

# Workforce Development: What do we know about what works?

April 24, 2019

 **RESULTS**  
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**FOR AMERICA**

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# Youth Programs

Program/ Strategy	Description	Outcomes	Strength*
Youth Villages/ YV Lifeset	Intensive case mngmt and services to youth, 18-24yo, transitioning out of foster care and juvenile justice. 9 month program. \$11,800/participant	Increased earnings by an average of \$611 at 12-months. No impact after 2 years. MDRC 2018	High Causal
Year Up	Six months of intensive training followed by a six-month internship. 18-24yo. \$28,290/participant	Increased ave. quarterly earnings by \$1,895 (53 %) in 7 <sup>th</sup> quarter after random assignment. Large positive effects through year 3. Abt 2018	High Causal
Urban Alliance	Program for high-school seniors that includes: 1) Paid internship in an office setting, 2) Soft and hard skills job training, 3) Coaching/ mentoring \$10-12.5K/participant	Effects for subgroups: Males - increased probability of high school grad. and college attendance. Middle-GPA - more likely to attend 4-year college. Urban Institute 2017	High Causal
YouthBuild	Construction-related or in-demand industry training, educational services, counseling, leadership-dev. Low income, out-of-school 16-24yo. 250 orgs., > 10,000 participants, \$22,000/participant.	At the 30-month follow up: increased GED attainment by 14 percentage points (31% vs. 18%). Increased average weekly earnings by \$15.70 (\$150 vs to \$134). MDRC 2016	High Causal

\* Evidence ratings are based on DOL's CLEAR definitions.

## Youth Programs (cont.)

Program/ Strategy	Description	Outcomes	Strength*
Career Academies	Operates in more than 8,000 schools. Grades 9-12. 1) Small learning communities/ schools-within-schools. 2) Focus on 1 career, occupation, or industry. Combines academic and technical. 3) Provides work-based learning experiences. Est. \$500/participant/year.	Increased ave. earnings by \$2,088/year, over the eight years following students' scheduled high school graduation. Males - average of \$3,731/year. MDRC 2008	High Causal
National Guard Youth Challenge	17-month residential program, 16-18yo. 2 week Pre-Challenge phase, 20-week Residential phase, and a 1-year Post-Residential phase. Participants live in barracks, very disciplined environment, wear hair short, called cadets, wear military uniforms. Includes physical training, eight core pillars: leadership/followership, responsible citizenship, service, life-coping skills, physical fitness, health/hygiene, job skills, and academic. Earn a GED. Placed in employment, education, or military service, and receive structured mentoring. \$15,400/participant	3-year follow up: Increased high school diploma and GED: 72% compared to 56%. Increased average annual earnings \$13,500 compared to \$11,250. Other positive and statistically significant impacts: number of months employed/year, % employed, % currently working full-time. MDRC 2011	High Causal

\* Evidence ratings are based on DOL's CLEAR definitions.



# Sector-Based Strategies

Program/ Strategy	Description	Outcomes	Strength
Per Scholas	Employment and training for low-income workers, focused on IT sector. 15 weeks of occupational skills training in IT, career readiness, and job dev. and placement services. \$5,754/participant (2013)	Increased ave. earnings by about 30% (\$4,829), 81% employed vs. 75% in control group, 3 years after random assignment. MDRC 2017.	High Causal
Project Quest	Tuition subsidies and support to low-income San Antonio residents enrolled in local community colleges. Degrees in: health services, business systems tech., and maintenance/repair/overhaul. \$10,500/participant	Increased ave. earnings by \$5,000/year after 9 years. More than 80% of alumni were employed year-round by year 9, compared to about 70%. Economic Mobility Corp. 2019	High Causal
WI Regional, Sectoral Empl. Prgrm.	Short-term (2-8 weeks) training to address employers' needs in construction, manufacturing, and health care. Case mngmt. and job placement.	Increased ave. earnings by \$6,255, over the two years after acceptance to the program. PPV 2010	High Causal
Registered Apprenticeships	On-the-job training and technical instruction. Incremental wage increases with skills gains. Nationally recognized certification upon completion. 1-6 years, about 1,000 occupations. Costs too varied to report here.	Increased employment rate, 8.6 percentage points. Increased ave. earnings by \$6,595/year and \$5,839/year, 6 and 9 years after enrollment. Mathematica 2012.	Moderate Causal

