

Norwalk ACTS Awarded Three-Year Workforce Development Grant

Norwalk ACTS is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a significant three-year workforce development grant to launch the Norwalk Youth Employment Collaborative. The initiative will help connect Norwalk's young people with internships, apprenticeships, career exploration, job training, and employment opportunities.

The grant is funded through Connecticut's Reimagine & Revitalize (R2) Program, an initiative of the Connecticut Social Equity Council that reinvests revenue from the state's adult-use cannabis market into communities disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs. The grant is being administered regionally by United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut, which oversees the funding process and provides support to awarded organizations.

Over the next three years, Norwalk ACTS will bring together employers, schools, workforce organizations, higher education partners, and community groups to strengthen pathways from education to employment. The work will focus on better coordinating existing resources, expanding opportunities for young people, and making it easier for families to find and access workforce supports.

A key part of the initiative is ensuring that young people help shape the work from the very beginning. Through surveys, focus groups, leadership opportunities, and other forms of engagement, Norwalk youth will help identify the career fields, experiences, and supports that matter most to them. Their feedback, combined with community data and local workforce trends, will help guide decisions and ensure future efforts reflect both youth interests and employer needs.

The grant will also support enhancements to Norwalk ACTS' Job Opportunities Platform, creating a more effective way for young people to discover jobs, internships, training programs, and other career resources. The platform will also help employers connect with local talent and promote available opportunities.

As Norwalk's backbone organization, Norwalk ACTS will coordinate partners, facilitate planning, and use data to help align efforts across the community. Together, these partners will work to create clearer pathways to employment, help more young people prepare for success in the workforce, and strengthen connections between local employers and the next generation of talent.

