Our Path Forward: Exploring How CBOs Partner with Underrepresented Youth to Support Their Post-Secondary Decision-Making

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YES
YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES

Agenda

I. Introductions

II. The Problem

III. Youth Enrichment Services (YES)

IV. Mentor Model

V. Example: Youth Civic Leadership Academy (YCLA)

VI. Discussion

Introductions

Dr. Sinex: Director of Research and Program Strategy at Youth Enrichment Services (YES)
- **Research**
  - Program Evaluation: what works, what can be improved, who are our youth/what do they want? What do they need? Inc. scholarly footprint
- **Program Strategy**
  - How can we make our programs run more efficiently and effectively? How can we increase staff capacity to better serve our youth?
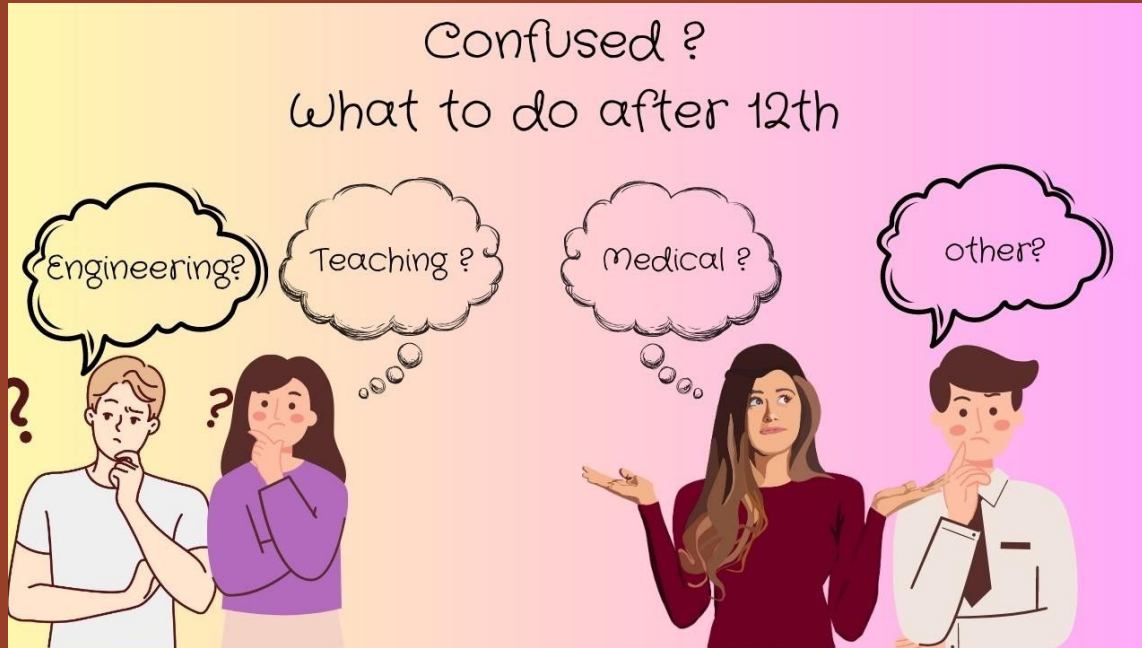
Who are you?
- **CBOs?**
- **Higher Education?**
- **Parents/families of youth?**
- **Employers?**
- **Researchers?**
- **Counselors?**
- **Student Advocates?**
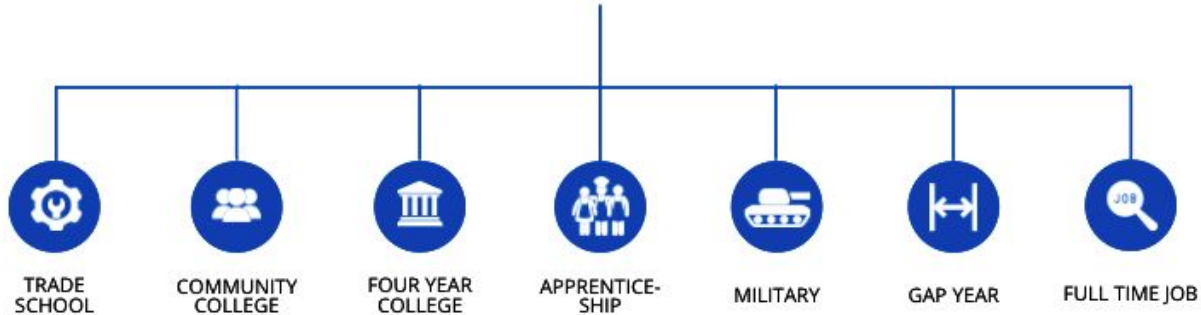- **Elementary/Middle/High School Leadership?**

