



# Annual Report 2018-19

# Letter from the Executive Director and Board Chair



Dear Youth Job Center Friend,

In this past program year, Youth Job Center (YJC) expanded programs, developed valuable new partnerships, tested innovative approaches, and magnified its voice in supporting youth in achieving success in the workplace and in life. YJC staff increased our impact, serving more than 2,600 young people in fiscal year 2019, the most YJC has ever served in a single year. YJC is participating in community conversations about youth workforce development, raising our voice and visibility throughout Chicagoland to better support young people in achieving career success. In Fall 2018 Curie High School on Chicago's Southwest Side and Mather High School on Chicago's North Side became partner schools, joining Gage Park, Sullivan, Wells, and Evanston Township High Schools. Together YJC staff provided more than 2,000 high school students with personalized support, connections to jobs, and career planning support.

YJC continued to innovate, focusing on promising partnerships in both Evanston and Chicago. In Evanston, YJC worked with the City of Evanston's Mayor's Employer Advisory Council (MEAC) and Evanston Township High School (ETHS) to strengthen our collaboration in connecting Evanston youth with career opportunities as they graduate from high school. Employers joined the conversation eagerly to think strategically about how they hire, support, and advance their workforce.

In Chicago, YJC now partners with the Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP), a broad-based organization of 44 member organizations, including faith-based institutions, schools and other non-profits, to provide youth from underserved communities with personalized career exploration and advising, skills training, and connections to training programs, apprenticeships, and meaningful employment with career advancement potential. While we are proud of these accomplishments, YJC's work is not done. There are still approximately 82,000 young people in Cook County who are disconnected from work and school. YJC is driven by this to continue building momentum, finding ways to provide even more youth with the support and resources they need to achieve success in the workplace and in life.

Please join us in helping young people build strong and successful futures.  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Tollenaar Demorest'.

Karen Tollenaar Demorest  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Hurwitz'.

Scott Hurwitz  
Board Chair







# Youth Job Center Programs

Youth Job Center provides high-quality programs at the intersection of youth development, workforce development, and career planning, helping young people develop skills to succeed in the workplace and in life. YJC programs serve In-School Youth (ISY), ages 14-18, and Out-of-School Youth (OSY), ages 16-25.



## In-School Youth

Youth Job Center's In-School Youth (ISY) programs serve youth, ages 14-18, helping them explore career paths, build personal and professional skills, develop plans for life after school, and gain employment experience. YJC's ISY programs are:

- High School Career Planning and Training
- Gap Inc. This Way Ahead Program
- Summer Corps

These programs have two goals:

- Assist students in transitioning successfully into the next phase by providing postsecondary planning support, from freshmen through senior year, focused on career options outside of the traditional college path;
- Provide youth with a positive first job experience, shown to have a significant impact on their trajectory, leading to increased income and reduced likelihood of unemployment.

## Out-of-School Youth

Youth Job Center's Out-of-School Youth (OSY) programs serve young people, ages 16-25, who are disconnected from work and / or school. These programs provide skills training and connect young adults with quality employment with career advancement potential. OSY Programs are:

- Core Services, including Work-Readiness Training (WRT) and employment placement
- Career Pathways Training

These programs have a single goal:

- A lasting and successful job placement on a career path toward economic self-sufficiency.

# High School Career Planning and Training

1,523

youth  
trained  
by YJC

761

youth  
received  
help earning  
education  
credentials

537

youth created  
postsecondary  
plans

100

youth  
secured job  
placements



## Gap Inc. This Way Ahead

318

youth received  
specialized work-  
readiness training

167

youth were  
placed in paid  
internships

99

youth received  
permanent part-  
time or full-time  
employment  
offers

## Summer Corps

75

youth provided  
with specialized  
work-readiness  
training

26

youth employed  
as ABC Boosters

24

youth employed  
as Summer Tutors





## Work-Readiness Training and Core Services

282

young adults served

211

young adults attended training workshops

119

young adults were placed in jobs

90

young adults were enrolled in Career Pathways training



## Career Pathways

48

young adults completed the Lasting Impact Program, receiving coaching and support to advance in their careers

42

young adults completed WIOA Career Pathways, career training in 40 different industries

34

young adults completed the Retail / Customer Service Career Pathway

14

young adults completed Career Pathways provided in partnership with the City of Evanston



## Meet Brandon

Brandon is a 16-year-old client who is part of YJC's In-School Youth Program. Brandon first encountered YJC while he was at school and determined to find a job. A staff member at school referred Brandon to NuDonna Williams, the YJC Career Advisor at Brandon's school. According to Brandon, "Before I found YJC I was completely lost on looking for a job. I am so grateful for Ms. Williams because she helped me find my current job (which is Starbucks) and I couldn't be any more grateful." NuDonna referred Brandon to Starbucks, a YJC employer partner, through an initiative called Project Englewood. The process was long, but according to Brandon, "It was a great experience and honestly the best preparation for my job."

Brandon also worked with NuDonna to become a participant in YJC's This Way Ahead program, which is run in partnership with Gap Inc., another YJC employer partner. Through his hard work Brandon was able to get a job at Gap on Michigan Avenue as part of This Way Ahead. Through the program Brandon says he was able to meet "so many amazing people," and start building his network. Brandon worked with NuDonna and other members of YJC's staff to identify his future goals and decided that he wanted to pursue a future career as a Marketing Director. "That job gives me a chance to flex my communication skills and also helps me to showcase my art," Brandon says. As part of his journey to become a Marketing Director, Brandon has begun filling out college applications and started building out his art portfolio even more.

Brandon recommends YJC to all youth and is proud of the experience he's gained since coming to YJC! Way to go Brandon! Keep up the hard work!





