

THE NEXT STEP.



How the **Mayor's Youth Program** successfully transitions Atlanta high school seniors into colleges, careers and productive adulthoods.

MAYOR'S YOUTH PROGRAM

We have two truths.



1. The first truth is that every business and nonprofit in the city of Atlanta needs qualified workers. Workers who are skilled and reliable, who get the job done, who motivate each other and inspire excellence and healthy competition at every level.

The more educated our workforce, the more robust our economy because jobs stay here and people prosper here.

At the same time, we have in Atlanta a pool of talented, creative, energetic and enterprising youth. When they were babies, they were strolled down Atlanta's sidewalks. As they grew they played in our parks, visited our museums, cheered at our parades, attended our elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and then...

Then...

Then what?

2. The second truth is that a significant number of Atlanta Public School high school seniors do not know how to move successfully into adulthood.

They are asking: **Now what?**

Here's what:

THE MAYOR'S YOUTH PROGRAM

When Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin announced on January 5, 2005 that she was "adopting" the Atlanta Public School system's entire senior class, she did so recognizing that the gap between finishing high school and moving toward successful careers and adult lives is not that wide. It's completely navigable.

With a workable PLAN.

In fact, the effort and expense it takes as a community to guide teens through

the process of creating, funding and following through with effective after high-school plans is miniscule when compared to the payoff.

Furthermore, bridging the gap inherent in this truth — that many high school seniors need help transitioning — helps resolve the gap inherent in the second truth by providing Atlanta with a more qualified workforce.

Wasted potential: On our watch?

Every young person has dreams and skills that can translate into a productive adulthood. Atlanta's teens have told us they dream of becoming scientists, dancers, nurses, doctors, executives — aspirations that don't sound far-fetched but can feel unattainable to them.

Here is their reality:

- The majority of families with children in Atlanta Public School have incomes below the national average.
- More than 70% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch.
- Many students don't understand the resources available to them, like scholarships, technical programs and employment training.
- Students watch classmates drop out weekly — Georgia has the highest dropout rate in the nation — so there's the temptation to follow their "peers."
- The application process for colleges and other post-secondary schools can be overwhelming and inhibiting, which means important deadlines are missed.



Even students who *do* understand the available resources and can manage the processes often don't have the funds to follow through — they are asking: *If I can't afford the \$45 SAT fee and college application fees, how can I afford college? How can I keep up with the kids who have laptops? Is college even a possibility for me? Who do I ask?*

And then there are the unexpected expenses, the unfortunate turns and quirky events that can become life-

changing obstacles. A student can be doing everything right — behaving responsibly, getting good grades and moving forward — when all of a sudden something happens... a parent loses his or her job, for example. Or the housing situation changes. Or there's a change in Pell grants or scholarship status, or an

increase in fees or tuition. Since these students are just scraping by to begin with, unexpected expenses can sideline their dreams, sometimes permanently.

So what happens? Far too often they end up in low-skill, low-paying, dead-end jobs with no way out. Or worse.

"Shirley Franklin could not sit by while Atlanta's young people struggled to make their way. She was determined to find a practical approach to helping Atlanta's high school students become productive, contributing adults. Her solution was to encourage them to make individualized post-graduation plans; provide small amounts of money for critical needs; and most importantly, give every student a chance to meet with her personally. The Arthur M. Blank Foundation was convinced from the beginning that Mayor Franklin's "just do it" strategy would make a real difference. It has."

— Penelope McPhee
President, The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation

A plan that fills the gaps.

There's nothing new about some families not being able to provide the guidance or financial support their children need to succeed after high school.

What is new is how the Mayor's Youth Program solves this problem.

By working with students one-on-one to develop individualized plans, the Mayor's Youth Program moves Atlanta's youth out of destructive cycles that include dropping out, drugs and jail and into promising futures through education at universities, two-year colleges, technical schools, the military and job training programs.

The plans are actionable, tied to our local job market and meet expected and unexpected financial needs.

They're also exciting for the students because in addition to providing what's missing — counseling, training, work experience, financial assistance — they're based on the student's own hopes and



dreams. Every graduating senior in the Atlanta Public School system or who has a parent employed by the City of Atlanta — no matter what their background or ethnicity — has the opportunity to develop an individualized plan.

The plans are also true collaborations. The public, private and nonprofit sectors all contribute along with the students, because that's what it takes to meet this challenge.



"If you want to know how well your city is doing when it comes to economic development, there is only one figure you need to know: the percentage of your population who have four-year degrees. The research on this is unassailable. The more talented your city, the better off it will be. Developing talent from within is an imperative for urban leaders who want their cities to thrive in the knowledge economy."

