

AGN. NO. \_\_\_\_\_

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS  
AND JANICE HAHN

JUNE 13, 2017

**Countywide Youth Bridges Program**

While LA County unemployment has dropped to 4.1%, youth unemployment is at 10.3%. With the recent homeless count showing a marked and disproportionate increase in youth homelessness, now is the time for the County to do everything possible to support even more effective career pathways for youth – before they become disconnected from the workforce, education, housing, and social networks.

Since 2006, the Board of Supervisors (Board) has spearheaded regional efforts, working with private business and other public sector partners, to provide meaningful work experience to tens of thousands of at-risk youth through the Los Angeles County Youth Jobs Program (LACYJ). Through this model of public-private partnership the County's dollars have been matched threefold by employer support, resulting in significant private sector employment for youth facing challenging barriers to employment. Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) reports that in 2016 it enrolled 16,611 youth of which 10,244 found employment, completed a training program, or enrolled in school. Of these participants, 1,466 were

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youth from the foster care system and 1,173 were parenting youth, demonstrating the program's success in helping youth overcome significant barriers on their career paths.

Effective July 1, 2017, the County is launching Youth@Work, the new youth-centered regional workforce development system, which expands, improves upon, and replaces the Earn & Learn model established by LACYJ by pairing work experience and personal enrichment training with a more comprehensive and strategic set of career path opportunities geared on employment, training and supportive services for at-risk youth. This Board's continuance of funding this year for Youth@Work secures the foundation for the Countywide response to the crisis of disconnected youth, unemployment and homelessness. To maintain the \$12.9 million in Youth@Work funding level from last year, the proposed County 2017/18 Budget recognized \$6.9 million as one-time-only funding with the remaining \$6 million needed for level funding deferred to Supplemental Changes. County funding is complemented significantly by Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding. Unfortunately, the President's FFY 2018 budget proposes a national \$265 million, or close to 40%, cut to the WIOA Youth Training program from \$873 million to \$523 million, as well as elimination of several subsidized student loan programs. Now is the time for the County to send a clear message to the White House that our country cannot afford to cut youth employment and training programs.

While Youth@Work supports a regional workforce development system to connect private sector employers with qualified at-risk youth workers, the County itself has several programs internally that provide these youth pathways to careers in the

public sector. Through the recently completed second Los Angeles County Economic Development Scorecard, Departments reported 2016 outcomes for various models of employment and training assistance targeted for at-risk youth:

- Arts Commission, Arts Internship Program – 130 internship completions
- Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
  - Bridges to Work - 70 of 101 youth returning to employment or school
  - Youth Worker - 20 internship participants
- Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), GAIN Transitional Subsidized Employment (TSE) for DCFS Independent Living Program Youth - 88 of 100 participating foster youth finding employment
- Probation, Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA)
  - Educational Pathways - 40 of 215 youth with criminal justice system involvement completing supportive services
  - Employment Services - 18 of 516 youth with criminal justice system involvement finding employment
- Department of Human Resources (DHR), Career Development Internship - 41 of 66 participating emancipating foster care youth completed the program leading to employment in County Departments, contributing to the 5% entry-level hiring goal as called for in the Board's January 7, 2014 Motion.

Although not captured on the Scorecard, additional departments have leveraged Youth@Work to create and offer County career pathway programs, including:

- Every year our County Libraries open their doors to almost 200 youth and

provide them opportunities to learn about career pathways in library sciences while simultaneously extending their ability to deliver quality services to Library patrons and to date six youth have been hired as permanent staff.

- The Parks After Dark program has provided well over 500 youth with robust work experience and civic pride and is expanding to additional parks in 2017.
- Over 100 youth at camp each year participate in Probation work experience.
- The LA County Sheriff Career Youth Program and the LA County Public Safety Prep Program (Including Fire Service Careers Pilot) operate to prepare interested underrepresented youth preparation for entry-level positions in the law enforcement, fire and other public safety occupations.
- Since 2013, the Department of Public Works (DPW) has implemented the Youth Opportunity Program for youth leaving the Probation system, providing an 18 month intensive program including mentoring, case management, and paid internships in order to transition into the workforce, including entry-level positions in DPW. Three youth participated in 2016.
- The My Brother's Keeper Initiative has a strong component around equitable youth employment.
- DHR has launched the implementation of the Temp Registry.

