

RECONNECTION + RESURGENCE + RESULTS

Career-Connected Learning Rebounds & Gains Ground in 2022



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Empowering young people to achieve economic mobility requires a set of seamless pathways that they can pursue with confidence. By supporting and collaborating with educators, training providers, employers, government and civic organizations, YouthForce NOLA is leading efforts to make career training more available to New Orleans young people.

YouthForce cultivates home-grown talent, facilitates systems change, and opens doors to economic prosperity for young people. As a result, tremendous progress was made to strengthen the New Orleans youth talent development system and an unprecedented impact was made in 2022 – despite the challenges we have faced the past few years.

In this report, you will find a snapshot of how our work enables students from early high school into post-secondary to experience career-connected learning in a variety of ways: specialized coursework, career exploration, paid internships, soft skills training, college credits and employer-validated credentials.

As we approach 2023, the YouthForce collaborative will continue to build bridges between school and work, and open doors to lucrative careers for our city's young people.

Sincerely,



Cate Swinburn
Co-founder & President
YouthForce NOLA

Vision

New Orleans public school graduates are thriving economically as a result of being the most sought-after talent for hiring and advancement in the region's high-wage career pathways.

Mission

YouthForce NOLA prepares New Orleans public school students for successful pursuit of high-wage, high-demand career pathways and facilitates systems change to accelerate and sustain progress.

Values

- Collaboration and Voice
- Equity
- Excellence and Accountability
- Respect
- Student Choice
- Transparency

Introduction

In 2022, the YouthForce NOLA (YouthForce) collaborative resolved to double down on career-connected learning opportunities for young people. Renewed career exploration, in-person training, internships, externships and gatherings allowed the YouthForce collaborative to reconnect, inspire, prepare and support young people, educators and training providers outside of the virtual realm established at the start of the pandemic. That resolve and reconnection led to the resurgence of career-connected learning to New Orleans.

YouthForce NOLA's Key Strategies



INSPIRATION & EXPLORATION (PAGE 5)

Raise awareness of high-wage careers and steps to enter them.



TRAINING (PAGE 6)

Provide high-demand technical and soft skills training.



EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT (PAGE 7)

Enlist and prepare employers to host youth in the workplace.



ECOSYSTEM CULTIVATION (PAGE 8)

Nurture local youth talent development via policy work, funding and incubation.



POLICY (PAGE 9)

Ensure agency regulations create an environment for career training.



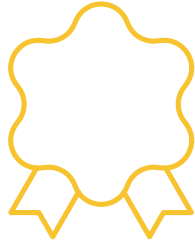
LAGNIAPPE (PAGE 10)

Highlight recent investments and accolades.

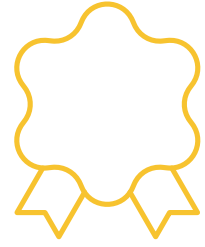


PARTNERS (PAGE 11)

Express gratitude for our collaborative partners.



2022 RESULTS



By-the-Numbers



7,949
Students

participated in career education programs

350 Educators trained to incorporate soft skills in lesson plans

1,537 Students directly impacted by New Orleans-based educators through the Soft Skills Educator Cooperative



\$2.5 Million in Subgrants to partners*



60%
OF YOUTHFORCE INTERNSHIP EMPLOYER HOSTS

are people of color or women who own or operate their businesses

345 Industry Credentials earned across all high school grades

228 Partners aligned and collaborating around a shared vision

\$5.5 Million New Philanthropic commitments to support career training ecosystem*

140 Students completed paid **YOUTHFORCE INTERNSHIPS**



31 Interns offered **jobs** or **volunteer opportunities** with their internship hosts



Interns Worked **22,000** Hours



Interns Earned **\$217,000**

Inspiration & Exploration

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, local business partners participated in the Employer Hub, a one-stop-shop for schools and students to hear directly from employers in the greater New Orleans community. In partnership with Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans, Employer Hub events and opportunities allow students to observe technical and soft skills in work environments. Highlights include workplace visits, hands-on opportunities observing and practicing welding, helping construct Mardi Gras floats alongside artists, and learning the basics of CPR with healthcare providers.

