Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps (SCYEC)

2013 Summer Evaluation Report

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Executive Summary ................................................................. 6
- Background .................................................................................... 7
- Literature Review ........................................................................... 9
- SCYEC Logic Model .................................................................... 12
- Program Design ............................................................................ 13
- Evaluation Methods ....................................................................... 27
- Results ........................................................................................... 28
- Discussion ..................................................................................... 47
- Progress on 2012 Recommendations ........................................... 48
- 2013 Recommendations ................................................................ 52
- References .................................................................................... 54
- Appendices .................................................................................... 56
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps (SCYEC) provides workforce training and ecosystem education to youth aged 14-24 in Sonoma County. The program began as a summer jobs program in 2009 and launched a year-round program in 2012. This evaluation focuses on the 2013 summer component of the SCYEC.

In 2013, 666 youth submitted an interest form for the SCYEC summer program before the deadline. Youth provider agencies screened youth for eligibility and conducted interviews with eligible applicants. Available funding allowed for 246 youth and young adults to be hired. The majority of the youth (83%) worked on one of 25 crews completing outdoor ecology work, with the remaining 17% of youth working at local non-profit organizations in an individual placement.

This summer, the SCYEC achieved its anticipated outcomes for youth, the environment and the community. Over the course of the summer youth improved their work readiness skills, earned money, built relationships, made plans for their future, and increased their environmental knowledge. Collectively, youth on crews completed various ecological projects, including creek restoration, trail maintenance, stream maintenance, and trash and debris removal.

Youth
Youth were paid $8.00 to $10.00 an hour, depending on experience, to work six to eight hours a day, four days a week, for eight weeks during the summer. Approximately 72% of youth said they saved some or all of their money, and over half used some or all of their money to pay for household expenses, including food, bills, necessities, rent and phone. In addition to the money youth earned over the summer, youth gained valuable work skills. Crew leaders and supervisors evaluated youth on 16-17 work readiness skills at the beginning and end of the summer. At the end of the summer, on average, 86% of youth had skills at entry level or above on any given skill. Almost 50% of youth had skills at entry level or above on all of the twelve core skills at the end of the summer, over double the percent of youth at this level at the beginning of the summer. Youth also demonstrated statistically significant improvements in the total number of answers correct from pre to post on the environmental knowledge questionnaire. Overall, youth were satisfied with the SCYEC.

Environment
The SCYEC crews completed numerous projects at over 76 worksites throughout Sonoma County. Some of the major accomplishments of the crews included, maintaining over 10.5 miles of waterway and 9.2 miles of trail, clearing over 8 acres of land, and removing 74,635 square feet of invasive plants. Project hosts voiced appreciation for the work of the crews, and estimate the work completed would have taken over 5,116 hours in staff time.

Community
Individual placements supported 13 non-profit organizations in Sonoma County, completing projects ranging from child care to office support. Project hosts for the individual placements estimated the value of the work the youth completed as the equivalent of over 887 hours in staff time. Additionally, crew members supported the community through their work by beautifying many public spaces. Youth reported feeling pride in contributing to the community.
BACKGROUND

The Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps (SCYEC) provides workforce training and eco-system education to young people aged 14-24, while teaching environmental stewardship. The SCYEC is a unique collaboration of numerous county departments, nonprofits, and community groups. Since 2009, the Sonoma County Human Services Department (HSD) has administered the Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps in partnership with:

- Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
- Sonoma County Youth Council
- Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA)
- Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE)
- New Ways to Work (New Ways)
- 6 local non-profit agencies which HSD contracts with to employ and supervise the youth:
  - Conservation Corps North Bay (CCNB)
  - Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship (The Center)
  - Petaluma People Services Center (PPSC)
  - Social Advocates for Youth (SAY)
  - Sonoma County Adult and Youth Development (SCAYD)
  - West County Community Services (WCCS)

The SCYEC began as a summer jobs program out of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in 2009. In 2012, the program was expanded to become a year-round program. 2013 marked the fifth summer of the SCYEC.

The four broad areas of SCYEC are as follows:

**Youth Employment**
- The SCYEC provides meaningful summer jobs for 200-300 youth and young adults each year.
- Youth and young adults learn the skills needed to find and keep permanent employment.
- Youth and young adults are placed in crew work and individual internships.
- The SCYEC offers education and training to develop core job skills.

**Environmental Stewardship**
- SCYEC crews complete necessary environmental and conservation related projects and learn about ecology and environmental issues.
- SCYEC crews maintain and improve local habitats and streams.
- The SCYEC helps improve access to parks and open space.
- Youth receive a number of educational enhancements, including environmental education and tours of the Sonoma County Water Agency’s facilities.
- Youth receive career development opportunities.
Community Benefits
- SCYEC projects help to prevent flooding, maintain and provide access to our parks, sustain community gardens, and address safety issues on public trails and pathways.
- The SCYEC provides valuable services to local private and public nonprofits.

Strategic Partnerships
- The SCYEC brings together numerous county agencies, nonprofits, and community groups.
- The SCYEC leverages a broad array of public and private dollars.

Youth are paid between $8.00 and $10.00 per hour, depending on their skills and experience, for eight weeks during the summer. While most youth are employed in crews completing outdoor ecology work and environmental restoration projects, some youth may be assigned to an individual placement with a non-profit or public agency. Over the summer, youth gain the skills deemed necessary by employers in Sonoma County.

Although open to all Sonoma County 14-24 year olds, the program targets economically disadvantaged youth, especially those who are currently enrolled in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs, youth receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), current or former foster youth, youth with a disability, pregnant or parenting youth, and/or court-affiliated youth. Funding targets determine the number and types of youth who can be served through SCYEC, with flexible dollars allowing for all youth to have access to the program.

Over the years the SCYEC has been found to:
- Build participants’ work-readiness skills
- Foster environmental awareness and help build the next generation of environmental stewards
- Contribute to participants’ household expenses (personal or family)
- Maintain creeks and streams
- Restore habitats
- Improve parks and trails
- Help plant and harvest community gardens, and
- Contribute to the completion of many other outdoor community projects

The SCYEC has employed more than 1,000 youth since its inception and funding has totaled over 4.7 million dollars. See page 66 for more details on the annual breakdowns of the summer program.

The 2013 SCYEC summer evaluation intends to measure the effectiveness of the SCYEC in reaching its short-term goals detailed on the logic model (page 12). The audience for the evaluation includes the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, various Sonoma County departments, past and future youth providers, past and future funders, and past and future host sites. Information from the evaluation will inform future program design and business practices. This evaluation addresses the following research questions:

1. Did the SCYEC achieve its anticipated outcomes for the 2013 summer?
2. How does the 2013 SCYEC summer compare to previous summers?
3. What lessons can be learned from the 2013 summer program that can be applied to future program design?
LITERATURE REVIEW

The following is a very brief summary of the literature relevant to SCYEC.

History of Youth Conservation Programs
During the Great Depression, youth corps programs emerged as a means for providing young males with temporary employment. However, the demand for such programs decreased during World War II, when young men were recruited for the military. (Youth Corps, 2009) Youth corps programs reemerged in the early 1960’s when President John F. Kennedy created the Peace Corps, which translated the foundation of previous service programs to the international community. Additionally, national service programs were expanded under the Economic Opportunity Act (Jastrazab, Blomquist & Orr, 1997). To meet the needs for public land conservation and combat youth unemployment, the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) was developed in 1970. In 1976, California governor, Jerry Brown, inspired the local and state corps movement when he created the California Conservation Corps. (Jastrazab, Blomquist & Orr, 1997) The early 1980’s saw an abundance of youth corps programs, and in 1985, the formation of the National Association of Service Conservation Corps (NASCC) gave more structure to the movement. This association became the primary means for youth corps service providers to collaborate and share ideas. The first National and Community Service Act was passed in 1990 to allocate funds to connect individuals with opportunities to give back to their community (Corporation for National & Community Services, n.d.). Three of the main programs resulting from this act were Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America. Nation-wide, today, there are 127 active conservation corps, with even more local environmentally-focused employment programs for youth (The Corps Network, n.d.).

History of Youth Employment Programs
In 1977, The Youth Employment Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) created youth employment demonstration programs to provide meaningful employment opportunities to disadvantaged youth (Youth Employment Demonstration Projects Act, 1977). During the Reagan administration, the Job Training Partnership Act was enacted to provide job training to youth and adults. This act included provisions for summer youth employment and training programs, allocating funding to states to provide summer employment opportunities for economically disadvantaged youth (Job Training Partnership Act, 1982). The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 established provisions for youth workforce development, whereby funding is provided for workforce education and career pathways programs (U.S. Department of Labor, 2006). Under WIA, youth receive basic skills assessment, resources and guidance help to attain educational goals, leadership development opportunities, and exposure to a work environment through training and adult mentoring.

In February 2009, President Barack Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This act came into effect as a response to the economic downturn, and was intended to stimulate the economy and invest in education. ARRA provided significant funding for youth and conservation corps, including renewed funding for summer youth employment programs. (U.S. Department of Education, 2009)

At-Risk Populations
Disconnected youth are defined as youth, generally aged 16-24, who are neither employed nor enrolled in school. National data shows that about 10% of youth ages 18-24 are persistently disconnected from school and work, 15% are initially connected but become less connected over time, and 15% are
initially disconnected but increase connection over time (Bloom, Thompson & Ivy, 2010). Disconnection at some point during the adolescent years is suggested to result somewhat from the increasing unemployment rates among youth. Throughout the recession, summer youth employment rates saw all-time lows, especially among minority and low-income populations (Sum et al., 2010). In Sonoma County specifically, annual unemployment rates among 16-19 year olds is 6 percentage points higher than 20-24 year olds, and 12.9 percentage points higher than 25-64 year olds (see graph on page 13) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

In a meta-analysis of education, training and employment programs for at-risk youth, it was demonstrated that youth who participated in a program that included a paid work experience saw increases in short-term employment and/or earnings (Bloom, Thompson & Ivy, 2010). Although sustained effects have not been well demonstrated, the short-term impacts are not unimportant.

**Characteristics of Successful Youth Employment Programs**

Although youth employment programs differ by the goals, infrastructure, activities, and participants, they generally follow a model of youth development that looks at youth’s needs (i.e. safety and security, emotional support, information, social support, etc.) and constraints and opportunities (i.e. biological factors, socioeconomic status, health, and housing), and uses these to identify resources available to youth, which translates into short-term and eventually long-term outcomes for those youth.

