

Proposal 5: Expanding Summer Employment Opportunities for Low-Income Youth

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Introduction

Youth employment rates have decreased dramatically over the past decade as the economy has faltered and the youth population has grown, as shown in figure 5-1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics n.d.). Unemployment rates among youth are especially acute during the summer, as more teens temporarily enter the labor force (Morisi 2010; Sum et al. 2008). In response to this problem, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided summer jobs for low-income youth with the goal of improving workforce readiness, although this increase in the availability of summer jobs was temporary (Bellotti et al. 2010). This policy memo offers a proposal to strengthen and expand work-related summer activities with the goal of fostering the skill development, education, and economic success of low-income youth.

Summer jobs should be part of a broader strategy for poverty alleviation, with the potential to benefit disadvantaged youth in multiple ways. In addition to providing work experience and an immediate income transfer to low-income youth, an emerging body of research also suggests that summer youth employment programs (SYEPs) can improve educational outcomes and social and emotional development, and decrease negative behaviors (including criminal behaviors), at least in the short term (Heller 2014; Leos-Urbel forthcoming; Sum, Trubskyy, and McHugh 2013; Walker and Viella-Velez 1992). A number of states and localities offer SYEPs on varying scales, although the availability of jobs fluctuates year to year.

We propose that the federal government make grants to state and local governments to work with local community-based organizations (CBOs) on the expansion of summer job programs. Targeting low-income youth ages sixteen to nineteen (enrolled in or graduated from high school), these expanded programs would provide employment and training to young people who currently face many barriers to entering the workforce.

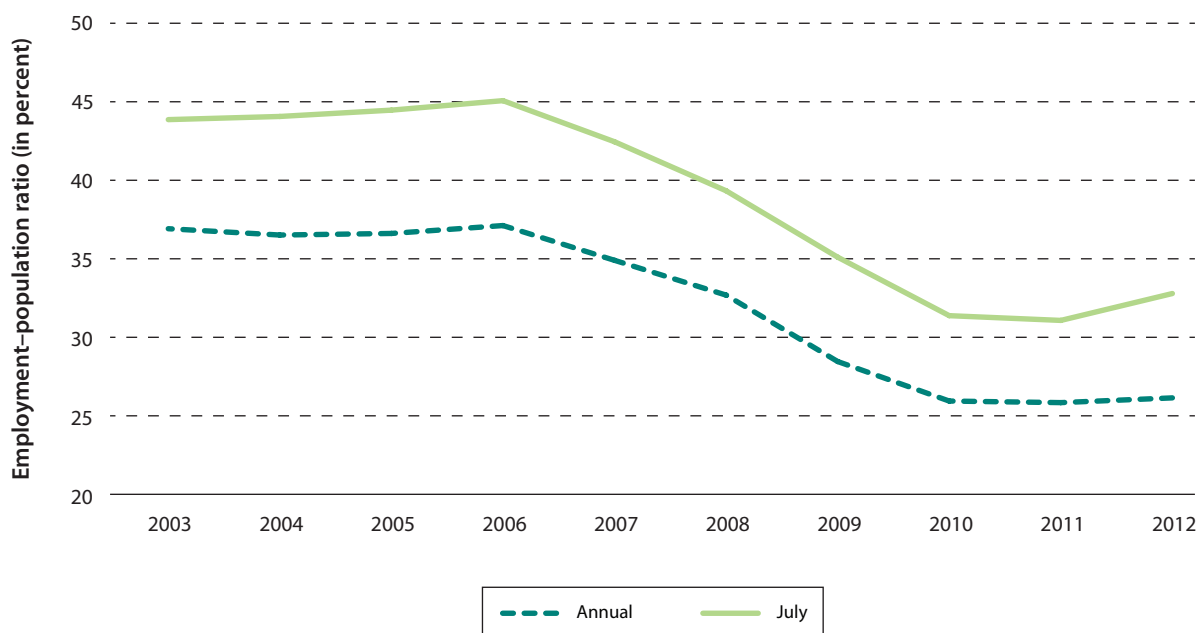
EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Emerging evidence indicates that summer jobs can do more than put a low-income youth to work. Using a rigorous lottery design, Leos-Urbel (forthcoming) finds that getting a job during the summer of 2007 through the SYEP in New York City (NYC) led to increases in school attendance in the following school year of roughly 1 percent overall and 3 percent for students who may be at greater educational risk. These effects are of a similar magnitude to some rigorously evaluated interventions that are explicitly designed to increase school attendance (Dee 2011; Riccio et al. 2010). A follow-up study by Schwartz et al. (in progress) examining the impact of the NYC program from 2006–2009 also finds small increases in school performance.

