

Year Up

Findings from the *Implementation and Early Impact Report* | May 2019 | OPRE Report #2019-26

WHAT ISSUES DID YEAR UP SEEK TO ADDRESS?



*As opportunities for college graduates have grown in recent decades, **prospects for young adults without postsecondary credentials have steadily worsened.***



*With few chances at well-paying jobs, many disadvantaged young adults **give up on school and withdraw from the labor force.***



***Employers are deprived of millions of workers** needed to close skills gaps in growing industries and tax revenues are diminished.*

WHAT IS YEAR UP?



Launched in Boston in 2000, growing to eight offices by 2013-2014, the PACE study period.



A one-year, full-time sectoral training program run by an organization also named Year Up, with offices in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Providence, as well as the San Francisco Bay/San Jose, Seattle, and Washington, DC areas.



Goal is for Year Up participants to gain the skills, experience, and support to successfully enter careers in fast-growing technical occupations.



Recruits economically disadvantaged, urban young adults ages 18 to 24 who have a high school diploma or equivalent and are motivated to succeed.

WHAT IS YEAR UP'S APPROACH?



Learning and Development Phase, an initial six months of training that provides intensive instruction and supports to foster technical, business communication, and professional/life skills.



Internship Phase, a second six-month period in which participants are placed at major firms.



Job search and placement, for four months following the internship.



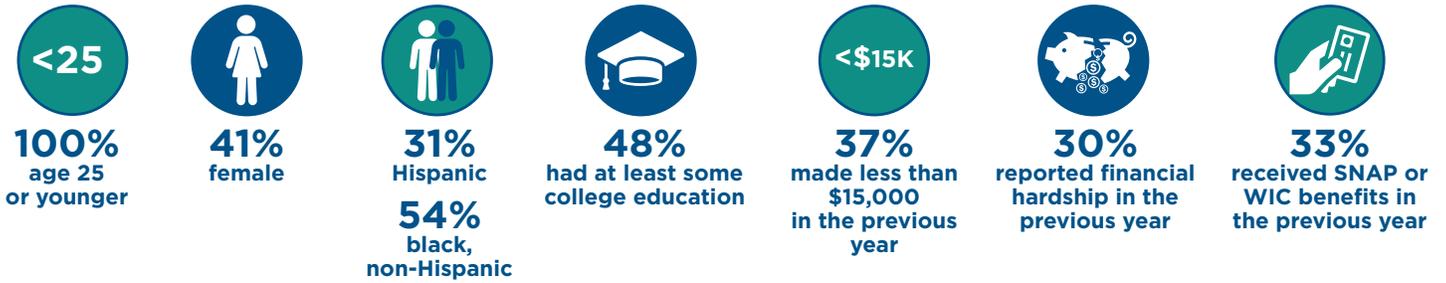
Weekly stipends for both the learning and development and the internship phases (typically \$150 and \$220, respectively), conditional on performance per behavioral contracts.



