

# **Toward the Development of the NWT Youth Corp Program – Background Research.**

Final Draft Report

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Prepared for: Community Development Division  
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Government of the NWT, Yellowknife, NWT

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## **Executive Summary**

The GNWT Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has prime responsibility for youth and is leading the development of a NWT Youth Corp. Lutra Associates Ltd. was contracted to conduct research to give direction to the development of specific guidelines for the Corp. It is expected that the Corp will *“help our youth become healthy, educated people with the experiences and mentoring examples to make responsible personal choices. ... The Youth Corp will be designed to improve the outlook and opportunities for young people by providing support and leadership for an extended period. Activities in the Youth Corps will include work assignments, volunteer and community contribution assignments and skills improvement.”*<sup>1</sup>

This research explored two volunteer programs, six service-learning programs and two employment and training programs in Canada, the United States and New Zealand. These three types of programs share common practices that are confirmed in the literature and by program representatives, as critical to the success of the program and participants. These practices are:

- Strong youth program leadership and co-ordination,
- A balance of program structure and flexibility,
- Meaningful youth experiences, recognition and linkages to tangible outcomes,
- Linked to a network of youth development opportunities,
- Partnerships with government, public sector and community organizations,
- Thorough screening to determine readiness to participate,
- Well-planned orientation, debriefing and follow-up/post-program support, and
- Program continuity and long-term presence in the community.

It is appropriate to draw from the experiences of other youth programs to design the NWT Youth Corp. It is suggested that the NWT Youth Corp

### **Target:**

Non-mainstream, at-risk and out-of-school NWT youth 15-25 years of age.

### **Objective:**

Improve the outlook and opportunities for NWT youth to become healthy, educated people in a manner that contributes to the capacity, safety, and sustainability of NWT communities.

### **Components:**

A multi-faceted year-round and summer NWT Youth Corp program that attends to best youth program practices is suggested. The NWT Youth Corp would involve: 1) recruitment and active support to skilled youth leaders; 2) a structured and varied program of outdoor/cultural/environmental, educational, work, life and personal growth experiences that challenge, engage, reward and recognize youth; 3) annual regional orientations and debriefing of youth participants; 5) an optional component implemented

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<sup>1</sup> from the GNWT Department of Finance 2002 Budget Address

outside of the youths' home community; and 5) an optional component implemented outside the NWT and/or Canada. The NWT Youth Corp might operate as a graduated program that requires volunteer activity, service-learning and paid employment.

**Infrastructure and Costs:**

The GNWT will invest \$1 million in a Youth Corp and provide support and leadership for an extended period. This commitment may be translated into the establishment of six-regional teams of youth leaders (e.g. 12 youth leaders) who receive extensive and ongoing support and training; basic project-specific expenses based on participation; and the development/adoption of program support materials including operations manuals.

**Other Considerations:**

The design of the NWT Youth Corp program could also include:

- a long-term (five to ten year) plan,
- consideration for the establishment of non-profit organization to implement the Youth Corp,
- plans for territory-wide initiatives that demonstrate and celebrate the valuable contributions that youth make,
- collaboration with the agencies requiring mandated community service,
- longitudinal monitoring of youth participants,
- sufficient implementation time and resources, and
- realistic promotion of the benefits of the program.

The report provides extensive profiles of the following programs:

1. Youth Volunteer Corps of Canada (YVCC)
2. Volunteer Youth in the Millennium (VYM)
3. Generation V
4. Ghost River Rediscovery Program –Youth Leadership Program YLP
5. AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)
6. YouthBuild
7. New Zealand Youth Service Corp (YSC)
8. Katimavik
9. Youth Employment Strategy (YES)
10. Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corp (NSYCC)

## 1. Introduction

The GNWT Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) has responsibility for youth. MACA discharges this responsibility through governance, volunteer development, sport and recreation, community services and community capacity building activities that develop safe, sustainable and healthy environments for youth and other community residents. MACA works with other agencies that serve NWT youth, for example NWT Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), and Human Resource Development Canada (HRDC). It is also an active player in the Canadian Rural Partnership (CRP), a federal-territorial consortium of government agencies. The Partnership has identified youth issues as a priority.

In the 2002 Budget Address, the GNWT announced that \$1 million would be invested in the development and implementation of a NWT Youth Corp. The NWT Youth Corp will *“help our youth become healthy, educated people with the experiences and mentoring examples to make responsible personal choices. ... The Youth Corp will be designed to improve the outlook and opportunities for young people by providing support and leadership for an extended period. Activities in the Youth Corps will include work assignments, volunteer and community contribution assignments and skills improvement.”*<sup>1</sup> With prime responsibility for youth, MACA is leading the development of the NWT Youth Corp.

To assist in the development of the NWT Youth Corp, MACA contracted with Lutra Associates Ltd. of Yellowknife to research similar programs elsewhere in Canada and potentially in other countries. The research will give direction for the development of specific guidelines for the NWT Youth Corp. Lutra was asked to identify and summarize:

- program names and the mandate and goals of various youth corps programs,
- the contents/outline of each program,
- program statistics including participant numbers, success rates, costs and other related outcomes and outputs,
- program evaluations and future intentions if available, and
- program contact information (name, phone, e-mail).

This document reports on the findings from the research.

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<sup>1</sup> from the GNWT Department of Finance 2002 Budget Address

## **2. The Context for Youth Programs in the NWT**

Youth is the stage of life between childhood and adulthood. Youth are persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age, although different agencies may extend this definition to include persons up to 29 years of age. Youth make up 15% (or about 6,500 people) of the NWT population. The distribution of youth is similar to the population as a whole,

- 41% live in Yellowknife.
- 18% live in Beaufort-Delta communities and a similar percentage live in South Slave communities.
- 8% live in Dogrib communities.
- 7% live in Sahtu communities and a similar percentage live in Deh Cho communities.

The socio-economic circumstances of NWT youth were documented prior to the creation of the new Northwest Territories and Nunavut Territory.<sup>1</sup> Many of these characteristics hold true today.

- NWT youth understand the importance of education but most continue to leave high school before graduation. In the NWT, only 40% of NWT youth are likely to graduate from high school compared to about 80% elsewhere in Canada. While improving, high school completion rates are significantly lower among northern Aboriginal students. There are a host of inter-related personal, family, community and school-related reasons that youth do not complete high school.<sup>2</sup> Motivation and interest are key factors that impact on early school leaving.
- Unemployment among NWT youth is almost double the NWT rate, 26% compared to 14%. Lack of skills to access and keep the few jobs that are available are among the reasons for high youth unemployment. Other reasons include not knowing where to look for a job, lack of confidence to participate in an interview, and overcoming age/youth stereotypes. NWT youth have difficulty keeping jobs and the reasons for this are remarkably similar those encountered in school – getting up in the morning, getting along with employers/co-workers and finding child-care.
- Many NWT youth live high-risk lifestyles or are subject to risk provoking environments. Substance abuse, conflict with the law, teen pregnancy and poor emotional, physical and/or mental health are some of the circumstances that put youth at risk and undermine motivation, interest, success and well-being.

The circumstances of NWT youth impact on the successes they have making transitions

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<sup>1</sup> Lutra Associates Ltd. October 1996. **Securing Our Future: A Planning Framework for Supporting NWT Youth.** Department of Education, Culture and Employment. (Currently, the NWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment is undertaking a youth in transition study. This study will update the circumstances of NWT youth.)

<sup>2</sup> Lutra Associates Ltd. 1992. **Lessons for All: Factors Contributing to Early School Leaving in the Northwest Territories.** Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, NWT Directorate and NWT Department of Education

from school to school, school to work, and from dependent to independent living, to name a few. Lack of success moving from one stage of life or from one experience to another is a significant concern for northern communities, employers, governments, families and youth themselves. Without the tools to cope with change, the potential of youth remains untapped and youth themselves and society as a whole are poorer for it.

NWT youth want and need:<sup>3</sup>

- more academic, career and personal guidance and support,
- stronger role models, clearer expectations and help from parents/communities,
- student summer employment programs such as the Student Summer Employment Program and work experience programs like Youth Service Canada in order to get the skills they need to get and keep a good job,
- access to organized, ongoing and greater variety of sport and recreation programs,
- access to supports and services they can trust and understand, and
- Involvement in solutions to the issues that impact on their wellness and happiness.

Throughout the NWT and elsewhere in Canada, government, non-profit and business organizations lead or sponsor a variety of programs and services aimed at youth. Many of these are listed in the **Youth Programs and Services Guide, 2001**<sup>4</sup> or in **Youth Link Fourth Edition: Work Experience/Summer Jobs, Learning Opportunities, Career Planning Information**.<sup>5</sup> The common intent of these programs is to engage youth. Secondly, youth programming seeks to accomplish a host of other purposes that are generally tied to the mandate of the sponsoring organization and/or respond to broader societal trends such as:

- a diminishing role of government in responding to the social needs of citizens,
- more privatization of community and social services,
- stronger global influence on business, governance and service decisions,
- less citizen involvement and sense of community,
- persistent poverty and marginalization of significant segments of society,
- greater difficulty sustaining social solutions,<sup>6</sup> and
- increasing demands on volunteers at the same time that volunteerism is decreasing and becoming limited to a small and aging segment of Canadian society.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> **Securing Our Future: A Planning Framework for Supporting NWT Youth**

<sup>4</sup> prepared by the GNWT Department of Municipal and Community Affairs in association with the Canadian Rural Partnership

<sup>5</sup> Human Resources Development Canada, 2000

<sup>6</sup> Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. 1999. **The Draft NWT Volunteer Strategy – Summary of Workshop Discussions**. June 9-10, 1999.

<sup>7</sup> The **National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating** found that volunteerism in Canada declined by 13% between 1997 and 2000. Despite the adoption of mandatory community services in some high school education systems, the rate of volunteering among youth ages 15-24 declined from 33% in 1997 to 29% in 2000. The survey also found that only 7% of Canadians contribute almost three-quarters of all volunteer effort. Most of these volunteers are older, university educated, higher income, parents and actively religious.

### 3. Best Youth Program Practices

This research explored ten youth initiatives in Canada, the United States (US) and New Zealand. Youth programs generally follow one of three models or combine elements of each model.

2. **Volunteer programs** engage youth as service providers, problem solvers and active participants in their communities. Youth give freely of themselves without any financial compensation.
3. **Service-learning programs** (also known as citizenship programs) engage youth in values-based experiences that enrich personal growth; gives life, work and skill development exposure; and offer a small financial payment or other reward such as a bursary or other form of educational support.<sup>8</sup>
4. **Training and employment programs** engage youth in wage earning, skill development and workplace exposure opportunities.

Within these program models, there may be some element of mandated community service, productive choice and/or workfare. There may also be some priority to out-of-mainstream youth, visible minorities, First Nations and Inuit youth, youth with disability, or youth without high school education.

Of the ten youth programs investigated in this research, two are volunteer programs, six are service-learning programs and two are employment and training programs. Regardless of the model used, these programs all share some common practices that are confirmed in the literature and by program representatives as critical to the success of both the program and individual participants. (Table 1) These practices are as follows.

#### Leadership and Co-ordination

Regardless of the type, nature or setting of the youth program, the strength of the individual(s) leading and/or co-ordinating the youth program is the single most important factor contributing to successful youth experiences. Youth program leaders or co-ordinators are:

- unique individuals who are distinguished by their caring and respectful relationships with youth; their willingness and ability to mentor and role model; and their flexibility to respond to particular needs.
- young adults, likely in their 20s, with first hand experience of how and what makes youth programs work. Youth program leaders/co-ordinators likely have a history of successful participation in a youth program. Sustained contact with adults provides youth with the structure and motivation to do well.

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<sup>8</sup> Service-learning has many definitions. Most commonly, it is understood as meaningful service to others, one's community and to society while engaging in some form of reflection or study that is related to the service. Within an educational context, the notion is built on the belief that education must be linked to social responsibility. That is, the most effective learning is active and connected to experience in some meaningful way. A representative of the Points of Light Foundation, which builds skills and capacity among US non-profit and community organizations, describes service-learning as service or volunteering plus learning of skills and attitudes that are defined prior to the experience and are reflected upon and assessed as part of the service experience.



Youth program leaders tend to be more successful in their work with youth if they are:

- connected to youth in the community.
- visibly supported by community members and organizations.
- regularly given opportunities for personal growth and respite to help them to cope with the challenges they face.
- have clearly stated guidelines, standards and codes of conduct to follow (e.g. an operations manual).

#### Balance of Structure and Flexibility

Successful youth programs are well-planned and have a clear focus. They provide structure but are sufficiently flexible to allow youth to make choices and mould the programs to meet their own needs and those that they identify in their communities. Flexible programs that youth can mould and shape engender ownership and commitment. A youth committee or council that guides program design and implementation is often the best way to facilitate youth ownership and commitment.

#### Meaningful Experiences and Recognition

Successful youth programs offer meaningful experiences that enable youth to reflect on their contributions and gain recognition from peers, leaders and the community for the contributions they have made. Successful programs take interactive approaches to recognizing and providing positive and constructive feedback to help youth discover their skills, strengths and the value of their participation. Successful youth programs have a transparent link between contributions/successful program completion and outcomes (e.g. employment, further education, personal development).

#### Part of a Program Network

Successful youth programs recognize that not all youth benefit from the same activities or experiences. Successful youth programs are part of a network of youth development opportunities. Successful programs engage youth in a mix of self-discovery/ personal growth, cultural, recreational, educational, skill development and work experiences. Successful youth programs incorporate a host of activities that take place in many different environments, involve a variety of players, use a range of methods/techniques and tools, provide appropriate personal supports and seek several outcomes.

#### Partnerships

No successful youth program operates in isolation. Partnerships are a main feature of successful youth programs. These programs draw from the resources and commitment of a variety of public, community and/or private sector organizations. Most youth programs operate as non-profit, non-government organizations in order to improve access to a wide range of public, community and/or private sector resources and infrastructure.

#### Readiness

Successful programs involve youth who are ready or want to participate. Successful programs screen youth to gauge their readiness. Screening also helps to determine the

role that a mandated requirement plays in participation (e.g. community service required by high school, the courts or income support). Screening is a tool to assist in participant selection and ensure a safe environment for all participants. Screening provides a foundation for participant orientation and for building on the strengths and interests of each youth.

### Orientation, Debriefing and Follow-Up

Successful youth programs invest in orientation for youth participants and staff to encourage sharing of expectations. Successful youth programs encourage and assist youth to reflect on their experiences and to carry these outcomes forward into future endeavours. Follow-up with participants after they leave the program ensures that youth are able to continue to build on their successes.

### Continuity

The most successful youth programs grow from continuity and long-term presence in the community. Youth programs that are discontinued after a short period of time send the message that youth and their contributions are unimportant.