An earlier rigorous random-assignment evaluation of intensive summer jobs programs that included an academic component found that the programs increased reading and math scores in the short term (Walker and Viella-Velez 1992).¹ Notably, the evaluation found no long-term academic or employment

FIGURE 5-1.

Employment-Population Ratio, Youth Ages 16 to 19, 2003–2012



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics various years.

Note: Employment–population ratio is the ratio of employed youth to all youth in the civilian noninstitutional population.

differences, which has led some to conclude that summer jobs are not a good strategy for reducing poverty.² Another experimental evaluation found that a summer jobs program in Philadelphia increased the likelihood of youth getting a job, but did not change intermediate academic or employment outcomes (McClanahan, Sipe, and Smith 2004). This proposal builds on the lessons of these earlier programs but takes some different approaches, as we describe below.

Recent research also suggests that summer jobs can help reduce violent behavior and crime. Preliminary results from an experimental evaluation of One Summer Plus—which combined summer jobs with a cognitive behavioral therapy-based program aimed at reducing youth violence—indicate that the program led to a large decrease in violent-crime arrests (Heller 2014).³ A study of a summer jobs program in Boston finds that, compared to a comparison group of eligible youth from the program waiting list, program participants were significantly more likely to reduce risky and violent behaviors, including the use of drugs and alcohol, physical fighting, damaging property, and threatening someone with a weapon (Sum, Trubskyy, and McHugh 2013).⁴ The program also created much-needed jobs for program participants, as just 27 percent of youth in the comparison group were able to find a summer job. Finally, an experimental evaluation of the After School Matters—an after-school apprenticeship program

for high school students during the school year in Chicago—found improvements in behavior and social and emotional development, although it found no effect on academic outcomes (Hirsch et al. 2011). Importantly, 91 percent of students in the comparison group in Chicago were involved in some other after-school activity (most common) or paid work, indicating that the availability of other opportunities (i.e., the counterfactual of what they would have done without the program) may differ considerably during the school year, and suggesting that the summer may be an especially promising time for such interventions.

The Challenge

High youth unemployment rates and a shrinking supply of traditional summer job opportunities for youth can have serious implications for their financial well-being and ultimate labor market success (Rees 1986). Employment during high school is linked to higher incomes as they become adults (Painter 2010; Ruhm 1995). Furthermore, from an equity perspective, the availability of work opportunities for youth often varies by race and socioeconomic status (Morisi 2010). For instance, Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson (2000) find that white youth are more likely to work, though African American youth apply for jobs more often than whites. Also, in contrast

to many publicly funded out-of-school programs that struggle to recruit and retain high school students, jobs programs for youth often face demand that far exceeds supply.

Public policies to support summer jobs are not new, though the availability of jobs fluctuates. At the federal level, ARRA provided a temporary influx of funding for summer jobs for low-income youth that has since dried up (Bellotti et al. 2010). In particular, it provided \$1.2 billion for employment and training for disadvantaged youth ages fourteen to twenty-four, and employed 345,000 youth in the summer of 2009.⁵ These jobs were in high demand, as indicated by an evaluation of the program's implementation, which found that the number of applications received exceeded the number of job slots available at nineteen of the twenty job sites (ibid.). The U.S. Department of Labor, lacking funds to pay for summer jobs, coordinated the Summer Jobs+ program in the summer of 2012; this program sought pledges from companies and nonprofit organizations to provide summer work experiences for youth nationwide. The current iteration of this program is called Youth Jobs+.

Many cities and states also offer summer jobs programs. The largest is NYC's SYEP, which operated with a budget of \$45.6 million in federal, state, local, and private funds in 2013. That same year, the program received more than 135,000 applications and served almost 36,000 participants, down from more than 52,000 participants in 2009 when ARRA funds were available. In 2013 in Washington, DC, 14,000 youth participated in the summer jobs program, which was administered by the city's Department of Employment Services. (See table 5-A1 in appendix 5-A for information on other SYEP programs in select cities across the country.)

Despite these efforts, both the fluctuating availability of jobs and funding constraints have limited the number of disadvantaged youth who are able to participate in summer employment programs, presenting an opportunity within public policy to meet this important need.

