

What do you do with a 14-year-old when school lets out for the summer? They are too young for most employers to hire and their parents don't want them just hanging out at home – potentially unsupervised. Having been challenged by this dilemma, MassHire Greater Brockton Workforce Board developed the WAVE (Work, Achieve, Volunteer, Education) program in 2012 for 14- & 15-year olds in our community.



MassHireGBWB's WAVE program is designed to provide young people ages 14 and 15 with an opportunity to self-reflect, learn what volunteerism is, why it's important, and to give to back to their community while learning the foundational skills needed to be successful in today's workplace. A cohort of twenty-eight low-income youth are recruited for the program through an

online application, along with four Youth Leaders to act as program organizers. The Youth Leaders are selected through an interview process and, prior to the start of the program, are trained by MassHireGBWB in the areas of leadership, workshop/program facilitation, supervision, and mandated reporting.



The program highlights targeted community needs such as homelessness, city beautification, and community engagement and development, with the option to research, plan and implement two youth-led activities. The 8-week program focuses on implementing and developing projects in three targeted community service-learning areas. The young people enrolled in the program receive an introduction to the topic and research the issue, plan for the activity, and then the implementation phase with youth participating in the service-learning activities. Completing the program is the reflections on the service and the development of presentation materials.

The areas of past focus include;



- Working with School on Wheels, an agency that works with homeless children, sorting and preparing book bags and school supplies
- Learning about the Veterans and the history of Veterans and their memorials in Brockton



- Designing, preparing and developing a garden for the Brockton Public Library.

Prior to the graduation opportunity to reflect on the importance, the service-career pathways they MassHireGBWB maintains during the course of the year placement for the following

ceremony, the youth have an topics of community learning activities and the discovered. contact with these youth and they receive priority year's YouthWorks program.