- What opportunities exist beyond the required partnership with the AJC/WDBs

This toolkit also includes a brief look at issues unique to rural programs and a practical roadmap to illustrate how to form partnerships.

Workforce Development Boards may have previously overlooked YouthBuild programs as viable partners. YouthBuild's active participation in the system means that more programs can connect with the out-of-school youth that systems usually struggle to engage, which results in a clear win for everyone.



YOUTHBUILD AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

In 2006, federal YouthBuild funding moved from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Since then, DOL YouthBuild programs shifted to a more career/work readiness culture, including exploring the benefits of the workforce system.

What is a Workforce System?

According to the [Urban Institute](#):

“A local workforce system is a set of organizations and activities that prepares people for employment, helps workers advance in their careers, and seeks to build a skilled workforce to support employers and the local economy.

Local workforce system organizations often perform multiple functions to serve adults and youth who need help preparing for and succeeding in the workforce. Local workforce systems include public, nonprofit, and private agencies and organizations, including employers and industry groups, and are supported by multiple federal, state, local, and private funding sources. How workforce system programs and services support local workforces varies according to local needs, priorities, and resources.”

Other helpful descriptions of the public workforce system can be found at [Workforce 101: An Introduction to the U.S. Workforce System](#).

What Can Workforce Systems Do for YouthBuild?

The seven major functions of workforce systems (shown below) provide an opportunity for YouthBuild programs to enhance their program and participants' education, training, and work/career readiness.

YouthBuild programs and partners can utilize each of the seven functions to help address the Administration's current policy attention on "job quality" (which is included below and may be one of the most important functions to emphasize in the description of the workforce system).



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



**WORKFORCE STRATEGIES
AND POLICIES**



EDUCATION AND TRAINING



FUNDING AND RESOURCES



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

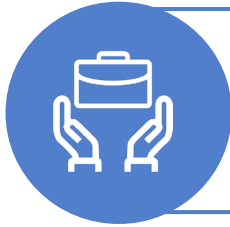


**IMPROVE JOB QUALITY
AND ACCESS**



EMPLOYER SUPPORT

Learn more about each function on the next page. You can also visit DOL's [TEN 12-21 Practitioners Guide to Supportive Services](#) for additional resources.



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Can assist YouthBuild participants in developing career pathways through career exploration and labor market data; access jobs; and develop soft skills needed to enter the job market



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Can provide YouthBuild participants with access to programs that offer further training and credentialing



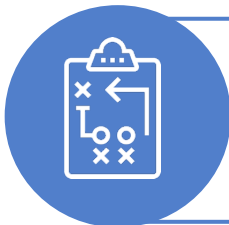
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Can provide YouthBuild participants with access to services that assist in overcoming challenges to their success in the job market (e.g., childcare, transportation, equipment)



EMPLOYER SUPPORT

Can assist the YouthBuild program with finding and retaining staff, and providing opportunities for professional development



WORKFORCE STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

YouthBuild programs can impact the overall workforce system by creating new opportunities and access for opportunity youth



FUNDING AND RESOURCES

YouthBuild programs can access public and private funding to further grow and sustain programming that targets youth and young adults



IMPROVE JOB QUALITY AND ACCESS

YouthBuild programs can work with local unions, employer/industry intermediaries, workforce development boards, etc. to access quality jobs for participants

What's the Difference Between the Public Workforce System and Workforce Systems?

