A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT TO PREPARE OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH FOR THE WORKPLACE
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Deputy Director

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- Over 10 years working with at-risk youth
- Background in teaching and counseling
- 5 years experience with Adult Basic Education
- Bachelor’s in Elementary Ed.
- Master’s Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy
- High school Girls Volleyball Coach
Out-of-school youth who are not engaged in school or employment are more likely to engage in destructive behaviors and less likely to be able to support themselves financially. Preparing out-of-school youth for a successful transition to the workforce is essential to ensuring a successful transition to employment and financial stability. Developing a work readiness program for this population can help to ensure workplace success. This presentation will share strategies for infusing work skills into programs for out-of-school youth. Through an interactive discussion, participants will learn about challenges and strategies as well as discuss cultural and economic barriers and implications.
AGENDA

• Overview of our Program
  • What is Youth Challenge?

• Where do our students come from?
  • Demographics

• Employment Trends
  • Employment Outcomes

• Strategies Used
  • iCAN Program vs. Bridge Program

• Cultural & Economic Barriers

• Our findings..
Overview of The Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy

Established in 1994 by appointment of the Governor and The Adjutant General of the State of Hawaii
CAMPUS
The Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy

Barbers Point (Kalaeloa) Campus
Kalaeloa est. 1994

Hilo Campus
Hilo est. 2010
MISSION

To Intervene in and reclaim the lives of 16-18 year old at-risk youth, producing program graduates with the values, life skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as productive citizens.
The Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy endeavor is to provide the State of Hawaii a premier progressive alternative school for “at-risk” youth that focuses on lessons in character, education, moral values, life-coping skills and responsible citizenship.
WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT

OVER 5,000 LIVES CHANGED IN JUST 24 YEARS

- Quasi Military Program
- 5 ½ Month Residential Program 2 cycles a year (400 Cadets a year)
- We follow up with graduates for 1 year after graduation. (Military, Workforce, College, high school)
- 39 Challenge Programs across the United States
- Graduation Target 125 (Barbers Point)
- Graduation Target 75 (Hilo)
WHERE DO OUR STUDENTS COME FROM?

- Referrals from schools, families, judicial system, outreach programs, self-referrals and other state entities.

Note: Volunteer Program
EMPLOYMENT TRENDS
YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT 1948-2013

Unemployment Rates

- 16-24 years old
- 25 years or older

(Hossain & Bloom, 2015)
YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT 1948-2013

Employment to Population Ratios

(Hossain & Bloom, 2015)
Employment Trends

- Young adults have much lower employment rates
- Teens aged 16 to 19 experienced the most drastic decline in labor force participation rates
- Approximately 6.7 million youth ages 16-23 are not enrolled in school or employed
- Youth who are disconnected from school and the work force are more likely to be dependent on public assistance, engage in criminal activity and less likely to participate in education or work training programs.
- Difficulty filling entry/middle level job openings

(Belfield, Levin & Rosen, 2012), (Hossain & Bloom, 2015), (Kallenbach & Goodman, 2018), (Manno, Yang, & Bangser, 2015)
STRATEGIES USED

National Work Readiness Credential
BRIDGE PROGRAM

The Bridge Program is a transitional vocational training program that allows graduates from our program to reside at our YCA facility on our off cycle days. Some of the vocational training offered through the Leeward and Honolulu Community Colleges were welding, Nurses Aide, culinary arts and carpentry.
ICAN PROGRAM

iCAN (Individualized Career Achievement Network) is a FAST-TRACK workforce certification program designed to help prepare students for entry-level employment or entrance into the University of Hawaii Community Colleges.

Through iCAN, instructors and coaches provide comprehensive curriculum and support to help students:

- Improve reading, writing, math and basic computer skills
- Develop job search skills as well as soft skills for workplace success or
- Apply for entrance into the community college.
- Earn a Certificate of Professional Development and National Work Readiness Certificate
CULTURAL & ECONOMIC BARRIERS
Demographic Backgrounds
59% - The majority of the respondents were male.
44% - Almost half of those surveyed were Hawaiian or part Hawaii.
25% - About a quarter had dropped out of school, and approximately half were considered idle (not in school or employed).

Health Issues
88% - Had used substances in the past 30 days; 33% were admitted to drug treatment program.
40% - Had suicidal thoughts; 58% of them attempted suicide.
32% - Had committed self-harming acts such as cutting or burning themselves.

Homeless Experiences
13% - Had participated in “survival Sex,” meaning they had sex in exchange for money, food, drugs or a place to stay.
48% - Had their first homeless experience with their families.
50% - Have been exposed to parental substance abuse.
OUR FINDINGS
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<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th># COMPLETE</th>
<th>EMPLOYED 1 MONTH</th>
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Program Results

- Employed: 57%
- Secondary Education: 18%
- Military: 18%
- No Follow up: 7%
Thank You

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Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy

