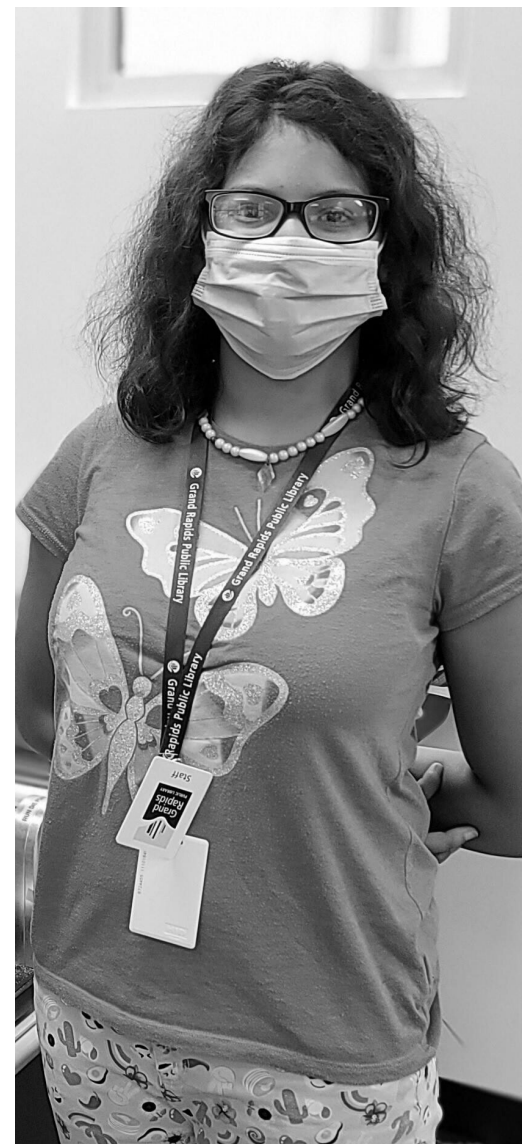

GROW1000 SUMMER 2021 REPORT



*Written & Prepared by Shannon L. Harris, Executive Director of
Our Community's Children, a public/private partnership between the
City of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids Public Schools and community partners.*

OVERVIEW

GRow1000 was launched the summer of 2020 in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing racial and economic disparities. City Manager Mark Washington called on business and community leaders to help mitigate these effects by employing 1,000 young people during the summer. Our community stepped up to the challenge! In just a few weeks, over 350 youth were employed in more than 60 unique job sites that spanned area businesses, nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions and government.

2021 ADAPATIONS

Our community has once again risen to the occasion to support GRow1000. In the summer of 2021, young people ages 15 to 24 had the opportunity to explore a career and obtain valuable work experience while earning money.

Program participants were be matched with employers for a 6-week, 120-hour, paid work experience. Through this experience, area businesses and organizations introduced youth to real-world work environments, provided mentorship, created pathways to future careers and explored post-secondary options.

This year's iteration of the program expanded the age limit for participation to age 24. The matching process was enhanced by including the following criteria: age, occupation interests, bus routes, and virtual vs. in-person preferences. Businesses participated in lunch and learn sessions to discover how to create culture with youth in the workplace. GRow1000 youth participants, affectionately referred to as "GRowers," attended weekly professional development workshops in a series titled, "WeGRowWednesday." Pay rates increased for those aged 18 to 24 (\$13/hr.). Youth who were 15 to 17 years-old, the pay rate remained at \$10/hr. And, options for "GRowers" switched from pay cards to direct deposit and paper checks.



STATS & DEMOGRAPHICS

972

YOUTH APPLICANTS

Unique GRow1000 youth applications

286

YOUTH EMPLOYED

Youth who earned wages at assigned placement

323

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

Youth who attended virtual pre-employment training

73

EMPLOYER PARTICIPANTS

Number of unique job sites; includes 11 job sites @ City of Grand Rapids. Some employers had multiple sites.

