

## **Project Design**

From day one, the emphasis of the program will be on success! During the first two weeks of the program youth will attend a two-week orientation and mental toughness training that will foster team building and outline the importance of setting goals, why education is important and community service learning. The orientation will describe how students can achieve success and what it will take to complete the program successfully. It will include community service and leadership, learning expectations, program rules/policies, education processes, testing, along with other program and construction safety measures needing to be followed. Vocational and educational assessments will be given during the first two weeks of the program, and career assessments to establish baselines for each youth's individual education plan and career development plan. An outline of the program and contract requirements will also be reviewed between the student and the staff of the YouthBuild program. Once students are enrolled in the program and baseline testing reviewed, staff will work to assess and identify barriers, while creating each individual plan; therefore, beginning the process for GED achievement and other industry recognized certifications.

In the beginning, it is imperative that youth understand the use and dangers of working with a variety of tools used in construction. Prior to beginning work on the construction site, youth will be trained on tool usage and tool safety. Construction supervisors will incorporate related academic materials to show the relationship between what is learned in the classroom under NCCER credentialing and the ability to do the job. This will help youth begin to tie the two areas together and how each applies when learning construction. To enhance learning, each cohort will be divided into two (2) groups, enabling them to alternate between the academic classroom and the construction site, and using the remaining 10% of their time participating in youth leadership development and community service learning activities over the 10-12 month program period. During each week the two groups will alternate between academic classes and the construction site from Monday – Thursday. Classroom will consist of a 7 hour day, Construction will consist of a 6 hour training/work day, and Friday's will be designated for community services activities, additional classes for credentialing/workshops, field trips, and community presentations for a total of 8 hours.

The program is challenging and rigorous, enabling students to draw on their experiences (Experiential Learning Model), reinforcing the learning process. The following activities will enhance our ability to meet the established performance goals of the YouthBuild program:

- Study and earn GED Certificate through approved educational curriculum and approved state testing

- NCCER industry recognized certification for required certification (received at the end of the program)

- OSHA certification training (industry recognized certificate)

Individual Employment Plan development and intensive case management for job placement in education or a job upon program completion

Tours of local Universities and Community Colleges that include information on FAFSA applications and Pell Grant information

Testing throughout the program to document literacy/numeracy gains

Student workshops on resiliency and other work related topics

Mock interviewing and interview techniques

Follow up every 30 days upon program completion for documented retention in job placement, educational placement, and reduced recidivism

Partnerships are a critical component of YouthBuild. Therefore, PPEP continues to partner with the Comité de Bien Estar for qualified construction projects, Arizona Western College for NCCER credentialing, and Campesinos Sin Fronteras for additional job readiness training. We also partner with PMHDC Micro Enterprise for Business development opportunities, the Cities of San Luis for community events, YouthBuild AmeriCorps for additional opportunities in community service and to achieve educational awards, and to the local American Job Centers for co-enrollment activities for additional employment and placement services.

Overall, The YouthBuild program is a 10 month program that offers secondary education, vocational education, certifications, national credentials, and college scholarships to students that enter the program and complete. Through a comprehensive GED program that incorporates online learning and classroom for blended learning to earn a high school diploma, students study and are able to obtain their diploma within the 10 month program. If they do not, they will then continue until it is achieved. In conjunction with the GED Program, students are also enrolled in a construction vocational education track, where they are building houses from the ground up with experienced construction supervisors and community housing partners. This is also tied into AmeriCorps, where each student is entered and participates in 450 hours of community services to earn a post-secondary scholarship that is good for 7 years once they complete the program. Because youth are working with housing partners to build low income affordable houses, it is also considered a part of their community services and giving back to the community. In addition, students will be involved within the community to offer community service and engage in multiple projects in the betterment of the community. Students will also attend college leadership classes, a National Construction credentialing class, and obtain certification in first aid, CPR, and OSHA 10 safety. Students are involved in a rigorous schedule for 10-12 months to complete all of their studies and prepare for future endeavors that include college attendance and direct job placement activities. Students are engaged in their community and also attend conferences for youth leaders and are a part of the local youth LULAC chapter.