



## WHAT WE LEARNED

This qualitative evaluation of the “Youth Futures” program from 2011 found that participants reported fostering new friendships with co-workers and were pleased with their job placements for their paid employment. Participants reported that the post-secondary experience gave them an opportunity to feel connected to other students on campus, and more confident in pursuing a university program of their choice (e.g., social sciences). Several improvements for the “Youth Futures” program were suggested including rotating job placements and more flexibility in the leadership training schedule. Overall this program shows enormous promise in making a difference in the lives of low-income youth.

## BACKGROUND

Youth Futures (YF) is an innovative and free seven-month program for low-income youth. It combines leadership training, paid summer employment and a broad exposure to the facilities, programs and professors in the postsecondary sector. The goal is to increase the number of low-income youth applying for and succeeding in post secondary education. The YF program is offered in both official languages. Participants of the YF program are also introduced to fostering community development and community involvement.



## OBJECTIVES

The goal of this study was to evaluate the YF program.

## METHODS

Participants were screened to ensure that they were highly motivated and met low-income requirements through an interview and examination process. In 2011, 50 students received

- leadership development training for three months: résumé preparation, program planning, leadership techniques, and Level-C certification in First Aid and CPR
- university student mentorship
- a university experience for two weeks
- summer employment for six weeks

Twenty-seven participants were included in this qualitative evaluation of YF program from the 2011 data

## RESULTS

Table 1

*Participant Feedback on Leadership Training, Employment Experience, and Post-Secondary Experience*

Session	Feedback
Leadership	<p><b>Benefits:</b> Improved job skills (communication), gained leadership skills, and learned about résumé preparation, interviews, and cover letters</p> <p><b>Suggestions:</b> Changing the start/end time, less ice-breakers, longer breaks, and have the leadership training on a weekday</p>
Employment	<p><b>Benefits:</b> The development of new friendships in the workplace and majority of participants enjoyed their work placement</p> <p><b>Suggestions:</b> Have background information on the job in order for participants to know what to expect, information on how to address concerns with co-workers, and the possibility of transferring to a different employment location</p>
Post-Secondary	<p><b>Benefits:</b> Feeling a part of campus community, the seminars provided valuable program information, and how to be prepared financially and academically</p> <p><b>Suggestions:</b> Providing deeper information about programs beyond the information available online</p>

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