



Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2009

This has been a busy year for the Cape & Islands Youth Council and thanks to the hard work of the Council members we have been able to tackle a number of projects, both old and new, throughout the year.

Professional Development Day

In January we once again presented a session at All Cape Professional Development Day at Cape Cod Community College. Due to the overwhelmingly positive response to the presentation last year from Elizabeth Englander, from the MARC center at Bridgewater State College, we brought her back for a ½ day session on cyber-bullying. Also presenting that day was Dianna Morton, from Cape Cod Regional Technical High School who spoke about the effects of the media on today's youth and the importance of media literacy. There was a high turnout for this session we presented and both speakers received very positive reviews.

YES Curriculum

The Youth Employability Skills (YES) Curriculum was completed in January of 2009, after many years of hard work, and is already in use by many schools and organizations across the Cape & Islands, including: Barnstable High School, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, Southeast Alternative School, Penikese Island School, Cape Cod Regional Technical High School, CORD, and many more.

P21

As part of the Pathways to Success by 21 grant that we received from Commonwealth Corporation we have been running a program at Career Opportunities aimed at providing a range of opportunities to older (18-24) at risk youth. By creating a wide network of referral sources in the community we have successfully outreached to a group of youth who have historically been the hardest to serve. We had aimed to enroll 20 students into the program but far exceeded that goal by enrolling 33 students.

Our P21 grant has also allowed us to continue work on the Graduation Rate issue that was started in early 2007. A strategic planning session was held early in the year, facilitated by staff from Commonwealth Corporation, to identify the issues that committee members felt were the best fit for the committee. What emerged from this session was the focus on a program being piloted at Cape Cod Technical Regional High School which was eventually named the Graduation Rate Improvement Program

(GRIP). This program is a systematic mapping and data gathering process related to all services provided by the school which address the graduation rate issue.

During the winter, the WIB was included in a 3-part radio show on WCAI, the Cape & Islands NPR station, which looked at the many initiatives on the Cape & Islands which seek to keep students in school and to improve the graduation rate.

“Keep Them Coming” truancy pilot at Station Avenue Elementary

Our newest initiative is an offshoot of discussions that happened in both the Graduation Rate committee as well as the Community Partnerships committee, about the importance of early intervention. Working with the Dennis-Yarmouth School District administration, we selected one of their K-3 schools, Station Avenue Elementary School, as the location for a pilot project modeled after a successful program run by a District Attorney’s Office in the western part of the state. WIB Staff and Youth Council committee members presented the pilot project idea to the Dennis-Yarmouth School Committee where it was approved and was then put into the handbooks sent home to parents. The project is a five step, non-punitive effort to educate parents on the importance of attendance at school.

The results from the first year have been very positive, and the program will be rolled out in this upcoming year to the other Yarmouth K-3 school, as well as to the grade 4 & 5 school in Yarmouth.

Career for a Day

In response to last year’s successful Career for a Day event we expanded the event this year to include more businesses and more students. Close to thirty students from Big Brothers/Big Sisters, YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club were taken to area businesses in three separate tour groups. Each group visited 8-10 businesses who were generous enough to open their doors to the students and give them a guided in depth tour of the business, and talk to them about the importance of education. Some of the participating businesses this year were: the Cape Codder Resort, FedEx, Cape Air, Shepley Wood Products, Infor, WXTK, Yarmouth Police Station, Hyannis Fire Station, and many more.

Summer Youth Employment Program/WIA Committee

With the influx of American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funding into the region, the WIA Committee has been twice as busy this year. Besides their annual task of reviewing and rating the RFPs for the full year programs, they pulled double duty this year by also working on the RFP and applications for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) which will provide paid summer employment to over 200 students.

I want to thank the Youth Council members, especially the Executive Committee members, for their hard work this past year in making sure that all these programs happened. Their guidance has been integral, and their enthusiasm has been infectious.

