



Michigan Youth Challenge – Job Challenge



Who We Are

The Michigan Youth Challenge Academy (MYCA) is a free, voluntary 22-week residential co-ed program serving high school dropouts who want to make a positive change in the next stage of their lives. Through formal education delivered by certified teachers and quasi-military structures and methods, the program supports young people in the development of their physical, academic, and moral development. During their time in the program, participants have the opportunity to earn a GED or four high school credits, as well as up to 19 college credits from Kellogg Community College (KCC). MYCA is paid for by the U.S. Department of Defense and the State of Michigan.

The Nature of this Opportunity

The U.S. Department of Labor (DoL) is funding a program for Challenge program graduates in an effort to markedly improve employment outcomes for these young people. This elective program entails an additional five month residential intervention focused on development of vocational skills through classroom instruction and experiential learning in the real-world workplace. There will be collaboration between the Michigan Job Challenge Program (MJCP), area businesses, and businesses all over Michigan to develop and implement activities such as internships, apprenticeships, education in many career pathways, participation in job shadowing, and job placement. Twelve KCC direct college credits are available to program graduates.

Benefits to Partner Organizations

There are several advantages to local businesses participating in the project. In brief, collaboration with MJCP will:

- Create a pipeline of disciplined and motivated young workers
- Provide access to an applicant pool already oriented and trained in the work to be done
- Garner local and national recognition and notoriety for the corporation
- Support fulfillment of corporate social responsibility by supporting disadvantaged youth
- Enhance organizational diversity by expanding the applicant pool beyond local residents



The Role of Partner Organizations

Corporate partners will provide the setting for work-based learning and exposure to the world of work. We anticipate that these types of activities will include: orientation and instruction on the career pathways available in the organization; opportunities for job shadowing in various corporate occupations and work roles; apprenticeships and/or occupational mentoring relationships; participation in training courses offered in the company; immersion in the culture and professional practices of the corporation; and, in many cases, job placement.

Other Project Components

In addition to partner-based experiential learning, other elements of our project will provide an array of opportunities for career counseling, assessment of skills and aptitudes, leadership/followership training, and development of “soft skills” such as customer service, critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork. Complemented by the opportunities afforded by our corporate partners, this project will provide a comprehensive and authentic opportunity to move the life trajectory of disadvantaged youth toward self-sufficiency.