

## Right Track Youth Career Development Pipeline

In Saint Paul, where nearly one-quarter of our youth ages 16-19 are unemployed and where youth of color are more likely to be unemployed than their white peers, youth employment is one of our greatest challenges.

Right Track is Saint Paul's pipeline for youth career development and building a diverse future workforce. We develop Saint Paul's leaders to drive Saint Paul's success. Right Track addresses changing labor force demographics and educational and employment disparities by placing at-risk youth in jobs, educating and training them for professional success, and helping employers recruit and mentor the next generation of diverse talent.

The Right Track Pipeline includes three levels of opportunities, YJ01, YJ02, and YJPro, that move youth from subsidized employment to unsubsidized jobs and pathways into specific career fields.

The Right Track pipeline includes three levels of opportunities:

- **Youth Jobs 01 (YJ01)**, formerly known as Youth Job Corps, offers government-subsidized basic work experience in parks, libraries, and nonprofits.
- **Youth Jobs 02 (YJ02)** features professional internships for youth in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade who have past work or leadership experience and are ready for a new challenge.
- **Youth Jobs Pro (YJPro)** is a collection of partner-run programs offering advanced opportunities in specific sectors that might lead to academic credit or an industry-recognized credential. Examples include Genesys Works and the City's EMS Academy.

The vision of Right Track is to help young people and employers understand how a first job at a park or a library could lead to a summer with an employer like Ecolab, which could lead to an advanced opportunity such as Genesys Works. The Right Track model offers a way to articulate the connections between these seemingly disparate experiences and to inspire youth to continue reaching for the next level of challenge and opportunity.

Right Track serves Saint Paul youth who are from low-income families or have a barrier to employment (as defined by the State of Minnesota).

## **Proposal Item #1: Efficient and User-friendly Engagement through a New Website**

Right Track aims to grow numbers of youth employed while maintaining an extremely lean and efficient staff model. To do this, we seek a one-time investment in the development of an engaging, user-friendly website that offers end-to-end management of the youth and employer application and matching processes.

Currently, youth visit at least 3 different websites to make it through our application/matching process:

- [Stpaul.gov/righttrack/youth](http://Stpaul.gov/righttrack/youth) – general information about the program
- [Stpaul.gov/jobs](http://Stpaul.gov/jobs) – uses an external vendor (Neogov) to apply for jobs
- [SprocketsSaintPaul.org/jobs](http://SprocketsSaintPaul.org/jobs) – searchable YJ01 Job Bank that allows youth to research available positions and submit their top five choices

On the back end, we have a database created by someone in the City's Office of Technology and Communications to manage the hiring process. However it doesn't give us everything we need and so we also track a lot of information using spreadsheets.

Employer partners sign up by downloading fillable pdf forms and returning them via email. We then manually input all of that information into a messy, inefficient system of spreadsheets.

Our business needs include:

- Easy ability to update and manage our own website content – keep it dynamic, incorporate photos, possibly add a calendar and videos (the City's website is complicated on the back end and so only a few users are trained to update it which limits our ability to keep information relevant and dynamic)
- Public-facing forms for employers and youth to use in the sign-up/application process
- Back-end ability to better manage our information – which youth are assigned to which jobs, contact information for each position, etc

A new website would ensure an efficient staffing model by:

- Reducing staff hours spent answering calls and emails about the current complicated online application process

- Simplifying the process for employers to sign up
- Making the back-end matching process more efficient

While it is clear from our high application numbers that youth do figure out how to navigate our current online application, we regularly receive strong feedback that the system is not easy for adults, much less young people. For example, this year we had a school counselor say, "This is impossible for me to figure out. How do you expect students to do it?" and a prominent youth advocate urging a return to paper applications because it would be easier than figuring out our system. We do not wish to return to the days of paper. We wish to create a website that ensures the public's first impression of Right Track will exemplify our values: innovative, dynamic, forward-thinking, professional, and fun.

## **Proposal Item #2: Business Partnership Development through SPACC**

At Right Track, we want to dramatically increase scale without dramatically increasing full-time program staff. Therefore we propose partnering with the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SPACC) to engage them in working on our behalf to secure new employer partners and summer jobs for youth.

### **Right Track Engagement Proposal**

#### **About the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce**

The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SPACC) is a vital, dynamic force serving the business community through the collective strength of its members. For more than 140 years, SPACC has provided vibrant programs, powerful advocacy and results that foster member growth. With more than 1200 members, SPACC is the largest local chamber in Minnesota.

The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce Charitable Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the Chamber serving as the mission to advance education and workforce development initiatives within the Saint Paul/East Metro area. Our mission is to create resources to invest in our region's vitality by developing and engaging a talented work force.

We provide the following to our members and the Saint Paul/East Metro community:

- Leadership programs to educate members on the issues facing our community
- Committed Volunteers
- Fundraising initiatives to address the most pressing issues surrounding workforce development and education.

### **Our Team**

With the largest staff of any local chamber in the state, SPACC has a robust team of professionals with a wide range of experience and expertise. The following staff members will play key roles in executing this proposal.

#### **SPACC President and CEO**

Matt Kramer- PhD with years of executive experience in both public and private sectors, including governor's chief of staff and Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Commissioner.

#### **SPACC Vice President**

Jonathan Weinhausen- MBA, Shoreview resident and Economic Development Commissioner. Small business specialist with years of sales and business engagement experience.

