

## YouthBuild McLean County Contract Abstract

This contract has been entered into for the purpose of providing Transition Services to participants of Career Link's youth drop-out recovery programs. The contract began July 1, 2021 and will terminate on June 30, 2022. This contract is renewable for two additional years at the discretion of Career Link. The funding amount is \$105,000. YouthBuild McLean County will assist students in dropout recovery programs to successfully complete the GED and transition to work, post-secondary or the military. YouthBuild expects to serve up to 30 students.

YouthBuild McLean County will provide the intensive education and employment skills program for youth served by Heartland Community College. It is envisioned that the staff would be similar to a mentor. Although not exactly a mentor, that word will be used hereafter for ease of reference. A key component will be for the mentors to build a relationship with the student. Both the GED provider and Career Link will facilitate the establishment of this relationship. Mentors will provide support and guidance to the student. The mentor will be familiar with additional resources to help address these barriers. The mentor will be actively engaged during the GED preparation phase and for at least six months after the student receives their GED. Further participation will depend on the circumstances that the student finds himself or herself in. The Career Link Career Planner and the mentor will discuss the need for further involvement. Typically, if the student enrolls in post-secondary training there would be an expectation for at least one semester of continued contact.

YouthBuild's staff will regularly communicate with students to build a relationship and provide them with support and guidance through their transition to work, post-secondary or the military after they have completed their GED. Providing consistent communication will be a key factor to aid students in their completion of the program and future success. The subcontractor's staff will also be involved in the process of the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) to assist the students in achieving their benchmarks and will assess the Individual Service Strategy for each student on a quarterly basis.

The concept of the Transitions Services Program facilitated by YouthBuild will focus on building the youths' personal board of directors, exposure to opportunities, and accessing support and services to achieve goals. The program will equip youth with the necessary resources of positive knowledgeable adults, understanding and access to opportunities and support services that result in high demand employment or postsecondary placement upon completion of their GED. The youth participants will be assigned an individual case manager that will assist them with barrier removal, guidance through career/postsecondary and transitions and provide follow up support.

The program will be evaluated bi-monthly and have bi-monthly goals. Goals include, but are not limited to, engagement and participation levels of students, attendance at workshops and lab experience days, barriers removed that youth identified on the intake assessment or through interaction with their case manager and various other areas surrounding youth development and progress toward a successful transition.

The youth will have opportunities to participate in monthly workshops with community partner providers coordinated by YouthBuild Case Managers and Supportive Service Director that include housing services/housing funding, criminal background sealing, mental health and emotional wellness, high demand employment exploration, mock interviewing, resume development, and mentoring. Youth will also have the opportunity to participate in monthly workshops surrounding postsecondary education processes/pathways and FAFSA and scholarships in partnership with various education institutions and coordinated by the Development Director. Additional workshop topics may be added according to barriers youth list on the intake assessment completed at the second case management meeting. Youth will also complete the Everfii Financial Literacy program.

All participating youth will have access to a variety of engaging, youth focused activities such as job and career fairs, our annual "Next Step Inspiration" fair, youth in government days, leadership development activities, college visits and training center tours. Employer based soft skill trainings, internship fairs, mock interviews, armed service seminars and many more career focused training opportunities will be made available to all youth participants to provide as much information possible to make informed career choices.

In addition to supportive services available for program participants like bus passes, access to professional clothing, post-secondary education supplies/enrollment fees, registration fees for childcare and application fees for housing YouthBuild McLean County will provide incentive payments for achieving successful program milestones. A financial incentive system will be offered to encourage perseverance and participation in goal-directed activities. Incentives may be modified, with prior approval from Career Link, as the need arises to make them more effective and appropriate in promoting program successes.