



## LANGLEY ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

Partners in Employment  
20512 Fraser Highway  
Langley, BC V3A 4G2

[langleyacl.com](http://langleyacl.com)



## Youth Works Summer Employment Service | 2013

WITH GENEROUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM

# vancouver foundation

Disability Supports for Employment Fund

## BACKGROUND

**Langley Association for Community Living has delivered employment supports to adults with developmental disabilities dating back to 1985.**

In recent years the Association has developed an awareness of the lack of employment resources and opportunities afforded youth with disabilities. Youth in high school (and their families) have expressed an interest in pursuing part time and summer employment opportunities. Research shows that youth who have access to paid, competitive employment in their high school years are more likely to secure employment post-graduation. The transition from youth to adult services can be a difficult time for both young people and their families. The supports to find, secure and maintain employment help to mitigate this challenge and provide the necessary skills and capacity not only to the youth but community at large in developing a strong, diverse community. Research has shown that youth who have access to paid, competitive employment in their high school years are more likely to secure employment post-graduation and be more involved in their community.

The Association submitted proposals to the Disability Supports for Employment Fund at the Vancouver Foundation for the project period of June 2011 to July 2014. LACL has successfully acquired support from the Vancouver Foundation for the last three years. The Vancouver Foundation awarded LACL their first grant to provide summer employment to youths between the ages of 16-19 with developmental disabilities, including youth who have just completed high school. In 2011 Youth Works service began providing support to ten (10) students. The Youth Works team secured employment for all 10 and accepted 5 more students for a total of 15 students. All 15 students secured employment superseding our target placement by 40%. In addition 4 students maintained their employment past the project summer period. During the first year it became quickly apparent that Youth not only wanted to work during the summer but wanted to continue on part time with their employment just as their peers did.

Fifteen (15) youth were identified in 2012-2013, all fifteen (15) youth secured employment which allowed for an additional two (2) individuals to receive supports and secure employment. This exceeded the targeted placement by 13%. Of the seventeen (17) youth, seven (7) individuals maintained part time employment at their summer jobs. Due to the continued success and an increase in the call for youth supports by youth, families and community it was determined that LACL would submit a proposal for 2013-2014 to support twenty (20) youth to secure part time and summer employment.

## 2013 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Complete a discovery and job matching process with each of the individual students in collaboration with the school and family members.

Develop and support positive and assistive relationships with local employers.

Frequent monitoring and/or follow-up with employees and employers to establish a culture of trust and support that ensures job stability and retention.

Support employers to consider expanding employment beyond summer to year round, part time after school and weekends.

Raise awareness of attitudinal and perceptual barriers that can limit the number of youth with disabilities who become employed.

Learn practical and tangible ways that accessibility and accommodation in the workplace can be successfully achieved.

Demonstrate the return on investment enjoyed by employers who hire individuals with developmental disabilities.

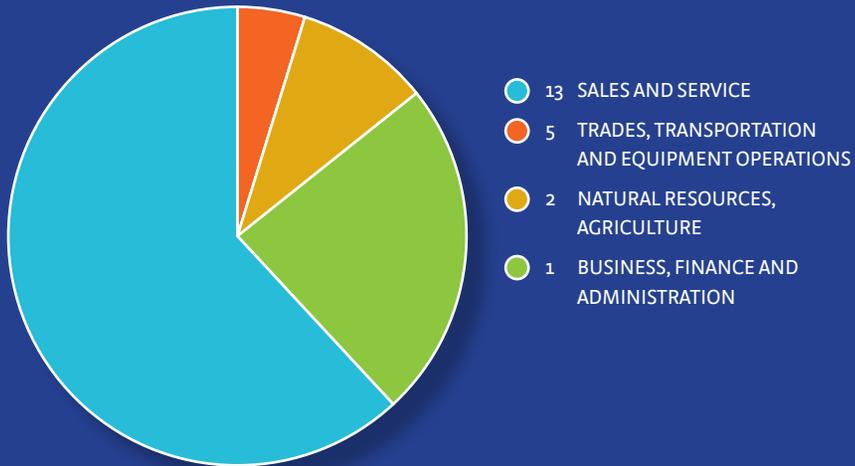
# 2013 DEMOGRAPHICS

## Student Demographics

Gender	Ages	School Grade
Males: 14	Over 19: 3	Graduated: 7
Females: 7	19: 6	2nd year grade 12: 3
	18: 5	Grade 12: 2
	17: 7	Grade 11: 8
	16: 0	Grade 10: 1