#### **Membership and Engagement**

Mindee Kastelic, Director of Member Services, focused on strengthening businesses within Saint Paul and the surrounding East Metro business communities by providing marketing opportunities, networking events, small business resources and professional development forums.

#### **Public Affairs Support**

Michael Belaen, Director of Public Affairs and Legal Counsel, Has a law degree and BA in political science, with significant experience in litigation, project management, and public affairs. He is a communications and media-relations expert and has significant experience leading the economic development efforts for SPACC.

Scott Beauchamp, Manager of Public Affairs, Transportation and communications expert specializing in business-focused engagement. Leads SPACC initiatives on Gateway Corridor and is a key member of our Ramsey County Municipal strategy team.

### **Marketing Support**

Mollie Mitchler, Director of Communications and Marketing Strategic communications, webpage and graphic design specialist responsible for creating and distributing SPACC newsletters and other communications, reaching over 13,000 readers every week. She is a social media and advertising expert with significant experience in web-based engagement.

### **Events Support**

Keely Schaust, Director of Events, has a degree in business administration with significant experience in event planning and marketing. She plans over 125 events a year serving a wide variety of individuals and businesses.

### **Foundation Support**

Elisa Rasmussen, Director of Engagement and Foundation, manages the daily operations for the Chamber's Foundation, including the Leadership Saint Paul program and alumni group existing of nearly 1,800. She supports the member services team with member retention efforts and has experience with training and business development.

### **Current Right Track Engagement Model**

The current engagement model addresses the business community in asking our members to support the City of Saint Paul's Right Track program. The bulleted items below represent work currently being done to support the program.

- Brief SPACC Board and Foundation Board on opportunities to support Right Track
- Serve as the fiscal agent for the Right Track Program, collecting grants and reimbursing organizations supporting Right Track in 2014 (total 27 organizations receiving reimbursement)
- Utilize Chamber electronic publications to promote opportunities for the business community to hire a Right Track intern
- Serve on advisory committee (Elisa Rasmussen)
- Plan and help execute Summer Celebration with Right Track interns and employers

### **Proposed Accelerated Work Plan**

- Work with Right Track team to develop a strategic plan including goals for new businesses on board and return on investment calculations

- Partner with Right Track team to identify target list of companies to market internships.
- Create a marketing campaign including letters and personal phone calls to targeted organizations encouraging them to support the program in 2015
- Create and execute media plan to engage with local media outlets on Right Track program and employer benefits
- Engage Chamber membership with customized messages depending on industry designation

### ***Phase 1- Leverage Current Network***

SPACC has a strong membership base concentrated in the East Metro but spread throughout the entire Metro Area. Membership includes everything from large Fortune 500 companies to family owned businesses across a wide range of industries and nonprofit areas.

- A. Primary Messaging Document
  - i. We will widely distribute an informative piece of promotional material to educate elected officials, business leaders, and community members on the importance of supporting the Right Track program, educating the public on the long-term benefits to the community, and what it will take to accomplish these goals
- B. Engage Current Members
  - i. Political Action Committee- brief SPACC's main political committee so that they can include this key issue for East Metro businesses as they meet with candidates and for office and discuss top priorities for the business community
  - ii. Board of Directors- brief SPACC's governing body, a high profile group of C-level executives from major East Metro employers, to build more "grasstops" support among business leaders
  - iii. Business Councils- work with SPACC's local business councils on a monthly basis in Shoreview/Arden Hills, Maplewood/North St. Paul, Roseville and Little Canada-ensure marketing collateral is at each business council meeting
  - iv. General Membership

- I. Keep general membership informed through electronic newsletters, social media, and SPACC events
- C. Engage Community Partners
  - I. Work with Saint Paul Public Schools Foundation and Saint Paul Public Schools and discuss needs based opportunities and leverage their knowledge of current students to expand job opportunities for students.
  - II. Leverage local community partners
    - Oakdale Business and Professional Association- brief OBPA at membership meeting and work to create a presentation to board regarding Right Track – explore opportunity to present at an OBPA luncheon
    - Woodbury Chamber of Commerce
    - Midway Chamber of Commerce
    - Grand Avenue Business Association
    - MN Chamber of Commerce
    - MN Hmong Chamber of Commerce
    - MN Black Chamber of Commerce
    - White Bear Lake Chamber of Commerce
    - Highland Park Business Association
    - East Side Area Business Association

### ***Phase 2- Grow Right Track Program through Community Engagement***

- A. Informational Updates
  - a. Continue to reach new individuals and organizations and keep interested parties engaged through updates on website, social media outlets, SPACC meetings and events, and strategic media positioning.

### **Cost & Duration**

The duration of the project will be from December 2014-February 2015. Cost for engagement, marketing and job development \$10,000.

## BUDGET

### Item #1: Website

#### INCOME

Saint Paul Foundation

\$25,000

F.R. Bigelow Foundation

\$25,000

Youthprise

\$ 5,000

Pohlad Foundation

\$10,000

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\$65,000

#### EXPENSES

Salesforce Licensing and support costs

\$13,000

Launchpad implementation services (website and portal development and configuration)

\$40,000

Data integrations

\$12,000

Total

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\$65,000

### Item #2 SPACC Member Engagement

#### INCOME

Pohlad Foundation

\$10,000

#### EXPENSES

Engagement, marketing, and job development by SPACC staff

\$10,000