

Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board

Youth and Young Adult Committee Meeting Agenda

Mesilla Community Center
2251 Calle de Santiago
Mesilla, NM 88046

To join the meeting by phone, dial (346) 248-7799, then enter Meeting ID: 879 2890 9330

To join the meeting online via Zoom, go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87928909330>

Tuesday, September 22, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. (MDT)

Ms. Debbie Schoonover – Chair
Ms. Cassie Arias-Ward – Vice-Chair

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Welcome**
- III. Roll Call and Abstentions**
 - a. If necessary, Chair's approval for members to participate in the meeting virtually
- IV. *Public Comments (3-Minute Limit)**
- V. Approval of Agenda**
- VI. Action Items**
 - a. Approval of August 18, 2026, meeting summary **pg. 03**
- VII. Discussion Items**
 - a. Youth Service Provider Reports **pg. 07**
 - b. Outreach and Initiatives **pg. 38**
 - c. Membership Update **pg. 39**
- VIII. Member Input**
- IX. Next Meeting**
- X. Adjournment**

*Public comments can be emailed to sawdb@employnm.com before September 22, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. (MDT). All public comments will be read at the meeting in the order received.



Scan the QR code to join the meeting via Zoom



Action Items

DRAFT OF MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting	:	Youth and Young Adult Committee
Date and time	:	August 18, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
Location of Meeting	:	Mesilla Community Center 2251 Calle de Santiago Mesilla, NM 88046
Chairperson	:	Debbie Schoonover
Members Attending	:	Present: Cassie Arias-Ward*, Tricia Brainard, Alisa Estrada*, Anton Salome*, Debbie Schoonover, Mary Ulrich Absent: Jacqueline Fryar (ex-officio) Staff: Skylar Arnold*, Fayth Grijalva, Glory Juarez, Angela Longovia, Diana Luchini*, Krisye Shook*, Jaymi Simms* *attended virtually
Guests in Attendance	:	Rosina Espinoza*, Marissa Molano*, Gerard Nevarez, Juanisha Padilla*, Giselle Palomares*, Sarah Raney*, Ashley Roller*, Marlene Thomas-Herrera*, Sylvia Ulloa, Jeff Waugh*
Summary submitted by/Signature	:	Fayth Grijalva, Administrative Specialist
Next Meeting	:	September 22, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

#	Agenda Item	Summary
1.	Call to order	Ms. Schoonover called the meeting to order at 2:14 p.m. Ms. Schoonover approved virtual attendance for online members.
2.	Welcome	Ms. Schoonover welcomed the attendees.
3.	Roll Call & Abstentions	Ms. Grijalva called roll; there were no abstentions.
4.	Public Comment	No public comment
5.	Approval of Agenda	Ms. Ulrich motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Estrada. Motion passed. The roll call vote was as follows: • Ms. Arias-Ward – yes • Ms. Brainard – yes • Ms. Estrada – yes • Mr. Salome – yes • Ms. Schoonover– yes • Ms. Ulrich– yes

#	Agenda Item	Summary
6.	Action Items	a) Approval of July 21, 2026, meeting summary Ms. Ulrich motioned to approve the summary, seconded by Mr. Salome. Motion passed. The roll call vote was as follows: • Ms. Arias-Ward – yes • Ms. Brainard – yes • Ms. Estrada – yes • Mr. Salome – yes • Ms. Schoonover– yes • Ms. Ulrich– yes
7.	Discussion Items	a) Overview of Grant Agreement and Service Provider Agreement • Ms. Juarez provided an overview of the DWS Grant Agreement, including key requirements for youth services, funding, performance, and monitoring. She also highlighted the importance of participant-centered services and addressing barriers to support youth in achieving their goals. b) Youth Service Provider Update • Ms. Ulrich presented a proposed brand and logo for the youth program and provided an update on partnership and outreach efforts to connect youth with services and work experiences. She also discussed partnering with existing youth groups for input rather than creating a separate youth subcommittee. • Members expressed support for the Youth Link branding, agreeing that the youth involvement and meaning behind the design were positive aspects. • Ms. Ulrich shared that CYFD Fostering Connections, NM CAFÉ, and other youth-led groups could provide opportunities for youth input and engagement. c) Outreach and Initiatives • Ms. Juarez outlined key youth priorities, including serving disconnected and underserved youth, expanding work experience and career pathways, removing barriers, and strengthening employer connections. She also noted these priorities will be incorporated into the revised local plan. • Ms. Ulloa, a member of the audience, shared insights on barriers facing youth in rural areas, including transportation, family circumstances, housing, and childcare. She emphasized the importance of going directly to the youth and existing community groups to gather feedback. • Ms. Ulrich and Mr. Salome discussed transportation barriers in rural areas and the potential use of gas cards or reimbursement to increase participation in training. Members discussed bringing the issue to the Board and supporting potential policy changes.

#	Agenda Item	Summary
		d) Membership Update - Ms. Juarez shared potential organizations and partners to contact for Youth Committee participation and requested additional recommendations from members. - Members shared recommendations for potential Youth Committee members and discussed the appropriate size of the committee.
8.	Member Input	- Ms. Schoonover requested that committee members' contact information be shared. - Mr. Salome thanked everyone for their presentations and time.
9.	Next Meeting	Tuesday, September 22, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
10.	Adjournment	Ms. Schoonover adjourned the meeting at 3:26 pm.

Attested: _____

Date _____



Discussion Items



Service Providers Reports:

Youth Services

Alamo Navajo School Board

Youth Services

Doña Ana Community College

Youth Services

Equus Workforce Solutions



Service Provider Report:

Youth Services

Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc.

Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc.



SAWDB WIOA Youth Provider
In-School & Out-of-School Youth

PY25/26 Quarter 4 Report

(April, May, June)

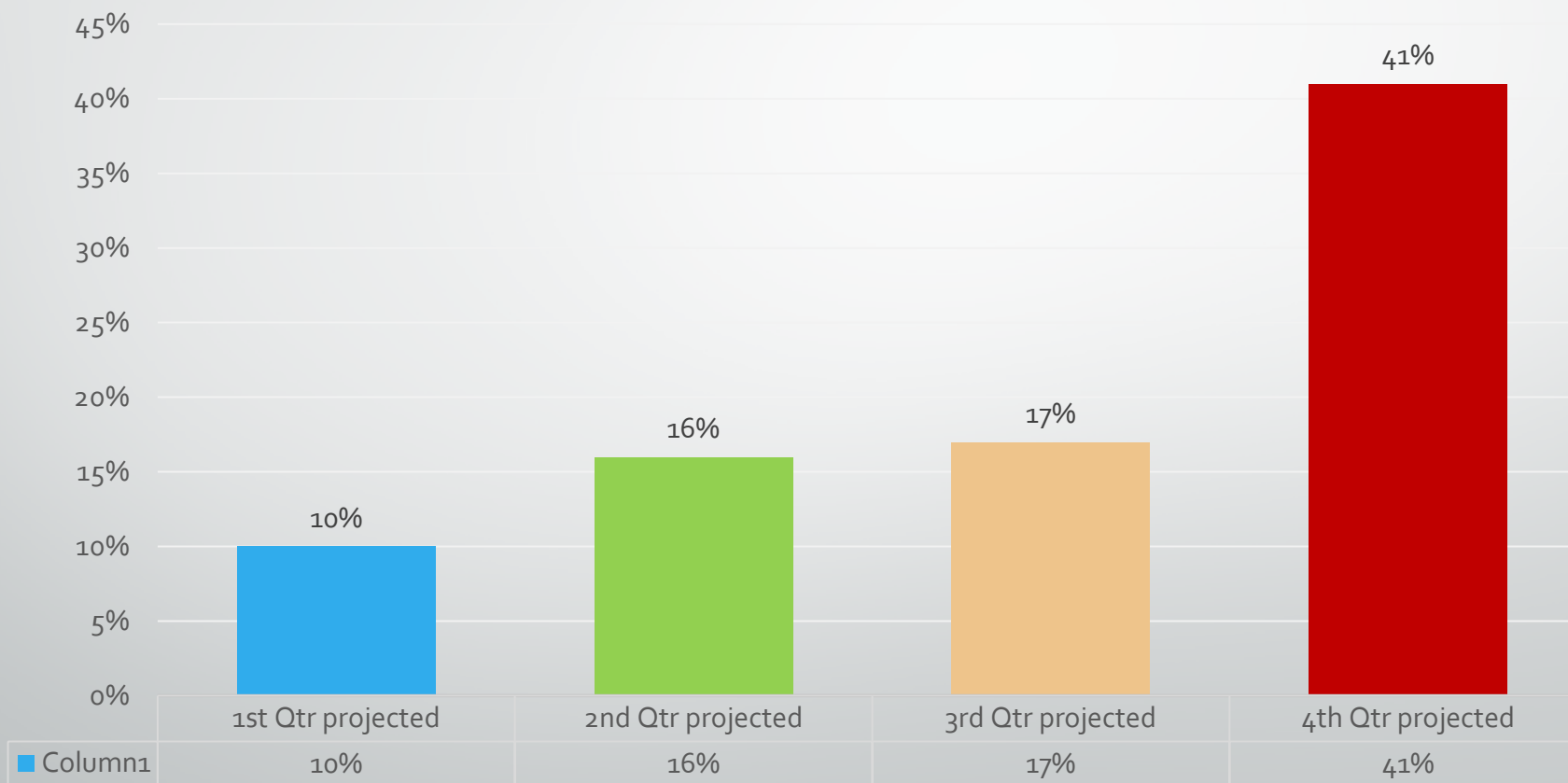


PY25 youth enrollment goal – 30 participants

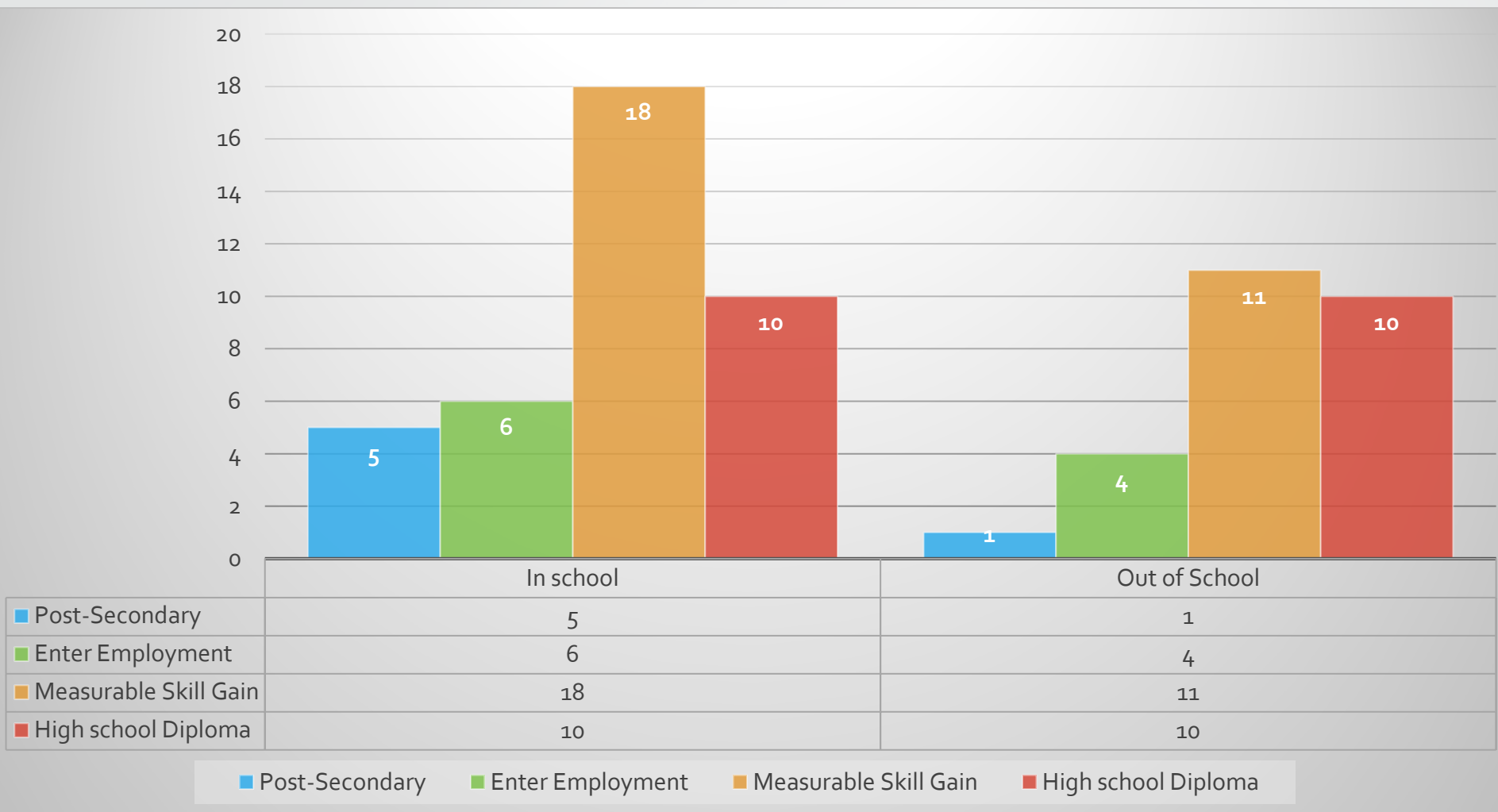
- 10-In-School youth (25%)
 - Goal was met
- 10-Out-of-School youth (75%)
 - 10 enrolled
 - lack 10 participants
- Total Enrollment - 20 participants

Actual Expenditures PY25/26

In school and Out of School



Successful Outcome PY25



Success Story

In School

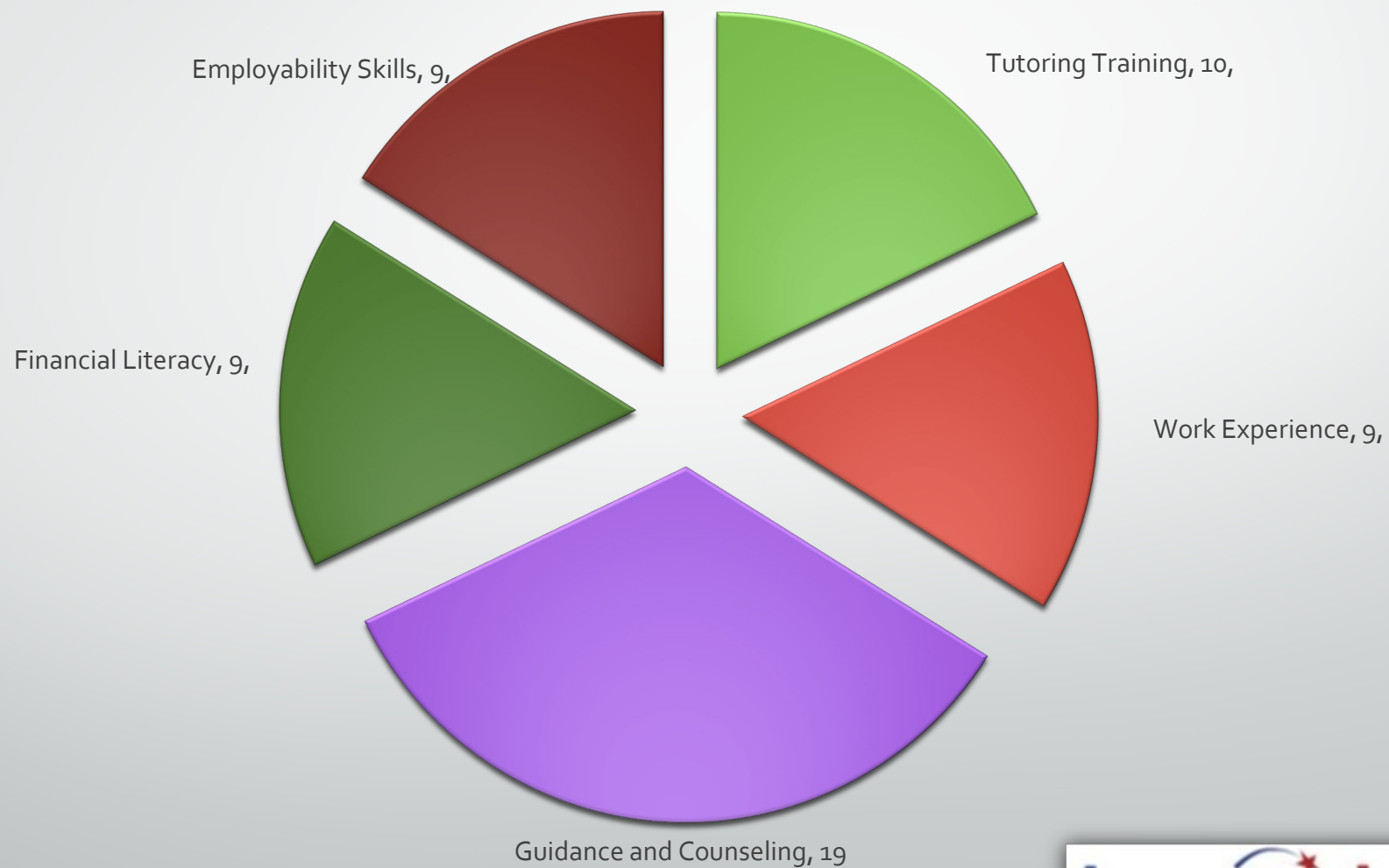
- *A participant has lived on the Alamo Navajo Reservation her whole life. She attended Magdalena High School located 30 miles south of the Alamo Navajo reservation. The participant completed the in-school program with WIOA (SAWDB) successfully. She attained her high school diploma and will be continuing her education with Navajo Technical University in Crown point, New Mexico for a four (4) year bachelor degree program in Social Work. Her decision is based on her life experiences residing on the Alamo Navajo reservation. She wants to get her degree and come back to Alamo to make a difference in the community. The participant is the oldest child in her family who was faced with the challenge of helping to raise her younger sister while staying focused on her own education and career success.*
- *Participant shared, “The WIOA program helped me financially to successfully finish high school. Being enrolled in the program motivated me to be responsible and attend my high school classes every day. I have also learned important job skills that will help me find a job and be a good employee. I want to thank the program for this opportunity in everything I learned about being a responsible participant.”*