Carol Coletta
President and CEO, CEOs for Cities

Students report back:

"I have been a statistic my entire life because I have lived in low income communities. I am now proud to say that I am a statistic of success. I am the first person in my family to graduate from college with a bachelor's degree."

"Many students do not receive a second chance. However ... I was placed in an internship at the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Here, I found myself learning what it takes to not only be a successful person, but a successful black man in Atlanta. Later, I was catapulted into the rigorous community called Morehouse College. I quickly learned what it takes to be a strong black man in today's world. I served on the homecoming committee...ran for class president twice ... participated on a step team that won national

recognition ... and am currently serving as a tutor, counselor, and mentor for those who are now in the shoes I filled not so long ago. I appreciate everything you do and stand for. Thanks for my chance."

"You have not only helped me by assisting me as I matriculate through college, you have helped my community because I now mentor in the Big Brother/Big Sister program. I also mentor kids at my former middle school and high school ... It all started with the internship you supplied me with at IBM. I just want you to know that this program has helped me tremendously and by helping me that also helps my family. I am the youngest in my immediate family and the first to graduate high school and go to college. I am now interviewing with top investment banks because of the program."

Creating the bridge:

6 steps to effective transitions

Here's what it takes to help students in need move successfully from high school into post-secondary education programs:

- Step 1:** Inform every Atlanta Public School senior about the Mayor's Youth Program.
- Step 2:** Meet with students to jump-start their post-secondary education planning.
- Step 3:** Monitor and guide students' progress through monthly check-ins.
- Step 4:** Train students for internships then pair them with summer employers.
- Step 5:** Meet one-on-one to sign off on individualized plans.
- Step 6:** Finalize arrangements with post-secondary schools and pay the bills.



Programs that train, teach and motivate.

Saturday Workshops: Include SAT Preparation, money management, time management, work ethics, dress for success, voter registration and resume building/interview skills. Also college fairs, job fairs and lifeguard recruitment.

Internship Program: Provides practical and invaluable work experience to hundreds of young people by first training them on how to be good employees, and then exposing them to the business world. Internship Program: Provides practical and invaluable work experience to hundreds of talented young people by first training them on how to be good employees, and then exposing them to the business world. It has a strong partnership with the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Atlanta-Journal Constitution and ajejobs.com and the Atlanta business community.

Summer Educational Certificate Program: Collaboration with Atlanta Technical College that provides certification classes plus stipends for training in the healthcare field, including Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA), Pharmacy Technician, or Patient Care Assistant (PCA), and in service industries, such as Automotive Tech, HVAC Specialist, Shampoo Tech, and Customer Service Specialist, Brake Repair Specialist and Plumbing.

ARTSCool: Provides arts instruction and job training to high school students through the City of Atlanta's Office of Cultural Affairs.

Cadet Program: Qualified seniors participate in Police Cadet training or Fire Cadet training with the City of Atlanta.

Oracle Program: Nationally recognized certification course on the Oracle Database Management System.



Impressive results.

- Number of Atlanta Public School high school seniors who met personally with Ms. Franklin since the program's inception: 3,798
- Number who received real-life work experience through summer jobs and internships: 2,894
- Number who received laptops: 571
- Number of colleges or universities attended since inception: 214
- Number of colleges or universities students are currently in: 102
- Number of metro-Atlanta businesses and organizations that have donated time or effort: 414
- Total amount awarded to students to cover expenses they could not afford: \$6,445,630
- Largest single award: \$18,200
- Smallest award: \$200
- Average award: \$2,146
- Total number of students who received awards: 3,060
- Number of students who have graduated from four-year colleges and other post-secondary education: 209
- Number of students currently enrolled in post-secondary education: 673

Atlanta Workforce Development Agency: Decades of experience.

The Mayor's Youth Program is managed by the Atlanta Workforce Development Agency (AWDA), which provides employment and training programs for Atlantans and workforce solution services for metro businesses. It also has a long track record of working successfully with youth. It is led by Executive Director Deborah Lum and the Atlanta Workforce Development Board, which includes some of Atlanta's most prominent educators, business leaders and civic leaders.



More than numbers.

The numbers don't represent the full picture — some results are immeasurable.

It's impossible to measure how finally having a college graduate in a family will affect younger siblings, relatives or the next generation. We can't track how a mentor's encouragement led to a shift in a belief system or a deeper understanding of how to succeed in the world. How do you know when a few thousand dollars actually saved a life? Or many lives, if the recipient chooses a career in medicine, as a first responder or a teacher (there are many ways to save lives).

Or what instrument, other than time, can we use to gauge the impact of new ideas, start-up businesses, creative works or civic leadership roles taking root right

now because of the fertile ground provided by the Mayor's Youth Program?