# Job Search Assistance and Reemployment Services

Program/ Strategy	Description	Outcomes	Strength
Individual Training Accounts	Comparison of service delivery methods at job centers: guided customer choice - mandatory weekly counseling. Maximum customer choice - did not automatically receive, but could request, counseling. Both received ITA (\$3,000 - \$5,000).	59% of maximum customer choice group earned a certificate/degree within 3 years of random assignment, compared to 53% for guided group. Mathematica 2011.	High Causal
Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment + Job Search	40 states use REA. This is a study of Nevada's REA, the most impactful model. Participants were required to receive REA services and reemployment services: REA - individual assessment, orientation, labor market info, workforce service workshop, and development of an individual reemployment plan. Reemployment - job search and resume assistance, job matching against state/federal databases, and job training options. Est. \$200/participant.	Increased employment 5.1 percentage points in year one, 2.9 to 4.5 percentage points in the next 5 years. Increased earnings by \$1,361 in year 1, \$1,413 to \$2,087 in the next 5 years after program entry. Decreased UI benefit receipt and UI benefit amount collected in the first full year after program entry. Earnings gained confirmed for 6 years. NBER, IMPAQ, US Treasury 2018.	High Causal

# Transitional and Subsidized Employment Programs

Program/ Strategy	Description	Outcomes	Strength
Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO)	Initial 5-day life skills course, immediate placement into a transitional job. 4 days of work, 1 day of job coaching/week. Paid each afternoon of workdays. Job placement and post-placement services. \$4,800/participant	3-year follow-up: Increase in employment early on (24.5 percentage points). Initial increase due to the temporary jobs provided by the program. No employment impacts past year 1. Significant reductions in recidivism. MDRC 2012	High Causal
Indianapolis RecycleForce Inc.	The program uses an intensive, highly supportive model in which participants are often supervised by peers who were program graduates in an electronics recycling social enterprise. \$11,000/participant	Increased ave. earnings by \$700/year at 30-month follow-up. 64% employed vs. 60% in control. Reduced incarceration rate by 12 percentage points for high-risk participants. MDRC 2018	High Causal
Transitions SF, Goodwill	Assessment, 2 week job-readiness training, placement into subsidized jobs: nonprofit, public, or private. \$8,460/participant	18-30 month follow-up: Increased % employed 61.5% vs. 53.9%. Increased earnings \$1,660 in last year of follow-up. MDRC 2018	High Causal
Good Transitions, Goodwill N GA	Job at Goodwill store for ~1 month, then less supported subsidized position with private employer for ~3 months. Case management and short-term training. \$7,146/participant	18-30 month follow-up: Increased % employed, 79.1% vs. 74.1%. Increased earnings \$930 in last year of follow-up. MDRC 2018	High Causal

## Considerations in leveraging this evidence base

- The research included is not comprehensive of all high/moderate causal evidence in workforce.
  - HHS's Employment Strategies Evidence Review is being updated and will provide a literature scan and evidence reviews for workforce programs for low-income adults.
  - CLEAR, ESER, and other reviews only include published studies, and locally-conducted evaluations may not be published for a variety of reasons.
- Most programs or strategies that have been rigorously evaluated have been replicated or mimicked in other locations.
  - Not every instance of an evidence-based strategy will be (nor should be) rigorously evaluated.
  - Conditions are not always appropriate for an RCT.
- It's tricky to compare outcomes across programs without considering: service population and barriers to employment, length of program, intensity of program, inclusion of wrap-around support services, labor market conditions at the time of study, employment resources available to the control group.



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