



OAKLAND FUND FOR
CHILDREN & YOUTH



Career Awareness and Employment Support

FY2021-2022 Strategy Summary

Prepared by Social Policy Research Associates | October 2022

OFCY’s Career Awareness and Employment Support strategy supports career exploration, work-readiness training, on-the-job experience, skill-building supports, exposure to career options, and employment. This report draws on a focus group with three programs (Civicorps Academic and Professional Pathway, Youth Employment Partnership’s Level Up - Options for Real Careers, and Lao Family Community Development’s Oakland Youth Industries Exploration Program, a participant focus group with one program (Oakland Youth Industries Exploration Program), an interview with one program (Center for Young Women's Development’s Sisters on the Rise), attendance and wage records, and program reports to summarize strategy achievements and progress to date.

Strategy Results



1,820 Youth
participated in programming



103 Average Hours
per youth participant



15 Programs
provided jobs and career exploration



93% of Youth
learned about jobs they can have in the future.



\$2,122,342
Total wages/stipends earned by youth



80% of Youth
participated in a job or internship



\$1,937,402
granted to programs



\$1,825
Average wages/stipends earned by youth

“With the Lao Family... With finding jobs, their training with doing cover letters, doing interviews and resumes, that really helped me in my real professional life in finding jobs. So I really like the skills that they have set me with, and they're very useful in my day to day life now.”
- Participant, Lao Family Community Development’s Oakland Youth Industries Exploration

“The skills that I developed through this program will help me get different job positions, because of the experience I gained. And one example is that I recently applied and interviewed for a position at my school for organizing an event, and I just got the job offer a couple days ago.”

- Participant, Lao Family Community Development’s Oakland Youth Industries Exploration

Funded Programs

Biotech Partners' Biotech Academy at Oakland Technical High School - Biotech Partners	Exploring College and Career Options (ECCO) - Oakland Unified School District	Oakland Youth Industries Exploration (YIE) Program - Lao Family Community Development, Inc.
Bridges from School to Work - Marriott Foundation for People with Disabilities	Havenscourt Youth Jobs Initiative - East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation	Sisters on The Rise - Center for Young Women's Development
Career Exploration Program - Alameda County Health Care Services Agency	Level Up - Options for Real Careers - The Youth Employment Partnership, Inc.	Summer Jobs - The Youth Employment Partnership, Inc.
Civicorps Academic and Professional Pathway - Civicorps	New Door Ventures Employment Program for Oakland Opportunity Youth 16-21 - New Door Ventures	The Oakland Youth on the Move (YOM) Summer Employment Program - Lao Family Community Development, Inc.
Digital Media Pathways - Youth Radio dba YR Media	Oakland Health Careers Collaborative - Alameda Health System	YU Achieve (Summer Youth Employment) - Youth UpRising

Strategy Results

Beginning in the 2019-2022 funding cycle, OFCY adopted a Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework to assess its role in contributing toward city-wide goals. The RBA model is a comprehensive approach for assessing the quantity of services provided by programs, the quality of those services, and the effect of those services on the lives of children, youth, and families. It does this by addressing **three guiding questions: (1) How much did we do? (2) How well did we do it? (3) Is anyone better off?** Results for this strategy are displayed on the following page.

Results-Based Accountability Results

How much did we do?

Number of Programs Funded	15
Number of Youth Served	1,820
Total Hours of Service Provided	187,339
Average Hours of Service per Youth	103
Number of Youth Placed in Internships and Jobs	1,456
Total Hours Youth Spent in Jobs or Internships	142,909
Total Wages and Stipend Earned by youth	\$2,122,342

How well did we do it?

Enrollment: Average progress toward projected number of youth served ¹	118%
Total Service Hours: Average progress toward projected total hours of service	113%
Average Hours of Service: Average progress toward projected average hours of service	99%
Job Placement: Youth placed in a job or internship	80%
Work Experience: Youth receiving at least 10 hours of work experience	73%
Safety: Youth who agreed that they felt safe in their program	94%
Caring Adults: Youth who agreed that there is an adult at their program who really cares about them	87%

Is Anyone Better Off?

Career Goals: Youth who agreed that they learned about jobs they can have in the future	93%
Employment Skills: Youth who agreed that they learned what is expected of them in a work setting	92%
Interpersonal Skills: Youth who agreed that they learned how to get along with others in a work setting	91%

The remainder of this report includes the following sections aligned with this RBA framework:

- 1) Overview of Programs and Participants
- 2) How much did the programs provide?
- 3) How well did programs do it?
- 4) Is anyone better off as a result of the strategy's work?

¹ At the start of the fiscal year, programs estimate their annual enrollment and the total number of hours of service they will provide. Progress is calculated as the actual enrollment divided by the projected enrollment.

Programs and Participants

CAES programs offer career development and leadership opportunities to meet the diverse needs of Oakland's youth.

During FY21-22, 1,820 unduplicated youth participated in the Career Awareness and Employment (CAES) programs. These programs provided job training, leadership development, college and career counseling, academic services, and placements in jobs and internships. Participants included opportunity youth, justice-involved youth, and youth who face high barriers to self-sufficiency. While the ongoing pandemic continued to pose recruitment challenges, programs offered programming to connect with young people in virtual and physical spaces, such as in-person one-on-one leadership development, on-site and remote vocational trainings, virtual orientations, , and virtual job readiness workshops.

Adapting to the moment - amid changing COVID protocols and limits on external internships - proved essential to programs' success. When external internships were extremely limited, programs created internal internships and developed additional work sites to continue to engage youth in career-building opportunities.

“So, we pivoted. Instead of building indoors, we built outside. Instead of doing this, we did that... We just moved in directions to make sure we could meet our young people there and keep them safe.”

- Staff, Youth Employment Partnership's Level Up

Program Spotlight

To inform this report, SPR conducted interviews and focus groups with staff and/or youth participants from four programs:

Center for Young Women's Development's Sisters on the Rise provided justice-involved youth with an employment training internship to develop their leadership and entrepreneurship skills and offered opportunities for healing and self-care as they prepare to transition to sustainable employment.

Civicorps Academic and Professional Pathway provided youth with paid internship opportunities to help them gain job experience while re-engaging them to earn their high school diplomas, pursue college, and begin sustainable careers.

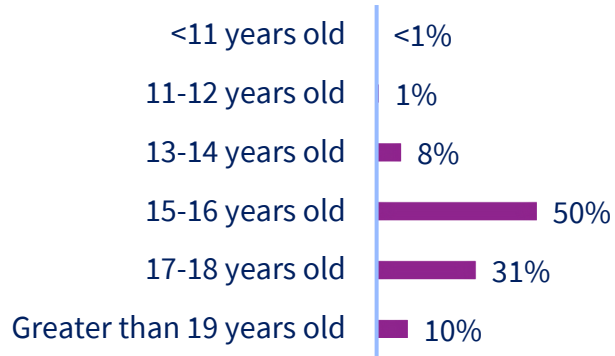
Youth Employment Partnership's Level Up - Options for Real Careers provided educational opportunities and work experience to opportunity youth, with vocational training in an area of their choice, including automotive, construction, culinary, document processing, or warehouse/logistics.

Lao Family Community Development's Oakland Youth Industries Exploration Program provided employment opportunities, academic support, and wraparound support to low-income youth who were not enrolled in school or employed.

Programs were most likely to serve high-school aged youth, but 10% of youth served were age 19 or above.