In a synthesis of available evaluations of youth employment programs, Jekielek, Cochran, & Hair (2002) found mixed results. Much of the evidence is not conclusive; however, employment programs have the potential to expose youth to supportive relationships, reduce school absences, and increase youth’s exposure to career development and job training. Those youth most likely to benefit from such programs are younger teens (ages 16-17) and youth at risk for poor educational and/or employment outcomes. These youth saw earning gains, increase in high school completion or GED obtainment, and decreased arrest rates. One of the evaluations noted that more structured programs were more likely to increase youth participation.

A similar synthesis of over 100 youth development and employment programs identified 8 common principals for effective programming (Partee & Halperin, 2006):

1. **High-quality implementation** that includes ample start-up time, agreement on the goals and purpose of the program, sufficient resources, strong leadership, and use of quality data for program improvement.
2. **Well-trained, caring and knowledgeable adults** to work with the youth, provide time and attention to the sustained success of youth.
3. **High standards and expectations** of performance for the youth.
4. **Community participation** in the planning and implementation of the program.
5. **A holistic-approach** to address the broad array of needs of youth. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, extended hours, hands-on instruction, culturally-sensitive activities, peer support, child care, and transportation.
6. **Community service and service-learning** to give youth an opportunity to contribute to their community in positive ways.
7. **Work-based learning** which adds authenticity and relevance to the experience and ensures youth learn skills that are needed for future employment.
8. **Long-term services and support** for youth to continue relationships with caring and knowledgeable adults.
Locally, the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) commissioned the Economic Modeling Specialists Intl. (EMSI) to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of WIA programs. Using the number of youth who were placed in employment or education and the earnings change of older youth who retained employment in the second or third quarters after exit, the results of the analysis demonstrate the benefit-cost ratio of WIA youth programs is 0.34, or for every dollar invested in WIA youth programs, $0.34 is saved; however, this number does not quantify many of the economic and social benefits of the programs (Economic Modeling Specialists Intl., 2013).

Conclusions
Although the results of youth employment and youth corps programs are mixed, many of the programs have demonstrated significant short-term gains for youth. Those especially impacted positively from the programming are at-risk and low-income youth. Additionally, impact has generally been measured by way of earnings; however, the social, emotional, and health benefits are not unimportant. Unfortunately, these benefits are not as simple to quantify. Programming of youth programs should incorporate the key elements identified in the above meta-analyses and more research should be conducted to understand the long-term impacts of youth employment programs past short-term earnings.

*A complete list of references is included on page 53-54.
**SCYEC LOGIC MODEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YOUTH NEEDS</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
<th>SHORT-TERM RESULTS</th>
<th>LONG-TERM IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More Youth with Needs than there is Capacity to Serve Disconnected Youth High Youth Unemployment First Generation of Youth Less Fit than Parents</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Exposure to Work Environment Crew Work and Individual Placements Physical Activity Mentoring and Role Modeling Referrals to Community Resources</td>
<td>Safety Improved Work Skills Relationship Building Improved Income for Families Planning for the Future Youth Satisfaction</td>
<td>Increased Graduation Rates Increased Participation in Post-Secondary Education Increased unsubsidized Employment Reduced Criminal Behavior Reduced Obesity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIES</th>
<th>RESOURCE STRATEGIES</th>
<th>SHORT-TERM RESULT STRATEGIES</th>
<th>LONG-TERM IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Conservation Projects Summer Work and Maintenance for Streams</td>
<td>Renewable growth of work to be done</td>
<td>Environmental Education Ecology Work Hire and Train Crew Leaders and Crews</td>
<td>Increased Environmental Knowledge Completed Ecology Projects Healthy Streams Increased Employment in Resource Conservation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNITY STRATEGIES</th>
<th>RESOURCE STRATEGIES</th>
<th>SHORT-TERM RESULT STRATEGIES</th>
<th>LONG-TERM IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disparate Resources</td>
<td>Funding Materials and Equipment Paid Staff Expertise and Commitment Volunteers Project Hosts</td>
<td>Cross-Sector Collaboration Diversion from Unstructured Activities Networking Events</td>
<td>Exposure to Community Service Workforce Readiness Community Support for Youth Development Reduced Crime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Youth@Work in Our Community
www.youthecologycorps.org
PROGRAM DESIGN

NEEDS

Youth Needs
In Sonoma County, youth ages 16-24 are faced with higher rates of poverty and unemployment than adults ages 25 and older. Monthly unemployment rates for Sonoma County by age are not available and 2013 yearly unemployment rates are not yet released; however, monthly rates from the United States show significantly higher rates of unemployment for youth than adults at the beginning of the summer (see graph in appendices on page 57). Although rates for both age groups have begun to decline since the peaks experienced during the recession, the differences between youth and adults are still significant. According to the United States Census, in 2012, 17.1% of youth ages 16-24 were living in poverty and 17.6% were unemployed, compared to 11.2% of adults ages 25-64 living in poverty and 8.3% adults who were unemployed (U.S. Census). Additionally, 7.7% of youth ages 16-19 in 2011 were classified as disconnected, meaning they were not enrolled in school (full- or part-time) and were not employed (full- or part-time). Disconnected youth are at risk for many negative outcomes and are less likely to successfully transition to adulthood. Youth that are involved in the justice system, live in a low-income family, are in foster care, and/or receive special education, are at increased risk for becoming disconnected. (Hair 2009).

![Sonoma County Annual Unemployment Rate by Age](image)

* Denotes the inception of SCYEC

Environment and Community Needs
Even though the economy has started to pick up after the depths of the recession, many community projects are still on hold because of limited staffing hours and funding. Both donations and tax revenues are down, but the need for nonprofit and government services don’t stop when the funding
dries up. Locally, there is still a tremendous seasonal demand for people to build trails, clean up creeks and restore native habitat for flood protection and fish passage. The SCYEC addresses the community need for environmental stewardship, and provides youth with the opportunity to work on conservation projects throughout Sonoma County.

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

**Youth**

Young people are referred to the SCYEC through a variety of avenues. For instance, case managers refer current TANF and WIA recipients, youth apply based on word-of-mouth or previous SCYEC experience, non-profit organizations refer high risk youth, and youth who attend the Sonoma County Water Agency’s community service days are encouraged to apply. Six non-profit organizations (hereafter called “youth providers”) accepted interest forms and screened youth for the program. Youth were hired based on predetermined eligibility criteria, often based on funder requirements. Over the years, funding availability has dictated the total number of youth that can be served through the SCYEC summer program and the characteristics of these youth. Of the 420 youth that were not hired, the highest percentage (41%) were ineligible, mostly due to age and ineligibility for the available funding sources. Approximately 30% of youth were contacted by the youth providers, but never responded. The remaining youth either did not complete the required documents, did not show up for the interview, were referred to another agency, were interviewed and not hired, were waitlisted, or were no longer interested in the employment opportunity. In 2013, the youth providers hired 246 youth to participate in the summer work program and 25 adults to work as crew leaders, supervising the youth. The majority (83%) of the youth worked on a crew completing outdoor ecology work, while the remaining youth (17%) worked in individual placements. In total, 198 youth completed the summer.
The 48 youth that did not complete the summer had varied reasons. Fifteen percent (7) of the youth dropped out for a positive reason, including obtaining other employment or leaving for college. Thirty-eight percent (18 youth) of those that did not complete SCYEC, did so for a neutral reason, including moving, having transportation issues, scheduling conflicts, and health issues. The remaining forty-eight percent of youth (23 youth) that did not complete the summer had a negative reason, including poor performance, inappropriate behavior, excessive absences, and disinterest in the job.

The youth that participated in the 2013 SCYEC summer program were demographically diverse, as illustrated by the following graph. Just over 60% of the youth served were male, down slightly from the 2012 summer. Most of the youth (45%) were 18-21 years old, a shift from the 2012 summer, when the majority of youth were 16-17 years old. Thirty-three percent of youth had participated in the SCYEC at least one year prior to this summer. For two of the youth, this was their fifth summer. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of participating youth met the criteria for at least one risk factor (court-affiliated, foster youth, TANF, pregnant or parenting, or high school dropout). The SCYEC recruited a higher percentage of Hispanic/Latino youth (47% of participants), than their representation in the Sonoma County youth population as a whole (33% of all youth).

### 2013 SCYEC Youth Demographics

![Graph showing demographics](image)

Each demographic category was analyzed in relation to hiring status. There were no significant relationships between sex and race/ethnicity related to hiring. There was a statistically significant relationship between age and hiring, with younger youth less likely to be hired; however, this difference is a factor of the program design, whereby older youth tend to be more employment ready than 14-15 year olds. Additionally, there was a statistically significant relationship between being a former SCYEC participant and hiring status. Repeat participants were more likely to be hired than not. Current or former foster youth and youth receiving CalWORKs were also more likely to be hired.
In addition, there were no statistically significant relationships between gender, age, ethnicity, placement type, or year in SCYEC related to completion of the summer. There were significant differences between some target groups associated with program completion. Current or former foster youth were more likely to not complete the summer than non foster youth (30% and 13%, respectively).

Demographic categories were correlated to one another to ensure protection of unintended disparities and consistent delivery of services. Youth aged 14-15 years were more likely to be Hispanic/Latino and older youth were more likely to be White only, not Hispanic/Latino. It is likely that most of the relationships that exist are factors of the target groups themselves, rather than a result of the program design.

Funding
In 2013, six organizations provided funding for the SCYEC summer program for a total amount of $775,794. The 2013 amounts received were as follows:

Local
- $243,978 from the Sonoma County Water Agency
- $45,395 from the Sonoma County Parks Alliance
- $4,000 from Kaiser Permanente to fund the Kick Off Event

State/Federal
- $343,135 from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- $86,011 from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- $53,275 from Services for Transitional Age Youth (STAY)

In 2013, youth participation was funded by multiple sources. The greatest number of youth were hired from WIA funding (55%). The remaining funding sources were allocated as follows: STAY funding (36% of youth), TANF funding (21% of youth), Sonoma County Water Agency funding (31% of youth), and Parks Alliance funding (5% of youth).

For WIA, TANF, and STAY funding, youth had to meet specific eligibility requirements. The eligibility requirements for WIA are living in a low-income family and having an additional barrier to employment, such as having experienced being homeless, a runaway, or a foster youth. Youth must also have at least one barrier to employment, such as being a high school dropout, being at risk of dropping out of high school, being disabled, or being enrolled in special education. To qualify for TANF, youth must currently be part of a family receiving CalWORKs. Youth receiving STAY funding needed to be a foster child at age 16 or older or are currently in the foster care system. The following definitions were used to determine STAY eligibility:

- Current Foster Child: The child was removed by Court Order from the family they were living in and lived in out-of-home placement such as a foster home, group home, close family friend, or relative. They have a current social worker and are under the care and jurisdiction of the County.
• Former Foster Child: The youth was removed through Court Order by from their family and lived in an out-of-home placement such as a foster home, group home, close family friend, or relative. For the purposes of this program, the youth must have been a foster child at age 16 or older to be considered a former foster youth.

The Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) prioritized funding to youth who participated in one or more of the SCWA community service days prior to the summer program. Parks Alliance funding was directed to youth hired by two agencies as a result of the location of the projects. Additionally, Parks Alliance funds helped to fill gaps and extend work projects which were not slated to run the entire eight weeks. Finally, Parks Alliance funding allowed for one crew of Measure O youth to work in Santa Rosa City Parks for the full eight weeks.

Since funding was not restricted to one source per youth, the numbers do not total to 100%. The following graph shows the percent of youth within each demographic group (sex, race/ethnicity, and age) funded from the various sources.

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1 Measure O is a Santa Rosa City Ordinance that provides funding for services in high risk neighborhoods to reduce juvenile crime and gang affiliation, among other services.
Project Hosts
In 2013, 38 public and private non-profit organizations, hosted youth and provided meaningful work and learning opportunities at various job sites throughout Sonoma County. Sixteen of the project host organizations offered individualized placements to youth, with the remaining providing crew members work at an outdoor job site.

Crew Work

State/Federal Agency
1. California State Parks
2. United States Army Corps of Engineers

County Agency
3. Sonoma County Agriculture Preservation and Open Space District
4. Sonoma County Regional Parks
5. Sonoma County Water Agency

City Agency
6. City of Cloverdale, Parks and Recreation Department
7. City of Healdsburg, Parks and Recreation Department
8. City of Petaluma, Parks and Recreation Department
9. City of Rohnert Park, Parks and Recreation Department
10. City of Santa Rosa, Parks and Recreation Department
11. Monte Rio Recreation and Park District

Environmental Non-Profit
12. Bayer Farms
13. Chanslor Wildlife, LLC
14. Friends of the Petaluma River
15. Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation
16. LandPaths
17. Petaluma Bounty
18. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance
19. Sonoma County Parks Alliance
20. Sonoma Ecology Center – Team Sugarloaf
21. Sonoma State University Preserves
22. Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
23. Valley of the Moon Natural History Association (Jack London Park Partners)

Other Non-Profit
24. Burbank Housing
25. Social Advocates for Youth
26. West County Community Services

Individual placements:
Environmental Non-Profit
1. Petaluma Bounty
2. The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship Native Plant Nursery

Other Non-Profit
3. Boys and Girls Clubs
4. City of Rohnert Park Senior Center
5. PEP Housing
6. Petaluma People Services Center
7. Pets Lifeline
8. Rohnert Park Animal Shelter
9. Social Advocates for Youth
10. Sonoma Valley Teen Services
11. TLC Child and Family Services Transitional Housing Program (THP)
12. VOICES Sonoma

College
13. Santa Rosa Junior College

Project hosts were responsible for following safety procedures (including supplying water, providing a shaded area, having safety gear, etc.), orienting youth to the job assignment and worksite, training youth, and assisting in identifying appropriate and relevant skill development. Project hosts provide a healthy and safe environment, worthwhile activities, and sufficient work.

STRATEGIES

Youth providers hired youth and placed them onto a crew or into an individual placement:

Crew Work
Most of the youth (83%) worked on a crew and participated in outdoor ecology work. The crews were made up of six to eight youth who were supervised by trained crew leaders. Additionally, Sonoma County Water Agency employees provided training for all crews. There are three different crew types. The designations are as follows:

Entry Level Crew: Designed to provide crew members with valuable experience in order to build basic work readiness skills and potentially advance to senior crews. Many times this is a first job for youth. These crews are comprised of 14-17 year olds or 18-24 year olds who lack experience and are not ready for senior crew work.

Senior Level Crew: Designed for crew members with more experienced skill sets. These crews have higher levels of responsibility and use power tools in the field. Crew members must be 18 years or older to be on the senior crew.

Extended and Year-round Crew: Designed to extend the experience of SCYEC youth beyond the 8-week summer program. Exemplarily crew members are recommended, and are then interviewed by a panel of SCYEC supporting agencies for hire. Funding restrictions limit the number of youth on extended and year round crews.
Although the daily activities of the crew varied, a typical daily structure was as follows:

- **Pick-up**: Pick-up occurs at a designated, consistent, and easy to access location for all crew members. Crew members are expected to arrive within a five minute window of a specified time.
- **Travel to worksite**: When traveling to the worksite for the day, crew leaders and crew members discuss the work of the day, the worksite, and environmental impact of the work to be done.
- **Tailgate**: Upon arriving at the worksite, crew leaders discuss any and all potential hazards of the day and that worksite.
- **Environmental work**: Crews perform ecological restoration and environmental projects on behalf of a worksite host agency.
- **Breaks**: Crew members are allotted two 10-minute breaks throughout the day.
- **Lunch**: Crew members are allotted 30 minutes for lunch.
- **Drop-off**: Drop-off occurs at the same location as pick-up.

The environment and conservation-related projects that crews completed include:

- **Stream maintenance**: Invasive and non-native plant removal
- **Fish recovery**: Endangered and protected species habitat restoration
- **Parks and public lands**: Maintenance, improvements, and public access

The following graph details the type of projects completed over the summer. Project hosts had the option to select as many project types as applicable on the Project Host Report form, as some of the work sites had multiple project types, with some crews changing project types throughout the day and/or week. Please note this graph is not reflective of the amount of time spent in each project type throughout the summer, but rather shows the variation in project types by the different types of project
host organizations. Exact information on person hours or person days spent on each project types is difficult to discern.

**Individual Placements**
Seventeen percent of youth worked in an individual placement. Individualized placements were assigned based on youth's needs or interests. Most individualized placements included administrative work such as filing, organizing, copying, inventory, event coordination, data entry, and other office duties. Some youth also worked with children in a daycare setting, in animal shelters, and at senior centers. Generally, youth worked 6-8 hour workdays, four days a week.

Not all individual placements provide information on the length of the youth’s placement. The following graph shows the number of organizations providing a specific type of project for individual placements. Some individual placements had multiple project types.

![Types of Individual Placements by Project Hosts](image)

**Work Readiness Skill Development**
The SCYEC is designed to provide youth with work experience where they can develop the necessary competencies for future employment. In a survey of over 200 Sonoma County businesses and employers, fifteen work skills were identified that Sonoma County employers felt necessary for youth to master prior to beginning work. This list of skills has been used and augmented to incorporate additional skills deemed necessary by program staff since the program's inception. During the summer, all SCYEC youth were mentored and evaluated by crew leaders and supervisors on ten of these fifteen skills as well as two additional skills. Skills 11 and 12 were added specifically for the SCYEC to address the critical need for safety and appropriate interactions in a work environment.
Sonoma County Work Readiness Skills:
1. Demonstrates willingness to work
2. Demonstrates integrity
3. Demonstrates promptness
4. Avoids absenteeism
5. Avoids the use of language or comments that stereotype others
6. Maintains appropriate grooming and hygiene
7. Is respectful of the opinions and contributions of others
8. Takes responsibility for completing own work accurately
9. Demonstrates willingness and ability to learn
10. Works well with others as part of a team
11. Follows procedures established to promote safety on a consistent basis
12. Interacts appropriately with the public

In addition to the above 12 skills, youth on crews were also coached and mentored in an additional five skills:

1. Demonstrates proper tool use
2. Demonstrates awareness of safety hazards
3. Completes work proficiently
4. Understands the difference between native and non-native plants
5. Demonstrates a working knowledge of basic ecology terms

Youth in individual placements were coached and mentored in an additional four skills (these skills are included in the "plus" skills of the Work Readiness Certificate):

1. Reads and understands written information
2. Has and applies computer skills
3. Demonstrates customer service skills
4. Uses and applies basic math

To measure progress toward attainment of these work skills, crew leaders and supervisors rated youth two times throughout the summer, once at the beginning and once at the end. See the appendix (page 58-65) for more information on the rubric used for skill assessment.

Environmental Education
Youth received four environmental education lessons throughout the summer for one hour each on various ecology topics. Sonoma County Water Agency employees and Sonoma State University interns made field visits to each crew to provide the lessons. Although there was some variation in topics addressed, the core curriculum was developed by the Sonoma County Water Agency educators in conjunction with the interns delivering the lessons. In addition, crew leaders imparted daily lessons through mentoring and training.

The environmental education questions included in the youth’s pre and post program surveys were intended to measure youth’s increase in knowledge over the course of the summer.
Youth also had the opportunity to tour Sonoma County Water Agency facilities. This field trip included visiting the SCWA operations center, as well as a trip to the Russian River to see the inflatable dam, fish ladders and infiltration ponds.

Annecdotal reports suggest youth gain additional environmental education through informal relationships with project hosts. Project hosts teach youth about invasive species, habitats, nature awareness and watersheds, among other topics.

**Ecology Work**
Throughout the course of the summer, crew members worked at over 76 different work sites\(^2\) (see pages 43-44 for a list of the worksites for the 2013 summer). The projects varied by worksite, but included stream maintenance, creek restoration, landscaping, and invasive plant removal among other tasks. Some assignments only required a day’s worth of work to complete, while others lasted the entire eight weeks. Additionally, the number of crews at a worksite depended on the demand of the outdoor work, but generally only one crew was needed per site. The 2013 worksites were generally located at Sonoma County creeks, trails, parks, other public open spaces, and beaches.

In 2013, in partnership with the Parks Alliance for Sonoma County, SCYEC launched “Youth @ Work in Our Parks.” Teens and young adults worked directly in parks and other public open spaces to preserve resources in order to protect and restore our local environment, while simultaneously developing the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to grow into healthy contributing members of the community.

**Hire and Train Crew Leaders and Crews**
Youth providers hired 25 adults to act as crew leaders. Before the start of the summer, crew leaders were required to participate in a two-day training for SCWA crew leaders and one day training for all other crew leaders. Through the training, crew leaders learned about the roles and responsibilities of the position and the types of projects that they would be working on throughout the summer. In addition, crew leaders received training

\(^2\) Some of the city and regional parks departments had multiple project sites which may not be reflected in that total number.
on outdoor hazards, tools, and wildlife, which gave them the knowledge to facilitate crew member learning during the summer. Crew leaders were also trained in administering performance evaluations. This training was essential in ensuring consistent ratings of youth performance across crew leaders.

Crew members received training prior to starting work for the summer, in addition to continuous on-the-job training regarding tool safety, environmental stewardship, and job skills. Worksite supervisors or Crew Leaders provided youth with an orientation to each worksite and familiarized youth with the job duties and expectations about performance, attitude, conduct, and appearance.