A New Approach

We propose expanding summer jobs programs for low-income youth—ages sixteen to nineteen, in both urban and rural communities, and who are enrolled in or have graduated from high school—through a program that will pay participants the federal minimum wage for working twenty-five hours per week for six weeks. (These eligibility parameters were chosen in an effort to keep down program costs by targeting the youth most likely to see the largest gains from a summer work program.) In addition, the jobs program will contain an education and training component, and a request-for-

proposal process to encourage states and localities to innovate in providing training and services to youth, and to build on best practices.

Our central proposal calls for extending the program nationwide. We recognize, however, that such a rapid expansion may face severe budget and administrative constraints. An alternative to an immediate nationwide scale-up of the program is to implement a multiyear pilot program, along the guidelines presented below, to a select diverse group of cities and localities. Program outcomes would be subject to comprehensive review and evaluation, and initial funding for the pilot program would be set at one-tenth of the cost of the full-scale implementation. If the multiyear program is found to be effective at improving educational and labor market outcomes for the targeted population, the pilot program would be expanded with the goal of reaching all disadvantaged youth across the country.

We model our proposal on NYC's SYEP—the largest program of its type in the United States—and we also borrow from and integrate best practices from programs in other localities. Based on the lessons learned from the summer jobs created through ARRA and from the NYC program, we anticipate high demand and propose allocating slots through a random lottery system. This has the dual benefits of allocating positions fairly, and of allowing for rigorous evaluation of program effectiveness by randomly creating treatment and control groups of lottery winners and losers, respectively.

JOB PLACEMENTS

We propose that the federal government, through the U.S. Department of Labor, make grants to states to regulate and coordinate these jobs programs, which will then be administered by city and county governments.⁶ This grant-based program, in turn, will develop a request-for-proposal process to identify qualified CBOs that will administer the program locally. In the case of NYC, the city's Department of Youth and Community Development administers the SYEP, and contracts with CBOs throughout the city to place and supervise youth in summer jobs and to provide training. Appropriate agencies could include city or county agencies responsible for youth development, workforce development, and/or education. Local agencies then contract with CBOs, which place youth in summer jobs supervise and monitor these placements, and provide the program's education and training component. The most successful job training programs include experienced staff and close connections between the program training and work (Greenberg, Michalopoulos, and Robins 2003; Stanley, Katz, and Krueger 1998). CBOs should be selected through a competitive process to ensure they have the experience and qualifications to provide disadvantaged youth with effective

training and mentoring. Additionally, providers should have knowledge of the local labor market to ensure that the training is relevant and necessary for participants' success. Funds should be allocated in proportion to the number of students ages sixteen to nineteen in each state, in school or just graduated, and living in poverty. Ideally, contracts with CBOs will be fixed term and will be re-competed on a regular basis with specific performance evaluation criteria required for renewal to ensure the most qualified organizations operate the program.

TRAINING

The proposed training component provides an important opportunity for innovation and collaboration between multiple youth-serving agencies and organizations to address issues specific to their target population and to the job skills important in the local labor market.

To capitalize on existing expertise, the training component could be connected to the local high school curriculum, focusing on college and career readiness training aligned to state or Common Core standards. For example, NYC's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Summer Scholars program matches students with part-time summer internships and engages students in a classroom experience to build workforce readiness skills. The program includes two full days per week of classroom training focused on career readiness skills and matches students with paid internships that are purposefully aligned to the content of their CTE track, such as information technology or media (Weinstein and Leardo 2013).

MONITORING PROGRAM QUALITY

Metrics for assessing program quality for selection of CBOs to be providers and for contract renewals may include attendance and hours worked, program completion or attrition, participant and supervisor evaluations, and feedback from placement sites. These metrics are directly related to the core elements of the program and are relatively easy to measure in a standardized way across program sites, requiring a minimal administrative burden. In addition to providing guidelines and incentives for program providers, the program should offer rewards to students for successful program completion (e.g., high attendance and positive supervisor feedback).⁷

TARGET POPULATION AND PROJECTED TAKE UP

As mentioned above, the proposal targets youth ages sixteen to nineteen who are enrolled in or have recently graduated from high school, which we believe to be a population likely to benefit from the program. However, our proposal would not provide training and support of the intensity and duration required to put out-of-school youth on a path to educational and career success. In fact, one explanation for the perceived

lack of success in previous programs such as the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) is that the participants did not enter the program with a baseline level of skill necessary to benefit from the work and training experience (Foster 1995). Additionally, JTPA training focused on remedial education rather than workforce-related training, a feature that more-successful youth employment programs tend to provide (Greenberg, Michalopoulos, and Robins 2003).