Promising and Effective Practices Network (PepNet), a US based working group of practitioners, policy makers and researchers identifies six criteria for assessing effective youth development initiatives. These criteria relate to:

1. caring, knowledgeable adults who nurture sustainable relationships with youth,
2. building responsibility and leadership by engaging youth in their own, development and encourage them to have high expectations,
3. tailoring program experiences to provide individual focus and age/stage appropriate outlook,
4. positive family and peer relationships and support,
5. supportive services and opportunities that go beyond education and training, and
6. building a sense of identity and self as well as a sense of belonging and being part of a group.<sup>9</sup>

Human Resource Development Canada has also examined various youth program models and concluded that:<sup>10</sup>

- Traditional approaches (e.g. formal education) to developing human resources may be rejected by youth because the rewards are too remote or youth have not observed successes as a result of educational achievement. Youth are attracted to programs that provide tangible or direct linkages to stable, well-paid employment.
- **Job search assistance programs** are relatively inexpensive to operate and are cost-effective. These programs may accelerate the process of finding a job but do not increase the earnings of participants or guarantee long-term successes in the labour force.

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<sup>9</sup> PEPNet is a project of the National Youth Employment Coalition, 1836 Jefferson Place, NW, Washington, DC 20036 Tel: (202) 659-1064 Fax: (202) 659-0399 [www.nyec.org/pepnet](http://www.nyec.org/pepnet)

<sup>10</sup> Human Resources Development Canada, 1997. Effectiveness of Employment-Related Programs for Youth-Lessons from Past Experiences

- **Work experience or job creation programs** in Canada and the US show no long-term improvement in employability or earnings. Many countries are abandoning this approach to youth programming as it has become clear that youth don't want just any job. They want meaningful work in economic sectors that are experiencing growth.
- **Wage subsidy programs** pay employers to hire members of a particular target group. These programs increase the probability that disadvantaged people will be hired to fill available jobs. These programs do not increase the number of jobs available so it is likely that these jobs come at a cost to other groups.
- **Training programs** are most effective when they are combined with work experience and paid employment programs. It is difficult to assess the benefits of these programs because benefits take a long time to materialize.
- **Back to school programs** have recently provided vouchers to encourage youth to pursue further education. This approach has proven effective for low-income youth and those receiving income support.

#### Other Best Practices

Program Principles: First Nations youth want:

**Love:** to know that program staff truly care about them and want them to succeed. They want program staff to empower them and believe in them.

**Joy:** program staff to be optimistic, find the good in all situations, be happy when youth succeed and encouraging when youth fail.

**Peace:** program staff role models who build people up and support them.

**Patience:** program staff to work with them at their pace.

**Kindness:** to be treated with respect and avoiding words that tear down an individual.

**Goodness:** program staff to focus on the positive and minimize the negative, their responsibility and their decision and future.

**Faithfulness:** trusting relationships and promises that are fulfilled.

**Gentleness:** program staff to be gentle with their feelings and approach to life.

**Self-Control:** program staff that have it all together and are able to handle any situation.

Program Design should be culturally relevant to, and empower First Nations youth. They should:

**Describe the target group**, the number and results. Results should be measurable and relevant to youth and to their communities.

**Holistic approaches** that enable youth to explore and grow ..... *"Treat me as I am and that's just where I will stay. Treat me as if I were what I could be and that's what I'll become."*

**Freedom to choose** what to participate in and how.

**Program ownership** of project design, input into decisions and input into the finished product.

**Spirituality** recognized and respected as part of youth programs that enable youth to search for what is right for them, what defines them as a persons and steps necessary to make their purpose a reality.

**Client-centred** approaches to empower youth to share their goals in a non-intrusive atmosphere.

**Life-skills and self-awareness** to give the foundation for living ... *"it is the tool kit with a lifetime guarantee."*

From the Grand River Employment and Training (GREAT) Six Nations of the Grand River, reported in Best Practices of the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres

**Table 1: Overview of Youth Program Models**

Scope, Name & Type	Target & Objective	Main Activities	Costs & Benefits	Success Factors
<p><i>National-Canada</i></p> <p><b>Youth Volunteer Corps of Canada (YVCC)</b></p> <p><i>Volunteer</i></p>	<p>Youth 11-18 years</p> <p>Develop and actively engage youth in volunteer service opportunities to promote the value/benefits of volunteerism</p>	<p>Year-round and summer components for 10-15 member project teams each with 2-3 leaders, working on community or non-profit needs identified by youth</p>	<p>No labour costs at project level. Project costs covered by youth fund-raising.</p> <p><u>Benefits:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Linkages to curriculum</li> <li>-Youth empowerment</li> <li>-Youth led civil action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Trained, team leaders</li> <li>-Ongoing leaders training</li> <li>-Team approach</li> <li>-Intensive design</li> <li>-Variety of approaches</li> <li>-Flexible design</li> </ul>
<p><i>Provincial- Ontario</i></p> <p><b>Volunteer Youth in the Millennium (VYM)</b></p> <p>(3-Year Pilot Project)</p> <p><i>Volunteer</i></p>	<p>Youth 15-30 years – 60% in school and 40% out-of-school</p> <p>Encourage youth to engage in volunteer experience both as a means of fostering caring communities and improving school-to-work transitions through career exploration and preparation</p>	<p>Project Coordinator identifies volunteer opportunities and liaises with community agencies. Project Coordinator pre-screens, refers, places, assists, monitors and supports youth volunteers</p>	<p>Cost-shared, \$50,000 for a Volunteer Coordinator plus project specific costs</p> <p><u>Benefits:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Valuable support to referral agencies and mandated community service needs</li> <li>-Stronger connections between youth-serving agencies, the community and youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Skilled coordinators</li> <li>-Holistic support infrastructure</li> <li>-Cooperative/supportive community non-profits</li> <li>-Extensive operations manual</li> <li>-Recognition of uniqueness of youth volunteers</li> <li>-Builds on youth strengths and interests</li> <li>-Personal contact and support</li> <li>-Individual and group placement</li> </ul>
<p><i>National-Canada</i></p> <p><b>Generation V</b></p> <p>(18 month Pilot Project)</p> <p><i>Service-Learning</i></p>	<p>Youth 15-30 years age with special emphasis on youth facing barriers to volunteering</p> <p>Through youth leaders enhance the capacity of non-profit agencies to engage youth volunteers</p>	<p>Four youth volunteer manager interns in each of six host sites for 18 months to undertake extensive volunteer management audits, create youth oriented volunteer programs, and recruit, manage and mentor youth volunteers</p>	<p>Estimated cost per site \$70,000 - \$80,000. Intern stipend set at \$15,000.</p> <p><u>Benefits:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Trained, nationally certified youth volunteer managers</li> <li>-Strategies for developing and implementing youth-friendly volunteer programs</li> <li>-More youth involved in community services and having positive volunteer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Run by youth for youth</li> <li>-Team approach</li> <li>-Good peer support</li> <li>-Well-structured and focused</li> <li>-Orientation and training</li> <li>-Professional development</li> <li>Focus and certification</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Overview of Youth Program Models can't**

<b>Scope, Name &amp; Type</b>	<b>Target &amp; Objective</b>	<b>Main Activities</b>	<b>Costs &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>Success Factors</b>
Provincial- Alberta & International  <b>Ghost River Rediscovery Program –Youth Leadership Program (YLP)</b>  <b>Service-Learning</b>	Youth 18-25 years, primarily First Nations  Provide leadership opportunities to develop young leaders in the field of cultural outdoor education within the context of indigenous cultures and the natural world	Cultural experiences, career development and personal growth through intensive programming at a three-month wilderness camp near Banff and three months working in a remote community in Guyana, South America	Three-month domestic program for 12 participants is estimated at \$85,000-\$100,000. Youth paid stipend equivalent to minimum wage. Youth fund raising <u>Benefits:</u> -Youth acquire leadership skills and self-confidence -Youth rediscover their strengths and interests	-Partnerships -Participant selection/orientation -Cultural and nature-based -Interaction with elders/peers -Inter-cultural sharing/discovery -Variety of experiences -Public debriefing/promotion -Follow-up counselling -Volunteer training -Peer support relationships
National-United States  <b>AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)</b>  <b>Service-Learning</b>	Youth 18-24 years  Renew ethic of civic responsibility and call young people to serve in programs that benefit the nation and improve their life chances	10-12 month residential program-based in a central location working in teams on community-based environment, education, public safety, disaster relief, and other types of projects	Cost per participant is estimated at \$20,000 (US).  <u>Benefits:</u> -Heightened sense of community and citizenship -Opportunities for poor and marginalized -Individual growth	-Community-based projects -Team-based -National support network -Political support to grow community/national service -Lengthy orientation -Participant benefits/rewards -Participant recognition -Meaningful contribution
National-United States  <b>YouthBuild</b>  <b>Service-Learning</b>	Youth 16-24 years unemployed or out-of-school  Support young people to assume leadership in rebuilding their communities and leading responsible lives	12-month YouthBuild project cycle offers construction skills training, a personalized high school program, leadership training and personal development. Participants spend alternate weeks on the job site and in a school program.	Estimated project cost in excess of \$363,600. Per participant average cost \$7,623  <u>Benefits:</u> -More youth with high school and higher level education -More youth with jobs -Positive experiences for adjudicated students, and those convicted of felony	-Centralized program materials/framework -Gov't-non-government support infrastructure -Program variety -Participant benefits/rewards -Youth recognition -Meaningful contributions -Participant policy committee -Personalized programs -Peer support -Mentoring -Graduate/post-program follow-up

**Table 1: Overview of Youth Program Models** con't

<b>Scope, Name &amp; Type</b>	<b>Target &amp; Objective</b>	<b>Main Activities</b>	<b>Costs &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>Success Factors</b>
<p><i>National – New Zealand</i></p> <p><b>New Zealand Youth Service Corp (YSC)</b></p> <p><b>Service-Learning</b></p>	<p>Youth 16-20 years and clients of the Dept. of Work and Income</p> <p>Develop young people through involvement in community projects, education and recreational activities</p>	<p>50% of 20-week projects are people-oriented community projects; 25% are challenging recreation; and 25% are certified educational activities. Maori cultural teaching is part of each component. Each project includes a work experience placement</p>	<p>Approximately \$42,000 (NZ) per 10-member project. Training allowances are about \$200 per eligible participant.</p> <p><u>Benefits:</u>                      -Youth understanding of community and self                      -69% of participants in school/employed 6 months after program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Experienced full-time leader</li> <li>-Challenging program</li> <li>-Mix of program elements</li> <li>-Cultural theme throughout</li> <li>-Meaningful contributions</li> </ul>
<p><i>National – Canada</i></p> <p><b>Katimavik</b></p> <p><b>Service-Learning</b></p>	<p>Youth 17-21 years</p> <p>Develop youth personally, socially and professionally through community service and building an understanding of Canada</p>	<p>12 member inter-provincial/territorial teams with project leader living and studying co-operatively and working in communities in three Canadian regions over a seven month period</p>	<p>Project co-ordination and project-specific costs, and participant completion bursary</p> <p><u>Benefits:</u>                      -Employable youth                      -Certified leaders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Project leadership</li> <li>-Orientation</li> <li>-Standards of behaviour</li> <li>-Peer interaction</li> <li>-Program variety</li> <li>-Collective approaches</li> <li>-Networking</li> </ul>
<p><i>National-Canada</i></p> <p><b>Youth Employment Strategy (YES)</b></p> <p><b>Employment &amp; Service Learning</b></p>	<p>Youth 15-30years</p> <p>Help Canadian youth make the transition into the labour market</p>	<p>Internships, service-learning opportunities, co-operative education and work experience programs in a variety of community workplaces and sectors</p>	<p>Non-taxable stipend for interns, completion bonuses plus project costs. Taxable wages for employed youth plus project costs. Per YSC participant cost is \$8,277</p> <p><u>Benefits:</u>                      -Youth able to participate in the work force</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Partnerships</li> <li>-Dedicated, committed and skilled supervisors/leaders</li> <li>-Project infrastructure</li> <li>-Youth ownership of programs</li> <li>-Manageable, planned focused projects</li> <li>-Meaningful projects</li> <li>-Hands-on experience</li> </ul>
<p><i>Provincial-Nova Scotia</i></p> <p><b>Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corp (NSYCC) Regular Summer Program</b></p> <p><b>Employment</b></p>	<p>Youth 17-24 years</p> <p>Provide youth with training and employment opportunities while providing services for the enhancement of the local environment</p>	<p>Work experience, personal growth, and sustainable benefits from summer environmental projects</p>	<p>Annual program costs estimated at \$130,000 for 53 youth.</p> <p><u>Benefits:</u>                      -More environmental knowledge and awareness                      -Impact on career, education and lifestyles decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-NSYCC administrative support</li> <li>-Progressive/graduated focus</li> <li>-Project supervision</li> <li>-Payment to learn/acquire skills</li> <li>-Orientation and debriefing</li> <li>-Participant selection</li> </ul>

## **5. Program Framework for the NWT Youth Corp**

The design of the NWT Youth Corp the GNWT to take a series of decisions about the program target, objectives, activities, investment and several other considerations related to the delivery of the program. It is appropriate to draw from the experiences of other youth programs for the design of the NWT Youth Corp (Table 1 and Chapter 5). Based on these experiences, the following framework is suggested for the NWT Youth Corp.

### **Target:**

A fundamental question in the design of the NWT Youth Corp is *who does the GNWT wish to target?* Supplemental to this is the question of whether to offer broad coverage or direct this initiative at people who need it the most.

There is no one definition of 'youth'. Youth may be persons as young as 10 or 11 and as old as 29 or 30 years of age. Most commonly, youth programs target persons in their mid-teens to mid-twenties (e.g. 15-25 years). A more narrow definition of youth that limits the age-spread assists programs to avoid potential inter-generational conflict that could occur for example between persons 11 and 29 years of age. Further, persons 15-25 years of age are more likely than older or younger persons to be making decisions and/or transitions related to school, work and personal relationships, lifestyle and living arrangements. As such, it is this age group who are most likely to be impacted by and receive the greatest benefit from youth programming. This is corroborated by current research.<sup>1</sup>

Many youth programs target non-mainstream, at-risk and out-of-school youth. By targeting these disadvantaged youth, programs endeavour to level the playing field among all youth. Targeted youth programs provide supports and opportunities to persons who need them the most and who otherwise don't have access to the benefits these programs provide.

The NWT Youth Corp should target non-mainstream, at-risk and out-of-school youth 15-25 years of age.

### **Objective:**

*What does the GNWT wish to achieve through the NWT Youth Corp?* The 2002 Budget Address indicates that the objectives of the NWT Youth Corp will be:

1. to improve the outlook and opportunities for young people, and
2. to help youth to become healthy, educated people who are able to make responsible personal choices.

Similar objectives are inherent in many of the youth programs investigated.

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<sup>1</sup> Preliminary results from the current NWT Youth in Transition study indicate that persons who are 20+ years of age do not readily identify themselves as youth nor do they share the same optimism and anticipation for the future as teenagers. Persons in their late 20s have likely gone through a number of transitions and may be reluctant to make further changes, especially if they have been unsuccessful in the past. Persons in their late 20s may require different types of programs.

The objectives of youth programs usually reflect the mandate of the sponsoring organization. The objective of the Volunteer Youth in the Millennium (VYM) program in Ontario (described in Table 1 and Chapter 5) offers a good example for MACA to reflect its mandate in the objectives of the NWT Youth Corp. Building on this example, the objective of the NWT Youth Corp could be to develop human capacity and safe, sustainable communities in a manner that improves the outlook and opportunities for NWT youth to become healthy, educated people.

**Program Components:**

*What activities and components are needed to achieve these objectives?* The GNWT envisions that the NWT Youth Corps will include work, volunteer and community contribution assignments and skills improvement. It also envisions the Corp providing support and leadership to youth for an extended period.

The GNWT's vision for the NWT Youth Corp recognizes that youth have a wide range of needs that no single intervention can be expected to address. A multi-faceted approach is favoured by many youth initiatives. For example, the Volunteer Youth in the Millennium (VYM) program advocates a graduated program where youth can begin with a volunteer experience then move to job trial, pre-employment and employment opportunities. The New Zealand Youth Service Corp (YSC) is structured in a way that each project will offer people-oriented community projects, challenging recreation, certified education activities, and work experience placement. The YouthBuild program in the US is an educational, work and personal support program. The HRDC Youth Employment Strategy is a multi-faceted initiative that provides internships, service-learning opportunities, co-operative education, information and work experience programs.

A multi-faceted approach together with attention to best youth program practices would indicate that the NWT Youth Corp might incorporate the following components.

1. Recruit and actively support skilled youth leaders to mobilize, lead and mentor youth teams in processes of self-discovery and meaningful ways of contributing to and participating in their communities. VYM, Youth Volunteer Corps of Canada (YVCC), New Zealand YSC, YouthBuild, Ghost River Rediscovery Program – Youth Leadership Program (YLP) and HRDC Youth Employment Strategy programs offer good examples of how this can/should be done.
2. Annual regional orientations and debriefing of youth participants to provide the basis for building attachment/connection and ownership to program activities as well as a platform for ongoing reflection and discovery. Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corp (NSYCC), YLP, YouthBuild, and Katimavik offer good examples of how this can/should be done.
3. Support and assist youth leaders to implement a structured and varied program of outdoor/cultural/environmental, educational, work, life and personal growth experiences that challenge, engage, reward and recognize youth. New Zealand



YSC, YLP, NSYCC, and Katimavik offer good examples of how this can/should be done.

4. As an optional component, MACA staff in conjunction with youth leaders might to implement specific program component that take place outside of the youths' home community (e.g. project exchanges, or regional or territorial components). AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) and Katimavik offer good examples of how this can/should be done.
5. As an optional component, MACA staff in conjunction with youth leaders might to affiliate with a national or international youth organization that offers experiences outside the NWT and/or Canada. YLP and NSYCC offer good examples of how this can/should be done.

The NWT Youth Corp might offer year-round and summer components. It may operate as a graduated program that requires each participant to engage in volunteer activity that involves no financial compensation, service learning that result in a stipend for example \$200/week similar to the Youth Service Canada model in the NWT, and some minimum wage earning opportunities.

#### **Project Resources, Infrastructure and Costs:**

*What is the GNWT prepared to contribute to the NWT Youth Corp?* The GNWT will invest \$1 million in the development and implementation of a Youth Corp and provide support and leadership for an extended period. Based on the above program components, MACA could:

- establish six-regional teams of youth leaders (e.g. 12 youth leaders) and house them in organizations that offer networking opportunities and program supports such as regional non-profit agencies, career centres, community development offices, or divisional education board offices. The estimated cost is \$45,000 per position for a total of \$540,000/yr.
- provide extensive and ongoing support and training to youth leaders (e.g. \$8,000/yr x 12 = \$96,000). The Generation V, YVCC and Katimavik offer examples of how this can/should be done.
- provide for basic project-specific expenses based on participation (e.g. per participant costs).
- develop/adopt program manuals with guidelines, standards and code of conduct. The VYM Operations Manual is an excellent example.

#### **Other Considerations:**

*What other things should the GNWT consider in the design of the NWT Youth Corp Program?* The program models examined as part of this research point to a variety of other elements that should be considered in the design and implementation of a Youth Corp.

- YVCC and VYM are among the programs that point to the need for a long-term plan in order to successfully engage youth. A long-term (five to ten year) plan

will enable the NWT Youth Corp to retain youth leaders/coordinators and achieve program continuity. These two elements are critical to engaging youth.

- To improve access funding and a network of youth programs, engage partners/sponsors and provide a variety of youth experiences, youth programs are most often run by a non-profit rather than government organization. This may be a consideration for the NWT Youth Corp. VYM and NSYCC are good example of programs that have or are dealing with this challenge.
- Recognition is a major part of youth programs successes. The GNWT should plan to support NWT Youth Corp projects with territory-wide initiatives that demonstrate and celebrate the valuable contributions that youth make to their communities and society as a whole. Generation V, Katimavik, YouthBuild and VYM are examples of programs that are particularly conscientious about recognizing youth.
- Mandated community service is required by all NWT high schools, frequently ordered by NWT courts, and one way to access income support. Collaboration with the agencies requiring mandated community service would enable the Youth Corp to enhance learning and the benefits of this service. VYM, AmeriCorps NCCC and New Zealand YSC are among the programs that are dealing with the issue of mandated community service.
- Youth programs recognize that their successes should be assessed over the long-term (e.g. over the life of the individuals involved). For a variety of reasons this is not possible or practical. As a result more focus is often put on evaluating the success of the program rather than the individuals participating in it. YLP, Katimavik and YouthBuild are among the programs endeavouring to undertake longitudinal monitoring of youth participants.

HRDC reports that *“a good program design is not on its own any guarantee of success. It is important that sufficient time and resources be allocated to plan program implementation, to develop operational procedures, to train staff and to work out initial start-up problems prior to full implementation. Well-trained and motivated staff, effective program management and early and continuous monitoring of program implementation and operation are all crucial to program success.”*<sup>2</sup> Secondly, HRDC notes that *“even when programs produce positive results, their impacts are generally modest in size. In launching any initiative it is important not to oversell it.”*

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<sup>2</sup> HRDC, 1997.

## **5. Program Profiles**

### **5.1 Volunteer Programs**

Volunteer programs engage youth as service providers, problem solvers and active participants in their communities. Volunteers give freely of themselves without any financial compensation.

#### ***Program #1: Youth Volunteer Corps of Canada (YVCC) and the Youth Volunteer Corps of America (YVCA)***

Historically, service opportunities were randomly available through schools, churches and community organizations. To address the lack of consistent and organized service opportunities available to youth of all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, the Youth Volunteer Corps of America (YVCA) was formed in 1986. YVCA was formed under the sponsorship of the United Way and numerous public and private sources. In 1992, the YVCA became an independent non-profit organization. The Youth Volunteer Corps of Canada (YVCC) began in Calgary as an extension of the YVCA. In 1996, YVCC became an independent organization.

#### **Program Target:**

YVCC and YVCA have the same targets, youth aged 11-18. Some YVCC projects may include youth up to the age of 25. This age-range is not encouraged due to difficulties balancing interests, providing supervision and dealing with potential inter-generational conflict.

#### **Mandate/Goal:**

YVCA promotes civic responsibility through structured volunteer service that brings young people from diverse backgrounds together and actively involves them in community problem solving. YVCC develops and actively involves youth in volunteer service opportunities to promote the value of giving back to the community while gaining valuable skills and experiences.

#### **Program Sponsors/Partners:**

A variety of community-based, regional and national public, private and non-profit organizations are involved in YVCA and YVCC programs and projects. YVCC sponsors include the Kahanoff Foundation, Shell Canada and Enbridge Pipelines. Youth volunteers work with local non-profit and community organizations.

#### **Program Components:**

The YVCA programs usually have a summer and a year-round component.

1. **Summer Component:** Youth volunteer as team members and are supervised by trained young adult/adult team leaders. Projects are intensive in design and reinforce teamwork, appreciation for diversity and civic responsibility.
2. **School-Year Component:** YVCC staff work closely with teachers to design and implement age-appropriate service projects that link community services and the

school curriculum.

YVCC has four strategies for delivering youth volunteer opportunities.

1. **Sites:** YVCC partners with existing organizations able and willing to manage youth volunteer opportunities. With payment of an affiliation fee, host organizations receive ongoing training and support in program administration. The NWT Youth Corp run by Storefront for Voluntary Agencies in Yellowknife in the late 1990s is an example of an YVCC site program that at one point enlisted 120 youth volunteers.
2. **Regional:** YVCC hires a regional coordinator to recruit and support two or three adult volunteers to work as a team member to supervise and facilitate the work of 10-15 youth volunteers. Youth volunteers usually work from donated space in a local facility.
3. **Episodic:** YVCC directly supplies resources (\$300 grants based on youth volunteer project proposals) and supports to youth volunteers who wish to create volunteer service projects. YVCC provides support via a toll-free number.
4. **School-Based Programs:** YVCC provides resources and support for school organizations that incorporate youth volunteering into extra-curricular activities.

YVCC policy requires that trained team leaders are part of every volunteer project. A typical YVCC project has 10-15 participants and two (2) adult volunteers. Adult volunteers are recruited through non-profit organizations and other community venues. Adult volunteers must commit to two-five hours a week and participate in six-eight hours of training prior to placement as well as participate in supplemental training throughout their term. Team leaders provide leadership and guidance to facilitate youth decision-making and community action. They are responsible for project safety and are in charge of creating a fun atmosphere. They report to the YVCC Regional Coordinator and participate in evaluations and evaluation activities. Team leaders are 18 or more years of age, have experience working with youth, have demonstrated leadership and communication skills, and are non-judgmental, fun and flexible in volunteer hours. They have First Aid training and can work independently and with others.

All YVCC projects serve the community or existing non-profits and respond to needs that youth have identified.

#### **Program Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

The cost of running YVCC projects is low. The two main costs are: YVCC staff coordinators who engage and support non-profit sponsors and team leaders, and project-specific costs. Project specific costs are usually borne by the non-profit/community group being served. YVCC projects usually involve fund-raising by youth participants.

#### **Program Statistics:**

Since YVCC became independent from the Youth Volunteer Corps of America in 1996, 12 sites have been launched in Canada. In the last six years, the national YVCC budget has grown from \$300,000 to over \$3 million.

### **Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

YVCC projects place youth in the role of service provider to communities rather than a service recipient. Youth are empowered to make decisions, solve problems and become creators of meaningful and relevant projects. Youth are empowered by the positive contributions that they make in their communities. They have fun and meet new people.

YVCC is in transition. It is moving away from affiliate or site programs. Site programs require host organizations to have a high level of commitment and adequate resources to operate/support youth projects. Site programs may have expectations, a level of commitment and sense of ownership that differs from that of youth volunteers. Different agendas can create conflict and/or change the scope/nature of youth volunteer projects and the quality of the volunteer experience. For example, the YVCC project at Storefront for Voluntary Agencies in Yellowknife in the late 1990s created issues for the organization related to identity and image (e.g. the youth focus became a dominant part of the organization's image). YVCC plans to continue to work with affiliate organizations through direct service delivery (e.g. a YVCC adult volunteer coordinator will recruit other adults to oversee the youth volunteer project.)

### **Comments and Program Issues:**

YVCC is one of a small number of national programs that work with youth as young as 11 years of age. Boys and Girls Clubs, YW/YMCAs and 4-H Clubs are others.

YVCC is a volunteer program. No wage, stipend or honoraria is paid to team leaders or youth volunteers. YVCC follows a philosophy of flexible programs that are intensive in design. The design is intended to empower youth. YVCC programs are as valuable to youth, particularly younger ones, as those that recognize youth through financial compensation/ rewards.

YVCC notes that youth programming is "*all about engaging youth.*" The most successful programs go beyond the employment focus to seek a balance between volunteerism and employment benefits. Service-learning approaches are excellent for older youth as they combine the best attributes of volunteerism with some financial reward which older youth need/want.

YVCC offers the following tips for successful youth programs:

- Youth react when programming is inconsistent. YVCC advises, "*the NWT government should be solidly committed to long-term programming and engage committed and solid staff.*" YVCC notes that youth become attached to staff and inconsistencies can be construed as undervaluing youth contributions, or as "*playing around with the youth, their ideas and their program.*"
- Involve youth in setting up the NWT Youth Corp - "*it is their program and they should be involved from the get-go. Set-up an Youth Advisory Council to oversee it.*"
- Treat youth as valuable and valued service providers.
- Pay attention to youth and recognize that efforts have to be constant and

consistent to get and keep youth engaged.

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**Program #2: Volunteer Youth in the Millennium (VYM)**

Volunteer Youth in the Millennium (VYM) is a three-year youth volunteerism initiative of the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres (OAYEC). OAYEC is a non-profit, charitable organization that provides supportive services to a network of more than 60 youth employment-counselling centres throughout Ontario.

OAYEC developed VYM as a result of the following observations:

- A need to revitalize the concept of volunteerism and grow a new generation of volunteers. Youth were the fastest growing demographic group between 1993 and 2000 but between 1997 and 2000, youth volunteers fell from 33% to 29%.
- A need to overcome barriers that limit youth volunteerism specifically, the limited capacity of the volunteer sector to attract and accommodate youth; lack of understanding and respect for volunteering by youth; incomplete support for volunteering in the education system; and poor understanding by youth-serving agencies of the benefits of youth volunteering.<sup>3</sup>
- A need to provide opportunities for youth to build skills, gain experience and obtain assistance to get employment, given persistently high youth unemployment.
- At-risk youth volunteer at less than half the rate of mainstream youth. The benefits of volunteering typically accrue to those who already have the skills and motivation to volunteer and to make their way in society.
- 'Mandated volunteering' has increased in every Canadian province in the form of court-ordered community service orders, workfare/productive choice, and community service as a requirement of high school graduation.

OAYEC had the infrastructure and resources in place to support a youth volunteer initiative. The organization created and implemented VYM programs in 10 selected OAYEC member centres. The VYM project operated from the Thunder Bay Centre was investigated as part of this research.

