

WHITE PLAINS YOUTH BUREAU

Summer

• REPORT •

2026



Growing White Plains

What a Summer!

It feels as if school just let out yesterday, yet, here we are already wrapping up an incredible summer of programming! Despite a few curveballs along the way, this was one of our most successful and enjoyable summers yet based on the glowing feedback from the teens who joined us.

Growing White Plains & the Community Garden: Resilience in Bloom

Mother Nature had other plans for us this year! Growing White Plains faced a rocky start, scorching early heat gave way to relentless rain, and a tornado even touched down just north of White Plains. As if that were not enough, we faced transportation issues that forced to pivot and redesign our activities that we planned for our student gardener.

Nevertheless, our community did not miss a beat. Despite losing our wheels and hands-on support, we still grew a thriving, beautiful community garden that is now feeding families through donations to local food pantries. Talk about turning obstacles into opportunity!



Summer Field Trips: Adventure Finds a Way

Losing van access could have meant losing our beloved field trips, too—but we made it happen anyway, coordinating two unforgettable outings:

The Bronx Botanical Garden

Kids rolled up their sleeves in workshops led by college-age and expert gardeners, explored the grounds, and capped it off with a BBQ.

Governors Island

A ferry ride carried our young gardeners to explore the waterways, working vegetable gardens, and the island's award-winning lavender garden.

None of this happens without our incredible community. Thank you to everyone who supported our programs this summer you helped make it a season to remember for the youth of White Plains!



Greening Project

*This summer, we brought
the greening to us!*

Throughout the five-week program, eight youth participated in a variety of activities focused on horticulture and the local urban environment of White Plains. Participants were responsible for planting and caring for plants from seed, which they grew in personalized planter boxes. Hands-on projects — like making recycled paper from old Youth Bureau magazines and building wooden birdhouses — gave them the chance to creatively address environmental issues.

Participants also conducted research projects that deepened their understanding of our local environment. In the first half of the program, they designed and carried out a survey on the safety and accessibility of White Plains green spaces (parks, patios, and more). After compiling the data, they presented their preliminary findings to Justin Holman, a planner with the Planning Department. The group also completed our White Plains History Project, recreating historical photos from the White Plains Public Library's Historical Collection. These recreations were submitted to the Collection to serve as a record of White Plains in 2026. Anderson Arteaga, a rising senior at Stephinac High School, said these projects made him “more aware of the environment of the city.” Through this research, participants strengthened their personal connection to White Plains while developing creative ideas to improve it.

During the Greening Project participants also built valuable professional skills. For many, this was their first work experience. Diego Urzua, who graduated from White Plains High School

in May, described it as his “first time working in a professional setting.” In this collaborative environment, youth were encouraged to bring their own creativity while learning to listen to and apply feedback from their peers. Cody Black, a representative from the College of Westchester, led a series of presentations on career and life skills, including interview preparation and navigating the transition to college. The group put these lessons into practice through mock interviews, taking turns role-playing as employers and job candidates.

This year's Greening Project gave youth an incredible opportunity to learn about nature and their own environment while building professional skills. They put that knowledge to work in a hands-on presentation on the value of nutritious eating for middle schoolers from the Health & Wellness Summer Camp. Participants leave the program with a deeper connection to nature, to White Plains and with lasting skills in collaboration, initiative, and dependability.



Bits N Pieces Summer Camp

Six weeks of laughter,
learning, and pure
summer magic!

Roughly 180 amazing campers entering first through fifth grade turned our summer program into a whirlwind of fun, friendship, and discovery and this year's theme, "LAUGH, LEARN, PLAY," came to life in every single activity!

Our incredible teachers and instructors wove that theme into every lesson, creating a space where campers didn't just learn they thrived! Through dynamic academic modules in **English Language Arts, Math, Science, Living Wellness, Art, Story Sparks, and Camp Chronicles**, campers dove into hands-on adventures that made learning feel like play.

In **English Language Arts**, campers leveled up their reading, writing, and vocabulary skills through lively read alouds, morning messages, and free writing sessions. **Math** came alive with interactive games, puzzles, and flash cards that turned problem solving into pure fun. Through **Story Sparks**, young writers unlocked their creativity building from simple sentences all the way up to powerful narrative and persuasive pieces! With **Camp Chronicles**, campers became real reporters, writing, editing, and collaborating to publish their very own camp newsletter!

In **Living Wellness**, campers exploring healthy habits through movement, discussion,

and hands-on activities, covering everything from nutrition and fitness to sleep and mindfulness. In **Soft Science**, campers became junior anthropologists, weaving, molding clay tablets, and building looms as they uncovered the wonders of human culture and history!

Of course, camp wouldn't be camp without the excitement of enrichment activities Creative Corner, Mix It Up, Arts and Crafts, Dance, Backyard Sports, Recreation, and Swimming kept the energy high all summer long! Campers even got special visits from the Girl Scouts, who brought fantastic hands-on experiences that sparked creativity, confidence, and teamwork!

Then came the truly unforgettable moments! Campers screamed with joy at Quassy Amusement Park, built epic adventures at LEGOLAND and cooled off with a sweet surprise, thanks to the generosity of Grandpas United, who treated everyone to an ice cream truck! The summer wrapped up in style with a fun trip to the movies the perfect finale to an epic season!



This summer truly brought "Laugh, Learn, Play" to life filled with new skills, unforgettable friendships, and memories our campers will cherish for years to come.



Social Justice for Youth Program ~ Community Youth Court

Inside the Courtroom Where Teenagers Are Rewriting Justice

What happens when you hand teenagers real cases, real courtrooms, and real responsibility? This summer, the White Plains Youth Bureau's Social Justice for Youth Program/Community Youth Court found out and the results were extraordinary.

■ **FORTY** young people

■ **FIFTEEN** real diversion cases

■ **ONE** mock trial inside White Plains City Hall.



Then came the test. On August 6th, inside the Chambers at City Hall, Youth Court members put their training on trial through a Mock Trial that showcased everything they'd learned. The Mayor's Office, Westchester County District Attorney Susan Cacace, and the Office of State Senator Shelley Mayer all took notice, awarding special recognitions alongside completion certificates.

The experience didn't stop at the courtroom doors. Members landed internships with the Federal Defenders Office, the Westchester County Attorney's Office, a Court of Claims Judge, and a local law firm. These are real placements with exposure to careers in law. One member, Youth Court Assistant Angela Mathews, chosen as a UNA-USA Delegate, joining a Town Hall Meeting on the global search for the next UN Secretary-General.

Beyond the courtroom, members gave back serving food pantries in Peekskill and White Plains, volunteering at the Carver Center in Port Chester, and showing up



for National Night Out. Through the Rosebuds Advocates initiative, young women built vision boards, coping strategies, and leadership skills together.

These teens did not simply study justice they questioned it, tackling public speaking topics such as the effects of the for-profit prison system, the literacy crisis, domestic violence, and how music shapes mental health.

Perhaps the most powerful storyline of all: returning members mentoring the newcomers, turning a training program into a community.

The verdict on summer 2026? A resounding success and proof that when you give young people the tools of justice, they not only learn the system, they start to reshape it.



STEM Camp

Bridging the Gap, Building the Future

Summer slide does not stand a chance at the White Plains Youth Bureau! Our STEM Camp exists to fill a critical gap serving rising 6th, 7th, and 8th graders who've outgrown traditional summer camp but aren't quite ready for summer employment. This is the sweet spot where curiosity meets capability.

WHO SHOWED UP:

- 10 girls, 20 boys
- 15 rising 6th graders
- 10 rising 7th graders
- 5 rising 8th graders

A vibrant mix of cultures:

- 1 African American
- 24 Hispanic/Latino
- 3 Caucasian
- 2 Asian



Under the direction of our certified Technology Teacher Mr. Douglas Thron, Jr., who brought serious energy to the classroom students coded Ozobots, piloted drones, and tackled team design-and-build challenges that pushed them to think like real engineers. Every activity was hands-on and rooted in the Engineering Design Process: Ask, Research, Imagine, Plan, Create, Test, and Improve. Giving students a real-world framework, they will carry far beyond camp.

Where STEM Met the World Cup

Our campers built Aviation and Aerospace-themed LEGO creations, flexed their creativity by designing their own soccer stadiums inspired by the 2026



World Cup. Along the way, they discovered just how much STEM powers the beautiful game from the physics behind every kick to cutting-edge stadium tech and next-gen player uniforms.

Careers & Impact

The New York State Troopers rolled in with drones and their K9 unit, opening students' eyes to STEM careers they had never considered forensics, DNA analysis, and the tech keeping communities safe. Then it was up, up, and away aboard the mobile White Plains Youth Bureau Flight Simulator, guided by Captain Parker and Mr. Kenny De La Rosa, alongside hands-on aviation projects that let kids imagine themselves in the cockpit.

The Win

More than the trips, the tech, and the trophies, what made this summer unforgettable was connection. Through our partners, students met professionals who are genuinely passionate about their work and walked away seeing new possibilities for their own futures.

SAT Summer Intensive Program

...the results speak for themselves!

This summer, the White Plains Youth Bureau teamed up with Bell Curves and the College of Westchester to launch something brand new: the SAT Summer Intensive Program and the results speak for themselves.

From June 30 through August 20, 2026, **29 rising 11th and 12th graders** spent eight weeks at the College of Westchester diving into reading, writing, math, grammar, and the test-taking strategies that make all the difference on exam day. This was not just another summer program it was a powerful collaboration bringing together WPYB's mission to expand opportunity for local youth, Bell Curves' proven SAT expertise, and a college campus setting that let students picture their future up close.



The Numbers are Impressive:

By the second diagnostic assessment, students were not just improving, *they were transforming their scores:*

- **12TH GRADERS**
jumped an average of **177 points**,
from 893 to **1,070**
- **11TH GRADERS**
climbed an average of **157 points**,
from 920 to **1,077**



The true win goes beyond the score report. Under the guidance of instructors Dr. Marlen Lux and Ms. Christina Robinson, students built something that will serve them well beyond test day: confidence, discipline, sharper study habits, and the perseverance to push through a challenge. Both instructors praised the group's engagement and effort throughout the eight-week journey; when students are challenged and supported, they rise to meet it.

This program is a shining example of what is possible when community organizations, educators, and families rally around young people. WPYB extends heartfelt thanks to Bell Curves, Westchester Clubmen, the College of Westchester, the instructors, and most of all the students and families whose commitment made it all happen.

The SAT Summer Intensive produced measurable outcomes built on consistency, hard work, and outstanding instruction! These White Plains students are one step closer to fulfilling their academic dreams.

Y.E.S. Summer Report



Y.E.S. by the Numbers...

212 Youth were employed during the summer of 2026

155 Youth employed in F012

26 Youth were employed through TANF funds (Grant)

15 Youth were employed in the Medical Career Pathways Program (Grant)

16 Youth were employed in the READI Program (Grant)

Y.E.S. FACTS...

66% of youth were first time employees with Youth Employment Services.

51% of YES summer program participants were female & **49%** were male.

98% of youth indicated that they enjoyed their summer job and would recommend it to future summer participants.

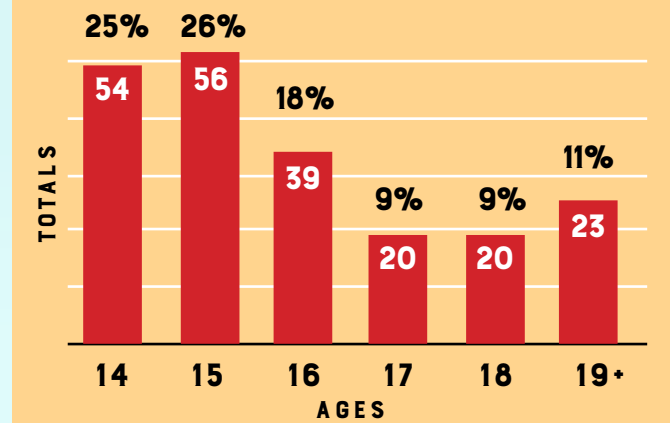
63% of youth reported being exposed to or learning about a new career.

80% of youth identified communication and teamwork as skills gained through their summer job.

95% of site supervisors indicated they would recommend their youth employee for future employment.

83% of site supervisors rated their youth employee's overall performance as "excellent" or "very good."

AGE BREAKDOWN OF THE 212 EMPLOYEES



12 youth were permanently hired by their summer employment placements.

Youth had this to say about their summer jobs...

"I would strongly recommend working here to another student. I think this position is great for developing stronger communication skills."

Aina Barreto, White Plains Community Center

"I really enjoyed this program. It gave me a lot of new opportunities & has educated me on different medical careers. It has helped make up my mind that I do want to work in healthcare & has led me to meet with people that can eventually help me throughout my career."

Coraline Carpinteyro, Medical Career Pathways Program

"This job expanded my knowledge on professions that you can apply for with or without college."

Kervlee Charles, Summer Career Academy

"I really loved this job, having to work with kids is fun & creating relationships/connections with the kids & others. I had such an amazing time here."