In order to avoid any stigma associated with participation and to minimize the administrative burden, our proposal does not include an income requirement. Requiring documentation of income can serve as a substantial barrier to program enrollment and can distract from the implementation and monitoring of program quality (Curnan and Hahn 2010). That said, localities should be encouraged to target communities with low-income populations; it is likely that take-up will be higher among low-income populations. As an example, although NYC's SYEP is open to all city youth, approximately 90 percent of applicants are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, which implies very low household income.

To estimate the size of the target population, we begin with the fact that there are roughly 17 million youth ages sixteen to nineteen in the United States, of whom approximately 75 percent are ages sixteen to eighteen (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013). To calculate the number of low-income youth, we assume that the number of youth ages sixteen to nineteen living close to or below the poverty level is the same as the ratio of households with five-year-olds to seventeen-year-olds living at or below 185 percent of the poverty level, which is approximately 30 percent. This implies a target population of 5 million low-income youth ages sixteen to nineteen, and 3.75 million low-income youth ages sixteen to eighteen. Both the sixteen-to-nineteen and the sixteen-to-eighteen age ranges are appropriate for SYEP, as one would target high school students and recent graduates, and the other would target only high school students.

The evidence from NYC's SYEP offers some insight into how many youth would be interested. Approximately 80,000 low-income youth applied for a position for the summer of 2009, which is around 40 percent of the roughly 200,000 low-income youth ages sixteen to nineteen estimated to be living in NYC (estimate based on data from U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Funding constraints meant that only half of applicants were offered positions and, importantly, approximately three out of four of those accepted the offer and participated.

Combining these figures yields an estimated take-up rate among the overall eligible population of 30 percent as a benchmark, which is likely a high estimate due to the relative scarcity of private sector jobs in the weak economy. Taken

together, this suggests that if universally implemented, 1.50 million youth ages sixteen to nineteen would be interested in participating in SYEP; again, it would be roughly three-fourths of that if the program was limited to students ages sixteen to eighteen.

PROJECTED EXPENDITURES

If implementing a multiyear pilot program, we propose dedicating \$300 million annually for five years, at a total cost of \$1.50 billion. As seen in table 5-1, we estimate that the total costs of expanding this nationwide to low-income youth ages sixteen to eighteen would be about \$2.25 billion (assuming 1.50 million participants, as calculated above, at a cost of \$2,000 per participant); if the program were offered to youth ages sixteen to nineteen, the estimated costs increase to about \$3 billion. Importantly, the budget of our proposed program is not a social cost. About half of the estimated program budget is the wage paid directly to the youth. From a societal perspective, this is a transfer of funds to low-income youth, rather than a change in economy-wide resources.

Table 5-1 breaks down the direct cost of the program, which is determined by the wage paid, number of hours and weeks of the program, number of participants, and educational and administrative costs. We estimate each of these factors drawing from the features and experiences of existing programs: national data on the size and composition of the youth population, data from the largest summer jobs program (NYC's SYEP), and the administration of other social programs.

We propose that the national SYEP pay an hourly wage of \$7.25 for jobs that last twenty-five hours per week for six weeks during the summer. These program parameters generally mirror features common to existing programs. While some programs offer higher wages, most SYEPs pay the federal minimum wage (currently \$7.25 per hour). Similarly, twenty-five hours per week is in the middle of the range of hours offered, which typically ranges from twenty to thirty hours a week (see table 5-A1 in appendix 5-A). There is also variation in program duration across the country from five to eight weeks during the summer, but six weeks is the most common. While administrative overhead costs will vary with program features, we use the 15 percent overhead rate that the California Department of Education allows for public after-school programs.⁸ We also include \$650 per participant for an educational component.⁹

POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Summer jobs programs introduce participating youth to the workforce, and these early work experiences have the potential to foster noncognitive skills, which prepare youth to enter the labor force (Heckman 1998; Lillydhal 1990; Mortimer 2003).

Summer represents an especially efficient area for intervention, as it is a time when many youth lack opportunities for other formal activities. The loss by students over the summer of some of the skills learned during the school year is well-documented in earlier and later grades (Castleman, Arnold, and Wartman 2012; Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson 2000).

