EQUIPPING YOUTH WITH SKILLS, LEADERSHIP, AND VOICE TO OVERCOME SYSTEMIC BARRIERS AND SHAPE THEIR THRIVING FUTURE

Youth disconnection is a strong indicator of a community's potential and a barometer of its residents' access to opportunity. The number of Opportunity Youth can also serve as a strong prediction towards the number of lower income families, higher unemployment rates, poverty, worse health condition, increased likelihood of relying on government support, and young people engaging in criminal activity in a community (Measure of America, 2017). The Opportunity Youth demographic consists of 16-24-year-olds that:

- **Have not graduated high school or received a diploma equivalent.**
- **Are not engaged in post-secondary education or career and technical education (CTE) courses.**
- **Currently are unemployed.**

UNITED YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Since 2022 the United Youth Leadership Council (UYLC) has engaged young people in Pima County, teaching them professional development and leadership skills while amplifying their voices. The Opportunity Youth organizing this program are dedicated to serving our community and removing barriers for other young people. This year, our 16 council members are applying what they've learned to build partnership opportunities with:

- The Community Food Bank
- Goodwill
- Tucson Clean & Beautiful
- DK Associates
- COPE Community Services
- Public Allies

16 YOUNG LEADERS IMPACTED

WORKFORCE READINESS SERIES

Last year, Cradle to Career began analyzing workforce trends in Tucson and Southern Arizona to identify growing industries and pathway to livable wages. Partnering with local businesses, we guide young adults in exploring:

- A day in the life of an employee
- Skills needed for success
- Tips from local professionals
- Career growth pathways
- Projected industry growth and evolution

At the end of the workshop series, interested attendees participate in interviews, gaining valuable skills, collaborating with peers, and discovering future workforce opportunities in Pima County.

35 OPPORTUNITY YOUTH GAINED WORK EXPERIENCE IN THEIR CHOSEN CAREER FIELD

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"Overall, I learned a lot about myself. It was very inspirational, especially hearing about other people's experiences in hospitality."
Participant - Goodwill REC

ESSENTIAL SKILLS WORKSHOP

These unique workshops are shaped by the voices of Opportunity Youth in our community. We listen to their needs to identify the skills and practices they want to develop for the workplace and leadership. Thriving Futures emphasizes modern practices and mental health care, ensuring young people become self-sufficient and learn to advocate for themselves.

Through strategic partnerships, we invite various organizations and professionals to share their knowledge and experiences and assist throughout the workshop. Each workshop concludes with an engaging panel discussion, where youth learn from the diverse journeys of our invited professionals.

REACHED 55 OPPORTUNITY YOUTH IN TWO WORKSHOPS

OPPORTUNITY YOUTH DATA IN PIMA COUNTY

- **3,345 youth did not graduate from high school in Pima County in 2022.**
- **In 2022 there were 15,879 Opportunity Youth in our community.**
- **49.6% of 2023 high school graduates enrolled in a post-secondary institution.**

PARTNER IMPACT

Cradle to Career has supported the establishment of four Goodwill of Southern Arizona's Re-Engagement Centers (RECs) across Tucson. These centers help young people return to education, provide support services and trainings, and assist with finding employment. Since 2019, these centers have served over 5,800 youth and young adults, with 9,000 visits last year. With the new northwest location, the goal is to exceed 12,000 visits annually.

12,000 YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IMPACTED

Learn More

To learn more about the Thriving Futures Initiative and Programs, contact Justin Curry at jcurry@unitedwaytucson.org

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