**Program Target:**

VYM projects target school youth (60%) and out-of school and other youth facing barriers (40%), which are between the ages 15-30. About 60% of the youth enrolled in

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<sup>3</sup> from the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP), 2000

the Thunder Bay VYM Project are considered at-risk. At this particular site, 40%-50% of clients have Aboriginal ancestry and about 60% are referrals from other agencies seeking court ordered community service work or qualification for income support. In-school youth seek volunteer placements to comply with mandated requirements for school.<sup>4</sup>

**Mandate/Goal:**

The goal of VYM is “*to encourage more young people to engage in volunteer experience, both as a means of fostering caring communities, and as a means of improving school-to-work transitions through career exploration and preparation.*” VYM expects to build community participation and life/career skills among youth participants, especially at-risk youth; increase the capacity among a range of institutions for youth engagement in volunteer activities; and develop innovative programming for OAYEC members through stronger community linkages within and between youth, youth-serving agencies, schools and funders.

**Program Sponsors/Partners:**

In addition to a seed grant from the Counselling Foundation of Canada, VYM Projects receive financial support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (e.g. the province’s gaming fund), Human Resources Development Canada, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and a variety of local agencies and organizations. OAYEC member centres house the VYM projects, provide in-house support and project infrastructure and networking opportunities. The Honourable Hilary M. Weston, former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario is the Honorary Patron of the VYM Project.

**Program Components:**

VYM Project staff are located in one of the 10 participating OAYEC youth employment centres.

The VYM Coordinator at the Thunder Bay Youth Employment Service (YES) describes the project as “*helping others to help themselves*”. The VYM Coordinator offers one-on-one screening (including reference and police records checks) and registration of youth to identify strengths and interests. Subsequently and through liaison with community non-profit agencies, three volunteer placements are identified based on strengths and interests. The Coordinator promotes the individual to potential agencies and facilitates an agency-volunteer interview. VYM participants have the opportunity to participate individually or as a group with a variety of local community groups. Following placement, the Volunteer Coordinator may participate in orientation and training sessions as well as provide ongoing support to the volunteer and the placement agency. The Coordinator notes that each of these steps can be time consuming, as many individuals have no experience participating in interviews or engaging in community activities. Further, many participants have a history of poor relationships with social agencies and may have difficulty developing trust relationships both with VYM as well as participating placement agencies. It is the skills of the Volunteer Coordinator that are critical to the success of volunteer-placement agency connections.

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<sup>4</sup>In Ontario, 40 hours of community service are required to graduate.

Each VYM Site Coordinator and VYM sponsoring agency supervisor works with an extensive OAYEC operations manual, a copy of which was provided for this research. OAYEC also publishes a best practices booklet.

**Program Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

The 10 OAYEC sites offering VYM projects have been able to integrate VYM into their regular operations at no/little additional cost. VYM Coordinators are well-supported by the 10-12 youth counseling staff employed at OAYEC centers.

The basic VYM program cost is about \$50,000 or the cost of a skilled volunteer coordinator. OAYEC funds each VYM project up to 50% of the total cost. Participating sites lever the remaining 50% from within the community they serve.

The VYM Coordinator in Thunder Bay suggests that youth volunteer projects focused at at-risk youth should plan for extra costs associated with transportation and recognition. *“At-risk youth are unlikely to have the resources and may be not even the motivation to get themselves to a placement.”* Further, funds that normally might be spent on advertising (e.g. posters, videos and booklets) to attract mainstream youth should be redirected to ensure personal contact. *“Reaching at-risk youth is about people connecting with people and establishing trust, it isn’t about flashy posters and videos because at-risk youth don’t see themselves in those pictures.”*

**Program Statistics:**

Over a three-year period, VYM is expected to:

- reach approximately 3,000 youth volunteers,
- generate more than 60,000 volunteer hours of service, and
- impact more than 250 voluntary sector organizations.

Half way through the three-year period, VYM had registered 1526 youth, placing nearly 1,000 in community service agencies and other volunteer-hosting entities. Of these youth, more than 44% are out of school/in-transition or youth at risk of leaving school. Nearly one in four of the youth placed through VYM are ‘at-risk’ (e.g. Aboriginal, disabled, new Canadians, visible minority) or referred through Job Connect (a subsidy program that pays employers 60% of the wage cost) or Ontario Works (income support).<sup>5</sup>

**Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

*“Like the Katimavik model, the main strength of VYM projects is directly related to the team or group leader.”* Volunteer Coordinators are key to raising awareness, recruiting community partners and youth, and building capacity. Youth in Thunder Bay are attracted to the VYM project at that site because the Volunteer Coordinator is connected to all segments of the community; is sensitive to the issues facing at-risk youth; and has the trust and respect of local youth. Volunteer coordination is a very demanding job that requires special skills and talents. An OAYEC representative says, *“it is possible to*

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<sup>5</sup> Johnson, H., C.A.C. International and Klar, C., Spark! Consulting. December 2001. **Volunteer Youth in the Millennium Final Report of the Operational Review and Mid-Term Performance Assessment.**



*develop management skills but Coordinators need to have passion, problem solving skills and motivation.*” Volunteer coordination support should come from the project rather than the program, as it is a more realistic way to connect, motivate and engage youth. In Ontario, there is an Association of Volunteer Coordinators and this Association is a valuable source of peer support.

VYM representatives say that the success of youth volunteer programs also hinges on recognizing that youth and adult volunteerism are fundamentally different– youth like different kinds of recognition, involvement and flexibility.

The cooperative and supportive nature of community non-profit organizations contributes to the success of VYM. This is evidenced in Thunder Bay. The VYM initiative is showing non-profits how to engage youth. Most are excited about engaging youth and are willing to change and adapt, if they get support to do so. VYM offers this support.

In December 2001, a mid-term third-party evaluation<sup>6</sup> of VYM found that:

- VYM is often the first volunteer experience for youth. Most found their experience personally satisfying. It also opened doors to work opportunities. VYM also reduces the stress associated with fulfilling the mandated school community service requirement. (Currently, the graduating class of 2003 will be the first to require completion of 40 community service hours to graduate. Only 5% of the students in Grade 11 now meet this requirement.)
- Many host agencies are rethinking volunteering programming in light of their experience with VYM youth. They are recognizing that compared to adults, youth have much different needs and interests, tend to require more interactive approaches to orientation and training, require more supervision, and respond well to different types of recognition.
- VYM acts as a catalyst for strengthening the relationship between youth-serving agencies and schools. Schools in Ontario are generally not involved in volunteerism or with the voluntary sector. School boards have few if any, resources or programs to link with non-profit sector and promote youth volunteerism. Further, Ontario schools are not allowed to recommend to youth where they should volunteer due to liability issues. Ontario schools lack in-school curriculum support or visible ways of integrating volunteering into learning within the classroom. The success of youth volunteerism relates very much to youth gaining recognition by their peers of the importance of volunteering.

### **Comments and Program Issues:**

VYM receives funding from HRDC and endeavours to adhere to its definition of youth. VYM representatives say that HRDC’s definition of youth (e.g. 15-30) creates programming challenges due to the diversity of interests among the various age groups. OAYEC tries to segment youth into two groups 14-20 and 21-30 years in order to deal with the different interests. VYM projects do mix the age groups if the older age cohort

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<sup>6</sup>Volunteer Youth in the Millennium Final Report of the Operational Review and Mid-Term Performance Assessment

can mentor the younger group. *“Avoiding inter-generational conflicts between the two groups depends very much on the characteristics of the older age cohort group.”* It is the view of some VYM staff that 21-30 year olds are likely the most effective mentors/role models for teens.

VYM projects offer volunteer placements with voluntary/community organizations and municipal governments. Volunteers receive no payment but are reimbursed for the direct costs of volunteering (e.g. transportation). Representatives say that youth are willing to give their time if they perceive the volunteer placements as valuable. They must however be reimbursed for costs. *“If you have a really good placement and youth have a sense of ownership and responsibility for what they are doing, nothing else, not even money, matters.”* At the same time, VYM coordinators report that most students do not continue volunteering beyond the mandatory 40-hour curriculum requirement.

The relative merits of a youth volunteer, service-learning and employment programs were discussed with VYM representatives. It is the view that each program model has merits although the needs of the client group are the most important consideration. For many youth, post-secondary education isn't an option. These youth seek programs that positively move them into the labour force and into learning within the work place. These youth also seek financial compensation for their efforts. In order to meet the diverse needs of youth, VYM representatives recommend a network of programs that provide a graduated process of volunteering, job-trials, pre-employment and employment programs. In Ontario, the OAYEC sites with VYM projects can offer this network of programs.

From their experience, VYM representatives say that:

- mentor-based programs have worked well for at-risk and First Nations youth, for example senior high school youth mentoring junior high school youth.
- group-based volunteer placements work best for youth at-risk. Group-based placements are usually short-term (so youth find it easier to deal with reliability and responsibility issues.) *“Even at-risk youth can likely handle 2-3 hours of volunteering a week.... Even if a youth isn't getting anything from it (the volunteer experience), they can still feel good about hanging out with friends.”*

The VYM initiative is nearing completion. Representatives suggest that VYM will likely become part of Job Connect or another youth program. The Thunder Bay Volunteer Coordinator notes that virtually every youth program is launched as a pilot *“even though there are enough examples of what works and doesn't .... We can't keep coming in and out of youth lives.”* Short-term programs do not support effort to maintain good staff. *“Good people move on to more secure jobs.”* This Volunteer Coordinator advocates for a 5-10 year plan of holistic youth programs that include volunteer experiences, job trials, early/pre-employment and employment programs, each with lots of personal support.

The Alberta Government also endeavours to promote youth volunteerism. The Alberta Ministry of Community Development with funding from the Wildrose Foundation offers a grant of \$3,000 to youth and other community organizations to cultivate youth

leadership, youth volunteerism and community participation.

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**5.2 Service-Learning**

Service-learning programs (also known as citizenship programs) are designed to enrich personal growth; give life, work and skill development experiences; and offer some financial compensation or award usually in the form of a stipend. Service learning involves meaningful service to others, one's community and to society while engaging in some form of reflection or study that is related to the service.

***Program #3: Generation V***

The Generation V program built on current volunteer management theory and aimed to increase the participation of young people in Canadian charities. Generation V was an 18-month pilot program operated by Volunteer Canada and funded by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). The pilot ended in 2001. The program is modelled on other internship programs described below under the Youth Employment Strategy. (Program #9, page 43)

**Program Target:**

In keeping with HRDC guidelines, the Generation V program targeted youth between 15-30 years of age and made special effort to involve youth that face barriers to volunteering (e.g. immigrant youth, youth with disabilities, youth living in care). Most Generation V interns were persons 18-30 years of age.

**Mandate/Goal:**

The mandate of the Generation V program was to enhance the capacity of non-profit

agencies through youth leaders. The program had three goals:

1. increase the participation of young Canadians as volunteers;
2. encourage voluntary organizations to involve youth in their volunteer programs and to invest in good volunteer management practices; and
3. create a career opportunity for youth in the area of 'volunteer program management.

**Program Sponsors/Partners:**

In addition to Volunteer Canada and Human Resources Development Canada, Generation V partnered with two-three community-based agencies seeking to involve young people as volunteers but without a formal program to do so.

**Program Components:**

The Generation V program was run by youth for youth. The pilot program placed four (4) Generation V Interns in six host sites across Canada for a total of 24 Generation V Interns. Storefront for Voluntary Agencies in Yellowknife was a host site in the NWT.

- The 24 Generation V Interns began with a week-long orientation and training session about *"everything you need to know about managing volunteer programs."*
- Generation V Interns returned to their host sites to learn and apply skills/ knowledge about volunteer management in local agencies. All Interns completed an extensive volunteer management audit of their respective organizations, worked with the organization to create a youth oriented volunteer program, and recruited, managed and mentored youth volunteers. In some cases they guided the development of appropriate volunteer policy and practices to involve youth in the organizations.
- Interns met every week with their peers to participate in a practice-based seminar to read, debate and bring their experience to other GenV Interns in the program.

At the completion of the 18-month period, interns received nationally-recognized certification as Managers of Volunteers Programs.

A coordinator at each host site guided, supervised and supported the work of the GenV Interns.

**Program Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

The costs of the Generation V program at each site are estimated at \$70,000 - \$80,000. This cost includes host site coordination and office space and the basic stipend paid to each Intern. The basic stipend was set by HRDC at \$15,000 per annum. In Yellowknife, Storefront for Voluntary Agencies made a decision to augment the stipend in order to attract and maintain youth to the intern positions.

**Program Statistics:**

Volunteer Canada reports that:

1. All but one intern was successfully employed after the program and many were hired away from the Program before completing it.

2. Testimonials from many of the 80 voluntary agencies impacted by GenV have indicated that the programs, policies, procedures and/or program documentation set up by the youth interns have been useful and have continued to be used at a local level and even at a national level.

3. Almost 3,000 youth volunteers were recruited by GenV interns. In Yellowknife, about 120 volunteers were engaged in the Storefront program. There have been anecdotal reports by organizations indicating that many of these youth have continued volunteering even though the Gen V program has closed.

### **Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

An evaluation of the 18-month program confirmed the following assumptions.

- With properly developed youth volunteer management, youth have better and more satisfying volunteer experiences and are better able to develop the skills and confidence necessary for employment.
- A program led by youth for youth tends to engender greater support from youth.
- When provided with well-run, meaningful opportunities to volunteer, youth are enthusiastic in their participation.
- Developing capacity for non-profits to provide meaningful youth volunteer experiences, creates a supportive environment for schools seeking to assist youth to meet mandated community service hours.

Local observers of the Generation V intern program at Storefront for Voluntary Agencies comment on the strong youth volunteer management team that developed under the program. Interns developed excellent skills and had good rapport with youth and with the community. For non-profits and youth in the city, this remains as the only experience actively working with youth volunteers.

One of main difficulties of Generation V was the internship stipend. The amount dictated by the funder was insufficient for many of the interns to live on and, as a result, many were hired away from the pilot program early. Organizations were attracted to these interns because they knew that the interns had been well-trained and had current, relevant experience. While most of the interns were offered positions within the voluntary sector working in volunteer program management, turn-over did create inconsistencies. Research into youth volunteerism shows that youth are negatively impacted by turn-over of youth coordinators/managers or changes in programs that are not rooted in youth input.

Volunteer Canada notes that efforts are being made to revitalize this program at a national level however "*nothing has panned out yet*".

**Comments and Program Issues:**

Observers of the Generation V Program suggest that the program demanded too much financially from the Storefront for Voluntary Agencies in Yellowknife and may have contributed to the demise of the agency. Further, it is suggested that the demand placed on Storefront by the Gen V program contributed to a less than successful Youth Volunteer Corp experience at the agency.

Observers suggest that high turn-over of interns due to the low stipend paid meant that the Generation V was a costly program for Volunteer Canada. Subsequent programs should increase the stipend or shorten the duration of the program.

