



PRESS RELEASE

PEPNet Accreditation Recognizes High Quality Youth Workforce and Education Organizations

Contact: Mala Thakur, Executive Director, NYEC, Tel. 202-659-1064, mt@nyec.org

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Eight youth-serving organizations have recently received recognition through the National Youth Employment Coalition Promising and Effective Practices (NYEC PEPNet) Accreditation Pilot. The pilot, conducted over the past 16 months with support from the William Penn Foundation and registration fees from pilot sites, sought to identify successful practices, foster a culture of continuous improvement, and continue to implement a national system of quality standards for youth organizations.

Twelve organizations participated in the 16-month NYEC PEPNet Accreditation Pilot, the core component of which involved completing a comprehensive organizational self-assessment and continuous improvement process. Of the organizations that applied for accreditation during the pilot, the following have received NYEC PEPNet Accreditation, valid for three years:

- [Arizona Call-A-Teen Youth Resources, Inc.](#) (Phoenix, AZ)
- [Jobs for Youth/Chicago](#) (Chicago, IL)
- [Our Piece of the Pie](#) (Hartford, CT)
- [The Work Group's New Jersey Youth Corps Program](#) (Pennsauken, NJ)

NYEC PEPNet Accredited organizations demonstrate a high level of quality in a range of criteria related to organizational management, program design and delivery, youth development, workforce development, and a focus on youth outcomes. These organizations show an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, documentation of activities that achieve superior results, and a thorough understanding of the services and supports youth need to develop and succeed.

The following programs received Provisional NYEC PEPNet Accreditation during the pilot:

- [EducationWorks](#) (Philadelphia, PA)
- [Hire Up – a program of Larkin Street Youth Services](#) (San Francisco, CA)
- [Los Angeles Conservation Corps](#) (Los Angeles, CA)
- [Simon Youth Foundation/Pacers Academy High School](#) (Indianapolis, IN)

Provisionally accredited organizations demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and quality practice. All provisionally accredited organizations have been invited to work on meeting recommendations identified in the Quality Review process and apply for full Accreditation within two years.

The NYEC PEPNet Accreditation Pilot is based on the PEPNet Quality Standards for Youth Programs and includes an application and a site visit by a Quality Review Team of experts from the field. An NYEC PEPNet Pilot Accreditation Commission made final determinations on all accreditation applications during the process.

The pilot process emerged from conversations with leaders operating youth programs and youth-serving systems seeking to improve youth program quality, foster an organizational and nationwide culture of continuous improvement, and provide a platform for identifying and sharing quality practices from a set of nationally recognized and rigorously assessed organizations. “The pilot process is the first critical step in developing and implementing a permanent and ongoing PEPNet quality improvement and accreditation process,” says NYEC Executive Director Mala B. Thakur. “We hope PEPNet Accreditation will come to represent a seal of excellence in youth programming.”

“Now, more than ever, with a slowing economy, a lack of well-trained, qualified workers, and an alarmingly low high school completion rate, youth programs and youth-serving systems need to ensure that our nation’s young people are adequately prepared to meet ever-changing labor market demands and successfully transition into adulthood,” states Ms. Thakur.

Since 1995, NYEC’s PEPNet, the Promising and Effective Practices Network, has been one of the premier resources for enhancing the quality of programs that link young people (ages 12 to 25) to work and education to promote a successful transition to adulthood. The NYEC PEPNet Accreditation designates organizations of exceptional quality that represent quality practice and provide resources for others in the field nationally and internationally. To achieve NYEC PEPNet Accreditation, youth organizations must meet the NYEC PEPNet Quality Standards and have a history and support system indicating a high quality program that can be sustained into the foreseeable future.

The National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC), a nonprofit national membership network based in Washington, DC, improves the effectiveness of organizations that seek to help youth become productive citizens. Toward this end, NYEC sets and promotes quality standards; tracks, crafts and influences policy; provides and supports professional development; and builds the capacity of youth-serving organizations and programs. To learn more about NYEC visit www.nyec.org.