



City of Cambridge

91.

IN CITY COUNCIL

September 14, 1992

MAYOR REEVES

RESOLVED: The attached report summarizes activities of the 1992 Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program and is included for informational purposes.

In City Council September 14, 1992.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

1992 Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program

SUMMARY

The Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program was expanded in 1992 to include youth 14 through 18 years of age. The program increased from employing 185 youth to employing 401 youth. In addition to the expansion of eligible ages, the program budget was expanded from \$117,000.00 in fiscal year 1991 to over \$291,000.00 in fiscal year 1992. This program was under the leadership of Joseph Grassi as Director and John Searcy and Wendy Powell as Assistant Directors.

The Program placed youth in non-profit organizations and municipal departments with salaries paid entirely through the program. The tasks performed by youth varied from entry-level day care and summer camp supervisors to clerical tasks to a performance group as well as many others. In addition to gaining entry-level skills, the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program was an opportunity for youth to develop appropriate work behaviors, discuss issues with counselors who serve as positive role models and learn about the world of work.

Each youth was assigned a counselor who played a vital role in the day-to-day supervision of the youth. Twenty-eight counselors were hired in 1992 which created a counselor to youth ratio of 1:14 thus allowing for close supervision. The role of the counselor was multi-faceted. To the youth, a counselor represents positive role model, teacher, resource person and friend. The counselor also substitutes for the network of school support which does not exist during the summer months. In many cases, counselors are the only support that exists for the youth during this time of the year.

In addition to the day-to-day supervision, counselors assisted youth with on the job conflicts that arose. They were available to both youth and worksite supervisors to discuss the performance of the youth. Counselors, through group and individual discussions, stressed the importance of the development of good work ethics, as well as encouraged youth to recognize the bridge between education and work. Counselors were also available to youth to discuss issues in their personal lives and provide referrals to appropriate social service agencies when deemed necessary.

Given the fact that most of the youth served were very young and this was the first job for many of them, a heavy emphasis was placed on the learning of valuable employment skills. This philosophy was consistent with worksite assignments, matching so as to give the youth meaningful experiences. All worksites submitted applications outlining duties and responsibilities of the youth.

After evaluating all of the worksites, several worksites were denied participation in the program because the positions would not have given the youth a meaningful job experience.

Youth worked in a number of capacities at a multitude of worksites such as summer day camps, day care centers, city departments and educational employment programs. In addition to screening for the best worksites, other worksites were developed and structured to have a lasting impact on the youth, their peers and the community as a whole. One of these worksites was the Department of Public Works. Usually youth are assigned to the Department of Public Works in litter patrols around the city. This year the group was assigned to a different task every week to expose them to various areas of responsibility within public works. Youth rotated between the welding shop, litter patrol, paint crew, landscaping, horticulture and sidewalk repair.

After meeting with Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) General Manager John Haley, the Mayor secured a grant of \$20,000 to fund the MBTA Beautification Brigade. It was created to research litter patterns and to clean up around train and bus facilities in Central Square. The group presented their research findings and specific suggestions at the August meeting of the Commission to Promote and Enhance Central Square Now.

Two innovative programs, the performance troupe and the Word-Up Program, required youth to audition for these special programs. The performance troupe, under the direction of Dreamers, Inc., created and practiced its show for four weeks and performed during the final two weeks of the program at community centers, parks, senior centers, housing complexes and at the end-of-the-summer picnic. The Word-Up Program's youth explored issues that affect their everyday lives. These issues were discussed, worked into scripts and then performed on radio spots which will be played on Boston-area radio stations. WGBH donated over 50 hours of production time and an engineer to the Word-Up project.

Youth were notified of the program through local newspapers and through flyers distributed through Cambridge schools and teen centers. In one of the first steps of the application process, we assessed the skills, interests and abilities of the youth. The purpose of the assessment was two-fold. First, the process allowed us to place youth where they would have an opportunity to refine existing skills and acquire new ones. In addition, the process also ensured compatible job matching.

The evaluation process allowed us to look at both qualitative and quantitative outcomes, both intended and unanticipated, which served as a means for us to monitor the overall management and effectiveness of the program. All participants of the program were required to take part in the evaluation process, this included worksite and counselor evaluation of the youth, counselor evaluation of worksites, worksite evaluations of counselors and program, counselor evaluation of program and the youth evaluation

of counselor and program. Youth were encouraged to use their evaluations as a tool to monitor their progress throughout the summer. The evaluation also served as a way to empower youth, giving them an avenue to express their thoughts on their experiences, their relationships with their counselors and what changes and additions they recommended for future programming.

The 1992 Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program was structured to give the youth some formal employment skill training in addition to meaningful work experience. On the first day of employment, all youth participated in an orientation which taught some basic skills thought to be successful during summer. At the end of the program, all youth participated in an employment workshop geared toward teaching them skills such as networking, resume writing and interview skills.

The program ended with a picnic planned for Danehy Park, but was moved to Rindge and Latin High School due to rain. At the event, youth were given a barbecued lunch, played athletic games and received information on year-round employment opportunities. They were addressed by the Mayor, listed to the MBTA Beautification Brigade's findings and suggestions, and watched the performance troupe's show.

STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

In keeping with the past practices of the program, this year's statistical profile of the participants focuses on four key demographic variables, race, gender, age and residential location.

By Race/Ethnicity (in percent)

Race/Ethnicity	Total
Black	43.4%
White	36.1%
Hispanic	10.5%
Asian	2.0%
Other	8.0%
Total	100.0%

**By Gender
(in percent)**

Gender	Total
Male	53%
Female	47%
Total	100%

Almost three quarters of the programs participants were either age 14 or 15. In fact, seventy-two percent of the program participants were 14 or 15 years of age, while 27.1% of the youth were in the 16-18 year age group. More than half of the program's participants were 15 years old.

More positions for 14 and 15 years of age were made available than for the older age categories. The philosophy behind this was consistent with past Mayor's Programs which only focused on teens 14 and 15 years of age and the fact that only a limited number of positions for the younger age group are available through other employment programs in Cambridge or even the private sector.

**By Age
(in percent)**

Age	Total
18	8.9%
17	14.0%
16	5.0%
15	55.9%
14	16.2%
	100.0%

The neighborhoods in which the participants lived were determined by their residential addresses. As shown in the table below, Area 4 at 20.0% represents the largest concentration of participants in the program while North Cambridge follows closely with 18.5% of the participants. The Agassiz neighborhood had the lowest number of participants in the program this year.

**By Area
(in percent)**

Area	Total
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Agassiz	1.2%
Riverside	8.0%
East Cambridge	6.7%
Harrington - Wellington	10.0%
North Cambridge	18.5%
Area 4	20.0%
Mid Cambridge	6.5%
Strawberry Hill	5.7%
Highlands	2.7%
Neighborhood 9	2.0%
Neighborhood 10	3.2%
Cambridgeport	15.5%
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City Council SEP. 14 1992
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K. Margaret Drury

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Consent Order # 91

Mayor Reeves report of the 1992 Mayor's
Summer Youth Employment Program.

In City Council,

Sept. 14, 1992

Order Adopted