



# The Learning Web

Community & Career Exploration & Apprenticeship Program (CCEAP) Annual Report  
January 2013— December 2013

## COMMUNITY & CAREER EXPLORATION & APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

### Discovering their Gifts — Learning their Worth

All youth have strengths and gifts to share. Engaging in real and challenging roles, Community & Career Exploration & Apprenticeship Program (CCEAP) youth experience competence, confidence, connection, and develop character and compassion through community and career exploration and apprenticeship program activities. Young apprentice journalists, chefs, carpenters, website designers, physicists, and historians are recognized and rewarded for their accomplishments and contributions

to their worksites. The individualized nature of our program design assures that each young person's unique needs are addressed. CCEAP broadens a youth's views of what is possible— in terms of pursuing a passion, a vocation, or a career. **IN 2013, OVER 327 YOUTH TOOK ADVANTAGE OF OUR SERVICES TO DISCOVER THEIR GIFTS AND CONNECT WITH CARING ADULTS. CCEAP PLACED THESE YOUTHS IN 72 APPRENTICESHIPS AND 116 EXPLORATION VISITS AT A DIVERSE RANGE OF COMMUNITY WORK SITES. 54 YOUTH UNDERTOOK COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS THROUGHOUT OUR COMMUNITY.**

We are proud that young people who participate in CCEAP are not pigeonholed. CCEAP transcends the boundaries of age, disability, socio-economics, academic skills, and family support, serving any youth in Tompkins County. Labels can limit. People often divulge their special challenges because it is required to gain needed services. Though that is necessary to access services through our Youth Outreach Program, it is not the case with our CCEAP. In reality, CCEAP serves a small percentage of “problem-free” youth—our estimates are about 20%. Our ability to say to every mentor and every youth and every parent that we serve ANY young person in Tompkins County, conveys an attractive, positive image, without stigma; a truly blended program.

Access to opportunities and supports is often what separates youth who achieve their dreams from youth who do not. Working with community adults who generously shared their time and workplaces with our participants, CCEAP has made a difference in the lives of many young people this year.

Mentor Kim Pugliese checks out her apprentice's knife skills as they prepare a meal together.

“I learned to work harder and stay focused on task. I realize that it's important to do work I enjoy and to be in a positive environment.”

CCEAP Apprentice, age 14

2013 Services	Goal	Actual
Total youth served	239	327
Interest/career assessment	180	72
Total Exploration Tours	76	116
Total Apprenticeships	79	72
– Volunteer Status	53	46
– Stipended Status	26	26
Community Service	42	54



Photo courtesy of Caroline Podraza

## OUR RESULTS IN 2013

The CCEAP Program served 327 youth;

251 ICSD youth and 76 Rural Schools youth

72 apprenticeships with community mentors were arranged

116 community & career exploration activities were arranged

54 young people undertook community service projects in our community.

### Program participants have achieved the following outcomes:

90 PERCENT of youth participating in exploration activities or apprenticeships increased their knowledge of the specific duties, responsibilities, training and qualifications of chosen fields of interest.

88 PERCENT of apprentices developed a positive relationship with an adult role model, their mentors, and increased their general employability skills.

83 PERCENT of apprentices improved their performance of workplace skills and successfully completed their apprenticeship: attending consistently, arriving on time at their site, cooperating with their mentor and fulfilling the goals and expectations of their Learning Agreement.

98 PERCENT of apprentices took responsibility and learned the skills necessary to negotiate their learning experiences.

94 PERCENT of youth participating in exploration activities or apprenticeships determined whether or not the field they explored is a viable career path for them to pursue. 100% increased their familiarity with the local employment market.

99 PERCENT of youth in the apprenticeship program articulated an understanding of the importance and relationship of school performance to a future career and stayed in school.



Photo courtesy of Caroline Podraza

“Young people add a fresh outlook and new energy to any situation.”

— CCEAP Mentor



Photo courtesy of Caroline Podraza

Young people often look for apprenticeships that will allow them to explore interests and skills not offered in school. Historic preservation (photo, top) and jewelry design (photo, bottom) are a few of the areas that young people checked out this year.

## Aaron Goldberg, sharing his gift with us—

Ithaca Journal apprentice, Aaron Goldberg (pictured at right) contributed the following article to our Fall newsletter. His piece speaks to the value of apprenticeship better than anything LW staff could write.

Benjamin Gallegos and I, Aaron Goldberg, embarked on an apprenticeship this past summer, where each of us gained valuable hands-on experience in a field of our interest.

Both of us are seventeen years old and are currently seniors at Ithaca High School. Benjamin and I both began our apprenticeships at the beginning of this past summer, following our junior year at the high school.