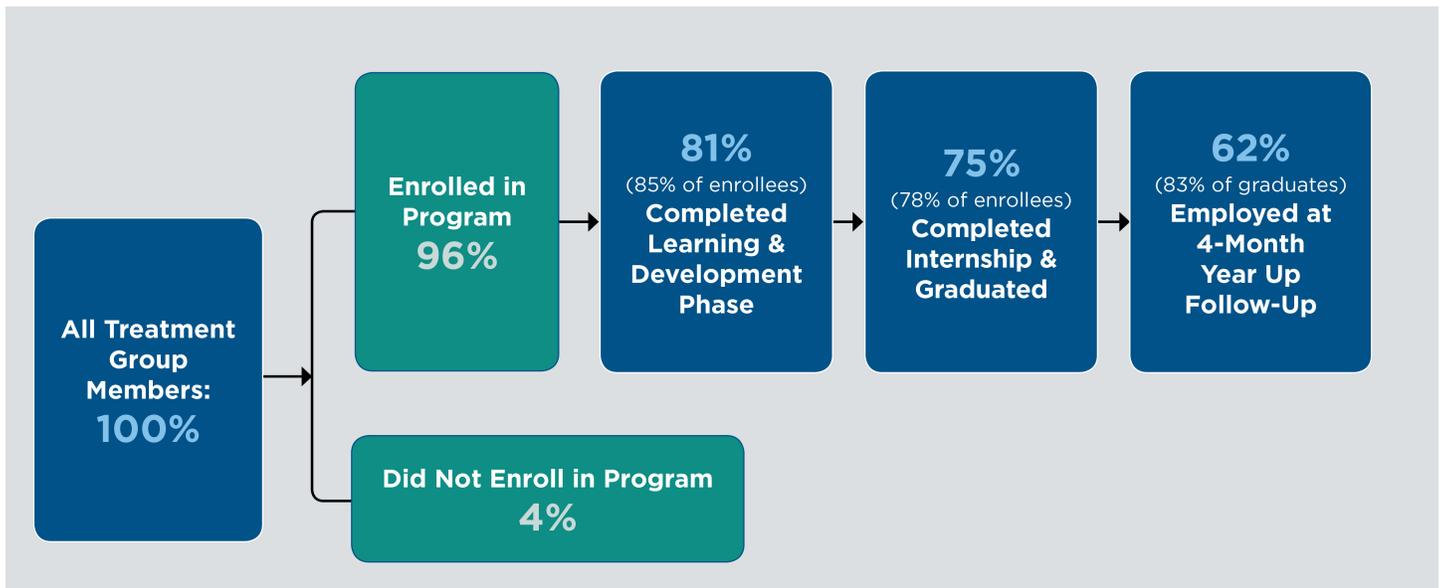
College credit for Year Up courses through agreements with local community colleges.

WHO ENROLLED IN THE YEAR UP STUDY?

For PACE, the program randomly assigned 2,544 study participants, 1,669 to the treatment group and 875 to the control group. Across treatment and control group members, study participants were:



WHAT TRAINING DID TREATMENT GROUP MEMBERS ENROLL IN AND COMPLETE?

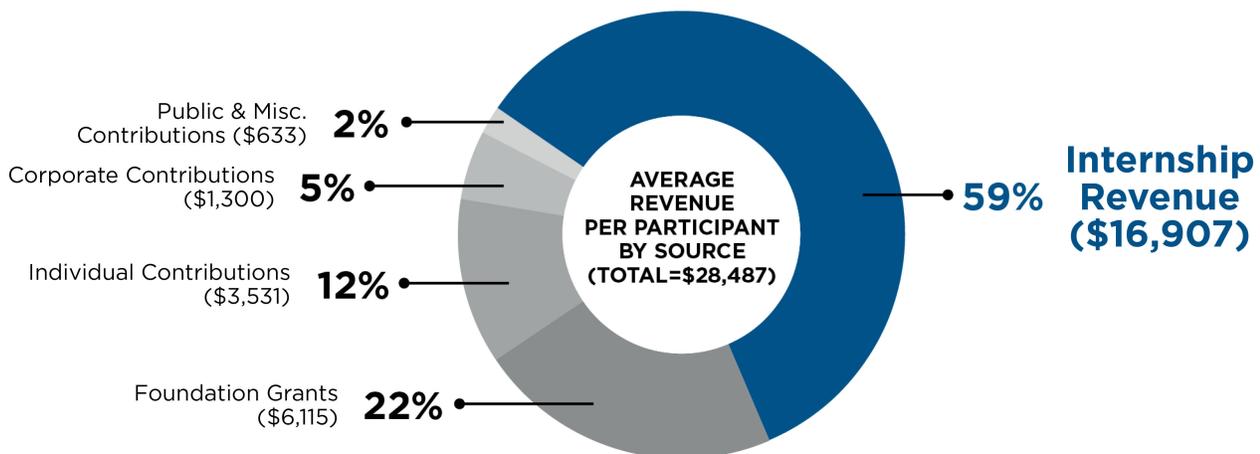


HOW MUCH DOES YEAR UP SPEND ON EACH PARTICIPANT?



Year Up spent an average of \$28,290 per participant.

More than half of that amount was funded by employer payments for interns; the balance came primarily from individual contributions and foundation grants.

