



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: AUGUST 15, 2023
FROM: OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER WARDS: ALL
SUBJECT: YEAR ONE UPDATE REGARDING THE CALIFORNIANSFORALL YOUTH JOB CORPS PROGRAM

ISSUE:

Receive and file a report regarding year one update for the CaliforniansForAll Youth Job Corps Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council receive and file a year one update report for the CaliforniansForAll Youth Job Corps Program.

BACKGROUND:

Through the work of Mayor Lock Dawson serving on the Big City Mayors Coalition, the City of Riverside was eligible to apply for a \$4.4 million CaliforniansForAll Workforce Development Grant ("Grant"). The Grant was through California Volunteers, a State office responsible for engaging Californians in service, volunteering, and civic action to tackle the State's most pressing challenges and to lift-up all communities. The purpose of the Grant was to fund a program that would increase youth employment, develop youth interest in and experience towards a career, and to strengthen City capacity to address key areas of climate, food insecurity, and local COVID-19 recovery.

On December 7, 2021, the City Council authorized a grant application to the California Volunteers Program ("Grant"). On May 24, 2022, the City Council accepted an award from the State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research in the amount of \$4,401,597 and authorized a Standard Agreement with the State of California for the grant funds.

In May 2022, the CaliforniansForAll Youth Fellow Program was transferred from the Mayor's Office to the Office of the City Manager, which was tasked to implement the Youth Job Corps Program, reconcile and submit an updated comprehensive budget, and to execute agreements with five subrecipient non-profit partners to set up their own subsidiary Youth Job Corp Programs. On September 20, 2022, the City Council authorized the approval of Subrecipient Agreements with Community Settlement Association, Tree People, Inc., Lighthouse of Hope, Feeding America Riverside/San Bernardino, and the C3 Initiative with total awards of \$2,055,514 to hire interns

over two years to work in Grant-related positions and to be partners with the City in completing Grant related activities.

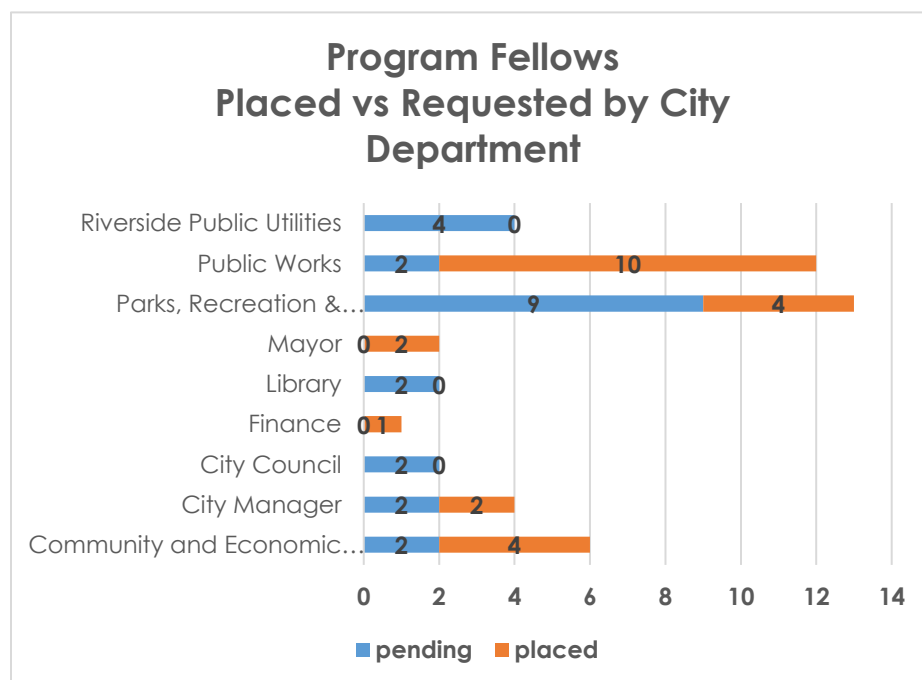
To implement Grant program activities, the City recruited a Project Coordinator position with the goal of hiring and managing approximately 100 positions over two years. Program Fellows recruited under the Grant Program would be youth between the ages of 16-30 to hire into part-time or full-time positions. The City of Riverside has a deadline of May 1, 2024, to utilize all grant funds.

