Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps

2015 Summer Evaluation Report

March 2016
Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps
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SCYEC Leadership Team

Sherry Alderman
Director, Employment and Training Division
Sonoma County Human Services Department

Mike Reilly
Sonoma County Supervisor
5th District (Retired)

Ann DuBay
Public Information Officer
Sonoma County Water Agency

Steve Trippe
President and Executive Director
New Ways to Work

Stephen Jackson
Director, Career Technical Education
Sonoma County Office of Education

Grant Davis
General Manager
Sonoma County Water Agency

Mike Thompson
Assistant General Manager, Business Operations
Sonoma County Water Agency

Karen Fies
Assistant Director
Sonoma County Human Services Department

Report Prepared By

Amanda Gayda
Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst
Sonoma County Human Services Department
707.565.5548 or agayda@schsd.org

With Appreciation for the Assistance Provided By

Employment and Training Division, Human Services Department staff:

Kathy Halloran,
Cristin Tuider,
Michelle Revecho,
Mai Garrett,

and the SCYEC Evaluation Workgroup Members
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BACKGROUND

Program Overview
The Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps (SCYEC) provides young people ages 14-24 with meaningful, paid work experience, environmental education, and the opportunity to explore careers and develop work-readiness skills. Youth and young adults contribute to their community while completing environmental and conservation-related projects or by working with local non-profits.

SCYEC brings together a diverse group of county and community agencies in a unique program that is replicable and sustainable. Since 2009, the Sonoma County Human Services Department (HSD) has administered SCYEC in partnership with:

- Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board
- Sonoma County Water Agency
- Sonoma County Office of Education
- New Ways to Work
- Five local non-profits which HSD contracts with to employ and supervise the youth:
  - Conservation Corps North Bay
  - The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship
  - Petaluma People Services Center
  - Social Advocates for Youth
  - West County Community Services

2015 marked the seventh summer of SCYEC. It began in 2009 as a summer jobs program with the support of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In 2012, SCYEC was expanded into a year-round program.

SCYEC has provided more than 1,400 job opportunities since its inception and funding has totaled over 7 million dollars. (See Appendix for details.)

SCYEC Core Components

Youth Employment & Development
- SCYEC provides meaningful summer jobs for 150-200 youth and young adults annually.
- Young people are placed on a crew or in an individual placement.
- Young people receive education and training to develop core job skills needed to find and keep permanent employment.
- Young people receive career development opportunities.

Environmental Stewardship & Community Service
- SCYEC provides valuable services to local private and public non-profits.
- Crews complete environmental and conservation-related projects, and learn about ecology and environmental issues.
- Projects help prevent flooding and fires, maintain and provide access to our parks, sustain community gardens, and address safety issues on public trails and pathways.
- Individual placements impact the community through the host organizations they work with.

Strategic Partnerships
- SCYEC brings together a diverse group of county agencies, nonprofits, and community groups.
- SCYEC leverages a broad array of public and private dollars.
Youth and young adults are paid between $9.00 and $11.00 per hour, depending on skill and experience, for eight weeks during the summer. While most work in crews completing outdoor ecology work and environmental restoration projects, some are assigned to an individual placement with a non-profit or public agency. Young people gain valuable work experience and develop skills deemed necessary by Sonoma County employers.

Although open to all Sonoma County 14-24 year olds, the program targets economically disadvantaged young people, especially those currently enrolled in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, those receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and current or former foster youth. Funding targets determine the number and types of participants served through SCYEC, with flexible dollars from investing partners and philanthropic donors allowing all young people to have access to the program.

SCYEC meets the criteria for a Tier 2 promising practice program on the Sonoma County Upstream Investments Portfolio. SCYEC has received several awards; for example, in 2014, SCYEC received a Challenge Award for innovation in county government by the California State Association of Counties and in 2015, SCYEC was named a Bright Idea by the Harvard Kennedy School Innovations in Government Program.

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**Report Overview**

The 2015 summer evaluation aimed to understand the impact of SCYEC on enrolled young people, the environment, and the community. The audience for this report includes the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, various County departments, youth program provider agencies, project host sites, and funders of youth and environmental stewardship programming. Information will be used to inform future program design and business practices.

This report presents evaluation data findings from the 2015 summer, including assessment of the effectiveness of SCYEC in reaching its short-term goals (see logic model on page 3). This report addresses the following questions:

1. To what degree did SCYEC achieve its anticipated outcomes for the 2015 summer program?
2. What lessons learned from the 2015 summer can be applied to future program design?

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1 [www.upstreaminvestments.org](http://www.upstreaminvestments.org)
PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

SCYEC Logic Model

NEEDS
- More Youth with Needs than there is Capacity to Serve
- Disconnected Youth
- High Youth Unemployment
- First Generation of Youth
- Less Fit than Parents

RESOURCES
- Youth
- Youth Program Providers

STRATEGIES
- Exposure to Workplace
- Crew Work and Individual Placements
- Career Exploration
- Life Skills Curriculum
- High School Diploma Support
- Mentoring and Role Modeling
- Referrals to Community Resources

SHORT-TERM RESULTS
- Proper Use of Safety Equipment and Knowledge of Safety
- Improved Work Skills
- Relationship Building
- Improved Income for Families
- Planning for the Future
- Physical Activity
- Youth Satisfaction

LONG-TERM IMPACTS
- Increased Graduation Rates
- Increased Participation in Post-Secondary Education
- Increased Unsubsidized Employment
- Reduced Criminal Behavior
- Reduced Obesity

ENVIRONMENT
- Multiple Conservation Projects
- Summer Work and Maintenance for Streams

COMMUNITY
- Disparate Resources
- Funding
- Materials and Equipment
- Paid Staff
- Expertise and Commitment
- Volunteers
- Project Hosts

- Environmental Education
- Ecology Work
- Hire and Train Crew Leaders and Crews

- Increased Environmental Knowledge
- Completed Ecology Projects

- Healthy Streams
- Increased Employment in Resource Conservation

- Cross-Sector Collaboration
- Diversification from Unstructured Activities
- Networking Events

- Exposure to Community Service

- Workforce Readiness
- Community Support for Youth Development
- Reduced Crime
Youth Needs

In Sonoma County, young people ages 16-24 are faced with higher unemployment and poverty rates than adults. Notably, the unemployment rate for youth ages 16-19 has decreased from 2013, although the rate has increased for young adults ages 20-24; this is a reverse of the trends observed from 2012 to 2013 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Unemployment Rates for Sonoma Co. Young People Ages 16-24 are Higher than Adults

In 2014, approximately 16% of Sonoma County young people ages 16-24 were living in poverty, compared to 11% of adults ages 25-64.

Further, data suggest approximately 8% of Sonoma County young people ages 16-24 are classified as disconnected, meaning they are not enrolled in school (full- or part-time) and not employed (full- or part-time). Disconnected young people are at risk for many negative outcomes and are less likely to successfully transition to adulthood. Young people 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.

Environment and Community Needs

Locally, there is a tremendous seasonal demand for flood mitigation and stream restoration activities, creek clean-up and invasive species removal, maintenance and building of trails in local parks, restoration of wetlands, clean-up of open spaces, and support of sustainable community gardening projects. SCYEC addresses this need and provides young people the opportunity to work on conservation projects and other projects throughout Sonoma County. The community is in need of a job-ready prospective workforce; SCYEC equips young people with work-readiness and other essential skills desired by local employers.

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Note: Unemployment rates by age and month are unavailable for Sonoma County and 2015 unemployment rates are not yet available.  
4 American Community Survey 2014 Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data  
Youth

There were 150 youth hired during the 2015 summer; most worked on a crew completing outdoor ecology work. The majority (76%) completed the program, defined as completing at least half of the paid program days.

Youth were referred to SCYEC in a variety of ways. For instance, SonomaWORKS case managers referred youth from families receiving TANF, and youth applied based on word-of-mouth or previous SCYEC experience.

The five non-profit youth program provider agencies 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 in the summer program.
Characteristics of Hired Youth and Young Adults

Overall, most participants were male, between the ages of 16-21, and Hispanic/Latino; these findings are similar to past program years. SCYEC recruited a higher percentage of Hispanic/Latino young people (46%), than their representation in the Sonoma County population as a whole (36% of all young people).  

Figure 2 displays the demographic characteristics of participants.

Figure 2: Most Participants were Male, Between the Ages of 16-21, and Hispanic/Latino

Analyses by placement reveal a statistically significant association between placement type and age and gender; more crew members were male and more individual placements were ages 18-21 than any other age group. Similar findings were observed in 2014. Individual placements were determined based on participants’ interests and needs.

