

For Information

DATE: October 17, 2012

REPORT TITLE: **SUMMER JOB CHALLENGE OVERVIEW AND UPDATE**

FROM: Janet Menard, Commissioner of Human Services

OBJECTIVE

To provide a review and update about the impact and benefits of the Summer Job Challenge Initiative that was implemented in 2010 and operational for the past three summers.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- On June 4, 2010, Council approved the Region's participation in the Summer Job Challenge by hiring 60 youth who would likely miss out on summer employment. 2012 was the third summer that the Summer Job Challenge provided employment to vulnerable youth.
- This Initiative employs youth between 16 and 24 years of age and is targeted but not limited to youth who are living in social housing, high-need neighbourhoods, single parent and low and mid income families, did not have previous work experience and would otherwise likely miss out on summer employment.
- Over the last three years, 211 youth have participated in the Summer Job Challenge, 209 completed the 8-week program.
- In 2011 and 2012 Community Agencies made up more than 35% of placement sites.
- All three years this initiative has returned 97%-100% satisfaction ratings of "good" or "excellent" by both youth and placement supervisors.
- Appendix I and Appendix II include direct comments made by youth about the impact of the Summer Job Challenge.

DISCUSSION**1. Background**

In February 2010, the City of Mississauga hosted the Mississauga Job Summit, a call to employers to hire more youth during the summer months. In response to the economic recession, the Human Services Commissioner, proposed to Council that the Region of Peel take on additional youth for the summer – in addition to the regular Summer Students already in placement at the Region. On June 4, 2010, Regional Council endorsed the recommendation and associated costs to participate in the Summer Job Challenge (SJC) which was led and funded by the Human Services Department.

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A report commissioned by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) entitled, "Rising Youth Unemployment during the Crisis: How To Prevent Negative Long-Term Consequences on a Generation" warns that the negative long-term consequences, referred to as "scarring", from long periods of unemployment among youth include: lower lifetime income, lack of contentment, lessened job satisfaction and reduced health. The OECD recommends investment in apprenticeships, enhanced income supports, training programs and strategies, to encourage youth to remain enrolled in post secondary education. They also support temporary contracts, which for many youth are stepping stones to permanent employment. The SJC is an investment that provides youth with access to the labour market while gaining work experience.

This Initiative employs youth between 16 and 24 years of age and is targeted but not limited to youth who are living in social housing, high-need neighbourhoods, single parent and low and mid income families, did not have previous work experience and would otherwise likely miss out on summer employment. This initiative also supports the prevention of youth violence as highlighted in the Provincial Roots of Youth Violence report.

2. Summer Job Challenge Overview

In 2010, 61 youth accepted employment in Regional Departments. Sixty youth completed the full 8-week experience which included a two-day employment preparation workshop facilitated by Employment Service Workers from the Human Services Department at the conclusion of the program. The two-day workshop provided the youth with job search tools and information to increase their employability in the current job market and enhance future job searching efforts. The employment preparation workshop continues to be included as a beneficial component of the SJC.

In 2011, the Summer Job Challenge was increased to 75 positions and expanded to include up to 40 per cent placements at community agencies which supports Term of Council Priority #19 of *Building Community Capacity through Investing in Community Partners*. Twenty-seven youth were placed with the following six community agencies: Boys and Girls Club of Peel, Knights Table, Brampton Safe City, Peel Aboriginal Network, Malton Neighborhood Services and Caledon Community Services. Regional Departments provided a combined total of 58 placements. Of the 75 youth who were hired, 74 successfully completed their placements; one youth could not continue with their placement due to health issues.

In 2012, 75 youth were placed in jobs at Regional Departments and eight community agencies. Peel Children's Aid and Erin Mills Youth Centre joined the roster of agencies participating in the SJC. Peel Children's Aid also served as a referral source and five of their clients were employed by the SJC. All 75 youth completed their 8-week job placements.

