
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2023

PRESS RELEASE

Fresno EOC YouthBuild program secures \$1.5 million in federal funding

Fresno, CA- **The YouthBuild Charter High School of California**, operated by Fresno EOC Local Conservation Corps, has received a renewal following the award of a grant from US Department of Labor. The \$90 million grant has been distributed among 68 organizations in 32 states, is aimed at providing employment services and training. The YouthBuild program is among the beneficiaries of this funding.

"YouthBuild Fresno is preparing at-risk, underserved young people for good quality jobs while bolstering the regional workforce to meet industry demands," says Congressman Jim Costa, highlighting how impactful this funding will be for the program.

"With this federal investment, Fresno EOC will support workforce development, create good-paying jobs, and empower our youth to reach their full potential," said Costa.

For the third consecutive cycle the program has been awarded this grant. The Grants support pre-apprenticeships that will provide education and training to young people aged 18-24 who are not in school or employed. The focus is on high-demand industries, with an emphasis on the construction sector.

Demetrius Romero-Sanchez, a current student of the YouthBuild program, stands as a shining example of success within the program. Reflecting on his journey, Romero-Sanchez shared, "So many things were going wrong in my life before I entered the program, and I didn't think I would succeed. Being in the program helped me take my steps forward and get my footing in life." His determination and perseverance have allowed him to overcome numerous obstacles.

Recently, Romero-Sanchez achieved a significant milestone by accepting a job offer at Valley Children's Hospital as a Sterilization tech. This remarkable accomplishment has not only transformed his life but has also opened countless doors of opportunity. Looking back, Romero-Sanchez expressed his gratitude, stating, "Now I have a really good job, and so many doors have opened up for me. I know that's something that can happen for other people if the program continues."

His story serves as an inspiring testament to the transformative power of the YouthBuild program and the potential it holds for changing lives and creating a brighter future.

Fresno EOC CEO Emilia Reyes spoke about the positive impact of funding for the program. "This funding provides incredible opportunities for young people to learn and grow within their own community," said Reyes.

She also praised the LCC program, saying, "LCC has been one of the most hands-on programs for our youth, and this grant will add to their development and preparedness for future jobs. This investment in the local youth community will have a significant impact on their educational and career paths, offering them the support and resources needed to thrive in Fresno."

Shawn Riggins, LCC Director, highlights the significance of YouthBuild grants, emphasizing the transformative impact they will have on students.

Riggins says, "These grants will provide students with invaluable opportunities to gain essential skills, equipping them with the ability to construct or renovate affordable housing for low-income or homeless families in their respective communities."

To learn more about the YouthBuild program, please contact YouthBuild Charter High School of California at [\(559\) 264-1048](tel:5592641048) or visit the website www.fresnoeoc.org/lcc/.

[About Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission \(EOC\)](#)

Established in 1965, Fresno EOC is a non-profit Community Action Agency that provides opportunities, strengthens self-sufficiency, and offers support for all people. We listen to the needs of the communities we serve to create effective programs and services. Fresno EOC is at the forefront, continuing the war on poverty with more than 35 programs dedicated to getting people the help they need to achieve their goals.

[About Fresno EOC Local Conservation Corps \(LCC\)](#)

LCC provides young adults (ages 18-26) with paid job training and educational opportunities. Corpsmembers must simultaneously enroll and make progress in an academic program while participating in the LCC's vocational training programs. Those without a high school diploma can enroll in the on-site YouthBuild Charter High School of California (YCSC), while high school graduates can take college classes offered each semester. The LCC's College and Career Center provides resources for corpsmembers to explore postsecondary and career pathways. Corpsmembers can earn an education award (college scholarship) by enrolling in AmeriCorps while serving their community.