75% of participants were identified as having one or more of the following barriers at program entry, slightly lower than observed in 2014 (81%). Also, more participants were identified as receiving TANF (29%) in 2014. These data were used to determine eligibility for various funding sources and do not necessarily include all presenting barriers. Figure 3 presents the percentage of participants in each group.

Figure 3: Youth Represented a Variety of Target Groups

Note: The figure includes duplicate counts.

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6 American Community Survey 2014 Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data
SCYEC was the first job experience for approximately a third of participants; 45% had at least one year of experience in SCYEC and 43% of those new to the program reported having past job experience. In 2014, approximately half of participants reported past job experience. Prior to participating, most (56%) were in high school (compared to 66% in 2014); 10% were in college. A third held a part- or full-time job prior to the program.

There were no statistically significant relationships between gender, age, ethnicity, placement type, past participation, or target group membership and summer completion.

**Funding**

$742,096 in funding was provided by 9 funders for the 2015 SCYEC summer program:

**Local**
- $167,282 from Sonoma County Water Agency
- $15,000 from Sonoma County Vintners Wine Country Weekend
- $14,636 from LandPaths
- $14,636 from City of Santa Rosa Parks
- $3,309 from Sonoma County Ag and Open Space District
- $4,000 from Kaiser Permanente to fund the Kick-Off Event

**State/Federal**
- $262,322 from Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- $151,551 from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- $109,360 from Services for Transitional Age Youth (STAY)

Participants had to meet specific eligibility requirements for enrollment through WIOA, TANF, and/or STAY funding. To qualify for WIOA, participants had to be one or more of the following: a high school dropout (or at risk of dropping out); an offender; homeless; a runaway; a current/former foster youth; pregnant or parenting; low-income; disabled; basic literacy skills deficient; an English language learner; or treated for substance abuse or mental health issues. To qualify for TANF, participants had to be receiving TANF as either an adult or dependent. To qualify for STAY, participants had to be active in the foster care system or have been a foster youth at age 16 or older and aged out of the system.
Project Hosts

In 2015, there were 30 public and non-profit organization project hosts who provided participants with a healthy and safe environment, as well as meaningful work and learning opportunities at a variety of sites throughout Sonoma County. Of these, 18 hosted crews and 12 hosted individualized placements.

Project hosts, along with youth program provider agency staff, were responsible for orienting the participants and crew leaders to the job assignment and worksite, and following safety procedures (e.g., supplying water, providing a shaded area, and having safety gear). Some project hosts also provided training and assisted in identifying appropriate and relevant skill development.

Several project hosts (identified by asterisks in sidebar) also invested in the program and contributed at least half of the crew costs.

Youth Program Providers

HSD contracted with five local non-profit agencies to deliver the Youth Employment and Education Services Program; SCYEC is the primary work experience component of this program. These youth program provider agencies employ, train, and supervise the participants and crew leaders, and also provide the participants with educational and career exploration support. The agencies include:

- Conservation Corps North Bay
- The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship
- Petaluma People Services Center
- Social Advocates for Youth
- West County Community Services

Crew Placement Hosts

Federal Agencies
US Army Corps of Engineers

County Agencies
Sonoma County Agriculture
Preservation & Open Space District*
Sonoma County Regional Parks
Sonoma County Water Agency*

City Agencies
City of Cloverdale
City of Healdsburg
City of Rohnert Park
City of Sebastopol
City of Santa Rosa*

Environmental Non-Profits
The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship
Laguna Foundation
Land Paths*
Petaluma Bounty
Sonoma Ecology Center
Stewards of the Coast & Redwoods
Jack London Park Partners

Other Non-Profits
Russian River Senior Resource Center

Other Agencies
Guerneville Community Church

Individual Placement Hosts

County Agencies
Guerneville Regional Library

Other Non-Profits
Sonoma County 4-H
Boys and Girls Club of Central Sonoma County
Boys and Girls Club of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties
Council on Aging
Petaluma Bounty
Petaluma People Services Center
Rohnert Park Animal Shelter
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
Social Advocates for Youth (Sunflower Garden)
TLC Child and Family Services
VOICES Youth Center

* = investing project host
Strategies

Crew Work
Youth program provider agencies hire the youth and young adults and place them on a crew or in an individual placement (described below). Most (79%) worked on one of the 14 crews and completed outdoor ecology work. Crews were made up of six to eight people who were supervised by trained crew leaders. Generally, participants worked 5-8 hour workdays, four days per week.

There are three types of crews, described below:

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<tr>
<th>Crew Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Entry Level</td>
<td>Designed to provide crew members with valuable experience in order to build basic work readiness and job skills. This is often a first or second job for participants. These crews are mainly comprised of 14-17 year olds, or 18-24 year olds who lack experience and are not ready for senior crew work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Level</td>
<td>Designed for crew members with a more experienced skill set. These crews have higher levels of responsibility and use power tools in the field. Crew members must be at least 18 years old to serve on a senior level crew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended &amp; Year-round*</td>
<td>Designed to extend the experience of older participants beyond the 8-week summer program. Exemplarily crew members are recommended and then interviewed by a panel. Funding restrictions limit the number of youth on extended and year-round crews.</td>
</tr>
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*This evaluation report does not include data from the extended and year-round crews

Although the regular activities of a crew varied, a typical day was as follows:
- **Pick-up:** Occurred at a designated, consistent, and easy to access location. Crew members were expected to arrive within five minutes of a specified time.
- **Travel to worksite:** Crew leaders and crew members discussed the work of the day, the worksite, and the environmental impact of the work to be completed.
- **Tailgate:** Upon arriving at the worksite, crew leaders discussed any and all potential hazards at that worksite.
- **Environmental work:** Crews performed ecological restoration and environmental projects on behalf of a worksite host agency.
- **Breaks:** Crew members were allotted 10-minute breaks.
- **Lunch:** Crew members were allotted 30 minutes for lunch.
- **Drop-off:** Drop-off occurred at the same location as pick-up.

Crew members worked at variety of worksites including Sonoma County creeks, trails, parks, and other public open spaces. The projects also varied, but included: waterway, trail and public lands maintenance; invasive plant and debris removal; and gardening or landscaping activities. (See Results for a summary of completed projects.)
Individual Placements
Individual placements are assigned based on youths’ needs or interests. In 2015, 21% of youth worked in an individual placement.

The types of individual placements varied, but many youth performed administrative work (e.g., filing, organizing, event planning, etc.). Others worked at agencies providing child care, services to clients (e.g., foster youth, seniors), or animal care. Generally, youth worked 5-8 hour workdays, four days per week.

Exposure to Workplace
SCYEC is designed to provide youth with work experience so they can develop the necessary competencies for future employment. Youth received training prior to the start of the program, and continued to receive training on the job throughout the summer. Crew leaders also served as a role-model for proper workplace behavior.

Crew leaders and worksite supervisors provided encouragement, mentoring, and guidance to youth throughout the summer, and evaluated them on their work readiness skills at the start and end of the summer (see Results). Youth in need of additional support services were referred back to their youth provider agency.

“Different site supervisors had different communication, leadership, and expectations that shifted sometimes. These social skills were important to recognize and teach the kids that some tools we use are not only those we hold in our hands, to adapt to different supervisors.”

-Crew Leader
Life Skills Curriculum
Youth program provider agencies deliver life skills curriculum to participating youth. In 2015, almost all agencies implemented the evidence-based Tackling the Tough Skills (TTS) curriculum to some degree. TTS is an interactive life skills curriculum that helps teens prepare for success in work and life. It addresses the following topics: Attitude, Responsibility, Communication, Problem Solving, and Preparing for the Workplace.

Education and Career Exploration Support
Youth program provider agencies provide education and career development enhancements and supports in a variety of ways, both in groups and one-on-one. For example, in 2015, supports included workshops, guest speakers, employer tours, career interest assessments, and research projects. (Also see the Opportunity Fair section on page 13).

Youth also had the opportunity to tour Sonoma County Water Agency facilities. This field trip included visiting the operations center, as well as a trip to the Russian River to see the inflatable dam, fish ladders, and infiltration ponds.

Environmental Education
Crew members receive one hour environmental education lessons on various ecology topics throughout the summer. Although there was some variation in content, the core curriculum was developed by the Sonoma County Water Agency educators. Additionally, crew leaders imparted daily lessons through mentoring and training, and participants gained additional environmental education through informal relationships with project hosts.

Hire and Train Crew Leaders and Crews
Youth program provider agencies hire, train, and supervise adult crew leaders. In 2015, they hired crew leaders for 14 crews. Crew leaders, project hosts, and worksite supervisors were responsible for: ensuring the safety of the young people; guaranteeing each work project was completed successfully; upholding high standards for workplace behavior; modeling values and ethics; and creating a positive and fun experience for the participants.