Success Story

Out of School

- *A participant enrolled in the out-of-school WIOA program as a single parent to an eight-month old son to gain work experience. The participant didn't have many job placement options in the area of Nursing, as this her interest. Her career goal is to become a nurse. Unfortunately, there are not any openings at the Alamo Clinic because of the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) law which safeguards sensitive patient health information. Instead the participant was placed at the Alamo School to assist with Navajo culture/Language class as a teaching assistant to students from Kindergarten to 12th grade. The Case Manager encouraged her to continue to pursue her career goal, so the participant completed a Certified Nursing Assistant Class and passed the assessments to earned her CNA License in April 2026. The participant completed Work Experience successfully and she will continue her education in nursing and obtain employment in Fall 2026.*
- *Participant shared, "The program helped me gain the expectation of having a real job as well as help me to become familiar with the community and work with children enrolled in the Navajo Culture/Language class. I was also happy to be able to take the CNA class in which my Case Manager advised and now I have a CNA licensure and will be able to work part-time as I prepare to attend college to become a registered nurse. I want to thank the staff for this opportunity to enroll in this program, it really made a difference in my life and future career goals."*

Successful Completion



Services - 14 elements

- Paid and unpaid Tutoring, study skills training – drop-out prevention leading to attainment of high school diploma, digital literacy
- Alternative secondary school – two individuals working on their GED with SIPI
- Paid/Unpaid Work Experience (summer employment, job shadow)
- Occupational Skills Training (work-based learning , First Aid/CPR American Heart, online food handlers, etc.)
- Employability Skills Training – Workforce Preparation Activities - Career Awareness – Life Skills
- Leadership Development Opportunities (exposure to post-secondary, peer mentoring/tutoring,
- Adult Mentoring (provide youth with guidance, support and encouragement on the job, etc.
- Follow-up (regular contact with participants)
- Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling – Career Pathways to help youth transition to post-secondary education and/or training
- Financial Literacy Education (creating personal budgets, setting up checking/savings accounts,)

Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc.
Division of Community Service
P.O. Box 5907
Alamo, New Mexico 87825
(575) 854-2609 ext. 1400

- Marlene Thomas-Herrera: marleneh@ansbi.org
- Sherri Bennett: sbennett@ansbi.org
- Sylvia Monte: smonte@ansbi.org
- Juanisha Padilla: jpadilla@ansbi.org
- Lacey Apachito: laceya@ansbi.org



Service Provider Report:

Youth Services

Doña Ana Community College



*connecting you(th) to career training, employment,
opportunity*

WIOA Youth and Young Adult Program

Powered By America's Job Center and NMSU Doña Ana Community College



2026-2029

Program Updates - Sept

- Inquiries and Enrollments
- Partnerships
- Hiring – Finalizing Selections of Candidates
- Career & Life Skills Academy

Inquiries and Enrollments

County	Number	Ave Age	Topics
Catrón	3	18	Internships, Ranching, Animal Care
Doña Ana	35	18	Post-Secondary Ed (CDL, Welding, Construction), GED, Internships, Employment
Grant	3	19	Employment
Luna	4	19	Internship, Employment
Sierra	2	15	College information, Work Experience

