

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments
Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee**

March 10, 2023

Agenda Item 5b

2023 Youth Programs Update

Subject:

Overview of MTC/ABAG Youth Programs.

Background:

This item provides an update on five youth programs supported by MTC/ABAG: 1) Norman Mineta High School Summer Academy; 2) Pathways to Government College Mentorship program; 3) Spare the Air Youth Program; 4) BayREN Workforce Education and Training Program, and 5) Local Youth Innovation Challenge.

2023 marks the third summer that MTC and ABAG have sponsored youth summer programs after they were suspended in the summer of 2020 due to budgetary and public health constraints. The Norman Mineta High School Summer Academy provides a multi-week, mostly remote learning curriculum for Bay Area high school students. The Pathways to Government College Mentorship is a targeted effort to develop a pipeline of college-age students from underrepresented backgrounds at the agencies. As the public health emergency order expires, staff are preparing to again update the programs to retain the benefits of remote access while also providing the youth with an in-person experience at the Bay Area Metro Center.

The number of high school students who completed the program doubled from 29 to 58 participants from the summer of 2021 to 2022. As shown below, the college program was limited to a handful of students in 2021 and 2022. Recruitment efforts were focused on encouraging students to apply from Equity Priority Communities (low-income and communities of color). All students were paid at living wage levels and consistently provided positive feedback on their experiences.

Program	2021 Participants	2022 Participants
High School Summer Academy	29	58
Pathways to Government College Mentorship	5	6

Both programs can grow by enriching the curriculum and expanding recruitment networks to ensure broader participation from all Bay Area communities – an effort that Commissioners can

help to advance by spreading the word to your constituents. Recruitment is now live, with [applications](#) due April 14, 2023. Staff will email related materials and request the Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee members share the recruitment flyers with your networks to encourage broad participation. The flyer is included as Attachment B to this item and the application can also be found at <http://mtc.one/BayAreaSummerAcademy2023> .

Established in 2011, the Spare the Air Youth Program is a partnership between MTC and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to co-develop transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies for K-12 schools, students, and their families through various programs and activities. The program supports local Safe Routes to Schools programs, bike safety and mechanics education programs, a technical advisory committee, and the very popular Youth for the Environment and Sustainability (YES) Conference, which has been paused due to the pandemic. The program has a dedicated website (sparetheairyouth.org) with active travel resources and information tailored to students, parents, teachers, and mobility program implementers.

Since 2019, BayREN has partnered with Rising Sun Center for Opportunity to offer the Green House Calls program, a summer program for youth that provides technical training and hands-on experience installing energy efficiency measures in regional residential households. The program prioritizes outreach to low-income youth and those disconnected from school and employment. In 2024, BayREN will offer the Climate Careers pathway, where graduates of Green House Calls will be placed in paid internships. Participants will gain real-life, first-hand career experience in positions such as contractors, researchers, educators, event coordinators, outreach associates, troubleshooters, and marketers.

As part of the BayREN Business Plan filed with the California Public Utilities Commission in March 2022, a new Workforce, Education, and Training program is proposed that includes the Green House Calls and Career Pathways offerings and adds another component: job placement. The newly proposed Workforce Education and Training program aims to create opportunities for youth from low-income households and equity-priority communities, providing youth with real-world work experiences in targeted sectors. The program addresses explicitly Bay Area youth unemployment, particularly among youth of color, while building a future energy efficiency and

clean economy workforce. The Public Utilities Commission will review and consider adopting the Business Plan later this year, with implementation set to begin in 2024.

Most recently, in February 2023, MTC and its partners, including AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District, SamTrans, SFMTA, and VTA, recruited youth participants for the Bay Area's Local Youth Innovation Challenge 2023. This nascent program is sponsored by the national non-profit Introducing Youth to American Infrastructure+ ([Iyai+](#))(link is external) and aims to increase young people's awareness of potential careers within the transportation field and identify ways to modernize the workforce/workplace for the 21st century. The challenge is mainly focused on engaging with youth who have historically been underrepresented such as young women and people of color, in these programs and career fields. The project aims to elevate youth voices and ideas on addressing urgent transportation sector workforce challenges of attracting, hiring, and retaining employees.

Issues:


None identified

Recommendation:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: PowerPoint
- Attachment B: Bay Area Summer Academy flyer



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