Crew leaders received training from the hiring youth program provider agency and the Sonoma County Water Agency. They learned about the roles and responsibilities of the
position, as well as the types of projects scheduled for the summer. They received training on outdoor hazards, tools, and wildlife, which gave them the knowledge to facilitate crew member learning. Crew leaders also learned how to administer the participant surveys and complete the performance evaluations to ensure evaluation tools were completed accurately.

Crew members received training prior to starting work, and continuous training on tool safety, tool usage, hazard identification, and job skills. Crew leaders and worksite supervisors provided an orientation to each worksite and familiarized youth with the project goals, job duties, and expectations of each site.

Cross-Sector Collaboration

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

- Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board
- Sonoma County Human Services Department
- Sonoma County Water Agency
- Sonoma County Office of Education
- New Ways to Work
- Youth Program Provider Agencies
- Project Hosts

HSD provides the backbone support and oversight of SCYEC. The infrastructure is managed collaboratively through regular partner calls and meetings among the aforementioned agencies and SCYEC Leadership Team. This, along with effective cross-agency partnerships, is instrumental to the success of the program. SCYEC leverages resources from multiple funding sources for maximum benefits. Project hosts and community partners provide an invaluable resource to SCYEC.

Networking and Other Events

Kick-Off

Each summer begins with a kick-off event with participants, crew leaders, youth program provider agencies, and project hosts. In June 2015, community leaders and local elected officials came together and helped prepare the young people for the great work they would be completing during the summer. The event was held at Spring Lake in Santa Rosa and included a lunch sponsored by Kaiser Permanente.
Bite of Reality/CHOICES
Many young people participated in a financial literacy workshop called Bite of Reality hosted by the Redwood Credit Union in July 2015. This 3-hour interactive program is designed to teach the participants about the financial realities of the real world.

Attendees first learned how to write checks and utilize a transaction register. They then received a mock identity complete with career, income, and family information, and visited different stations to “purchase” major goods/services (e.g., transportation, housing, food, child care). Financial counseling was available for those who spent outside their means. Most attendees (85%) reported the event was Excellent or Good and that it had a positive impact (see Results).

Those who participated in Bite of Reality in 2014 had the option of participating in a CHOICES workshop instead. CHOICES, developed in Seattle in 1985, is an interactive workshop that includes information on goal-setting, time and money management, factors influencing youths’ lives, self-discipline, and the consequences of the decisions youth will make over the next four years. Most attendees (68%) reported the event was Excellent or Good and that it had a positive impact (see Results).

Opportunity Fair
Participants attend an Opportunity Fair towards the end of each summer. In 2015, it was held at the Finley Center in Santa Rosa. This event gave participants the chance to meet with potential employers, learn about educational and employment opportunities, practice interview skills, and hear panelists speak about their job experiences. Participants browsed 27 exhibitor booths from a wide variety of organizations. Most attendees (95%) reported the event was Excellent or Good and many thought the event helped them (see Results).

“I learned that self-discipline is an important quality to have and that it will increase your chances at success.”

-CHOICES Participant
Evaluation Methods

Overview

The Planning, Research, Evaluation and Engagement unit of the Sonoma County Human Services Department implemented the evaluation, including data entry, analysis and reporting. The SCYEC Evaluation Workgroup and Leadership Team reviewed the findings, and provided interpretations and recommendations.

SCYEC identified the following objectives as indicators of success in 2015:

- At least 80% of participants will demonstrate following safety procedures at program end.
- At least 80% of participants will know how to identify potential work hazards at program end.
- At least 80% of participants performing below work readiness levels at start will demonstrate improvement on one or more of those skills at program end.
- At least 80% of participants will report having a post-summer plan at program end.
- At least 90% of participants will report program satisfaction at program end.

Data Collection Tools and Procedures

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<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Data Collected</th>
<th>Administration Procedures</th>
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<tr>
<td>Interest Form</td>
<td>Participant demographics and characteristics</td>
<td>Everyone interested in participating completed a form</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth Information</td>
<td>Placement and completion data</td>
<td>Youth program provider agency staff completed for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre/Post Survey</td>
<td>Environmental knowledge and attitudes, community attitudes, safety, relationships, plans for the future, physical activity, and SCYEC satisfaction</td>
<td>Crew leaders/worksite supervisors administered to all participants at start and end of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Evaluation</td>
<td>Participants’ level of work readiness on essential job skills</td>
<td>Crew leaders/supervisors completed at start and end for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Host Report</td>
<td>Work completed, impact of work, and SCYEC satisfaction</td>
<td>Project hosts completed for each project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crew Leader Post</td>
<td>Crew leader perceptions and impact of program</td>
<td>Crew leaders completed near the end of the program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Feedback</td>
<td>Perceptions of Bite of Reality, CHOICES and Opportunity Fair events</td>
<td>Participants completed at the end of the events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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These data collection instruments were developed specifically for the SCYEC evaluation. The pre/post surveys also included some questions from existing research-validated surveys. Also, a sample of young people participated in one of several focus groups. (See Appendix for data collection details and forms.)

Data Analyses

Only participants completing the program with data in each outcome area were included in the outcome data analyses. Analyses included descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to assess whether changes were statistically significant from the start to end of the summer.
RESULTS

To what degree did SCYEC achieve its anticipated outcomes for the 2015 summer?

Summary of Findings
In 2015, the program achieved or almost achieved its short-term outcomes identified on the logic model (see page 3). Positive impacts on youth and young adults, the environment and the community were observed.

Evidence

Impact on Youth and Young Adults

Improved Work Skills
Youth and young adults received supportive supervision and work experience designed to help them develop and demonstrate work-readiness skills throughout the summer. Feedback on job performance was provided informally and via performance evaluations. Crew leaders and worksite supervisors evaluated participants on work-readiness skills at the start and end of the summer using the following scale: 0 - Not Exposed, 1 - Training Level, 2 - Improving Towards Entry Level, 3 - Entry Level, and 4 - Exceeds Entry Level.

All participants were evaluated on eight core skills identified through a survey of Sonoma County businesses and employers, and these are the only skills included in the following analyses. Crew members were evaluated on five additional skills pertaining to working with others, awareness of safety hazards, public interaction, and grooming/hygiene, and individual placements were evaluated one additional skill related to customer service work. (See Appendix for list of skills.)

Note: Participants with a rating of "not exposed" were not included in these analyses, in addition to participants who did not complete the program.

Objective: At least 80% of participants performing below work readiness at start will demonstrate improvement on one or more of those skills at program end.

88% with skill deficits at program start showed improvement in at least one area at program end.

Notes:
7 Note: The participant data analyses include those who completed the program and have matched pre and post data. Of the 150 participants, 114 (76%) completed the program. Of these, 106 had pre and post survey data and 102 had start and end performance evaluation data.
8 Note: 73 participants demonstrated skill level below work readiness on one or more items and had both start and end performance evaluation data.
This objective was met. In 2014, 84% showed improvement on one or more skills. Further, the majority of the 61 participants with a rating on all items performed at entry level or above on all eight core skills at the end of summer, and gains were observed:

67% performed at entry level or above on all eight core skills at program end, compared to 38% at program start, an increase of 29 percentage points.

Figure 4 shows the percentage demonstrating skill level at entry level or above at the start and end of the program.

![Figure 4: Most Young People Demonstrated Work Skills at Entry Level or Above at Start & End](image)

* = statistically significant change in percentage at Entry or above at \( p < .03 \). Statistically significant changes in mean scores were observed on all items except Demonstrates Promptness and Follows Attendance Procedures.

Over half of participants were rated at entry level or above on each item at the first evaluation, and gains were observed on seven of the eight core skills. Improvements were also generally observed from program start to end during 2014. Returning participants had a significantly higher average score on the item ‘Completes work proficiently’ than new participants at the start evaluation (2.98 vs 2.67, respectively) and a higher average score on the item ‘Demonstrates willingness to work’ than new participants at the end evaluation (3.55 and 3.09, respectively).

“[SCYEC] impacted me by helping me prepare for more official, professional jobs.”

“SCYEC helped me get job experience and the feeling of what it’s like to be on a work force.”

-SCYEC Participants

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Note: Only participants completing the program with a rating of Training Level or above on all 8 core items at both the start and end performance evaluations were included in this analysis.
Additional Skills Gained from SCYEC

The large majority of participants reported SCYEC helped them with other skills, in addition to the work readiness skills described above. On the post program survey, participants were asked whether they agreed SCYEC helped them learn or improve seven additional essential skills on a scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Figure 5 shows the percentage reporting agreement (Strongly Agree or Agree) on each skill.

![Figure 5: Young People Agreed SCYEC Helped Them Learn or Improve Skills](image)

This program helped me learn or improve how to...