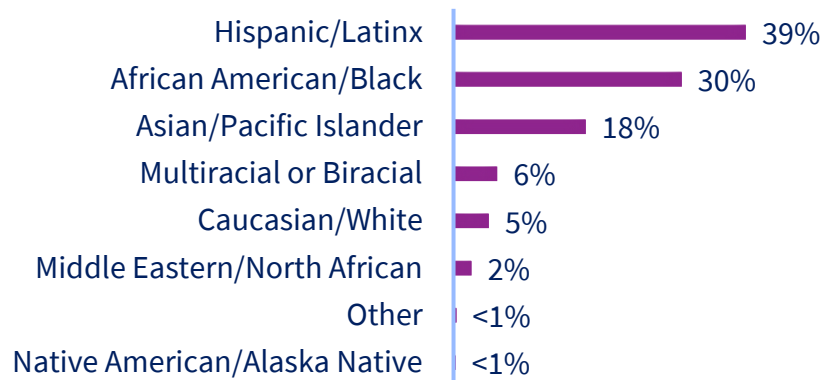
In line with the focus on preparing youth for productive adulthood, most youth served by the career awareness programs were age 15 or older. As shown in the chart on the following page, programs were most likely to serve high-school aged youth, but 10% of youth served were age 19 or above.

Age of Participants



Aligned with the goal of reducing race-based disparities in employment, programs served predominantly Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) youth residing in under-resourced communities. As shown in the graph below, over 85% of participants identified as Latinx, Black, or Asian and Pacific Islander.

Race/Ethnicity of OFCY CAES Participants and Oakland

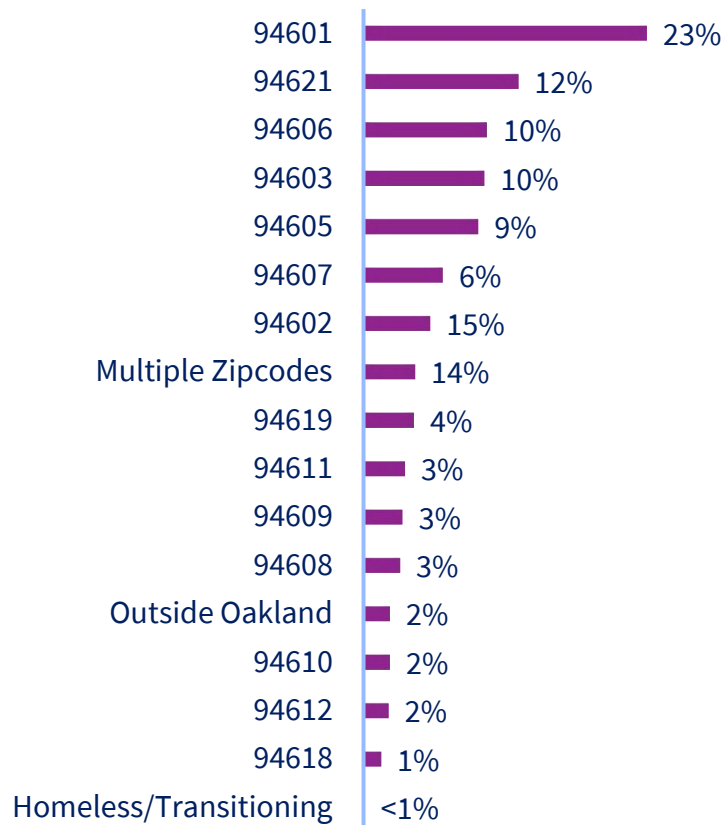


As illustrated below, most participants lived in zip codes that experience high levels of community stress, including Fruitvale, Webster Tract, Sobrante Park, and Eastmont.

Relative to the city's population, youth who identify as Latinx, Black, or Asian and Pacific Islander were most likely to be served.

Most participants lived in zip codes that experience high levels of community stress, including Fruitvale, Webster Tract, Sobrante Park, and Eastmont.

