

**LAYC/Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers**  
**Montgomery County Department of Economic Development/Workforce Services**  
**FIFTH ANNUAL MONTGOMERY COUNTY YOUTH JOB FAIR**

**REPORT**  
**April 2011**

**Background and Overview**

This year's "Let's Get it Started" Montgomery County Youth Job Fair, held March 26<sup>th</sup> held at the Downtown Silver Spring Civic Building, attracted over 853 youth. Forty-five employers/resource organizations participated. LAYC/Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers (MMYC), the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development, and the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families, Inc. served as the lead partners, and were joined by a variety of government and community organizations to plan and implement the event. Employers reported a total of just under 7000 contacts with youth during the actual event. Analysis of youth's response on the exit surveys indicated that they talked to an average of 6 employers and/or resource organizations during the course of the day. Based on follow up conducted after the job fair, interactions between youth and employers that day resulted in 58 job offers and 48 youth hired for jobs as of the end of April 2011. It is expected that even more hires will occur over the next few months, as employers finalize recruitment and employment decisions for the summer season.

**Partners**

The 2011 job fair attracted financial and in-kind support from both the private and public sectors. The following entities provided support this year:

Montgomery Co. Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families, Inc...	\$500
Montgomery Co. Department of Economic Development.....	Bags
Ride On Bus.....	Displayed posters
Pepco.....	Provided Job Readiness Training
Montgomery County Public Schools.....	Assisted with displaying posters and recruitment of youth
One Stop Centers.....	Displayed posters
County Executive's Office of Community Partnership .....	Assisted with announcing event

Much of the success of this event was due to the work of collaborating partners who worked with LAYC/MMYC to plan and implement the job fair. Partners took responsibility for various aspects of the planning and implementation.

**Volunteers**

The Volunteer committee was able to recruit 75 people from the Montgomery County Department of Recreation, WIA Youth Council Board Members, Latin American Youth Center-MMYC, Montgomery Works, Department of Economic Development, and the community at large. Sixty-five volunteers helped out the day of the event.

**Advertisement**

Outreach was done in high schools through flyers and presentations. Flyers were not only posted in high schools, but also distributed by committee members; posted on local college campuses and sent via email blasts.

Posters were also posted on RideOn Buses, as they have been in previous years. Local newspapers were also contacted and a press release prepared and distributed.

### **Demographics and Information about Attending Youth**

Based on exit surveys collected, we estimate that over 853 youth participated. This estimate is based on the number (853) of actual registration forms that were completed by youth and collected from youth leaving the event. Due to a reasonable margin of error in collecting 100% of these surveys, we estimate that more than 853 youth attended.

The following demographic information was distilled from information specifically provided by youth registering at the event. Not all attendees filled out the surveys; therefore, the data below provides representative information about the youth attending this event.

- Gender
  - Males=53%
  - Females=46%
  - Did not indicate=1%
  
- Education
  - High School Students=65%
  - College Students=10%
  - Out of School Youth=1%
  - Did not indicate=24%
  
- Age (the vast majority of attendees were between the ages of 15 and 21 years, with 75% between 16 and 19 years of age.)
  - 11-14=2%
  - 15= 5%
  - 16=14%
  - 17=28%
  - 18=22%
  - 19= 11%
  - 20= 9%
  - 21= 3%
  - Over 21=4%
  - Did not indicate=2%
  
- Home Addresses
  - Silver Spring=44%
  - Gaithersburg=4.5%
  - Germantown=2%
  - Rockville= 7.8%
  - Bethesda, Olney, Potomac = 5.2%
  - Washington, DC= 9%
  - Upper Marlboro= 6.5%
  - Laurel= 8%
  - Capitol Heights= 4%
  - Clinton= 4%

- Bowie= 5%
- How did you hear about the Job Fair
  - Teacher/Counselor/School=3%
  - Family/Friend/Coworker=4%
  - Internet=1%
  - Newspaper=1%
  - Flyers=1%
  - MMYC=1%
  - Ride On=1%
  - Radio Station=1%
  - Recreation Centers=1%
  - Other organizations=1%
  - Other=1%
  - Did not indicate=84%

Representative comments from the surveys youth completed regarding the job fair included:

- This event was wonderful! There should be more of these events!
- It was very organized
- It was great!
- I loved it!!!
- It was a good learning experience.
- Look forward to the next one.
- This is a great thing to do. I just say thank you for this opportunity.
- I love this job fair. I think it's really good for teens to get a job.
- Job fair needs to be held more often. I really enjoyed being here.

### **Employer/Resource Organization Outreach**

The MMYC staff focused recruitment on employers that would hire youth ages 16-21. In addition to the employers, we reached out to organizations that could provide information of interest to youth. A total of 200 employers/resource organizations were contacted through the outreach efforts of the Job Fair Consultant, who also managed the planning of the event. Out of these contacts, a total of 56 employment/resource sites confirmed attendance. The day of the fair, 45 employers/resource organizations attended. Some of the reasons given by the confirmed participants that did not show up included:

- Insufficient staff
- Conflicting engagements
- Miscommunication within employers' - staff travel plans changed

### **Employer Follow-up**

Each participating employer was provided a form that requested them to list the names of youth they interviewed, were scheduled to interview or hired that day. For employers who did not complete the form, LAYC/MMYC staff followed up via phone calls/emails with employers asking these questions.

The chart below lists the employers and the results. The “Engaged” column represents the number of interactions with youth each employer had the day of the event. The “Hired” column represents the number of youth that each company reported hiring as of the end of April 2011.

