

Exploring Careers

Program Overview

River Rec Teen Zone (RRTZ) seeks to offer comprehensive, creative, and accessible training to youth ages 13-19 for pre-employment readiness. This training will be highly individualized; offering career skills and interests assessments, career counseling, a mentorship and internship program, and periodic soft skills training and group projects. Detailed below are programs and procedures.

I. Objective

It is RRTZ's mission to prepare all involved youth for success in future employment. It is the overall goal for all students entering into the Career Exploration program to be able to identify clear career goals and incremental steps towards success in their chosen field. By providing career skills and interests assessment and career counseling upon entry into RRTZ membership, RRTZ staff will have a comprehensive understanding of student goals and abilities, making them well equipped to match them appropriately with a career mentor or work study opportunity. With involvement in this program, students will have access to a large network of career mentors, a staff point of contact to provide career counseling, and access to special projects programming (dependent on student's field of interest, availability may be limited.)

II. Program Assessment

A. Career Skills and Interest

Upon entry into the Exploring Careers program at RRTZ, students will complete a Career Skills and Fields of Interest Assessment. This assessment allows a detailed look into potential fields of study and career to both students and staff. The results of this assessment will allow the student to choose a Field of Interest. The established Fields of Interest as represented by available career mentor representation in the general Marine City area are as follows:

- Hospitality & Food Services
- Business & Administration
- Entertainment & Recreation
- Construction & Maintenance
- Educational Services
- Finance & Insurance
- Government & Law
- Healthcare & Human Services
- Information Media & Technology
- Manufacturing
- Retail & Personal Service

- Real Estate & Housing/Utilities
- Transportation & Automotive, and
- Animals & Agriculture

Once a Field of Interest has been identified, RRTZ staff will match the student with a local career mentor. The matching may result in one (or more) types of exploratory experiences for the student; job shadow, work study/internship, or personal mentorship. Each business will be allowed to choose the level of involvement which is best for them.

B. Student Knowledge & Experience Assessment

Before beginning the Career Exploration program, each student will be asked to complete an assessment which measures their knowledge of and experience with their chosen Field of Interest. This assessment will also assess soft skills and preparedness, with topics such as resume writing, interviewing skills, and workplace communication.

Post-program, students will be asked to complete the same assessment measuring their knowledge of and experience with their chosen Field of Interest. This program assessment will also ask students to provide a narrative of their overall experience and area of improvement for the program at large. If student knowledge increased from pre- to post- assessment, and overall experience is rated highly, the program will be considered successful.

C. Career Mentor & Employer Assessment

Career mentors, employers, or job site supervisors will also be asked to complete a post-program assessment. This assessment will rate the student's participation, likelihood for hire, and areas for improvement for the student or program at large. If the employer/mentor's willingness to continue remains above 70%, and likelihood for hire remains above 40%, the program will be considered successful.

III. Program Implementation & Procedure

A. Career Mentors

All potential career mentors will be required to complete a Career Mentor Application and submit to a background check. Career mentors may be accepted into the RRTZ programming volunteer staff, but may not be matched with a student immediately. If, for any reason, a career mentor must withdraw their availability, they must contact the Exploring Careers program manager to do so.

B. Student Registration

All students eligible for membership with RRTZ at large may be eligible for the Exploring Careers program. RRTZ career exploration activities may take place off-site, in which case the student and parent/guardian is responsible for transportation to/from the work site. A permission slip must be signed for students under the age of 18 must be signed for students to participate in the Exploring Careers

mentorship or career experience activities. Soft skills trainings will be held on-site and do not require an additional permission slip.

C. Mentorship & Career Experiences

Each registered Career Mentor (personal or business) will submit: 1. Availability and student capacity, 2. Plan for career skills education, and 3. Type of mentorship Experience provided. The Career Mentor Application (including this information) will Be kept on file and regarded as a commitment of volunteer time. In order to be Withdrawn from the list of available mentors, the Career Mentor must contact the Program coordinator directly.

1. Types of Mentorship Experience: (A Career Mentor must choose one or more).
 - a. Job Shadow - A student will be allowed between 4-8 hours of job shadowing opportunity. This includes time on-site and explanation of job duties, educational/training requirements, etc.
 - b. Work Study/Internship - A student will be allowed 4-10 weeks of on the job, hands on training and experience. This experience may be paid or unpaid, (negotiations are to be done directly between employer to student).
 - c. Career Mentorship - A student will receive at least one hour per month of support services in personal and career development. This may, for example, include assistance developing a portfolio, teaching a usable skill, etc.

D. Soft Skills Training

On a monthly basis, RRTZ staff, volunteers, and/or hired instructors will conduct group soft skills trainings. These training workshops and seminars are open to all students, including those not currently participating in the Exploring Careers program. Listed below is a list of possible topics for instruction and/or events aimed to teach valuable soft skills to all RRTZ members.

1. Resume Writing
 - a. Group Resume & Writing Seminar - a group of students will complete the Group Resume Game: Seeing Through Your Employer's Eyes. This will include a presentation on what employers look for, creative language to use on a resume, how to best highlight experiences, etc. After this exercise, students will be encouraged to create a paper resume.
 - b. Creative Resume Seminar - offers students an opportunity to think creatively for a resume. Students are challenged to create an out-of-the box resume; anything from an infographic to clever food delivery.
2. Interviewing Skills
 - a. Improv - introduces students to the world of improv at large with a focused point of communicating clearly and providing appropriate answers in an interview.
 - b. Speed Interviewing - business owners and supervisory staff from a variety of industries in the community will be present. Similar to speed dating, speed interviewing will require students to answer interview questions appropriately and quickly.

3. Professionalism
 - a. Skit Writing - students will be introduced to a list of soft skills. In groups, they will be asked to develop and perform two skits: the 'right' way to present a soft skill, and the 'wrong' way.
 - b. Fashion Show - students will be put into teams and asked to develop two professional "looks" each - one male and one female. Collectively, a fashion show will be held to showcase.
4. Communication
 - a. Role Playing - students will be put into groups to complete role playing exercises regarding conflict resolution.
 - b. Self Advocacy & Respect Seminar
5. Problem-Solving
 - a. Community Scavenger Hunt
 - b. Escape Room
6. Leadership
 - a. Youth Leadership Seminar - seminar which includes group activities and discussions on leadership.
 - b. Hero Awards - students will identify a leader in their lives or communities which they would like to honor at a yearly event. Students will honor them with an awards ceremony, creating a presentation which shares why they chose that particular person.

E. Special Projects

The RRTZ intends to create special projects in order to promote student leadership and project management in several Fields of Interest previously outlined. These special projects may be run on a fee-for-service basis, depending on availability of resources and volunteer efforts. The goal of these special projects is to provide students with experiences with leadership, project management, and poignant career tasks which will help them with developing a strong resume. Some potential projects include:

1. Food Truck - *Hospitality & Food Services Experience*
2. Shark Tank Competition - *Business & Administration Experience*
3. Annual Event Planning Committee - *Entertainment & Recreation Experience*
4. Community Building Project - *Construction & Maintenance Experience*
5. Painting with a Twist Instruction - *Educational Services Experience*
6. Petition to Ordinance Management Project - *Government & Law Experience*
7. Public Service Announcement Film Festival - *Healthcare & Human Services Experience*
8. RRTZ Social Channels Team - *Information Media & Technology Experience*
9. Upcycling - *Retail & Personal Service Experience*

IV: Program Budget