Danna Cuateco Aguilar, Bits n Pieces Camp



"This job is great for people interested in computer forensics. Although, I wasn't as interested in this career at the start, I am now."

Dayanna Silva, Project Digital Jumpstart

"This job has taught me a lot more of what people are going through. I am very grateful for it."

Nora Jones, Kensington Assisted Living



Site Supervisors had this to say about their summer employee...

"Sabrina will be missed. We would be happy to welcome her back anytime and in any capacity. The therapists will miss her assistance and the children will miss her support. Sabrina participated in all aspects of our practice and has been an asset throughout."

Physical Therapy 4 Kids, employee Sabrina Andrade



"Anneliese operated autonomously and consistently produced a high output of work. Our files have never been so organized, thanks to her!"

WP Building Department, employee Anneliese Alonso

"Anthonella has been absolutely amazing-great with the kids, ready to tackle anything & everything I put in front of her; truly a delight to work with."

WP Library, employee Maria (Anthonella) Benitez Quintero

"Stephanie has been wonderful to work with. She has been responsible, respectful and willing to learn. I have enjoyed having her join the team for the summer."

WP Police Department, employee Stephanie Charro Gill

"Absolutely amazing with our residents. Compassionate, kind and very helpful."

The Kensington White Plains, employee Justin Wong

THE KENSINGTON
WHITE PLAINS

Health & Wellness Summer Camp

A Summer of Growth, Energy & Fun

This summer, the Healthy & Fit Summer Camp turned up the energy for White Plains student's grades 6th through 8th, giving campers an action-packed, safe, and welcoming space to move, grow, and thrive. Over two dynamic three-week sessions, campers dove into a powerful mix of fitness, nutrition, social-emotional learning, and wellness.

For many families, this camp was so much more than a summer activity. It was a Launchpad; a place where kids stayed active, built real confidence, connected with inspiring role models, and discovered new passions that will stick with them well beyond August.

Summer Highlights

Sports & Recreation: From fast-paced basketball and soccer to volleyball, kickball, and team fitness challenges, campers stayed moving while learning teamwork, sportsmanship, and grit.

Nutrition & Healthy Living: Hands-on activities brought healthy eating to life, helping campers understand how food fuels energy, mood, and overall wellness.

Gardening & Hydroponics: Campers got their hands dirty growing traditional gardens and explored cutting-edge hydroponic technology, discovering how innovation, agriculture, and nutrition connect.

Social-Emotional Learning: Through games and group discussions, campers sharpened



communication, problem-solving and emotional management skills that carry far beyond camp.

Mental Wellness: Yoga, mindfulness, and breathing exercises gave campers real tools to manage stress and stay grounded for life.

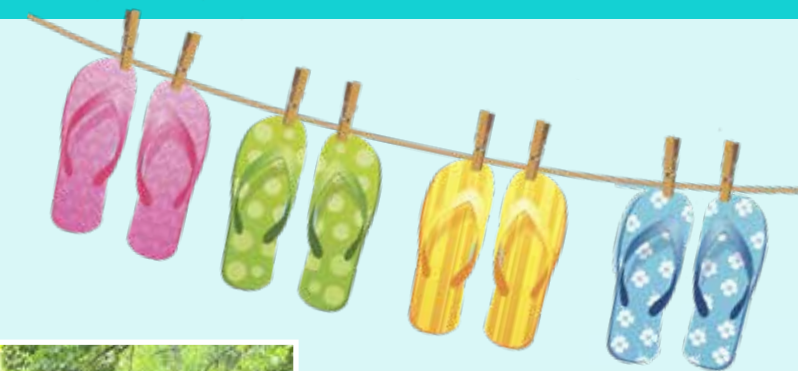
Substance Use Prevention: Interactive, empowering activities built confidence and equipped youth to navigate peer pressure and make healthy choices.

Unforgettable Field Trips: Adventures to Sky Zone, Ridge Hill Mini Golf, SplashDown Beach, Botanical Gardens, and the Westchester County Invest in Kids Festival delivered thrills, friendships, and teamwork in action.

A Summer That Changes Lives

By summer's end, campers walked away with more confidence, stronger friendships, sharper communication skills, and powerful connections with caring staff and peers. Many discovered new passions and picked up skills they will carry into the school year and beyond.

The Healthy & Fit Summer Camp remains a vital investment in White Plains youth a place where young people don't just spend their summer, they Grow, Thrive, and Shine, all while giving families access to affordable, high-quality programming they can count on.



