



Board of Commissioners

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2015 SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Portage County Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is a federally funded initiative sponsored by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and provided youth ages 16 to 24 with enriching and constructive summer work experiences through worksites in the private and government sectors from May 3- October 31, 2015. Continuing with the changes made in PY2014, we choose to run a longer program and let the employer choose the rate of pay using the pay range \$8.10-\$10.00. Portage County SYEP puts the responsibility on the young adults to schedule their interviews and be selected by a pre-approved list of employers.

Portage County Youth

Over the course of the summer PCJFS enrolled 173 youth in the program:

- 219 Applications Received
- 173 Approved
- 151 Employed
- 120 Successful Completions
- 8 Permanently Hired
- \$9.14 average hourly rate of pay

There were a wide variety of youth involved, 18 was the average age and the largest population served were from Ravenna.

The successful program changes from PY2014 continued to make an impact, resulting in 18% more

youth enrolled and 15% more employed than 2014 resulting in a summer youth payroll of **\$429,588.42**, a one year increase of 35% ! While putting more money back into the local economy, youth were able to increase new job skills and gain interview experience. Not to mention the satisfaction of working a job and building references for future employment.

Employers

In our efforts to ensure an effective program, we asked local employers to help recruit the youth. This format gave our employers the opportunity to select the youth who will work for them. We actively engaged employers in every corner of the county so that the program was easily accessible for our youths, offering them a reasonable commute to work. We were able to secure 72 worksites and 311 positions county-wide, and 50 of those worksites employed youth for the summer.

The employer feedback was excellent, especially since they had more decision-making control over the youth at their worksite.

The employers were asked to complete surveys about the youth near the end of their employment and 69% said they would recommend the youth to another employer.

