

YouthWorks
WORK LEARN THRIVE

#YouthWorksStrong
A Summer of Virtual Career Development

YouthWorksStrong is a virtual career development program designed by Commonwealth Corporation with input and collaboration from regional and local stakeholders. The offering, which will take place from Monday, July 6th through the weeks of August 3rd and August 10th, will be administered by Commonwealth Corporation in direct collaboration with local partner agency staff. This robust program will provide a range of opportunities from career readiness skill development to rigorous career-focused project-based learning to career pathway training in high-demand fields. Significant stipends, ongoing case management and support services will ensure that participants have the resources and guidance to thrive. Regardless of the current challenges, Massachusetts youth and young adults will have a summer of learning, career growth and support.

BUILD ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Participants will gain a range of skills - from employability skills like communication and initiative to transferable skills like using project management and digital collaboration applications.

INCREASE CAREER AWARENESS

Through projects, training and access to working professionals, participants will increase their awareness of careers from a 360 degree view - including a broader understanding of the tasks, mindsets, skills and work culture.

FOSTER POSITIVE CONNECTIONS TO PEERS AND PROFESSIONALS

Participants will spend their summer in dialogue with peers, case managers and professionals. The cohort-based model fosters collaborative work, mentorship and connection.

COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION
Building skills for a strong economy.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE MODEL

The YouthWorksStrong Summer of Virtual Career Development was designed to align directly with YouthWorks Age, Stage and Path model in order to support program continuity.

STARTING OFF STRONG TRACK	BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL SELF TRACK	CRAFTING A CAREER PATH TRACK
(Based on the Service and Project-Based Learning Tier)	(Based on the Early & Career-Trajectory Employment Tier)	(Based on the Career Pathway Training and Support Tier)
14-15-year-old participants 60-75 hours of programming	**16-21-year-old participants 75-100 hours of programming**	**17-21-year-old participants 90-120 hours of programming**
Track-Specific Program Goals		
Provide additional supports for younger participants to prepare them for future employment experiences.	Provide participants with opportunities to hone leadership and accountability skills.	Provide older participants with substantial online training opportunities linked to high-demand fields.
Program-Wide Goals		
• Provide participants with high-quality career development experiences that foster connection to peers, employers, mentors and the larger community • Increase participant awareness of skill, careers and industries • Support the development of key soft skills through workshops and applied learning • Provide participants with cohesive and progressive career development services by aligning YouthWorks programming with local Connecting Activities and Innovation Pathways programming		



Core Program Components

(range of possible program hours)

Self-Paced Signal Success Career Readiness Training
(10 to 20 hours)

Interactive Live Signal Success Trainings
(6.25 to 10 hours)

Project-Based Learning Modules
(12 to 60 hours)

Career Exploration Lunch and Learns
(3 to 8 hours)

Online Mock Interviews
(1.5 to 4 hours)

Group and Indivdiual Case Management
(3 to 10 hours)

Career Pathway Training Courses
(0 to 30 hours)

Building Essential Work Readiness Skills with Signal Success Online

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SELF-PACED SIGNAL SUCCESS

Sequenced career readiness modules help participants acquire strong foundational knowledge and apply key concepts. Participant work is captured in the YouthWorks database - allowing staff to provide feedback and analyze learning outcomes.

Starting off Strong:
(14-15-year-old participants)
Learning Strengths, Growth Mindset, Demonstrating Initiative, Effective Communication and Teamwork, Workplace Safety, Identifying Skills, Drafting a Resume, Self Presentation

Building a Professional Self:
(16-21-year-old participants)
Expanding Initiative, Professionalism & Evaluation, Communicating & Collaborating, Identifying Career Interests, Advancing Skills, Workplace Safety, Building a Resume, Applying & Interviewing

Crafting a Career Path:
(17-21-year-old participants)
Self- Advocacy & Initiative, Setting Occupational Goals, Workplace Safety, Aligning Resumes to Sectors, Applying & Interviewing, Resilience & Perseverance, Time Management

LIVE INTERACTIVE ONLINE SIGNAL SUCCESS

Engaging and interactive weekly sessions are structured to extend learning from self-paced modules and to provide a forum for discussion, practice and connections. Sessions are conducted in cohorts and adjusted to the age, stage and path of participants.

Weekly Topics for YouthWorksStrong 2020

Week One (July 6-10): **Thriving Online** - Professionalism and learning in the virtual space
Week Two (July 13-17): **Collaboration** - Working effectively with others in person and online
Week Three (July 20-24): **Overcoming Obstacles**- Anticipating, analyzing and solving challenges
Week Four: (July 27-31): **Financial Literacy** - From managing money to being an educated consumer of financial services
Weeks Five & Six: (August 3-14): **Finishing Strong** - Capitalizing on skill gains for solid next steps

WHAT DOES COMMCORP PROVIDE?	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LOCAL PROGRAM STAFF?
• **All of the online distance-based modules so that participants can develop career readiness on demand** • **Design and lead facilitation of the live sessions and guiding questions for breakout sessions, post-reflective assignments and database alignment**	• **Provide encouragement, feedback and scoring of final participant reflection on self-paced modules** • **Attend and participate as breakout discussion leaders, provide feedback and rubric-based scoring on follow-up written components**

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RIGOROUS PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

YouthWorksStrong participants will take on complex and challenging projects that connect to a range of career sectors. Local project teams will have the chance to apply foundational soft skills like communication, dependability, time management and problem solving while gaining insight into career fields, connecting with peers and professionals, and developing project management skills against the increasing relevant context of virtual collaboration.

List of Project-Based Learning Modules available in Summer 2020

#1 - Conducting an Oral History of Covid-19 in your Community ***(sample module included!)***
Capture this unprecedented moment through structured interviews with family, friends and local community members

#2 - Developing a Successful Social Media Strategy for Small Business or Non-Profits
Research and design a strategy to amplify core messages and engagement across multiple social media channels.

#3 -Exploring Manufacturing Advances and Connecting Peers to Industry 4.0
Helps peers and local educators learn how Agile, Internet of Things (IOT), business-specific pivots for Covid-19, and much more are shaping the landscape of manufacturing in Massachusetts

#4 - Promoting Health and Wellness in your Community
Try and share local hikes, healthy recipes, meditation, and more to research and craft a health promotion campaign

#5 - Increasing Voter Registration in Your Community & Beyond
Review public voter data, learn about government, and help others understand and access the voter registration process

#6 - Taking on Design and Consultancy Challenges for Personal and Public Spaces
Experience design-thinking as you create and optimize plans for spaces for yourself, your peers and your community

#7 - Creating Classroom Art/Supportive Visual Designs for Childcare/Elementary Settings
Learn about child psychology, expand your visual arts skills in photography, design and illustration all while making sure that when the youngest members of your community return to class they are greeted with positive visuals

#8 - Mastering the Medium of Podcasting
Explore best practices and key tools for podcasting while listening to and conducting podcasts in high-interest areas. Then put your skills to use by creating career podcasts to help young adults connect to high-opportunity fields.

#9 - Building and Implementing a Peer-Leadership Model for Virtual Programming
Support your peers statewide and increase youth voice in the design and facilitation of the YouthWorksStrong program
(Facilitated by CommCorp - limited spaces available)

WHAT DOES COMMCORP PROVIDE?	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LOCAL PROGRAM STAFF?
• **A menu of project designs with clear deliverables and guiding tools (see the attached #1 guide for an example)** • **Coordination and access to employer and community partners to serve as advisors** • **Facilitation of project #9 for participants**	• **Develop participant working groups based on interest and fit for projects** • **Facilitate projects by conducting group check-ins and providing input and feedback** • **Engage additional employer and community partners in projects**

PROJECT CONSULTATION WITH PROFESSIONALS

In order to deepen their work and learning, participants in project-based learning groups will have the opportunity to consult with professionals from related fields. These targeted and structured advisory sessions will give employers and professionals the opportunity to share the specifics of how they conduct their work and provide participants with the chance to gather context and ask specific questions. Whenever possible advisors will reconnect online to provide feedback on final group projects.

LUNCH AND LEARN CAREER EXPLORATION

Lunch and Learn Career Explorations will be scheduled throughout the duration of the program to give participants the space to learn more about careers from professionals across the state. In most fields today, career ladders and paths are anything but straight, so these live online sessions will allow professionals to share their path and insights into their careers and sectors. Sessions will start off with information from the three to four professionals and then youth will participate in small group breakout sessions with one to two of the featured professionals.

VIRTUAL MOCK INTERVIEWS

All YouthWorksStrong participants will work on their self-presentation and interviewing skills, and individual or small group online/ phone interviews will allow them to put these skills into practice while making connections to more employers and community members.

WHAT DOES COMMCORP PROVIDE?	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LOCAL PROGRAM STAFF?
• **Identify employer and professional advisors and connect them to PBL cohorts across the state**	• **Identify additional leads for local project advisors and Lunch and Learn speakers**
• **Organize and facilitate Lunch and Learn webinars by recruiting professionals, leading whole group sessions and providing templates for breakout group discussions**	• **Support participant attendance at Lunch and Learns and encourage professional follow-up among participants (connecting on Linked In, sending a thank you email, etc.)**
• **Provide guiding tools and support to help programs structure virtual mock interviews**	• **Organize virtual mock interviews including identifying local professionals willing to participate.**

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CAREER PATHWAY TRAINING

Opportunities for participants to gain exposure and build foundational skills in a range of careers, delivered in focused dosages and aligned to summer programming schedules.

List of Featured Career Pathway Trainings

- **Live Online Instructor-Led Courses** with small cohorts (15-20) of exclusively YouthWorks participants.
- **30 Program Hours** (24 hours of live instruction, 6 hours of follow-up work)
- **Flexible M/W/F, and T/TH morning and midday schedules**
- **300+ spots available** (combined across all courses) - available to all regions for their Career Pathway tier participants first and then additional participants on a first come first serve basis

Designed and taught by Millennium Training Institute, www.millennium.edu
Intro to Healthcare Exploratory Course
Health professionals play a critical role in our communities, and this course introduces participants to the sector by providing an overview of medical administration practices and information to make educated decisions about a range of health care career options. Topics include: Medical Administration, Medical Billing and Records, HIPAA Regulations, Healthcare Environment Procedures, and Medical Law & Ethics

Designed and taught by American Graphics Institute, www.agitraining.com
Web Design Foundations
Effective websites require planning, design and technology skills. Learn to create websites that work well across phones, tablets and computers. This class teaches principles and technologies of modern web design. Participants gain foundational coding skills essential and learn principals of user design. The course includes exercises to practice their skills and concludes with a project to showcase their capabilities.

Digital Marketing Principles and Practices
Marketing helps businesses reach their clients, nonprofits communicate their messages and government agencies to share information effectively. This course prepares participants to plan and deliver marketing campaigns and to measure their effectiveness using analytics tools. Participants learn to work with modern digital tools and platforms and conclude their work with a project that showcases their new marketing skills.

Digital Skills for Future Professionals
Today's workplace requires effective organization, analysis and communication. Learn to work with spreadsheets to build lists and perform calculations, create and design effective presentations that deliver messages with impact, visualize numbers and information, as well as communicate and collaborate effectively with digital tools. This class teaches skills that translate between Google Office and Microsoft Office applications.

WHAT DOES COMMCORP PROVIDE?	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LOCAL PROGRAM STAFF?
• **Identify, vet and establish group pricing options for the statewide program** • **Collaborate with local programs on schedules**	• **Support enrollment based on interest and fit** • **Utilize YouthWorks funding allocation to support participation, provide encouragement and address barrier removal**

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CASE MANAGEMENT



Quality case management is always an essential component of the YouthWorks model, but in a virtual program these supportive touch points are increasingly important to the participant experience. While Commonwealth Corporation is providing the design and administration for this virtual model, case management at the local program level will surely be the element that will enable most participants to learn and grow to their fullest potential.

Case management structures for this program include, but are not limited to:

1. Intake evaluation to support program placement choices and address initial support service needs
2. Daily small group case management meetings
3. Embedded support and feedback in all learning settings
4. Individualized support to analyze and address challenges
5. Supportive referrals additional services (housing assistance, mental health, educational services, etc.)

WHAT DOES COMMCORP PROVIDE?	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LOCAL PROGRAM STAFF?
• **Guiding tools, training and technical assistance** • **Access to technology solutions to address communication and data collection challenges**	• **Organize and conduct group and individual check-ins, guidance and support** • **Utilize YouthWorks funding allocation to address barrier removal** • **Provide referrals as needed**

THE PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE



Aleah enrolled in YouthWorks because both of her older brothers had been part of program in other summers. 16 going on 17, she was looking for an early work experience and a chance to earn some money. When Aleah was presented with the option of virtual career development program, she wasn't sure - it sounded really different that her brothers' experiences. Completing the virtual orientation meeting helped answer some of her questions. Then, her case manager touched base with her daily - first in morning meeting and then sometimes in a group text with others in her cohort or sometimes individually with encouragement. These check-ins soon included updates from everyone on how they were progressing through the Signal Success modules and their various project-based learning programs.

While Aleah had not settled on a specific career path, she knew she was interested in teaching or social services of some kind, so during the intake process the project around Creating Classroom Art for elementary schools caught her interest. She was also placed in the Health Promotion and Wellness Campaign to gain exposure to wellness topics that could be relevant in education and other social services. As part of this project, she participated in an advisory session in the second week of the program and got the chance to meet and ask questions of a yoga and meditation instructor as well as other wellness experts.