Still, perhaps the most difficult thing to measure is the gratitude from participants and family members. The appreciation that comes pouring in through letters, emails, phone calls and other expressions are not quantifiable, and neither are the tears of joy when students cross each milestone.

Investing in this generation's dreams and aspirations sets off ripple effects that give back today, tomorrow, in ten years and for generations far into the future.



Why it works.

The Mayor's Youth Program is so successful because once people see there's a real, workable solution to filling the gaps, they commit.

Students: Thousands commit.

Students commit to their individualized plans because it gives them hope and empowers them to take charge of their own futures. Not surprisingly, some end up taking on leadership roles in their post-secondary schools.

Community: Each sector commits.

Internships. Summer jobs. Mentoring. Technical training. A total of 414 Atlanta businesses, nonprofits and government agencies have stepped up. Society of Human Resource Management-Atlanta has provided hands-on help to hundreds of seniors from each Atlanta Public School highschool.

Donors: Commit year after year.

Corporations, individuals and family foundations give substantial gifts each year. Every dollar raised since 2005 has gone to the students — operational costs are federally funded. We are grateful and encouraged by our donors enthusiastic support.



"Since late 2006, Society for Human Resource Management-Atlanta volunteers have helped over 2,000 high school seniors by conducting one-on-one mock interviews, finding summer internship opportunities for them and facilitating classes that provide core skills training for today's environment, including Workforce Readiness Training, Communications, Time Management, Ethics and Understanding College Costs. All year long, our pool of over 300 volunteers offers up their Saturdays to assist in developing Atlanta's future leaders — it's SHRM-Atlanta's goal to give back to the community in ways only human resource professionals can."

— Tina Spencer
Director of Human Resources, Ivan Allen Workspace



To cover anticipated expenses for the 2010-2011 school year, the Mayor's Youth Program needs to raise \$1.5 million dollars. This amount supports graduating high school seniors beginning their post-secondary education and the 673 students already enrolled in four-year colleges, two-year programs and certificate programs.

The Mayor's Youth Program has raised approximately this amount or more each year after having received \$500,000 in seed money. The ability to have raised more than 12 times the initial funding amount is a testament to the quality, effectiveness and management of this program.

Closing the funding gap.

Where does the money go?

Every donated dollar funds the post-secondary education expenses of students whose individualized plans have been honed and vetted by a team of committed professionals. Expected expenses include tuition, books, fees, internship wages, and room and board, and unexpected expenses include items such as increases in tuition and fees, hardship management, emergencies and other kinks in the plan. Mayor's Youth Program operational costs are funded by the federal government, not donors.

How much does each student receive?

The average award is \$2,146 to each student each year but the range varies greatly — success flows from the program's flexibility to fill whatever gap exists between standing still and moving forward.

For example, some students are able to raise scholarship funds and other money to attend out-of-state private schools, so in those situations the Mayor's Youth Program will cover the remaining gap, whether it's for tuition, transportation to and from school, or other expenses.

For students whose workable plan is to go to a state college and live at home, the gap that needs to be filled may be 100% of tuition and fees. Others may have earned HOPE scholarships but can't afford room and board, and still others may want to go to technical school but can't support themselves without receiving stipends while learning. The gaps differ so the solutions differ — this is not a cookie-cutter program, which is exactly why it's so successful.

Why pay schools, bookstores, dorms and other bills directly?

We fund expenses, not students. This allows us to retain tight

financial control and prevent waste, overpayment and loss that can occur when things fall through the cracks. This is also why we pay bills one semester at a time. It's more labor-intensive than sending checks directly to students, as most programs do, but the cost-saving results are worth it and the students know we mean business.

How does funding students' post-secondary education benefit the entire community?

Studies prove each additional year students stay in school impacts the rest of their lives. And if they earn degrees? A city that increases its number of college graduates by just 1% experiences an economic base increase of \$763 in annual per capita income. For in-town Atlanta, that would be an increase of \$396 million per year.

What's the program's long-term plan?

As long as there is a gap between what Atlanta Public School graduates need and what they have, the Mayor's Youth Program is determined to find a way to fill it.

Systemic changes at the federal level may reduce the size of the gaps in the coming years. The current administration has pledged to dramatically expand college financial aid and make other important changes in the education pipeline so that more young people have access to college. If Pell grants for low- and moderate-income students increase as planned, the need for funding through this program will decrease.

Unless, of course, colleges increase tuition at equivalent levels. We are, in fact, seeing substantial tuition increases today. So the need remains as great as ever.

