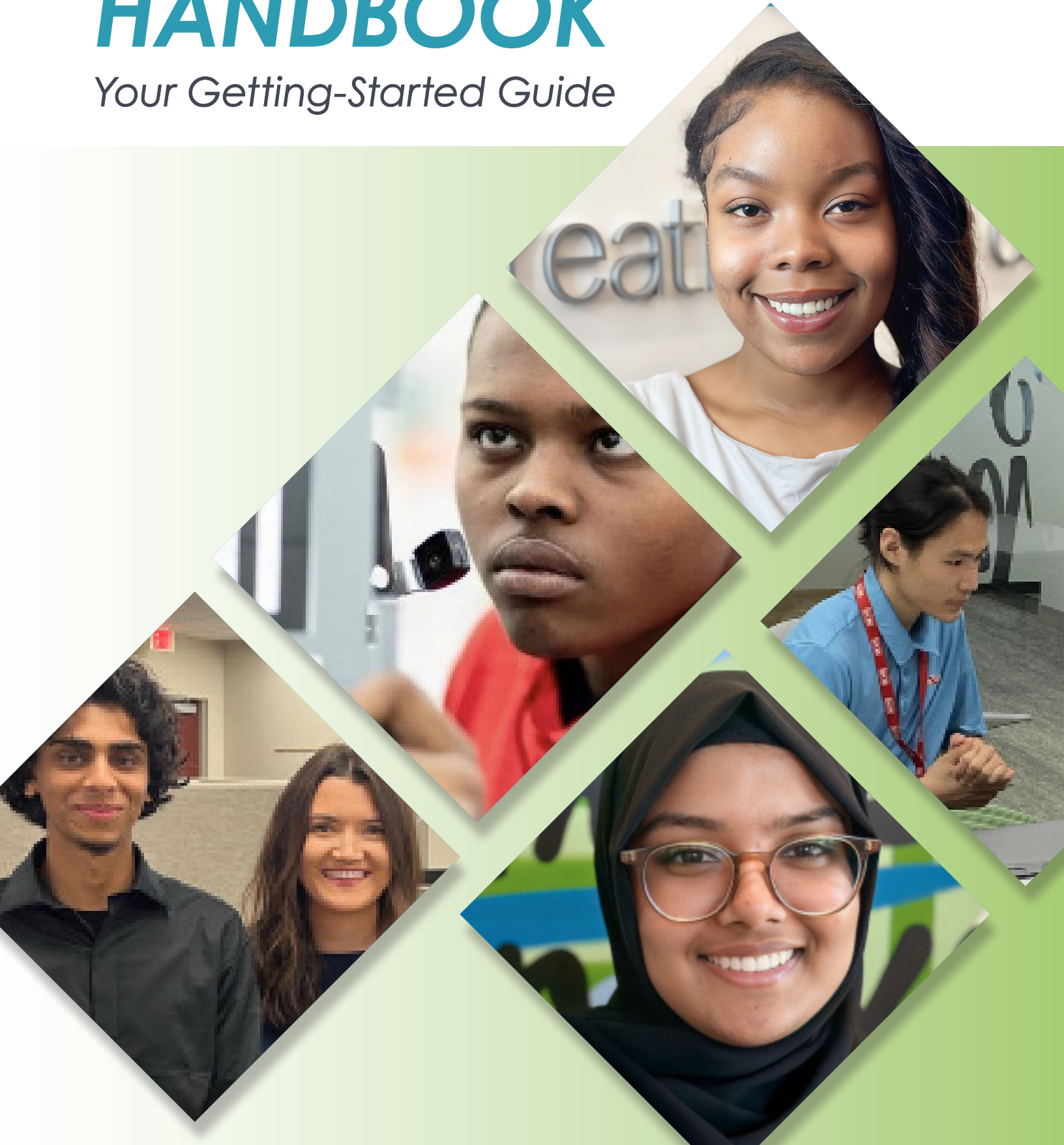


EMPLOYER HANDBOOK

Your Getting-Started Guide

 CareerWise
Greater Buffalo
A SAY YES BUFFALO INITIATIVE





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RACIAL EQUITY STATEMENT

CareerWise Greater Buffalo welcomes and honors the power of the unique experiences, backgrounds, voices, talents, and perspectives of our community of young adults. We believe equity will be achieved when we can all just wake up and live freely; be valued and respected; live free from structural impediments based off of perceived racial characteristics; and have fair representation and opportunity. The mission of CareerWise Greater Buffalo is to remove barriers to postsecondary education, workforce participation and economic mobility for students in public schools in Buffalo, NY.

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WELCOME TO YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP!



