



U.S. Department of Labor Summer Jobs and Beyond: Career Pathways for Youth

## The New Americans Career Pathways Project (Utica, NY)

<https://www.labor.ny.gov>

Period of Performance: May 2016 – June 2019



in-school youth served



out-of-school youth served



participants attained a Measurable Skill Gain



participants received work experience



participants placed in unsubsidized employment



participants placed in post-secondary education/training

**Overview of the Program:** The New Americans Career Pathways Project served refugees in high poverty areas in the city of Utica. These youth survived persecution in their homelands and language barriers have kept them from jobs that can help them carry on America’s immigrant tradition of rising to the top on the strength of their work. The project provided skills and language training, along with work experience and career guidance. Education, workforce development and human services came together in partnership with employers to help the young people move off of the streets and into the workplaces of Utica and the region. The local board worked to bring together training providers and employers to provide this transition program to support the youth.

### Program Highlights:

**Recruitment Strategies:** Project managers developed a media plan to recruit youth. In addition, youth were recruited thru referrals from probation, foster care and community partner organizations. The media plan included the distribution of flyers and agency handouts. Program staff targeted in-school, economically disadvantaged youth who had one or more of the following characteristics: underachiever; truant; potential dropout; or in need of extraordinary support due to environmental, economic, or personal circumstances. Preference was given to youth who were refugees and English has a second language (ESL) designees.

**Partnership Strategies:** The local board brought together Cooperative Education Services – education; and Oneida County – existing Summer Youth Employment Program as primary partners. Other partners included Mohawk Valley Community College, County government, the city housing authority, Genesis, and the Chamber Alliance. Through partnerships with worksites, staff were able to secure employment for participants after they finished their 200 hours of work experience. Also, through the partnership with Municipal Housing Authority (MHA) staff started an initiative to help out of school youth better themselves by taking part in our Fresh Start program. This opportunity gave them the tools they needed to train for a construction career. Upon completion of the training youth received their Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) lead training certificate.

***Work Experience Activities:*** Each student received 100 hours of work experience in projects that made a visible difference in their community. The local workforce board relied on existing partnerships to provide employment to give youth experience they can use on their resume and to learn lessons about the workplace. One of the primary work projects was building homes and preparing grounds for new single-family homes being built by the Municipal Housing Authority in the target neighborhood. Participants were assigned to specific landscaping contractors who, in conjunction with project staff provided supervision and work-site training. Staff prepared detailed training plans for the worksite component of the program.

***Leveraging Support (outside of WIOA resources, monetary/in-kind):*** Project leveraged funds in the amount of \$2,032,738 from the Oneida County Workforce Development.