Zipcode of Residence

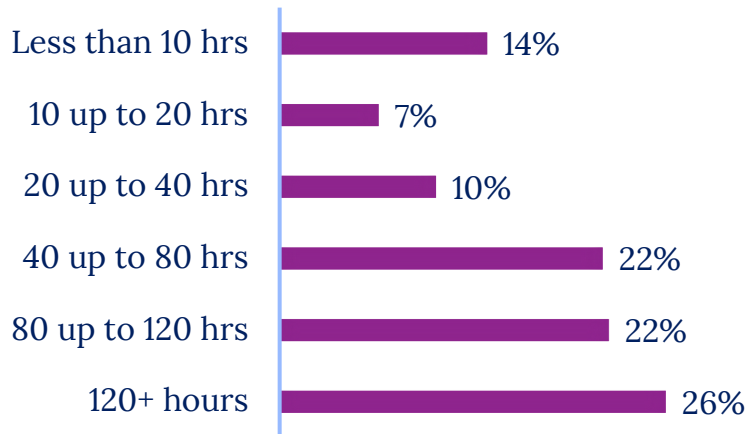


How Much Did Programs Do?

Programs provided 187,339 hours of service. During the ongoing pandemic, programs developed hybrid approaches to allow youth to safely participate in programming, such as offering virtual orientations and remote job readiness training. In addition to developing COVID protocols to allow for social distancing on site, programs provided youth with virtual work site opportunities, as many youth did not feel safe working in person. Over two-thirds of youth (69%) received 40 or more hours of career awareness and employment support services. About 8% of participants attended more than one career program.

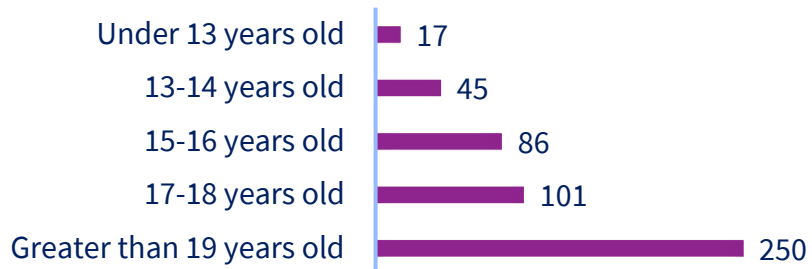
Youth spent an average of 103 hours in career awareness programming, job training, and work placements.

Total Hours of Service Provided



On average, youth spent 103 hours in programming. As shown below, older youth spent more time in career programming and work experience opportunities than their younger peers, consistent with the needs of youth as they transition to adulthood.

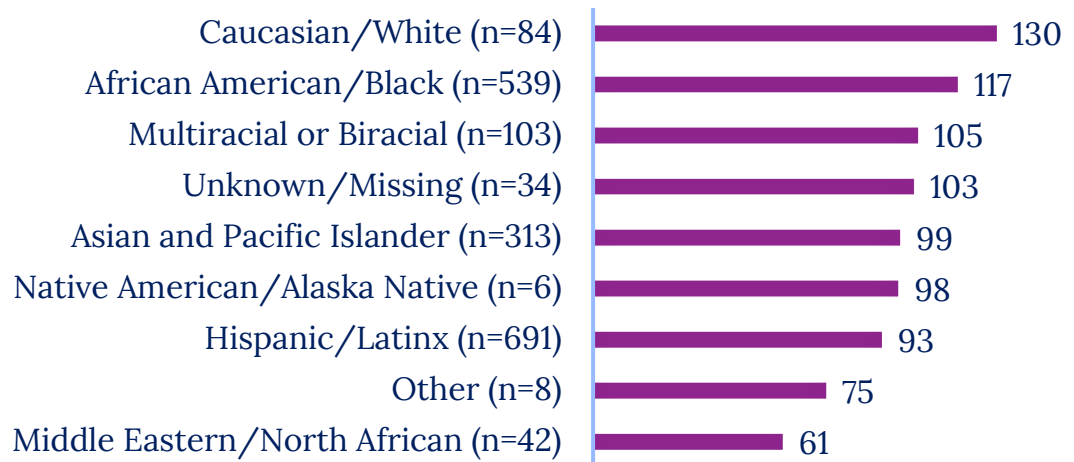
Hours of Attendance by Age



The number of hours spent in programming varied somewhat by race/ethnicity. As shown below, Caucasian/White and African American/Black youth had the highest average hours of participation.

Older youth spent more time in career programming and work experience opportunities than their younger peers.

