

Improved Outreach Increases the Potential of Bristol Youth

The MassHire Bristol Workforce Board (MHBWB) recently engaged in a concerted effort to increase youth awareness of the many valuable education, career development and training opportunities available within the region's workforce development system. This initiative started with the board's Youth Committee (MHBYC) which included representation among local employers, educators, and community organizations. The committee, in setting strategic priorities for 2019-2020, decided that youth systems awareness was a critical factor in maximizing the impact of workforce development services and programming available to at-risk youth throughout the local area. Historically, some of the MHBWBs' youth programs have not been fully enrolled, and not because of a lack of need or demand.

Following the direction of the MHBYC, the MHBWB worked to develop a partnership that would ensure a strong youth voice in addressing this strategic priority. To that end, the MHBWB's Youth Systems Coordinator Nick Church presented the board's challenge to the Marketing II DECA class at B.M.C Durfee High School in Fall River. From this presentation and further research, the Marketing class, alongside instructor Irene Houle, created a MassHire Bristol Youth Marketing Plan that included a SWOT analysis, Objectives, Marketing Strategies, Implementation, and Evaluation and Control suggestions.

In addition, the MHBWB secured grant funding from Commonwealth Corporation to support a Summer YouthWorks Pilot program of 12 students aged 14-15. The purpose of this program was for the students to learn about marketing and to design the implementation phase of the MassHire Bristol Youth Marketing Plan. The program was delivered by instructors at B.M.C. Durfee High School and was coordinated by the MHBWB with support from the MassHire Fall River Career Center and its Youth Connection office.

During the marketing project work, Students studied the social media presence of various popular brands and discovered that all successful brands posted on social media weekly, if not daily. Along with learning about the marketing psychology of colors and why popular brands use certain images in their ads and logos, the students created a 30-day youth focused social media campaign centered on Bristol's MassHire youth services during 80 hours of project learning. Examples of some recommended posts included motivational quotes, Instagram TV success story interviews, work memes, current open positions (with urgent action required), pictures from an employer tour, and an Instagram poll.

Going forward, the marketing campaign will be supported by MassHire Workforce Board/Career Center Staff and students at local high schools who could use a real world application in their marketing studies. Long term goals include partnering with local schools in graphic design departments to create youth-tailored signage and flyers to be posted both online and physically around the community, and television/radio clubs to produce video and sound medium to later post on our social media platforms.

As Bristol's MassHire system moves forward in implementing a more concentrated outreach plan, it is the hope of The MassHire Bristol Workforce Board that all Youth within the region will have the information and skills needed to be successful in achieving their career goals.



This graphic, intended to be used on a social media post, was created by a student in the Marketing Pilot Program. The intent is to create a sense of urgency and to show that through MassHire, the start of gainful employment is just a click away.