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***Program #4: Ghost River Rediscovery Program – Youth Leadership Program (YLP)***

The Ghost River Rediscovery Program is affiliated with the Rediscovery International Foundation (RIF), a non-profit umbrella organization to a network of 40 affiliated programs around the world. Each Rediscovery program is community-based, independently administered and funded, and structured to respond to local needs. The RIF began in the Queen Charlotte Islands among the Haida Gwaii. Wilderness activities, blended with indigenous culture, are the foundation of the Rediscovery Program.

The Ghost River Rediscovery Program was founded in 1994. For the first three years of operation, Ghost River Rediscovery offered only volunteer-run summer programs. In 1997, the Ghost River Rediscovery Program became a year-round operation, running a winter program in Calgary to provide needed follow-up for young people who attended the Rediscovery summer camps. Since then, Ghost River Rediscovery has developed a community development centre that assists communities in designing their own Rediscovery programs. Ghost River Rediscovery has also designed and developed a school-based outdoor cultural education program, which has been adopted by several schools in Calgary. The implementation of direct program delivery in schools began in 1998. School programs are available for children as young as 8 years of age. The Youth Leadership Program (YLP) was also established in 1998 and the international component was added a year later.

**Program Target:**

The Ghost River Rediscovery Youth Leadership Program (YLP) is targeted at youth 18-25 years of age. YLP participants are primarily First Nations people although a small number of non-Aboriginal participants have been involved in recent programs.

**Mandate/Goal:**

The guiding vision of the RIF is to draw on the strengths of indigenous cultures and the wisdom of the elders to empower youth to discover the world within themselves, the world between cultures and the natural world. The Ghost River Rediscovery YLP follows this overall mandate to provide leadership opportunities and develop young leaders in the field of cultural outdoor education.

**Program Sponsors/Partners:**

The Ghost River Rediscovery Program receives support from the Calgary Foundation, the City of Calgary Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and 27 other funders including numerous foundations (e.g. Muttart, Wild Rose, and Alberta Orange), industry partners (e.g. Shell Canada, Gulf Canada, Alliance Pipelines, and CP Railway), government (e.g. Canadian Heritage and HRDC), and Aboriginal organizations (e.g. Metis Nation, Treaty Seven). Ghost River Rediscovery also identifies over 50 local, national and international supporters/contributors. One supporter is Youth Challenge International, which has partnered with Ghost River Rediscovery to undertake projects in Guyana, South America.<sup>7</sup>

**Program Components:**

The Ghost River Rediscovery YLP builds youth leadership skills through cultural experiences, career development and personal growth.

Youth are recruited through a network of sponsors and promotions. Each program involves about 12 participants. YLP participants are selected in accordance with Youth Challenge International policies. Particular emphasis is placed on sobriety and willingness to participant, share and learn. Prospective participants complete an application form, with one-page essay explaining reasons for wishing to join the program. Applicants are invited to a Selection Day, a day of activities, and informal and formal interviews. Selection is not a competitive process but one that is based on merit. Team work, aptitude, attitude, willingness to work, share, and learn, enthusiasm and determination are the attributes sought by team leaders, elders, and at least two program funders who oversee selection day activities. Applicants also participate in selection in so far as they vote on peers who are deemed suitable for the program (e.g. based on willingness to work together, share and enthusiasm).

The YLP is six months in duration – three months for each of the domestic and

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<sup>7</sup> Youth Challenge International (YCI) is an international youth program based in Toronto with affiliate organizations in Australia and elsewhere in the world. YCI provides youth volunteers with an international experience within a community context, through work on community- based projects. YCI's mission is to build the skills, experience and confidence of young people and communities to effect positive social change.

international components.

- The first three months (regular YLP) are spent at the Ghost River wilderness area setting-up a summer camp, menu planning, learning survival skills, achieving hard (certifiable) skills such as in survival, canoeing, wilderness safety and first aid, and soft skills such as coping with living away from home, how to process feelings, sharing, team building and conflict resolution. Guest facilitators (e.g. a professor from the University of Lethbridge) provide cross-cultural awareness training and First Nation elders and other leaders deliver various culture-based training. Research, preparation and orientation (cultural sensitivity training) for the international component are also included to enable participants to learn how to share skills with indigenous people in another region.
- Over the three-month period, participants generally have two days off every 10 days or three days off every 17 days. Participants have two weeks off between the regular and the international components of the program.
- The last three months are spent in Guyana, sharing skills with indigenous youth and working on community projects. Participants live in remote locations beyond the reach of traditional support networks; participate in a cross-cultural exchange; experience the dynamics of group living; discover the key principles of community development; and learn from local leaders. Participants seek to improve community life through building infrastructure and local capacity to sustain these facilities. Local community groups participate in the design and implementation of the local project and provide a portion of the necessary resources.

As part of the Rediscovery experience, every participant is expected to organize a speaking tour (e.g. at least two presentations) at schools, friendship centres, and youth clubs. Speaking tours are supported by press releases, posters and the website.

The YLP does some tracking of participants. Participant follow-up usually occurs for a month after leaving the program and the intensity of group life to ensure that youth have made the transition back to home, job and/or school life. This year, the YLP is tracking former participants to determine long-term outcomes and in an effort to keep youth involved as a volunteer or part-time staff (e.g. one participant is working on an exchange with Kugluktuk, another is involved in a speaking tour).

### **Programs Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

The RIF sets criteria and assists with program and staff development, at a cost to individual programs. RIF also provides ongoing training for staff in cross-cultural orientation, canoe safety, wilderness survival and safety, and in the use “rediscovery games” that encourage personal growth and cultural awareness. Youth Challenge International provides much of the policy and program structure for working with/in other countries.

YLP participants are paid every two weeks at a rate equivalent to minimum wage for 35-40 hours work. Payment is a stipend rather than a taxable wage as may be expected in an employer-employee relationship. Consistent with Youth Challenge International



policies, participants in the international component are required to participate in fund-raising activities to offset the estimated \$1,600 cost of airfare to Guyana.

The cost of a three-month regular YLP is estimated at \$85,000-\$100,000 for the wages of 12 youth, four staff (coordinator, logistics person and two team leaders), elders and facilitators fees, food, travel (e.g. van rental for travel between Calgary and the Ghost River Wilderness area), and other supplies. Ghost River has a base camp adjacent to Banff National Park and program logistics and operations are from the Calgary office.

The Ghost River Rediscovery Program retains a Volunteer Coordinator. The Coordinator organizes an annual three-day orientation and training session for volunteers at the Ghost River Wilderness area. Training occurs in roles and responsibilities, safety and first-aid protocols at camps, transportation and emergency procedures, cultural protocols and training to respond to the needs of youth. Volunteers are recruited among family and friends of participants, past program participants, and staff from other Ghost River Rediscovery programs (e.g. adult and children's programs). Volunteers are also recruited from colleges in the region for example, practicum students from the Aboriginal Eco-Tourism Program at Bow Valley College.

**Program Statistics:**

In 2001, 63 volunteers contributed 11,265 hours of time to Ghost River Rediscovery Programs. The overall total volunteer hour estimate is 14,276, valued at \$221,278 based on \$15.50/hr. Volunteer time is distributed as follows:

Camp Set-up = 228 hours	Volunteers & Staff Training = 864 hours
Camp Volunteer = 2,906 hours	Camp Custodian = 1158 hours
Employee over time hours = 3,506 hours	Drum and craft workshop = 103 hours
Office/Technical Support = 780 hours	Special Promotion = 700 hours
Counsellors, Skills Support = 410 hours	Elders = 150 hours
Christine Wihak = 250 hours	Board Members = 350 hours
Students Practicum = 350 hours	School Camp = 144 hours
Volunteers at Casino = 280 hours	Drivers = 235 hours
Youth Leadership Program = 1692 hours	Board Meeting = 360 hours
Space for workshop = \$1800	Vehicle Discount = \$2798.04
Food (Food Bank) = \$650	Vehicle Discount = \$3500
Camp set-up & Volunteer Training = \$450	
Food (Food Bank) for school camp = \$250	
Camp Food (Food Bank) 200/camp = \$1400	
Space for Workshop 5 days x \$120= \$600	

**Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

Every year the YLP assesses program performance. Current areas requiring improvement are:

- skill development in conflict resolution. Participants spend a lot of time together and in stressful, isolated environments away from regular support structures. Programming must help youth deal with conflict that arises in this setting.

- volunteer development. The Program relies on volunteers who need more and better supports.

Youth participants acquire a host of skills and self-confidence as a result of the cultural-based and nature-based focus of the program. Youth (re)discover who they are and develop a sense of pride in themselves. Positive interaction with elders and peers also contributes significantly to the strength of the program. Program representatives suggest that participants are often recruited for jobs in other youth programs or go on to higher education. An observer from another youth program suggests that the international component of YLP provides First Nations youth with opportunities to participate in another indigenous culture and through this experience, “*they tend to learn a lot about their own culture.*”

### **Comments and Program Issues:**

Substance abuse is a major issue for many YLP participants and is a reason that many people come to the program. The Program won't turn anyone away due to a substance abuse problem but efforts are made to ensure that healthy participants out-number those with problems (e.g. to enable peer support relationships). Some participants have been asked to leave the program/sent home due to substance use.

Twelve-member teams are too large and demanding for staff to effectively manage. Eight member teams are deemed more realistic. Staff burnout is a significant issue for the YLP. Groups are intense and demanding with very high expectations of staff. Staff are young and may not be able to handle the rigorous demands. Facilitators and elders do however relieve the demands on staff. Staff get one week off between the regular and international components of the program.

There are numerous Rediscovery Programs in Canada, some operate from a base while others are mobile camps such as the Pine River Camp in Saskatchewan. All programs are based on the dominant First Nations culture in the area. Rediscovery camps exist throughout Canada. In the NWT, the Rediscovery camp is located on the Hay River Reserve.

Currently, Ghost River Rediscovery is involved in setting up a Junior Leadership Exchange with the YWCA Exchange Canada Program that involves Kugluktuk, Nunavut and 14 Calgary youth. Rediscovery is setting up the program, recruiting and selecting students and will run the program with the YWCA. Ghost River representatives say that the YWCA is a good youth program partner.

Canada World Youth is likely one of the oldest youth international education exchange program. It enables youth to gain practical work experience and participate in a community in Canada as well as in another country. Canada World Youth works with partners to customize programs.

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### ***Program #5: AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)***

AmeriCorps is a national network of hundreds of service programs throughout the United States (US). Two programs are managed nationally – AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) and AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC). Other programs operate through local, district and/pr national organizations throughout the US. The Corporation for National and Community Service oversees AmeriCorps. The NCCC was conceived in 1992 by a bipartisan group of senators who proposed a Civilian Community Corps to: 1) take advantage of the ‘peace Dividend’ resulting from the easing of the Cold War, 2) provide domestic opportunities for young people to serve their country while utilizing closing bases and military personnel expertise to operate the program, 3) help young people pay college costs, and 4) address unmet community needs.

#### **Program Target:**

AmeriCorp participants are called members. Members are U.S. citizens or legal permanent resident alien of the U.S. Members must be at least 17 years old, although some service opportunities require members to be at least 18. Members of the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) are between 18 and 24 years of age.

**Mandate/Goal:**

The National and Community Service Act (1990) provides the philosophical mandate for AmeriCorps and a wide range of other service programs, namely “*to renew the ethic of civic responsibility in the United States*” and “*to call young people to serve in programs that will benefit the Nation and improve the life chances of the young through the acquisition of literacy and job skills.*”

**Program Sponsors/Partners:**

AmeriCorps works with a variety of local, regional and national non-profit and other organizations. In a typical year, about 40% of project sponsors are community non-profits, 24% are federal, state or local governments, 16% are faith-based organizations, 11% are educational organizations, and 9% are national non-profits. Currently, AmeriCorps, as a result of a four-year partnership with the Youth Volunteer Corps of America (YVCA), has 43 members working in 10 YVCA sites across the United States. The newly formed USA Freedom Corps is also working with the AmeriCorps to promote a culture of responsibility, service and citizenship. A component of the USA Freedom Corps is the new Citizen Corps that is designed to engage Americans in specific homeland security efforts.

**Program Components:**

While some part-time service opportunities are available, AmeriCorps NCCC is mainly a full-time residential, team-based program that emphasizes discipline, mental and physical conditioning, responsibility and accountability. NCCC is described as blending “*the best practices of the military, the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s and present day service learning principles.*”

AmeriCorps NCCC has two program cycles –October and January. This ensures member availability year-round and coverage during peak disaster periods. NCCC has moved from local/regional promotions to Internet (web-based) recruitment. Enrolment in AmeriCorps programs is increasing. The September 11<sup>th</sup> bombing of the World Trade Centre is a main reason for this. All NCCC applicants are subject to medical screening and a criminal background check. Less than 1% of applicants are screened out for medical or criminal reasons. Telephone interviews are held to select participants. Participants are selected based on their motivation, interest and willingness to participate and contribute. NCCC selects three individuals for each space in the program. The program attrition rate is about 12%.

Upon selection, AmeriCorps NCCC members report to one of five regional campuses in Denver, Charleston, Sacramento, Perry Point and Washington. Members reside at these campuses for the 10-12 month duration of the program. Each campus houses 300-400 members. Members are permanently assigned to diverse teams of 10-14 individuals. A team leader provides day-to-day supervision. Members undergo a three-four week orientation program which includes drug tests, first aid training, conflict management sessions, team building and “*getting geared up to serve*”. Each member is also provided with a uniform.

NCCC members work from one of the five regional campuses to undertake a variety of environmental, education, public safety, disaster relief and other community/regional-based projects. NCCC is on 24-hour call to support disaster relief services. Disaster relief projects make up about 12% of the total projects. Each NCCC team completes six to seven projects over the course of their service. Each project is intensive and rigorous in terms of the level of team and individual effort required.

Sponsoring organizations may include regional youth corps, schools, veterans associations, historical societies, environmental organizations, homeless coalitions, housing groups, and sport groups. Potential community projects are supported by AmeriCorps NCCC if sponsoring organizations:

- address a compelling community need;
- have well-planned tasks and objectives;
- use all NCCC team members effectively;
- provide opportunities for members' growth and development;
- involve the community in the project; and
- have a plan for sustainability after the AmeriCorps NCCC members complete their work.

AmeriCorps NCCC members serve full or part-time usually for a 10-12 month period.

- Successful completion of one year of AmeriCorps service entitles a full-time member to an education award of \$4,725. (Part-time members may receive a portion of this amount.)
- NCCC members receive a modest living allowance, food and lodging (at one of the five campuses).
- AmeriCorps members can defer payment of an outstanding student loan for the period of service, and receive health insurance, childcare assistance and relocation expenses.

