

DHS News

Newsletter of the Allegheny County
Department of Human Services



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New service corps allows IL youth to engage with their community, learn career skills

Summer 2018 was an exciting time for KEYS Service Corps as they piloted 412 Youth Corps, a program designed to engage Independent Living (IL) youth and young adults with their community while also teaching soft and hard job skills.

Participants, who ranged in age from 18 to 24, were selected from Auberle's 412 Youth Zone as well as referrals from DHS employees. Once recruited by the program, the participants were assigned to three teams located in Braddock, McKeesport and the Hill District where they assisted with landscaping, worked on Braddock Farms, and prepared meals for low-income men who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, among other activities.

"We wanted to create an opportunity for young adults who have fewer connections to engage in their communities and with each other through service," said Ben Blatt, 412 Youth Corps coordinator. "Throughout the term, we provided them with weekly feedback on professional skills so that no matter their starting point, they would experience improvement."

All participants who completed their summer term of service with the 412 Youth Corps transitioned to college, a job, or will do a longer service term during the school year.

Plans for the 2018-19 program year include recruiting participants for two separate service terms: from October 22 to February 15 and February 18 to June 8. The service members will continue to work with Auberle at St. Joe's in the Hill District and the main campus in McKeesport. The Braddock team will continue to serve in Braddock and the surrounding areas.

To learn more about the 412 Youth Corps or to request an application, contact Ben Blatt at Ben.Blatt@AlleghenyCounty.us.