- Work together as a crew.* 92%
- Take responsibility for my actions. 91%
- Be prepared for future employment or education. 90%
- Respect what other people think. 87%
- Be on time. 86%
- Find resources/services. 85%
- Ask questions if I don’t understand something. 81%

*This item was administered to crew members only. Number of responses to each item = 105-106, with the exception to the item only administered to crew members (n = 83).

Additionally, 92% of crew leader survey respondents reported they learned skills they can apply outside of SCYEC, particularly related to behavior management, leadership and mentoring.

Proper Use of Safety Equipment and Knowledge of Safety

SCYEC prioritizes safety, especially for the young people working on crews. Understanding safety procedures and potential hazards is essential for those working with tools outside.

**Objective:** At least 80% of participants will demonstrate following safety procedures at program end.

- 89%

demonstrated consistently following safety procedures at entry level or above at program end.

**This objective was met.** Further, there was a statistically significant increase in the percentage performing at entry level or above from the first evaluation (64%), an increase of 25 percentage points.

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Participants were asked on the pre and post survey to indicate whether they know how to report a site hazard if they see one on a scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

**Objective:** At least 80% of participants will agree they know how to report potential work hazards at program end.

91% agreed they knew how to report a potential site hazard at program end.

This objective was met. The majority of crew members also reported they know how to use personal safety gear and landscaping tools properly.

**Relationship Building**

SCYEC helps youth build relationships with others, including their fellow crew members or co-workers, crew leaders or supervisors, and project hosts.

Participants reported extremely positive relationships with adults and peers at the start and end of the program, evidenced by pre and post survey responses as well as qualitative data from focus groups.

88% reported they enjoyed being part of a crew or working with the people at their placement on the post survey.

“I really enjoyed the people that I worked with. They are a great group of people who want to work together and want everyone to succeed.”

“My crew and supervisor felt like family.”

-Crew Members

Crew leaders also reported developing positive relationships with the young people:

92% of the crew leader survey respondents reported they developed positive relationships with their crew members and 100% reported they served as a mentor for their crew members.

“I enjoyed working outdoors with the crew who are dedicated and motivated to accomplish their personal goals...”

-Crew Leader
**Improved Income for Families**

SCYEC targets low-income youth in hopes of increasing their income and providing experience that will allow them to secure future employment. Wages earned help the youth and young adults support themselves and their families while they gain valuable work experience. Participants who worked the entire summer earned between $1,000 and $1,500.

SCYEC helped participants support themselves and their family, as well helping them prepare for their future:

- **56%** spent at least part of their income on household expenses and
- **70%** saved at least part of the money they earned.

Data are fairly similar to 2014, although more participants saved their money in 2014. Participants also reported spending their money on clothes, entertainment, school, their car, and court ordered payments/fines.

**Planning for the Future**

Through workforce training, mentoring, life skills lessons, and education and career exploration support, SCYEC hopes to instill participants with aspirations for the future.

**Objective:** At least 80% of participants will have a post-summer plan at program end.

- **99%** had a post-summer plan.

Participants reported their plans immediately following the summer on the post survey: 57% planned to return to high school and 42% planned to go to college. Sixty-five percent planned to work (either part-time or full-time). Also, approximately 56 young people will participate on an extended or year-round crew following the 2015 summer program.

**60%** of crew members reported that SCYEC had an impact on their plans for the future, and mentioned SCYEC provided information and opportunities relating to careers and education, and provided work experience and job preparation.

“**SCYEC has made me think about going to the JC and getting a job after this program is over.”**

“**[SCYEC] has shown me future opportunities and there are way more jobs out there than I thought.”**

-Crew Members
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Youth Spotlight: Daniel

Daniel was just getting ready to graduate high school and was unsure about his future plans. He wanted to work which is what drew him to the SCYEC program as he had never been employed. He became a Park Aide at Armstrong Woods as an individualized placement. Daniel worked for eight weeks with Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods and learned more than trail maintenance and how to work a chain saw; he developed skills in ecological restoration, landscaping, and trail beautification. He now has the ability to identify native plants and trees in his surroundings.

Daniel said, “I gained a lot of experience working there, it was hands on learning... Working in the SCYEC program at Armstrong Woods didn’t feel like work.”

His supervisors had rave reviews about Daniel, noting, “He is quick to learn and eager to do all jobs with field ops. Whatever he doesn’t know, he is willing to learn. I appreciate his honesty, and commitment to being here ready to go.”

At the conclusion of the summer, Daniel was offered a permanent job with the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods. Additionally, because of participation in SCYEC, he has also decided he wants to go back to school. SCYEC has helped this young man identify and pursue his plans for the future.

“SCYEC helped me realize all the great jobs involved in ecology.”

-Crew Member

The best part of SCYEC was:

“Being given the opportunity to be exposed to new working environments.”

-Individual Placement

SCYEC-Related Career Knowledge and Plans

SCYEC helped crew members become aware of jobs in a related field:

- **79%** of crew members were aware of jobs and careers in environmental or ecology areas at program end, compared to **52%** at program start, an increase of **27 percentage points**.

Further, **42%** of participants (crew members and individual placements) were interested in a career they learned about during the summer program, while a little over a third were unsure. These data are similar to 2014.

“SCYEC helped me realize all the great jobs involved in ecology.”

-Crew Member

The best part of SCYEC was:

“Being given the opportunity to be exposed to new working environments.”

-Individual Placement

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Impact of Bite of Reality

The Bite of Reality event was designed to help youth learn about the financial realities of the real world. Most attendees reported the event had a positive impact on their spending habits and future plans on an event feedback survey. They enjoyed how realistic the event was and learning how to manage their money, and were surprised how expensive child care and other costs could be.

The survey asked participants whether they felt more likely to change their spending habits and future plans because of the event on a scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. 89% reported the event impacted their habits or plans in one or more ways. The percentage reporting agreement (Strongly Agree or Agree) to each item is displayed below.

Figure 6: Most Attendees Reported Bite of Reality Impacted their Spending and Saving Habits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Think about what I need vs. want to buy</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save my money</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about my future career plans</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep track of how I spend my money</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use financial counseling if I need it</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of responses = 45-46. Figure does not include the N/A responses (2-3 responses to each item).

“It did make me realize that I need to do more saving than spending because the real world is expensive.”

-Bite of Reality Participant

Impact of CHOICES

The CHOICES workshop is designed to help youth think about how the decisions they make now will affect their future. Attendees completed a feedback survey that asked them whether they felt more likely to change their future plans because of the event on a scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The percentage reporting agreement (Strongly Agree or Agree) to each item is displayed in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Most Attendees Reported CHOICES Impacted their Future Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Think about my future career</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue additional education</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use self-discipline in my life</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of responses = 23-25. Figure does not include the N/A responses (2 responses to each item).
Impact of the Opportunity Fair

The Opportunity Fair gave participants a chance to meet with potential employers and learn about educational, training and employment opportunities, as well as practice their interview skills. Most Opportunity Fair attendees reported the event components helped them plan for their future, especially the mock interviews with volunteers and staff.

Attendees completed a feedback survey that asked them to rate how helpful each component was on a scale from Not at All Helpful to Very Helpful. Figure 8 presents the percentage reporting Very or Somewhat Helpful to each item.

Figure 8: Most Youth Reported the Opportunity Fair Components Were Helpful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Helpfulness</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mock interviews</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/training exhibitors</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer exhibitors</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of responses = 89-97. Figure does not include the N/A responses (1-2 responses to each item).

"[The Opportunity Fair] helped me to know what opportunities there are out there for someone of my age."

"The mock interviews were helpful because it prepared me for future interviews."

"The panel helped. Really inspired me to better myself because they come from the same background I come from."

-Opportunity Fair Participants

Physical Activity

Crew members participating in SCYEC completed projects that often involved a lot of physical activity. The post survey asked crew members whether SCYEC helped them be more physically active on a scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

87% of crew members agreed SCYEC helped them be more physically active.
Program Satisfaction and Perceptions

Youth and Young Adults
Similar to past summers, data indicate most participants had positive perceptions of SCYEC. The youth and young adults enjoyed many aspects of the program, including meeting and working with others, gaining work experience and life skills, earning a paycheck, working (especially outdoors), and helping the environment and community. Program suggestions varied, but several requested increased pay, more enforcement of disciplinary actions, increased training on tools, and more education activities.

Objective: At least 90% of participants will report program satisfaction at end

87% reported they were satisfied with SCYEC.

This objective was almost met. Participants were also asked questions about their experience with SCYEC. The large majority reported favorably about the program:

91% agreed they would recommend a friend join the program and
80% reported they would return to the program again.