The benefits from this federal investment go beyond providing summer employment. Research suggests that SYEPs can also have small positive effects on school attendance and academic outcomes (Leos-Urbel forthcoming; Walker and Viella-Velez 1992). In a preliminary investigation of the short-run impacts of summer jobs programs, Leos-Urbel (forthcoming) finds that these programs produce small increases in attendance in the following school year. Increases are larger for students at greater educational risk, namely those ages sixteen and older with low baseline school attendance. For this group, participation in a summer jobs program also increases the likelihood of attempting and passing statewide high school math and English exams. In current work exploring the impact of these programs on student academic outcomes over more years, preliminary findings suggest small positive effects of the program on the number of exams students take; although impacts on scores are generally insignificant, there is a small positive effect on passing key high school exams. Furthermore, another study finds that the impacts increase with the number of years a student participates in the jobs program—with impacts being larger for second-time participants and largest for those participating for the third time or beyond (Schwartz et al. in progress). Positive effects, even small effects, are encouraging; as we have seen, numerous previous efforts have failed to produce returns.¹⁰

Moreover, these small increases may translate into meaningful gains in lifetime earnings. Rose (2005) finds that students who made test score gains in high school were more likely to be employed and have larger earnings seven years after high school compared to students whose test scores improved very little. Specifically, a one-point increase in a student's test score gain from grade 8 to grade 12 predicted an increase of 0.62 percent in earnings. Similarly, work by Deming and colleagues (2013) examines the impact of increased student performance on high-stakes exams, postsecondary attainment, and subsequent earnings. The authors find that students in high schools that raised test scores in response to accountability pressure were more likely to attend and graduate from a four-year university and had higher earnings at age twenty-five. Impacts were strongest for students with the lowest baseline achievement. Specifically, increased test score performance led to 1 percent higher labor market earnings at age twenty-five. Given the approximate average earnings of \$30,000 at this age, this effect would translate to \$300 per participant.

TABLE 5-1.

Program Budget

Estimated costs	Ages 16 to 19	Ages 16 to 18
Target population		
Total low-income population in United States (in millions)	5	3.75
Take-up rate	30%	30%
<i>Estimated participants (in millions)</i>	1.50	1.13
Average cost		
Participant compensation		
Wage	\$7.25 per hour	\$7.25 per hour
Hours per week	25	25
Duration (in weeks)	6	6
Total	\$1,088	\$1,088
Average other costs		
Educational cost per participant	\$650	\$650
Administrative overhead	15%	15%
<i>Cost per participant</i>	\$1,998	\$1,998
Total cost		
<i>Total annual cost of SYEP (in millions)</i>	\$2,997	\$2,248

Sources: New York University Institute for Education and Social Policy 2014; authors' calculations.

Recent research also suggests that summer jobs programs can reduce crime and violent behavior among individuals (Heller 2014; Sum, Trubskyy, and McHugh 2013). Heller (2014) examines the impact of a program that provided youth from low-income, high-crime high schools in Chicago with a part-time summer job and cognitive behavioral therapy. The study provides credible, experimental evidence of a significant link between crime and summer jobs, thus providing a social benefit that substantially exceeds program costs.¹¹

Finally, paying low-income youth for work reduces poverty. By offering low-income youth an opportunity to earn wages, this program would immediately increase the economic resources available to participants and their families. This increased income would bring households on the poverty margin above the poverty level and would ease the depth of poverty for all others. In addition, expanding youth employment can assist nonprofit organizations in providing services to low-income neighborhoods and communities. For example, in NYC's

SYEP, the most common job placements are in summer camps and day-care centers.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

Expanding summer jobs for low-income youth would yield benefits in many dimensions, including to the individual participant and to society. Benefits to the individual participants include income received, workforce readiness, reduction in risky behavior and crime, increase of earnings over the long run, and improvements in educational outcomes. For example, as noted above, these programs have been shown to increase attendance among students in the school year following the summer intervention, especially among those students with poor attendance records.

Social benefits include the services provided by participants, such as service as a camp counselor, and improvements in communities, such as reductions in crime. As noted above, prior research suggests a link between participation

in summer jobs programs and lower crime rates. The high social cost of each individual committed—numbering in the thousands for even low-level nonviolent crimes—suggests that even relatively small reductions in burglary or vandalism could provide sufficient benefits to offset the costs of the SYEP program.

The costs of the program are measured by program outlays. As noted above, we estimate the cost of a pilot program to be \$300 million annually, with the cost rising to between \$2.2 billion and \$3.0 billion annually if implemented nationwide. Since a large portion of the program outlays are devoted to wages paid to participants, much of these outlays can be classified as transfers of income rather than changes in economy-wide resources.

