MEDIA RELEASE

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Summer Jobs Program Relaunches to Expand Opportunities for Local Youth

Erie, PA — The Erie County Bright Futures Summer Jobs Program is relaunching this year with new enhancements designed to expand access, strengthen skill development, and connect more young people with meaningful employment opportunities across Erie County.

The program provides local youth with paid work experience, hands-on learning, and exposure to a variety of career paths. Through partnerships with area employers, participants gain practical skills, build confidence, and develop a stronger foundation for future success in the workforce.

The Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) was chosen through a competitive grant process to implement the program, recognizing its experience and capacity to deliver results for the last 10 years. The Erie County Bright Future Summer Jobs Program is a collaborative effort among the Erie County Government, the Erie County Gaming and Revenue Authority, and GECAC.

This year's revamped program includes expanded employer partnerships, increased participant capacity, and a renewed focus on career readiness. Youth will not only gain work experience, but also develop essential skills such as communication, teamwork, and responsibility, all critical to long-term success.

"Our youth throughout Erie County need employment opportunities that provide career-focused mentorship, build confidence, and open doors to promising career pathways," said Dr. Ben Wilson, CEO of GECAC. "The Bright Futures Summer Jobs Program brings all of these elements together, giving youth the tools and confidence to move forward."

More

The program is expected to serve more than 150 youth this summer, partnering with approximately 50 local employers across industries such as healthcare, retail, manufacturing, and hospitality. Participants will earn wages while gaining valuable real-world experience that can shape their career goals and future pathways. Local employers can participate by offering supportive work environments where young people can learn and grow while receiving additional workforce support during the summer months.

“This program is not only an investment in young people, but it is an investment in career exploration and our future workforce,” said Brandon Mendoza, President & CEO, Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership. “Employers are encouraged to get involved and support the program’s mission of creating bright futures for our local youth.”

Youth aged 14-21 and employers are invited to take part in the Bright Futures Summer Jobs Program. Those interested in applying or partnering can find more information and get started by visiting www.gecac.org.

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PROGRAM FACT SHEET

Program Name:
Erie County Bright Futures Summer Jobs Program

Purpose:
To provide youth with paid work experience and career exploration opportunities.

Who It Serves:
Erie County Youth ages 14-21
Local Employers

What Participants Gain:
- Paid work experience
- Job readiness skills
- Career exposure
- Mentorship opportunities

Employer Benefits:
- Paid workforce support
- Opportunity to mentor youth
- Build a future talent pipeline

Youth Work Dates:
June-August 2026 (180 hours total)

Youth Salary:
$12.50/hour

Funding:
Erie County Government
Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership

Program Lead:
Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC)