

YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School is an innovative academic and job-training program that reengages young adults, 18-21, who dropped out of high school and puts them on the path for future success. Students spend half their time at work sites learning job skills as they rehabilitate abandoned houses and the other half in the classrooms, where they receive individualized academic attention as they work toward their high school diploma. Students also provide hundreds of hours of community service. Our program has successfully mobilized at-risk, out of school youth to become a positive workforce in Philadelphia. Our program provides real and tangible benefits to the entire Philadelphia community.

Through our 14 years of experience, we know that out-of-school youth can turn their lives around if they are provided with the right resources and opportunities. We put a real investment into our students, not just through academics and job training, but individualized care through case management, life skills, and transition services to ensure that each student knows they can be successful. Every year YouthBuild receives four times as many applications as available positions, proving that when you make a valuable opportunity available, young people will show up to take advantage of it.

When we invest in our youth, lives truly can change. However, the level of service that YouthBuild provides cannot be sustained without a financial commitment from our community. Our community needs to support the transition of these students into responsible adulthood by providing high quality internships, living wage jobs and career tracks. To truly reconnect to their education and succeed in programs like YouthBuild, young people need to be shown that they can have a bright future and a quality career. By providing support from local tax dollars for youth workforce development activities, we can provide these students with the best transition possible, ensuring that the commitment to their future will not end with a high school diploma.

In June 2007 we expect another 120 former dropouts to graduate from our program. We would love for each of those graduates to have a real plan in place for their future success, with high quality jobs and internships in the community waiting for them. We would love to be able to tell each and every one of those graduates that their next step is planned because their City invested in them because we all believe that they can succeed.