Ultimately, we find that the summer youth program will have a series of relatively modest, but important, impacts on participants and society. Although the effect on any one of these dimensions may be small, taken together they suggest benefits that outweigh the relatively modest costs.

Questions and Concerns

How is this different from past youth employment programs that were considered by some to be a failure?

Our proposal differs from prior federal programs in a few key features. First, we propose to serve youth who are enrolled in or have just graduated from high school, a population of students whom we believe are most likely able to take advantage of the program. We recognize that this limits the potential of the program to help all disadvantaged youth. This population is in contrast to those served by JTPA, for example, which targeted out-of-school youth, a population who likely have lower skills and require support that is more intensive. Second, our program requires a regular workforce training component closely aligned to the local employment context that is provided by qualified CBOs with expertise either connecting individuals to the local job market or providing local youth with support services and mentoring. The JTPA education component for youth, in contrast, focused on remedial education.¹²

Why does this proposal make sense given the lack of evidence on long-term effects of summer jobs programs on education or employment outcomes?

Much of the available research on youth employment focuses either on effects of employment year round or on hard-to-

reach populations, such as out-of-school youth or those involved in the juvenile justice system (see, for example, Bloom et al. 1997; Farkas, Smith, and Stromsdorfer 1983; Orr et al. 1996). In contrast, the specific evidence on summer-only programs that target in-school youth suggests that youth summer employment programs hold promise for improving youth outcomes, particularly educational outcomes, social and emotional developmental outcomes, and reduced negative behaviors (Heller 2014; Leos-Urbel forthcoming; Schwartz et al. in progress; Walker and Viella-Velez 1992).

What are reasonable expectations for the effects of a program for youth of this duration, intensity, and cost?

We expect small effects across a range of critical dimensions, including small increases (1 percent to 2 percent) in attendance, educational attainment, and graduation. We also expect slightly larger effects on crime and risky behaviors, particularly during the summer when students are employed.

Conclusion

While there is a broad consensus that education can provide a path out of poverty for low-income youth, out-of-school time—including both summer and after-school activities—can also enrich youth development. Recognizing this, middle-class families routinely invest in travel, camps, internships, and summer jobs, providing their children with experiential learning and work experience while minimizing the amount of unsupervised idle time and the potential opportunities to engage in risky behavior. We believe summer jobs can provide some of the same benefits to low-income youth: increasing their engagement in school, providing job experience, and reducing participation in risky activities across a broad range.

To be clear, our proposed SYEP is a very modest intervention. It would be naive to imagine that this sort of low-cost intervention will dramatically improve outcomes. Instead, we hope summer employment will lay a foundation on which future success can be built.

While investment in early childhood education has captured the imagination of policymakers and the public alike, such interventions will not address the inequality in opportunities and life-chances of today's youth for whom completing school; avoiding crime, pregnancy, and drug use; and other negative behaviors are critical steps on the path to future success. Summer jobs may be an effective tool in the effort to reduce inequality at the beginning of adulthood and may level the playing field for low-income youth.

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Appendix 5-A.

TABLE 5-A1.

Summer Youth Employment Programs, Select Cities

Program name	Location	Description
Midwest		
Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.)	Cleveland, OH	Y.O.U. helps match thousands of teenagers from Cuyahoga County to meaningful summer work experiences.
One Summer Chicago (OSC) 2013	Chicago, IL	OSC connects young people to summer jobs, internships and training programs that are offered throughout the city. Through OSC, young adults have the opportunity to learn job skills, develop their résumés and explore career interests.
Workforce Development Board (WDB)–Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)	Detroit, MI	The WDB-SYEP is introducing a program that will allow local businesses to contribute to summer work experiences for Detroit youth.
Step Up	Minneapolis, MN	The program primarily serves youth from lower-income families, or youth with significant barriers to finding a job.
Northeast		
Boston Summer Jobs	Boston, MA	This program provides youth with training related to job readiness and career exploration and job opportunities during the summer at a variety of private, community, faith-based and government organizations.
WorkReady Summer Youth Employment	Philadelphia, PA	Summer employment models offer educationally-enriched work opportunities to in-school and out-of-school youth that foster the acquisition of the twenty-first century skills through work-based learning.
Summer Youth Employment Program	New York City, NY	The program provides New York City youth with paid summer employment and provides workshops on job readiness, career exploration, financial literacy and opportunities to continue education and social growth.
Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program	Norwalk, CT	The program prepares youth for jobs via pre-employment workshops and matches them with employment opportunities where they can explore a profession, learn a skill, learn to navigate in a business environment, contribute to the community, and earn money.
Rensselaer County Summer Youth Employment Program	Rensselaer County, NY	The program provides income-eligible youth with a unique opportunity to gain meaningful job skills during the summer months through employment.
RochesterWorks! Summer of Opportunity Program	Rochester, NY	RochesterWorks! is an employment and training program for youth who are still in high school. The program is designed to provide training and employment opportunities to youth while making a direct connection to success in school.