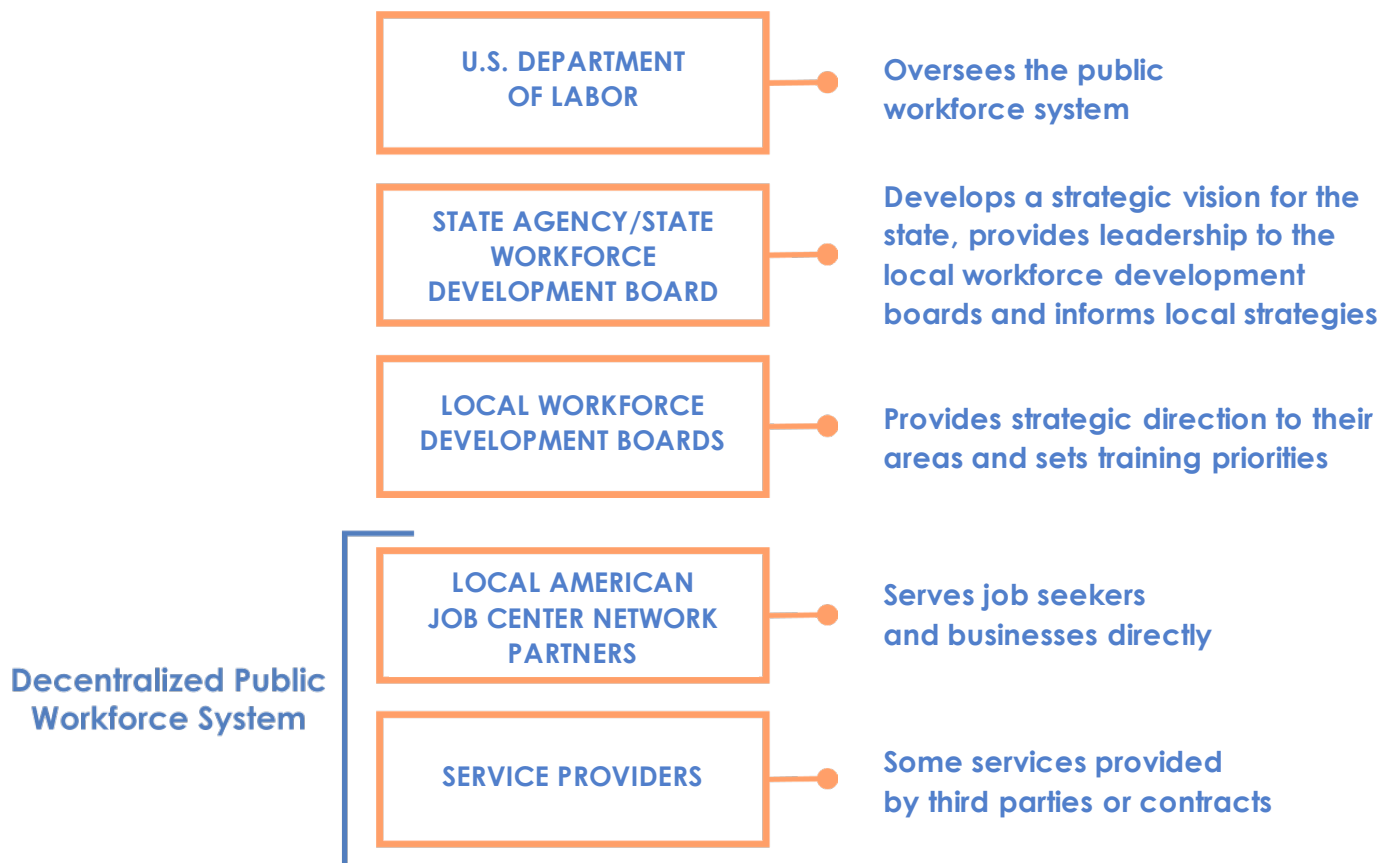
The Public Workforce System is made up of a wide range of entities, including:



According to a [presentation](#) by the Employment and Training Administration about the public workforce system:

"The publicly-funded workforce system is a locally and business led network of federal, state, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all jobseekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy."

The Public Workforce System





CLICK ON PARTNER/PROVIDER NAMES BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Below is a list of partners within the Public Workforce System. Learn more about partners' potential role(s) in the system in this [YouthBuild-specific training video from the National Association of Workforce Boards](#) and in the research section.

REQUIRED PARTNERS

- [Career and Technical Education \(Perkins\)](#)
- [Community Services Block Grant](#)
- [Indian and Native American Programs](#)
- [HUD Employment and Training Programs](#)
- [Job Corps](#)
- [Veteran Services](#)
- [National Farmworker Jobs Program](#)
- [Senior Community Service Employment Program](#)
- [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\)](#)
- [Trade Adjustment Assistance](#)
- [Unemployment compensation Programs](#)
- ★ [YOUTHBUILD](#) ★

OTHER WORKFORCE SYSTEM PROGRAMS, PROVIDERS, AND STAKEHOLDERS

- [Community Colleges](#)
- [Registered Apprenticeship Programs](#)
- [Economic Development Agencies](#)
- [Adult Basic Education Programs](#)
- [SNAP Employment and Training Programs](#)
- [Community/National Service Programs](#)
- [Small Business Administration Employment & Training Programs](#)
- [Public Libraries](#)
- Community and Faith-Based Organizations
- Workforce and Industry Intermediaries
- Employers
- Unions

Specific to Programs in Rural Areas

Challenges for Rural Programs

Rural YouthBuild programs experience many unique challenges when engaging with their workforce boards and AJCs.

