

2021 School-Year WorkReady Summary

January-June 2021



provided by:



Who We Are

The Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO), Philadelphia's community action agency, provides leadership on issues of economic justice by advancing racial equity and inclusive growth to ensure that all Philadelphians might share in the city's prosperous future. Following CEO's strategic framework, CEO advocates at the program, operational, and system level for solutions to mobility out of poverty. CEO is also guided by listening to, supporting, and including communities while working collaboratively to foster greater economic mobility.

Career Pathways is part of the Youth Strategies Unit in CEO. Our focus is aimed at providing career exploration and workforce development opportunities specifically for Philadelphia's high school juniors, seniors, and recent graduates. We work to build the next generation of young professionals and entrepreneurs in Philadelphia. We believe that each junior, senior, and recent graduate should have the opportunity to experience a variety of career pathways that actively inform their next steps after high school.

WorkReady, managed by Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN), is a 6-week summer job for 12-24 year-olds in Philadelphia. For many young people, summer jobs are a critical first introduction to the world of work. WorkReady offers 5 program types through 80+ partner organizations, providing more than 1,000 places for young people to work each summer. Each year, more than 16,000 young people apply to roughly 8,000 opportunities. WorkReady partners and supporters are working to raise awareness and raise funds so that more young people can work each summer.



School-Year Overview

Career Pathways was awarded 100 slots with two forms of programming: 25 for **internship** and 75 for **digital career exposure**. Due to recruitment challenges, we requested a slot decrease for our internship program to 16 students.

Career Pathways ran programming for two separate groups for the School-Year program. The **digital career exposure program** was created for youth ages 14-18, interested in entrepreneurship, and the **internship program** was created for youth enrolled at a community school. We were awarded a partnership with Kensington Health Sciences Academy (KHSA). The digital career exposure program ran for six weeks and the internship program ran for 10 weeks.

Digital Career Exposure-BUILD

Participants in the digital career exposure program completed benchmarks in the BUILD Virtual Design Challenge, created by BUILD.org. The benchmarks included empathizing with a client, learning details about them and defining their problems, brainstorming ideas to create solutions, prototyping their top ideas, and pitching their ideas to panel of “potential investors.” We ran two cohorts of this program and participants were broken up into groups of five, based on similar career interests. In addition to completing the activities in the virtual design challenge, participants attended professional development workshops in networking, public speaking, and financial literacy in loans, credit, and financial planning.

Internship

Participants in the internship program were all enrolled at Kensington Health Sciences Academy (KHSA). During the program, participants were matched with worksites based on their career interests. Due to COVID-19 guidelines and worksites being unable to take on interns in-person, all interns worked remotely, at least two hours per day Monday-Thursday. For the first two weeks of the internship program, participants completed the BUILD Virtual Design Challenge in a 2-week intensive format. After completing the design challenge, participants began their internships. In addition to their individual work at the worksites, participants attended professional development workshops in resume-writing, public speaking, best practices for professional communication, and reflective practices.

Message from the Career Pathways Manager

Entrepreneurship is such an important career pathway to introduce to our youth. As part of this year's School-Year Program, we worked with 55 youth who live in northwest and southwest Philadelphia zip codes. As a result of their participation, these youth walked away understanding the fundamentals of social entrepreneurship. They delivered a product, service, or campaign that could help current professionals, creatives, and frontline workers cope with the personal and economic effects of COVID-19.

Additionally, our interns gained valuable career experience that helped shape and change their perceptions around job type, salary and compensation, and most importantly, career next steps.

We would like to thank Vanguard for their community engagement interest and their assistance with our BUILD pitches. A special thank you to Jonathan Gardner of Gardhouse, Natasha Pratt of Petal to Rose, Ashleigh John of Northwestern Mutual, Alissa Steele of The Philadelphia Phillies, and Staff at Santander Bank for their amazing contributions to our Professional Development Curriculum. Lastly, we are so grateful to our employers who shared our vision of an intentional internship.

~ Jerome Walker

Message from the Career Pathways Program Coordinator

Similarly to entrepreneurship, we know how important it is for youth to gain important core skills to be successful in any career they pursue. Whether they begin their own businesses or enter the workforce in various industries, we want youth to build their knowledge and skills in oral and written communication (including public speaking and resume-writing), networking, and career planning. We also believe that youth should have knowledge about their finances earlier to make wise financial decisions to build their wealth.

