

The Workforce Alliance is the local workforce board for this region. It manages employment and training programs and operates the Wichita Workforce Center. Their mission is to *“support and advance a competitive workforce in South Central Kansas”*. One initiative of the Workforce Alliance is the Youth Employment Project (YEP); which is designed to assist young adults in gaining work experience. Through participation in YEP, young people have opportunities to learn resume creation, job search, interview preparation, customer service, and financial literacy. YEP is a collaborative effort of the Workforce Alliance, Greater Wichita YMCA, City of Wichita, multiple school districts, and many employers. Currently YEP operates within a budget of approximately \$450,000; (not including support from the previously mentioned partners) and provides employment opportunities to over 400 young people.

The Workforce Alliance is making a one-time request of \$25,000 from Sedgwick County to help create a joint marketing and outreach campaign to increase the number of employers and youth participating in YEP. This would include elements such as a website, social media tools, and incentives for participating youth, materials for group presentations, and key messages that will be delivered in classrooms. A goal of the project is to annually place 1,000 youth in summer jobs and internships. Increasing awareness and outreach efforts are key to doubling the annual participation. Focusing on providing education via the “Youth Essential Skills Certificate” and “Dollarwi\$e” through workshops and online courses; and providing a first job or work experience, YEP promotes developing the emerging local workforce to meet the employment challenges of a growing local economy.

Some Benchmarks from YEP’s 2017 Annual Report:

- 1,420 Young adults served
- 20 Outreach sessions held in April & May – 448 attendees
- 18 Essential Skills Certificate Workshop – 727 attendees
- 401 Essential Skills Certificates awarded
- 2 large job fairs
  - 30 employers
  - 337 attendees
- Other governmental/public sponsors
  - Butler Community College; Butler County; City of Mt. Hope; Greater Wichita Partnership; Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce; City of Wichita; City of Augusta; Riverside Township; USD 259

In addition to their current data tracking which includes job placements, wages and retention data, YEP is working with WSU to develop a model to measure the economic impact of growing YEP.

Additional grants received this year for outreach efforts have come from Bank of America (\$50,000) and Butler County (\$5,000). These are not anticipated to be recurring. The primary revenue generator for YEP is an annual golf tournament. In order to grow YEP, additional funds are needed to develop the outreach and marketing campaign outside the current funding sources and budgets. If approved, funding may come from BOCC Contingency funds from either 2018 or 2019. Workforce Alliance will work with Sedgwick County Communications to coordinate recognition for County funding support. A resolution to approve the grant would authorize funding from the Economic Development Fund 47001-110.