Crew leaders and supervisors were responsible for ensuring the safety of the youth and crew, guaranteeing each work project was completed successfully, upholding high standards for workplace behavior, modeling conservation values and ethics, and creating a positive and fun experience for the youth.

Cross-Sector Collaboration
The SCYEC is a partnership between a diverse group of county and community-based agencies to create a program that is replicable and sustainable. The following agencies perform unique roles to ensure the success of the SCYEC:

1. Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
2. Sonoma County Youth Council
3. Sonoma County Human Services Department (HSD)
4. Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA)
5. Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE)
6. New Ways to Work (New Ways)
7. Youth Providers
   a. Conservation Corps North Bay (CCNB)
   b. Petaluma People Services Center (PPSC)
   c. Social Advocates for Youth (SAY)
   d. Sonoma County Adult and Youth Development (SCAYD)
   e. The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship (The Center)
   f. West County Community Services (WCCS)
8. Project Hosts

HSD provides the backbone support and oversight of the SCYEC. The infrastructure of the SCYEC is managed collaboratively through ongoing conversations with the above mentioned agencies. This, along with effective cross-agency partnerships is instrumental to the success of the program. In addition, SCYEC leverages resources from multiple funding sources for maximum benefits. Project hosts and other community partners also provide an invaluable resource to the SCYEC.

Kick-Off Event
Each summer begins with a Kick-off event. In attendance are participating youth, the six youth provider agencies, crew leaders, and other public and private organizations. This is a time for community leaders, local
elected officials, and non-profit partners to recognize the youth for the great work they will be accomplishing throughout the county over the course of the summer. This year’s Kick-off event was held at Howarth Park in Santa Rosa. It included a sponsored lunch funded by Kaiser Permanente and catered by the Sonoma County Youth Probation Culinary Program.

**Opportunity Fair**

Towards the end of the summer, SCYEC participants attended an Opportunity Fair, held at the Finley Center in Santa Rosa, which gave youth the chance to meet with potential employers, learn about educational opportunities, practice interview skills, and receive training on money management and other financial issues. At the event, youth browsed 31 exhibitor booths from the following organizations:

1. Buckelew
2. California Human Development
3. CHOPS Teen Center
4. California Tooling and Machining Apprenticeship Association (CTMAA)
5. Dal Poggetto & Co.
6. Empire College
7. First American Home Buyers Protection
8. Goodwill Industries
9. Home Health Care, Inc.
10. North Coast Builders Exchange
11. Office Depot
12. Operating Engineers JAC
13. Redwood Credit Union
14. Santa Rosa City Schools
15. Santa Rosa Junior College
16. Santa Rosa Community Health Centers
17. Securitas
18. Small Business Development Center
19. Society of Manufacturing Engineers
20. SoCo Hospitality Group
21. Sonoma County Human Services Department – Economic Assistance
22. Sonoma County Job Link
23. Sonoma County Office of Education
24. Sonoma County Water Agency
25. Sonoma State University
26. Sprouts Farmers Market
27. The Fairmont SMI
28. US Army
29. US Marines
30. VOICES
31. Volunteer Center
Career Assessment
Each youth is provided with a lifetime Kuder Navigation membership, an online career assessment and academic planning tool, and an orientation to this system. Kuder Navigation offers a wide range of features, and youth have the opportunity to complete a career interest assessment, explore occupations of interest, and determine what salary they need to live their preferred lifestyle. In addition to the search functions, users have the option of creating an electronic portfolio, which is a step-by-step process that guides youth through educational discovery and career preparation.
EVALUATION METHODS

To answer the research questions outlined in the introduction, this evaluation analyzes youth and project host data from program surveys. Youth completed three forms (interest form, pre-program survey, and post-program survey) throughout the summer. All youth who applied to the SCYEC submitted an interest form. This was submitted prior to the start of summer, and included questions regarding youth demographics and risk factors. Only those youth who were hired completed the pre-program and post-program surveys.

In addition, crew leaders and supervisors evaluated youth’s work progress with two performance evaluations, once conducted at the beginning of the summer and the other conducted at the end of the summer. Youth who were hired late or did not complete the summer did not have all of the forms and performance evaluations completed, and were excluded from analyses requiring matched pairs.

The pre-program and post-program surveys for all youth contained questions of environmental stewardship, connection to one’s community, safety expectations, career aspirations, educational goals, post program plans, and overall satisfaction. Crew members completed additional questions on environmental knowledge.

Some of the questions on the pre and post test surveys were adapted from:


The Sonoma County Human Services Department implemented the evaluation and conducted the data entry and analysis. The SCYEC Leadership Team and youth providers reviewed the analysis and provided interpretations and recommendations.
RESULTS

YOUTH

Improved Work Readiness Skills
Throughout the summer, youth received supportive supervision and work experience designed to help them develop and demonstrate work-readiness skills. Crew leaders then evaluated youth on these skills in June and August. The performance evaluations are repeated to ensure that SCYEC youth make progress towards development of entry-level job skills deemed necessary by Sonoma County businesses and employers.

Sonoma County Work Readiness Skills:
1. Demonstrates willingness to work
2. Demonstrates integrity
3. Demonstrates promptness
4. Avoids absenteeism
5. Avoids the use of language or comments that stereotype others
6. Maintains appropriate grooming and hygiene
7. Is respectful of the opinions and contributions of others
8. Takes responsibility for completing own work accurately
9. Demonstrates willingness and ability to learn
10. Works well with others as part of a team
11. Follows procedures established to promote safety on a consistent basis
12. Interacts appropriately with the public

In addition to the above 12 skills, youth on crews were also coached and mentored in an additional five skills:

1. Demonstrates proper tool use
2. Demonstrate awareness of safety hazards
3. Completes work proficiently
4. Understands the difference between native and non-native plants
5. Demonstrates a working knowledge of basic ecology terms

Youth in individual placements were coached and mentored in an additional four skills (these skills are included in the “plus” skills of the Work Readiness Certificate):

1. Reads and understands written information
2. Has and applies computer skills
3. Demonstrates customer service skills
4. Uses and applies basic math
Crew leaders and supervisors were trained to use the matrix on pages 58-65 of the appendix to rate youth's performance. The matrix provides behaviors typical of each skill at the various levels in an effort to better describe youth's performance. Although the crew leaders and supervisors were not using a rating scale, their responses were averaged and coded into the following scale:

**Work Readiness Rating Scale**

- **0 - Not Exposed:** Youth was not provided the opportunity to demonstrate this skill.
- **1 - Training Level:** Preparing to become work-ready. Needs practice and reminders.
- **2 - Improving Toward Entry Level:** Has become more work ready. Demonstrates skill with some reminders. Skill needs a bit more development.
- **3 - Entry Level:** Work ready. Proficient. Demonstrates the skill most of the time. Rarely needs reminders. Meets and demonstrates the skills at a level equal to what is expected of any employee in a similar position.
- **4 - Exceeds Entry Level:** Exemplary. Demonstrates mastery of skills at a level above what is expected of any employee in a similar position. Demonstrates skills with no reminders and improves work quality when necessary. Identifies problems before they arise and makes adjustments accordingly. Helps others acquire the skill.

Youth are evaluated within five days of starting the SCYEC to identify baseline work readiness skills. All youth were evaluated on the first twelve skills. Crew members are evaluated on an additional five skills pertaining to crew work, and youth in individual placements were evaluated on an additional four skills related to administrative and customer service work. In June, for the baseline assessment, 24% of youth met criteria for entry level or exceeds entry level on all twelve skills. The average percent of youth that met criteria for entry level or above on a given skill in June was approximately 74%. At the end of the program, looking at the same youth as in June, 48% had work skills at entry level or exceeds entry level for all twelve skills, double the number in June, with an average of 86% having entry level or above work skills on a given skill. The following graphs show the percent SCYEC youth that were at entry level or above for all twelve skills. The first graph is by target group. The lines across the graph show the percent of all youth at entry level or above for all twelve skills at pre and post. The second graph is by work experience level and age.
Percent of Youth at Entry Level or Above on All Twelve Skills

- **CallWORKs youth:**
  - Pre: 37%
  - Post: 41%

- **Court-affiliated youth:**
  - Pre: 24%
  - Post: 55%

- **Foster youth:**
  - Pre: 27%
  - Post: 46%

- **Pregnant or parenting youth:**
  - Pre: 33%
  - Post: 39%

- **High school dropout:**
  - Pre: 17%
  - Post: 33%

---

Percent of SCYEC Youth at Entry Level or Above on All Twelve Skills

- **SCYEC Repeat**:
  - Pre: 48%
  - Post: 48%

- **No SCYEC Experience**:
  - Pre: 28%
  - Post: 22%

- **Had a Job Before**:
  - Pre: 26%
  - Post: 21%

- **First Job**:
  - Pre: 50%
  - Post: 48%

- **Under 18 Years Old**:
  - Pre: 48%
  - Post: 24%

- **Over 18 Years Old**:
  - Pre: 48%
  - Post: 23%
The following graph shows the percent of all youth (crew members and individual placements) with skill level at entry level or above at pre and post. Statistically significant differences are represented by an asterisk before the skill on the Y-axis.

### Percent of SCYEC Youth with Work Skills at Entry Level or Above at Pre and Post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interacts with public</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety procedures</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to learn</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grooming and hygiene</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of language</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids absenteeism</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promptness</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilingness to work</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In August, the highest percent of youth (97%) had skills at or above entry level for maintaining appropriate grooming and hygiene. The second most mastered skill was interacts appropriately with the public. With 77% of youth at entry level or above, avoiding use of language or comments that stereotype others was the skill the fewest number of youth mastered. These results are similar to 2012.

“SCYEC was a wonderful experience to me. The summer program helped me to expand my knowledge of ecological issues and resolutions. The summer program also gave me awareness and valuable job skills.” - Youth participant

The total number of skills at entry level or above (at pre and post) were correlated to previous SCYEC experience to determine if there was a relationship between previous work experience and work readiness. There was no difference between the work readiness of youth who had prior SCYEC experience and youth who had no prior SCYEC experience for either of the evaluations.

To affirm that the SCYEC is meeting the needs of the target populations (court-affiliated youth, pregnant/parenting teens, foster youth, and youth in CalWORKs) analyses compared the work readiness skills of youth in each of these groups to youth who were not a member of the group. Only two significant differences were found. CalWORKs youth were more likely to be at entry level or...
above for promptness than non-CalWORKs youth, and high school dropouts were less likely to be at entry level or above for use of language compared to non-high school dropouts.