353

YOUTH PLACED

Youth matched with an employer

21

MENTORS

Mentors matched with 161 GRow1000 youth participants

Race:

African American	38% (110)
Asian	4% (12)
Caucasian	24% (68)
Latinx	20% (58)
More than 1 race	4% (10)
Unknown	10% (28)

Age Range:

15 - 17	71% (204)
18 - 20	21% (60)
21 - 24	8% (22)

Gender:

Female	52% (150)
Male	42% (120)
Non-binary	2% (5)
Unknown	4% (11)



Zip Codes:

49507 - 20% (57)	49509 - 3% (8)	49426 - <1% (1)
49503 - 16% (46)	49548 - 2% (7)	49418 - <1% (1)
49504 - 13% (38)	49525 - 1% (3)	49417 - <1% (1)
49505 - 12% (34)	49534 - 1% (3)	49307 - <1% (1)
49506 - 9% (26)	49315 - <1% (2)	48360 - <1% (1)
49508 - 7% (21)	49316 - <1% (2)	22003 - <1% (1)
49546 - 6% (19)	49544 - <1% (1)	
49512 - 4% (12)	49435 - <1% (1)	

YOUTH TESTIMONIALS



"The GRow1000 program was definitely the highlight of my summer. Through this program, I received the opportunity to pursue a technological project in partnership with MobileGR. Pursuing this project and participating in the GRow1000 program taught me various real-world skills, ranging from coding techniques to workplace etiquette."

Vishnu Mano
2021 GRow1000 Participant
MobileGR

"I would like to say thank for being apart of GRow1000 program this summer. I worked with Nexus Technology Service (IT) I really like the way the treated me."

**Jacques I., 2021 GRower
Nexus Technology**

"It was a splendid memory."

**Joshua K., 2021 GRower
Indian Trails Golf Course**

"It was great. Life EMS offered me a scholarship, the staff was so welcoming and showered me with many nice treats to show their appreciation for me."

**Anabel S., 2021 GRower
Life EMS**

"I absolutely loved it. Every second of it. Thank you."

**Brian M., 2021 GRower
Meijer**

"It made me feel more confident in going to college and finding a career."

**Boris S., 2021 GRower
Steelcase**

"I think that they did the best they could. I don't think they could have improved my experience."

**Caleb K., 2021 GRower
P&R Dept./Richmond Pool**

MENTORSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR "GROWERS" & EMPLOYER PARTNERS

MENTORS | MENTEES

21 | 161

To further support youth during their employment, DV Apple Logistics and Our Community's Children developed a mentorship program. Mentors from a variety of professions were matched with youth who opted-in to this component of the program. At least twice a week, mentors framed their connection points with their GRow1000 mentees around the following subject areas: workplace norms, financial planning, SMART goals, conflict resolution, and physical mental health.

EMPLOYER WORKSHOPS:

3

During the course of the GRow1000 program, employer partners participated in the following workshops in order to provide a more meaningful work experience:

1. *Orientation*
2. *Building Youth Culture*
3. *Mid-Program Feedback Session*

WEGROWWEDNESDAY WORKSHOPS:

6

A new component of this year's program was a six-week professional development series titled, *WeGRowWednesday*. For six consecutive Wednesdays during their employment, GRow1000 youth workers logged onto Zoom during their lunch hour. Sessions included the following: college preparation facilitated by OCC's T2C Studio, post-secondary success, mid-program check-in, 2-part financial literacy facilitated by the CRA Association and an end-of-program celebration.

#WeGRow WEDNESDAY

EMPLOYER TESTIMONIALS



"I FEEL THIS IS A GOOD AND VALUABLE PROGRAM AND FROM MY EXPERIENCE, IT FOUND QUALITY YOUNG PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE."
DEWPOINT

"We would love to participate in future iterations of the program. Overall we had a very positive experience."
Grand Rapids Public Library

"Our intern through the GRow program has done phenomenal. Her level of professionalism is really commendable considering her lack of experience in a professional work environment. She was very helpful and a pleasure to work with. Great job on this program!"
61st District Court

The City of Grand Rapids served as the employer of record and processed all pre-employment paperwork as well as payroll. Employment partners were recruited and were match with youth participants through a partnership with EuzenConnect. Criteria for the matching process included career interests, location, age requirements, mode of transportation, virtual vs. in-person work preferences and more.