Source: New York University Institute for Education and Social Policy 2014.

Note: Information downloaded from various Internet sites.

Ages	Program features			Youth served	Education component
	Hourly wage	Hours per week	Duration (in weeks)		
14–18	\$7.95	25	6	4,600 in 2008	Y
14–24	—	—	6	17,000 job opportunities in 2013	Y
14–21	\$7.50	30	6	—	Y
14–21	\$7.25	—	6	1,280 in 2009	Y
16–24	\$8.00–\$12.00	25–35	7	10,000+ in 2009	Y
14–21	\$7.25	20	6	5,144 positions in 2012	Y
14–24	\$7.25	20–25	6	35,957 in 2013	Y
14–18	\$8.70	25	6	—	Y
14–19	\$7.25	20	5	—	Y
14–20	\$7.25	—	6–8	845 in 2013	Y

TABLE 5-A1. CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS SPREAD.

Summer Youth Employment Programs, Select Cities

Program name	Location	Description
South		
Youth Employment Program	Denver, CO	This program provides career advising, mentorship, job readiness, financial literacy and life skills training and work experience programs to allow students to explore long-term career interests.
Workforce Partnership Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)	Kansas	Funded through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, SYEP is specifically intended for low-income youth with barriers to employment. The central objective is to introduce and reinforce the demands and rewards of holding a job.
Summer Youth Employment Program	Virginia Beach, VA	The program provides jobs and workplace readiness skills to young people who often lack the skills required to obtain employment and succeed in the workplace.
Summer Youth Employment Program	Washington, DC	This program is a locally funded initiative sponsored by the Department of Employment Services (DOES) that provides District youth with enriching and constructive summer work experiences through subsidized placements in the private and government sectors.
Summer Youth Employment Program	Wilmington, DE	The Summer Youth Employment Program provides students with a summer work experience with the purpose of fostering job-related and personal skills and habits important for success in future careers.
West		
Hire L.A.	Los Angeles, CA	Hire L.A. is designed to emphasize real-world expectations, increase awareness of services offered by local community-based organizations, and provide opportunities for college, career, and financial literacy training.
Summer Youth Employment Program	San Francisco, CA	This program provides low-income youth with hands-on work experience, job readiness training and ongoing support through partnerships with local community-based organizations.
Seattle Youth Employment Program	Seattle, WA	During the summer, the program provides exposure to the world of work. Internships take place in a range of sectors such as health care, education, recreation, skilled trades, social services, and technology.

Source: New York University Institute for Education and Social Policy 2014.

Note: Information downloaded from various Internet sites.

Ages	Program features			Youth served	Education component
	Hourly wage	Hours per week	Duration (in weeks)		
14–21	\$8.00 an hour for up to 160 hours			—	Y
16–24	\$7.25 (in 2009)	20-30	6–8	515 in 2009	Y
16–21	\$7.25	35	7	—	Y
14–21	\$7.25	25	6	14,000+ in 2012	Y
14–20	\$7.25	25	5	150 in 2012	Y
14–21	—	—	6	—	Y
16–21	—	—	—	—	Y
15–17	—	—	7	—	Y

Appendix 5-B.

Previous Youth Employment Programs

Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects (YIEPP)

- Youth sixteen to nineteen, low-income, who have not yet completed high school. (Open to all teenagers in targeted communities.)
- Funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA).
- 1978–81.
- Program components included employment, but no training or job search assistance.
- Served approximately 82,000 youth over the course of the program, 1978–1981.

The YIEPP provided low-income youth age sixteen to nineteen who had not yet graduated from high school with part-time jobs during the school year and full-time jobs during the summer in exchange for meeting academic and job-related performance standards. Specifically, to be eligible participants were required to be enrolled in high school or in a GED program. This federal program was established through the CETA, preceded JTPA, and operated from 1978 to 1981. Students participated for an average of fifty-six weeks in the program.

A matched-comparison study found that the program increased employment in the short term and decreased the unemployment gap between white and African American youth, and increased school enrollment rates.