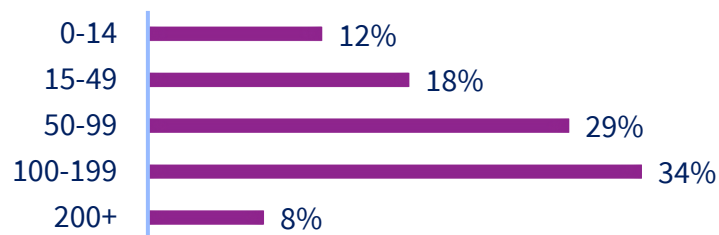
Average Hours of Participation by Race/Ethnicity



1,456 youth participated in job and internship placements, spending an average of 95 hours in work settings.

Through their programs, 1,456 unduplicated youth (80% of all participants) engaged in jobs and internship opportunities. Programs creatively modified placements to provide valuable career exploration and work experiences despite limited external opportunities, such as creating internal internships as part of construction, administration, or culinary projects. The amount of time participants spent in work settings varied. As shown below, more than one-third of those placed into a job spent 100 hours or more in work setting.

Hours of Work Experience

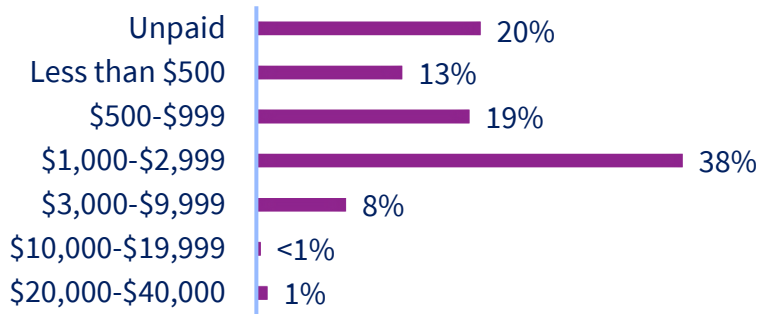


In addition to gaining experience, 80% of youth and young people participating in placements received a wage that ranged from less than \$100 to \$37,900. On average, these participants earned about \$1,825 for their time and effort. Overall, programs distributed \$2,122,342 in stipends and wages to youth.

80% of youth placed in work experience earned a wage, ranging from less than \$100 to \$37,900.

Older youth in programs that focus on transitions to unsubsidized employment generally received higher wages than other participants.

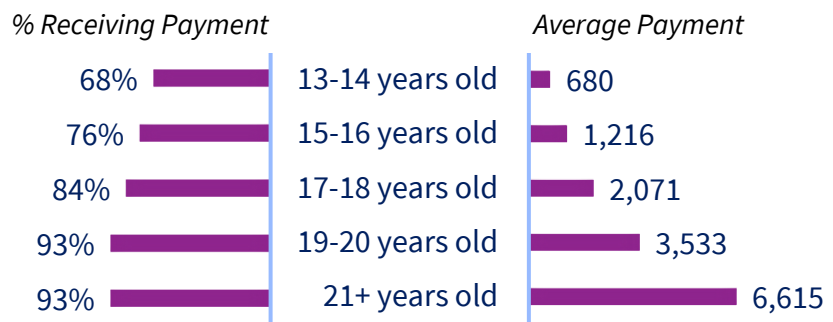
Wages Earned by Youth in Work Experience Placements



The amount earned depended on the time youth spent in placements and the type of work experience they received. Programs designed to prepare older youth to transition into unsubsidized employment generally offered hourly wages, while programs focused career exploration generally provided a flat stipend and served younger participants.

For example, 33% of youth of received a wage at Alameda Health System’s Oakland Health Careers Collaborative, where middle and high school students shadowed medical professionals, attended seminars, and learned about a range of medical professions. Those who received a paid placement earned an average of \$453. In contrast, at Civicorps Academic and Professional Pathway, where young adults received between \$14 to \$19 per hour for paid job training and on-the-job experience in environmental management and recycling, the average payment was \$7,890 and 15% of participants received over \$20,000. On

Wages Earned, by Age



African American youth were more likely to receive a stipend or wages.

average, participants earning over \$20,000 spent 1,412 hours in their placements.

