

Youth Program Update - Summer 2009

- Due to the receipt of funds this spring from the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA), our program's emphasis is now on creating summer employment opportunities for an expanded number of youth. The eligibility age was increased to 24 and we extended our search for "green jobs".
- We expanded our summer staff in April to include another Youth Workforce Specialist, a worksite coordinator, and an administrative support person.
- We completed our weekly Job Search Skills Classes until the end of May for our year round participants in order to ensure that they received the planned skills and stipends until our summer program began.
- Three days of Spring Break Programming were held at the youth center for our year round participants including:
 - a career exploration event at the Jelly Belly Factory
 - a community service event for Community Action Agency where we made educational board games for Head Start participants
 - a hands-on activity with an Art Therapist as well as a presentation about the field
 - visited Kohl's to purchase interview outfits for youth
 - Ice Skating to promote teamwork and encouragement of the development of new skills
- Increased the total number of youth participants to 239
 - 57 youth participants in our year round program
 - 182 new participants in our summer program (all recruited and processed since April)
- Participants in our summer program will:
 - Complete required work readiness activities using Illinois WorkNet including:
 - quizzes about their understanding of preparing for a job and good work behaviors
 - assessment activities including interest profilers
 - an online resume
 - conduct a job search
 - review interview tips
 - Gain work skills through a paid work experience at one of our monitored worksites
- 111 worksites throughout the county with participants who have been working since May1.
 - Youth's wages are subsidized by McHenry County Workforce Network
 - Supervision and mentoring is provided by the worksite supervisor with feedback given to youth staff
 - Evaluations and monitoring visits are completed with the youth, their supervisor, and a representative from the youth program
- Supportive services provided to those youth expressing other needs
 - Pace summer bus passes
 - Work clothes for an interview or for duties at the worksite
- 20 Participants working at an Outdoor Living Classroom through First Institute in which they are constructing Butterfly Gardens at the three middle schools in Crystal Lake.