“I loved working with a crew, the variety of tasks and sites we visited and worked at, and I loved becoming physically more active.”
-Crew Member

“My favorite part about this summer was working with animals at the shelter.”
-Individual Placement
Crew Leaders
Crew leaders also enjoyed participating in SCYEC. Post program survey data reveal they especially enjoyed working with the young people, project hosts, and their youth provider agency, as well as the worksites and projects.

They were proud of: the growth the participants made over the course of the summer; the relationships they developed with crew members and those made between members; and the work completed.

Crew leaders also reported SCYEC was a positive experience for them personally, and had an impact on their career.

100% of the survey respondents agreed serving as a crew leader was a valuable experience.

“This was the first job I’ve had working with "at risk" youth and I believe the training, and my experience, was very helpful for future personal and professional opportunities.”

-Crew Leader

Project Hosts
Project hosts also reported positive perceptions of and satisfaction with SCYEC, and identified many benefits of the program for their agency, the environment and/or the community.

100% of the host survey respondents said they would participate in SCYEC again.

“Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods is very pleased with the crew members and the work accomplished. SCR would be honored to work with SCYEC again in the future.”

“We love to be able to support a particular youth’s employment needs and our staff and participants benefit greatly from an intern’s input, interaction and support.”

-Project Hosts
**Impact on the Environment**

**Increased Environmental Knowledge**
SCYEC sought to increase youth knowledge about the environment through outdoor ecology work and environmental education. In addition to the weekly lessons, participants also learned about the environment from their crew leaders and project hosts.

Environmental knowledge was measured by eight true and false questions on the crew member pre and post program surveys (see Appendix for questions). Generally, over half of crew members responded correctly to each item at both time points, and gains on all but two questions were observed. There was a significant increase in the total number of questions answered correctly from pre to post. Also, many who responded incorrectly to an item at program start responded correctly at program end.

Project hosts also taught crew members about the environment. Concepts were related to the project type and varied by location. Approximately three quarters of project hosts taught crew members some type of nature awareness education and about half taught them about riparian habitats.

**Completed Ecology Projects**
Crew members completed a variety of projects in 2015 and accomplished a substantial amount of work that benefitted the environment and the community.

**Type of Projects Completed**
The type of projects varied by worksite, but included: waterway, public lands and trail maintenance; invasive plant and debris removal; and gardening or landscaping activities. Over half of hosts reported their projects involved park or public lands maintenance, gardening/landscaping, and trash and debris removal. Other projects included trail and waterway maintenance, food production and construction.

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**Project Spotlight: Santa Rosa Creeks and Trails**
Over 26 cubic yards of garbage were removed from the creeks and trails in Santa Rosa, including many materials known to harm riparian health.

The Santa Rosa crew also freed 233 creekside trees from English ivy, an invasive that can kill off trees if left unchecked. Additionally, the removal of invasive plant species along creek trails and channels allows native species to thrive, providing water quality enhancement and habitat for wildlife.

The trails and access roads along creeks provide multi-use recreational opportunities and enhance public exposure to nature in a largely urban environment.
Work Completed
SCYEC collectively accomplished a significant amount of work throughout Sonoma County. Highlights of some of the work completed are displayed below:\(^{10}\):

**SCYEC Enhanced Recreation on Public Lands**
- Maintained approximately \(12\) miles of park trails
- Laid \(400\) cubic yards of soft bark in four regional parks’ playground areas
- Spread \(292\) cubic yards of mulch
- Constructed \(4\) food lockers for campites
- Removed fence at the Laguna Wetlands Preserve

**SCYEC Protected Wildlife and Restored Public Lands (Ecological Restoration)**
- Removed over \(6,000\) pounds, \(23\) cubic yards, \(15\) bags, and \(5\) trailer loads of debris/trash
- Removed \(811\) cubic yards, \(162\) pounds, \(29\) wheelbarrows, \(20\) bags, \(5\) truckloads, and \(5\) trailer loads of invasive plants and weeds
- Removed \(2,700\) pounds of plant debris
- Removed vegetation interfering with sediment mitigation and flood control over \(2,000\) square feet
- Removed ivy from \(233\) creekside trees
- Removed over \(800\) pounds of concrete
- Repaired \(2\) culverts

**SCYEC Protected Communities and Public Lands from the Devastating Effects of Wildfire**
- Cleared brush from over \(6,000\) linear feet of trail
- Cleared and maintained \(4\) acres and \(1.75\) miles of land

**SCYEC Enhanced Neighborhoods and Community Public Space**
- Planted over \(3,000\) vegetables at the Petaluma Bounty farm
- Harvested and distributed \(1,000\) pounds of vegetables, fruits and flowers
- Installed \(1,052\) plants
- Spread and compacted \(10\) cubic yards of decomposed granite on the Russian River Senior Center’s bocce ball court
- Performed weeding, mulching, soil amending and irrigation infrastructure

“As the season progressed, the crew seemed to increasingly internalize the benefits of their work on the environment and community, which improved both their pride in the projects and the quality and quantity of the work completed.”

-Project Host

\(^{10}\) Additional work was completed, but data was not submitted by several project hosts and some work completed was not quantified.
Benefits and Impacts of SCYEC for the Environment

Project hosts identified many positive benefits for the environment, including:

- Improved wildlife habitat conditions due to the removal of trash and debris
- Improved ability for native California plans to thrive and better establish themselves in County parks, which provides water quality enhancement
- Increased water infiltration and sediment trapping
- Installation of water-wise drought tolerant plants
- Additional two miles of equestrian trail use
- Reduced fire hazard
- Removal of materials harmful to riparian health
- Reduction of soil erosion
- Foraging for insects and a food source for salmonids due to native plant and riparian habitat enhancement

Qualitative data from program surveys reveal crew leaders and crew members also enjoyed seeing the impact of their work on the environment; for example:

“Benefits to the environment included reducing the potential for flooding in creek channels maintained by the SCWA, reducing fire hazard by clearing flammable brush, and installing water-wise drought tolerant plants to teach community members about alternative to grass and lawns.”

-Project Host

“The best part of the program was the fact that I got to make an impact on the City of Santa Rosa creeks.”

“The best part of this summer program was the knowledge that one was helping the environment.”

-Crew Members

Positive Attitudes About the Environment

The majority of crew members reported positive attitudes about the environment. Participants were asked questions about their awareness of environmental issues on the pre and post program surveys.

- 86% of crew members reported awareness of environmental issues and
- 85% of crew members reported thinking about how their actions affect the environment at program end.

Working outdoors was one of the major highlights of SCYEC, as evidenced by quantitative and qualitative data from surveys and focus groups. 92% of crew members reported they enjoy being outdoors on the post survey and several crew members and crew leaders mentioned working outdoors/outside was one of the best parts of SCYEC.
Impact on the Community

Exposure to Community Service
Youth and young adults participating in SCYEC experienced what it is like to give back to their community. Crew members contributed to the community through environmental restoration, whereas individual placements had an impact through the organizations they assisted and clients they served.

The majority of participants (80%) agreed they try to make a positive difference in their community at program end. Participants and crew leaders also reported feeling pride in the work they accomplished.

Benefits and Impacts of SCYEC for the Community
Project hosts identified many positive benefits to the community, including:

- Reduced fire hazard and flood risk
- Cleaner, safer, more attractive, and more accessible parks and trails
- Better ecologically balanced parks system
- Improved recreational opportunities
- Reduced potential for homeless encampments
- The opportunity for community members to develop a relationship with the environment and an awareness of natural resources
- A safe and beautiful community garden and a garden education program
- Local food distribution and organic produce donated to homeless shelters
- Increased child supervision
- 5 new after school 4-H clubs
- A well-maintained animal shelter
- Provision of additional support at placement sites
- Increased awareness for projects and events

Project hosts also reported many benefits of SCYEC to their agency, in terms of materials and supplies, but most notably staff hours:

8,756 hours = estimated benefits provided by SCYEC in terms of staff hours.\(^\text{11}\)

According to one project host, an eight week, eight member crew was valued at $40,458.

“The residents feel a sense of pride in seeing the parks and landscape areas maintained well and are excited to see the youth from the surrounding communities being employed to do the work.”

\(^\text{11}\) Some agencies did not quantify the benefits
Discussion

Conclusions

SCYEC Positively Impacted Participants
SCYEC provided 150 youth and young adults, most of whom were at-risk, with a summer job and the opportunity to gain valuable work experience. As with previous summers, participants received supportive supervision and mentoring, and gained skills considered necessary for entry-level employment by local employers. Participants also received educational and career supports, learned about financial literacy at the Bite of Reality/CHOICES event, and were exposed to potential employers and interview practice at the Opportunity Fair.

Data indicate the 2015 summer program had a positive impact on participating young people, as well as on crew leaders and project host agencies. The program achieved its short-term outcomes and objectives related to work readiness skills, safety knowledge, and plans for the future; participants also reported they gained additional skills and developed positive relationships with others. Crew leaders felt the program was a valuable experience for them personally, and that it had a positive career-related impact. Project hosts greatly appreciated the assistance, as much of the work either would have not been completed or would have taken longer without the help of the program.

SCYEC Benefitted the Environment and Community
Youth and young adults participating on crews completed a substantial amount of environmental restoration work, including: waterway, trail, and public lands maintenance; invasive plant and debris removal; and gardening or landscaping activities. This work benefitted both the environment and community members utilizing these areas, and resulted in: enhanced recreation on public lands; protected wildlife and restored public lands; protected communities from wildfire; and enhanced neighborhoods and community public space. Further, crew members gained environmental knowledge and awareness of environment- or ecology-related careers.

Young people participating in individualized placements were exposed to community service and positively impacted the community through the host organizations they worked with. Host agencies appreciated the increased program support and clients served by host organizations also benefitted.

SCYEC Participants Had a Positive Experience
Participants, crew leaders, and project hosts reported very positive perceptions of and satisfaction with SCYEC. Participants especially enjoyed: developing relationships with others; completing the work and earning a paycheck; and gaining work experience and life skills. Crew leaders and project hosts enjoyed working with the young people and observing the positive impact of the program on them.
Next Steps

**WIOA Implementation**

President Barack Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) into law on July 22, 2014 and it was implemented on July 1, 2015. The Human Services Department, along with program partners, will continue to work together to develop strategies for engaging WIOA eligible participants to participate in SCYEC, particularly older, out-of-school, and disconnected youth. Providing more year-round work based learning opportunities under SCYEC for this population of youth will be crucial for their success.

**Program Replication**

The Youth Ecology Corps program has been successfully replicated in four California counties, as well as in Portland, Oregon. The second annual regional meeting was held in Sonoma County on October 28, 2015 and, with increasing interest from other areas, SCYEC will continue to work with more communities that wish to establish ecology corps programs of their own.

**Expansion of Partnerships**

SCYEC has partnerships with public and non-profit entities that serve as investing project hosts, providing engaging projects and at least partial funding for the crew(s) working on their project(s). New projects are being identified (e.g., reducing fire fuel around properties in Sonoma County) that will continue to provide participants with work opportunities throughout the year.

**Expansion of Evaluation**

The exiting program evaluation has focused solely on the summer portion of SCYEC, and does not include assessment of the extended or year-round crews, or the larger WIOA Youth Employment and Education Program. Next year, the evaluation will be expanded to include these areas and examine the impact of the entire program on participating youth and young adults.
Program Recommendations

A summary of progress made on the 2014 summer recommendations, as well as the 2015 recommendations, are presented below:

Outreach and Recruitment

2014 Recommendation
The large majority of participants were male and many were in-school youth in 2014. Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, a major program funding source that began in July 2015, requires a greater focus on out-of-school and disconnected youth. It was recommended to identify additional strategies to reach more female, out-of-school, and disconnected youth.

2015 Status and Recommendation
In 2015, a greater percentage of out-of-school youth were served than in past years, but the percentage of female participants remained stable. Recommendation: Continue to identify effective outreach and recruitment strategies to reach more female, out-of-school, and disconnected youth.

Strategies may include greater outreach efforts with community partners to identify potential youth and young adults, as well as convening potential female participants and women in environmental or ecology-related fields to identify possible career opportunities.

Career Development

2014 Recommendation
2014 participants reported they enjoyed the career development opportunities provided during the summer, especially the Opportunity Fair, and would like additional opportunities. It was recommended to expand and/or identify additional career development opportunities for youth, such as linking in-school youth to career pathways established by the Northern California Career Pathway Alliance and providing additional opportunities for those ages 18-24 to visit Job Link. Connecting participants interested in environmental- or ecology-related careers with project hosts would also be beneficial.

2015 Status and Recommendation
Linking participants to career development opportunities is an ongoing priority of the program, especially since WIOA’s focus is on out-of-school youth and young adults up to age 24. Recommendation: Continue to identify, expand and connect youth and young adults with career development opportunities and pathways post SCYEC.
In specific, SCYEC will connect in-school youth with their college and career ready hubs as well as other career pathway hubs. For out of-school youth under 18, SCYEC will work to get them back into school and on a career pathway. For out-of-school young adults ages 18-24, SCYEC will work intensively to connect them to Job Link so they can access training scholarships and on-the-job training while establishing a career pathway.

It will also be important to continue to work closely with partner organizations and project hosts.

Training and Communication

2014 Recommendation
Project hosts, participants, and crew leaders could all benefit from increased communication about the program purpose and expectations. Project hosts and youth program provider agencies identified some participant attendance issues in 2014, and provider agencies reported crew leaders could benefit from increased information and training around the program. Also, project hosts reported they would like clarity around program components.

To ensure the program is a meaningful and worthwhile experience for all involved, it was recommended to expand program trainings for participants and crew leaders to include a more thorough discussion about the purpose of SCYEC, the job duties, and the program expectations and standards. Also, HSD and youth program provider agencies should provide on-going communication and support to projects hosts to ensure they have a clear understanding of their role and duties, and program components.

2015 Status and Recommendation
In 2015, program attendance varied among participants. Crew leaders did receive additional training about SCYEC and were provided with program fact cards for reference. Project hosts generally reported favorably about communications regarding implementation of the program, but could benefit from additional information about the larger SCYEC program as well as the year-round opportunities. Recommendation: Continue to communicate information about the purpose, structure, and components of SCYEC to participants, crew leaders, and project hosts.

Evaluation

2014 Recommendation
The evaluation focuses solely on the summer portion of the SCYEC program, and does not include evaluation of the extended or year-round crews, or any follow-up with youth post-participation. It was recommended to evaluate the extended and year-round crews in order
to gather information about the implementation and impact of these portions of the program. Also, conducting follow-up with a sample of participants would provide data about the potential long-term impacts of the program.

2015 Status and Recommendation
Due to limited resources, the evaluation continued to focus on the summer program only. Expansion of the evaluation is planned for the next program year (see Next Steps).
APPENDICES

SCYEC Summer Profile ................................................................................................................. 35

Literature Review......................................................................................................................... 36

2014 Data Collection Tools ........................................................................................................ 40
SCYECA Program Profile

Information youth, project hosts, and investments for the SCYECA from 2009-2015.

### 2009 - 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>HOSTS</th>
<th>INVESTMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ecology Crews</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>$1,149,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$1,330,572</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Participants**
  - Ecology Crews
  - Individual Placements

- **Hosts**
  - 32
  - 25
  - 26
  - 22
  - 38
  - 46
  - 30

- **Investments**
  - $1.4 million
  - $850,000
  - $973,595
  - $783,087
  - $775,794
  - $1,149,743
  - $1,330,572

### SCYECA 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

### SCYECA Partners:
- New Ways to Work
- Sonoma County Human Services Department
- Sonoma County Office of Education
- Sonoma County Water Agency
- Workforce Investment Board
- Youth Council

---

1. SCYECA includes funds for the year round program from 2009-2015.
2. CCNB joined the SCYECA in the summer of 2012.
3. Sonoma County Adult and Youth Development discontinued participation after 2013.

---

Youth@Work in Our Community
[35]
Literature Review

The following is a brief summary of the literature relevant to SCYEC, compiled in 2013.

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.

**References**

Bloom, D., Thompson, S., & Ivry, R. (2010). Building a Learning Agenda Around Disconnected Youth. MDRC.


Youth@Work in Our Community

www.scyec.org


Data Collection Tools

Data collection tools gathered the following information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Data Collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest Form</td>
<td>• Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Demographics (DOB, age, sex, race/ethnicity, grade level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contact information (address, phone number, email)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Participation in Sonoma County Water Agency community service days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Past SCYCE participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Youth target groups (legal system-involved, foster youth, CalWORKs,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pregnant/parenting, high school dropout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Independent status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Past job experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High school completion information and plans to return to high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Information Form</td>
<td>• Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Youth provider agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reason not hired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hire date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Pre/Post Survey</td>
<td>• See form on page 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Performance Evaluation</td>
<td>• See form on page 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Host Report</td>
<td>• Agency name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Youth provider agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Environmental concepts taught (crew only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Amount of work completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew Leader Post Survey</td>
<td>• Youth provider agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Past crew leader experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Past crew member experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Status before position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Plans after summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Perceptions of job preparation/training and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Feedback Surveys</td>
<td>• Overall event rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Impact of event on spending habits and future financial plans (Bite of Reality &amp; CHOICES events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Helpfulness of event in planning for future (Opportunity Fair)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Liked best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Suggestions for improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Youth Pre and Post Surveys and Performance Evaluation form are included on the following pages.
DIRECTIONS: We hope this program will be a valuable experience for you this summer! Please answer these questions to the best of your ability. Your answers will help us understand you better so we can make sure this is a good summer for you.