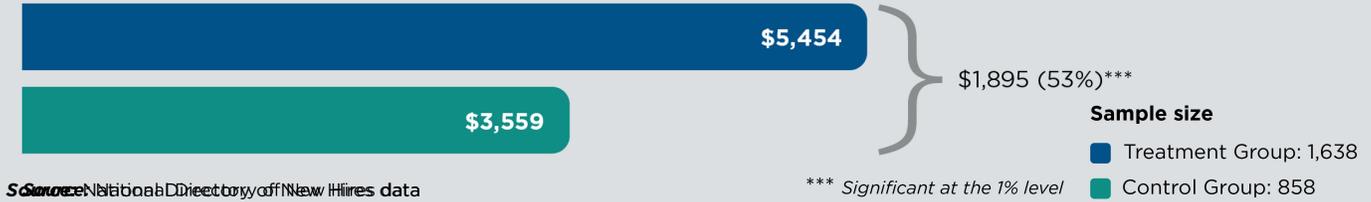


WHAT WERE THE IMPACTS OF YEAR UP ON EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS?

Year Up increased average quarterly earnings by 53 percent, the largest earnings gains measured to date in random assignment studies of workforce training programs for youth and adults.

Earnings impacts were driven by higher hourly wages and more hours worked, rather than by an increase in the percentage employed.

AVERAGE EARNINGS IN THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH QUARTERS FOLLOWING RANDOM ASSIGNMENT (\$)



Source: National Directory of New Hires data

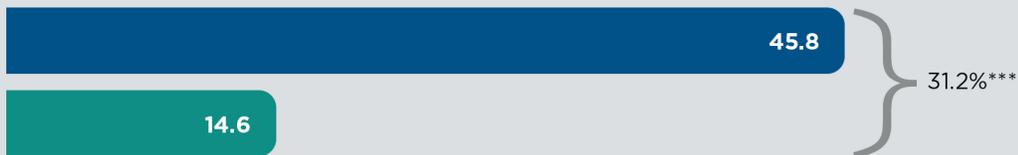
Every subgroup of participants experienced higher earnings, as did all eight local Year Up offices.

Impacts were larger for less-motivated participants and smaller for less-academically prepared participants, those who expected to work full-time in addition to being in training, and black non-Hispanic participants.

Substantially more treatment group members were working in career-track jobs.

At 18 months after random assignment, Year Up generated statistically significant increases in the percentages of graduates working in jobs that paid at least \$15/hour, that required at least mid-level skills, and that were in Year Up target occupations (e.g., IT or financial services).

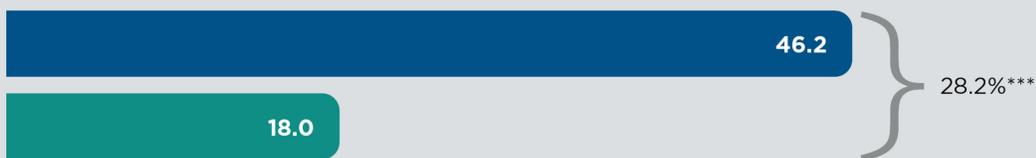
WORKING IN A JOB PAYING \$15/HOUR OR MORE (%)



WORKING IN A JOB REQUIRING AT LEAST MID-LEVEL SKILLS (%)



WORKING IN A YEAR UP TARGET OCCUPATION (%)



