



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Nanci Klein

SUBJECT: RESILIENCE CORPS UPDATE

DATE: May 17, 2023

Approved

Date

5/18/23

INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

This memorandum provides an update for the Resilience Corps Program regarding Phase 1 and Phase 2 activities and outcomes to date.

Phase 1 Overview

A key component of the Mayor's June 2021 Budget Message centered on the creation of the Resilience Corps Program. This inter-departmental collaboration funded primarily by American Rescue Plan Act resources centered upon a variety of paid work experience opportunities ranging in term from 25 to 30 weeks. San José residents living in low-resource census tracts, or those that were very low-income were prioritized for these paid work experience opportunities.

Following the City Council's June 23, 2021, approval of the program, a comprehensive outreach effort was conducted to identify program participants residing in San José's low resource census tracts. These outreach components featured a multi-lingual approach encompassing social media, outreach through the Mayor and City Council offices, nonprofits, universities and community colleges, and community-based partners, as well as extensive in-person outreach at various neighborhoods, community centers, libraries, and parks located in low resource census tracts.

Resilience Corps Phase 1

As described further below, Phase 1 focused on environmental stewardship, learning recovery, and small business marketing support employment pathways. As presented in the table below, a total of 207 individuals were enrolled in these various pathways.

Pathways	Enrollments	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color	Low-Resource Census Tracts
Environment - Coyote Creek	106	98%	89%
Learning Recovery	61	91%	72%
Small Business	40	93%	93%
Total	207	95%	86%

Phase 1 Pathway Activities

A brief description of the activities for the different Phase 1 Pathways follows:

- Environment-Coyote Creek. The City’s Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) contracted with the San José Conservation Corp (SJCC) to provide case management, and training and served as the employer of record. Services undertaken by the program participants included creating fire breaks and reducing fire fuels for defensible space in and around Alum Rock Park, managing vegetation along the Guadalupe River trail, rehabilitating bio-retention swales in parks, and planting native gardens that are drought tolerant. Additional work also included planting trees in parks in neighborhoods with high heat island index and having crews work at the City’s Family Camp at Yosemite to reduce fire fuels and plant trees for a healthier forest. SJCC also partnered with various community organizations, with the latter hosting program participants and supporting the cleanup of watersheds and surrounding areas, trails, and parks.
- Learning Recovery. For this Pathway, the San José Public Library (Library) contracted with the San José Library Foundation. Program participants were responsible for completing a range of activities such as the implementation, supervision, and evaluation of programs for students. This enabled students to develop skills (Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, and Citizenship) needed to succeed in school, career, and life, so that they become self-directed lifelong learners and leaders. Program participants provided quality learning experiences like small group tutoring, homework support, mentorship, and recreation for school-age children from TK – 8th grade. These programs were aligned to common core anchor standards, prioritizing whole child learning

opportunities including social-emotional learning, academics, and physical activity. All programs followed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention public health and safety guidelines and best practices.

- Small Business. The City's work2future program contracted with Goodwill of Silicon Valley for this pathway. Program participants worked with small businesses to develop a digital marketing and online presence. Goodwill provided digital marketing training and case management services. Program participants were placed with San José small businesses or revenue-producing arts and cultural organizations. These placements were made based on the employer's marketing and language needs. Of the 40 participants funded under this Pathway, 31 were supported with American Rescue Plan Act resources, and nine were funded directly with work2future's formula funds received under the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act.

It is important to note that the City's COVID Relief Food Boxing and Vaccine Champion efforts that had already commenced before the launch of the above-referenced pathways were also included within the Resilience Corps Phase 1 budget:

- Food Boxing was initiated shortly after the onset of the COVID pandemic and was initially managed out of the Emergency Operation Center, with SJCC as the lead agency for the program. In July 2021, PRNS assumed the lead for the food boxing effort, with the San José Library Foundation still serving as the contractor and serving as the employer of record for up to 110 individuals onboarded for food boxing work.
- For the vaccine effort, the City's Human Resource Department led the effort to hire Nonclinical Resilience Corps Vaccine Champions. In August 2021, this employment pathway reached a peak of 157 individuals who were hired directly by the City as temporary and unclassified workers and then deployed for logistical support at various vaccination sites. The City ceased operations of the Vaccine Champion Program in April 2022, at which point all logistical clinical needs were transitioned back to the County. Many of the remaining Vaccine Champions were hired into a position created by the County for their continued operations.

All the Learning and Small Business Pathway participants have completed their work experience. The final cohort of the Phase 1 Participants for the Environmental Pathway will complete their work experience by June 2023. Overall, for all the pathways, 85% of those clients that completed their paid work experience or exited before the end of their paid work experience achieved a positive outcome such as securing unsubsidized employment, entering/continuing their education, and/or enrolling with work2future or another workforce agency for further training and career counseling support.

Moreover, 40 of the Learning Pathway participants received a job offer from the City, a host agency, or a partner. Of those receiving such offers, 21 were hired by the City, a host agency or a partner.

PRNS Externship Pilot

To mitigate the impacts of 25 current vacancies and build a pipeline of future City Park maintenance employees, PRNS staff recently created an “externship” model where Resilience Corps participants stay in the program receiving ongoing counseling, training, and guidance from SJCC staff, while working directly in Park Districts to gain valuable experience in City service.