DISCUSSION:

In the first year of the program, staff has finalized several partner Subrecipient Agreements, reviewed over 150 applications, conducted about 90 interviews for placement in different City departments, and placed the first Program Fellows in City departments. Staff has also actively worked with departments to find new opportunities for Fellows and has often worked person-to-person to match Fellow interests with City opportunities. Staff has also been working to establish enrichment programs utilizing a Program budget set aside for wrap-around services for both the City of Riverside Program and the subrecipient partners programs with the goals of making the Fellow experience not just one of employment, but enrichment and positioning for future employment. Program wraparound services are described below.

To participate in the Grant program, City departments submitted project proposals to request a Program Fellow, outlining proposed job responsibilities, how the position helps the City goals, and professional development opportunities for the program fellows. In some cases, job opportunities were found after a Fellow interviewed to ensure that candidate interests and assigned work were a successful match. Nine departments and 25 divisions requested 46 total Program Fellows. As of last month, 22 Program Fellows are working for the City, 17 are completing the pre-employment process, and there is ongoing recruitment to fill nine more positions. In Chart 1 below, numbers in blue below represent positions that are being filled or need to be filled, and the numbers in orange represent the number of Program Fellows currently working for the City.

Chart 1 : Positions that need to be filled (blue) and positions that are filled (orange):



Program Fellow Job Responsibilities:

Program Fellows placed within City departments and with non-profit partners have varying responsibility based on personal goals and educational background, and all contribute to Riverside's efforts to meet City goals and objectives. For many of the Program Fellows just out of college or high school, this is their first professional job and they are taking advantage of the opportunity to do meaningful work that will help them secure long-term employment.

The Program Fellows are currently engaged in the following initiatives:

Community and Economic Development: 5 Program Fellows

- Support the Advance Planning Team in planning future sustainability projects.
- Support the Community Engagement team with Neighborhood and grant projects that address food security efforts such as Little Free Pantries, Senior Market, Pantry Produce, Project Dash, and the CalFresh Healthy Living programs.
- Work at the Homeless Access Center to connect homeless individuals with resources and case management to help get them back on their feet.

City Manager: 3 Program Fellows

- Work in the Office of Communications to post content across social media platforms.
- Support the Bloomberg Fellow with his work in identifying City success metrics to show on a dashboard.

Finance: 1 Program Fellow

- Support Finance staff with COVID related funding activities and audit supporting documentation to meet CARES Act requirements.

Fire Department: 1 Program Fellow

- Support Administrative staff with submitting grant quarterly reports, reimbursement packets, and support other community resiliency initiatives.

Mayor: 2 Program Fellows

- Support Beautify Riverside projects and Campus Riverside workforce development initiatives.

Parks, Recreation and Community Services: 13 Program Fellows

- Support programming at the community centers for youth and seniors, food distribution, and ARPA-related administrative tasks.

Public Works: 12 Program Fellows

- Support the Solid Waste Division with helping the City comply with Senate Bill 1383 through data analysis and community outreach.
- Support the Urban Forestry Division with applying to grants to create an in-house tree database, modernizing the urban forestry manual, and conducting community outreach.
- Working in the Traffic Engineering, Survey, Stormwater, Sewer, Paving, and Land Development to support ongoing Transformative Climate Communities and Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities Grant rollouts.

Municipal partners also assist the City in serving residents and meeting vital human service needs. The following is a selection of projects from our partners.

C3 Initiative: 4 Program Fellows

- Plans to hire program fellows to conduct coding workshops for Riverside Unified School district students ages 8-18. They have partnerships with Northrop Grumman and Esri, to create scenario-based programming to promote the disciplines of engineering, robotics, and design.

Community Settlement Association: 6 Program Fellows

- Program fellows support weekly food distribution operations and receive important certifications and trainings on food safety.