The virtual YouthForce NOLA + Junior Achievement Virtual Career Expo, presented by Baptist Community Ministries, introduced students to numerous high-paying, high-demand regional careers, providing the early exposure students need to have a sense of the many careers available to them. Employer partners and training providers gave students an opportunity to learn about their companies and training programs. These interactions helped students to get an inside look at how to pursue these options.



2022 Virtual Career Expo Participants

1,400
high school
students

19
schools

45
employer, training and
education partners



Participants Engaged through Employer Hub

6,136
high school students

21
schools

57
local business partners

Training

YouthForce NOLA prioritizes soft skills training directly to young people and educators to cultivate the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the workplace and beyond. Also known as power skills, 21st-century skills, non-cognitive skills, transferable skills and social emotional learning skills, soft skills are the non-technical abilities that allow someone to succeed academically, socially and professionally.

YouthForce teaches summer interns about the following soft skills: personal mindset, planning for success, social awareness, communication, collaboration and problem solving. During training, interns receive feedback about their skill performance in a transparent and developmentally appropriate manner. Following training, interns say that they are more confident, better communicators and better understand the importance of teamwork.

YouthForce also works with a collaborative of educators to integrate soft skills in their classrooms. Through the cooperative, New Orleans public school teachers have the opportunity to strengthen their understanding of soft skills and implementation strategies; share and receive teacher resources related to soft skills; and help their students take their soft skills to the next level. These teachers incorporate soft skills into daily instruction, regardless of the subject they teach, providing thousands of students with opportunities to practice and apply skills such as collaboration and problem solving.

In addition to soft skills training, the YouthForce collaborative offers opportunities for young people to receive technical training. During the 2021-2022 school year, students earned 238 industry-based credentials – 105 were high-level credentials – from YouthForce training provider partners: Delgado Community College, Gateway EMS, New Orleans Career Center, New Orleans Technical Educator Provider (NOTEP), New Orleans Video Access Center (NOVAC), Nunez Community College, Operation Spark and Spark Mindset.

The renewal of YouthForce NOLA's U.S. Department of Education 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant through 2027 will support this technical training. In 2022, \$1.2 million was awarded and will be used to help more students develop job-specific technical skills and earn industry-recognized credentials after school and over the summer in business services, digital media/information technology, health sciences and skilled crafts.

LAUNCH,
the first state-
recognized bridge
year program
in New Orleans,
moved to the New
Orleans Career
Center (NOCC) at
the beginning of
the 2022-2023
school year.

LAUNCH at NOCC is a free year-long career preparation program for New Orleans high school seniors after graduation. LAUNCH provides students with the experiences, knowledge, skills and support they need to develop strong career plans and achieve career success.

LAUNCH began as a program at YouthForce NOLA in 2019. It was funded from a collaborative application led by New Orleans Public Schools and jointly approved by the Louisiana Board of Regents and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education under the innovative extension academy policy. YouthForce's incubation of LAUNCH provided a strong foundation, upon which NOCC has begun to build.

21 young people completed
LAUNCH in 2021-2022

59 young people are
ENROLLED in fall 2022

Alumni Spotlight

Jason Plain

Multimedia Sales Consultant

The Times-Picayune/The New Orleans Advocate

Jason Plain, a YouthForce Intern in the inaugural 2015 cohort, continues to use and build upon the soft skills that he learned during the program. He shared that he learned such skills as how to handle himself when communicating with his manager or with colleagues.

“Writing an email was something [YouthForce coaches] showed me how to do,” Jason said. “I hadn’t written a professional email before the internship, and now I write emails everyday. A lot of the skills I learned during my YouthForce Internship transfer to my work today.”