Revenue & Expenses

2009 MAYOR'S YOUTH PROGRAM

Revenue

Private Donations	\$ 883,001.00
Private Donations – 2008 Carry in	\$ 658,227.00
Program Service	\$ 176,500.00
Workforce Investment Act	\$ 50,000.00

TOTAL REVENUE \$ 1,767,818.00

Expenditures

Unmet Needs Awards	\$ 1,009,593.00
Unmet Needs Obligations	\$ 625,891.00
Internships	\$ 393,294.00
Staff	\$ 60,732.00

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 2,089,510.00

Most futurists predict America will not succeed as a healthy economy unless we educate our citizens beyond high school.

According to a recent survey of college freshman, about two-thirds said they had “some” or “major” concern about their ability to pay for their education. The percentage of students

who responded with “some” concern is at its highest level since 1971: more than half of those students are unsure they can finish.

Closing the funding gaps so Atlanta students can begin and finish their post-secondary education grows our talent pool, our resources and our ability to compete globally.

“Education has always been a key focus area for Georgia-Pacific Foundation. We find the Mayor’s Youth Program unique in that Shirley Franklin meets one-on-one with each of the students — when someone says ‘I believe in you,’ kids respond and it helps them persevere. The program has gone a long way in helping students focus and also filling financial gaps for those who don’t have all of the funds they need to matriculate through college. We’ve been supporting the program since its inception and plan to continue our support for as long as it’s needed.”

– Curley M. Dossman, Jr.
President, Georgia-Pacific Foundation



What does the program mean to the Class of 2010? To Atlanta?

For students, the program can mean the difference between stop and go. Success and failure.

Without the Mayor’s Youth Program, most participants from the graduating classes of 2005 through 2009 would be “on the streets” instead of in classrooms and careers.

The truth is these kids need help transitioning. Right now. Today.

And the truth is Atlanta needs an educated workforce. We need qualified, reliable employees who know how to plan, strive, lead and succeed. The answer is to address both truths with a proven, collaborative strategy.

We are asking for your help. Please invest in the Mayor’s Youth Program as generously as you can.



To support the Mayor’s Youth Program, please contact:

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www.atlantaworkforce.org

Mayors provide inspiration and leadership.



"The Mayor's Youth Program is a good example of how the Mayor can encourage our high school students to achieve and persevere, knowing that our community stands behind them, and is willing to help them achieve their next step."

– Mayor Kasim Reed

For decades, the mayors of the City of Atlanta have been building a legacy of helping students transition from high school into higher education and successful careers.

In 1982, Mayor Andrew Young established the Atlanta Dream Jamboree, a college and career fair sponsored by the city. At the time of its inception, colleges didn't recruit in Atlanta and the total scholarships awarded annually to Atlanta Public School students came to under \$1 million. By 2007, the Jamboree had become the largest college fair in the Southeast and our high school graduates were receiving over \$14 million in scholarships annually.

Each subsequent mayor — Maynard Jackson, Bill Campbell and Shirley Franklin — supported the program until Atlanta was securely on the college fair map and the publicly funded fair was no longer needed.

However, significant gaps remained. In 2005, Mayor Franklin built upon the original Jamboree concept by creating the Mayor's Youth Program. The program delivered results immediately and has transitioned hundreds of students into colleges and training programs each year.

Mayor Reed is committed to the continued success of the Mayor's Youth Program. He's been a champion of education since

his days at Howard University when he created a program that has since raised well over \$10 million for scholarships, and he is investing heavily in the future of Atlanta's youth, particularly through his Centers of Hope initiative.

From college fairs and internship programs to one-on-one meetings and fundraisers, Atlanta mayors consistently create and support pathways to higher education. Like mayors across the country, they have understood that the investment in children and education pays dividends for generations. It is part of a grand yet achievable mission: more vibrant, educated, prosperous and healthy cities for us all.

"The civil rights movement was as much about access to education as access to voting rights and economic rights. Access is still an issue, especially when children who can't afford to go to school lower their aspirations as a result. I applaud the supporters of the Mayor's Youth Program who recognize the true value of education. They are actively helping Atlanta Public School students overcome the hurdles that stand between them and a brighter future."

*– Andrew Young, City of Atlanta
Mayor 1981-1989*

"Every child in Atlanta must have a bright future if our city is to thrive in the global economy of this century. The keys to success are skill training and a first-class education. For nearly six years, the Mayor's Youth Program has given thousands of Atlanta graduating seniors encouragement to pursue their dreams, financial assistance, and summer training and internships. What started as a pilot with modest expectations and little funding has expanded into a full-blown, year-round effort. We've celebrated with thousands of students who've graduated, earned degrees or licenses and overcome obstacles of every kind. As mayor, I was inspired to support the students who took charge of their lives. I thank the students, their families and our community for stepping up to support every Atlanta Public School class since 2005. The success of the Mayor's Youth Program is documented in the personal stories of the students, their gratitude and their serious endeavors."

– Shirley Franklin, City of Atlanta Mayor 2001-2009