Introduction

Introduction

THE BIG PICTURE
WHAT'S AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

TRADE SCHOOL · COMMUNITY COLLEGE · FOUR YEAR COLLEGE · APPRENTICE-SHIP · MILITARY · GAP YEAR · FULL TIME JOB

Post-secondary Enrollment and Achievement

1,742
Started high school in 2011

1,227
Graduated in 2015

70.4% 4 year cohort graduation rate

883
Enrolled in college or trade school in 2015

72% post-secondary enrollment rate for those that graduated

393
Completed college or trade school in 2021

23% of 2011 freshmen completed college or trade school within 6 years

1,349
Unsure of outcome

77% of 2011 9th graders

16%

of Black PPS Students Graduate from College between 4 - 6 years

42%

of White PPS Students Graduate from College between 4 - 6 years

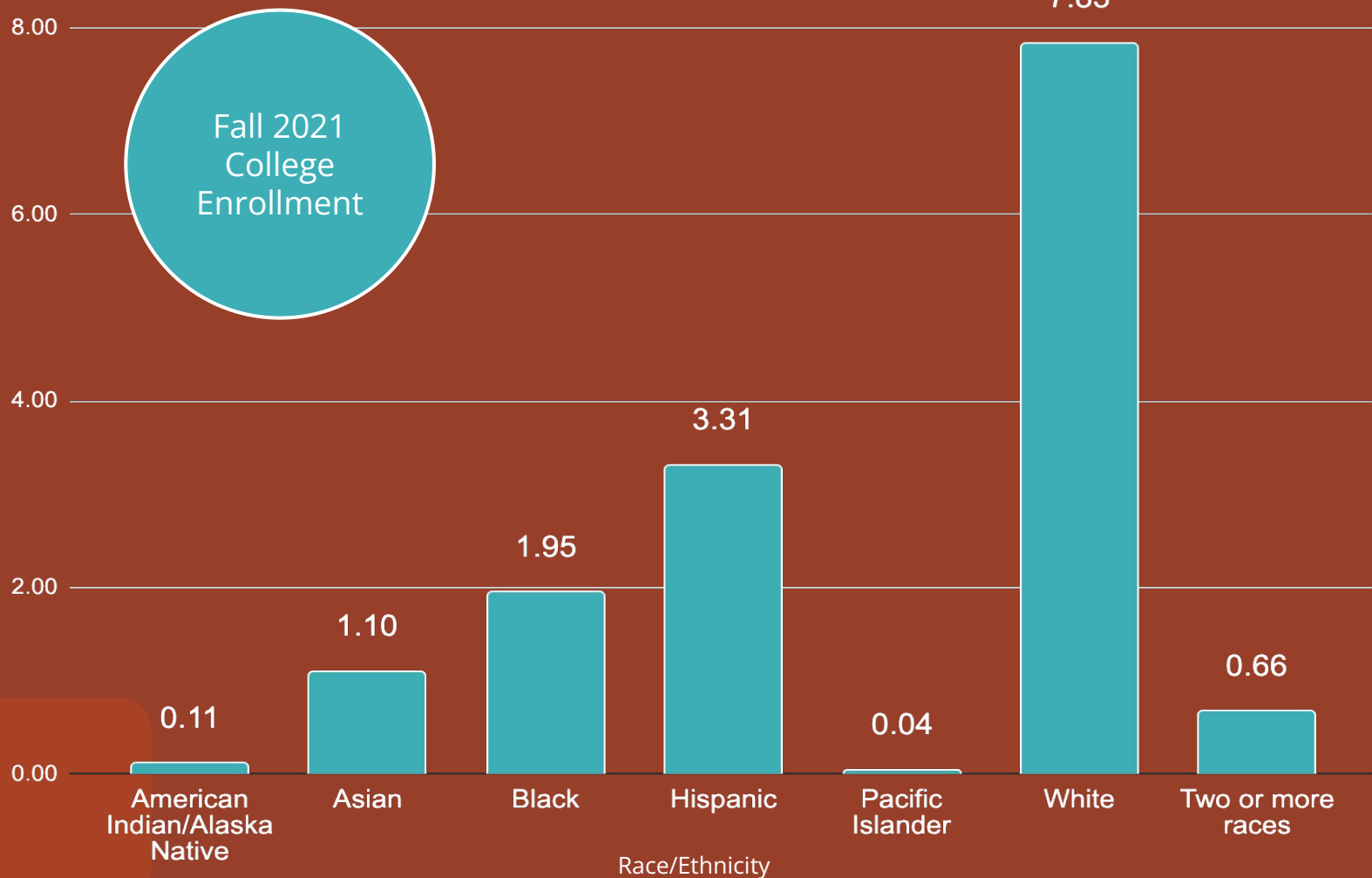Higher levels of education → Better health outcomes

