Effective Pathways Committee Meeting
January 27, 2016 / 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
United Way (30 Laurel Street, Knox Board Room, 1st floor)

Agenda

1:00 pm   Introduction

- Welcome and introductions
- Updates / information sharing
- Goal for the meeting

1:20 pm   Career Pathways Digital Map

- Review and update since December meeting
- Youth feedback / creating a youth-friendly map
- Revisiting information to include
- Recommendations for design

2:20 pm   Summary and Next Steps

- Assignments / tasks
- Future meetings

2:30 pm   Adjourn

Handouts

- Committee Meeting Notes, 12/2/15
- Sample 211 data (OPP)
- Designing for Success: Lessons Learned in Opportunity Youth Incentive Funds Sites (pages 5-10)
- Effective Pathways Committee Profile

Effective Pathways Committee Meeting Notes
January 27, 2016 / 1:00 pm to 2:15 pm

Participants

Ricardo Henriquez (United Way), Courtenay Jackson (Urban League), Alice Turner and Alanna Burrell (URISE), and Dave Bechtel (Cross Sector)

Introduction

Participants introduced themselves and Dave reviewed the agenda for the meeting. The main goal is to continue developing a digital map for the Career Pathways framework.

Career Pathways Digital Map

Dave reviewed discussions of the map from the December Pathways meeting and updated the group on activities since December:

- **211**. Dave met with staff from 211 to discuss ways to share information on opportunity youth programs. While 211 does not classify programs specifically for opportunity youth, they were open to sending information back and forth with the Hartford Opportunity Youth Collaborative (HOYC). This could help in keeping the information up-to-date.

- **City of Hartford Family Resources Directory**. The City has developed a map showing a wide range of services for families, listing organizations and types of services (e.g., workforce development, youth and family enrichment, child care, support services). There may be opportunities to share updated information and link to each other's site to help locate additional services for opportunity youth (e.g., young parents find child care centers in the neighborhood via the Hartford map).

- **URISE TechPreneurs Program**. Dave and Alice met to discuss her program with students at the Hartford Journalism & Media Academy. The students developed the concept of Work Life – a digital career coach for youth. These students could do market research and develop the HOYC digital map as a first step in developing their Work Life app. Alice and Dave will follow up with Kim Oliver to discuss.

Participants then discussed different options for developing the digital map. Main themes include:

1. **Feedback from Youth**. Alice shared feedback on the framework from youth in her TechPreneurs program. The young people did not like the map; the framework was not developed for youth and it shows. The main reaction was: What is this? Alice also asked a church youth group and high school students from New Britain where they go for information on services and jobs. Many cited 211 as the source for information on child care, public benefits (EBT card), and emergency services like energy assistance. When looking for jobs, youth ask friends, use social media, and the snagajob.com website that lists mainly low-wage jobs.

   Ricardo noted the term "disconnected youth" used in full model.* This is insulting to young people. Participants agreed that "opportunity youth" should be used consistently in the model.

   Courtenay described a new Urban League pathways program for opportunity youth that started this past fall. While the Urban League used the Pathways Framework to design the program, staff

explain the program to youth in a totally different way. Staff talk about the steps in the program and expectations for participants. Courtenay agreed that the language in the framework needs to be changed completely if the tool is going to be used directly with youth.

* See http://youthreconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/09-Attachment-2-Career-Pathway-System.pdf for the full model and http://youthreconnect.org/pathways/ for the basic framework.

2. **Primary Audience for Map**. Participants revisited the discussion of whether the map should be primarily for youth or staff. Ricardo asked if youth organizations want the digital map or will use the tool? Ricardo's experience is that case workers and front-line staff are focused on implementing their own programs, and will not work with youth on next steps in the pathway. Dave noted that the original idea for the digital map came from the Collaborative, which includes most of the organizations delivering pathway programs for opportunity youth. This does not necessarily mean that front-line staff will use the map, but does show a general commitment from organizations. Courtenay noted that youth workers are moving toward a case management model, and could benefit from a tool that includes additional resources for youth. Alanna suggested that youth should be able to use the map on their own, as well as in partnership with staff.