Medical Leadership Pathways Program



6 summers and
stronger than ever —

The Medical Leadership Pathways Program just wrapped up an incredible fifth year, and the future of healthcare has never looked brighter!

Thanks to the powerhouse partnership between SUNY Purchase, Liberty Partnerships, and the White Plains Youth Bureau, this life-changing program gave young people an all-access pass into the world of healthcare and medicine connecting them face-to-face with the professionals who inspire, educate, and open doors to the future. All summer long, students rubbed shoulders with physicians, nurses, radiologists, nurse practitioners, and healthcare administrators, getting insider access through electrifying tours and presentations at some of the region's top institutions: White Plains Hospital, Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, New York Medical College, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS), Touro Dental College, SUNY Purchase, and The College of Westchester!



However, this program is about so much more than watching from the sidelines. It is about leadership in action! At its core, the experience challenges students to think critically, dig into real research, get creative, and give back to their community. Participants were tasked with a bold mission: identify a real need facing White Plains youth, research meaningful solutions, and build a community-based project with the power to make a real difference.

Moreover, deliver, they did! Through dynamic final presentations, students brought their big ideas to life, displaying incredible confidence, sharp problem-solving, true teamwork, and the leadership chops it takes to turn a vision into reality.

The Medical Leadership Pathways Program is so much more than a career introduction. It is an investment in tomorrow's healthcare heroes, innovators, and community leaders! We are bursting with pride for these students and everything they have accomplished. Their vision, their drive, and their unwavering commitment to building a healthier, stronger future for themselves and their community is the foundation for their success in the healthcare field.





Summer Entrepreneurship Program

11 Teens, \$1,000 Budgets,
One Wild Shark Tank Finale!



Over six action packed weeks **11 rising 9th –11th graders** started their journey to millionaire status by swapping video games for venture capital and entrepreneurship.

The Challenge: Build a business from scratch product or service, your call with a mock \$1,000 budget and nothing but your own life experience and imagination to work with.

The Curriculum: Four pillars, one mission: Turn “I have an idea” into “I have a business”:

Life Skills: Mining students’ own hobbies and passions for hidden business potential.

Management: Timelines, logistics, and the real question every founder asks: do I need a lawyer?

Marketing: Names, taglines, branding, and figuring out exactly who would buy their product.

Finance: Spreadsheets, budgets, and the hard math of turning a profit.

On the Road: The cohort hit the pavement for visits with local Westchester entrepreneurs: Loola Doola Boutique, The Pamplemousse Project and Chocolutions. Of course, we had to have some fun, so we added in a business scavenger hunt, live Mentimeter and Quizlet battles, and one-on-one mentoring. These teens received a crash course no classroom could match.

The Grand Finale: SHARK TANK



FIRST PLACE:

Giulianna DiPietro
created
Hair and Their
(hair care)
\$300



SECOND PLACE:

Dorina Qorraj
created
Fur Friendzy
(pet accessories)
\$200



THIRD PLACE:

Destin Morillo
created
Flashback Films
(entertainment)
\$100



Every business plan, elevator pitch, video ad, and prototype built toward one nerve wrecking moment: pitching to five real local “sharks,” organized in partnership with Teens Under Construction (CEO Yocasta Jimenez, VP Shamar Moore).

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of Yocasta Jimenez and Shamar Moore of Teens Under Construction, *every single participant walked away*

with \$50 for their hustle because showing up and pitching your idea to a panel of real entrepreneurs is a win in and of itself.

THE BOTTOM LINE: Eleven students. Six weeks. Zero real dollars risked, but a whole lot of real confidence, business savvy, and hustle gained.



Summer Career Academy

12 Students, One Unforgettable Summer

This summer, *12 students walked into their very first job* and walked out transformed.

They met the pros! NYS State Troopers, White Plains Police and Fire Department Personnel, a Social Media Influencer with +100K followers, Finance professionals from TD Bank, local entrepreneurs from The Pamplemousse Project, Cayivisions Podcast Studio, I AM-ABLE Wear as well as professors from the College of Westchester and Columbia University. Students met professionals across business, public sector, finance, academia and media. These are connections and resources most teens never engage until college.

They built real skills: resumes, budgeting, public speaking, email etiquette, personal branding, goal-setting, teamwork and then actually used them, personally emailing past guest speakers to invite them back for the end-of-summer showcase.