We are grateful to all our guest speakers and CEO staff who facilitated workshops to help build our youth professionally. We also want to thank our employer partners who virtually welcomed our youth interns and gave them a quality work experience with their organizations.

~ Kaila Shannon

Recruitment and Enrollment

Career Pathways (CP) was allotted 100 slots for the WorkReady School-Year program: 75 slots for the digital career exposure program and 25 slots for the internship program. For the digital career exposure program, recruitment was limited to participants who lived in Northwest and Southwest Philadelphia (zip-code specific). Based on those guidelines, CP recruited participants with the assistance of program partners and career coordinators within schools located in the northwest and southwest areas, as well as partner agencies, including Promise Corps and Promise Neighborhoods. The internship program was specifically created for youth attending a community school, and we were partnered with Kensington Health Sciences Academy (KHSA). We met with the Community Schools Coordinator and partner agency, 12+, to begin recruitment for the program. One of our biggest challenges to recruitment was that many of the students who attend KHSA were already connected to an internship opportunity. We worked with the Community Schools Coordinator and other KHSA staff to match students to the program. Youth interested in both the digital career and internship programs were instructed to apply for the school-year program through PYN's online system. Once tagged for enrollment, youth were asked to complete their enrollment documents and upload their vital documents for review.

Digital Career Exposure-BUILD

- 166 youth applied for the digital career exposure program.
- 86 youth were tagged for enrollment.
- 55 youth successfully completed enrollment packets and were approved for incentive, filling 73% of slots.
- Approximately 95% of youth completed all benchmarks for the program and earned the full incentive (\$595).
- Each participant who completed the program received an additional \$150 from CEO
- Total earnings for all participants: \$35,715

Internship

- 18 youth applied for the internship program and were tagged for enrollment.
- 13 youth successfully completed enrollment packets and were approved for jobs, filling 52% of slots.
- Approximately 85% of youth completed all BUILD benchmarks and began the internship program with their worksites.
- Approximately 69% of youth completed the entire internship program with an average of 65 hours.
- Each participant who completed their internship hours received an additional \$150 from CEO.
- Total earnings for all participants: \$13,537.75

Digital Career Exposure Additional Workshops

Entrepreneurship

Participants were introduced to the four different types of entrepreneurship and examples of those types. For Cohort 2, we had a guest speaker, Jonathan Gardner, founder of GardHouse. Jonathan walked through his process of becoming an entrepreneur and his “why” for starting GardHouse. Participants enjoyed the workshops and said that the conversation with Jonathan was helpful as they think about future opportunities and potentially becoming an entrepreneur.

Loans and Credit

Guest speakers from Santander Bank went in-depth with participants about credit, debt, and loans. They introduced the youth to credit reports, the basic foundations to every loan, and tips for repaying loans. This workshop provided youth with fundamental knowledge of credit, something many adults are still learning.

Financial Planning

Guest speaker Ashleigh John from Northwestern Mutual spoke to participants about future financial planning, making financial SMART goals, and ways to save for future financial goals. Ashleigh also shared free resources and next steps for anyone interested in receiving financial counseling for future financial plans.

Public Speaking

Guest speaker Alissa Steele, an advertising specialist with the Philadelphia Phillies, spoke to the youth about effective tips for public speaking. The workshop participants with useful tips as they prepared and completed their BUILD pitches to "potential investors."

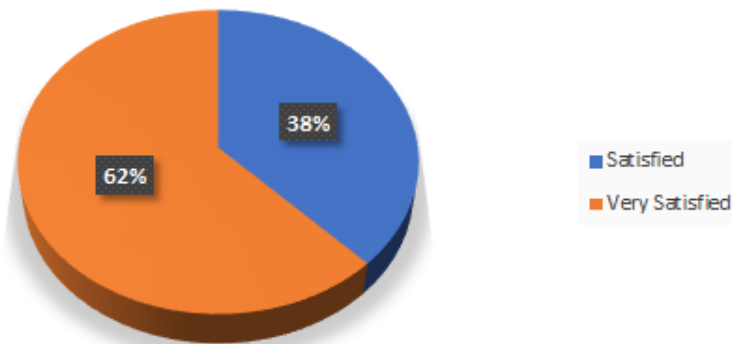
Networking

Career Pathways Manager Jerome Walker and guest speaker Natasha Pratt, Executive Director of Petal to Rose, discussed the benefits of networking and tips on how to network in a virtual age. Participants also learned about branding and participated in a Q&A discussion with Natasha about how to begin effective networking.