“SCYEC helped me gain the skills I need for the work world, skills that I had not yet mastered. I learned about punctuality, patience, time management, leadership, and interpersonal and communication skills. Most importantly I’ve learned about the importance of following through with things I say I am going to do.” – Youth participant

Youth were also asked to rate on a scale of one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree) how much they felt the SCYEC helped them gain or improve the following soft skills:

1. Problem solving
2. Time management
3. Teamwork
4. Communication
5. Leadership

The graph below shows the percent of youth at the completion of the summer who agreed or strongly agreed the SCYEC helped them gain or improve each of these skills.

**Agree/Strongly Agree SCYEC Helped Gain/Improve Essential Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Increased Environmental Knowledge**

The SCYEC seeks to increase youth knowledge about the environment through outdoor ecology work and environmental education lessons. Sonoma State University students hired by the Sonoma County Water Agency are trained to provide environmental education lessons. They visited crews and
individual placements for one hour a week to teach youth about environmental issues such as stream maintenance, creek restoration, wildlife, watershed, and the connection between water and energy. Youth also learned about the environment from their crew leaders, project hosts, and volunteers.

Environmental knowledge was measured using true and false questions on pre- and post-program surveys. These questions were only administered to crew members. The questions were as follows:

1. An ecosystem can be found in your backyard. (True)
2. All non-native plant species are bad. (False)
3. An ecological footprint includes washing your car. (True)
4. An ecosystem only includes living organisms. (False)
5. "New" water is continually being produced by the Earth. (False)
6. All greenhouse gases are bad. (False)
7. Only the leaves of Poison Oak can cause allergic reaction. (False)
8. Asia is the largest ecosystem on Earth. (False)
9. In the average household, the kitchen uses the most water. (False)
10. An increase in non-native plant species typically causes an increase in native plant species. (False)

Youth made significant improvements on questions 1, 3 and 10. Additionally, there was a statistically significant increase in the total number of questions correct from pre to post. The graph below depicts the percent of youth who answered each question correctly.
Relationship Building
By working with peers in crews, the SCYEC hopes youth will learn teamwork skills. The program is designed so that each participant builds relationships with their fellow crew members and crew leader, as well as youth providers and project hosts. The youth enjoyed the relationships they developed with their crew leaders, citing that their crew leader was someone they could count on and talk to.

“The best part of SCYEC for me was the people. I got to meet so many new people throughout the program. I made a lot of new friends and met people who really changed my outlook on things and helped me grow up and see things differently.” – Youth participant

“The best part about SCYEC was getting to know a lot of people I was unfamiliar with, and getting to help the environment.” – Youth participant

Improved Income for Families
The SCYEC targets economically disadvantaged youth in hopes of increasing their income and providing them experience that will allow them to secure future employment. Wages earned help youth support themselves and their families while they gain valuable work experience. Youth who worked the entire summer made about $1,500.

Based on self-reported post-program surveys, the highest percentage of youth (72%) said that they saved all or some of the money they earned in the SCYEC. This percentage is similar to 2012. Over fifty-six percent of youth said they used their money to pay for household expenses, including food, bills, necessities, rent, and phone. The SCYEC is helping youth support themselves and their family, as well as allowing youth to prepare for the future.

There were significant differences for some of the target groups with regards to spending income on household expenses. Court-affiliated youth and pregnant/parenting youth were more likely to spend their income on household expenses. The following graph illustrates the percent of youth in each target group that used their SCYEC money for household expenses.
There were no significant differences in spending habits by ethnicity, age, and previous SCYEC experience found in 2012. In 2013, there was a statistically significant relationship between gender and saving money, court-ordered payments, and personal entertainment; males were more likely than females to save their money, spend their money paying court-ordered payments, and pay for personal entertainment. Additionally, there were significant relationships between age and household expenses and court-ordered payments; older youth were more likely to spend their money on household expenses than younger youth and 18-21 year olds were more likely to pay court-ordered payments than other aged youth. Youth receiving CalWORKs and pregnant/parenting youth were both more likely to spend money on car related expenses.

**Planning for the Future**

Through workforce training, mentoring, and educational lessons, the SCYEC hopes to instill youth with aspirations for the future. At the Opportunity Fair, which is coordinated by the Sonoma County Human Services Department and the Youth Council, youth had the chance to meet and talk to future employers, educators, and business professionals in Sonoma County. The fair was a networking event held at the end of the summer program that also gave youth the opportunity to practice interview skills through mock interviews. At the end of the event, youth are asked to complete a brief evaluation of the event. Nearly all of the 171 youth that completed the participant evaluation (92%) enjoyed the event, 70% of youth found the resources will help plan for their future, and 87% of youth felt the mock interview session was helpful. The following graph shows the percent of youth that found the specific resources most helpful.
Youth were asked about their educational plans before and after the summer. At the end of the SCYEC, 63% of youth wanted to pursue an Associate’s degree (AA) or higher. When comparing goals before SCYEC to goals after, there was not a significant difference between the average degree youth wanted to pursue prior to starting SCYEC to after SCYEC. Youth’s highest degree desired is illustrated in the following chart.
Youth are provided with a lifelong membership to Kuder Navigator, an online career exploration system hosted by the Sonoma County Office of Education. This membership allows them to complete career interests, skills confidence, and work values assessments. The career interest assessment is a short questionnaire that measures the youth’s interests and aligns them with career clusters.

Youth answered questions on their career interests on pre and post program surveys. Additionally, youth answered a question about an interest in ecology and environment careers. 52% of youth were interested in a career in ecology and the environment at the end of the summer. There was no difference between the response to this question on the pre test and post test.

Youth’s career aspirations were measured using the Career Aspiration Scale, which had youth rate six statements using a five-point Likert scale from one (not at all like me) to five (exactly like me). The items were as follows:
1. I hope to become a leader in my career field.
2. When I am established in my career I would like to manage other employees.
3. I do not plan to devote energy to getting promoted in the organization or business I am working in.
4. When I am established in my career, I would like to train others.
5. I hope to move up through any organization or business I work in.
6. Attaining leadership status in my career is not that important to me.

Please note items 3 and 6 are reverse scored.

Youth's Career Aspirations Average Response Level

* I hope to become a leader in my career field.
* When I am established in my career I would like to manage other employees.

I do not plan to devote energy to getting promoted in the organization or business I am working in.

When I am established in my career, I would like to train others.

I hope to move up through any organization or business I work in.

Attaining leadership status in my career is not that important to me.
There was a statistically significant increase in the average agreement with two of the items: I hope to become a leader in my career field and when I am established in my career field I would like to manage other employees. There was no statistically significant change from pre to post on the other four items.

Finally, youth submitted information on their plans immediately following the SCYEC. Forty-eight percent of youth had plans to return to high school in August and 24% had plans to continue on to college, with 80% of those youth planning on attending Santa Rosa Junior College. Twenty-one percent of youth had plans to work (either part-time or full-time) and 2% were attending a job-training program. Additionally, some youth were continuing on with the extended crew, obtaining their GED, applying for jobs, or did not know. These youth are counted as “other.” The following chart illustrates youth’s plans immediately following the SCYEC. Percents do not equal 100% because some youth had multiple plans (i.e. returning to school and working).

Youth's Plans Immediately After SCYEC

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work (Part-time or Full-time)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job-training</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

“I believe that the SCYEC is a positive building block for today’s youth. This program builds a great work ethic through modeling and positive reinforcement.” – Project host

Youth Satisfaction
Before starting the program, youth were asked if they thought the SCYEC would be a benefit to them. Almost all (97%) of youth said that it would. Most reasons included getting work experience and getting paid.
Overall, youth seemed to enjoy the SCYEC, and 99% felt that they benefited from the program. The benefits were similar to what youth expected prior to starting the program (work experience and money), but youth also enjoyed learning about the environment and working with peers. Moreover, 79% of youth stated they would return to SCYEC and 89% would recommend a friend join SCYEC. The graph below illustrates youth’s satisfaction with the SCYEC.

Satisfaction with SCYEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>99%</th>
<th>90%</th>
<th>89%</th>
<th>79%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCYEC was a benefit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall satisfied with SCYEC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would recommend that a friend join SCYEC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would return to SCYEC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Youth felt that the best part of the SCYEC was getting paid and making new friends. In addition, most youth felt that the SCYEC did not need any improvement. Youth that offered suggestions, generally discussed better organization, more money and/or hours, and better tools.

“It helped me experience new things. I learned how to communicate with people and how to work with new people. I also learned a lot about the ecosystem. I gained skills I didn’t have before SCYEC. I learned how to write a resume and work in a community.” – Youth participant

Safety
A primary focus for the SCYEC youth working on crews is safety. When working outdoors with tools, it is necessary that youth have appropriate training and understand safety precautions. Before beginning the summer youth were asked to rate their expectations of certain safety issues and after the summer youth were asked to rate if the safety issues were met. The questions were worded as eight statements and the youth were asked to mark their level of agreement with the statements. Youth on crews rated their expectations for each of the statements; however, youth in individual placements only responded to the first three items (Use work equipment properly, participate in safety training, and not take shortcuts). In the following graph, 1 corresponds to strongly disagree and 5 corresponds to strongly agree.
Only 14 youth had safety concerns before beginning the summer. The concerns were related to heat exposure, poison oak, wasps, and ticks. Ninety-three (93%) percent of youth felt their crew members took safety seriously and 97% felt there was enough time to safely complete their work. Additionally, 96% of youth felt they received enough supervision this summer.

ENVIRONMENT

Completed Ecology Projects
The type of project varied by worksite, but included creek restoration, landscaping, trash removal, trail maintenance, and invasive plant removal among other tasks.
In 2013, crew members collectively accomplished the following throughout Sonoma County:

- Maintained 55,200 feet (or 10.5 miles) of waterway
- Maintained 48,299 feet (or 9.2 miles) of trail
- Cleared over 8 acres of land
- Planted 1,532 crops covering over 4,208 square feet
- Planted 104 plants
- Removed over 74,635 square feet of invasive plants and 694 trees
- Harvested 2,300 pounds of crops
- Distributed 1,000 pounds of crops
- Removed over 14,719 pounds and 25.8 cubic yards of debris or garbage
- Removed over 400 thirty-gallon garbage bags of vegetation
- Painted 570 square feet
- Filled 820 Dri-water tubes
- Managed storm water runoff using 514 square feet swale
- Built tents, windows, and an ADA-compliant picnic area

“Removing invasive species from our landscaped areas is a great benefit to the balance and sustainability of our ecosystems. Also removing trash and litter not only provides a safe and beautiful environment in our parks but also helps prevent injuries to wildlife.”