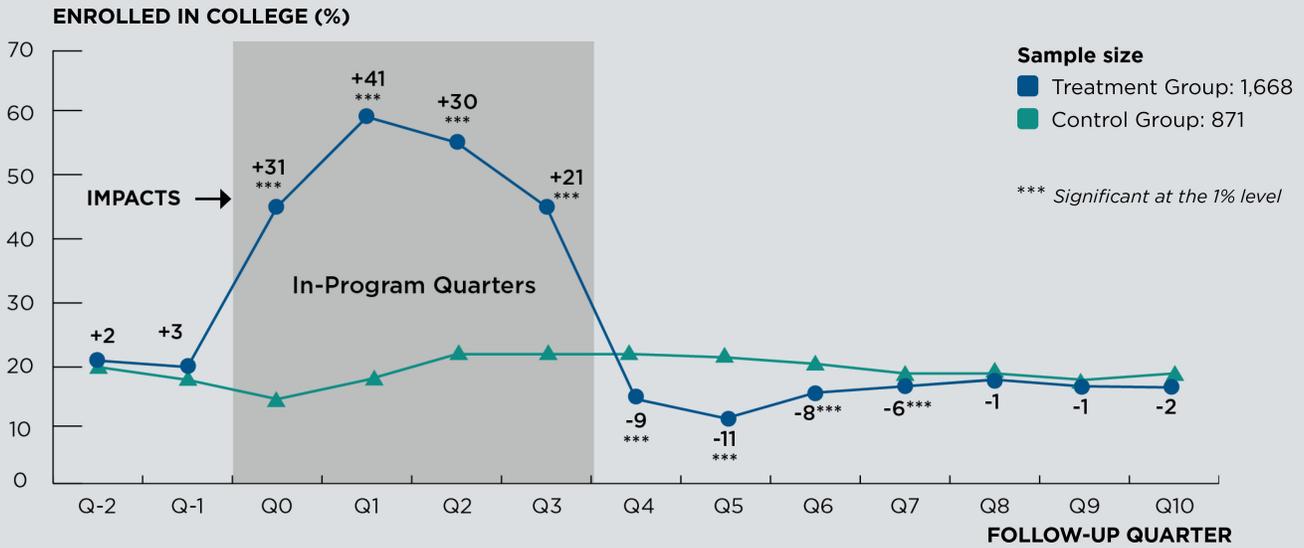
Source: PACE 18-month follow-up survey

Impacts may not equal the difference between groups due to rounding

Impacts on postsecondary enrollment were mixed.

Through connections with college partners, Year Up produced substantial increases in college enrollment during the first follow-up year (when participants were enrolled in the program).

Enrollment rates for the treatment group fell below rates for the control group in the year following program completion, as treatment group members entered the workforce and obtained career-track jobs.



Source: National Student Clearinghouse data

Year Up increased attainment of industry certifications and licenses by over 18 percentage points.

CREDENTIAL FROM A LICENSING/CERTIFICATION BODY (%)



Source: PACE 18-month follow-up survey

However, treatment group members were not more likely to receive a college credential.



Just 3 percent of treatment and control group members did so.

Source: PACE 18-month follow-up survey

Impacts may not equal the difference between groups due to rounding

WHAT FACTORS LIKELY CONTRIBUTED TO YEAR UP'S POSITIVE IMPACTS?



Rigorous screening of participants to ensure those who enroll are committed to the program.



High level of employer engagement, including mobilizing private-sector financing of paid internships.



Availability of stipends throughout the training and internships, combined with engaging instructional practices and comprehensive supports.



Continuous engagement with staff, participants, and other stakeholders (e.g., employers, college partners, and funders) around applying the program's values of hard work, learning, and continuous improvement.



High fidelity to the model across sites, including use of performance measures and a strong business ethos as reflected in the infusion of business language, concepts, and tools throughout daily activities.

HOW DID LEADERSHIP LEARN ABOUT AND REFINE THE PROGRAM DURING THE EVALUATION?



Year Up continued to grow and evolve during and after the PACE study years (2013-2014).

National staff took steps to standardize admissions processes, centralize curriculum development, expand flows of interns to large employers, and extend the period of post-graduation employment supports.



Recognizing limits to upscaling a model requiring ongoing philanthropic funding, in 2014 Year Up stabilized the size of its stand-alone core program (the version evaluated in PACE) and concentrated growth efforts on scaling adaptations of the model for college and workplace settings. The revised models aim to reduce costs by leveraging instruction and other resources at partner institutions.

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What is PACE?

The Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) evaluation uses a random assignment methodology to assess the effectiveness of nine career pathways programs targeting low-income, low skilled individuals on credential attainment, employment, and earnings. Key features of career pathways programs include:

1. A series of well-defined training steps;
2. Promising instructional approaches targeted to adult learners;
3. Services to address academic and non-academic barriers to program enrollment and completion; and
4. Connections to employment.

This brief summarizes findings from the implementation study and impacts 18-24 months following study intake. The study is funded by the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Next steps in the PACE evaluation of Year Up

The next Year Up report will cover 36-month and 72-month follow-up periods and will examine whether earnings impacts persist or fade and whether positive initial impacts on career-track employment translate into continued progress along career pathways in targeted sectors. Future reports will also include a cost-benefit study.

This brief summarizes the findings from the following report: Fein, D. and J. Hamadyk (2018). *Bridging the Opportunity Divide for Low-Income Youth: Implementation and Early Impacts of the Year Up Program*, OPRE Report #2018-65. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This brief, the full report, and other PACE publications are available at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/pathways-for-advancing-careers-and-education> and www.career-pathways.org



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