## Employment Classification and Placements

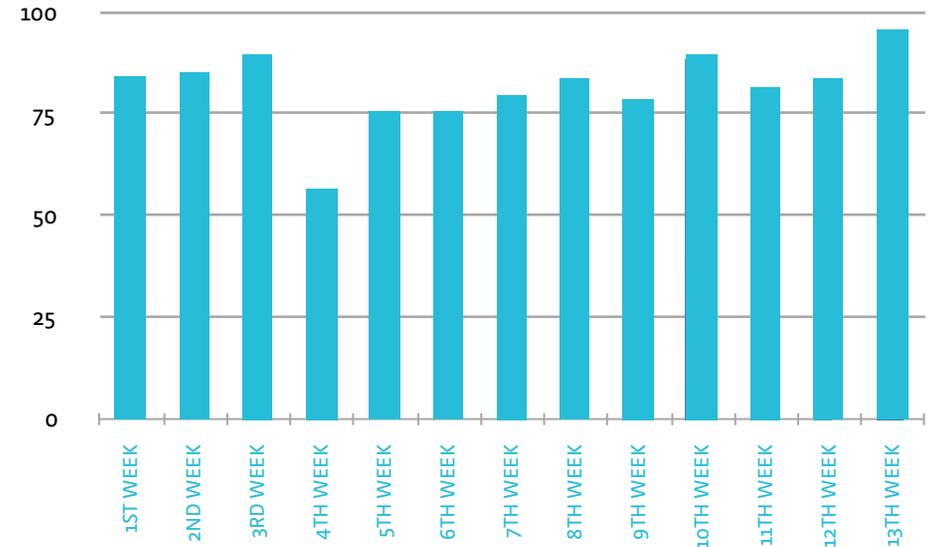
The pie graph below indicates the number of job classifications that the youth works students secured.



# RESULTS

The following graph indicates the number of student employment hours worked in 2013 for a twelve week period. The increase in the number of weeks by four weeks of employment in 2013 was due to an increase in demand from individuals and employers for continued employment.

## Number of Youth Works Employment Hours Per Week for 2013



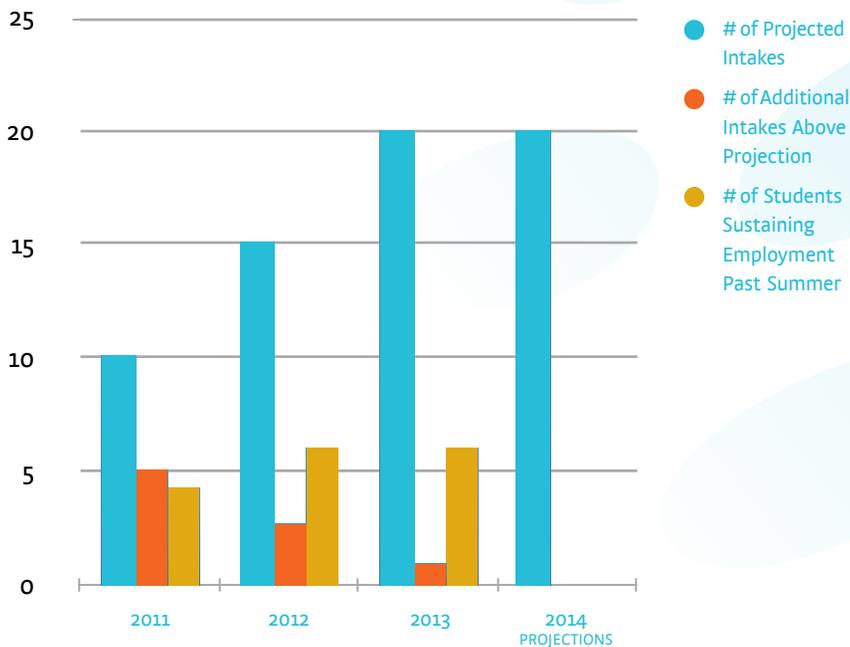
# Outcomes

LACL Youth Works project identified twenty (20) individuals to take part in the 2013 project, all twenty (20) individuals secured employment. LACL was able to provide additional support to one (1) individual. The individual secured employment exceeding the projected target by 5%. Of the twenty one (21) individuals who acquired summer employment seven (7) individuals secured part time placements that continued after summer.

Employers continue to support the Youth Works project and have committed to hosting additional students in 2014 because of the youth employees commitment and success.

The chart below indicates the number of student intakes and the number of students who have sustained employment for the period of 2011 to 2013 and the projected intakes for 2014 that result in paid employment.

## Youth Works Student Intakes for 2011 to 2013



The supports provided to the youth to find, secure and maintain employment has helped the youth to gain necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to continue to plan and strive towards a fulfilling future with opportunity. Below are the challenges that were encountered in 2013 and the recommendations identified to improve on the outcomes and supports provided to youth and employers.