Partnerships and Outreach – By Target Pop

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

-African Proverb

- Foster Youth
 - CYFD
 - Fostering Connections
 - FYI+
- Justice-Involved
 - Juvenile Justice Continuum (various counties)
 - YDDP
 - FYI+
- Disabilities/Mental Health
 - DACC SAS
 - DVR
 - 18-21 Program/Project SEARCH
 - LC3 Behavioral Health Collaborative
- Basic Skills/ESL/HSE
 - Adult Education (DACC, WNMU)
 - Alternative Pathway Programs
 - El Corazon de Columbus
- Work Experience
 - NGAGE – SSIP - DA
 - The Bridge of Southern NM
 - Cesar Chavez Charter HS - Deming
- General
 - Legislative Members
 - Job Talent Collaborative
 - DAC Resilience Leaders
 - 100% Community
 - City Council Las Cruces
 - Workforce Classes

Career & Life Skills Academy

Short Courses

- Personal Discovery
- Financial Literacy
- Community Engagement
- Entrepreneurial Training

Workshops

- Life Skills
- Career Navigation
- Digital Skills
- Work Readiness Skills

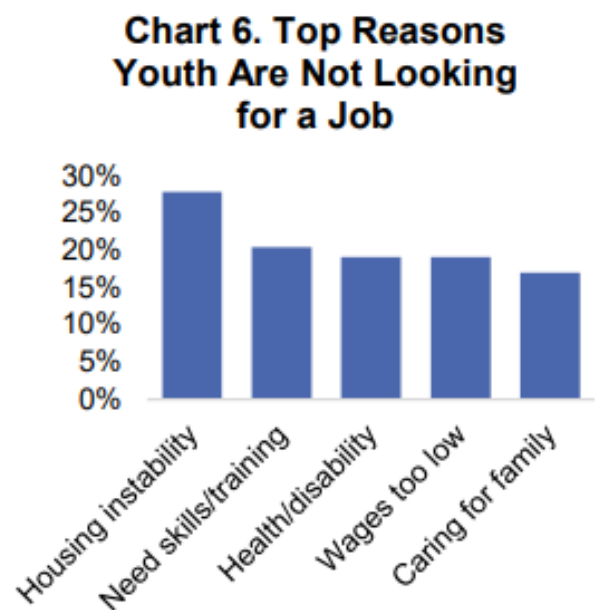
Activities Quarter 1 (July – September)

- Hiring and Onboarding Staff (7-8 positions)
- Access to Systems & Training
- Marketing & Communication Planning
 - Stakeholder Meetings and Community Listening Sessions
- Managing Continuing Participants & Follow up with Participants from FY26
 - Reviewed Case Notes of 57 Participants from PY25
 - Contacting participants to continue services
 - Contacting Employers who provided work sites
- Recruiting and Co-Enrolling Participants
 - Community Mapping of Youth Program Services

Discussion

Why are youth not working?

What they say



Source: LFC analysis of WSD data

Questions/Comments

- **Contact Information:** Mary Ulrich, 575-527-7526, mulrich@dacc.nmsu.edu
- **Referrals/Interest Form:**

Information Request





Service Provider Report:

Youth Services

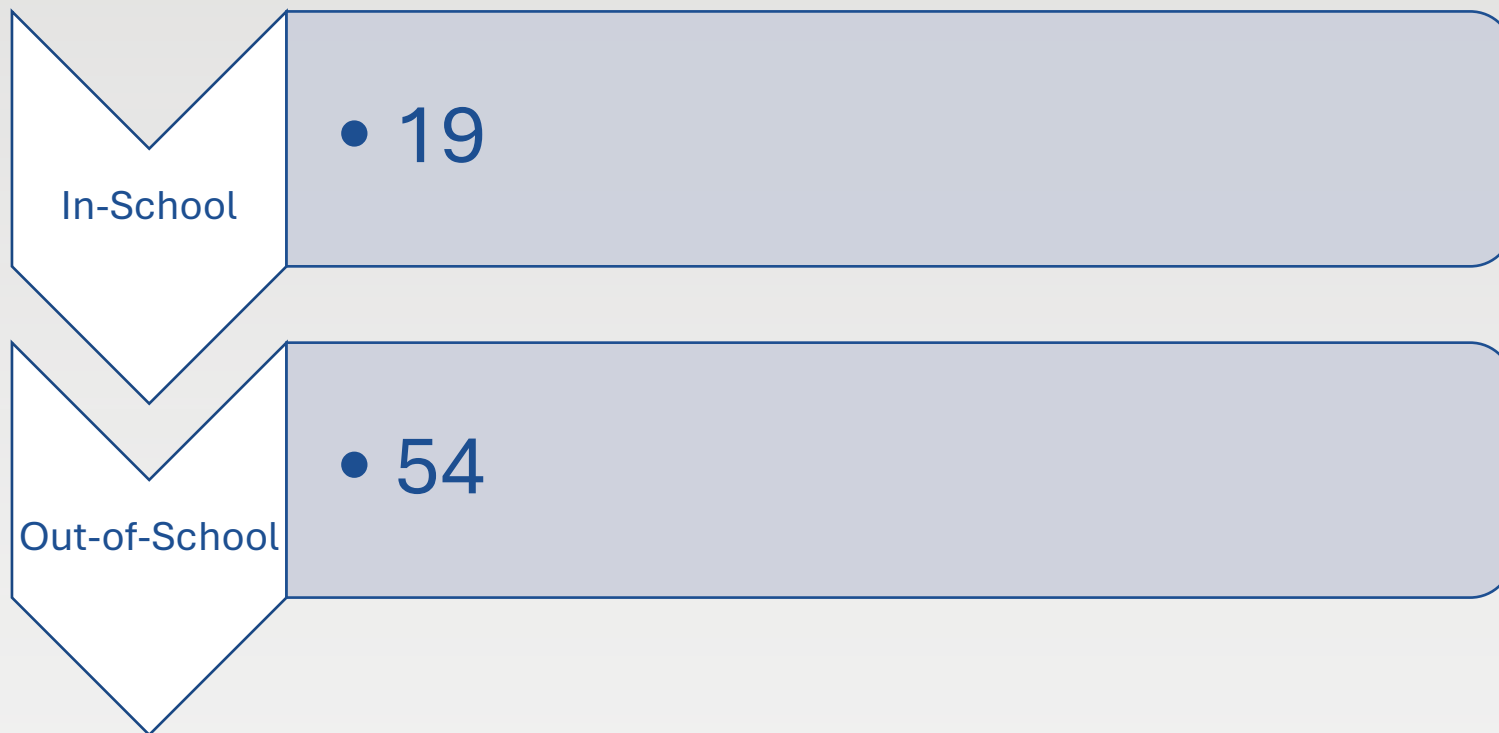
Equus Workforce Solutions

Youth Program (Equus)