### **Programs Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

NCCC was designed as a vehicle for enabling youth to serve their country in light of the downsizing of the US military. The regional campus/residential facilities used in the program are closed military installations. It is estimated that 35% of NCCC staff are retired military personnel.

Sponsoring organizations pay no labour costs. Sponsoring organizations are required to provide materials and equipment, technical supervision, training and orientation, and assistance with food and lodging if the project site is located more than 90 minutes from an AmeriCorps NCCC campus.

In the 2002 fiscal year, NCCC had a budget of \$25,000,000 that was applied to 1,250 members and team leaders and an estimated 650 projects. NCCC spokespeople estimate that per member cost is \$20,000. Team leaders are paid \$12,000 per 10-12 month session and provided with room/board and other living expenses similar to what might be expected in the military.

**Program Statistics:**

President Bush is challenging all US citizens particularly youth, to participate in community and national service activities. He recently announced that citizen participation in AmeriCorp and other service groups is expected to increase by 50% over the next year. Another factor increasing enrolment in service programs is the growing number of mandated community service programs for example, in American schools. Community service programs are also growing both in number and enrolment as a result of over-crowded jails, lack of rehabilitation programs, a substantial marginalized population and the large portions of the population without access to social (health and education) programs. Slow growth in the American economy is also a reason for increasing enrolment in service programs.

The recent study<sup>8</sup> of AmeriCorp members found that compared with the U.S. population as a whole:

- AmeriCorps members are young and more likely to be female, single, and persons of colour.
- AmeriCorps members are diverse in terms of ethnicity and race. Half the members are Caucasian (49%), African Americans represent a quarter of the members (26%), and Hispanics another 15%.
- While AmeriCorps members are better educated than the national average, prior to joining AmeriCorps 70% had personal incomes below \$15,000. Overall, household income for members averaged \$35,000, about 80% of the national average.
- Members express a strong commitment to service. Most members said their primary reason for joining AmeriCorps was to help other people or perform community service.
- Prior to joining the program, members had high levels of participation in service activities. More than half of the members (58 %) reported that they had participated in service the year before joining AmeriCorps, 9% higher than the national average of 49%.

A recent demographic profile released by NCCC shows that:

Characteristics 2002	Applicants N=3,863	Members N= 1,009	Team Leaders N=110
Female	70%	72%	65%
Male	30%	28%	35%
African American	9%	5%	6%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	.4%	1%	0%
Asian American/Pacific Islander	3%	3%	6%
Hispanic	2%	4%	3%
Other	16%	13%	6%
Caucasian/Non-Hispanic	75%	78%	79%
No response	11%	9%	0%
College Graduate>	44%	43%	71%
Some College	29%	26%	23%
High School/GED<	27%	31%	6%

<sup>8</sup>Abt Associates, May 2001. **Assessment of Long-Term Impacts on Service Participants: A Profile of Members at Baseline.** AmeriCorps

### **Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

The Points of Light Foundation, a non-profit organization that supports community and volunteer-based organizations, notes that connecting learning and service (e.g. service-learning) activities is growing in popularity and priority among schools, governments and community organizations. Studies in the US show that most schools that incorporate service-learning provide support to teachers in integrating service into the curriculum.

Current research that that Americans are looking for a heightened sense of community and citizenship that can be achieved through service-learning activities. At the same time, a tremendous number of Americans experience difficulty becoming engaged in their community due to socio-economic circumstances. Service-learning activities help citizens to overcome these barriers. Citizens particularly youth, believe that individuals, not institutions, can solve community problems. In one study, eight in ten people surveyed between 18-30 years, agreed that "*average people have the resources and practical know-how to solve most of their problems in their community*". They also cited "*practicing your ideals in everyday life*" (68%), "*friendship with people of different race or ethnicity*" (58%), and "*volunteering to help people in a direct way*" (54%) as very effective ways to bring about change.<sup>9</sup> Another study of 12-17 year olds found that three-quarters report that their schools did not have service requirements, but almost half of these students wish their schools did.<sup>10</sup>

### **Comments and Program Issues:**

While AmeriCorps NCCC is based on the military model, efforts have been made in the last decade to shift community service activities away from the regiment and security/crisis frequently associated with military service. Since the September 11,2001 terrorist bombing, President Bush has called Americans to increase their participation in community service and service-learning activities, particularly in the area of homeland security (e.g. Freedom and Citizen Corps). This suggests to observers that the military model is once again being activated. Currently, the Corporation for National and Community Service is consulting with community organizations to determine how the new USA Freedom and Citizen Corps will be implemented.

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<sup>9</sup> Peter D. Hart Research Associates, July 1998. **New Leadership For A New Century: Study On Youth, Leadership, & Community Service.** for Public Allies

<sup>10</sup> Harris Interactive. August 2001. **Civic Engagement Study.** for Do Something, New York

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Other Website references:

[www.servicelarning.org](http://www.servicelarning.org)

[www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)

[www.nyec.org/pepnet](http://www.nyec.org/pepnet)

[www.aypf.org/forumbriefs](http://www.aypf.org/forumbriefs)

### **Program #6: YouthBuild**

YouthBuild is a community development program, a youth development program and an alternative school. The first YouthBuild program was established in East Harlem in 1978. From the success of the first project, a coalition of local not-for-profit organizations was formed to replicate the program. The coalition expanded nationwide and in 1988 became the YouthBuild Coalition. Today, YouthBuild USA, a national non-profit support centre and intermediary for the YouthBuild movement support the Youth Build Coalition. YouthBuild USA was founded in 1988. Between 1988 and 1993, YouthBuild USA promoted the YouthBuild model, advocated for a federal YouthBuild program and provided technical assistance and training to organizations wishing to replicate the model.

#### **Program Target:**

YouthBuild targets unemployed and out-of-school young adults aged 16-24 years of age.

#### **Mandate/Goal:**

The goal of YouthBuild is to support young people to assume leadership in rebuilding their communities and leading responsible lives.

#### **Program Sponsors/Partners:**

In 1993, federal legislation (the Housing and Community Development Act) created the YouthBuild program within the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). YouthBuild USA was designated as the technical provider for HUD.

#### **Program Components:**

The YouthBuild program is designed to give youth a voice and control over their futures; enable them to play a major role in improving their communities; and “*have a share of*



*the American dream.*” The program promotes involvement in a positive peer group and in the community, and follows a mentorship approach to providing participant supports.

Each YouthBuild project is a separate legal entity that is governed by a participant policy committee. YouthBuild projects select participants following careful screening of potential participants (e.g. medical, drug use and criminal checks) and an in-depth interview. The structure and duration of YouthBuild projects vary with the location. Projects may run from 9 to 18 months however typically they operate on a 12-month cycle and offer job construction training, education, counselling and leadership development opportunities. Participants usually spend alternate weeks on the job site and in school. Regardless of the structure and duration, each project adheres to YouthBuild standards and works from competency-based manuals and learning materials provided by YouthBuild USA.

YouthBuild participants work as trainees on HUD job sites under the direction of YouthBuild construction supervisors and trainers. Participants acquire construction skills while rehabilitating or constructing affordable housing for low income and homeless people in their own communities. Currently, a Department of Labour apprenticeship program is being introduced into the YouthBuild Program. YouthBuild projects also retain staff to provide a personalized self-paced education program to prepare participants for GED (General Equivalency Diploma) testing and completion of high school. YouthBuild projects also retain staff to provide personal/professional counselling and leadership training. Peers also support educational and personal development activities.

YouthBuild staff invest significant effort to provide post-program job placement support and networking, and support to pursue further education and training. YouthBuild also provides post-program counselling to former participants to ensure successful transition into society.

### **Programs Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

YouthBuild USA supports the efforts of organizations planning or operating YouthBuild programs. The organization provides extensive in-depth materials and services including educators, training, workshops, and on-site assistance that enable local communities to successfully implement HUD-funded YouthBuild projects.

YouthBuild USA may also provide financial assistance through pass-through grants that it receives from national funders, and through a loan fund that provides short-term credit assistance to Youth Build programs. Each YouthBuild Program is responsible for securing its own funding which is usually a mix of federal, state and local government funding, and private support from foundations and corporations in their geographic area. Legislation supporting community service (National and Community Service Act) identifies YouthBuild as an eligible program for funding through the Corporation of National Service.

Between 1993-1998, a total amount of \$193 million was appropriated to YouthBuild

Programs. The proposed 2002/03 YouthBuild budget is \$65 million, up from \$60million in 2001/02. Project costs are impacted by the nature of the local project The estimated average HUD project cost is \$363,600 and an average per participant cost of \$7,623. Program representatives note that HUD contributions make up only a portion of total project costs. Other costs are covered through local partnerships. YouthBuild representatives say that a partnership model evolved for the program as a result of HUD funding reductions.

YouthBuild program costs are mainly for staff (e.g. teachers, counselors, construction supervisors and trainers). YouthBuild participants receive stipends usually at a rate equivalent to minimum wage while involved in construction activities. No stipend or compensation is available for the educational or personal development component of YouthBuild projects because “they are investing in themselves.”

**Program Statistics:**

There are 165 operating YouthBuild programs in 42 states and in Washington D.C. These programs engage about 6,000 young adults annually. An average of 60% of students complete the full program (an average of 11 months). Most (85%) persons

**YouthBuild Data 1997-2000**

<b>Youth Build</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>
Info Based on	1714 students	1284 students	1390 students	1278 students
Attendance	77.1%	81.0%	85.5%	81.7%
Graduated	63.7%	59.9%	60.8%	63.3%
Received GED or HS Diploma (% of those needing either)	40.0%	42.5%	37.7%	35.8%
Placed in Jobs or School	81.4%	84.8%	85.2%	85.6%
Avg. Length of Stay	8.7 months	7.9 months	7.8 months	9.3 months
Avg. Age	20.0 years	19.8 years	19.3 years	19.1 years
Avg. Reading Level at Entrance	Grade 7.2	Grade 7.4	Grade 7.0	Grade 7.0
Average Wage After Program	\$7.43	\$7.53	\$7.37	\$7.61
Male	75.2%	69.6%	71.6%	73.0%
Female	24.8%	30.4%	28.4%	27.0%
African-American	55.*%	65.4%	51.9%	45.9%
Hispanic/Latino	19.35	12.1%	21.7%	29.5%
Caucasian	18.0%	20.8%	15.9%	19.0%
Native American	4.4%	1.0%	0.8%	3.6%
Asian American	0.5%	1.5%	3.2%	1.4%
Other	2.4%	0.4%	1.6%	1.0%
On public assistance at entrance	39.8%	38.5%	21.4%	31.0%
Adjudicated students	21.1%	30.6%	23.9%	39.5%
Convicted of a felony	13.6%	18.1%	11.2%	11.9%
In public housing at entrance	25.0%	21.5%	12.8%	16.8%
Are Parents	42.6%	46.6%	36.0%	33.4%
Without GED/Diploma at entrance	79.6%	79.1%	84.0%	89.1%

YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Aggregate Data. 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 for 33, 34, 39 and 36 programs, respectively. Percentage of Native Americans dropped due to the Native American Housing and Self Determination Act (NAHSDA) that made tribes ineligible for HUD YouthBuild funding.

completing the program were placed in college or were employed. In 1999, YouthBuild programs involved 5,500 African-American, Native American, Hispanic/ Latino, Asian and Caucasian American adults. About 70% were male, 90% were from very low-income families and 47% were parents.

Since 1993, YouthBuild has built or reconstructed more than 2000 units. The buildings that are rehabilitated or constructed during the program are usually owned and managed by community-based organizations as permanent low-income housing.

### **Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

YouthBuild is recognized by Promising and Effective Practices Network (PepNet), as a program that works in promoting youth employment and development. (PepNet is a system and information base for identifying and promoting what works in youth employment and development.)

The YouthBuild program model is based on centralized coordination through YouthBuild USA. Centralized coordination results in many program efficiencies and adherence standards throughout the country. At the same time, centralized coordination can result in poor quality site selection and operational difficulties at the local level.

A formative evaluation of YouthBuild in 1996 identified a host of elements contributing to the program's success. Strong leaderships and adequate and sufficiently flexible funding are key factors.<sup>11</sup> YouthBuild attributes program success to giving "*young men and women exactly what they are looking for*", namely:

- work that has value,
- concentrated skills training that gives access to a well-paying job,
- a means to continue education,
- personal and peer support to overcome problems,
- positive values "*that are strong enough to compete successfully with the culture of the streets and give meaning to life*", and
- clear vision of who they can become.

The YouthBuild program embraces a mentorship approach to each activity. The mentorship approach contributes to the success of the program. While a strength, staff-turn over can quickly defeat the best of mentoring efforts as it takes sometime to build trusting and respectful relationships between the mentor and the his/her student.

Currently, YouthBuild has program partnerships in South Africa and Europe and has recently completed a program in Siberia.

### **Comments and Program Issues:**

BladeRunners, a program of the British Columbia Ministry of Employment and Investment (now the Ministry of Community development, Cooperatives and Education) and the ARCO Foundation are implementing a similar type of program in the province.

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<sup>11</sup> Fergus, Ronald F. and Philip L. Clay, 1996. **YouthBuild in Developmental Perspective: A Formative Evaluation of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project.** Cambridge MA: Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

BladeRunners started in downtown Vancouver in 1994 and now operates in seven locations in the province. BladeRunners is a work-based training program that offers a wage-subsidy to secure work placements on construction sites for street-involved youth. The program encourages youth to work toward an apprenticeship in the building trades and offers extensive mentoring support. Staff are retained for their significant knowledge of the construction industry and commitment to youth successes. The BladeRunners program is a recipient of a PepNet award, the first time that a program outside of the US has been recognized for such an award.

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**Program #7: New Zealand Youth Service Corps (YSC)**

The New Zealand Youth Service Corps program was established in 1995 and is based on American Youth Service Corps model. The Ministry of Youth Affairs has adjusted the content of the American program to meet the needs of New Zealand's *rangatahi* (young people).

**Program Target:**

Youth clients of the Department of Work and Income, ages 16-20. The program is available only to persons who have not previously participated in a full YSC program.

**Mandate/Goal:**

The aim of the New Zealand YSC is to facilitate the development of young people through involvement in community projects, education and challenging recreational activities that will:

1. enable young people to undertake community projects that are of benefit and value to the local community;
2. increase the participants' self-esteem and motivation as well as their awareness of their potential;
3. enable them to evaluate educational and career choices through additional opportunities for learning, reflection and personal development;
4. improve their employment prospects by learning job skills, communication and team work;
5. link the participants to their community, and involve projects of lasting value; and
6. develop knowledge and appreciation of *Te Ao Maori* (all things Maori).

**Program Sponsors/Partners:**

All YSC projects are a partnership between the New Zealand Ministry of Youth and community organizations. Projects are sponsored by a variety of organizations such as government agencies, educational institutes and community groups.

