

Friends and Colleagues,

CIS is going to be placing a large number of young people into “summer employment experiences” this summer. This will include summer jobs, community service, and employment training. We want the buffet of opportunities that we offer to be as diverse as possible, so we need your help.

Would your business or organization be a good fit to serve as a summer worksite?

A brief overview may help as you consider this question:

The purpose of this program is to help prepare young people for productive careers. To be eligible for this program, students must be 14 to 18 years old, be low-income, and have another barrier to productive employment (foster child, teen parent, behind in school, etc).

Most students will be placed in community-based worksites. They will work approximately 6 hours a day, 4 days a week for 6 weeks (June 8 to July 18). Variations on this schedule can be accommodated. One day of the week they will meet away from the worksite to participate in activities designed to help them develop “soft skills” – problem solving in the workplace, conflict resolution, time management, work ethics, managing personal finances, etc. These students will have a case manager who will check in with them at least once a week and will be available to the host supervisor as needed. These students will be paid by CIS and will be provided bus passes as needed. The host supervisor (hopefully you) agrees to attend a short orientation, and provides age and skill appropriate work for the young person for the duration of their employment. This funding will not allow students to work as life guards, with heavy equipment or in zoos (sorry Jim). Students can work in a business, as long as they are not displacing existing employees and do not directly contribute to the profit of the business. We will work carefully to match students with appropriate settings.

We have students who want to be lawyers, business leaders, journalists, health care professionals and much more. These students have many challenges and face many barriers. You may not have the right setting for them. I do ask you to seriously consider that, though, as most of these young people just need someone who is willing to take the time to treat them with respect and believe in them. 25 years ago this summer, I was in Harlem supervising teenagers working in a federally funded summer youth employment program very similar to what we will be doing here. At that time, the average life expectancy for a Black male in Harlem was shorter than for a male living in many 3rd world countries. Years later I ran into one of young men at a subway stop. He was enrolled in college and spoke of how meaningful his summer job had been and the significant role it had played in his development. You have the power to make that happen this summer.

If you would like to talk about your business or organization serving as a worksite, please contact Brandon Tull at btull@cis-hot.org or 753-6002 x0.

We know that some settings are able to take groups of students. We are still working out the details, but expect to be able to offer a small amount of funding to help defray staffing costs of any organization that takes at least 12 students. We will also have a couple teams of students

that focus on community service. If you have a project or setting that could benefit from a community service team, please let me know. In addition, we will have many students in certification programs (like MCC's Certified Nursing Assistant program). These students will need shorter-term placements to supplement their classroom learning.

Last of all, you probably know students who may be eligible for this program. Please feel free to refer them to Tammy Taylor at ttaylor@hotworkforce.com or 296-5390. If you know an eligible student that you would like to host, refer them to Tammy, but let Brandon know as well.

Thanks for considering this opportunity to make a real difference in the life of a child!