We pursued these internships and were directed to the Learning Web by our chosen mentors. The Learning Web helped to organize our apprenticeships and gave us the opportunity to explore something that interests us and gain exposure in careers related to those interests.

I am very interested in sports journalism and intend to follow this as my major in college. Therefore, in order to learn more about this career path, I met with Tom Fleischman, the Sports Editor at the Ithaca Journal, and set up an internship, with the help of The Learning Web, over the summer. While at the Journal, I worked three days a week writing small articles and roundups, doing the daily TV/radio guide, proofreading. I even received the opportunity to write my first byline article.

Benjamin, on the other hand, is interested in physics, and he was encouraged by his physics teacher at the high school to pursue an internship with the Cornell Physics Department. Lora Hine, the Outreach Coordinator at Cornell's Wilson Lab of Elementary-Particle Physics (LEEP), advised him to get in touch with The Learning Web to set up the internship.

"After I visited LEEP, I liked the idea of what we were going to be doing," Benjamin said.

He participated in activities ranging from soldering BNC cables and lasers to heat wrapping the connection and finding better alternatives for soldering light bulbs into wires. The goal of his apprenticeship was to improve and troubleshoot high school lab kits.

For me, the experience at The Ithaca Journal was extremely valuable and proved to me that I truly do want to strive for a career in sports journalism. I was able to receive valuable writing knowledge and practice and learned so much from Mr. Fleischman. I now have an advantage that many aspiring journalism majors do not have in getting ready for college.

Benjamin does not necessarily aim to pursue a career in physics, but will definitely keep it as one of his options. Even though this is the case, he still took away helpful experiences from his apprenticeship.

"My apprenticeship involved a lot of soldering, and I think the thing that stood out for me the most was when I was soldering something for a while," said Benjamin, "after trial and error, I was able to find out what was wrong and ended up fixing it."

Benjamin and I would advise anyone looking to become an apprentice to work through The Learning Web in order to accomplish this goal.

Benjamin (pictured at right) said, "Life is short, and it's a lot better when you like what you are doing as a profession, and this program helps by giving experience of what day-to-day tasks are out here."

I agree and believe that hands-on experience is better than anything taught in a classroom. If you enjoy something and are even the slightest bit interested in possibly following a career in it, search for an apprenticeship. This type of internship will verify whether or not you do wish to take on the profession, while giving you fun, important practice, and an understanding of that field of work.



Photo courtesy of Caroline Podraza



## Program Evaluation— Improving Our Performance

We take seriously our commitment to evaluate all of our programs and services and the staff who work for our agency. Web staff and Board engage in a number of levels of evaluation and monitoring. 100 PERCENT of program outcomes indicators for youth who participated in the program were achieved this year.

We use formative and summative evaluations to assess project progress and inform program improvements. Evaluation integrates quantitative and qualitative data, with quarterly, semi-annual, and annual outcomes measured against benchmarks that indicate progress toward achieving objectives. Data collection includes using the agency's data tracking system (LW Datasystem). This custom designed filemaker database system has improved cost-effectiveness and strengthened capacity for evaluating participant and project outcomes, generating custom reports on demand. The Associate Director, with staff assistance, completes formative quarterly reports to assure that the work plan is on target and to assess the need for adjustments. The summative Annual Report includes outcomes for all objectives. The Executive Director reviews all reports, assesses the need for program changes, and reports on program progress to the Board of Directors.

Beyond the numbers though, we look to our most important stakeholders: youth participants, their parents, and the mentors for feedback about our services and the performance of our staff. We gather regular feedback through the use of Program Evaluation forms. Evaluations reflected a high degree of satisfaction with the program and staff in almost all cases:

“ This was a fantastic opportunity for a young person to gain life skills and employment responsibilities at such a young age. ”

100 PERCENT of youth felt they exceeded the goals of their apprenticeships.

100 PERCENT of youth felt their apprenticeship experience influenced and 43% felt it had a strong influence on their future career plans.

100 PERCENT of youth felt they increased and 57% felt it significantly increased their knowledge of the of the career field they explored.

80 PERCENT of parents felt that their child achieved what they had hoped they would gain.

100 PERCENT of parents said their child communicated that they were satisfied and 67% said that their child was very satisfied with their experience.

75 PERCENT of mentors felt that their apprentice met the goals for the apprenticeship.

75 PERCENT of mentors felt that their apprentice increased and 25% significantly increased their knowledge of the field of work.

Suggestions about how our program can be improved were few—most respondents feel the program works well. When suggestions are made they usually relate specifically to a particular mentor match. In these cases we update our mentor database to reflect the wishes of a particular mentor or feedback from a youth or parent so that staff can make more effective placements in the future. This year mentors' comments ranged from a need for some mentors to have an apprentice who was a bit older, to others wanting the stipended status youth to be able to have longer apprenticeships. Parent comments were very positive and both mentors and parents comments regarding the staff and program reflect their strong support for our program.

## Our Community as Classroom

### 2013 Community Exploration & Apprenticeship Sites

188 apprenticeship & exploration experiences were arranged in diverse fields. The following is a sample of the areas youth explored:

Landscape architecture	Website design	Early Childhood Education
Sustainability studies	Dog Grooming	Gerontology
Journalism	Sewing & Textile arts	Blacksmithing
Education	Sound production	Small business mgt
Physics	Computer programming	Chocolate Making
Emergency Med Technician	Baking	Construction technology
Food prep	Printmaking	Equine Care
Arts & Theater	Salvage & restoration	Martial arts
Academic research	Plant Science	Retail clothing
Restaurant cooking	DJ'ing	Photography
Arts Education	Local history	Catering
Radio Broadcasting	Leadership Training	Engineering

“ He was excited to share the things he learned and wanted to go to the apprenticeship each time. He respected his mentor and enjoyed the full experience. . . the computer skills he learned were great and the opportunity to engage with others and learn more team work was invaluable.”

Parent of Apprentice



Photos courtesy of Caroline Podraza

## Working Together to Provide Quality Services

Collaborations yield a better outcome— especially in youth development. CCEAP staff welcome connections with other service providers. In the case of Tiffany, a 15 year old high school student; collaborating with the Ithaca City Youth Employment Service (YES) geometrically improved her experience (all identifying details have been changed to protect the youth's privacy). Ironically, in this case, CCEAP staff's work did not result in a "countable" outcome (no Learning Web apprenticeship was created). However, the outcome for Tiffany was very positive and that is what our work is all about.

Tiffany was referred by her mother who wanted Tiffany to be involved in a positive afterschool activity. Her mom shared that she was a single parent who was currently unemployed. They did not have income to afford to rent a place of their own and had been temporarily staying with friends. She hoped that an apprenticeship would help Tiffany maintain her focus on school and think ahead to the future. Tiffany expressed an interest in the visual arts, engineering, computer graphics, and music. CCEAP staff worked on arranging an apprenticeship in a Cornell lab where Tiffany could gain a broad experience in engineering design. CCEAP staff accompanied Tiffany to the initial meeting with the mentor and after discussing the possibilities, the pair were anxious to move forward with the apprenticeship.

Here is where collaboration comes in. Tiffany's apprenticeship would occur over the summer and the Learning Web offered her a stipend of 6 hours per week for work at the lab (her family's unstable housing and low income made her eligible for the stipend). Her mentor offered to have her in the lab for 15-20 hours per week and Tiffany was interested even if it meant the extra hours would be volunteer. CCEAP staff knew that Tiffany's family really needed money and that if Tiffany could have all of her apprenticeship hours paid, it would make a big difference to Tiffany and her family. CCEAP staff contacted YES staff about having Tiffany participate in the YES Summer Youth Employment Program and using the apprenticeship site as the YES work site. This plan would offer Tiffany the learning experience she wanted and needed and allow her to earn 20 hours/week through YES. Both staff worked together to facilitate Tiffany's application to YES, the Cornell Mentor's application to YES to become a worksite, and the personal connections between Tiffany, her mom, the mentor, and the YES staff. The following quotes sum up the outcome of the collaboration:

"Tiffany has done well this summer. She is a smart kid and a quick learner. She worked on a case study project that we'll likely present on Monday, if you would like to stop by and see it."

— Tiffany's Mentor

"Thanks so much [CCEAP staff]. There was a great experience and collaboration all the way around. Thanks for helping us connect with the team and making all this happen for Tiffany. I have been hearing so many great things about her experience from [Tiffany's summer YES Rep]. I am so glad that it has been such an amazing experience for Tiffany. That is what this work is all about. I look forward to future collaborations!"

— Suki Tabor, Youth Employment Service

Sometimes it takes a team to put together a successful experience for a youth. From The Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB), Joblink, the Dispositional Alternatives Program (DAP), and the Mental Health Clinic, to the Office of Children & Family Services, Cooperative Extension, Family & Children's Service, to school staff, the Bridges Program, and other county youth-serving agencies, Web staff exchange referrals, share resources, and communicate about youth with whom both agencies work. Often, collaboration yields the best result for the youth.

"Please tell the mentor that this Learning Web apprenticeship has done exactly what it was designed to do with my client. To me it is such a success story for the Learning Web, my client, and the mentor. . .it has made a real difference."