- Project host

Additionally, during the project, project hosts taught the youth environmental education lessons. This education was related to the project type and varied by location. The most common environmental education lesson taught was nature awareness, which was taught by 59% of project hosts.

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3 Some of the results were not quantified and are not reflected in these totals.
Crew members and project hosts were pleased with the work that was completed during the summer. Project hosts were appreciative of the work performed by crew members, and cite that the work that was done by SCYEC crews either wouldn’t have otherwise been completed or would have taken up limited staff time to accomplish.

“SCYEC provides valuable support to our parks at a time when our budget would not allow us to accomplish all of the work they were able to do. This was also a wonderful opportunity for park rangers to show the students what we do and encourage them to consider a career in the natural resource field.” – Project host

Project hosts estimated that the work the crews completed over the summer saved their organization:

- $6,600 in material costs
- Over 5,116 hours in staff time, valued at over $85,772

Environmental Stewardship

All participating youth completed questions related to environmental stewardship. The three questions were adapted from the Child Trends for the Flourishing Children Project. Youth were asked to rate their agreement with three statements from one (not at all like me) to five (exactly like me). The statements were as follows:

1. I believe there is no need to change how I live to protect the earth’s environment.
2. I look for information about how my actions affect the environment.
3. I do my part to take care of the environment.

There were no statistically significant changes from pre to post. These questions were new to the 2013 evaluation.
SCYEC Worksites
The following is a list of the work sites, both crew work and individual placements, for the summer.

Crew Work4
1. Ag & Open Space
   a. Paulin Creek Open Space Preserve
2. Allman Marsh
3. Austin Creek
4. Badger Park
5. Bounty Farm
6. Brush Creek Restoration
7. Camino Collegio
8. City Park
9. City of Rohnert Park
   a. City Hall and surrounding buildings
   b. East Cotati Ave. Footpath
   c. L Section Footpath
   d. Rainbow Park
10. Chanslor Ranch
11. Clark Park
12. Cloverdale Boulevard
13. Colgan Creek
14. College Creek
15. Community Family Services Agency
16. Copeland Creek
17. Corona Creek
18. Flat Rock Park
19. Foothill Boulevard
20. Furber Park
21. Gateway Park
22. Guerneville Senior Center
23. Healdsburg Community Center
24. Hidden Valley Park
25. Jack London State Park
26. Kawana Springs Creek
27. LaFranchi Dairy
28. Laguna Environmental Center

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4 Some of the exact worksites at the city and regional parks may be missing.
29. Landpaths
   a. Bayer Farms
   b. Colgan Creek
   c. Poppy Creek
   d. Riverfront Park
30. Lake Ilsanjo
31. Lake Sonoma
   a. Yorty Creek
32. Ledson Marsh Dam
33. Lornadell Creek
34. Matanzas & Spring Creeks in Doyle Park
35. Monte Rio Recreation and Parks
   a. Creekside Park
36. Paulin Creek
37. Piner Creek
38. Poppy Creek
39. Ragle Ranch
40. Regional Parks
   a. Chanate Historic Cemetery
   b. Doran Beach
   c. Maxwell Park
   d. Norton Mental Health Center
   e. Spud Point
   f. Sonoma Valley Regional Parks
41. Rockpile Road at Lake Sonoma
42. Roseland Creek
43. Santa Rosa City Parks
44. Santa Rosa Creek
45. Shollenberger Park
46. Sierra Park Creek
47. Social Advocates for Youth
   a. Stepping Stones
   b. Tamayo Village
48. Sonoma County Water Agency Facility at Aviation Blvd.
49. Sonoma County Water Agency Facility at Mirabel
50. Sonoma State University
51. Stewards of the Coast & Redwoods
   a. Bullfrog Pond
   b. Austin Creek
   c. Armstrong Woods
52. Sugarloaf
   a. Annadel State Park
   b. Headwaters
   c. Maple Glen
   d. McCormick Addition
   e. Quercus
   f. Grandmother Oak
   g. Wildcat Creek
53. Wendell Creek
54. West County Community Services
55. Yeardsley River Heritage Center

Individual Placements:
1. Boys and Girls Club
2. PEP Housing
3. Petaluma Bounty
4. Petaluma People Services Center
5. Pets Lifeline
6. Rohnert Park Animal Shelter
7. Rohnert Park Senior Center
8. Santa Rosa Junior College
9. Sonoma Valley Teen Services
10. Sunflower Garden
11. The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship's Native Plant Nursery
12. TLC Child and Family Services Transitional Housing Program (THP)
13. VOICES Sonoma
Exposure to Community Service
SCYEC youth experienced what it is like to give back to their community. Crew members saw their contributions to the community through environmental restoration, whereas youth in individual placements had an impact through the organizations they assisted and clients they served. After the program, youth voiced feeling pride in the work they accomplished. Additionally, project hosts acknowledged the impact the youth had on the community.

Before the summer, the Sonoma County Water Agency advertised community service days. Youth were encouraged to attend these events as an introduction to the SCYEC. The Sonoma County Water Agency hosted four community service days: December 8, 2012, January 12, 2013, February 2, 2013 and March 9, 2013. It was intended that those youth who participated in at least one community service day would be given special consideration by the youth agencies when hiring youth for Sonoma County Water Agency crews. All youth that attended a community service day were contacted by the youth providers and offered interviews, with 36 submitting an interest form. Of those, 20 were hired.

“The children we serve are impacted by the youth that assist them and present themselves as positive role models in the community.” - Project host

Connection to Community
Youth completed five questions on the pre and post surveys to assess their connection to their community. This tool was adapted from the National Youth Corps evaluation. The questions asked youth to respond on a scale from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree) of how much they agreed with each statement. The statements were as follows:

1. I have a strong attachment to my community.
2. I often discuss and think about how larger political and social issues affect my community.
3. I am aware of what can be done to meet the important needs of my community.
4. I have the ability to make a difference in my community.
5. I try to find the time to make a positive difference in my community.
There was a statistically significant increase in the mean response level to “I try to find the time to make a positive difference in my community” from pre to post (3.4 and 3.7, respectively).

**Individual Placements**
Project hosts estimated that the work the individual placements completed over the summer was valued at over $14,726.

**Community Benefits**
SCYEC projects help prevent flooding, maintain our parks, sustain community gardens, and address safety issues on public trails and pathways.
- Flood Prevention: urban and rural stream maintenance
- Public Access: trail and bridge building, park maintenance
- Public Safety: trail and bicycle path visibility
- Sustainable Foods: community gardens
DISCUSSION

2013 marked the fifth year of the SCYEC summer program. SCYEC continues to provide at-risk youth with an eight week paid employment opportunity and local organizations with labor and assistance. The SCYEC Leadership Team and youth provider agencies recognize the importance of meeting the needs of Sonoma County's youth; however, funding continues to drive the selection process, limiting the number of youth that can be hired. The majority of SCYEC’s funding sources are reserved for at-risk youth, including youth receiving CalWORKs, current or former foster youth, court-affiliated youth, pregnant or parenting teens, and high school dropouts. This allows the SCYEC to serve those most at-risk for being disconnected to their community (not attending school or being employed), which is associated with many adverse outcomes.

As with previous summers, youth participating in the SCYEC gained skills considered desirable for entry-level employment by local employers, as well as environmental and ecological knowledge. Youth continue to describe the relationships among crew members as one of the most enjoyable aspects of the SCYEC.

At a time when jobs for young people are still scarce, youth in the SCYEC not only get a steady paycheck for the summer, but also get the benefit of working outdoors and giving back to their community. Over the summer, the projects the youth completed helped maintain creeks, trails, and parks, making life in Sonoma County more enjoyable for residents. Project hosts voice appreciation for the work of the crews, as much of the work either would have not been completed or would have taken longer without the help of the youth.

The strong leadership and commitment that the SCYEC Leadership Team, funders, youth provider agencies, and program staff provide allow for the SCYEC experience to continue past the summer for some youth. Older youth, ages 18 and up have the opportunity to work beyond the summer on extended and year round crews with the Sonoma County Water Agency. This year 32 youth continued onto the extended crew and 16 were selected to participate in a year-round crew.

After reviewing the results of the evaluation, the SCYEC Leadership team made several recommendations for the upcoming year(s) of SCYEC. These recommendations are detailed on page 51-52 and relate to both the program design and evaluation. The Leadership Team believes that putting these recommendations in place will allow the SCYEC to better serve the youth of Sonoma County and measure the success of the program.
PROGRESS ON 2012 RECOMMENDATIONS

Each year, after reviewing the results of the summer program, the Leadership Team makes recommendations for improvement. These recommendations are tracked year to year. The following are the recommendations from the 2012 summer and their status for this summer.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Community Service Days

2012 Finding: Community service days were intended to be used as an eligibility requirement for Sonoma County Water Agency funding; however, there was low turnout to the events. The events are an important pre-screening tool because youth get experience working in creeks and understanding appropriate dress before ever being hired.

2012 Recommendation: Advertise community service days more broadly and use as a prerequisite for hiring and funding decisions.

2013 Status: Community services days were advertised extensively and all youth who attended a community service day were contacted by a youth provider to apply for the summer program and were invited to an interview.

Completion

2012 Finding: Nearly 20% of youth hired did not complete the summer. Although there are some acceptable reasons for not finishing employment (i.e. family emergencies or finding other employment), the SCYEC wants to better understand the needs of those not completing the summer and how to meet those needs.

2012 Recommendation: Identify ways to understand and meet the needs of youth who are at risk for not completing the summer.

2013 Status: Evaluation forms attempted to collect more information on reasons for youth not completing the summer program. More research is needed to fully understand the reasons for dropping out (for a negative reason) and how to meet the needs of youth at risk for dropping out (for a negative reason).

EVALUATION

Safety

2012 Finding: Safety is extremely important to the success of the SCYEC. Current survey questions measure youth’s recognition of safety importance but do not relate the questions back to the youth.
**2012 Recommendation:** Adapt safety questions to reflect the importance of safety to youth and how youth felt about how SCYEC handles their safety.

**2013 Status:** Safety questions adapted to reflect youth’s expectations of how safety would be handled prior to the summer and how they felt safety was handled after the summer.

**Environmental and Community Results**

**2012 Finding:** The SCYEC evaluation report accurately captures the impacts of the program on youth; however, there are limited measures of environmental and community impacts.

**2012 Recommendation:** Measure and report impacts to youth, environment, and community in a more balanced way. Add additional measures of environmental and community impacts to better assess the SCYEC’s success.