The Post-Secondary Challenge

Enrollment, in millions

Fall 2021 College Enrollment

Race/Ethnicity	Enrollment
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.11
Asian	1.10
Black	1.95
Hispanic	3.31
Pacific Islander	0.04
White	7.83
Two or more races	0.66

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2011, Spring 2020, and Spring 2022, Fall Enrollment component. See Digest of Education Statistics 2022, table 306.10.

Low-income, first-generation students were **4 times** more likely to leave higher education after the first year than students who had neither of these risk factors.

Six years later, **43%** of low-income, first-generation students had left college without earning their degrees.

After six years, only **11%** of low-income, first-generation students had earned bachelor's degrees compared to **55%** of their more advantaged peers.

(Engle & Vinto, 2008)
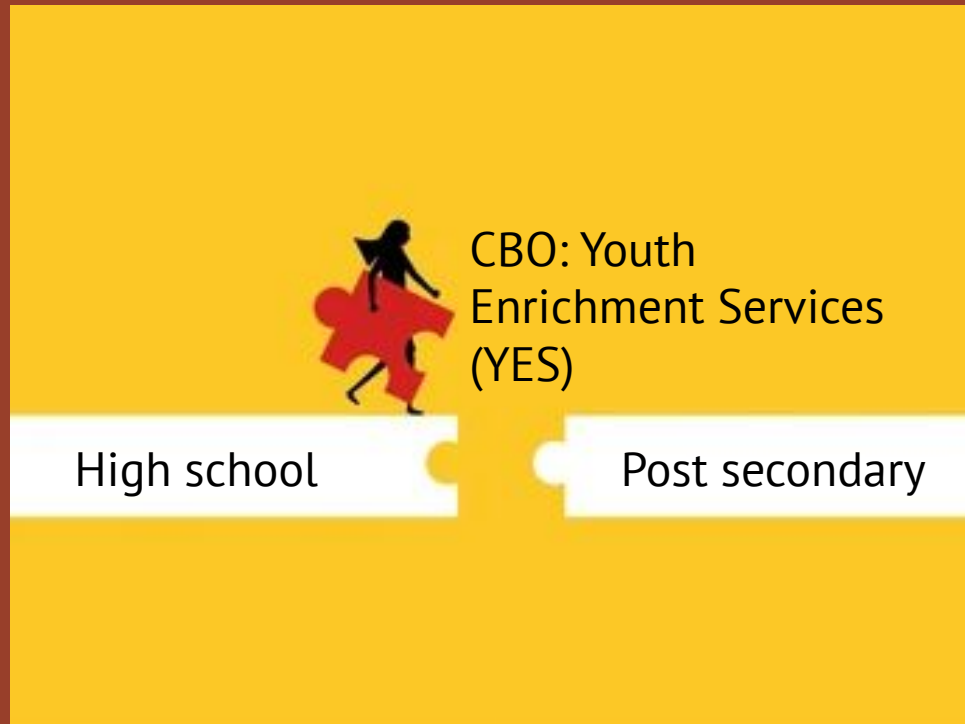
One Solution: Out-of-School-Time Learning

- One mechanism to support challenges highlighted within school context is out-of-school-time
- Research shows that OST spaces can be transformative for young people's holistic development and post-secondary futures

CBO's bridging the gap

Youth Enrichment Services

- Established in 1994

- Pittsburgh, PA

- Currently serving ~600 youth and families

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Neighborhoods

Mission

To provide socially and economically at-risk youth the opportunity to achieve success through participation in mentorship, education, and enrichment programs.

