

# Evaluation of Twin Cities Youth Social Entrepreneurship Programs

## *Summary of Sundance Family Foundation Research Cohort*

In winter 2016, the Sundance Family Foundation partnered with Wilder Research to engage a cohort of Youth Social Entrepreneurship (YSE) programs in a 24-month evaluation capacity building and a research study. Sundance defines YSE programs as youth-centric, youth-led enterprises (i.e., businesses or community social initiatives) that include the development of entrepreneurial thought, community engagement, social-emotional learning (SEL), and workforce readiness. The purpose of the study was to grow the capacity of YSE programs to conduct evaluation and gather evidence of YSE program impact on youth. Please see the full report and Appendix A for a full description of the evaluation and instruments used.

Based on data from DEED and the State Demographer's Office, Minnesota Compass reports that by 2024, Minnesota is expected to have 3.1 million jobs, yet only 2.7 million working-age adults (age 18-64), leaving a potential shortfall of about 400,000 workers. (See Compass Points 2017: [https://www.mncompass.org/\\_pdfs/compass-points-2017.pdf](https://www.mncompass.org/_pdfs/compass-points-2017.pdf).) To make up this shortfall, Minnesota needs to take full advantage of the state's human capital, including supporting the workforce skills of racially and ethnically diverse youth.

### Description of programs

A total of 12 programs (10 organizations) participated in the YSE research cohort. These programs varied widely in terms of size, location, and enterprise activity (Figure 1). Due to variations in their programming and their initial data capacity, the number of youth assessed by each program as part of the evaluation also varied substantially (4-120 youth).

Two of the programs in the cohort served 43 percent of the youth. As such, the results from those two programs had a large impact on the overall results. To ensure programs, regardless of size, were better represented among the aggregate results (433 youth), a separate analysis was done of the 10 programs (245 youth) that had collected data on 50 youth or less.

#### Research Cohort

- Appetite for Change
- Cookie Cart
- Cycles for Change
- Dream of Wild Health
- Elpis Enterprises
- Juxtaposition Arts
- Keystone Community Services – Youth Express
- Lakes Center for Youth and Families – Tried and True Small Engines
- Pillsbury United Communities – Triple C Coffee Cart, Full Cycle & Sisterhood Boutique
- Tree Trust\*
- Urban Roots
- Urban Strategies, Inc. – Green Garden Bakery\*

\*New for 2018 (not included in these data).

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## 1. Description of programs in the research cohort

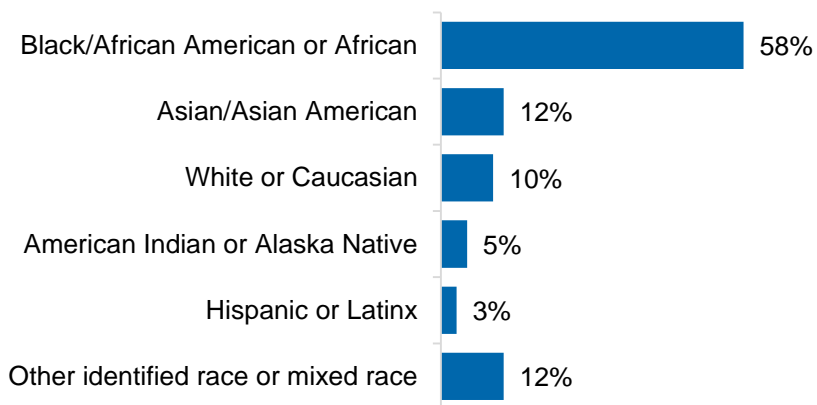
	All programs	Programs with small datasets
Number of programs	12	10
Number of youth	433	245
Average age	15.6	16.3
Average days engaged in program	114	85
<b>Data collection/response rates</b>		
Work Readiness assessments completed	287 (66%)	112 (46%)
Range in number of youth assessed	4 – 120	4 – 26
Youth Retrospective surveys completed	297 (69%)	168 (69%)
Range in youth completing survey	8 – 79	8 – 49

### Key Finding: Programs serve diverse youth.

The over 400 youth served by the 12 participating YSE programs from fall 2016 through summer 2017 were a diverse group. About half of youth identified as male and half as female. While most youth (80%) were working age teens, they ranged in age from 8-22 (average age was 15.6). Racially, youth were also very diverse, with over half identifying as Black, African American or African (58%) (Figure 2).

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## 2. Race and ethnicity of youth served YSE programs, all 12 programs

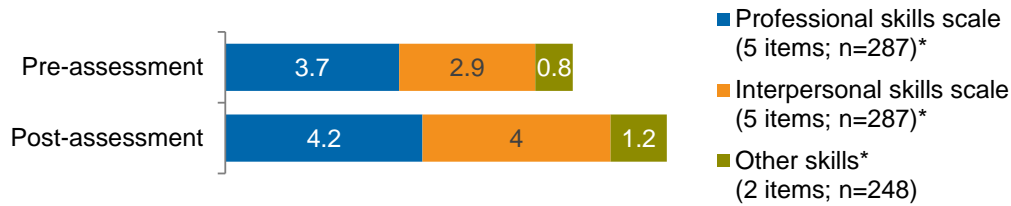


### Key Finding: Youth gained proficiency in work readiness skills

Staff ratings of youth's work readiness skills indicated statistically significant improvements in all areas – professional skills, interpersonal skills, and other skills (financial self-sufficiency and job application) (Figure 3). At the onset of their employment or engagement with their respective YSE program, youth were rated proficient or exemplary on 7.4 out of 12 items, on average. After three or more months of programming,

youth had gained proficiency on two items and were rated proficient or exemplary on 9.4 out of 12 items on average. Eleven of 12 items showed statistically significant improvement overall; the only item without significant change was “attendance.”