Please print neatly & fill in the bubbles completely: Correct = ☐ Incorrect = ☑ ☐

1. First Name _______________________________  2. Last Name _______________________________
3. Today’s Date _______________________________  4. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy) ___________________

THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5a. * In California the drought has been defined by lack of rain, snowfall and warmer temperatures.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b. * The lack of snow in the Sierra Nevada mountain range only impacts people who like to ski and snowboard.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c. * Fossil fuels will last forever.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5d. * Wind turbines, solar panels and hydroelectricity are examples of renewable energy sources.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5e. * Virtual or embedded water is the total amount of water used to make a product.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5f. * You live in Sonoma County. Food you eat grown locally has the same impact on the environment as food grown in South America that you eat.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5g. * Over the course of a year, a reusable water bottle and reusable grocery bags use the same amount of natural resources as one-time use plastic water bottles and grocery bags.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5h. * You can make a positive impact on the environment by purchasing local products, reusing items, recycling and composting your waste.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements.

On this survey, environment refers to the place you live and all things that surround you including air, soil, water, plants, animals, buildings, roads, and pollution. And community refers to the area where you live or work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6a. * I am aware of environmental issues.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b. * I think about how my actions affect the environment.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6c. * I enjoy being outdoors.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6d. I try to make a positive difference in my community.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*completed by crew members only
**WORKPLACE SAFETY**
*Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements about workplace safety.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7a. I know how to use personal safety gear properly.*</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b. I know how to use handheld landscaping tools properly.*</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7c. I know how to report a site hazard if I see one.*</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EDUCATION/JOB STATUS BEFORE THIS SUMMER**
*Please tell us what you were doing before you started the program this summer.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>If yes, please indicate:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8a. Were you going to school?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>High School GED Program College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b. Were you working?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Part-time Full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8c. Were you doing something else?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>What? ____________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YOUR GOALS AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**
*Please tell us what your plans are immediately after this summer program ends.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
<th>If yes, please indicate:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9a. Will you be going to school?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>High School GED Program College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b. Will you be working?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Part-time Full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9c. Will you be doing something else?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>What? ____________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Are you aware of jobs and careers in environmental or ecology areas?*

*completed by crew members only*
2015 Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps

2015 POST PROGRAM SURVEY

DIRECTIONS: We hope this program will be a valuable experience for you this summer! Please answer these questions to the best of your ability. Your answers will help us understand you better so we can make sure this is a good summer for you.

Please print neatly & fill in the bubbles completely:  
Correct = ○  Incorrect = ☒  ☐

1. First Name _______________________________  2. Last Name _______________________________

3. Today’s Date _______________________________  4. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy) _____________________

THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

5a.* In California the drought has been defined by lack of rain, snowfall and warmer temperatures.

5b.* The lack of snow in the Sierra Nevada mountain range only impacts people who like to ski and snowboard.

5c.* Fossil fuels will last forever.

5d.* Wind turbines, solar panels and hydroelectricity are examples of renewable energy sources.

5e.* Virtual or embedded water is the total amount of water used to make a product.

5f.* You live in Sonoma County. Food you eat grown locally has the same impact on the environment as food grown in South America that you eat.

5g.* Over the course of a year, a reusable water bottle and reusable grocery bags use the same amount of natural resources as one-time use plastic water bottles and grocery bags.

5h.* You can make a positive impact on the environment by purchasing local products, reusing items, recycling and composting your waste.

Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements.

On this survey, environment refers to the place you live and all things that surround you including air, soil, water, plants, animals, buildings, roads, and pollution. And community refers to the area where you live or work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6a.*</td>
<td>I am aware of environmental issues.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b.*</td>
<td>I think about how my actions affect the environment.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6c.*</td>
<td>I enjoy being outdoors.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6d.</td>
<td>I try to make a positive difference in my community.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*completed by crew members only
WORKPLACE SAFETY

7a. Were you ever worried about your safety this summer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7b. If so, were your safety worries addressed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7c. Did your crew leader take safety seriously?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7d. Is there anything you want to tell us about safety this summer?

Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements about workplace safety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8a. I know how to use personal safety gear properly.*</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b. I know how to use handheld landscaping tools properly.*</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8c. I know how to report a site hazard if I see one.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUPERVISION

9a. Did you receive enough supervision this summer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9b. If no, please explain: __________________________________________________________

9c. Did your supervisor give you feedback to help you improve your job skills?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9d. Did you feel comfortable talking to your supervisor about questions or concerns?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YOUR GOALS AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Please tell us what your plans are immediately after this summer ends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
<th>If yes, please indicate:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10a. Will you be going to school?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GED Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10b. Will you be working?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c. Will you be doing something else?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>What?____________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11a. Are you aware of jobs and careers in environmental or ecology areas?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11b. Are you interested in having a career you learned about in the program this summer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11c. If yes, what career are you interested in? ________________________________

11d. What is your dream job? ________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12a. Did SCYEC have an impact on your plans for the future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12b. If yes, please explain how: ____________________________________________

*completed by crew members only
THE MONEY YOU EARNED

13. How did you spend the money you earned this summer? Check all that apply.

- O Savings
- O Personal entertainment
- O Household expenses (such as food, bills, necessities, rent, phone)
- O Car (such as car payments, gas, license, driver’s education, insurance, repairs)
- O Clothes
- O Court ordered payments or fines
- O School (such as tuition, books)
- O Donation/charity
- O Something else. What? ____________________________________________

WHAT YOU LEARNED

This summer program helped me improve or learn how to:

14. a. Ask questions if I don’t understand something. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
14. b. Be on time. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
14. c. Take responsibility for my actions. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
14. d. Work together as a crew.* Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
14. e. Respect what other people think. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
14. f. Find resources/services (like help with banking or job search). Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
14. g. Be prepared for future employment or education. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

During this summer program...

15. a. I enjoyed being part of a crew.* Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
15. b. My supervisor was a mentor to me. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
15. c. I had an adult I could depend on to help me if I needed it. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

16. This summer program helped me be more physically active. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE PROGRAM

17. a. Overall, I was satisfied with this summer program. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
17. b. I would return to this summer program again. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
17. c. I would recommend that a friend join this summer program. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree
17. d. I benefitted from the Tackling Tough Skills (TTS) sessions. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

18. a. What was the best part about the program this summer? ____________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

18. b. Do you have any suggestions to help make this summer program better? ____________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

*completed by crew members only

Youth@Work in Our Community
www.scyec.org

[45]
Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps

2015 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION MATRIX

The purpose of this form is to measure youths' work readiness skills. The matrix includes 13 skills, attitudes, & values that are essential for professional success. It provides examples of behaviors, attitudes & skills at each level of proficiency, for each skill. The purpose of the matrix is to help you identify the proficiency level of each youth on each work readiness skill. For each youth, please complete at the start and end of the program, and halfway if requested by your supervisor (refer to Evaluation Manual for completion dates).

DIRECTIONS:
- Mark the behaviors, attitudes, & skills demonstrated by the youth for each proficiency level for each skill (optional)
- Provide one overall rating of the youth's performance on each skill using the rating scale below by filling in the applicable bubble:
- On the last page, list major strengths & areas needing improvement
- Return completed forms to your Supervisor
- Please answer thoughtfully & truthfully, & consult with your Supervisor if you have any questions

Work Readiness Rating Scale

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

Start: O  | Mid: O  | End: O

Assessment: O O O

Youth’s First Name ________________________________  Youth’s Last Name ________________________________  Youth’s DOB _______________