### Challenges:

- Transportation
- Competition from other high school/university/college students job searching
- Developing natural supports due to the short term job
- Economic downturn of the tourism and hospitality industry
- Increase in minimum wage  
-Higher expectation of employers of employees to do all aspects of a job

### Recommendations:

- Offer summer and part time employment supports throughout the year
- Networking / marketing employers throughout the year
- Provide Youth Works to students from the Private Schools
- Provide comprehensive partnership/commitment material and information to families
- Market industries that currently do not employing students with disabilities
- Secure ongoing funding

Accessing the work force prior to graduation supports youth to develop skills and self-confidence necessary for future employment, economic stability and community inclusion. The following are testimonials from the youth, families, businesses and the school of the impact and transformation that has occurred as a result of the opportunities and experiences provided through Youth Works.

## YOUTH WORKS SUCCESS STORIES



# Hannah

## HER SMILE SAYS IT ALL

Hannah's journey with Youth Works provides an excellent example of partnership between Langley Association for Community Living and the local school district. School District 35 provides work experience opportunities to select students and Hannah was one of those students chosen.

Her work experience at A&W went well and the employer provided positive feedback on Hannah's performance. During her intake into Youth Works it was discovered that Hannah had a positive work experience and that she enjoyed it. Youth Works staff approached the manager at A&W she was quick to give Hannah an opportunity for paid summer employment as she had already shown the manager what an asset she would be during her work experience.

Hannah excelled and was asked to stay on as a part time staff member!

The Youth Works Team is so proud of Hannah and you can see by the smile on her face she is too!



# Jacob

## WORKING AT HIS DREAM JOB

When Jacob came to Youth Works, he told the staff he would love a job working with trucks. He told us he grew up around trucks and feels comfortable around them.

Jacob had an interview at K-Line industries in Aldergrove. Ian, the manager, was pleasantly surprised at Jacob's knowledge of trucks that he hired him on the spot.

Initially, Jacob was hired for the summer, cleaning up the parking lot, tiding or sweeping the work shop floor, refilling the paper towels and cleaning up the lunch room. Whatever his Supervisor requested, Jacob enthusiastically completed with a positive work ethic.

Soon Jacob found that he was helping out with the mechanics, tightening bolts on the trailers, and feeding the electrical wires through the chassis. Jacob's employer took Jacob through the in-house fork lift training program and true to the nature of his character, he has exceeded their expectations.

What started out as a simple summer job has now blossomed into a career path.



# Kailyn

## A DEPENDABLE EMPLOYEE

Kailyn was a typical Grade 12 student when she arrived with her parents for her intake meeting. Her interests were typical of a youth, she stated that she preferred working in the hospitality industry; this was not surprising as her evaluation stated that it was the cafeteria that she enjoyed the most. Nothing was found that had to do with socializing or restaurant work, instead labor and sporadic work requiring a variety of skills to master, such as dog walking, recycling service and gardening work. As it was paid work, it was not surprising that she accepted the work.

As the summer ended we anticipated that she would be happy to return to school and continue to develop her interests in the structure of the work experience model. What happened next was surprising; her teacher called stating that Kailyn was no longer satisfied with work experiences and wants to find paid work. In the same week, Kailyn's father called requesting that we continue to help Kailyn find work during her school months.

Kailyn was provided an opportunity to apply to the Real Canadian Superstore. Real Canadian Superstore reviewed her work history and references from her summer employment and interviewed her for a general service clerk.

We are pleased to report that Kailyn was successful and continues to make strides in her new employment.



# Samuel

## SUMMER ADVENTURE

Samuel was a quiet, shy young man when we met him last spring. Through an opportunity from Youth Works Samuel has gained skills, maturity, confidence and some savings in the bank!

Samuel worked part-time as a landscaper for a company called RDM Industries. He learned how to weed garden beds, plant bedding plants and mow lawns. Samuel also learned about responsibility, showing up for work when scheduled and working hard. He has a confidence that he did not have before.

At our recent Youth Works information session the quiet and shy young man had transformed into a confident young man and spontaneously spoke up and shared his experience being supported by the Youth Works team.

Samuel's Mom was proud to tell the employment consultant that Samuel still has all of the money he earned in the bank. When the consultant asked him what he was saving for, he told her for his graduation and/or a trip! Samuel is graduating from high school in June and will be applying to Youth Works to help him find another job.

Good luck to you in whatever you do Samuel!

## YOUTH WORKS PARENT TESTIMONIALS



# Melissa

## TESTIMONIAL #1: KATHY SEMKE

Our daughter's name is Melissa Semke. Melissa is 19 years old and she has been involved with Youth Works for 3 years and we feel very fortunate that she was selected by Youth Works.

When she first started with Youth Works she was very quiet and shy. It was difficult for her to communicate with others and she was unsure of her capabilities of employment. She has gained confidence and stamina over these last 3 years.

