




## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Joya Hayes, Interim Director, Human Resources and Civil Service 

**DATE:** June 21, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Council Agenda Items for June 23, 2016

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The City of Austin takes pride in the youth programs that have been implemented within the Human Resources Department and in departments across the City. These programs allow high school and college students to work throughout the year in various departments. Attached is an overview of programs administered by the Human Resources Department, Youth & Family Services/Youth Initiatives division.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information regarding two of those programs that will come before council for approval on June 23, 2016. The first item is the acceptance of grant funds from the Corporation for National Community Service for AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), a national service program designed to fight poverty. This program provides up to 19 individuals to work for the City for 12 months at a cost to the City of up to \$35,028 which is available in the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Operating Budget of the Human Resources Department. The partnership between the City of Austin and AmeriCorps began in July 2012 with nine individuals and has continued to grow.

The second item is to formalize an Interlocal agreement with Austin Community College, Center for Public Policy and Political Studies for an internship program. This program provides an opportunity for up to 10 students, who are studying public policy, to work in various governmental entities including the City of Austin. Students in the program would work in City departments, up to 20 hours per week for one semester. Other governmental entities that have participated in the program include Austin Independent School District, Lower Colorado River Authority, Travis County and the Governor's Office. The partnership between the City of Austin and Austin Community College, Center for Public Policy and Political Studies began in 2008.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Attachment

cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager  
Mark Washington, Interim Assistant City Manager

# The Youth & Family Services/Youth Initiatives

One of the major aims of the office is to assure that youth programming is inclusive of all 7 ISDs Austin residents attend, as well as being inclusive of those students that attend charter, private/parochial schools, Texas School for the Deaf, Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and students who are homeschooled.

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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### AUSTIN YOUTH COUNCIL AND CAREER FEST

The Austin Youth Council is a general assembly of about 80 high school students who represent the majority of the high school population in the City of Austin. There are 10 elected council members that represent the 10 districts in Austin. We have students from over 25 high schools from AISD, DVISD, PFISD, RRISD, LISD, charter schools, private schools and parochial schools. This program is an opportunity for leadership development as they serve as the voice for Austin's youth; broadly, the program aims to cultivate a culture of civic engagement and community service in Austin's youth.

Resulting from an initiative from the Austin Youth Council members, is the Annual Career Fest. This event is designed to showcase various career pathways and internship/job opportunities for students. This year 100+ businesses, companies, and organizations in Austin were represented and 1,000 high school students were in attendance. Guest speaker, Jack Ingram spoke to students about following their dreams and coordinated a STEAM panel, which had representatives from the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design, and Math to discuss their careers. This event provides Austin-area high school students with an opportunity to interact with people working in the careers they may be interested in pursuing, as well as providing Austin-area high school students job opportunities and a range of career choices.

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### AMERICORPS VISTA PROGRAM

The AmeriCorps VISTA program is a city-wide project which is a program of national service where college graduates volunteer a year of their time to develop various programs; the VISTA's goals are to assure services reach the target population of those living in families with incomes below the poverty line. There are 17 projects across the city in the following departments: Human Resources; Health & Human Services; Neighborhood Housing; Parks & Recreation; Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs; Public Works; & the Mayor's Office.

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### QUALITY OF LIFE FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS COMMITTEE

The City of Austin Youth & Family Services/Youth Initiatives Office partnered with local higher education institutions and City departments to create a committee that addressed the quality of life for college students as it relates to the five issues of affordability, transportation, public safety, sustainability, and ethnic and racial inclusion. The local higher education institutions include: *University of Texas at Austin, Austin Community College, St. Edward's University, Concordia University Texas, and Huston-Tillotson University*. City departments include: *Neighborhood Housing & Community Development, Office of Sustainability, Austin Transportation Department, Austin Code, Austin Police Department, Austin Fire Department, and Austin-Travis County EMS*.

The committee met once a month during the 2015-2016 academic school year to discuss the five issues as it relates to the quality of life of the higher education student population as well as the programs and practices put in place by the City of Austin as of date.

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## YOUTH WEBSITE

In partnership with *Austin Free Net*, and *The Boys & Girls Club of Austin*, the Youth Website program works to give students from 8th grade to seniors in high school, the opportunity to get paid to learn how to code. With 12, two-hour sessions, held after school at four different sites, students learn how to code, research a disease that is prominent in the community, and create a website to help spread information and awareness about that disease.