Employer Engagement

YouthForce NOLA works with employers to increase career awareness among students and educators, inform policymakers on workforce development needs, and connect young people with career growth opportunities. Businesses across New Orleans are opening their doors to students and educators to build awareness, facilitate exploration, and coach students to develop their soft skills.

Alumni Spotlight

Kaia Preston

Warren Easton Charter High School

YouthForce Internship – ASM New Orleans

Kaia Preston was a summer YouthForce Intern at ASM New Orleans, the company that manages New Orleans' Caesars Superdome and Smoothie King Center. She heard about the YouthForce Internship opportunity from her teachers and decided to apply to gain knowledge about the world of work and to have a new experience. She was not disappointed.

“It’s a once in a lifetime experience that is exciting and teaches you so much,” Kaia said. “I learned professionalism, how to balance different jobs and how nothing can get done without a team. The ASM staff was great and very supportive.”



Alumni Spotlight

Destiny Chester

Livingston Collegiate Academy

YouthForce Internship – St. Margaret’s Family of Care



As a YouthForce Intern this summer, Destiny learned a lot about herself and the career she wants to pursue. Because she previously helped to care for her grandmother, Destiny was excited to be an intern at St. Margaret’s Family of Care in New Orleans. She performed so well that St. Margaret’s offered her a part-time position after her internship.

Self-described as being shy, she learned that communication is key in any work environment, especially if she wants to work in health sciences.

“At this job, I had to socialize a lot. I had to communicate with my supervisor and the other supervisors that I worked with,” she said. “I learned about time management and professionalism. How to dress properly – casual, business casual and business formal. [The internship] prepared me for my next steps, what I want to pursue when I get to college and the steps I need to take after I graduate.”

Ecosystem Cultivation

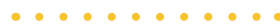
YouthForce NOLA brings together economic, educational, and civic leaders to build a network of programs and policies that benefit our city’s public school students. In 2022, our collective advocated and secured numerous policy-related victories that reduce system-level barriers young people face as they explore and learn about career options.

YouthForce NOLA Co-Founder & President Cate Swinburn represents the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools on the state’s Workforce Opportunity and Readiness Task Force. Created during the 2022 legislative session, the task force is studying workforce readiness programs and activities in the state’s public schools, identifying successful programs and practices, and developing recommendations for improvement.

BRINGING



**Economic
Education
Civic**



LEADERS
TOGETHER



Policy

YouthForce's annual policy agenda includes work to ensure that regulations are coherent across state and local agencies and create an enabling policy environment for career training and work-based learning for young people in New Orleans. YouthForce has adopted a multi-year policy agenda focused on the following priorities.

Data

Education stakeholders are able to review data on career-connected learning participation and outcomes to assess the effectiveness of programs, monitor progress towards goals, and differentiate programming for students with different needs. **Key Legislative Update: 2022 Act 567 enables the Louisiana Workforce Commission to study aggregate workforce outcomes of educational programs.**

Dual Credit

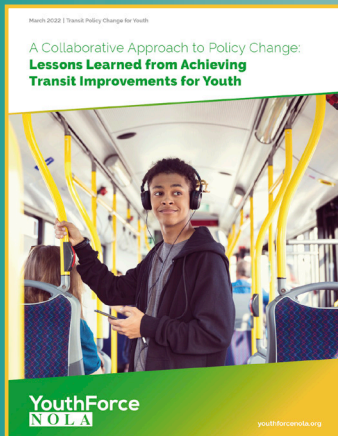
All career pathways include opportunities for students to receive college credit for advanced credentials and students are able to continue their pathway after graduation. **Key Policy Update: A team formed by YouthForce was selected by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to participate in their Accelerate [ED] Design Sprint to expand dual credit partnerships.**

Funding

The public education system in New Orleans is accessing all public career-connected learning funding for which it is eligible and schools understand the full impact of career-connected learning funding on their budgets. **Key Legislative Update: 2022 HCR 23 increased public per pupil funding for technical training.**

Transit

Young people can easily travel to technical training and work-based learning opportunities that will help them achieve their postsecondary ambitions. **Key Update: More efficient transit routes were added for young people to attend technical training and travel to meaningful work experiences.**



“A Collaborative Approach to Policy Change: Lessons Learned from Achieving Transit Improvements for Youth.”