	<b>Company/ Org</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Hiring</b>	<b>Engaged</b>	<b>Offered Job</b>	<b>Hired</b>
1	Aeropastale	Retail	Resource	100	5	5
2	Aflac	Sales	PT	100	2	2
3	American Pool Inc.	Summer	Contract	170		
4	Baja Fresh	Customer Service	FT/PT/Seasonal	150	6	6
5	Community Pool Service	Summer	PT/FT	175	3	3
6	Copper Canyon Grill	Customer Service	PT	100	2	2
7	Eggspectation	Retail	Resource	125	1	1
8	Giant Food	Customer Service	PT	50	5	5
				150		
9	Hunter Cleaning		FT/PT/ Seasonal			
10	MC Dept. of Recreation	Government				
11	Music and Arts		Resource	75	1	1
12	National Park Service		Resource	75		
13	Old Navy	Retail	FT	250	1	1
14	Payless Shoes	Retail	PT/FT	75	3	3
15	Peer2Peer Tutors	Education	Resource	100		
16	Pre-Paid Legal	Sales	FT			
17	Regal Majestic Stadium	Customer Service	PT	100		
18	Starbucks	Customer Service	FT/ PT	70	1	1
			FT/PT/Intern/	140		
19	T.G.I Friday's	Customer Service	Volunteer		10	10
			FT/PT/Intern/	70		3
20	The Fit Solution		Volunteer		10	
21	The Limited	Retail	FT/PT			7
22	TW Perry		PT/ Seasonal			
23	Unipark Valet	Service Hospitality	PT/FT	150	6	6
24	Adventist Health Care	Education				
25	GapBuster Learning Center	Non-Profit	FT/PT/Seasonal	75		
	National Electrical			100		
26	Apprenticeship	Industry Training	FT			
27	R&D Computers	Industry Training	FT	150		
	Peace in the Valley Baptist			140		
28	Church	Skin Care	FT			
	Columbian Center for					
29	Advocacy and Outreach	Education				
30	Job Corps	Retail	PT/ Seasonal	175		
31	Adventist Healthcare	Non-Profit	Resource	150		
32	Maryland Physicians Care	Recreation	FT/PT/ Seasonal	300		
33	TAYA		Volunteers/ Interns	100		
	Washington Sanitary					
34	Commission					
35	Marriot Foundation		PT	100		
36	Music and Arts		PT/ Intern	100	2	2
37	New Genesis	Workforce Development	Internship/Seasonal	100		
				75		
38	Ghandi Brigade		Resource			
39	US ARMY	Government Agency				
40	LAYC Silver Spring	Non-Profit				

41	LAYC Langley Park	Non-Profit			
42	LAYC Riverdale	Non-Profit			
43	Montgomery Works				
44	Colonial Life				
45	Carol's Daughter				
			6905	58	48

**Total 45 Employers**

Despite a poor economy, the job fair helped 48 youth obtain jobs and exposed many more youth to job preparation and potential employers. Many employers reported that they would be hiring youth from the job fair until June and into the summer.

**Representative comments from the surveys employers completed regarding the job fair included:**

- Everything went well, sooo many interviews! –Copper Canyon Grill
- We personally thought the event was a success. The staff were very friendly and knowledgeable of what was going on- Giant Food
- This was our first time at this job fair and we found it to be a wonderful success- Maryland Physicians Care
- Very well run event- Peer2Peer Tutors
- Great experience. We cannot wait to participate next year.- Old Navy
- It was a wonderful turnout. I had over 100 people express interest in our company. – American Pool
- The fair was great. A wonderful turnout! - Columbian Center for Advocacy and Outreach
- It was an outstanding job fair and organization- Baja Fresh Mexican Grill

Overall, employers expressed extremely positive opinions regarding the job fair. They commented on the professionalism of the LAYC/MMYC staff and the high quality of customer service on the part of the volunteers. Many employers also wanted to be included in future events of this kind. A number of employers expressed an interest in working directly with the LAYC/MMYC in filling positions that become available within their companies in the future.

**The Job Fair Event**

The Job Fair consultant was extremely vital to the success of the event. The consultant provided daily calls (beyond consultant hours) to confirm employer attendance, kept the employers engaged, recruited youth, planned the event and logistics and provided post-event follow-up for the final report. Full-time staff provided support but relied on the consultant to manage the daily planning and organization of the job fair. The consultant’s work began in November 2010 and ended in April 2011.

The day of the event was a nice day of spring with warm temperatures. The event ran from 10:00am to 2:00 pm.

A continental breakfast and lunch (and water throughout the day) was provided to all volunteers and employers. We were able to use one additional room as a main operational headquarter for the day.

Registration tables were set up at each “entrance” of the gym so that youth entering would complete registration forms. At the exit doors for the job fair, staff/volunteers were able to stop many youth and ask them to fill out a survey with their comments about the event.

The event also included a visit from County Executive Ike Leggett. For their ongoing support of the County Youth Job Fair, the Collaboration Council received special recognition. Donated giveaways for employers included water bottles and pens.

### **Challenges**

- Eleven employers did not show up the day of the event despite confirming. This resulted in a few empty tables that could have been filled by other employers or resource organizations. Based on past years’ experience, intensive follow-up with employers was a priority prior to the event; however, 11 employers still did not show or call. Staff made three calls to each employer to ensure attendance. One suggestion for future fairs would be to have an employer orientation where all staff can meet the representatives attending the fair.
- Follow up with employers is challenging. Often, numerous contacts are required to obtain final data on actual job hires and retention rates.