

From: [Greg Markle](#)
To: [Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Community Service Committee Funding Recommendation
Date: Monday, November 28, 2022 4:16:03 PM
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Mello Madam Mayor and Alders,

I am writing in hopes that there is a creative solution.

Staff recommendations, which were then passed by the Community Services Committee, for the use of limited Employment Training funds include a cut to Operation Fresh Start funding of \$100,000. The staff recommendations for Employment Training funding moves funding from a direct impact for employment outcomes towards younger youth programming. Following these recommendations reduces the impact of the limited funding available and doesn't follow direction from the Mayor and CSC committee to focus funds on emerging youth population. Please focus funding on the greatest impact:

1. Emerging adult focus: The committee specifically designed a process to provide focus on Emerging adults. The Mayor added \$250,000 to the funding specifically focused on this population. Yet the greatest increase in funding is going towards younger youth programming – *over \$400,000 – over 30%*. In total, when adding previous funding towards emerging adult/older youth and the Mayor addition, there was *\$120,000 cut and redirected* from this population towards youth programming. Emerging Adults are a population most at need as they face adult situations of homelessness, food insecurity and violence while not having available to them the services and supports availed to younger youth. This is why I was overjoyed there was supposed to be a focus on this population.

And this movement of funds towards younger youth programming is directly against [what research shows us is effective employment training:](#) (Brookings Institute)

“Research suggest that summer jobs programs reduce violent and property crime but have no long term effect on employment and earnings.” Brookings Institute [Work-Based Learning Can Advance Equity And Opportunity for America's Young People.](#)

2. Credentialing: *OFS Legacy program has built into its 1,000 hours of programming a **HS diploma issued by MMSD*** – not an HSED or GED as erroneously stated in the presentation by staff. No youth programming funded includes the single greater indicator or employment, adult homelessness and involvement in justice systems – a High School diploma. The most direct impact on employment that the City's limited funds can have to provide young people a path to this vital employment credential.

- HS graduates earn over \$10,000 more annually.
- 75% of prison inmates didn't complete HS.
- Only 40% of individuals that didn't complete HS are unemployed.

- A HS diploma is the most often used credential qualification for jobs in Dane County – over 10 times more often than any other credential.

Of the 4,000 disconnected youth in Dane County, nearly half don't have a High School diploma. These young people are the racial achievement gap in our community. Without this credential a young person doesn't even get that chance at most careers -it doesn't matter what summer youth experience they were in.

Additional aspects of OFS Legacy Program not in any funded youth programming: (In addition to the HS Diploma)

- A Drivers License: The second most required credential for employment in Dane County. (OFS provides classroom and behind the wheel instruction and a car for taking the test.)
- \$2,3000 for college (A path to many STEM careers requires college which requires tuition and books) This is an AmeriCorps award at program completion that can be used at any college.
- 1,000 hours of paid programming while young person is studying or at worksites. Youth programming doesn't have the depth or length. (Cost per hour of programming is lower for the City – better investment)

3. Matching Funding: A \$50,0000 cut in OFS local funding will mean a \$100,000 cut in total program budget. OFS uses the City funds as required match for federal DOL investment. The impact will be greater than just this cut.

These cuts mean an additional 200 young adults won't receive these services funded by the City over the next five years.

Please focus resources on the greatest impact. The staff recommendation to cut funding to the programming that provides the greatest impact for the population most in need.

I encourage exploring creative options to restore this funding.

I am available to discuss this and answer questions: cell: 608.609.7118.

Thank you,

Greg

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Operation Fresh Start

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Mission: Operation Fresh Start empowers emerging adults on a path to self-sufficiency through education, mentoring, and employment training.

operationfreshstart.org

[Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter!](#)



Operation Fresh Start helps emerging adults and our community through your support and engagement. Thank you!

Operation Fresh Start is a YouthBuild and CorpsNetwork Member organization and partner in the American JobCenter and gratefully receive additional support through the United Way of Dane County, City of Madison and Dane County.

And our staff kickball team Fresh Kicks is really good --- or at least we have a lot of fun.