



PY18 Youth Proposal Description / Executive Summary

The Holsten Human Capital Development (HHCD) proposes to implement the Joliet Community Development Program in response to the Workforce Investment Board RFP PY18. This program will provide GED Preparation/Attainment and Occupational Skills Training for youth ages 17 to 24, as specified by the Workforce Investment Board of Will County and will fill 75 participant slots for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligible youth during the PY18 Request for Proposal.

HHCD will implement a unique thorough program designed for out-of-school youth which special emphasizes on youth who have had contact with, the judicial system, low-income housing residents, and returning citizens who are either in risk or at risk to promote self-sufficiency and economic empowerment.

The program will use well qualified and experienced staff to help youth get the training and education they need to find the right jobs for them leading to self-sufficiency. HHCD directly provides assessments, job coaching and career exploration and job placement assistance with local employers at the program service sites and refers clients to external education and training partners. HHCD builds strong contacts with local businesses in its communities of service and acts as a resource to assess the skills of clients to fill the positions provided by potential employers.

Through a series of goal setting; assessment, re-assessment and remediation practices, participants achieve self-sufficiency and are better prepared for successful completion of GED attainment and basic skills and career exploration and awareness, and entry into the workplace. The program will be located in three primary Joliet neighborhood sites allowing community residents and staff the opportunity to utilize its educational and social service resources.

This is a Community Development component which link participants to their community and is an ultimate correlation to community improvement, crime reduction and safety. Realizing that the attainment of a G.E.D. is critical to each participant's success, the program instructional staff has made available a number of instructional options to accommodate participant's variant learning styles. These methods include traditional paper and pencil; lecture; computer-assisted learning and interactive online research on subjects that relate to G.E.D. testing. Academics are related to employment skill development and can be taught specific to identified career paths.

Close wrap-around services for program participants is vital to the success of this program impact, career assessment, G.E.D. completion, assistance with admissions and financial aid applications, as well as employment services. The program itself, as well as the twelve-month follow-up system, gives participants the positive support to inspire them to be responsible members of society, as they are adequately prepared for success in the workplace

HHCD and partnering sites are committed to working daily with low-income, low-skilled workers who are challenged with finding employment. Barriers to employment commonly include lack of GED or high school diploma and poor digital literacy which severely limits job options and the ability to advance from minimum wage positions. Responsive workforce development programs must build the capacity of the participant to not only gain employment but to increase earning potential and negotiate avenues for personal development and career advancement.

HHCD and partnering sites are well positioned to provide comprehensive training and connect participants with the supportive services necessary to help them pursue continuing education, entrepreneurship, and professional development. Service coordination staff will provide supplemental assistance to program participants. This includes, but is not limited to linkages for childcare resources, computer training, referrals for GED or basic literacy programs, and access to online learning applications for clients deficient in basic reading, math and employment skills.

The Joliet Community Development Program will emphasize three standard behaviors in all aspects of the program. These standard behaviors are: 1. The importance of good attendance, 2. Appropriate grooming for a work environment and 3. Interpersonal skills on the job.

The program will be available at three community-based neighborhood sites throughout Joliet, IL. These sites include Forest Park Community Center (Northeast Quadrant of Joliet; 60432), Harvey Brooks Foundation (Southeast Quadrant of Joliet; 60436) and Riverwalk Homes (Near west Quadrant of Joliet, 60435). All three of the designated sites are in areas that are considered low-income and underserved. A total of 75 youth (25 at each site) will be served with a budget of \$622,729.

Joliet Junior College (JJC) Workforce Education will implement a GED preparation/ attainment and occupational skill training program for youth entitled Connect to Your Future for WIOA eligible youth in accordance with the Workforce Investment Board of Will County (WIB), and Workforce Services Division (WSD) of Will County. The target market for this program will be out-of-school youth (ages 17-24) who meet the WIOA eligibility criteria and are determined appropriate by WSD, and meet eligibility criteria established by the Workforce Investment Board of Will County.