**2013 Status:** Additional questions were added to the youth surveys to capture youth’s connection to the community and environment. In addition, more data was gathered to better quantify and understand the impact of crew work to the environment.

**Work Skills Assessment**

**2012 Finding:** Youth with previous SCYEC experience and no SCYEC experience have statistically similar performance evaluations. It is hypothesized that youth with prior SCYEC experience should have higher initial work skill ratings; however, this is not being captured by the current measure. In addition, crew leaders feel that they do not know the youth and their skills well enough the first week to give an accurate rating.

**2012 Recommendation:** Research outcomes- and evidence-based work skills assessments for youth and select a measure that will most accurately measure youth’s work skill improvement.

**2013 Status:** The work skill assessment utilized was based off the performance evaluation matrix developed by the Sonoma County Youth Council. In prior years, this matrix was used as a tool to help crew leaders and supervisors complete the performance evaluation, as it gave examples of behaviors and attitudes of youth observed at various experience levels. This year, the matrix was used as the sole method of measuring youth’s work skills. It provided a more objective assessment of the youth, as crew leaders and supervisors were required to select the behaviors a youth was exhibiting versus rating their level in a certain skill.

**2012 Recommendation:** Conduct the first performance evaluation the second week of the program so crew leaders have a better opportunity to get to know the youth and are not just “guessing.”

**2013 Status:** The first performance evaluation was conducted the fifth day of the program.
Career Pathways

2012 Finding: The SCYEC wants to understand youth's long-term goals and see if crew work impacts interest in ecology and environmental careers. Many youth voice an interest in working at the Sonoma County Water Agency at some point throughout the summer; however, they do not select ecology and the environment as a career interest on their surveys. Youth may be overwhelmed by the amount of career choices on the survey and may also not understand the connection between career areas and specific jobs.

2012 Recommendation: Narrow down career choices on surveys. Use established career clusters and provide job examples. Add an additional question about interest in ecology and the environment careers on the pre and post program surveys.

2013 Status: The goal of this recommendation was to better understand youth's career aspirations. Instead of using career clusters, the questions on the pre and post surveys related more to leadership and aspirations. An additional open-ended question was added to ask about the youth's dream job. A question about interest working in a career related to ecology and environment was added.
2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the results from the summer program, the Leadership Team made the following eight recommendations for next year.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Applications, Hiring, Completion, and Gender
Over the years, the SCYEC has seen a decrease in female participation in the summer program. Although female participation in 2013 was higher than in 2012, the Leadership Team recognizes that there is an imbalance.

**Recommendation:** Increase recruitment to females prior to summer enrollment and make efforts to increase female participation and completion of the SCYEC.

Job Link Services
Unemployment rates for youth are much higher than for young adults and adults. Although a majority of SCYEC youth return to high school and college after the summer, a number of youth seek other employment opportunities. Sonoma County Job Link is a workforce service center. Job Link can provide services to youth over 18 years of age, including linking youth to resources such as options after high school, career planning, volunteering, college preparation and financial aid, and careers in the military.

**Recommendation:** Link participating youth, especially those not attending school, to Job Link services to ensure all youth have a plan at the end of the summer.

Opportunity Fair
The Opportunity Fair is a chance for participating youth to explore job options in Sonoma County, practice interview skills, and discover educational opportunities. Youth enjoyed the exhibitor booths but voiced a desire for a greater number of environmentally related exhibitors, as well as additional training, work, and educational opportunities.

**Recommendation:** Expand the Opportunity Fair to include more exhibitors, especially in relation to environmental and ecology work. Include additional training, work, and educational opportunities to give youth a broader idea of future possibilities.

Individual Placements
Although SCYEC is primarily crew-based, some youth choose to participate in an individual placement. Youth receiving an individual placement work at non-profit public and private organizations. The daily activities of the individual placement vary by organization; however, all placements should meet the SCYEC standards and provide youth with an enriching work experience.
**Recommendation:** Approve the work activities of individual placements to ensure that all youth placements are up to the standards of the SCYEC and will meet youth’s needs.

**Effective Programming**
The literature review cited a synthesis of 100 youth development and employment programs. This synthesis identified 8 common principals for effective programming.

**Recommendation:** Integrate Partee & Halperin (2006)’s 8 common principals for effective programming into the SCYEC program design.

**EVALUATION**

**Program Surveys**
The SCYEC targets at-risk youth, and many who participate may be reading below grade-level. To ensure that the results of the evaluation are as reliable and valid as possible, it is important to confirm participants understand the questions on the program surveys.

**Recommendation:** Have former SCYEC youth assist the Human Services Department evaluation staff with creating appropriate survey questions.

**Training**
Before the beginning of the program, crew leaders and provider agencies receive training on the evaluation tools and surveys. They serve as the main intermediary between the evaluation staff and the youth and project hosts. To guarantee data is of the highest quality, youth providers assisting participating youth and project hosts to complete the forms should understand the evaluation tools.

**Recommendation:** Conduct trainings for crew leaders, youth providers, and project hosts on the importance of the evaluation tools, details of the surveys, and how to complete each form. Human Services Department staff should also prerecord a webinar for crew leaders, youth providers, and project hosts to reference throughout the summer.

**Data Collection**
Much of the data that has been collected from youth and project hosts has been through surveys and more quantitative measures. Anecdotally, some of the impacts may be missed. To better understand the changes to youth and project hosts, evaluators should conduct focus groups and interviews, in addition to the current survey methods.

**Recommendation:** Conduct focus groups with youth and follow-up interviews with project hosts to gain a better understanding of some of the impacts of the SCYEC.
REFERENCES


Corporation for National & Community Services (n.d.). *Our History | Corporation for National and Community Service.* Retrieved from [http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/who-we-are/our-history](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/who-we-are/our-history)


YOUTH FORMS
Youth were asked to complete multiple forms throughout the summer for evaluation and tracking purposes. The following are the forms and information collected from youth:

**Interest Form**
Completed by all youth applying for a summer jobs position. The information collected is as follows:
- Name
- DOB
- Age
- Sex
- Address
- Email
- Phone number
- Race/Ethnicity
- Participation in SCYEC in 2009, 2010, 2011 and/or 2012
- Participation in Sonoma County Water Agency community service days
- Youth target groups (Foster youth, CalWORKs, Pregnant and parent of a child, involved in the legal system, high school dropout)
- Over 18 years old and independent
- Had a job before
- Return to high school or college in August 2013
- Highest grade completed
- Have high school diploma, GED, or Completion Certificate

**Pre-Program Survey**
Completed by all youth hired for the 2013 summer. The information collected is as follows:
- Name
- DOB
- Environmental knowledge questions (crews only)
- Environmental stewardship questions
- Connection to community questions
- Safety expectation questions (a-e, crews only)
- How do you think you will spend your income?
- How far do you plan to go in school?
- What job would you most like to have?
- Career aspiration questions
- Plans immediately after SCYEC
- SCYEC will help me gain/improve the following essential skills
- Do you think SCYEC will be a benefit to you?

**Post-Program Survey**
Completed by all youth that completed the 2013 summer. The information collected is as follows:
- Name
- DOB
- Environmental knowledge questions (crews only)
• Environmental stewardship questions
• Safety expectation questions (a-e & i-k, crews only)
• Did you receive enough supervision?
• Did your fellow crew members take safety seriously?
• Was there enough time to safety do your work
• Did your Crew Leader/Supervisor review your performance evaluation with you
• Was the performance evaluation useful in improving your job skills?
• How did you spend the money you made this summer?
• How far do you plan to go in school?
• What career would you most like to have?
• Career aspiration questions
• Plans immediately after SCYEC
• Overall I was satisfied with SCYEC
• I would return to SCYEC
• I would recommend that a friend join SCYEC
• SCYEC helped me gain/improve the following essential skills
• SCYEC was a benefit, why?
• Best part of SCYEC
• Suggestions about changes to make to SCYEC for next year

Performance Evaluation (Two times)
Completed by crew leaders and supervisors in June and August for youth currently employed. The information collected is as follows:
• Name
• DOB
• Skill level assessed by supervisor/crew leader using performance evaluation matrix for 12 skills and an additional 5 if on a crew or an additional 4 if in individual placement

PROJECT HOST FORMS
Project hosts were asked to document the work completed at their worksites over the summer.

Project Host Report
Completed by project host sites at the end of the summer. The information collected is as follows:
• Organization
• Youth provider agency
• Type of assignment
• Project type
• Work completed
• Contributions
• Savings
• Benefits/impacts for youth, environment and community
• Participate in SCYEC again?
• What worked well?
• What could be improved for next year
SUMMER UNEMPLOYMENT
Sonoma County monthly unemployment rates are unavailable by age. This graph shows national rates of unemployment in June by age (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). It is likely that Sonoma County monthly breakdowns would have similar age discrepancies.

United States June Unemployment Rate by Age

- 16-17 Years Old
- 18-19 Years Old
- 20-24 Years Old
- 25 Years and Older

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>16-17 Years Old</th>
<th>18-19 Years Old</th>
<th>20-24 Years Old</th>
<th>25 Years and Older</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td>32.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>23.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
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<td>14.4%</td>
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<td>2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<td>6.8%</td>
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PERFORMANCE EVALUATION MATRIX

The performance evaluation matrix was developed for supervisors and crew leaders to use when evaluating youth’s work skills throughout the summer. The matrix helps to ensure that all supervisors and crew leaders are evaluating youth’s performance in the same manner.

DIRECTIONS: The Worksite Supervisor will complete this Performance Evaluation to measure a youth’s readiness for successful transition into the workplace. It includes skills, attitudes, and values that are essential for professional success. Please provide an honest assessment of the youth’s level of performance. Complete this Performance Evaluation two times – on June 21 and August 2 or when a youth starts SCYEC and ends SCYEC. This MATRIX provides examples of behavior at each level of skill. It is intended to help you more fully describe the performance of each youth. Please circle ALL behaviors, attitudes, and skills exhibited by the youth for each skill level.

In addition on the last page, list the strengths of each youth and areas that need improvement. The worksite supervisors can and should consult with their provider agency for direction when there is uncertainty.