- YouthForce NOLA played a key role, in collaboration with Ride New Orleans and the Regional Planning Commission, to ensure that youth needs, interests and voices were included in New Links, the region's redesigned public transit network.

Lagniappe

New Orleans CityBusiness named YouthForce NOLA as a Nonprofit Organization of the Year for 2022. The Nonprofit Organizations award recognizes organizations from across the New Orleans area that have gone above and beyond in serving the needs of local women and/or children. We are also proud that two board members, Shaneika Dabney-Henderson of the New Orleans Saints + Pelicans and Missy Sparks of Ochsner Health, were named Women of the Year.



CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

City of New Orleans
reinvests in career learning

The City of New Orleans allocated \$1.25 million in its 2023 fiscal year budget to support the YouthForce NOLA network in preparing New Orleans public school students to successfully pursue high-paying, high-demand careers. We are grateful for the city's partnership and continued support of our young people!

YouthForce NOLA Values Its Partners

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New Schools for New Orleans

New Orleans Business Alliance

New Orleans Public Schools

Urban League of Louisiana

United Way of Southeast Louisiana

SCHOOL PARTNERS

Abramson Sci Academy

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Living School

Livingston Collegiate Academy

McDonogh 35 Senior High School

Morris Jeff Community School - High School

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Rooted School

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The NET: Charter High School: Gentilly

The NET: East

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TRAINING PROVIDER PARTNERS

Delgado Community College

Gateway EMS

New Orleans Career Center

New Orleans Technical Education Provider (NOTEP)

New Orleans Video Access Center (NOVAC)

Nunez Community College

Operation Spark

Spark Mindset

EMPLOYER PARTNERS

- A Community Voice Louisiana
- ACLU of Louisiana
- Allimac Mobile Phlebotomy Lab
- Ashé Cultural Arts Center
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- Tanja Davis
- Deloitte & Touche, LLP
- Delgado Community College
- Delgado Community College Radiologic Technology Program
- Delgado Community College Respiratory Care Technology Program
- Dickie Brennan & Co
- Bryant Dixon
- DXC Technology
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- Hancock Whitney Corporation
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- New Orleans City Council - District B
- New Orleans City Council - District C
- New Orleans City Park
- New Orleans Culinary & Hospitality Institute
- New Orleans Public Library
- New Orleans Regional Transit Authority
- New Orleans Saints + Pelicans
- New Orleans Technical Education Provider (NOTEP)
- New Orleans Video Access Center (NOVAC)
- **NOLA Baby Café**
- Nola Organic Spa
- NOLAvate Black
- **Nunez Community College**
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- Operation Spark
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- Riverworks Discovery
- Ruby Slipper Restaurant Group
- **Search Influence**
- **Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans**
- Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response (STAR)
- **Sheraton New Orleans Hotel**
- Skillz Academy
- Solomon Group
- Spark Mindset
- St. James Cheese Company
- St. Margaret's Family of Care
- Susco Solutions
- Symbiont, Inc.
- Textron Systems
- The Times Picayune/ The New Orleans Advocate
- Universal Data, Inc.
- **The University of New Orleans (UNO)**
- **Vanguard College of Cosmetology: A Paul Mitchell Partner School**
- VIA LINK

- **Virage Community Services**
- Wicks NOLA
Candle Company
- Paris Woods
- Woodward Design + Build
- WYES
- Patrick Young

*Multiple engagements with YouthForce

FUNDING PARTNERS

- Agenda for Children
- AmeriCorps
- Baptist Community Ministries
- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- The Joe W. and Dorothy Dorsett Brown Foundation
- Mitchell Brown
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- Skillz Academy
- United Way of

- Southeast Louisiana
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- George H. Wilson Fund
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