Three areas of Will County will be addressed with this proposal: Northern (Bolingbrook/ Romeoville), Central (Joliet), and Eastern (Crete/Monee).

Connect to Your Future program GED preparation/attainment components:

Pre-GED Testing and Assessment. The Connect to Your Future GED Education Coordinator will assess out-of-school youth referred to the program by WSD to determine GED skill deficiencies and identify academic areas to target. All youth will be given a pre-GED test to determine their skills levels in all four areas of the GED: Social Studies, Language Arts, Science, and Mathematics. Practice GED assessments are available to determine when a youth is ready to take the actual GED assessment. ACT Curriculum and CareerReady101/KeyTrain will be used in the GED class as well to improve the students' WorkKeys scores for the National Career Readiness Certificate.

GED/Academic Classroom Training. The Connect to Your Future instructors will provide classroom instruction, as well as facilitate on-line and self-directed learning. The GED class will focus on preparing students to pass their GED test. The four areas of the GED test will be focused on one at a time, to allow the youth to learn the skills required and then take the GED test one subject at a time.

Connect to Your Future program occupational skill training components:

Marketing and Recruitment. The Connect to Your Future outreach and recruitment specialist will perform marketing activities and conduct orientation sessions for interested participants in each region. The outreach and recruitment specialist work with Will County high schools in multiple regions to identify WIOA eligible students in each high school district for matriculation to the program. The career specialist will also provide community orientation sessions at JJC campuses, local community centers and libraries to recruit older youth who are disconnected from school and/or the workforce.

Assessment. Interested participants will be required to complete the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and score at the 7th grade level in both reading and math to be considered for enrollment. Participants scoring below the 7th grade level will be referred to JJC Workforce Education (formerly Department of Adult Education and Literacy) for additional basic skills training or tutoring. Participants will have access to ACT Curriculum and CareerReady101/KeyTrain for soft skills training for work readiness, take the WorkKeys assessments as needed, and earn the National Career Readiness Certificate.

Career Exploration. Each participant will take an online career assessment such as Career Coach, Strong Interest Inventory, and/or Myers Briggs Type Indicator to determine suitability for an occupation. As part of eligibility, each participant will be required to complete a Career Path Packet.

Occupational Training. WIOA eligible youth will have the opportunity to attend an occupational training program in identified Will County high growth/high demand industry from the Illinois WIOA Training Provider list. Placement in training will be a reflection of their career exploration and career assessments. Training must result in a credential, certificate, or degree.

Case Management/Support Services. The case management specialists will provide the personal touch of biweekly/monthly workshops and one-on-one advising. This component is crucial to the participants' success. They will also provide academic advising for youth, coordination of registration in occupational training programs, assistance with job placement, and ensure retention in employment.

Work Experience/Employment. The Connect to Your Future employer relations coordinator and workforce coordinator will be in each of the three regions and work collaboratively on the needs of Will County employers. They will also coordinate paid and unpaid work-based learning opportunities with employers, such as: job shadowing, employment opportunities available while in training, pre-apprenticeship programs, and internships.

Follow-Up Services. The workforce coordinator will be primarily responsible for intense follow-up with youth to ensure job retention and success for a one year period after exit. Re-employment efforts may be deployed as needed for youth who become unemployed in the first year after exiting the program. Intense follow-up may include one-on-one advising and activities such as speakers, workshops, job fairs, etc. to engage youth.

Connect to Your Future program Work Readiness component: All eligible participants will partake in work readiness training which will consist of: WorkKeys assessments; soft skills (e.g., work habits, workplace effectiveness, communication skills, business etiquette, etc.); preparing for a career (e.g., writing a résumé, job search strategies, applying for a job, interviewing strategies, networking, etc.); workplace behaviors (e.g., attendance, punctuality, grooming, and interpersonal skills); financial literacy; and entrepreneurial skills.

To provide these resources and services beginning July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, Joliet Junior College is proposing the following budget: \$1,657,460. The cost justification for this request is described in the budget section of this proposal and is to serve 220 students (70 new, 150 continuing) in occupational training and an on-going 50 students in GED.