*Skills 13-17 are just for crew members and 18-21 are just for individual placements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>1. Demonstrates willingness to work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Yet Observed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>2. Demonstrates Integrity</td>
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<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Yet Observed</td>
<td>・ Hides cell phone use</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>・ Off task when crew leader not present or watching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>・ When questioned or encouraged to get back to work, makes excuses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>・ Does not show respect for equipment or site – or things belonging to others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>・ When asked, admits using cell phone or being off task</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>・ Goes back to work easily when asked</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>・ Takes care of equipment and work space when reminded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>・ Doesn't use cell phone</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>・ Easily answers questions when asked, doesn't hide anything</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>・ Encourages others to take care of equipment and work space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Not Yet Observed</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 5. Avoids the Use of Language or Comments That Stereotype Others | • Puts down others  
• Gossips  
• Makes derogatory comments  
• Comments detract from work time and work morale  
• Racist or sexist comments or jokes  
• Excessive foul language  
• Insensitive to negative reactions from others ("Oh dude, lighten up")  
• Doesn’t stop when coached (doesn’t generalize) | • Occasionally makes an off-color joke or comment  
• Occasional foul language  
• Apologizes if asked to  
• Rarely puts down others for work quality | • Does not intentionally make stereotyping comments  
• Never uses foul language  
• Notices response/reaction of others  
• Apologizes and quits if brought to their attention  
• Doesn’t respond to others’ inappropriate comments | • Demonstrates model behavior of not using stereotyping comments, foul language, or inappropriate comments  
• Encourages others not to use stereotypical languages (acts as a leader in this area) |
| 6. Maintains Appropriate Grooming and Hygiene | • Clothes not worn properly for the workplace  
• Uses heavily scented products and resists requests not to  
• When asked to change, resists  
• Visible and/or offensive body piercings or tattoos and does not accept request to cover them | • Only occasionally needs reminders about appropriate dress for the workplace  
• Readily, willingly covers tattoos or piercings if asked  
• Quits using heavily scented products when asked | • Come to work as clean as possible  
• Does not wear scented products  
• Wears appropriate and required clothes for the work environment  
• Don’t wear clothes that show the 3 Bs  
• No offensive tattoos or body piercings (offensive to the others you are with) | • Always comes to work clean and appropriately dressed  
• Makes suggestions to peers that are accepted by peers |
### Skill

#### 7. Is respectful of the opinions and contributions of others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Yet Observed</th>
<th>Talks a lot -- doesn’t let other talk, dominates conversations</th>
<th>Stops self when talking too much</th>
<th>Does not interrupt</th>
<th>Active listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interrupts</td>
<td>Rarely interrupts</td>
<td>Tries other people’s ideas</td>
<td>Encourages other people to suggest ideas and opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quickly judges others’ opinions</td>
<td>Makes value judgments</td>
<td>Does not make fun of other people’s ideas (no eye rolling or gossip with others)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not try other people’s ideas</td>
<td>about opinions that aren’t rude but are unhelpful to the overall team spirit (“No, that’s not a good idea.”)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makes fun of others’ opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Asks for others’ opinions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Makes fun of others’ opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Talks a lot -- doesn’t let other talk, dominates conversations
- Interrupts
- Quickly judges others’ opinions
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- Quickly judges others’ opinions
- Makes value judgments about opinions that aren’t rude but are unhelpful to the overall team spirit (“No, that’s not a good idea.”)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>10. Works well with others as part of a team</th>
<th>11. Follows procedures established to promote safety on a consistent basis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Yet Observed</td>
<td>• Works alone -- does not want to work with others • Negative attitude • Complains about others who don’t pull their weight • Does not accept help from others</td>
<td>• Does not wear safety equipment and resists when asked • Does not use tools correctly and resists when asked • Does not know/remember safety rules • Misuses equipment • Acts in ways or takes risks that may threaten the safety of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude</td>
<td>• Works with some people but not others • Mostly a positive attitude (but some bad days) • Sometimes blames others • Usually accepts help from others</td>
<td>• Wears safety equipment usually -- and when reminded • Uses tools correctly usually -- and when reminded • Knows most safety rules -- and is open to reminders if forgets • Begins to think about safety of themselves and others before beginning tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete their own tasks in the team and then goes to help someone else</td>
<td>• Positive attitude • Completes their own tasks in the team and then goes to help someone else • Works on tasks with other people • Knows and says the team goal • Helps keep the attitude positive</td>
<td>• Always wears safety equipment without being asked • Looks for and points out safety hazards • Reports safety incidents • Thinks about safety -- does not jump into the work without safety in mind (takes the time to think about safety) • Uses equipment correctly to ensure safety • Knows the safety rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiates interaction with others they may not know</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Appropriately makes suggestions for improving the safety of the environment • Appropriately reminds the team to be safe (wear equipment, use equipment safely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Not Yet Observed</td>
<td>Observed</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Interacts appropriately with the public</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ignores the public</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Makes inappropriate comments or body language</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Shy – but working to be able to respond appropriately to the public</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Demonstrates proper tool use</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses tools incorrectly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tool use leads to safety hazards and threatens safety of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tool use does not threaten the safety of others</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Demonstrates awareness of safety hazards</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Not aware of safety hazards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Behavior threatens safety of self and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not report safety hazards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 15. Completes work proficiently | • Does not demonstrate accuracy, thoroughness and/or orderliness in performance of work assignments  
• Does not complete expected amount of crew work in a timely fashion and/or work results often contain mistakes and errors | • Inconsistently demonstrates accuracy, thoroughness, and/or orderliness in performance of work assignments  
• May not complete expected amount of crew work in a timely fashion and/or work results may sometimes contain mistakes and errors | • Demonstrates accuracy, thoroughness, and orderliness in performance of work assignments  
• Shows professional concern for quality and timeliness of work  
• Completes expected amount of crew work in timely fashion and avoids mistakes and errors | • Performs work assignments with a high degree of accuracy, thoroughness, and orderliness  
• Frequently exceeds expected amount of crew work  
• Provides suggestions on how to improve efficiency of processes and assists in implementing when appropriate |
| 16. Understands the difference between native and non-native plants | • Does not understand the difference between native and non-native plants  
• Believes that we find only native species of plants in Sonoma County | • Has a basic understanding of the difference between native and non-native plants  
• Cannot name or identify the difference in practice | • Understands the difference between native and non-native plants, including the difference between non-native and invasive plants  
• Can name native and non-native plants found in Sonoma County, but cannot yet identify in practice | • Understands the difference between native and non-native plants, including the difference between non-native and invasive plants  
• Can name and identify different species of native and non-native plants found in Sonoma County |
| 17. Demonstrates a working knowledge of basic ecology terms | • Does not know or understand basic ecology terms  
• Does not ask questions to gain a better understanding of ecology terms  
• Frequently confuses various ecology terms | • Has a limited understanding of basic ecology terms such as ecology, species, population, community, habitat, niche, ecosystem, biosphere  
• Sometimes confuses various ecology terms, but remembers when corrected | • Demonstrates a working knowledge of basic ecology terms such as ecology, species, population, community, habitat, niche, ecosystem, biosphere  
• Can answer questions about ecology terms when asked | • Uses basic ecology terms during daily crew work activities  
• Explains the definition of ecology terms to fellow crew members  
• Has a basic understanding of more advanced ecological concepts |
| 18. Reads and understands written information | Not Yet Observed | • Has trouble reading written information  
• Cannot interpret and understand written information | • Makes mistakes when reading written information  
• Makes mistakes when interpreting written information  
• Requires some assistance when reading written information | • Reads written information without mistakes  
• Understands written information  
• Does not require assistance when reading written information | • Reads and understands written information  
• Can clearly communicate the message of written information |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19. Has and applies computer skills | Not Yet Observed | • Requires assistance to use word processing and spreadsheets  
• Requires assistance to use email  
• Requires assistance to use Internet | • Has basic word processing and spreadsheet skills  
• Has basic email skills  
• Has basic Internet skills | • Familiar with word processing, spreadsheets, email, and Internet  
• Organizes/inputs data into computer  
• Generates and maintains documents | • Competent at using word processing, spreadsheets, email, and Internet  
• Selects and analyzes information and communicates results using computers  
• Helps others readily |
| 20. Demonstrates customer service skills | Not Yet Observed | • Fails to meet customer needs  
• Communicates poorly with customers  
• Gets frustrated with customers | • Meets customer needs  
• Communicates adequately with customers  
• Sometimes gets frustrated with customers | • Anticipates and meets customer needs  
• Communicates well with customers  
• Friendly  
• Helpful | • Exceptional in anticipating and meeting customer needs  
• Communicates very well with customers  
• Always friendly  
• Always helpful |
| 21. Uses and applies basic math skills | Not Yet Observed | • Inappropriate concepts are applied and/or procedures are used  
• No evidence of mathematical reasoning.  
• There is no use or inappropriate use of mathematical representations (e.g. figures diagrams, graphs, tables, etc.)  
• There is no use, or mostly inappropriate use, of mathematical terminology and notation | • The solution is not complete indicating that parts of the problem are not understood  
• Some evidence of mathematical reasoning.  
• There is some use of appropriate mathematical representation  
• There is some use of mathematical terminology and notation appropriate of the problem | • Uses a strategy that leads to a solution of the problem  
• Uses effective mathematical reasoning  
• Mathematical procedures used  
• All parts are correct and a correct answer is achieved  
• There is appropriate use of accurate mathematical representation.  
• There is effective use of mathematical terminology and notation. | • The solution completely addresses all mathematical components presented in the task.  
• Applies procedures accurately to correctly solve the problem and verify the results.  
• Makes mathematically relevant observations and/or connections  
• There is precise and appropriate use of mathematical terminology and notation |
## SCYEC Summer Program Profile

Information on youth, project hosts, and investments for the SCYEC from 2009-2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>300 Hired</td>
<td>176 Hired</td>
<td>192 Hired</td>
<td>224 Hired</td>
<td>246 Hired</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>64 Individual Placements</td>
<td>51 Individual Placements</td>
<td>21 Individual Placements</td>
<td>15 Individual Placements</td>
<td>42 Individual Placements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Hosts</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>$1.4 million</td>
<td>$850,000</td>
<td>$973,595</td>
<td>$783,087¹</td>
<td>$775,794</td>
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<td>American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; Workforce Investment Act: Summer Jobs Sonoma County Water Agency; Flood Mitigation Kaiser Permanente</td>
<td>Workforce Investment Act: TANF Emergency Contingency Funds Sonoma County Water Agency; Flood Mitigation Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Commission The Miranda Lux Foundation Sonoma County Ag and Open Space District Kaiser Permanente</td>
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**SCYEC Youth Agencies:** Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship, Conservation Corps North Bay, Petaluma People Services Center, Social Advocates for Youth, Sonoma County Adult and Youth Development, West County Community Services  
**SCYEC Partners:** New Ways to Work, Sonoma County Human Services Department, Sonoma County Office of Education, Sonoma County Water Agency, Workforce Investment Board, Youth Council

¹The SCYEC launched a year round program in 2012. The total allocation for the year-round SCYEC is $1.3 million  
²CCNB joined the SCYEC in the summer of 2012.