

# Jobs program survives economic downturn

Teens and young adults find work at local agencies, businesses

BY LAYLA FARMER  
THE CHRONICLE

More than 250 local youth, ages 15-24 found gainful employment this summer, courtesy of a long-running program designed to give them real world experience and expose them to a variety of professions.

Sponsors of the program have changed several times during the program's more than two decades of existence, and funding sources and facilitating agencies have varied from year to year, but the gist of the Summer Youth Employment Program has remained largely the same.

Youths who meet the income requirements of the program — which is designed to provide opportunities for families in lower income brackets — receive job readiness training and, then are placed at work sites in the public and private sector. They work a maximum of 20 hours per week, and their wages are paid not by the companies themselves, but by an exterior funding source provided by program sponsors. In recent years, the City of Winston-Salem has helped the program procure funding for this purpose.

"Hopefully, some of these young people will have done such a grand job that if there is funding available at their workplace, then hopefully they will get picked up (as permanent employees)," said Deltra Bonner, the employment program's coordinator, "or at least they'll have experience on their resumes to share with their next employers."

This year's youth employment program was supported by stimulus funding from the federal government's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Because it is backed by the federal government, the income requirements and age restrictions are a little different from that of previous years, Bonner explained. More than 800 applied for the program this year, but many were eliminated because of the more stringent income guidelines put forth by the government, she said.

Bonner says the program is



Summer workers Jontille Haney, Martin Rabb and Paris Wagner.

Right: Bryant McCorkle with Jaci Bradley.

beneficial for both the companies/agencies and the young workers.

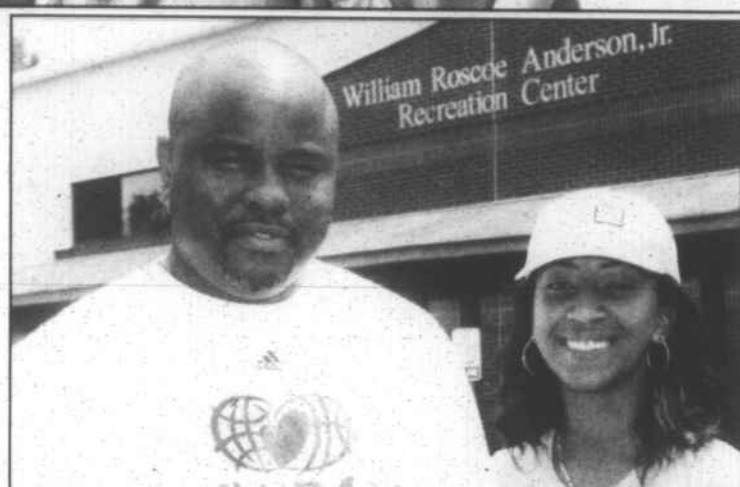
"A lot of companies are struggling because of financial concerns," she said, noting that many small businesses are being forced to work with smaller staffs just to stay afloat. "...These young people can come in and do the job (at no cost to the company)."

Youths are working at roughly 80 local sites this summer, everywhere from the City of Winston-Salem and the Forsyth County Public Library system to the Darryl Hunt Project for Freedom and Justice and the Institute for Dismantling Racism.

Goodwill Industries on Waughtown Street had three teen participants from the program this year. Among them was 17-year-old Jontille Haney, a rising senior at Mt. Tabor High School. She praised the program for offering her something new and different this summer.

"I didn't want to just sit around the house all summer," she said. "I wanted to get out and experience more."

The interaction she's had with



members of the community through working at Goodwill has been a learning experience for her, said Haney, an aspiring nurse.

"It'll help me become a better person, understanding people more, and not just judging people by the way they look, but actually getting to know them," she said.

The William Roscoe Anderson Jr. Recreation Center, formerly Reynolds Park Rec, also took on a team of youth this year.

Jaci Bradley, a rising senior at Parkland IB Magnet High School, grew up participating in programs at the center. She has returned several times as a counselor through the Summer Youth Employment Program.

"I thought it was pretty cool to get a job in a program I used to

be in," commented Bradley, 17, an avid basketball player and a member of Parkland's Lady Mustangs team. "I enjoy the job on a day to day basis; I can come up here and shoot (hoops) and still do my job."

Center Director Bryant McCorkle says he knows first hand the importance of initiatives like the Summer Youth Employment Program. He participated in a similar program as a teen.

"It helped me a lot," he said of his own participation. "My first job was as a counselor in a camp, and I found out right then, at 16 years-old, that that was my calling."

The Summer Youth Employment Program will culminate Aug. 21.

## Vaccines

from page A4

dren should be vaccinated, there are exceptions, and some children have special conditions, such as HIV or cancer, that prevent them from following a routine vaccine schedule. Your child's pediatrician should be aware of any existing medical conditions.

Always make sure you keep your child's immunization records up-to-date and keep their immunization card with you in case of emergency.

It is common for children to have a low fever and some swelling in the area of the injection in the 24 hours following a vaccine. If your child has more serious adverse reactions (for example: convulsions, fever higher than 105 degrees, difficulty breathing) after receiving a vaccine, inform your doctor immediately.

Germs and other disease-causing agents, like bacteria, can spread very quickly in school settings. Assuring your children have all their vaccinations on time can help keep them and our communities healthy.

- Contribution by Sarah Langdon, MPH, CHES

Do you need further information or have questions or comments about this article? Please call toll-free 1-877-530-1824. Or, for more information about the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity, please visit our website: <http://www.wfubmc.edu/minorityhealth>.

## SHS

from page A4

students to have friends who smoke and to frequent or live in locations where smoking occurs, according to the study. Similarly, students who binge drink were more likely than other students to report exposure to SHS, likely reflective of the co-occurrence of smoking and drinking among college students.

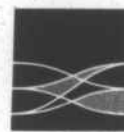
Other factors that appeared to be associated with increased exposure to SHS included living in residence locations where smoking is allowed or locations associated with smoking, such as Greek houses and off-campus housing, being female, of white race, having parents with higher education levels and attending a public versus private school.

Nearly all nonsmokers (93.9 percent) and the majority of smokers (57.8 percent) reported that SHS was somewhat or very annoying.

"We were really shocked to see that 83 percent of students reported at least some exposure during the previous week," Wolfson said. "That said, we don't know if the exposure was at a nuisance level or at a level that might influence health. Either way, knowing what we know about SHS, lowering the rates of smoking is definitely something we should be seriously looking at on college campuses."



Wolfson



**WACHOVIA**  
A Wells Fargo Company



With you when your savings keep up with you

You're always on the move. At Wachovia, we're with you when you want to keep on top of your finances without interrupting your flow. We'll review your ever-changing financial situation and help you find the tools you need to stay in control. Together, we'll select the right Wachovia products and services so your finances can keep pace with your life. Put your financial goals in motion today. Stop by, call 1-800-WACHOVIA (1-800-922-4684) or visit [wachovia.com](http://wachovia.com).