1. Workforce boards in rural areas tend to receive less funding than their urban counterparts. This translates to fewer people being served overall and impacts youth services, including training dollars.
2. Transportation to AJCs is limited with the lack of mass transit and overall longer distances to access services.
3. The internet, which improves access to services offered by the workforce system and YouthBuild, is not consistently available at broadband speeds required for distance learning and other online service delivery options.
4. There are high rates of poverty, low median income, lack of jobs, and many social service needs of residents.
5. Fewer staff work at AJCs, and they also have fewer dollars to offer training and other services.

Solutions for Rural Programs

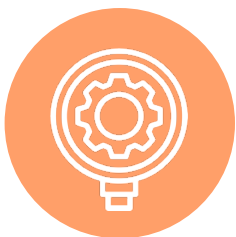
The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) partners with DOL in developing and implementing strategies and programming targeting rural communities.

The [USDA Guide for Rural Workforce Development](#) highlights four strategies for addressing some of the unique rural challenges. See them summarized below:



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Include a network of stakeholders (e.g., state and local government, education and training institutions, employers, entrepreneurs, and infrastructure service providers) at the decision-making table to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure communities and businesses are equipped with the skills, experiences, and competencies to meet present and future workforce needs.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT FINANCING

Identify gaps and opportunities to make strategic infrastructure investments to support workforce development goals. This investment will enable access to technology (e.g., high-speed internet) and expand training and employment opportunities for communities with physical transportation barriers.



INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Engage employers from target sectors to develop effective education and training programs to meet current and anticipated workforce needs. Identify opportunities for industry partners to share their workforce needs and contribute to the design and delivery of training curricula and apprenticeship programs.



EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND APPRENTICESHIP

Consider competency-based education as an effective mechanism to measure knowledge mastery instead of time spent learning. This approach to learning can be incorporated into apprenticeship programs to identify and track progress of foundational, technical, industry-based, and occupational skill sets and competencies essential to growing a globally competitive and agile workforce.

Find more strategies in the resources section at the end of the toolkit.

Specifics About Partnering with American Job Centers and Workforce Development Boards

Infrastructure Funding Agreement

Each required partner must use a portion of its funds to jointly fund the infrastructure costs of the AJCs through [partner contributions](#). The partners make available applicable career services and work collaboratively with the state and local workforce development boards to establish and maintain the one-stop delivery system. These contributions may be provided via cash, non-cash, or third-party in-kind payments.

Strategies to Build a Strong AJC/YouthBuild Partnership

- Mutually identify how a partnership benefits YouthBuild participants.
- Collect, maintain, and share performance reporting data to ensure the positive outcomes for YouthBuild participants.
- Identify other partnerships that can benefit YouthBuild participants.
- Establish frequent communication and check-ins to assess partnership progress.
- Take full advantage of co-enrollment policies and established processes.
- Reach out to your Federal Project Officer for guidance as needed.

Check out [A Guide to Effective DOL YouthBuild and American Job Center Partnerships](#).

Development Strategies for the Memorandum of Understanding

- Clarify expectations and scope of services.
- Formalize existing partnerships.
- Negotiate even if there is a standard MOU presented.
- Utilize guidance and other resources.
- Engage with your Federal Project Officer as needed.

Moving Beyond the Mandatory: Mutual Benefits

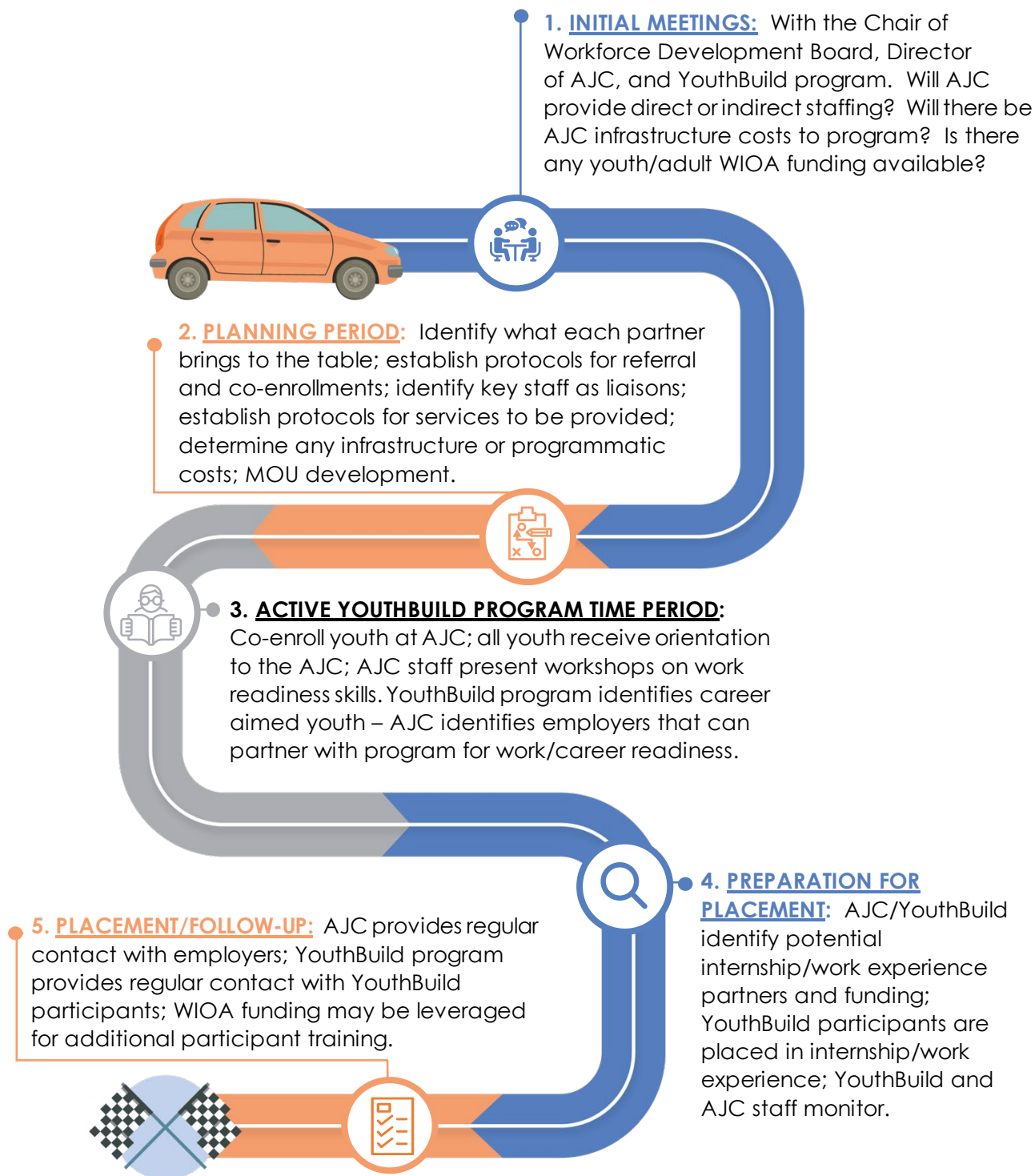
Local workforce development boards and YouthBuild programs offer [mutual benefits](#) for developing a healthy and robust partnership. Explore some of these benefits in the table below.

Benefits to the AJC	Benefits to YouthBuild
Access to out-of-school youth	Expand community and industry outreach to participants.
Access to older youth	Expand YouthBuild's recruitment stream.
New youth membership stream	Other required partners can offer the YouthBuild program expanded access to additional services for their participants.
Opportunity to make AJC more youth-friendly	Expand workforce services for YouthBuild participants, including hard and soft skills training, guidance and career planning, and job placements.
Opportunity to engage with new employers by offering new worker stream	Provide access to multiple employment and training resources, including supportive services.



What additional mutual benefits can you identify for the AJC and YouthBuild?