I'M THRILLED that you've embarked on this journey with CareerWise Greater Buffalo, a Say Yes Buffalo Initiative. It will have a transformational impact on your apprentice and your company, but more than that, it will help transform talent pipelines and lead to an innovative, more equitable economy.

Your employer-led youth apprenticeship is designed to have a positive bottom-line impact on your business as your apprentice grows into increasingly valuable work. The experience and training you provide to your apprentice will prepare them to step into a full-time role with your company or elsewhere in the industry. So, your leadership will have tangible benefits as you increase profitability and innovation through this new talent pipeline.

Your bottom line will thank you. But, it's more than that.

You've become an innovation partner in an industry and education collaboration. It's a system that started in Colorado and in just five years has been adopted across the nation in places like Indiana, New York City, and Washington D.C and, now, Buffalo. You are a leader in developing talent pipelines that remove traditional barriers of entry and create social capital for communities that need it most. Your work today will innovate tomorrow's workforce and keep America's economy competitive.

The work you will do during the next few years with your apprentice will provide them with the technical skills to perform the job alongside seasoned professionals. It will instill the soft skills that your apprentice simply cannot learn in the classroom- essential skills such as adaptability, collaboration, problem solving and professional communication.

And, across the nation, those are the very things our 21st century workforce demands. We know we need a skilled workforce in Greater Buffalo. The pandemic has taught us that we'll require a resilient and adaptable workforce as we face evolving work environments and emerging changes in AI, technology and automation. This apprenticeship work is a new pathway for long-term talent recruitment and development, and will allow young people in Greater Buffalo to meet their potential, and contribute to our region.

I am proud to be your partner in this endeavor. Your leadership is valuable. It's valuable to your apprentice. It's valuable to your business. And it's valuable to our future.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Rust". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David Rust
CEO, Say Yes Buffalo

WELCOME!

Hi, I'm Tiffany! It's nice to meet you.

Congratulations! You're part of the CareerWise Greater Buffalo team now and I am excited to work with you! Becoming a Modern Youth Apprenticeship Employer Partner is a commitment, and there is a lot to absorb. But do not worry, I've got you!

I am CareerWise Greater Buffalo's Business Partnerships Manager. My purpose is to help you navigate all the nuances and expectations of the Modern Youth Apprenticeship program. I have many years of school-based support and social work case management experience which I enthusiastically bring to this role. And I have a passion for creating a more equitable Western New York economy and giving back to our unique community, a rich tapestry which you and your apprentices belong to.

**“I'M HERE
FOR YOU
EVERY STEP
OF THE WAY”**



Having worked within the “Helping Profession” for over 15 years, one thing that has always remained true for me is that growth and success is not a one size fits all model. I am here to help you and your apprentice grow, meet challenges, and celebrate wins in your own exceptional ways. Nothing makes me happier than to see our apprentices and employer partners flourish together!

Modern Youth Apprenticeship is a journey we will take together. We will navigate the challenges and triumphs and I will be with you for you every step of the way. I've got a dedicated, highly skilled, and compassionate team at CareerWise Greater Buffalo behind me. Thank you for your partnership and for joining the youth apprenticeship movement. I'm so glad you're here.

-Tiffany Swink,
Business Partnerships Manager
tswink@sayyesbuffalo.org
716-468-0052

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM CWGB

YOUR THOUGHT PARTNER

Apprenticeship looks slightly different for each company and will bring new ideas, challenges, and questions throughout the process. CareerWise Greater Buffalo can offer program knowledge, share best practices, connect you to resources, and be available to bounce ideas off of.

REMINDERS

We will make sure nothing slips by you. Whether it is an event you don't want to miss or a new phase of apprenticeship you are about to launch into, we've got your back.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

You're not on this journey alone. CWGB is here to guide you through any challenges that we may encounter during the apprenticeship. You can send your Business Partnerships Manager or Apprentice Success Coach an email, you can call us, text us, or we can put time on the calendar to meet.

APPRENTICE TRAINING SUPPORT

It's extremely rewarding to train apprentices, but at times it can also be hard work. You aren't in it alone. CWGB will set up reviews for the twice-yearly apprentice performance evaluations and will walk you through creating your six-month training plan. If training is getting off track or not accelerating at the rate you had hoped, we're here to intervene and get things back on track.

EVENT INVITATIONS

Don't miss valuable training sessions or events we host throughout the year! CWGB will send you and other partners invitations to attend employer training, webinars, and our Employer Think Tank Series.