To date, approximately 30 participants have joined as externs. These same participants gained valuable experience working in the Park Districts and at facilities like Emma Prusch Farm Park and Happy Hollow Park & Zoo. Recently PRNS has received 40 applications from the Environmental Pathway participants for maintenance assistant positions with the City. Of these applicants, 32 have been invited to the interviewing phase, with hiring decisions anticipated for the May–June timeframe. PRNS intends to welcome future cohorts of externs over the next 18 months of the Resilience Corps program, building a pipeline and pool of trained candidates that can fill future vacancies.

Phase 2 Overview

On January 25, 2022, City Council approved the appropriation of \$13.7 million of American Rescue Plan Act funding from the State of California Volunteers Office. This Phase 2 funding was provided under the State banner of the #Californiasforall Program, and effectively supports the continuation (Phase 2) of the Environmental-Coyote Creek and Learning Recovery Pathways described above. Of note, and as described below, is that the State modified the eligibility criteria for this Phase 2 of American Rescue Plan Act funding.

- At least 75% of all participants must have two or more barriers to employment (may have difficulty finding employment, are low-income, are unemployed and/or out of school, are or were justice-involved, are in or transitioning from foster care, or engaged with the mental health or substance abuse system, etc.). The City did request, and the State subsequently approved the expansion of the eligibility criteria to include individuals residing in low-resource census tracts and are also first-generation residents/college students be included as well.
- Though the Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs was interested in pursuing the Small Business Pathway, it was not able to do so given the State-imposed restriction prohibiting program participants to undertake their paid work experience at a

for-profit host location. As such, the \$13.7 million of American Rescue Plan Act funding is supporting the Phase 2 continuation of the before-described Environmental-Coyote Creek and Learning Recovery Pathways.

Both Environmental and Learning Recovery Phase 2 Pathways launched in September 2022. The table below summarizes enrollments to date and aggregated client participant data.

Resilience Corps Phase 2

Pathways	Enrollments	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color	Two or More Barriers
Environmental	128	90%	100%
Learning	115	99%	96%
Total	243	94%	98%

Phase 2 operational highlights to date include the following:

Environmental

- Phase 2 consists of three different cohorts of approximately 60 each. To date, 128 participants have commenced their work experience. The third cohort is scheduled to commence in September 2023. Phase 2 for this pathway is expected to be fully completed by summer 2024.
- Of the 128 participants enrolled to date, 90% are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and 100% have two or more barriers to employment.
- As was the case for Phase 1, SJCC and its partners will provide various trainings, including hazardous materials waste handling certification, basic tool safety, Occupational Safety and Health Administration management elements, CPR/first aid, environmental education, and conservation and prevention (wildfires, water conservation, and climate change), financial literacy, entrepreneurship, leadership, and college career navigation support. Additional trainings pending include California Naturalist Certification, Community Emergency Response Team, and additional entrepreneurship and leadership training.
- Host sites include the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy, Veggielution, Our City Forest, and creek partners.

Learning Recovery Pathway

- To date, 115 CaliforniansForAll funded participants have commenced in Phase 2 of the Learning Recovery Pathway. Approximately 99% of these participants are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and 96% have two or more barriers to employment.
- Of the 115 CaliforniansForAll funded participants, 23 were hired for summer 2022, 45 worked the summer and are continuing through the academic year 2022-23, and 47 were hired following the end of summer and are anticipated to work through the close of the current academic school year.
- In addition, 33 of Phase 1 participants continued to work through the summer of 2022. Hence, a total of 148 Resilience Corps participants worked in the Learning Recovery Pathways during the summer of 2022.
- Phase 2 host locations include Boys & Girls Club Silicon Valley, Bay Area Tutoring Association, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, Mount Pleasant Elementary School District After School, Parks and Recreation, Recreation of City Kids (R.O.C.K.) After School, Think Together, and the San José Public Library. These programs are located in low-resourced census tracts that supported schools and students in seven Local Education Agencies (Alpha Public Schools, Alum Rock Union School District, Berryessa School District, Downtown College Prep, Franklin McKinley School District, Mt. Pleasant Elementary School District, Oak Grove School District)
- To date, 86% of the CaliforniansForAll funded participants have either successfully completed their paid work experience or are still participating in the Learning Recovery Pathway.
- As was the case for Phase 1, SJPLF and its partners will provide the following trainings:
 - Participants received professional development and training opportunities that exposed them to expanded learning pedagogy, career pathway support, and professional skills.
 - Participants attended workshops that provide information related to careers in education and expanded learning, like postgraduate programs, becoming a credentialed teacher, or substitute teaching options.
 - They received training related to trauma-informed care, protective factors, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines as well as training to better support students' academic success.
 - Participants received training related to work readiness services including resumé development, interviewing skills, professionalism, and skills for working remotely.
 - Participants attended financial literacy workshops: The Basics of Budgeting and Saving, Credit and Debt Management, Employment Tax Forms, and Building and Rebuilding Credit.

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Looking Ahead

For Phase 2, the City anticipates serving in total 340 participants and fully spending the #CaliforniansForAll funding by fall 2024. Staff will continue to explore other funding sources to continue the Program Pathways once the Phase 2 funding is fully expended. Possible options include State resources under the Office of California Volunteers Program, the Employment Development Department, and/or other sources of philanthropic or corporate funding.

/s/

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Director of Economic Development
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For questions, please contact Jeff Ruster, Assistant Director, Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs at (408) 535-8174.