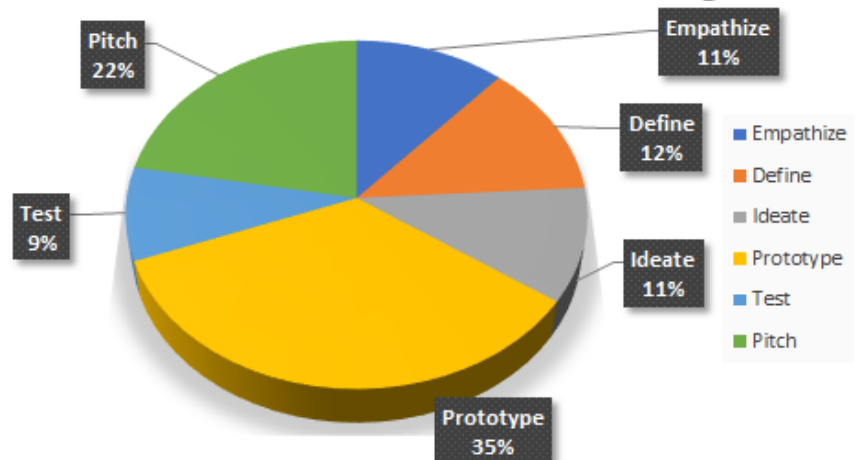
BUILD: Satisfaction Survey

We asked all youth who completed the program to take a satisfaction survey. All youth participants in the BUILD Career Exposure completed the survey for the Digital Career Exposure program.

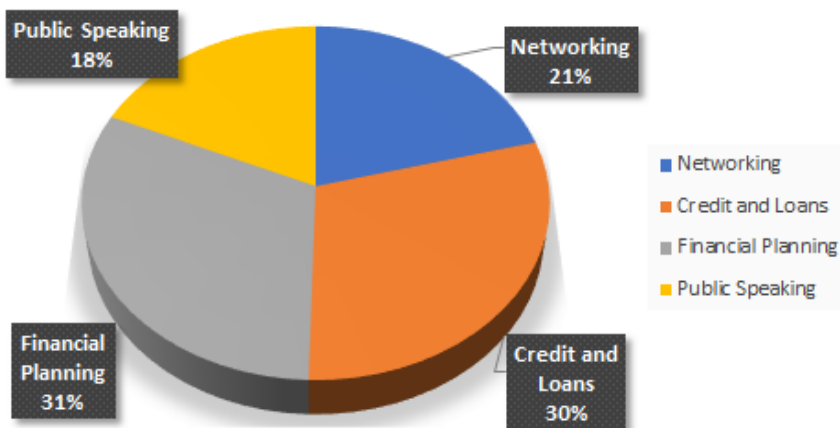
Rate Your Overall Satisfaction of the Program