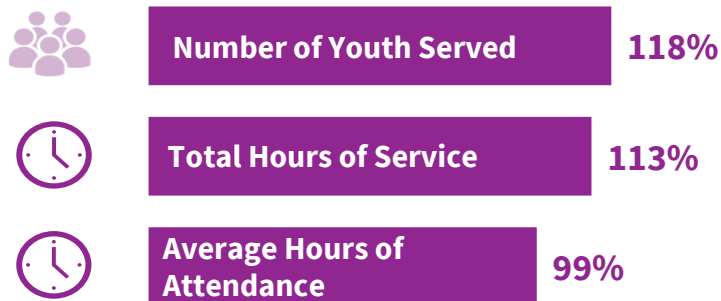
As shown on the previous page, older youth were more likely to receive a wage and, among those who did were paid, earned more than their younger peers. They generally spent more time in their placements and were more likely to receive wages. Notably, African American youth were more likely to receive a wage compared to other youth (95% versus 74%).

How Well Did Programs Do It?

On average, programs met or exceeded their enrollment and attendance goals.

OFCY tracks a series of indicators to assess how well grantees have implemented their programming. The first three indicators include progress toward projected program enrollment, total hours of service, and average hours of service per participant. As shown below, program attendance and enrollment were strong: on average, programs enrolled 118% of the youth they anticipated, provided 113% of their anticipated hours of service, and were at 99% of their average hours of attendance goal.

Program Performance: Progress Toward Projections



In addition to these performance measures, the Career Awareness and Employment Support strategy has indicators of program quality, including the percentage of youth who received work experience, and youth perceptions of critical aspects of programming. As mentioned previously, 80% of

participants were placed in a job or internship. Further, 73% spent at least ten hours in their work placement.

As shown below, the 684 participants who completed a survey generally felt safe and connected to adults that cared about them in their programs

Program Quality: Youth Survey Scores (n=684)

Safety **94%**

Youth who agree that they feel safe in their program.

Caring Adults **87%**

Youth who agree that there is an adult who cares

Programs emphasized that ensuring youth’s physical and emotional safety was their number one priority over the course of the pandemic. Programs limited in-person interactions, implemented social distancing measures by utilizing outdoor classrooms and rearranging staff offices, and got creative, such as creating a mask-making station on site. In addition, programs provided face shields, face masks, and in some cases vaccination clinics.

Program participants emphasized how staff created a caring environment by checking in on them and supporting their interests. Youth reported that staff helped place them in internships that matched their interests and felt that staff were genuinely looking out for them.

“When I’m in the program I feel like I belong a lot in that I’m very welcomed there, because connecting back to what we said earlier about how supportive the staff were...I feel like it’s like a family there, it’s not an office. It’s more like a family where everyone supports each other.”

- Participant, Lao Family Community Development’s Oakland Youth Industries Exploration

Over 90% of the youth surveyed agreed that they met outcomes related to employment skills, career goals, and interpersonal skills.

Is Anyone Better Off?

As part of the RBA framework, OFCY tracks indicators of job and career readiness to assess if program participants are better off because they participated. As shown below, the vast majority of youth reported gaining the experience and skills that the Career Awareness and Employment Support strategy aims to provide.

Participant Outcomes: Youth Survey Scores (n=684)

Career Goals

93%

Youth who agree that they learned about jobs they can have in the future

Employment Skills

92%

Youth who agree that they learned what is expected in a work setting

Interpersonal Skills

91%

Youth who agree that the program taught them how to get along with others in a work setting

In addition to these RBA indicators, participant survey data and program interviews tell a more comprehensive story about the ways that career awareness programs prepare youth for success in youth employment and their future careers.

“[I learned]...not just [about] being more open but also knowing that even if I don't know exactly what I'm going to do in the future, there are ways that I can build up to that level by gaining different skills and experiences.”

