

YouthBuild Facts ■ January 2014



YouthBuild USA Inc. is the international nonprofit organization that exists to orchestrate high quality replication of the YouthBuild program in the United States and internationally. It does business as YouthBuild USA in the United States, and as YouthBuild International in all other countries.

Purpose

To unleash the positive energy of low-income young adults to rebuild their communities and their lives, breaking the cycle of poverty with a commitment to work, education, community, and family.

Need

There are 3.5 million low-income 16- to 24-year-olds in the United States who are neither in school nor employed. Every year 1.2 million young people, including 50 percent in low-income communities, leave high school without a diploma. Globally, 200 million youth are working poor and earning less than \$2.00 a day in informal sector activities. All are in urgent need of pathways to jobs, education, entrepreneurship, and other opportunities leading to productive and contributing livelihoods.

Program

In YouthBuild programs in the United States, low-income young people ages 16 to 24 who have left high school without a diploma enroll full-time for about ten months. They work toward their GEDs or high school diplomas while learning job skills and earning a living allowance by building affordable housing in their communities. Emphasis is placed on preparation for careers and postsecondary success, leadership development, community service, and the creation of a positive mini-community of adults and youth committed to each other's success. Students may earn AmeriCorps education awards through their homebuilding and other community service. In addition to construction, some train for jobs in the health-care, technology, and customer-service fields. At exit, they are placed in college, jobs, or both, and provided with supportive services for at least nine additional months.

Impact

Since 1994, over 120,000 YouthBuild students have produced over 22,000 units of affordable, increasingly green housing in rural and urban communities across the United States. Research by Brandeis University on 800 graduates showed that 75 percent up to seven years after graduation were in college or employed with wages averaging \$10 an hour.



Fifteen thousand participants in 15 other countries have produced various types of tangible community assets including affordable housing.

Size

In 2013, 264 YouthBuild programs engaged nearly 10,000 young adults in the United States. YouthBuild is now being replicated by NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iraq, Israel, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Serbia, and South Africa. YouthBuild International programs engaged 12,000 young adults in 102 locations in these countries in 2013.

Participants

Demographics of YouthBuild students in the United States, based on data submitted to YouthBuild USA:

- 100% are low-income.
- 93% enter without a diploma.
- 71% are men; 29% are women.
- 53% are African American; 22% are Latino(a); 20% are White; 3% are Native American; 2% are Asian American.
- 39% have received public assistance.
- 33% are court-involved.
- 26% are parents.



Outcomes

In the United States, based on data submitted to YouthBuild USA:

- 71% of enrollees completed the program.
- 71% of enrollees obtained their GEDs/high school diplomas, industry-recognized credentials, or both.
- 51% of enrollees went on to postsecondary education or jobs averaging \$9.24 an hour.
- 79% of those placed retained their placements for at least six months.
- Recidivism rates within one year of enrollment for court-involved YouthBuild students averaged 13%.

Local sponsoring organizations

Local YouthBuild programs are small, supportive mini-communities operated by autonomous community-based and faith-based organizations, and some by local public agencies. Fifty-five YouthBuild programs have become diploma-granting or alternative schools.

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Funding

Each local YouthBuild program secures its own funding—a mix of public and private support. Primary funding for local YouthBuild programs in the United States comes from the US Department of Labor (DOL) under the federal YouthBuild program through a national competition open to all local nonprofit and public entities. The federal appropriation for FY14 is \$77.5 million and FY13 was \$75.5 million after sequestration. Internationally, the governments of Haiti, Israel, Mexico, Serbia, and South Africa are supporting YouthBuild programs in their countries.

Costs

The average cost per participant for a full year in the United States is about \$22,000, including stipends for work performed. This is less than other full-time options for unemployed young adults, such as Job Corps, service and conservation corps, college, the military, and prison. DOL provides a maximum of \$18,000 per person; each DOL YouthBuild grantee must obtain a 25 percent nonfederal match.

Quality

Through a competitive process DOL has selected YouthBuild USA as its sole provider of YouthBuild training and technical assistance. In addition, YouthBuild USA independently manages a voluntary national affiliation and accreditation system, leadership opportunities for youth and staff, research to understand best practices, advocacy in support of YouthBuild, and innovative competitive grants from private and public sources to affiliates.

YouthBuild USA and YouthBuild International receive support for program quality improvement, capacity building, expansion, and innovation from major private foundations and corporations including American Express, Annie E. Casey, AT&T, Bank of America, Bill & Melinda Gates, Charles Stewart Mott, Ford, Gap, John S. and James L. Knight, JPMorgan Chase, Kresge, MasterCard, New Profit, Noyce, Open Society, Prudential, Saint-Gobain, Skoll, Starbucks, State Street, Walmart, and W. K. Kellogg.

YouthBuild USA also receives innovative public grants and contracts for domestic YouthBuild programs from the Corporation for National and Community Service, US Department of Labor, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, US Department of Agriculture, and the US Department of Energy. YouthBuild International receives grants and contracts from the Inter-American Development Bank, USAID, and the US Department of State.

Advocacy

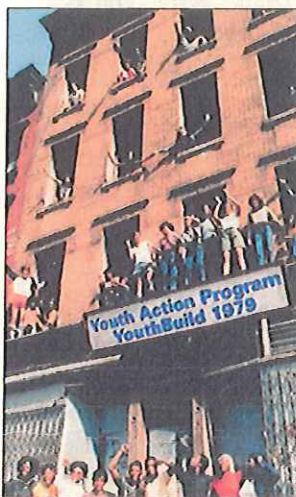
YouthBuild USA sponsors the national YouthBuild Coalition, which comprises nearly 1,000 local and national organizations, and seven state YouthBuild coalitions that advocate for public funding. YouthBuild USA contributes to



the broader youth and community development fields in order to diminish poverty in the United States and worldwide. No public funds are used for advocacy.

YouthBuild International works to bring the issues of undereducated, unemployed youth to the forefront internationally, and to increase the investment in pathways to jobs, education, entrepreneurship, and other opportunities leading to productive and contributing livelihoods.

Bipartisan majorities, led recently by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Representative John Lewis (D-GA), have supported YouthBuild through four administrations.



History

In 1978, Dorothy Stoneman, founder and CEO of YouthBuild USA Inc., asked neighborhood teens in East Harlem, New York, how they would like to improve their community. They answered, "We'd rebuild the houses. We'd take empty buildings back from the drug dealers and eliminate crime." Together they did a gut rehabilitation of a ten-unit apartment building; thereafter the program was replicated in New York City communities with city funds. In 1988, Tim Cross, now president of

YouthBuild International, worked with Dorothy to replicate the first YouthBuild outside of New York City, in Boston.

In 1990, YouthBuild USA was founded to scale up YouthBuild as a proven social innovation to break the cycle of poverty. By 1992 the program had been replicated in 20 cities with private and local funds and was authorized in the federal budget within the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In 2006, at the recommendation of the White House, Senators Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ted Kennedy (D-MA), and John Kerry (D-MA) led the transfer of YouthBuild from HUD to DOL. In 2001, YouthBuild USA was invited to work with South Africa to bring YouthBuild to their country. In 2006 YouthBuild International was founded based on the success of this venture. In 2013 the South African government announced the scale up of YouthBuild to 50 locations in that country.



Awards

The *New York Times* has called YouthBuild a "wellspring of human reclamation." YouthBuild USA was named one of America's 12 most impactful nonprofits in 2007 by researchers in the book *Forces for Good*. YouthBuild USA CEO Dorothy Stoneman was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship in 1996, the Independent Sector's John Gardner Leadership Award in 2000, the Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship in 2007, and the Harvard Call to Service Award in 2011. ■