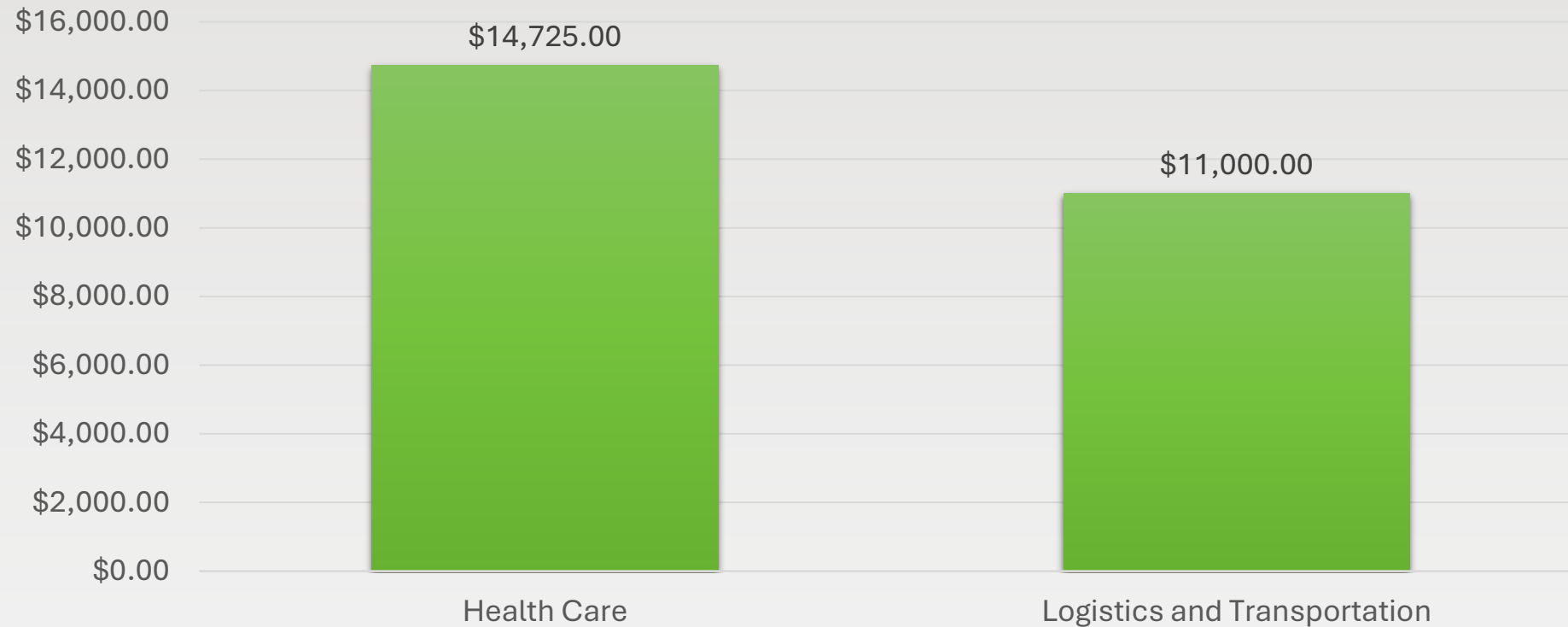
Program Year 2025

July 01, 2025 - June 30, 2026

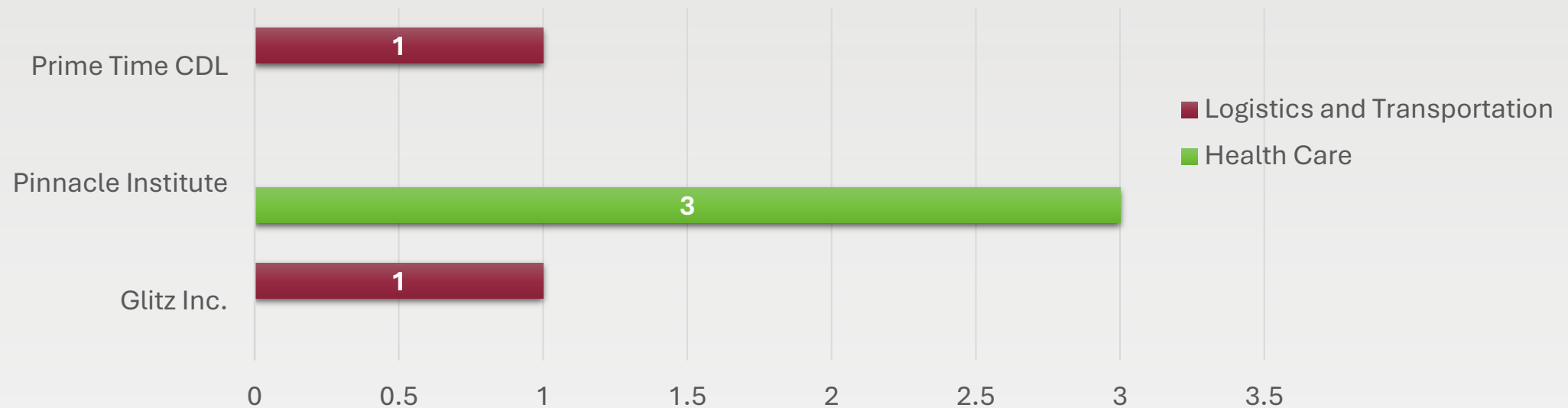
Program Enrollments



Individual Training Account Contracts by Sector



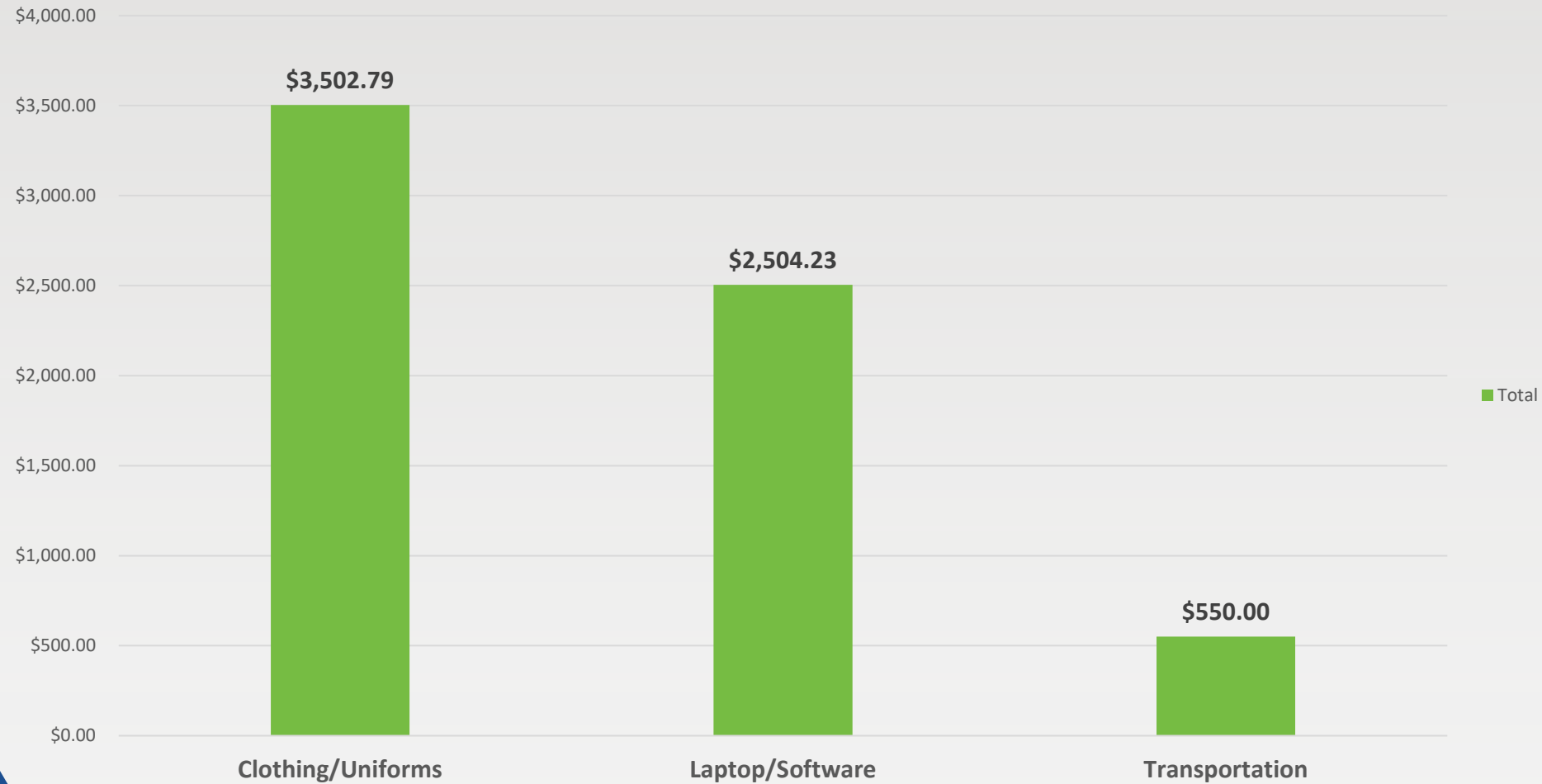
Individual Training Account Contracts by Provider & Sector