We feel very proud of her growth and confidence level. Her job coaches have been exceptional in understanding her complex needs. We hope to continue seeing her growth in this program, without this program she would have a difficult time seeking employment on her own.

# Kailyn

## TESTIMONIAL #2: LENNAYA & PETER POTOMAK

Our daughter Kailyn is 18 years old with an intellectual disability. We were able to get Kailyn connected with Youth Works in the summer of 2013.

Within the first two work days we had noticed a big change in Kailyn's personality, she was very excited to go to work. She had started with the recycling program at Willowbrook Mall and then onto dog walking.

With the help of Youth Works Kailyn is now employed at the Langley Superstore working 15 hours a week and loving it.

This opportunity has given Kailyn a new outlook on life expressly with graduation around the corner. A great big thank you to the great folks at Youth Works.

# Tyler

## TESTIMONIAL #3: JODIE KROPINAK

My son Tyler has been getting support from Youth Works for the past few years and he has got some excellent experience that he can take with him through life. The employee specialists are there to support Tyler and the other individuals are very attentive and will go to all lengths to see that everything is good.

Finally, parents and caregivers are more than welcome to be included in the job selection if necessary. I think that this program and the workers are an excellent support for families in the Langley Community.

## YOUTH WORKS BUSINESS TESTIMONIAL



Since 2010, Aldergrove Credit Union has been working in partnership with the Youth Works Program.

I have found them to be dedicated, professional and results oriented. The need for a holistic service for youths with disabilities in our community has become more evident each year.

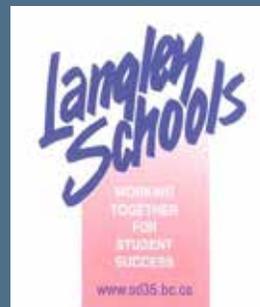
Their unique concept and approach to delivering this service will fill a gap in our community for youth who have not had any opportunities to secure summer employment.

I fully support their proposal and look forward to continuing to work with the Youth Works Program.

A white handwritten signature of Susan Glover on a dark blue background.

**Susan Glover**  
Office Manager

## YOUTH WORKS COMMUNITY PARTNERS TESTIMONIAL



Youth Works has become the perfect 'next step' and helps to develop a smooth transition from school to work.

At Youth Works, our most employable students receive support finding their first paid job. Youth Works also provides invaluable job coaching ensuring that the student learns the job and develops the skills he/she needs to keep that job.

Many students have seen their summer job transform into ongoing part time employment. Youth Works had become an important part of the transition process for young people with disabilities and we have been very impressed with the professionalism and effectiveness of the PIE team.

We look forward to working with PIE and Youth Works in the future!

Sincerely,

A white handwritten signature of Marvin Moedt on a dark blue background.

**Marvin Moedt**  
Teacher, Career Discoveries Program

# Closing Remarks

Over the past year, Youth Works has successfully demonstrated that youth with developmental disabilities will learn, grow and transform when provided with the opportunity to participate and experience employment. Twenty one youth secured summer employment and seven of those youth secured permanent part time jobs. Youth were provided the necessary job coaching and natural supports to ensure success in the workplace. They were able to determine their abilities, develop their confidence and identify potential employment choices to help them plan for their future. It is clear that as Youth Works continues to grow and demonstrate success the demand for employment supports for youth increases from not only the youth themselves but also their families and the business community.

## Overall results continue to confirm:

Demand for Youth employment supports are increasing

Businesses are supportive of the initiative

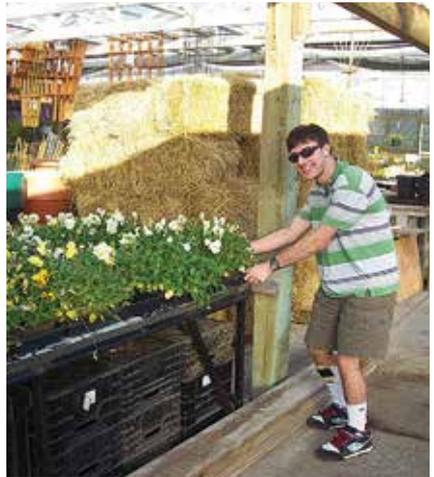
Transitions to adulthood is more seamless

Access to employment increase community inclusiveness

Youth Works is a cost effective initiative

The Langley Association for Community Living is grateful to the Vancouver Foundation Disability Supports for Employment Fund for their support of this initiative. The project would not have been possible without their support and financial contribution.

It is apparent that the first steps towards building a healthier and inclusive community are recognizing the personal and financial contributions youth with disabilities make to their community. It is LACL's goal to continue to support and look for opportunities for youth employment supports funding.



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