## Meet Isabella

Isabella came to YJC in October of 2018 at the age of 24. Isabella had been experiencing homelessness and was working as a temporary employee in a factory where she was paid minimum wage and had to face hostile and dangerous working conditions daily. Because she didn't have a place to stay, Isabella was forced into working overnights. She was becoming increasingly concerned about her lack of shelter because it was starting to get colder outside.

Knowing that she needed to find a better job and a place to live Isabella got in touch with YJC and began working with M Nelsen. After Isabella successfully completed YJC's Work-Readiness Training, she entered YJC's Career Pathways program for further training and employment. Isabella was intent on using her organizational and administrative skills to work in an office so YJC helped her secure an internship with the Edgewater Chamber of Commerce. Then through some strategic networking, Isabella got herself a job as an Office Manager at Patch Landscaping after her internship was over.

Isabella is now working full-time and has her own apartment, and beams when she talks about her new life and home. Way to go Isabella!



# Donors

## Partners for the Future

In 2018-19 Youth Job Center was awarded the Evanston Community Foundation (ECF) Partners for the Future Challenge Grant, with ECF matching every new or incremental gift of \$5,000 or more, matching up to \$100,000. Special thanks to everyone who helped us meet our goal!



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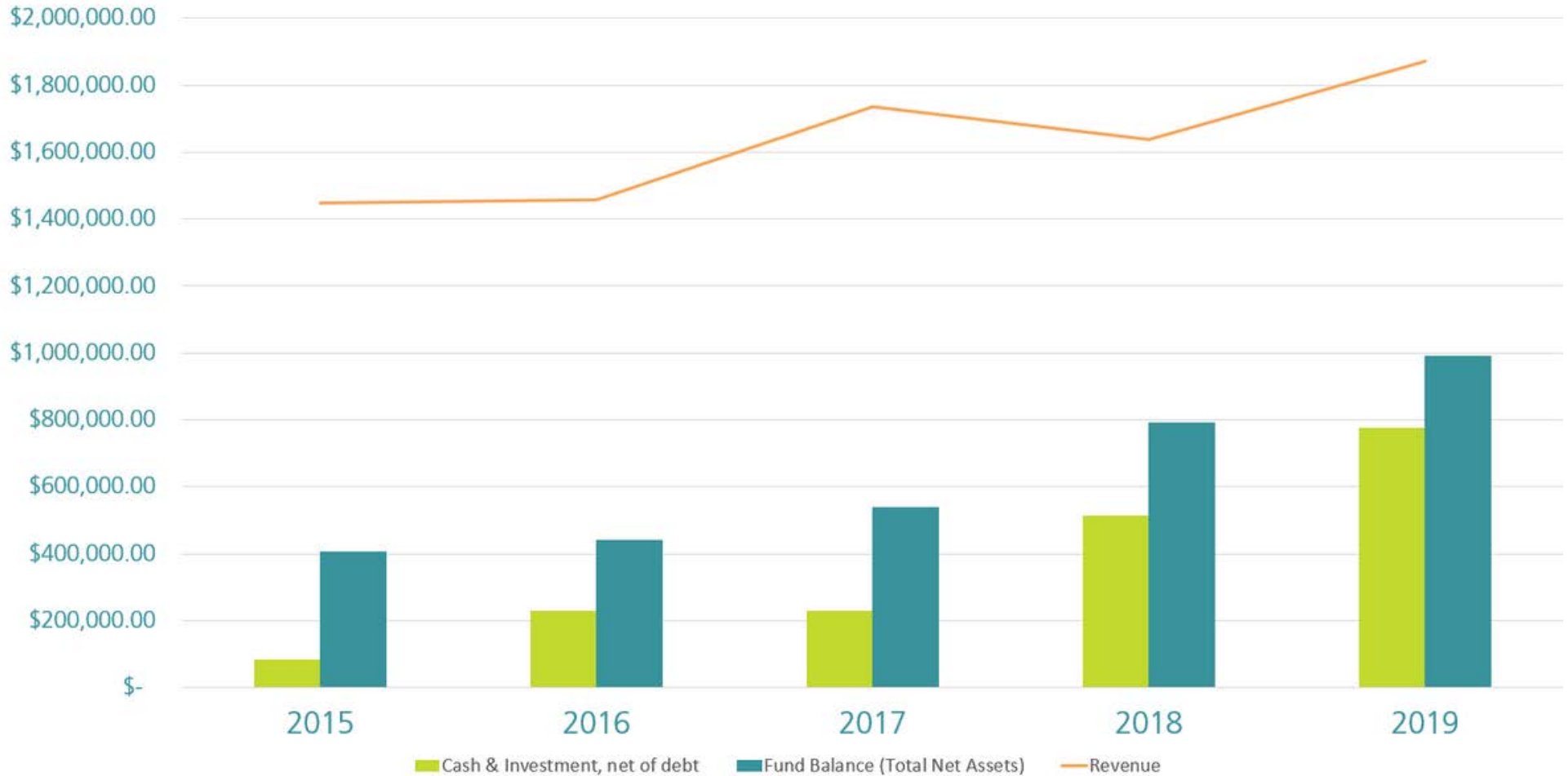
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# Financial Report



76%

of Youth Job Center  
funding goes directly to  
Programs for youth.

A full copy of Youth Job Center's  
FY19 Audited Financials are available  
at [youthjobcenter.org/annualreport](http://youthjobcenter.org/annualreport)



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**Youth Job Center had one of it's best years yet last year but we couldn't have done it without our amazing staff, board, partners, funders, and community. We hope that you will continue your support of YJC in the coming year so we can help even more young people build a better future for themselves next year!**