Vision

To empower communities to become their own best resource.

Ethos

Everyone matters – there are no throw-away kids

30 Years of Service

Youth Served Through Programs	5,500+
Youth Wages & Stipends	$2 Million
Diversion Service Savings	$1.5 Million
Returning Students	75+
Workforce Post Graduation	25%
Post Secondary Education	75%

Partnerships with 10 Colleges & Universities (Pitt, CMU, WVU, UMich, CCAC, etc.)

YES YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES

Recent Successes

Research, 2024	17 conferences, presentations, workshops
Collective Impact Violence Prevention Partnership, (since 2024)	65+ Organizations
Community Schools Lead (2024)	Arsenal Schools
College Credits (since 2022)	85 Youth
Budding Partnerships	6 +
Recent Awarded Grants (since 2024)	Approx. 10

And so much more!!

YES Programming Domains

Diversion and Restorative Practices

Pre adjudication mentoring and monitoring detention alternative program

Mentoring and Wellness Programming

Safe, gender-inclusive space to develop positive peer relationships, prioritize wellbeing and wellness

Summer Programming

Provides academic enrichment, work experience, and social cultural opportunities

School Year Workforce and Academic Programming

Tutoring, College and Career Preparation

Violence Prevention Programming: Teen Councils, Summits, FFISH, CIVPP, and many more!

MENTORSHIP APPROACHES

Peer to Peer
One-to-one mentoring between two high school peers.

Staff to Staff
Veteran staff and leadership mentoring incoming personnel.

Near-Peer to Peer
One-to-one mentoring between college-aged peers supporting younger students.

Staff to Family
Staff mentoring families by helping them access resources, navigate challenges, and gain financial literacy.

MENTORING

Staff to Student
Group mentoring or one-to-one mentoring that occurs between staff and enrolled students.

Example Program: Youth Civic Leadership Academy (YCLA)

- An ACADEMY designed to help youth access, explore, and experience industries within local government that are typically deemed inaccessible for youth of color

- An opportunity for youth to earn college credits and financial resources by engaging in experiential learning, civic-related programming, and solution-driven research

- A unique experience to support the governmental initiatives and work of Pittsburgh's Mayor Ed Gainey

Benefits (to name a few)

- Paid experience
- Career Based Learning
- Industry exposure
- Civically-oriented
- Access to college credits
- Research Experience

Program Partners

Office of the Mayor

Youth Enrichment Services

Partner4Work

Community College of AC

Heinz History Center

Multi-institutional Partnerships

- Why are partnerships important? Why are multi-institutional partnerships important?

- How can they be leveraged to support our youth?

- There are multiple access points necessary for successful programming: funding, opportunities, "clout", community/student relationships, shared goal/drive

- **Goal in a partnership**
  - Creating something better and more dynamic than one could do on their own
  - Contributing expertise aligned with one's "wheelhouse"

- Ex: Human body functionality
  - Each part has a specific purpose, generally one part can't replace another, and lacking a part can lead to decrease in function

Partner Contributions

- Office of the Mayor: **the brain**

- Youth Enrichment Services: **the musculoskeletal system**

- Partner 4 Work: **cardiovascular system**

- CCAC: **nervous system**

- Heinz History Center: **integumentary system**

Questions? Discussion

- Other examples of CBO programs that:
  - Help bridge the gap for youth in transitioning from high school to post secondary options?
  - Provide long-term mentoring for youth? (recruitment AND retention)

- What are ways that CBOs can continue to help bridge gaps identified by other stakeholders (parents, elementary/middle/high school representatives, post-secondary representatives?

- What are actionable next steps/connections can be made to continue to support our youth?