We must commend the work of County Departments for taking the first step by establishing pilot programs serving hundreds of youth last year. Sadly, the scale of the problem is much greater and growing and merits a scaled, systematic approach that builds on these efforts. Through these best practices, inter-departmental collaboration,

and coordinated information sharing, County Departments can come together to set ambitious yet achievable Countywide goals and track outcomes. The County can leverage the Youth@Work pipeline and provide meaningful opportunities proportionate to the over 10,000 placements made with private sector partners last year.

**WE THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors

- 1) Direct the Director of Personnel, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS), to establish the Countywide Youth Bridges Program (Program) to serve as the County's central resource across all County Departments for achieving Countywide goals in facilitating talent acquisition and on-boarding and pairing work experience and personal enrichment training for at-risk youth with a more comprehensive and strategic set of career path opportunities geared on employment, training and supportive services;
- 2) Direct the Director of Personnel to report back in writing within 90 days with an implementation plan for Board approval for the Countywide Youth Bridges Program, including but not limited to a description of goals, processes, methods for tracking individuals, measures for success, required staffing, and requested funding. The program implementation plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. Coordination with WDACS, with assistance from CEO, to utilize the County's Youth@Work system as the primary mechanism for the Countywide Youth Bridges Program to outreach, source qualified at-risk youth candidates, and track metrics and reporting standards for job placement, training, job retention, salary, and longer-term career pathways, including careers in the County and targeted industries, consistent with those required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA);

- b. A scan of all departments with existing youth employment and training programs consistent with the Board's February 28, 2017 Motion on Countywide Workforce Development Plan Coordination. Review and analyze the results of the scan for potential alignment of efforts under standard Countywide metrics as established by the Countywide Youth Bridges Program and identify leveraged resources in support thereof. Develop a proposal for Board approval that would bring these existing programs into alignment under the single Countywide Youth Bridges Program by December 31, 2017;
- c. A plan for all departments and County agencies that do not have existing youth employment and training programs to develop and commence coordinated implementation of Departmental programs consistent with the proposed Countywide Youth Bridges Program model by the beginning of Fiscal Year 2018/19;
- d. Goals and implementation strategies to achieve County outcomes equivalent to at least 10% of the private sector rates for comparable metrics in Youth@Work by the end of Fiscal Year 2018/19, increasing to 25% by Fiscal Year 2020/21;
- e. Emphasis should be given to coordination among County departments to maximize employment and training opportunities for youth already served by County social service, housing, or other programs;
- f. An evaluation of the need for a convening or task force of stakeholders to develop the Program, including comprehensive recruitment, training, and mentorship activities, including representatives from the Board of Supervisors, CEO, WDACS, departmental management, labor organizations, community-based organizations, Social Enterprises, education providers, and/or America's Jobs Centers of California;

- g. An evaluation of the need for implementation monitoring teams comprised of management, labor organization representatives, and employees to coordinate the different divisions within each department to assure that positions are being filled per Countywide Youth Bridges Program hiring plans;
  - h. Proposed quarterly reports with identified metrics that will be submitted to this Board and its Economic Development Policy Committee for inclusion in the quarterly Economic Development Scorecard; and
- 3) Direct the CEO's Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations staff, in coordination with WDACS, to work with the County's legislative advocates in Washington, D.C. to oppose budget cuts to WIOA Youth Training programs, subsidized student loan programs, and other Federal programs that provide opportunities for youth to obtain new skills, employment, training or education, and communicate with the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation that the Board views youth employment and training funding as a critical issue and requests to be included in the Federal policy discussion pertaining to these issues.

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