The study also found that students were more likely to be employed six months after the program ended (Farkas, Smith, and Stromsdorfer 1983). However, the study found no impacts on school outcomes such as high school graduation (Gueron 1984).

Summer Youth Employment Training Program (SYETP)

- Youth ages fourteen to twenty-one who are economically disadvantaged and of school.
- Funded by the JTPA, which repealed CETA.
- 1982–97.
- Program components included employment. Training in the form of remedial education was added after 1986.
- Served approximately 500,000 to 700,000 youth annually.

The JTPA of 1982 provided federal funds to establish programs to prepare economically disadvantaged youth and unskilled adults for employment, including funds to establish the Summer Youth Employment Training Program (SYETP). This program, operated by the U.S. Department of Labor and coordinated and regulated by states and administered by city and county governments, served youth ages fourteen to twenty-one, and was initially designed to provide short-term financial assistance in exchange for work. Youth worked in a variety of public, nonprofit, and private sector jobs and were paid the minimum wage. In later years (after 1986), the program also included an educational component for students who were identified as needing education remediation (Doolittle et al. 1993). Although little evidence is available regarding the effectiveness of SYETP, some research suggests that the program provided jobs that would otherwise not have been available to youth (Stanley, Katz, and Krueger 1998).

In addition to summer employment, approximately one-third of the population served under JTPA was economically disadvantaged out-of-school youth enrolled in year-round programs. Participants enrolled in programs for fifteen months on average, but the length of the program varied by local site. Evidence from a randomized experimental study found no effect of the program on the youth's earnings thirty months after participants were assigned to the program. Impacts also did not differ based on the type of training or job search assistance youth applicants received. The program did, however, have small positive impacts on educational attainment—obtaining a high school diploma thirty months after program assignment—for youth dropouts, particularly female youth (Bloom et al. 1997; Orr et al. 1996). An important caveat to this study is that the comparison group received non-JTPA educational services, so that the estimated impacts are not compared to receiving no program services at all.

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Endnotes

1. The program was implemented in five cities, spanning two consecutive summers, which included summer jobs plus academic remediation and training; evaluations found short-term increases in reading and math scores, compared to a comparison group that received only jobs.
2. We address this point later in our discussion of the costs and benefits of summer jobs.
3. Seven months after the program, there were 3.7 fewer arrests per 100 participants, a 51 percent decline.
4. This study sample of youth ages fourteen to twenty-four in high crime neighborhoods included 421 participants and a comparison group of 192 eligible youth from the waiting list.
5. Funds could be spent through June 2011. The one success indicator for the program was achievement of workforce readiness goals, which was up to local sites to define (Bellotti et al. 2010).
6. An earlier SYEP was funded through the federal JTPA and administered through the U.S. Department of Labor; see appendix 5-B for more details.
7. For example, NYC's CTE Summer Scholars summer paid internship program rewards students who have perfect attendance at the end of the program with a \$500 bonus. The YIEPP improvement of school enrollment rates could be attributed to the requirement that students be enrolled in school to participate—requiring participants to be enrolled in the school year prior in order to be eligible might also provide some incentive for students to stay in school.
8. New York State also administers a 15 percent ceiling for NYC SYEP administrative costs.
9. For example, NYC's SYEP allocates between \$300 and \$700 per participant for educational services, depending on the type of youth and intensity of services offered.
10. For example, NYC's Conditional Cash Transfer program offered high school students a \$600 incentive for each Regents exam passed, but yielded no significant effect (Riccio et al. 2013).
11. To give a sense of magnitudes of the costs of crime, McCollister, French, and Fang (2010) estimate the societal cost of household burglary at \$6,169 in tangible costs and \$321 in intangible costs, totaling \$6,462; vandalism is valued at \$4,860 in tangible costs, with no intangible costs.
12. Focusing on youth still enrolled in school, summer employment only, and including training closely connected to the youth's employment experiences separates this proposed program from prior less-effective federal youth employment programs. For example, the youth employment initiatives funded by the 1982 JTPA targeted out-of-school youth who are likely difficult to reach without intensive services and time and had limited effects on participants (Bloom et al. 1997). The YIEPP, a federal program operating under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) that preceded JTPA and targeted in-school youth, had small positive impacts on school enrollment rates (Farkas, Smith, and Stromsdorfer 1983). YIEPP did not, however, provide training or job search assistance to students, and we believe that a program that provides these connections has the potential to provide greater benefits. (More details about these programs can be found in appendix 5-B.)

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