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## INTERNSHIPS

The Youth & Family Services/Youth Initiatives Office also facilitates four internship programs for high school students: the *Emerging Leader Summer Internship Program*, *Get Ready! Summer Internship Program*, *Aviation & Austin Convention Center Summer Internship Program* and *Austin Corps Civic Engineering Program*.

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### EMERGING LEADER SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The *Emerging Leaders Summer Internship Program* is a partnership between the City of Austin, Bank of America the Quality of Life Foundation. Internship opportunities are not only with the City of Austin Departments but various companies and organizations willing to host a summer intern. This program supports teen employment as provides an opportunity to students they might not have had otherwise. This program employs at least **30 high-school students** over the summer, and internships are carefully designed and offered to students based on their particular interests and skills identified throughout their application and interview process. The internship program is 6 weeks in length with students working 20 hours a week. The funding for this program come from the Quality of Life Foundation, a non-profit organization.

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### GET READY! SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The *Get Ready! Summer Internship Program* is an internship program designed to use S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design, and Math) as the focal point in terms of the internships that will be made available; this program creates the opportunity for these students to gain experience in occupational areas where there is an increasing job demand. The program gives over **75 paid-internships** opportunities to students over the summer; giving them hands-on learning experiences, and ultimately aiming to increase the student's engagement and interest in the career fields where jobs are in an increasingly high-demand. The internship program is 6 weeks in length with students working 20 hours a week.

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### AVIATION & AUSTIN CONVENTION CENTER SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

This pilot program will allow 40 high school students to gain work experience within the Aviation and Austin Convention Center in a 5-6 week period. The City of Austin Youth & Family Services/Youth Initiatives Office will assist in the creation and implementation of the program. The YFS/YI office will partner with Austin Interfaith and 4 AISD high schools to recruit and train youth interested in working with these departments. Selected students will receive workforce training provided by Austin Interfaith during the school year, complete an application, participate in interviews, participate in training provided by the YFS/YI office and

be placed in various divisions this summer within the Aviation Department and the Austin Convention Center Department.

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### **AUSTINCORPS CIVIC ENGINEERING PROGRAM**

In partnership with AISD students participating in this program receive school credit through their Government course. The students spend the first semester taking field trips to learn about the projects being worked on by City of Austin departments. During the second semester, students are placed in an internship with a department they have expressed interest in. The course is currently offered at 5 AISD High-Schools (Akins, Travis, Austin, Reagan and Crockett) work is underway to expand the number of participating high-schools.

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### **WORK-BASED LEARNING/SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

The Youth & Family Services Office has the responsibility for working with Travis County as a liaison for this program. Over 700 students are employed each summer. The students are between the ages of 14 to 17 who reside and attend school in the City of Austin and/or Travis County area. Each participant is provided with a broad range of projects in work settings within the public sector (City of Austin and Travis County), non-profit organizations, and private businesses. The program provides an opportunity for young people to develop competence and confidence as well as workplace skills in a “real-world of work” environment. Those chosen for the program will be exposed to career awareness and exploration while developing their own career paths. Additionally, youth interact with positive, successful adult role models who provide guidance in setting and achieving goals.

## **City Department College Internship Initiatives**

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### **AUSTIN ENERGY COLLEGE INTERSHIP PROGRAM**

This a 12 week program developed for college Junior, Senior or Graduate students. The students who are majoring in Business or Engineering are the focused candidates for the program. Last year 25 interns were hired for the 12 week period.

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### **PUBLIC WORKS COLLEGE INTERSHIP PROGRAM**

Internship opportunities in the following areas: Engineering, Architecture, Finance, Human Resources, Geographic Information Systems, and Urban Trails. Internships

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### **WATERSHED PROTECTION DEPARTMENT**

This Internship Program is a 12 week engagement (June – August) developed for college Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors or Graduate students. The students who are majoring in Environmental Science, Geological Science, Ecological Restoration, Biology, Civil Engineering and Mathematics are the candidates for the program. Last year 15 interns were hired for the 12 week period.

Additional information, including a comprehensive list of youth-focused programs offered by HRD and other City departments can be found at <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/about-youth-and-family-services>.