By the end of July, Aleah was getting used to dividing her mornings among online meetings, guided meditation practice, and finessing the right emotional tone into the drafts of her team's inspirational classroom posters. At first, she struggled to learn how to use Google sites to work with her teammates to capture and share their top health and wellness resources, but an encouraging story from a local entrepreneur at a Lunch and Learn reminded her that most things that are worth doing don't come easily. Then, the Overcoming Obstacles Signal Success session gave her some strategies to get through the frustrating moments.

At the end of the summer, Aleah and her teammates had their poster printed and sent off to the 2nd grade class at a school Aleah had attended many years earlier. The group also included their images in a PowerPoint and did a presentation on Zoom for their case manager and some of the local elementary school teachers.

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SAMPLE PARTICIPANT SCHEDULES

Starting off Strong Track (14-15-year-old participants)

15 hours a week for 5 weeks - 75 program hours (recommended one PBL experience)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:30-10:00	**Group Case Management -** Participants meet online with their case management group, which is age/ stage-based and may contain an overlap of the project group but should also have other participants				
10:00-11:00	**PBL - Podcast Weekly kick-off meeting**	**Online Self-paced Signal Success**	**Individual Project Time** - draft ideas for partner podcast	**Online Self-paced Signal Success**	**Live Interactive Signal Success**
11:00-12:15	**Individual Project Time -** research best podcasts on sports and new tech	**Advisory Session** with local podcast host and group debrief	**Lunch and Learn with Technology Professionals**	**Podcast - Subgroup working meetings -** brainstorm and define topics	**Individual Project Time** - draft details for first podcast & **partner check-in call**
12:15-12:30	**End of Day Status Updates -** participants update project management application to show task process and write a quick 5-minute reflection that gets shared with project cohort and case managers				

Building a Professional Self Track (16-21-year-old participants)

20 hours a week for 5 weeks - 100 program hours (recommended two PBL experiences)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00-9:30	**Group Case Management**				
9:30-10:30	**PBL - Classroom Art Weekly Kick-off meeting**	**PBL- Health Promotion Weekly Kick-off meeting**	**Individual Project Time** - explore Canva to design poster	**Individual Project Time -** try recipes, take photos for blog	**Individual Project Time Classroom Art** - draft designs
10:30-11:30	**Individual Project Time -** read child development literature and draft designs	**Individual Project Time -** try guided meditation and local hike	**Subgroup working meetings -** collaborate on design and content	**Subgroup working meetings -** discuss strategies for sharing health promotion	**Live Interactive Signal Success**
11:30-12:45	**Advisory Session** with local educator and group debrief	**Online Self-paced Signal Success**	**Lunch and Learn with Social Services Professionals**	**Individual Project Time -** email local health organizations	**Online Self-paced Signal Success**
12:45-1:00	**End of Day Status Updates**				

Crafting a Career Path Track (17-21-year-old participants)

20 hours a week for 6 weeks - 120 program hours (recommended one PBL and one training)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30-9:00	**Group Case Management**				
9:00-10:00	**PBL - Manufacturing Weekly Kick-off**	**Web Design Foundations Course**	**Individual Project Time** - research	**Web Design Foundations Course**	**Individual Project - email companies**
10:00-11:00	**Individual Project Time -** watch Agile overview videos		**Subgroup working meetings -** Wordpress group design options		**Advisory Session** with local manufacturer and group debrief
11:00-12:15	**Lunch and Learn with IT Professionals**	**Online Self-paced Signal Success**	**Live Interactive Signal Success**	**Web Design Course Homework**	**Online Self-paced Signal Success**
12:15-12:30	**End of Day Status Updates**				

STAFF TRAINING & PREPARATION

Pivoting to a new model is never an easy feat, so Commonwealth Corporation will offer a full slate of additional online trainings in the month of June in order to get staff prepared. Be sure to visit HTTPS://YOUTHWORKSSTRONGVIRTUALTRAINING.EVENTBRITE.COM to sign up. Also throughout the month of May and June technical assistance staff are there to help regions and cities plan for all the details and build capacity at all layers of staff.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The best support isn't limited to just a single training, so this summer local partner staff will convene weekly for brief and strategic professional learning communities (PLCs). PLCs will be based on affinity grouping so that staff leading specific PBL and working in different size communities will have the chance to strategize and share immediately relevant best practices.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

New challenges require new tools and resources. In addition to our traditional Signal Success materials we will be debuting ones designed for virtual engagement and providing thorough PBL guides to get program started in charting a course for learning and growth. The new YouthWorks database will be integrated into all facets of the model to provide increased power to gather and analyze data. Finally, we are working to provide all interested programs with CareerHub, a powerful virtual services tool.

QUESTIONS?

Reach out to Learn More!

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