**Program Components:**

All YSC projects are 20 weeks in duration and must comply with the following standards.

- 50% of the overall content and duration is community projects.

*Youth Service Corps community projects are those that are ‘people orientated’ and serve to increase the well-being of individuals and the community as a whole. Examples of community project activities include:*

- Assisting disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities and the elderly,
- Building community facilities such as children’s playgrounds,
- Assisting other local groups with established community programs,
- Working with local voluntary organizations, and
- Participating in school holiday programs or other local events.

Community projects must not displace work that would otherwise be undertaken by existing workers in the sponsoring or any other organization, or involve activities resulting in the financial gain for any of the parties involved.

- 25% challenging recreation,

Challenging recreation is *‘those activities which challenge and extend an individual’s awareness of their potential and capabilities.’* Examples of challenging recreation activities include:

- |                  |                              |                   |
|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| tramping         | camping                      | diving            |
| water sports     | rafting                      | caving            |
| canoeing         | kayaking                     | abseiling         |
| mountain biking  | project adventure activities | scuba and snorkel |
| sailing          | confidence course            | rock climbing     |
| personal fitness | orienteeing                  | team sports       |

- 25% educational,

Educational activities focus on practical and relevant subjects based upon the needs of the individual project member and include some New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) units of learning. Examples of educational activities include;

- |                      |                         |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| communication skills | career planning         | curriculum vitae  |
| budgeting            | New Zealand history     | personal grooming |
| recycling education  | environmental awareness | first aid         |
| personal health      | literacy and numeracy   | ‘kiwi’ host       |
| civil defence        | computer skills         | self defence      |

drivers licence  
community services

outdoor skills  
wildlife knowledge

anger management  
Duke of Edinburgh award

Maori are the indigenous people of New Zealand, and under the treaty of Waitangi the government has an obligation to work in true partnership with them. *Te Ao Maori*<sup>12</sup> is an intricate part of each component of the program. *Te Ao Maori* is carried out in consultation with local people.

All New Zealand YSC projects must include a program of work experience placement. Agencies such as the Department of Work and Income, organizations associated with the project and local employers assist with work experience placements. Work experience placements are usually scheduled for a period of approximately 1-2 weeks during the course of a project or for 1-2 days per week over various periods of the project.

A suitably trained and experienced full-time supervisor leads each project. A part-time supervisor often supports this position. Key supervisory competencies are:

- commitment to equal opportunity in youth development and an understanding of gender and cultural differences; and
- ability to accept responsibility and to model behaviour consistent with high standards of youth development.

Generally projects operate with 10 members. Members are drawn from a wide cross-section of the community. All young people including women, Maori, Pacific Islanders, other ethnicities, advantaged and disadvantaged youth and young people with disabilities must be given an equal opportunity to participate.

YSC projects are to be provided at no or minimal cost to project members. Participants aged 18 to 20 receive a training allowance while on the program. Only 16 to 17 year olds on an Independent Youth Benefit are paid while involved in the program. This means that they have participated in a group family conference and can live independently from parents or guardian. Other 16 to 17 year olds who do not fit this category are the responsibility of their parents or guardians and receive no payment.

### **Programs Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

In the 2001/2002 financial year, an estimated 14 Youth Service Corps projects took place throughout the country. The Ministry of Youth Affairs contributes a maximum of \$208 per member per week, about \$41,600 per project. The Ministry requires that at least \$10 per member per week must be allocated towards safety related costs for the project. This may include additional staff, equipment or other costs directly connected with member safety.

Sponsoring organizations are required to commit 5-6 hours a week to project administration.

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<sup>12</sup> Te Ao Maori means all things Maori.

**Program Statistics:**

Each year New Zealand YSC members provide 100,000 person hours to community projects throughout New Zealand. They have assisted councils and local organizations to complete community projects such as holiday programs and adventure playgrounds. Between 1995/96 and 2001/02, 123 projects operated throughout New Zealand, an average of 18 per year. Over this period, projects have involved 1052 males and 660 females, for a total of 1712 participants.

Six months after leaving the program 69% of participants were employed (53%) or enrolled in further training (13%) or education (3%).

**Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

Sponsoring organizations must outline the evaluation methods to be used during and at the completion of the YSC project. The Ministry undertakes its own independent monitoring and evaluation procedures.

The New Zealand YSC provides major benefits to young people. Participants gain valuable understanding about their communities and themselves. They learn the meaning and value of participating in projects that benefit not only themselves but also their local communities. The program enables youth to learn work skills, learn about their community, pick up on lost educational opportunities and experience the outdoors. The program also enables youth to rediscover and/or strengthen their understanding of Maori culture.

**Comments and Program Issues:**

Youth programs operated by the New Zealand Government are part of the Ministry of Youth Affairs' comprehensive youth strategy.

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***Program #8: Katimavik***

Katimavik was created in 1977 by the Honourable Jacques Hebert. The program operated until 1986 when the Federal Government terminated program funding. To prevent the program from being cut from the federal budget and call public attention to the plight of youth, youth staged protests and Senator Hebert fasted for 21-days. In 1994, funding was re-instated and activities resumed at Katimavik. Today, Katimavik is recognized as a core member of the 40 member-country International Association of National Youth Services (IANYS). This year Katimavik is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**Program Target:**

Canadian citizens or landed immigrants between 17-21 years of age who have never participated in a Katimavik program.

**Mandate/Goal:**

The original four goals of Katimavik were:

1. to help in the personal development of young Canadians,
2. to serve Canadian communities,
3. to stimulate environmental awareness, and
4. to give young Canadians a greater understanding of their country.

Today the program has three goals:

1. to contribute substantially to the personal, social and professional development of participants,
2. to promote community service, and
3. to offer a diversified experience fostering a better understanding of Canadian reality.

**Program Sponsors/Partners:**

Katimavik is funded by Exchanges Canada, Department of Canadian Heritage. Local projects are undertaken with the assistance of a wide variety of government and non-government sponsors and contributors.

**Program Components:**

Katimavik is a national youth service-learning program that involves youth from every region of Canada. In 2002, 726 spaces are available. Each year an equal number of male and female participants and proportional regional representation according to population size are selected. A typical Katimavik group usually has one participant from either British Columbia or the Yukon; two participants from the Prairies, Northwest Territories or Nunavut; four Ontarians; three Québécois; one participant from the Atlantic provinces and one Project Leader. Participants' names are drawn at random although at least three members of each group are Francophone. Applicants are not required to be bilingual in order to participate in Katimavik.

Katimavik participants and their family doctor must complete a detailed medical form. All participants must also give authorization for a criminal records check. A criminal records check is considered necessary to ensure the safety of persons participants may be associated with (e.g. participants are required to live with a group, stay with host families and work with children, seniors, persons with disability and other vulnerable people.) Katimavik does not accept a participant who is still completing a sentence, minors who are currently in a youth center upon a court order and under the terms of the Young Offenders act, or anyone awaiting a judgment or against whom a charge has been laid or is pending. If applicants have a criminal record, they may be accepted into the program if more than six months (or one year in the case of a crime against a person) have elapsed since the last sentence was completed.

At the beginning of the program, participants are on probation for a period of three



weeks. Individuals may be asked to leave the program during this time for inappropriate behaviour or poor attitudes. At the outset of the program, all participants participate in an extensive five to seven day orientation program. The orientation familiarizes participants with the group and the program; prepares individuals for the seven-month experience; and facilitates integration into the community. Participants are oriented to roles and responsibilities and Katimavik's standards of behaviour, which require discipline and respect. Persons not abiding by the eight standards may be expelled. Since the seven-month Katimavik program takes place in three different locations, two to three day orientations also occur upon arrival in the second and third community.

The Katimavik program exposes participants to a variety of views and values, encourages participants to reflect on their experiences and to think critically about the values that others would thrust on them. Program objectives are met through travel and work experiences in three different regions of Canada, living collectively in a 12-member group, and study that complements practical experiences and working with community groups and organizations. Participants provide 35 hours of volunteer service each week that are intended to build leadership skills, French language skills, environment, cultural discovery and healthy lifestyles. One-third of the program is spent in a French speaking environment and the rest in English-speaking environments. Experiences and reflection help youth to understand and learn to manage life challenges. Participants are led by a group leader/facilitator who organizes placements in the community and oversees the overall service activities in that location.

Katimavik promotes itself as "*the nation's leading youth program*". In 2001/02, Katimavik restructured its approach to build on the program's core educational values to integrate the 'service learning' approach and foster the development of participants' leadership skills. The service-learning model promotes learning through community service and provides recognition for training acquired through volunteer work. The integration of the service learning approach enables Katimavik participants to acquire certified leadership skills that will increase their employability. Program participants receive a leadership certificate upon completion.

### **Programs Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

Katimavik covers the cost of transportation, food lodging and program-related activities. Participants receive a daily allowance of \$3.00 and a \$1,000 bursary upon completing the seven-month program. The bursary may be used for further education, living costs, travel, etc. Katimavik pays for the cost of participant transportation during the program including any special costs arising from illness or expulsion.

Katimavik requires participants to pay for accident insurance (at a cost of \$20 per participant). Participants are not allowed to have their own car or motorcycle during the program. Katimavik does not reimburse student loans or interest accumulated during the program. Participants are ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits either during or after their participation in Katimavik.

Katimavik has entered into a new contribution agreement that provides minimum annual federal government funding of \$11.6 million. The Board of Directors has established the

Katimavik Foundation, a registered charity and the Katimavik Fund, a non-profit organization, to help develop philanthropic activities and establish corporate financial partnerships. The organization is also looking to build a strong Alumni Association as a possible contribution base. In all aspects of Katimavik's programs, administrative expenses are less than 10% of total expenditures.

### Program Statistics:

Since 1977, 21,469 young Canadians have participated in the program and provided almost 2,000 Canadian communities with millions of hours of volunteer work, worth some \$100 million. In 2000-2001, 876 participants did 444,020 hours of volunteer work valued at \$6,167,000 (a calculation based on the Canada's average wage in the volunteer sector).

### Overview of Katimavik Activity

Year	# of Participants	# of Work Projects with Community partners	Amount Financed by Federal Gov't	Economic Value of Work Achieved*
1977-78	969	80	\$10m	\$1.3m
1978-79	1,095	90	\$10.5m	\$1.5m
1979-80	1,343	115	\$10.7m	\$1.9m
1980-81	1,136	95	\$12.1m	\$1.8m
1981-82	1,327	110	\$13.3m	\$2.2m
1982-83	1,745	145	\$14.6m	\$3.0m
1983-84	4,086	325	\$39.25m	\$7.2m
1984-85	4,095	325	\$39.25m	\$7.2m
1985-86	1,791	150	\$19.7m	\$3.0m
1986-1993	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994-95	66	6	\$600k	\$150k
1995-96	252	21	\$3.0m	\$575k
1996-97	324	27	\$4.0m	\$850k
1997-98	648	54	\$8.6m	\$1.8m
1998-99	825	75	\$11.5m	\$2.1m
1999-2000	891	81	\$11.5m	\$2.3m
2000-01	876	81	\$11.6m	\$6.2m

\*calculation based on Canada's average wage in the volunteer sector.

### Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:

Senator Hebert wrote about Katimavik in 1992 referring to an evaluation that reported *"the per capita cost of a Katimavik participant was only two-thirds the cost of paying a young Canadian unemployment compensation for an equal period while producing nothing, and one-third the cost of maintaining a young Canadian in military service or in prison for delinquency."*

Like volunteer programs, a service-learning program such as Katimavik increases participants' employability as a result of work experience, job training, group and social

skills, good work attributes, networking, and personal/professional gained through participation in the program.

In 1999, Katimavik developed an evaluation framework and implemented a results-based management system to help the organization measure and adjust performance.

**Comments and Program Issues:**

A growing number of youth programs in Canada and elsewhere are adopting the service-learning model in order to accommodate increasing mandated community service requirements by schools and other institutions.

Observers of youth programs identify the main weaknesses in Katimavik programming as participant selection and post-program follow-up.

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**5.3 Employment Programs**

Training and employment programs create wage earning, skill development and workplace exposure opportunities for youth in all sectors.

***Program #9: Youth Employment Strategy (YES)***

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) Youth Employment Strategy (YES) and the component, First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy (FNIYES) are designed to help Canadian youth make the transition into the labour market by providing the skills, work experience and knowledge, and information. Initiatives include:

- internships,
- service and co-operative education programs,
- work experience programs, and
- summer employment programs.

### **Program Target:**

The Government of Canada defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 30 years. Specific youth initiatives may target segments of the youth population, for example, the First Nations and Inuit Youth Work Experience Program targets youth 16-24 years of age, and the First Nations Schools Co-operation Education program targets students in grades 7-13. Internship programs usually target youth 18 or more years of age. YES gives priority to annual themes. Currently, these are: 1) youth at risk including youth who have not attained a high school education, youth with disabilities, youth heading lone parent families, and visible minority and immigrant youth; 2) initiatives that respond to current and future skills shortages; and 3) partnerships that provide high quality work experiences that advance effective partnerships with youth driven organizations, peer-to-peer innovations, and new forms of private, public and voluntary sector collaboration.

### **Mandate/Goal:**

The goal of all YES initiatives is to help young people acquire the experience, skills and information they need to prepare for and participate in the world of work. Each initiative of YES has specific goals and objectives. Generally,

- **internships** are designed to enable youth to gain work experience in science and technology, international trade and development, entrepreneurship, sectoral and community-based partnerships.
- **work experience, service-learning and co-operative education** programs are intended to help in and out of school youth gain skills.
- **summer employment programs** help secondary and post-secondary students to prepare for future entry into the labour market.

### **Program Sponsors/Partners:**

Partnership is a basic tenet of YES initiatives. Youth initiatives are delivered directly by 14 Government of Canada departments and agencies including HRDC and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), or through a third party employer or a private or public organization.

### **Program Components:**

The following youth initiatives are based on a project plan and usually dedicated project supervision, co-ordination, group leadership or mentorship.

**Internships** are an employer-employee relationship that usually last from six to 12 months and may be offered domestically or internationally. Employers receive a full or partial wage subsidy to create new jobs in particular industries or sectors, or provide learning opportunities for youth entering high demand occupations. Internships require a mentoring relationship and an investment in time and money by the employer. They

offer youth the opportunity to gain a valuable first work experience. The Housing Internship Initiative for First Nations and Inuit Youth through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, offers a wage subsidy to housing related employers who can offer work experience and on-the-job training. Internships are supported by the Career Edge website which encourages employers to post internship opportunities to recruit high-school, college and university graduates. Interns are paid a nominal stipend.