3. Summer Job Challenge Outcomes

a) Program Outcomes

Year-after-year the Summer Job Challenge (SJC) has received high ratings from both youth and supervisors. Even with the quick turn around for implementation in year one, the SJC received 97 per cent "Good" or "Excellent" ratings from youth and supervisors. Both subsequent years the feedback was 100 per cent positive. The last two years when the youth were asked if the "SJC gave them experience that will help them in the future", 93 per cent (2012) and 92 per cent (2011) responded "Yes." Another question that received high ratings the past two years was if the "SJC increased your understanding of what is expected in a work situation", 93 per cent (2012) and 100 per cent (2011) responded "Yes." Six

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former 2010 SJC youth have since returned to the Region of Peel as regular summer students, student co-op/placements or hired as permanent staff; this speaks to the networking opportunity the program offers. Table 1 summarizes the data received from the youth and supervisor surveys. Appendix I includes comments from youth collected at the conclusion of the 2012 SJC program.

Table 1

Summer Job Challenge (SJC)	2010	2011	2012	TOTAL
Youth Hired	61	75	75	211
Youth Completed 8 weeks	60	74	75	209
Placement Organization				
Region of Peel Departments	61	48	47	156
Community Agencies	0	27 (36%)	28 (37%)	55
Youths' Plans for September				
Return to school	48	62	63	173
Work Part-time	14	22	23	59
Look for a job	4	12	5	21
Other	1	2	1	4
Note: youth may have selected more than one of the above activities				
Summer Job Challenge Ratings				
Youth Rated SJC as Good or Excellent experience	97%	100%	100%	
Did your experience with SJC impact future career plans? (Youth)	75%	63%	70%	
Supervisors Rated SJC Initiative as Good or Excellent	97%	100%	100%	

b) 2010 and 2011 Summer Job Challenge Participant Follow Up

Previous Summer Job Challenge participants were contacted the subsequent summers and invited to access the Human Services' Employment Services Unit for job search support. In August 2012, 89 youth from 2010-2011 were invited to participate in a follow-up survey. All 30 of the respondents stated that the SJC was a positive experience that has since helped them with their endeavors and 70 per cent reported that the SJC had a positive impact on their work and life situations. At the time of the follow up survey, 22 respondents were still in school, 5 had graduated and 14 were actively employed (full or part-time). Several respondents were involved in more than one activity (i.e. still in school and working part-time). Appendix II includes comments received from 2010 and 2011 SJC youth who responded to the follow up survey.

To capture Summer Job Challenge's impact on its participants, yearly follow-up will be conducted through surveys, e-mail and social media.

c) Community Impact

Community agencies reported that the SJC youth helped their organizations to complete much needed work or special projects. SJC also helped to decrease some financial stress for the agencies, especially non-profits. Refer to Table 1 (above) for outcomes and Appendix I for detailed comments from youth about their experiences and the SJC. The

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following are some comments about the impact that the SJC placements had at community agencies.

This past summer at **Caledon Community Services**, *“youth assisted tremendously in sorting through pounds of quality goods that are diverted annually from landfill sites in and around Caledon. Summer is the busiest time for the Reustore so without the ROP students we would not have such a steady flow of donation being processed. [The SJC youth] helped greatly while the store was short staff throughout the summer holidays. They kept the store clean that really helped the overall appearance that the store has from both the staff and customers point of view! They helped with a huge donation of fridges doing whatever they can to clear out a space and helping organize where to put them in the store.”*

Debbie Whalen, Eco-Store Supervisor, Caledon Community Services

*“The impact for the **Erin Mills Youth Centre** was a positive and beneficial experience for staff, parents, children and the Oasis Summer Camp. Having the youth present allows us the opportunity to attend to tasks and duties in a shorter time period. Also, the support from youth decreased some financial stress on our agency due to lack of staffing being non-profit.”* Janet Tate, program supervisor, Erin Mills Youth Centre

*“The SJC has been a definite asset in helping to build capacity here at **Knights Table**. We consider it a win-win situation in that these young people give us their skills while at the same time becoming aware of the social issues around poverty in the Region of Peel.”* Annie Bynoe, Executive Director, Knights Table

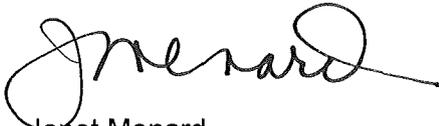
*“Having the extra summer students from the Summer Job Challenge allowed **Brampton Safe City** to increase numbers for outreach (community events, camp presentations, Neighbourhood Watch, Road Watch). It allowed tasks to get done faster and more efficiently, and allowed the rest of the team to focus on the task this summer of taking inventory of all the posted Neighbourhood Watch signs in Brampton”.* Jenna Canning, Manager, Community Programs, Brampton Safe City

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CONCLUSION

Over the past three years, the Summer Job Challenge has provided an opportunity for 211 youth with various backgrounds and levels of education to gain valuable hands-on experience in a job market that may offer limited employment opportunities. Youth between 16 and 24 years of age that participate in the SJC not only build their resume, but also their skill sets, networking contacts and self-confidence. The SJC is an investment that provides youth with access to the labour market while gaining practical work experience. The SJC also supports Term of Council Priority 19 of *Building Community Capacity through Investing in Community Partners*.



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Approved for Submission:



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APPENDIX I

Comments Received from YOUTH at the conclusion of the 2012 Summer Job Challenge

Awesome Experience!

With this experience I can go to my first year of university knowing that I am prepared for the co-op program.

Keeps me encouraged to be the best at all that we do, whether school or job.

Due to my young age, I don't have a lot of work experience and many employers want those with experience. If I didn't get this opportunity it would be very difficult to get others along the way

It has changed my perspective on many things, including to believe nothing is impossible.

It has made me feel good about myself as well that I too have made an impact on someone else's life.

The summer job challenge has helped me gain experience for future jobs and has given me work experience for my resume. It has helped me grow into a more mature adult and has helped me work well with people of all personalities.

I was having a difficult time finding a summer job and finding the SJC was a great opportunity for me to show my skills and earn a paycheck. It was also a starter to my career path.

It allowed me to gain valuable experience regarding what it's like to be a part of the workforce

Looking for a summer job it was hard because all of the places seemed to want someone with a lot of experience. So by coming to a place that just wanted to help us out was great.

This experience has changed my view on life and people. I appreciate life more and would like to take care of myself and others. I've learned to value money and the work available.

The summer job challenge helped me get my first job along with a sense of accomplishment.

Encouraged me to work harder than I do, and really challenged me to complete this program.

I learned new things; became more responsible and disciplined; stuck through it and didn't quit.

I would want to thank you for this once in a lifetime opportunity. If it wasn't for you I wouldn't have had such a life changing summer. Once again thank you!

It's been amazing! I learned team work and how to work with others.

APPENDIX II

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I gained many transferable skills that I continue to use today

It provided me with valuable job experience and helped me experience a health-care environment. It also allowed me to learn about networking and understand how to be a good employee.

I gained general work experience to put on my resume as well as work experience related to the type of work I may want to do in the future as a career.

This experience has helped me to expand my skill set, such as communication and organizational skills. It provided me with an excellent opportunity to deal with time sensitive projects and work in a fast-paced environment. This experience has helped to build my character and prepare me for life outside of school and in the workforce.

My experience definitely helped prepare me for my future and has given me the confidence to go out there and do what I want, whatever that may be! I met some amazing people who helped me along the way and who I look up to.

I got my next job mainly because on my resume when my interviewer read that I was employed in the past with the Region of Peel just the name impressed him and I got the job on the spot, DESPITE not having relative experience.

It provided me with relevant work experience related to my studies. I am in a coop program, and it also helped me in securing coop job(s). I also saw first hand what it was like to work in an office environment as well.

The Summer Job Challenge helped me gain a lot of work experience that I could use on my resume to attain another job once it was finished. It also built my leadership skills and teamwork skills, which could help me in future jobs or other life situations.

This is an excellent opportunity for youth to enter the workforce, and provide them with a stepping stone to further develop their character and prepare them for future situations that may arise in school, the workforce, or even in life. This is a beneficial initiative that should be continued in the future.

I would highly recommend the continuation of the Summer Job Challenge.

It helped me get acquainted and more comfortable in the workforce environment. At the beginning stage, I was skeptical about whether or not this was beneficial for me in the long-term but now that it is done I can truly say that I am thankful that I was given this opportunity! Thanks, Region of Peel.

It was very helpful in gaining new skills, learning new things and making good contacts. It helps to build character and provides useful resources to gain more knowledge and insight.