

Boston Private Industry Council Private Sector Summer Youth Employment Program

The Boston Private Industry Council (the city's WIB) has been operating the private sector component of the mayor's summer youth employment program (SYEP) since 1982. Boston has a three-part SYEP, with the WIB placing youth in private sector jobs and the mayor's Youth Fund program and the Action for Boston Community Development program placing youth in community-based organizations. Altogether, the three components should place between 8,000 and 10,000 youth in jobs this summer.

The WIB program places youth into jobs in the private sector, including universities and hospitals, where the company carries the full freight, both paying the youth's wages and providing the worksite supervisors. To participate, youth must be Boston public high school students, 16 or older, with a good attitude and attendance record. They will earn between \$8 and \$15 per hour and work 25 to 37.5 hours per week.

The WIB expects to place between 2,700 and 3,100 youth into private sector jobs this summer, as compared to last year when it placed 3,100, and its best year (2000) when it placed over 5,000. While most participants will have only a work experience component, some youth also will participate in a Classroom at the Workplace component, designed to help them pass the Massachusetts high school graduation test, or an SAT-prep program, designed to help them raise their SAT scores.

The Boston PIC suggests that other WIBs interested in developing a private sector SYEP build slowly. It is important to work with the recruited companies to help develop job descriptions, set wages, and prepare supervisors. Both the youth participants and the worksite supervisors must feel that they are being fully supported. The WIB has a best practices booklet on its website (http://www.bostonpic.org/best_practice_booklet) that could help other WIBs build their program.

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