Roadmap for Building a Successful American Job Center and YouthBuild Partnership

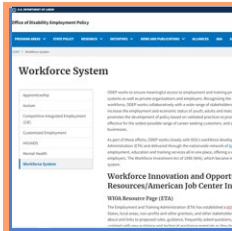


Resources for Navigating Workforce Systems

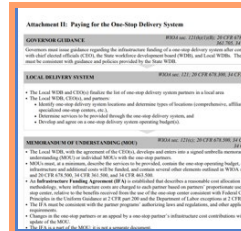


CLICK ON EACH HYPERLINKED IMAGE FOR MORE INFORMATION.

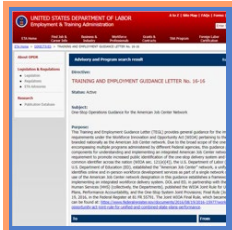
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



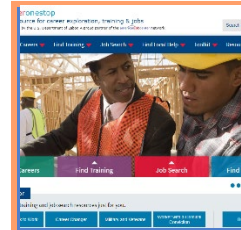
Office of Disability
Employment Policy



Infrastructure
Funding of the
One-Stop System

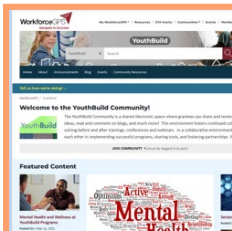


TEGL 16-16:
One-Stop Operations

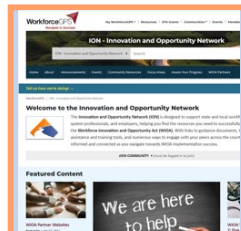


CareerOneStop

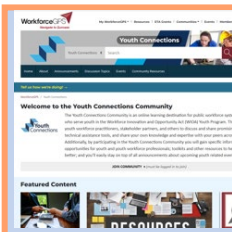
WORKFORCE GPS



YouthBuild Community
of Practice



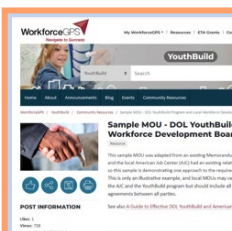
ION: Innovation and
Opportunity Network



Youth Connections
Community



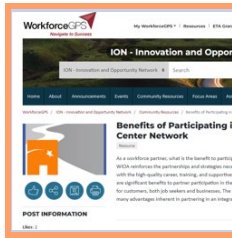
A Guide to Effective
Department of Labor
YouthBuild and
American Job Center
Partnerships



Sample MOU - DOL
YouthBuild Program and
Local Workforce
Development Board



Sample MOU and
Infrastructure Costs



Benefits of Working in an Integrated AJC

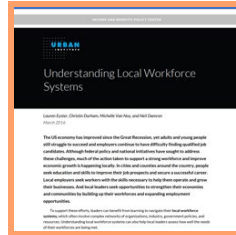


Connecting to the Public Workforce System: An Introduction for Youth Service Providers

URBAN INSTITUTE

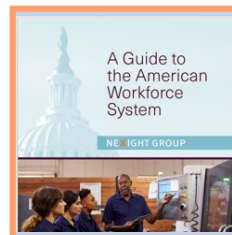


Local Workforce System Infographic

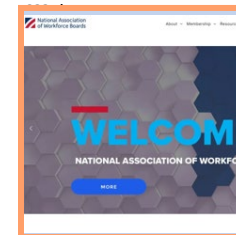


Understanding Local Workforce Systems

OTHER



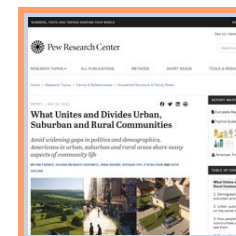
A Guide to the American Workforce System



National Association of Workforce Boards



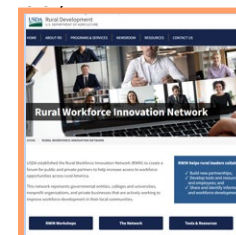
An Institutional Analysis of American Job Centers: AJC Service Delivery in Rural Areas



What Unites and Divides Urban, Suburban, and Rural Communities



USDA Guide for Rural Workforce



Rural Workforce Innovation Network



YouthBuild and the Workforce System



Skills Commons