**3. Pre-post staff ratings of youth’s work readiness skills, average number of items youth are proficient or exemplary, 11 programs**



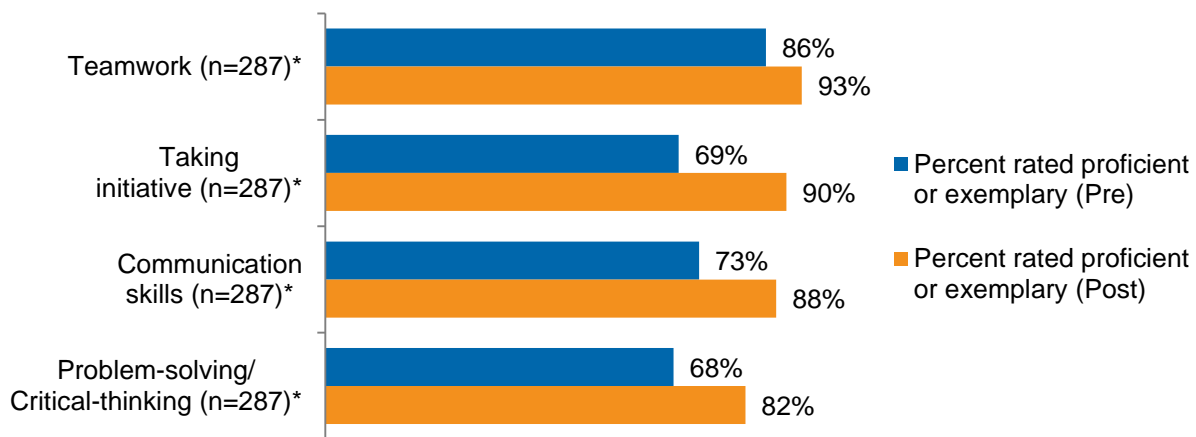
Note. Significance tests were conducted using McNemars test; an \* indicates the post was statistically higher than the pre. One program with a small dataset was not included, as only one youth was rated.

**Key Finding: Youth had the most improvements in interpersonal skills.**

On average, youth’s interpersonal skills grew the most. At the onset of their employment or engagement with their respective YSE program, youth were rated proficient or exemplary on 2.9 out of 5 interpersonal skills, on average (Figure 3 above). After three or more months, youth were rated proficient or exemplary on 4 of 5 items.

Of particular note, 20 percent or more of youth gained proficiency on four items in the interpersonal scale: taking initiative, teamwork, communication skills, and problem-solving/ critical-thinking, a statistically significant change (Figure 4).

**4. Pre-post staff ratings of youth’s interpersonal skills, percentage of youth rated proficient or exemplary at pre and post**

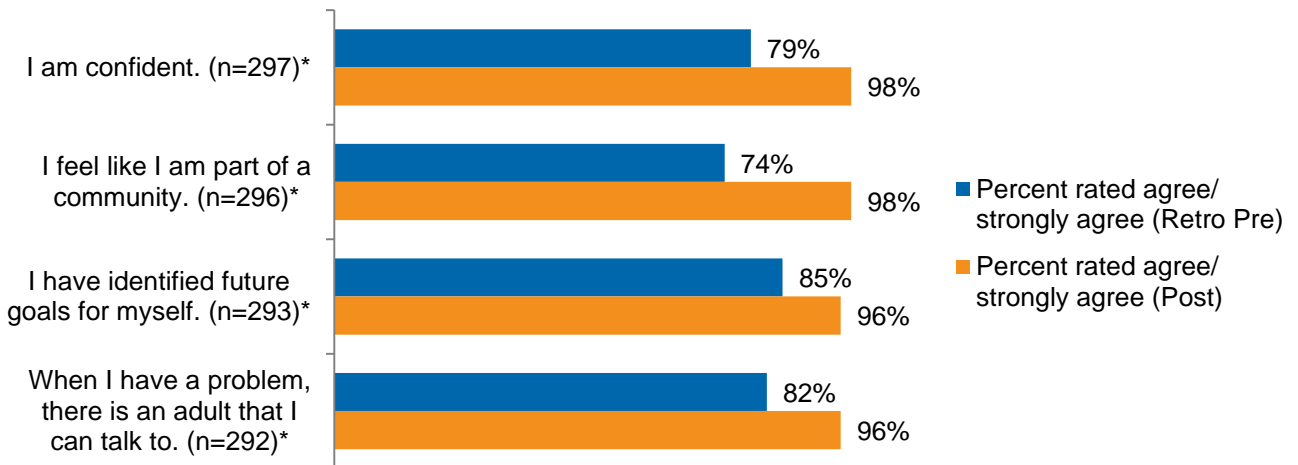


Note. Significance tests were conducted using McNemars test; an \* indicates the post was statistically higher than the pre. One program with a small dataset was not included, as only one youth was rated.

## Youth reported growth in their own social-emotional skills.

On the Youth Retrospective Survey, youth similarly perceived improvement in their social-emotional skills. Youth ratings of their skills at the beginning and end of programming reflected statistically significant growth in: feeling part of their community, feeling confident, having an adult to talk to about problems, and having future goals for themselves (Figure 5).

### 5. Youth self-ratings, retro-pre/post and change, all 12 programs



Note. Significance tests were conducted using McNemars test; an \* indicates the post was statistically higher than the retro-pre.

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#### For more information

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