Feeding America Riverside San Bernardino: 2 Program Fellows

- Program fellows support food operations, fundraising, and event planning. Program Fellows helped Feeding America Riverside San Bernardino cultivate relationships with their donor base, create partnerships with food producers and distributors, and collect donations from the community partners.

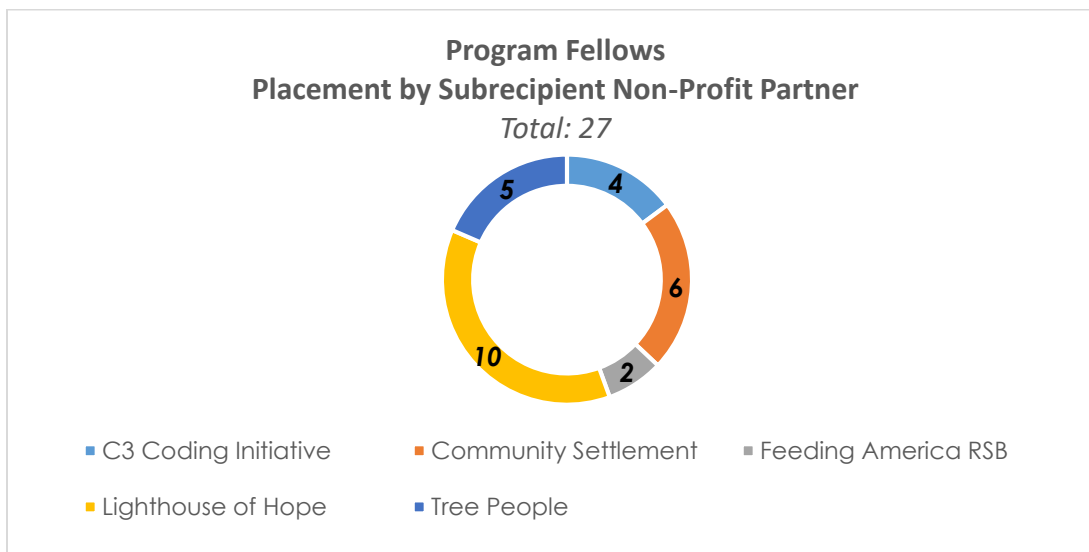
Lighthouse of Hope: 10 Program Fellows

- Program Fellows support food distribution operations for the community and fundraising initiatives. Fellows assist with food distribution to approximately 1,400 low-income City residents per week.

Tree People: 5 Program Fellows

- This partner hired program fellows to train them to become Certified Arborists, learn to care for existing trees, and give shade trees out trees to the community. The CaliforniansForAll program helps the Program Fellows meet minimum training required to become a Certified Arborist.

Chart 2: Utilization of Fellow positions by outside Program partners:



Program Fellow Wrap Around Services:

The City of Riverside’s Youth Job Corp has created opportunities for the Program Fellows to both improve their community and add meaningful work experience to their resumes. The City has created a support network consisting of a Project Coordinator, City department supervisors, and

supportive coworkers to ensure the Program Fellows Success. Fellows have professional development opportunities through on-the-job training, S.M.A.R.T. goal setting (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-based), monthly check-in meetings, Human Resources EPIC trainings, and additional resources provided by the Grant. These additional resources help the Program Fellows overcome potential barriers to success. Each Program Fellow develops a long-term (1-5 years) professional goal, one short-term soft skill goal (communication, teamwork, leadership, etc.), and one technical skill goal (Microsoft office, Excel, Data Analysis, Project Management, scheduling software, etc.) that will help them achieve their long-term professional goals. Monthly check-in meetings review their progress on their goals, connect them with professionals to conduct informational interviews, and recommend additional trainings and resources.

