

Immediate Release



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Washtenaw County Summer Youth Employment Program Now Accepting Applications

“Being a part of SummerWorks was awesome! My job led to an internship and the internship turned into my career!” - SummerWorks Participant

The Washtenaw County Summer Youth Employment Program – a partnership between Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development, Michigan Works! Southeast, and the University of Michigan – is entering its 5th year and is hoping to connect more young adults with local employers and professional development opportunities than ever before! Now called SummerWorks, the program launched a new website (SummerWorks.info) and began accepting applications for this summer in January and will continue accepting applications through the middle of March.

The ten-week program pairs local businesses with Washtenaw County youth (ages 16-24) to provide on-the-job training that sets the stage for life-long careers, opens doors to new industries, and provides mentorship critical to building professional networks. Last year, almost 100 youth participated. This equated to more than 20,000 work experience hours and more than \$220,000 invested in our youths’ future success.

“In my youth, I participated in a program much like SummerWorks and it proved to be an important stepping stone in my career,” said **Gregory Dill, Washtenaw County Administrator**. “Washtenaw County is proud to partner with Michigan Works! Southeast and the University of Michigan to create this opportunity for young adults in our community to not only learn critical life and job skills, but also bring fresh eyes and energy to our local employers that is beneficial for all involved.”

Young adults are expected to work a minimum of 20 hours per week from June 15th to August 21st and attend a variety of professional development sessions throughout the summer. Before the employment begins, youth complete a “Soft Skills Academy” designed to develop skills such as resume building, professional communication, and more.

“Each year, we continue to develop and refine a series of professional development opportunities including our Soft Skills Academy and weekly enrichment sessions so that program participants gain skills to succeed both with their employer this summer and for years to come,” said **Julia Weinert, Managing Director of Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan.**

Employers, in addition to providing a job opportunity, are asked to mentor the young adults and introduce them to new career opportunities in diverse fields. Businesses or organizations interested in hosting a SummerWorks participant are invited to attend one of three upcoming mixers where they can connect with other organizations who have hosted a participant in previous years to learn about their experience. The list of mixers are as follows:

- February 12th | 8:30-9:30am | A2Y Regional Chamber, 2010 Hogback Rd, Ann Arbor, MI
- February 19th | 4:00-5:30pm | Back Office Studios, 13 N Washington St, Ypsilanti, MI
- March 5th | 4:00-5:30pm | A2Y Regional Chamber, 2010 Hogback Rd, Ann Arbor, MI

“As we continue to grow this program, we are hoping to bring in new types of agencies and businesses so that we can provide as many opportunities for young adults to explore potential careers as possible,” said **Shamar Herron, Deputy Director of Michigan Works! Southeast.** “This is also a great opportunity for employers to positively contribute to the development of a young adult in our community, and to meet business needs by having an extra set of hands around this summer.”

For more information, including key dates and how to apply, young adults and employers can visit SummerWorks.info.