

Community Focus Statement D: Grow the local economy in a manner consistent with the rural desert character.

Action Statement D.5: Support local job training opportunities for area teens.

D5

Benchmark: A job training program with local businesses modeled after the State of California’s Employment Development Department (EDD) model has been created.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 - \$150,000 dependent upon resources needed.



Teen mentoring programs provided needed job training. Photo source: John S. and James L.Knight Foundation

Job training credentialing and certifications are fast becoming an important gauge for employers in terms of hiring qualifications. A high school diploma can no longer command a living wage. Developing targeted credentialing or certification programs for teens allows secondary schools and local colleges to match skilled workers with open positions, thus providing employers with a larger pool of highly skilled candidates and individuals with career skills and access to higher wage employment opportunities.

These programs often include a link between training, certification, and job placement. Typically the programs partner with individual businesses or business coalitions. Training and certification is usually done through existing

training providers like local high school vocational programs or Copper Mountain College. Several for-profit institutions also offer credentialing programs, but recent studies have shown that their effectiveness is questionable due to high rates of student debts, non-acceptance of credentials or certificates by employers, and low completion rates. However, this is not true of all for-profit programs, and partnerships should assess the tuition fees and performance of any prospective partner training provider.

Case management should follow the participant from initial enrollment through the job placement process. Some programs actually include internship opportunities prior to full-time job placement for on-site worker training and experience.

These programs could be coordinated by local school districts, chambers of commerce, or labor unions. The San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) is charged with coordinating workforce development for the County under the auspices of the federal Workforce Investment Act. Collaboration with the WIB will be important in developing a successful, effective, and sustainable program.

The Competency Model Clearinghouse (www.onestop.org) has developed a hospitality, tourism, and events competency model for workforce training and credentialing in the tourism and hospitality industry. The model identifies and tiers the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities needed at various levels of industry workers and lays out programs for curriculum development and life-long learning.

Action Statements D4, D5, and D6 could be completed together.

Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Partner the Economic Enforcement Team with local high schools to create a job training program committee.	Champion	Month 1	State of California, Economic Development Department http://www.edd.ca.gov/jobs_and_training/Services_for_Youth.htm Joshua Tree Chamber of Commerce http://joshuatreechamber.org/
2. Reach out to local business owners to ascertain their availability to serve as mentors or hire temporary staff.	Economic Enforcement Team	Months 2– 5	
3. Compile resources from the EDD model (see resources) and make connections with EDD staff to learn how to create the program.	Economic Enforcement Team	Months 3 – 5	
4. Promote local opportunities and the EDD’s Youth Employment Opportunity Program (YEOP) in schools.	Economic Enforcement Team with Local school officials, teachers	On-going	
5. Establish a local YEOP for Joshua Tree businesses (potentially partner with the Twentynine Palms and Yucca Valley Chambers of Commerce to expand mentor and job training opportunities).	Economic Enforcement Team	Months 6 – 12	