**Service-learning opportunities and co-operative education** programs are the First Nations Schools Co-operative Education Program and Youth Services Canada (YSC). The First Nations Schools Co-operative Education Program provides funds to education authorities to foster partnerships with public and private sector employers to create opportunities for junior and senior high school youth to combine school-based learning with workplace experience. YSC is mainly geared at out of the mainstream/at-risk youth. YSC funds organizations to create meaningful community service projects for youth who face difficulties entering the labour market. YSC projects must address community needs and demonstrate longer-term sustainability (e.g. how it will continue). YSC projects challenge young people to invest time, energy and expertise in their own communities. Youth acquire job and life skills while strengthening their sense of accomplishment and attachment to the community. The duration of YSC projects is up to 52 weeks. Within YSC projects, no employer-employee relationship is established. Participants receive a non-taxable, non-insurable stipend that is intended to cover the cost of participation (although transportation, child care and other costs of participation may be covered by the project). YSC stipends are not intended to compete with wage employment opportunities or to provide a stipend equivalent to minimum wage.

**Work experience** programs are intended to help in and out of school youth gain skills. As an example, the First Nations and Inuit Youth Work Experience Program targets out-of-school youth and pays a minimum wage plus benefits for a period of 6 to 9 months. Sponsors must provide mentoring support for the development of life and work skills, and counselling. Each participant works with a project leader to develop an individual learning plan that incorporates the work-experience program into a longer-term plan for education and/or employment.

**Summer employment programs** such as the Summer Career Placements (SCP) provides wage subsidies to employers to create career-related work experience and training for 4 to 18 weeks. The Partners in Promoting Summer Employment (PPSE) is a joint effort of the federal government and business associations or not-for-profit sectors and is designed to expose youth to career opportunities. Students are usually paid at a rate equivalent to minimum wage.

**Program Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

For internships, HRDC and/or its other federal agencies offer a wage subsidy up to a maximum of \$15,000 per intern. Employers may top-up intern stipends. Typically intern partners/placements are required to have:

- a sound financial position,
- the ability to offer a structured 6-12 month work experience,

- the ability to support interns in meaningful and career-related endeavours, and
- the ability to invest in internships costs ('in-kind' or cash support).

The federal government usually contributes to the costs of staff co-ordination up to the local labour market prevailing wage for the occupation.

Service-learning projects offered under YSC, provide a weekly stipend that varies in amount from project to project. In the NWT, the stipend rarely exceeds \$200/week per participant. YSC also offers a completion bonus of \$500 to assist youth to move on to further education, training or employment opportunities. YSC may also provide a further \$1,500 to participants who have demonstrated after an agreed upon length of time, that they have moved on to new opportunities. In the case of a recent YSC project in Yellowknife (at the Sidedoor Youth Centre), sponsors agreed to forego completion bonuses in favour of higher weekly stipends. In this case, the weekly stipend was \$300/week per participant. The cost per participant for YSC projects is \$8,277.

In addition to participant costs, internship, service learning projects and work experience projects experience costs associated with co-ordination, administration and materials.

### **Program Statistics:**

A 1998 survey of HRDC youth programs found that:

- 6-12 months following an internship program, 70% of participating youth were employed or self-employed and 91% had returned to school. Further, 89% of internship participants felt that the program had enhanced their ability to find a job.
- 6-12 months following a YSC project, 60% of participating youth were employed or self-employed and 18% had returned to school. Further, 91% of YSC participants felt that the program had enhanced their ability to find a job.

A 1997 evaluation of the Summer Career Placement Program found that these projects improve youth's skills and chances of finding future employment. 55% of participants were provided with experience in their field of study. Further, 89% of employers would not have hired a student if the subsidy had not been available.

### **Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

Internships are described as a cost-effective way for employers to source new talent, and develop future employees while reducing training and recruitment costs. Youth bring enthusiasm, creativity, new perspectives and entrepreneurial spirit to organizations. Employers provide an opportunity for youth to acquire skills and for both the employer and youth to assess future potential for employment. Interns gain technical expertise, practical work experience and the expert mentoring they need to enhance employability. Popular media reports have indicated that interns often feel exploited and do not see opportunities for employment (a sense that seems to increase with the size and complexity of the company). At the same time, employers see interns as requiring extensive time and training that may or may not be available.<sup>13</sup> In the NWT, HRDC representatives say that intern programs have been quite successful.

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<sup>13</sup> CBC Radio documentary – Definitely Not the Opera (DNTO), March 9, 200

Service-learning opportunities provided through YSC are highly valued among NWT youth both for the experience they offer as well as the opportunities for meaningful engagement in the community.<sup>14</sup> HRDC representatives say the keys to success for YSC as well as other youth programs are:

- committed coordinators who have rapport with youth, know how to engage youth and facilitate their participation as team members;
- infrastructure to support youth endeavours,
- youth ownership of projects and outcomes,
- long-term programs that people can count on, (e.g. like YSC), and
- a clear focus (e.g. “*don’t try to do too much*”).

### **Comments and Program Issues:**

YES offers a network of programs and services to support youth. Many of the models for youth programming have been adopted in the NWT through for example, the GNWT’s Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy, NWT Literacy Strategy and the NWT Labour Force Development Plan.

An HRDC representative suggests that there are many opportunities for youth program partnerships with federal government agencies and departments. Many of these agencies have infrastructure but do not have financial resources to support youth engagement, for example the Department of National Defense and Parks Canada. It was cautioned that programs that follow a military focus such as practiced in some US programs do not work well in Canada due to the lack of opportunity for flexibility, and participant control and ownership.

Currently, YES is undergoing some change and will be sent to Cabinet for renewal. It is expected that the revamped YES will place greater emphasis on skills-based training and development in the areas of literacy and technology.

HRDC representatives underscore the importance of coordination in youth programs. Skilled youth coordinators are difficult to find and retain. The stress and burn-out in these positions are high and directly proportionate to demands. Coordinators often do not enjoy a great deal of job security due to the often short-term nature of youth projects.

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<sup>14</sup> **Securing Our Future: A Planning Framework for Supporting NWT Youth**

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### ***Program #10: Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corp (NSYCC) – Regular Summer Program***

The Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corp (NSYCC) program began in 1989 when conservation and the environment were significant public issues. A youth initiative was seen as one way for the government to work with the community to take action on these issues as well as encourage youth to seek formal education in these areas.

The NSYCC has three programs – the Environmental Leadership Program (exchange with Costa-Rica and targeted at persons 20-24 years of age); the Environmental Youth Exchange (a link between community-based and international environmental management/development and exchange in St. Lucia for 21-24 year old youth); and the Regular Summer Program for 17-24 year of youth to assist community organizations to undertake local environmental projects. The Regular Summer Program is profiled below.

#### **Program Target:**

The NSYCC Regular Summer Program is targeted at youth 17-24 years who live in Nova Scotia; are able to work as a team member; and possess a genuine interest in environmental issues. Youth are eligible to work for only one summer on a NSYCC Regular Summer Program crew. They are however eligible for employment in one of the other NSYCC programs.

#### **Mandate/Goal:**

The mandate of the NSYCC is to provide youth with training and employment opportunities in the environmental field while providing services to communities in Nova Scotia for the enhancement of the local environment.

#### **Program Sponsors/Partners:**

The NSYCC is a partnership among various levels of government, community-based non-profit, government and profit agencies, and youth. Financial resources are garnered from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), the Nova Scotia Provincial Employment Program, the Solid Waste-Resource Management Section of



Department of Environment and Labour, and corporate sponsors. Over the last year, NSYCC has formed a partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services to offer employment to youth on welfare.

**Program Components:**

Annually NSYCC requests and selects proposals/applications from community sponsors/partners. Criteria for choosing community partners and projects are based on the scope of a work plan, and capacity to provide supervision and opportunities for youth to learn/acquire new skills. Community partners should demonstrate that the project will engage youth in 'hands-on' environmental work experience, provide opportunities for the personal growth and development, and have lasting and self-sustaining environmental and community benefits. Community partners must demonstrate that any work carried out by crews will meet provincial Occupational Health and Safety Standards. Community partners can submit proposals that reflect one or more of the following themes: waste/resource management, watershed management, environmental education, climate change and pollution prevention. All projects, unless their priority activity is environmental education, must include at least two public education sessions through which youth promote projects to their communities and other interested groups or individuals.

NSYCC works with community partners/host/proponents to hire youth project crews. Community partners are expected to participate in the interview process for project crews. Two, three, or four crew workers are hired for each NSYCC project. Projects run from July 2<sup>nd</sup> to August 30<sup>th</sup>. Youth crew workers receive a wage of \$7.00/hr for 35 hours a week.

NSYCC encourages community partners to strike a balance between sponsor and youth ownership and control of projects. NSYCC tries to reinforce that youth projects/contributions are part of something bigger. This is done through a three -day orientation and training camp at the beginning of the summer. The training camp brings all youth project crew workers together for Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training, first aid and safety training, environmental speakers, team building, and interaction with other participants, all designed to reinforce that projects are part of something bigger. Ownership is also fostered through encouraging students to develop materials and engage in developmental aspects of their projects. Following the training camp, the crews return to their home communities to tackle their projects for about eight weeks. At the end of the summer, five regional debriefing sessions are held to provide an opportunity to close the project, help youth digest what happened, incorporate skills in a resume and cover letters, and generally identify what happened.

NSYCC projects vary but all include teamwork, organization skills, presentation skills and public relations skills. These are the skills that NSYCC believes are transferable to other job opportunities. Participants gain self-confidence and valuable work. They also develop a better understanding of the community and environment issues and responses to them.

**Program Costs, Resources, and Infrastructure Requirements:**

NSYCC provides  $\frac{3}{4}$  of labour costs and \$150 per project for participant materials, supplies and travel. NSYCC is responsible for administration duties and payroll for crew workers, as well as some training in environmental issues, first aid, occupational health and safety and WHMIS. Community partners submit  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the wage costs to the NSYCC and are responsible for all other project costs. Community partners must provide any materials, equipment, special equipment training and transportation required for the project and supervision and workspace for crew workers. Community partners often access funding from other sources (including other government departments) to support projects.

One full-time NSYCC Administrator and two NSYCC four-month term (April 29<sup>th</sup> to September 6, 2002) support staff operate the program. Support staff receive a wage of \$8.50 hr. for 35 hours/week and are usually past program participants. Support staff are responsible for coordinating and facilitating community partner meetings; recruiting, hiring and training NSYCC crews across the province; organizing a provincial youth training camp; providing administrative support to NSYCC community partners; monitoring and assessing crew progress; conducting project site visits; collaborating on a daily basis with other staff; and being a responsible steward of the environment.

NSYCC was officially eliminated from the provincial government budget in 2001, following a couple years of severe budget cutting. Today, the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour provides one person-year to the NSYCC for administrative and logistical functions and houses the program

**Program Statistics:**

In 2001, NSYCC received 30 applications from community partners. Twenty-two (22) were accepted. Nova Scotia's poor economy is creating difficulties for community sponsors. More are having difficulty paying  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the wage contribution (e.g. ranges from \$1,191 to \$2,383) and paying for the full cost of a volunteer coordinator (if one is needed). Further, associated (material) costs are also affecting the ability of some community partners to participate.

Between 1989-1999,

- more than 1,600 youth were involved in the program, an average of 145 each year.
- over 300 NSYCC projects were completed in 80 communities.

In 1999, 44 NSYCC crews were employed in the province and in 2000 the number fell to 23 due to budgetary restrictions. Only 53 crew positions will be available in the summer of 2002.

The program attracts average middle-class youth, usually students. Special effort is required to reach at-risk and First Nation students, as they seem not to be attracted to this type of project. NSYCC representatives say that involving hard-to-reach students goes beyond regular recruitment at schools, word of mouth, school presentations, HRDC and the Student Job Bank. Word of mouth is the most powerful approach for

mainstream students.

In 2001, six of 53 youth participants/crew positions were welfare recipients due to a partnership with the Department of Community Services.

### **Program Evaluations and Future Intentions:**

Representatives of NSYCC identify the support given to project sponsors (e.g. support staff literally do all the paper administration) as a strength of the program. *“NSYCC staff literally take a load off community sponsors.”* Another strength has been the progressive or graduated nature of the program as youth start off in the regular program are likely to advance to one of the other programs then into a staff role within the NSYCC.

Two studies have reported on the NSYCC.<sup>15</sup>

- The 1999 study found that prior to involvement in the NSYCC, most participants had strong leadership and teamwork skills and were concerned about environmental damage, balancing economic growth with environmental protection, and preserving the balance of nature and humans living in harmony. Participants' presentation skills were weaker than other skills. Participants were more likely to practice recycling and energy conservation than water conservation and environmental consumer behaviour. Prior to the program ¾ of participants believed that they were knowledgeable about the environment. After completing the two-month program, participants' knowledge and presentation skills had significantly improved while behaviour and attitude did not.
- Based on responses from NSYCC participants who had been involved in the program between 1990 to 1999, the 2000 study found that NSYCC had a positive impact on career, education and lifestyle decisions; enhanced appreciation of the environment (73%) and community (53%).<sup>16</sup> Participants also learn skills during their time with NSYCC that they applied to future career opportunities and 45% indicated that NSYCC had influenced their career decision and provided marketable skills. NSYCC also contributed to the respondents' abilities to address environmental problems and increased environmental awareness and activities (32%).

Funding cuts are creating issues for the NSYCC. Currently, the program is considering establishing a non-profit organization as a way of accessing foundation and corporate funding that is not currently available to a government program. This would however result in a loss of government administrative support and possibly government partnerships.

### **Comments and Program Issues:**

Employment programs are less flexible and more formal than volunteer and service-

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<sup>15</sup> Cane, Maria. 1999. Youth and the Environment: An Evaluation of the Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corp. Dalhousie University

MacKinnon, Heather. 2000. Education, Career and Lifestyle Choices Made by Past Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corp Participants. Dalhousie University

<sup>16</sup> n=111 respondents

learning opportunities. They are also more likely to be full-time programs.

NSYCC has adopted an employment rather than a service-learning or volunteer approach because there are few opportunities in Nova Scotia, particularly in rural areas, for youth to work, earn money and learn new things. *“In a poor economic area, it is just not feasible and certainly not desirable for people to work for nothing.”* Further, because many of the community partners are small businesses, NSYCC notes that it is inappropriate to ask youth to volunteer for a profit making enterprise. NSYCC notes that there may however be opportunities to expand the program to offer a summer employment program and year-round volunteer opportunities.

The NSYCC maintains linkages with a similar environmental youth corp program in Newfoundland and Labrador. Environmental youth corps were also instituted in Ontario and British Columbia in 1989. The Government of New Zealand has also adopted this model. The Youth Conservation Corps of the New Zealand Ministry of Youth is targeted at youth 16-25 years of age who plant native trees, upgrade walking tracks and take on other activities to help the environment. The New Zealand Conservation Corps program was created in 1989 and is based on the Californian Conservation Corps program.

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