– Oakland Youth Industries Exploration Participant

87% of youth surveyed agreed: This program helps me to understand how to get the kind of job I want.

94% of youth surveyed agreed: In this program, I try new things.

Awareness of Job and Career Options

Programs provided hands-on opportunities for participants to explore different careers through internship and job placements. While many programs continued to offer virtual and hybrid job placement options, some programs were able to offer fully in-person job opportunities. For example, Youth Employment Partnership's Level Up was able to work with local businesses to develop over 30 external internship sites, which was not an option in FY20-21 due to the pandemic. In addition to these external internships, Level Up created internal internships involving construction, administration, culinary and mosaic art projects.

Development of Technical Skills

Programs supported technical skill development through training and on-the-job experience, which they offered through a combination of virtual, hybrid, and in-person formats to meet the needs and safety concerns of youth. Programs helped youth earn industry recognized certifications in fields such as warehouse logistics, construction, culinary arts, and environmental services (e.g., using chainsaws and rush cutters). Furthermore, programs such as Civicorps Academic and Professional Pathway and Youth Employment Partnership's Level Up offered job training alongside coursework, allowing youth to simultaneously work towards completing their education requirements (e.g., to obtain their high school diploma).

Professionalism and Work Soft Skills

Programs provided youth with opportunities to build their professionalism and soft skills through activities such as public speaking or workshop facilitation. For example, after undergoing outreach trainings, youth interns at Center for Young Women's Development's Sisters on the Rise began developing outreach strategies to reach youth in their

92% of youth agreed: Because of this job, I learned new skills that will help me to get a job (e.g., job search, interviewing, and resume development).

community. As a result, the interns successfully co-facilitated virtual workshops on topics such as navigating systems and self-advocacy. The Annual Summer Youth Conference hosted by Lao Family Community Development's Oakland Youth Industries Exploration Program also provided youth with opportunities to learn about career paths, increase their networking skills, and increase their self-confidence through public speaking engagements.

Moreover, programs engaged youth in comprehensive job readiness trainings to build their repertoire of soft skills. For example, Youth Employment Partnership's Level Up offered a three-week, hybrid Job Readiness Training. Half of the training involved on-site vocational training, job training workshops, and education, and the other half included remote employability activities, where youth learned financial literacy, communication, and conflict management skills. As part of addressing professionalism in the workplace, Center for Young Women's Development's Sisters on the Rise developed a framework called "Writing for Power" that encouraged youth organizing interns to highlight their own experience as expertise. Furthermore, youth attended fully in-person job readiness trainings that taught skills such as setting up a professional email, working on a team, practicing time management, and recording time on payroll systems. Center for Young Women's Development's Sisters on the Rise also offered various other

"I used to be a very shy person and would hate public speaking but being in this program gave me different opportunities to get out of my comfort zone. And specifically this past summer, I was able to help MC their summer conference, so that I think really helped improve my public speaking."

- Lao Family Community Development's Oakland Youth Industries Exploration Program

trainings to engage youth interns, including outreach, self-defense, and critical consciousness trainings.

Differences in Outcomes by Youth Subgroups

An analysis of survey responses by subgroup revealed some differences in outcomes across race and age:

- Out-of-school youth were the most likely to agree with questions related to having positive connections to adults, followed by students in 11th or 12th grade. Students in 10th grade or below were least likely to report positive connections to adults.
- Asian and Pacific Islander participants were less likely than their peers to report feeling safe in their program or having an adult in their program that cares for them.²

Conclusion

In summary, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Career Awareness and Employment Strategy continued to connect youth to job readiness training, career exploration, and work experience. In response to limited work opportunities and the hesitance that some youth felt about working in public settings, programs devised new strategies to safely expose youth to careers and work experience, such as providing virtual work opportunities and creating new internships within their organizations. As a result of these experiences, most youth agreed that they had learned career options, better understand how to find the job they want, and developed soft skills for the work setting.

² This finding was consistent when controlling for program of enrollment. In other words, this was not driven by enrollment in certain programs.