Crew Leader’s Name ________________________________________________  Today’s Date ________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0- Not Exposed</th>
<th>1- Training Level</th>
<th>2- Improving Toward Entry Level</th>
<th>3- Entry Level</th>
<th>4- Exceeds Entry Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1. Demonstrates willingness to work** | - Often off task (e.g., talks to friends) instead of working  
- Takes a while to start work or change tasks (e.g., walks slowly)  
- Doesn't ask for more work when finished with a task  
- Leans on tools  
- Waits for direction | - When watched, is often engaged in productive work  
- Occasionally asks for more work when finished with a task | - Is engaged in work most of the time (about 90%)  
- Moves between tasks readily, efficiently, quickly  
- Occasionally takes initiative to start new tasks without being asked | - Is engaged in work almost 100% of the time  
- Offers help readily to others  
- Is a self-starter and often takes initiative to start new tasks |
| **OVERALL RATING** | O | O | O | O |
| **2. Demonstrates integrity** | - Tries to hide cell phone use  
- Off task when crew leader is not directly supervising  
- Makes excuses when questioned or encouraged to get back to work  
- Doesn't show respect for equipment or work space, or things belonging to others | - When asked, admits to using cell phone or being off task  
- Goes back to work easily when asked  
- Shows respect for equipment & work space when reminded | - Rarely uses cell phone  
- Easily answers questions when asked, and doesn't hide anything  
- Independently shows respect for equipment & work space | - Before being asked, owns up to mistakes & suggests solutions  
- Encourages others to take care of equipment & work space | |
| **OVERALL RATING** | O | O | O | O |
| **3. Completes work proficiently** | - Doesn't demonstrate accuracy, thoroughness & orderliness in performance of work tasks  
- Doesn't complete expected amount of work in a timely fashion  
- Work often contains mistakes & errors | - Inconsistently demonstrates accuracy, thoroughness, & orderliness in performance of work tasks  
- May not complete expected amount of work in a timely fashion  
- Work results sometimes contain mistakes & errors | - Demonstrates accuracy, thoroughness, & orderliness in performance of work tasks  
- Completes work in a timely fashion & generally avoids mistakes & errors  
- Shows professional concern for quality & timeliness of work | - Performs work assignments with an exceptional degree of accuracy, thoroughness, & orderliness  
- Frequently completes more than expected amount of work  
- Provides suggestions on how to improve efficiency of processes & assists in implementing when appropriate | |
| **OVERALL RATING** | O | O | O | O |
| **4. Takes responsibility for completing own work** | - Makes mistakes & doesn't notice them  
- Provides excuses for mistakes or blames others  
- Doesn't complete work & doesn't appear to care | - Doesn't notice own mistakes but fixes when asked  
- Accepts responsibility for own mistakes when pointed out to them  
- Completes majority of work  
- Wants to improve | - Identifies & fixes own mistakes  
- Checks own work quality without being asked  
- Completes almost all work or talks to crew leader if unable to finish tasks  
- Seeks ways to improve  
- Helps others when asked | - Makes suggestions for improving the quality of the team's work  
- Encourages others to finish their work so the work of the team is complete & accurate  
- Voluntarily helps others | |
<p>| <strong>OVERALL RATING</strong> | O | O | O | O |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0- Not Exposed</th>
<th>1- Training Level</th>
<th>2- Improving Toward Entry Level</th>
<th>3- Entry Level</th>
<th>4- Exceeds Entry Level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Demonstrates promptness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Often late</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally late</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Often extends breaks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally extends breaks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL RATING</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Follows attendance procedures</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Doesn’t show up for work &amp; doesn’t inform supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally absent</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Doesn’t offer an excuse when returns to work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally provides advance notification</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• When questioned, excuse is inadequate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If late, informs supervisor ahead of time</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL RATING</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Avoids the use of language or comments that stereotype others</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gossips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally gossips or puts down others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Puts down others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally makes inappropriate comments or jokes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Makes derogatory comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally uses foul language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Makes racist or sexist comments/jokes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apologizes when asked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Uses excessive foul language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Inensitive to negative reactions from others (“Oh dude, lighten up”)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Doesn’t stop when coached</td>
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<tr>
<td>OVERALL RATING</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Maintains appropriate grooming &amp; hygiene (Crew only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inadequate personal grooming or hygiene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally needs reminders about appropriate dress or grooming for the workplace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wears inappropriate clothes for the workplace, &amp; resists changing them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Readily, willingly covers offensive tattoos or body piercings if asked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has visible &amp;/or offensive tattoos or body piercings &amp; resists covering them up if asked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quits using heavily scented products if asked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses heavily scented products &amp; resists stopping use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL RATING</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0- Not Exposed</td>
<td>1- Training Level</td>
<td>2- Improving Toward Entry Level</td>
<td>3- Entry Level</td>
<td>4- Exceeds Entry Level</td>
<td></td>
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<td>----------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Is respectful of the opinions &amp; contributions of others (Crew only)</td>
<td>Makes fun of other people's opinions</td>
<td>Makes value judgments about opinions that aren't rude but are unhelpful to the overall team spirit (&quot;No, that's not a good idea.&quot;)</td>
<td>Doesn't judge or make fun of other people's ideas (no eye rolling or gossip with others)</td>
<td>Engages in active listening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn't try out other people's ideas</td>
<td>Stops talking too much when asked</td>
<td>Tries out other people's ideas</td>
<td>Encourages other people to suggest ideas &amp; share opinions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talks a lot and dominates conversations (doesn't let others speak)</td>
<td>Occasionally interrupts others</td>
<td>Asks for other people's opinions</td>
<td>Builds on other people's ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interrupts others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL RATING</strong></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Works well with others as part of a team (Crew only)</td>
<td>Works alone -- does not want to work with others</td>
<td>Works with some people but not others</td>
<td>Works well with other people</td>
<td>Initiates interaction with others they may not know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often has a negative attitude</td>
<td>Usually has a positive attitude</td>
<td>Has a positive attitude</td>
<td>Invites others to work with them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complains about others</td>
<td>Occasionally complains about others</td>
<td>Completes their own tasks &amp; then helps others</td>
<td>Recognizes other people's strengths &amp; makes sure they work in ways that use their strengths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not accept help from others</td>
<td>Usually accepts help from others</td>
<td>Helps keep a positive team attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL RATING</strong></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Demonstrates awareness of safety hazards (Crew only)</td>
<td>Not aware of safety hazards</td>
<td>Usually aware of safety hazards</td>
<td>Aware of safety hazards</td>
<td>Makes suggestions on how to avoid safety hazards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behavior threatens safety of self &amp; others</td>
<td>Needs to be reminded by crew leader &amp; fellow crew members about safety hazards</td>
<td>Reports safety hazards or incidents to crew leader</td>
<td>Reminds crew members about safety hazards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not report safety hazards</td>
<td>Sometimes reports safety hazards to crew leader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL RATING</strong></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Follows procedures established to promote safety on a consistent basis</td>
<td>Doesn't wear safety equipment &amp; resists when asked</td>
<td>Usually wears safety equipment -- &amp; does so when reminded</td>
<td>Wears safety equipment without being asked</td>
<td>Makes appropriate suggestions for improving the safety of the work environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn't use tools and equipment correctly &amp; resists when asked</td>
<td>Usually uses tools and equipment correctly -- &amp; does so when reminded</td>
<td>Uses tools and equipment correctly</td>
<td>Appropriately reminds the team to be safe (wear protective equipment, use equipment safely)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn't know/remember safety rules</td>
<td>Knows most safety rules -- &amp; is open to reminders</td>
<td>Knows the safety rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acts in ways or takes risks that may threaten their safety or that of others</td>
<td>Usually thinks about safety of themselves &amp; others before beginning tasks</td>
<td>Constantly thinks about safety -- does not engage in work without safety in mind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL RATING</strong></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0- Not Exposed</td>
<td>1- Training Level</td>
<td>2- Improving Toward Entry Level</td>
<td>3- Entry Level</td>
<td>4- Exceeds Entry Level</td>
<td></td>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13. Interacts appropriately with the public (Crew only)</strong></td>
<td>• Usually ignores the public</td>
<td>• Shy, but working to be able to respond appropriately to the public</td>
<td>• Polite &amp; respectful to the public</td>
<td>• Is a good ambassador for SCYEC at the worksite</td>
<td><strong>OVERALL RATING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Makes inappropriate comments</td>
<td>• Rarely makes inappropriate comments or demonstrates inappropriate body language</td>
<td>• Responds appropriately to questions</td>
<td>• After engaging with this youth, the public is impressed with the youth and the program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Demonstrates inappropriate body language</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Smiles, makes good eye contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL RATING</strong></td>
<td><strong>O</strong></td>
<td><strong>O</strong></td>
<td><strong>O</strong></td>
<td><strong>O</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14. Demonstrates customer service skills (Individual Placements only)</th>
<th>• Fails to meet customer/client needs</th>
<th>• Meets customer/client needs</th>
<th>• Anticipates and meets customer/client needs</th>
<th>• Exceptional in anticipating and meeting customer/client needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Communicates poorly with customers/clients</td>
<td>• Communicates adequately with customer/client</td>
<td>• Communicates well with customers/clients</td>
<td>• Communicates extremely well with customers/clients</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gets frustrated with customers/clients</td>
<td>• Occasionally gets frustrated with customers/clients</td>
<td>• Friendly to customers/clients</td>
<td>• Extremely friendly and helpful to customers/clients</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL RATING</strong></td>
<td><strong>O</strong></td>
<td><strong>O</strong></td>
<td><strong>O</strong></td>
<td><strong>O</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strengths:

Areas Needing Improvement:

Supervisor Signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Youth Signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________