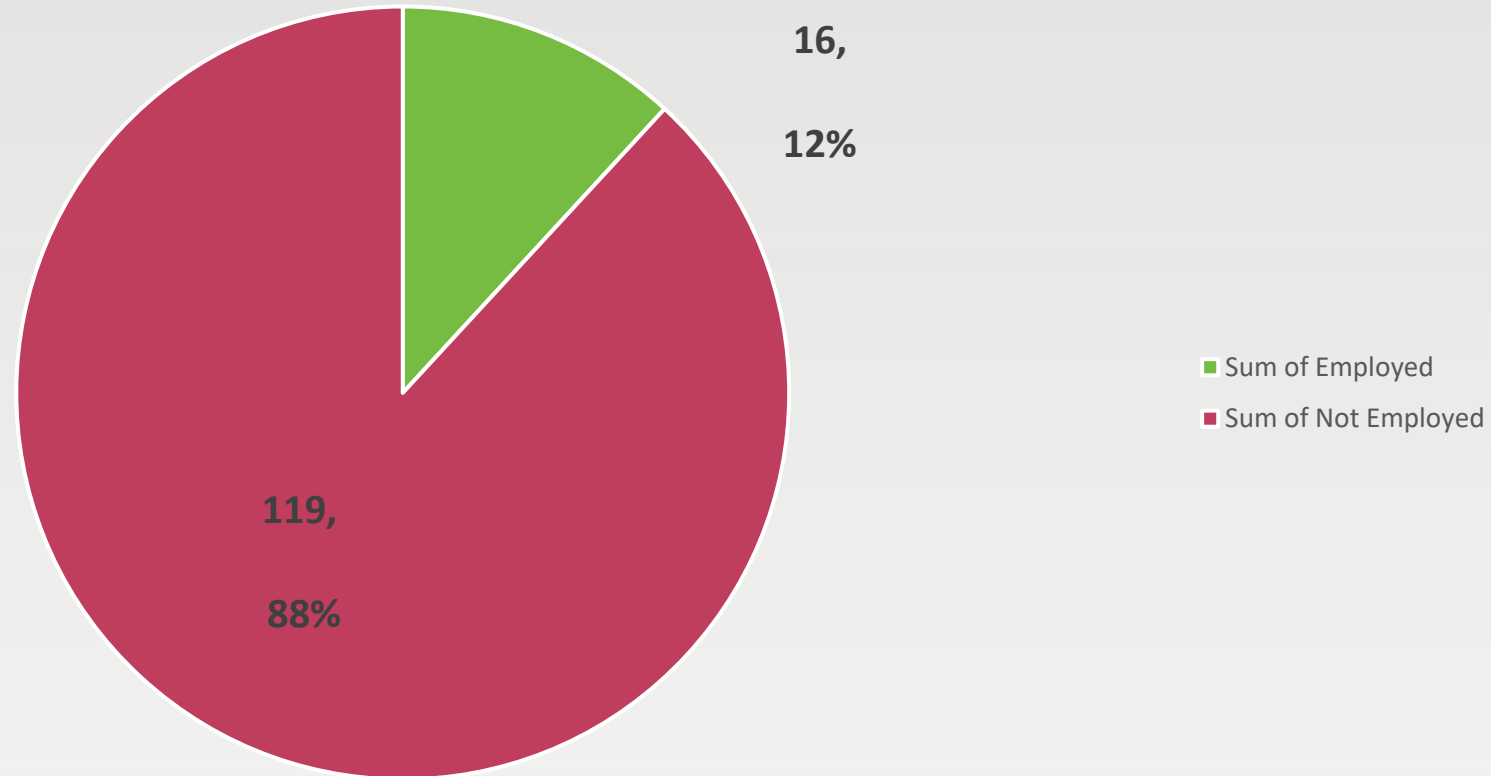
Work Experience Investment and Successful Completion



Supportive Services by Type



Program Exiters - Employed



Participant Success Story: Kevin Huerta

At just 20 years old, Kevin exemplifies the impact of workforce development services in helping young adults overcome barriers and build sustainable career pathways. After graduating from Deming High School in 2021, Kevin faced significant challenges, including financial hardship, limited transportation, and language barriers as an English Language Learner. With his parents struggling financially in Mexico, Kevin delayed further education to help support his family through work.

Kevin enrolled in the WIOA Out-of-School Youth Program seeking opportunities for career advancement. He successfully completed the Design Your Future Workshop, enhancing his career-readiness skills before returning to employment. After a seasonal layoff, Kevin re-engaged with the program and completed a 240-hour Work Experience with El Corazon de Columbus as a Flagger, where he earned \$14.00 per hour and demonstrated a strong work ethic, reliability, and growing communication skills.

Building on that success, Kevin advanced into the CBF Pre-Apprenticeship Program as a Traffic Control Technician with El Corazon de Columbus, increasing his wages to \$15.90 per hour while gaining industry-recognized experience in the transportation and construction sector. He is also developing administrative and customer service skills through work at the Deming America's Job Center as an Employment Services Assistant, expanding his professional capabilities and workplace confidence.

Kevin's journey highlights how WIOA services, work-based learning opportunities, and targeted support can help participants overcome barriers, improve employability, and achieve economic self-sufficiency. His growth is reflected in his own words:

"I am improving a lot in speaking English because of this work setting. I am really enjoying the time working in the office as it is a brand-new environment for me."

Kevin's success demonstrates the power of perseverance combined with workforce investment, creating a clear pathway toward long-term career success and self-sufficiency.

"I am improving a lot in speaking English because of this work setting. I am really enjoying the time working in the office as it is a brand-new environment for me."

- Kevin Huerta

Contact Information

Chris Ruiz, Operations Managers, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs

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Phone: 575-288-9503

Marissa Molano, Quality Assurance Manager, Adult, Dislocated Work, and Youth Programs

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Phone: 575-574-7428

Questions

WE CHANGE
Lives



Outreach and Initiatives



Membership Update



Member Input



Next Meeting

2026

JANUARY

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DECEMBER

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Meeting Adjourned

***Thank You for
Attending***

Have a great day!