Participants agreed that any product aimed at youth would require extensive marketing (and resources) to compete with the many social media sites and apps for youth. Marketing needs to go beyond the youth organizations, to include schools and a range of dissemination vehicles (online, text, print).

3. **Design Considerations**. Participants discussed components of a successful digital map, and implications for organizations delivering services:
   a. <u>On-demand</u>. Youth need to be able to take action when they are on the site. The next step needs to be available when youth are ready. If youth have to wait, we might lose them. This could mean completing an online form or texting information to sign up right away.
   b. <u>Website and app</u>. Ideally, the digital map could also be an app that youth and staff can use. Youth use their phones more than computers, and may not have Internet access via their computers.
   c. <u>Just-in-time delivery</u>. Participants discussed the challenge that many programs have specific start dates, but youth may not follow up if they have to wait 2-3 months for the next program cycle. It may make sense to organize services to highlight those that can be started right away (e.g., open-entry GED program), so youth can be engaged at the moment they are motivated to take action. This could have major implications for how organizations design and deliver services.
   d. <u>Texting options</u>. Participants noted that youth may not call organizations, but are very comfortable texting. It may be helpful to use texting to access information about services (send link to website), to contact program staff, and/or to receive text updates on upcoming programs (subscribe).

Dave suggested soliciting feedback from additional Committee members on the ideas discussed today, given the low attendance and the implications of the discussion (design, resources needed to develop). Dave noted that a number of members who planned to attend had a last-minute change in their schedules.

Next Steps

Assignments (to be completed before the February meeting):

1. Committee members who work with Opportunity Youth will send materials they use with opportunity youth to describe their pathway programs.

2. Dave will update Kim on the Committee's suggestions and check on the resources available for the digital map.

3. Committee members can forward Dave descriptions of any new programs for Opportunity Youth that have been launched since the spring 2015 survey (e.g., Urban League program).

Future Meetings:

Wednesday, **February 24, 2016**, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm, United Way

Wednesday, **March 30, 2016**, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm, United Way

Link to Resources:

- **HOYC Partners**. http://youthreconnect.org/partners/

- **Career Pathway Framework**. http://youthreconnect.org/pathways/

- Meeting Handout: **Designing for Success: Lessons Learned in Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund Sites**. http://youthreconnect.org/hartford-highlighted-in-national-report/

Pathways to Success

AGENCY: OUR PIECE OF THE PIE

LOCATION: OUR PIECE OF THE PIE - YOUTH CENTER - NORTH

DESCRIPTION

OPP offers several programs to prepare and engage youth as young as 14 on a path towards a meaningful career. Youth begin with Career Competency Development Training (CCDT) which provides the foundational skills necessary to enter the workforce. CCDT covers 8 competencies including computer literacy, customer service, problem-solving and decision making, interpersonal communication, personal qualities, financial literacy, and job seeking skills. Students also receive career counseling services with guidance on aligning career interests with labor market information, as well as internship and job placement assistance with area employers.

ELIGIBILITY

Resident of Greater Hartford; Ages 14 through 24

LOCATION

20-28 Sargeant Street Hartford, CT 06105

HOURS

M-F: 9am-6:30pm

WEBSITE

www.opp.org

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

Males ages 18+ must be registered with Selective Service; Verification of age, address and legal US residence

APPLICATION PROCESS

Call to speak with a Youth Development Specialist Supervisor

SERVICE AREAS

Bloomfield, East Hartford, Farmington, Glastonbury, Hartford, Manchester, Newington, Rocky Hill, South Windsor, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor

PAYMENT

No fee

LANGUAGES OFFERED

Spanish

Agency Info

DESCRIPTION

Youth development organization works to help 14 to 24 year-old urban youth become economically independent adults. OPP's programs are centered around the personal relationship developed between each youth and an adult staff member. That relationship helps participants identify and overcome barriers, access support services and programs, and achieve the goals of high school graduation, a college degree and/ or vocational certification and rewarding post-education employment. OPP provides high school, community college and community-based programs to youths in five Connecticut cities annually.

LOCATION

20-28 Sargeant Street, Hartford, CT 06105

TELEPHONE

860-761-7300

WEBSITE

www.opp.org

LAST VERIFIED ON

July 20, 2015

LEGAL STATUS

None or unknown