Favorite Section of the Build Challenge



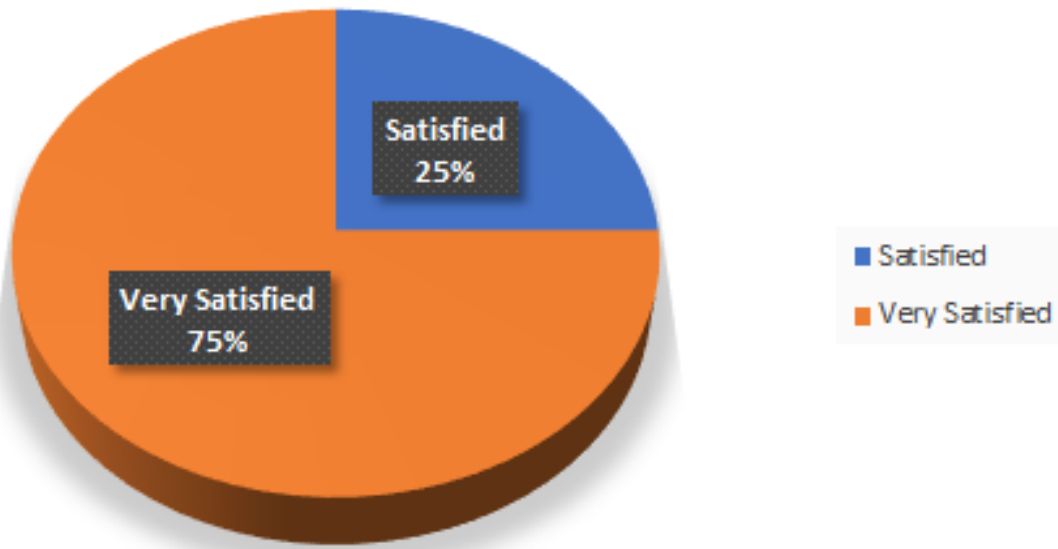
Favorite PD Session/Additional Workshop



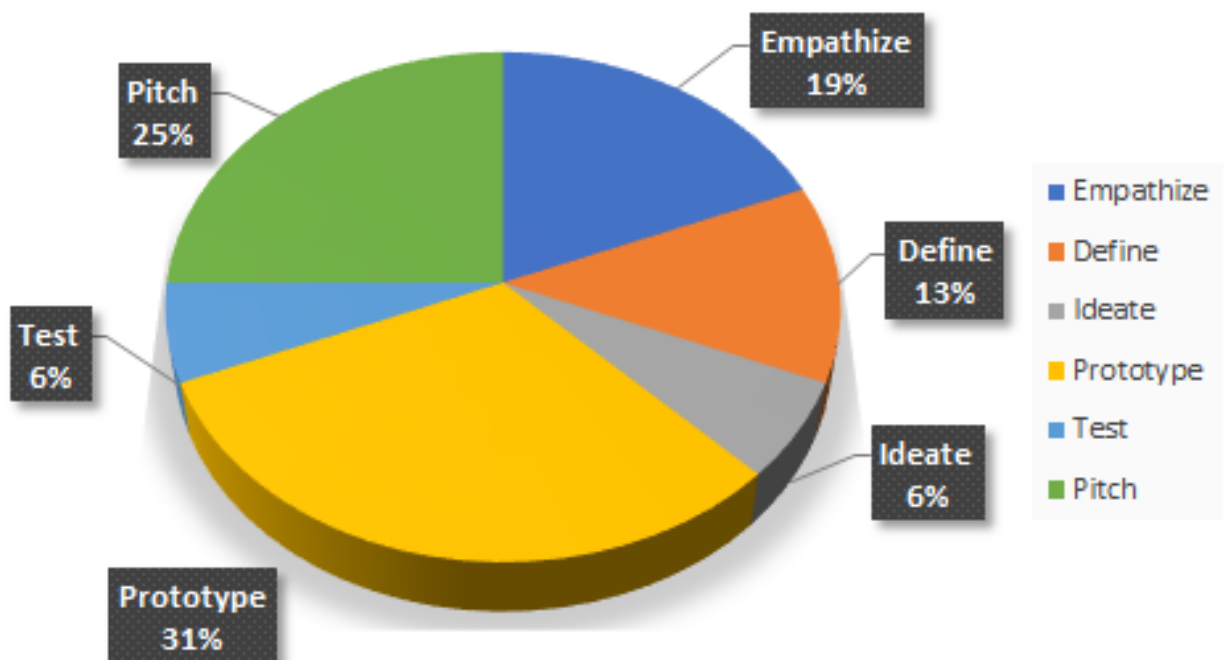
Internship: Satisfaction Survey

For the internship program, 8 out of 9 participants completed the end-of-program survey.

Overall Satisfaction in the Program



Favorite Section of the Build Challenge



A Word from Our Participants

How was your
overall
experience in
the program?

"My overall experience was great. I wouldn't change anything about this program".

"My overall experience of this program was good because I learned a lot of useful information and met people along the way. I wouldn't change anything about the program."

What was the
most valuable
thing you learned
about yourself in
this process?

"I learned that I can handle multiple assignments at a given time if I put my mind to it, plus I enjoy voice-overs."

"That I really like data management and I might want to get into that in the future."



Thank you!

Thank you to CEO Executive Director Mitch Little, Deputy Executive Director Sharon Clinton, and the staff at CEO for their support and assistance throughout our school-year program.

Special thank you to the Operations team (Marc Spearman and Bernie Lopez) and the Finance Department (Monique Easterling and Teneesha Hendricks) for their assistance in purchasing supplies and processing payments for all participants. Thank you to the Youth Strategies Unit for assisting with implementation.

Thank you to all our guest speakers for your time, energy, and knowledge, and thank you again to our employer partners!

Lastly, thank you to our participants and their families who have persevered through many challenges within the last year! We are proud of each of them for successfully completing the school-year program and wish them a safe and happy summer.

***School-Year WorkReady 2021 was lead by
The Career Pathways Team of
The Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity***