The cost of wages were reimbursed to the City by employers at \$2,000 per youth ages 18 to 24 years-old and \$1,600 per youth ages 15 to 17 years-old.

EMPLOYERS SAID...

Was this your organization's first time participating in the GRow1000 Program?

64.3% Said "Yes"
35.7% Said "No"

What was your business' /org.'s motivation for participation?

Top 2 answers:

"To provide a general work experience or internship."
"To introduce young people to a specific career path."

Do you believe you were able to give your "GRower a meaningful work experience?

64.3% Said "Yes"
35.7% Said "Somewhat"

Would you be willing to offer your GRower part-time or full-time work experience now or in the future?

50% Said "Yes"
35.7% Said "Maybe"
14.3% Said "No"

N= 14



YOUTH SAID . . .

Why did you participant in the GRow1000 Program?

Top 2 answers:

"Needed to earn money."

"Wanted to explore career options."

How would you rate your overall experience in the GRow1000 Program?

52% Said "Good"

44% Said "Excellent"

12% Said "Satisfactory"

4% Said "Unsatisfactory"

If given the opportunity, would you continue to work at your placement?

68% Said "Yes"

24% Said "Maybe"

8% Said "No"

GRow1000:

Exceeded my expectations - 40%

Met my expectation - 56%

Did not meet my expectations - 10%

N= 25





SPONSORS

- Alticor
- Autocam Medical
- Behler-Young
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Central Reformed Church
- Crystal Flash
- Daniel & Pamela DeVos Foundation
- Dick & Betsy DeVos Foundation
- Douglas & Maria DeVos Foundation
- First National Bank of Michigan
- Flexco
- Frey Foundation
- Huntington Bank
- Independent Bank
- Jireh Metal Products
- Lisa Haan
- Medbio, LLC
- Meijer
- Nicole Albertson
- OST
- Pine Rest
- PNC
- Progressive AE
- Tamara Iakiri
- Terryberry
- Trillium Investments
- Unist Inc
- Varnum
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation Trustee Advised Fund of Grand Rapids Community Foundation
- Warner Norcross Judd
- Wege Foundation

EMPLOYER PARTICIPANTS

Amplify GR
Aquinas College
Baxter Community Center
Block by Block
Boys & Girls Clubs of Grand Rapids
Bruce Heys Builders
Cascade Engineering
Community Rebuilders
Consumers Energy
Davenport University
Dewpoint
Dream Garden
Family Promise of Grand Rapids
First National Bank of Michigan
First Tee of West Michigan
Fox Motors
Friends of Grand Rapids Parks
Garfield Park Neighborhoods Association
Grand Rapids Community College Workforce Training
Grand Rapids Public Schools
Heartside Gleaning Initiative INC
ITS Partners
John Ball Zoo
Kent County Department of Health & Human Services
Kent District Library
Kentwood Office Furniture
Life EMS Ambulance
Load a Spud Potato Bar
Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital
Master Finish Company
Meijer
Mel Trotter
Mercy Health Saint Mary's
Metro Health University of Michigan Health
The Mitten Brewing Company
Neighbors of Belknap Lookout
Nexus Technology Services
Noor's Heaven of West Michigan
Oakdale Neighbors

Projects for Purpose MI
Public Thread
Rockford Construction
Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association
SeyferthPR
South East Market
Spectrum E-Coat
Spectrum Health
STEM Greenhouse
Steelcase
Suburban Inns
Switchback Gear Exchange
The Delta Project
The Factory
The Rapid
The Right Place Inc.
The Windquest Group
WMCAT
West MI Works
YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids
City of Grand Rapids Departments:
61st District Court
Archives
Community Development
Development Center
Economic Development
Executive Office
Fire Department
Grand Rapids Public Library
Mobile GR Department
Our Community's Children
Parks & Recreation

