

Overview

County of Los Angeles Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services has developed new online avenues to connect with County residents in new and innovative ways.

Challenge

Following the Safer at Home and Safer at Work orders issued by the County of Los Angeles in response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the County needed to rethink its workforce development system to continue services and align them with the new health and economic considerations created by COVID-19.

Solution

Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) built infrastructure surrounding two (2) primary facets to ensure continued, effective service delivery. Each of the components below supports this overall strategy, serving residents and engaging the community in new and innovative ways. On April 1, 2020, within 2 weeks of the Safer at Home order, the Virtual Resource Room (bit.ly/lac2work) was launched on our website, providing access to resources for job seekers and businesses alike. Customers can also connect directly to one of our America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs), with step-by-step guidance on how to enroll in our programs virtually.

WDACS also developed a completely virtual component for its renowned Youth@Work program, which includes a 20-hour soft skills component and telework or project-based assignments that underserved youth can complete from home. We partnered with Arizona State University and the Schultz Family Foundation to offer the platform Edge (bit.ly/edge4lac) to all workforce program participants. This platform includes modules across three (3) primary domains: customer service, leadership, and personal development.

Innovation

Through both components, WDACS has brokered new partnerships, at both the local and state level, and in both the public and private sectors. These have allowed the County to establish new bridges between job seekers and businesses while streamlining access to all resources. The County is now able to directly provide telework opportunities, giving residents the opportunity to build their skillset from home, through education and hands-on work experience, while subsidizing this experience and freeing up capital for our local businesses. Many of these positions directly respond to COVID-19, which adds another layer of benefit for our community.

Results

Since its inception, the Virtual Resource Room has seen over 4,000 unique visitors, and our Youth@Work program has thus far seen 592 youth placed at worksites this fiscal year despite the physical limitations across the County. Further, 210 participants have utilized the Edge platform through one of our programs.

Replicability

Our partnerships have created the foundation for our success, and we have worked with community and public sector leaders to build this infrastructure. Most of these efforts were the result of our work with organizations and the innovation of WDACS staff. By ensuring a strong connection with the local entities that our workforce programs rely on, we were able to build out these different avenues to serve our residents and to build a more responsive service delivery that will provide customers with options on how they prefer to access services post-COVID.

Project or Program Contact

Irene Pelayo, Program Manager Address: 3175 W Sixth St. LA, CA 90020 Ph: (213) 351-5246 Email: IPelayo@wdacs.lacounty.gov.