After lessons in entrepreneurship and marketing, students ran their own stand at the White Plains Farmers' Market, handling

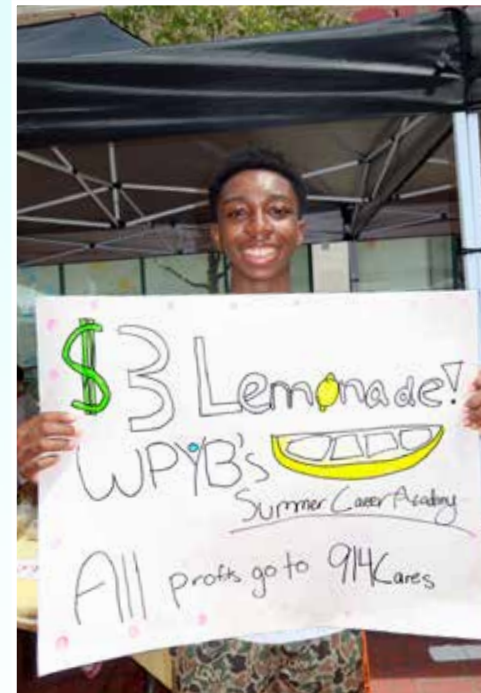
everything from sales to customer service. They raised nearly \$1,000 from sponsoring lemonade stand, the largest fundraiser in the history of our summer employment program! Every dollar raised went directly to 914Cares.

They tackled a real client challenge auditing the White Plains Youth Bureau's social media pages. The end result: pitching genuine strategy recommendations, which allowed them to step into the role of content contributors rather than simply consumers.

They found their footing and their voice. The summer closed with Future Blueprint

presentations, where students spoke confidently about their strengths, goals, and next steps. This was huge growth for a group where, for the most, this was their first job ever.

THE OUTCOME: Real mentors, real money raised, realistic goals & objectives set, and most importantly, substantial confidence built in six weeks.



Grandpas United



Summer Fun!

Grandpas United made this summer one to remember, filling it with activities that brought youth and mentors together for genuine connection and joy.

The season kicked off at Bits 'N' Pieces Camp, where the Grandpas surprised campers with string backpacks and got something even better in return: a flood of smiles and happy faces. What says summer more than an ice cream truck? As camp season wound down, the Grandpas rolled in alongside the Ice Cream Emergency Truck, dishing out cool treats and pure excitement. Everyone tried to keep the screaming under control, but the smiles were impossible to contain.

The summer concluded at Playland, where members and young people spent the day riding rides, laughing together, and building summer memories side by side. Grandpas United also hosted



its Second Annual Fishing Trip, giving youth the chance to get outdoors, learn the basics of fishing, and simply enjoy a day on the water with their grandfathers and mentors.

A Time to Share

Grandpas United wasn't just about the kids it was also a place for the Grandpas themselves to connect and grow closer. Members gathered regularly at the White Plains Community Center for the Lunch Bunch Program, trading good food, good stories, and plenty of laughter. These gatherings gave members a chance to deepen friendships and strengthen the bonds that make Grandpas United such a special community.

Community Engagement

You could also find Grandpas United members out at the White Plains Farmers Market, recruiting new Grandpas, chatting with community members, and connecting with local farmers. Their presence at the market offered a chance to spread the word about the organization's mission while building relationships across the community.

Youth Employment Training

Grandpas United's summer wasn't all fun and games. The Grandpas also rolled up their sleeves to help prepare the next generation of young workers through the Youth Employment Service Program offering encouragement, practical job-readiness tips, guidance on workplace expectations, and plenty of positive reinforcement to help young people become successful, responsible employees.



JumpStart for Dads

The organization also stayed true to its commitment to fathers through JumpStart for Dads, offering counseling, mentoring, support, and guidance to dads working to strengthen their relationships with their children and become more engaged parents.

Mentoring and Professional Development

The Grandpas never stopped learning either. Every other week, members took part in mentoring skills sessions, sharpening their abilities so they show up as even better mentors, role models, and supporters for the young people they serve.

Making a Difference

Fun, friendship, mentoring, employment prep, fatherhood support, community engagement, and service that's how Grandpas United spent the summer. Whether they were handing out backpacks, serving ice cream, fishing with kids, enjoying a day at Playland, sharing stories at Lunch Bunch, or recruiting new members at the Farmers Market the Grandpas proved once again that positive relationships can leave a lasting mark on young people, families, and the community.

Grandpas United continues to show that being a Grandpa isn't just a title it's an opportunity to mentor, inspire, support, and make a real difference.





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