Program Success stories:

- On June 8, 2023, the City of Riverside, its non-profit partners, and the California Volunteers team, celebrated the ceremonial launch of the City of Riverside's Youth Job Corps at the Lighthouse of Hope food distribution. A total of 32 Program Fellows held a roundtable discussion with Mayor Lock Dawson, Councilwoman Gaby Plascencia, Councilmember Clarissa Cervantes, and California Chief Service Officer Josh Fryday. Fellows shared their stories and work experience in the Riverside Youth Job Corp program. After the roundtable discussion, the Mayor, Josh Fryday, and one of the program fellows spoke to the press about the program. Following the press event, everyone distributed food to the community and served over 150 individuals. The event was livestreamed on RiversideTV, and covered by several news organizations, including Telemundo news coverage.
- The City had its first Program Fellow join the City team as a part-time benefitted employee. This new position ensures financial stability and meaningful work experience while the program fellow finishes their Bachelor's degree.
- Another Program Fellow was offered to fill a temporary, full-time, benefitted position, that is vacant due to a leave of absence. This new role was offered to the Program Fellow because of the department trainings the Fellow completed, their experience and job performance.
- One Program Fellow just graduated with their Bachelor's degree and is applying to several open positions with the City of Riverside, local non-profits, and agencies. The Fellow's work experience with the City has helped them become more competitive for entry-level positions.
- One of the Program Fellows graduated from a local high school last year and is now looking to apply to college, using his experience to inform his college choices. This fellow has learned a lot from his work experience in the city and being in a professional environment.

Fellows at Work:



Quotes from Program Fellows:



Our team is constantly holding events where we speak to crowds. I didn't consider myself to be a good public speaker the beginning of the program. I can confidently say that this program has helped me tremendously in building my confidence, public speaking, and communication skills.

"Lighthouse of Hope has made me a better person. It has shown me and developed teamwork and responsibility. My Spanish speaking has improved, and I am more mentally prepared to deal with the world."

"I have been learning about tree biology, tree identification and tree planting while out on the field. I can now identify trees around Riverside by their scientific classification, describe their morphology and diagnose any possible diseases or public hazards. I have found a career with the help of the Youth Job Corps and I am establishing my future as an arborist because of Tree People."

"Job Corps and the food pantry has had such a positive effect on my life so far. I really like this job, and it was a new opportunity that opened when I needed it the most. I love making a positive impact on my community. Working at the food pantry allows me to do this, and I feel good knowing that I'm contributing to helping other people."

"Working for Youth Corps has helped me be compassionate towards people we are helping in this program. It has also helped me understand the needs many people have and the change we are creating by helping them with basic needs."

The CaliforniansForAll Program is learning from its experiences and adapting to new information. The deadline to fully expend the federal grant funds will likely be extended to December 2024. This will allow the City of Riverside and its subrecipient partners to propose additional programming to utilize grant funds and assist the community. Now that the program is fully operational, other departments have shown interest in submitting project proposals requesting Program Fellows. This has created opportunities to provide additional support to City departments.

The State of California approved the Governor's budget for the 2023-2024 Fiscal year, which included an additional \$78.1 million dollars to continue the Youth Job Corps program. This additional State funding will also allow AB540 eligible youth to be hired for the CaliforniansForAll Program Fellow position. Thanks to this funding, the City of Riverside's Youth Job Corps program will continue making a positive impact for young people in the City of Riverside. The lessons learned from the first year of this program will also set the foundation for future innovative partnerships to create career pathways.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to **Strategic Priority 3 – Economic Opportunity** and **Goal 3.2** - work with key partners in implementing workforce development programs and initiatives that connect local workers with high quality employment opportunities and provide access to education and training in Riverside.

The item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. Community Trust – Applying for this grant and building a Youth Workforce Program will serve the public interest, benefit the city's diverse populations, and result in greater public good.
2. Equity – By program design, the funding will be used to benefit underserved populations of youth throughout the city, resulting in a more equitable distribution of opportunity.
3. Fiscal Responsibility – The City will ensure the use of grant funding in accordance with the guidelines provided by CaliforniaVolunteers and maximize outcomes.
4. Innovation – This grant provides the City with the ability to create an innovative program for building career pathways in our young workforce.
5. Sustainability & Resiliency – This grant will provide funding for a Youth Workforce to address COVID 19 recovery efforts, climate impacts, and food insecurity.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to this informational update.

Prepared by: Edgar Arreola, Project Coordinator
Certified as to
availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer

Approved by: Mike Futrell, City Manager
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachment: Presentation