WHAT WE'LL DO FOR YOUR APPRENTICE

ADVISING AND COACHING

It's not uncommon for an apprentice to need guidance while navigating tough work situations or discovering what future career options may be available following their apprenticeship. Whether it is me, a CareerWise apprentice ambassador, a CareerWise peer mentor, or the staff and counselors at their school—we have an entire team here to help your apprentice.

PERSONAL SUPPORT

If your apprentice needs extra support or resources to be successful at their apprenticeship, our team will do everything we can to connect them with those resources.

NAVIGATING HIGHER EDUCATION

We will make sure your apprentice has the information and tools they need to enroll in the higher education coursework relevant to their job.

CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

When the time comes, we will help your apprentice enroll in the exam-prep courses, ensure eligibility requirements are met, and assist in getting them signed up for their certification test.

EVENT INVITATIONS

We'll invite your apprentice to participate in ongoing summer intensive training sessions, apprentice events, and peer mentoring.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Your journey as a MYA employer partner begins with linking you to our established CareerWise Greater Buffalo support system.

ESTABLISH 1:1 MEETING WITH BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER

Upon your commitment to MYA, you will coordinate a schedule with CWGB's Business Partnerships Manager to hold 1:1 meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss high level programmatic updates related to each specific employer partner, to ensure continued progression of MYA in partnership with you.

CONNECT TO EDUCATION MANAGER

Within the first 30 days of your commitment, you will be invited to meet with our Education Manager to discuss the higher education tracks to determine which tracks are best aligned with an apprentice's identified job roles and to help the Education team further assess the skills needed for success. Our higher education partners will continue to identify curriculum for Related Instruction (classroom instruction) that best fit the roles.

CAREER COACH INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Within 30 days of your commitment, before the hiring cycle, your team will be invited to meet with our Career Coaches to discuss your hiring processes and learn what type of candidate would be the best fit for your company. This information will help our Career Coach team to better discuss who you are and the job they may be hired for during their canvassing and outreach of potential candidates for MYA.



CONNECT WITH MENTORING TRAINING

Within the first 90 days of an apprentice's start date, you will be connected to the CWGB Mentorship Supervisor to help you identify mentor candidates within your organization. Throughout the apprenticeship, your mentors will receive support and training opportunities to ensure the successful mentoring of your apprentice(s).

START DATE OF ALL EMPLOYER MEETINGS

Upon commitment to MYA, each employer lead will be invited to attend the All Employer Meetings held on the last Monday of each month. These one hour, virtual meetings are employer driven and often led to discuss common themes for growth across industry. Additionally, programmatic changes, updates, trainings, and other related needs are provided during this time.



Cont. ►



EMPLOYER ONBOARDING

IDENTIFY SUPERVISORS (by Dec. 31st)

It is encouraged that each employer identify the supervisor(s) that will be working directly with each apprentice by December 31st, prior to the hiring cycle. This is to allow them to be a part of the hiring cycle as well as attend our Inclusive Youth-Centered Hiring & Onboarding Training prior to interviewing. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the apprentice's training plan is being followed, that there is sufficient task rotation, and that competency evaluations are being completed and reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

The Supervisor should be someone with the capacity and understanding to work with youth, experience in the industry, and they should be well established in the company. This person will demonstrate inclusivity in the workplace.

INCLUSIVE YOUTH CENTERED HIRING & ONBOARDING TRAINING (by Feb. 1st)

This interactive in- person training helps prepare your team for the upcoming interview, hiring and onboarding cycles. As we move through an array of media and self-reflective activities, we will have a conversation about what it means to be an inclusive organization and how to ensure equity throughout the hiring process.

SUPERVISOR TRAINING (June/July)

This workshop takes a deep look into what it takes to work with and supervise a Modern Youth Apprentice, how to build a productive relationship, training practices, effective communication, and overall skill-development throughout your apprentice's journey.

MENTORING TRAINING (Oct./Nov.)

This workshop affords the opportunity to learn about what it means to be a mentor to a Modern Youth Apprentice, and how to best support your apprentice(s) throughout their journey to success.

INTERVIEW AND HIRING CYCLE

The CareerWise Greater Buffalo Team will work with you to help make the interview and hiring cycle as seamless as possible.

JANUARY

You will receive access to the Hub and Training on how to utilize the features with our Apprentice Success Coaches.

FEBRUARY

- Review best hiring practices and example interview questions during All Employer Meetings with the Business Partnerships Manager.
- The Career Coach Supervisor will help you review submitted profiles
- The Career Coach Supervisor will help you send interview offers to students via phone, text, and email.
- The Career Coach Supervisor will help you update student status for interviews in the Hub.
- You will communicate interview offers to the Career Coach Supervisor.

MARCH

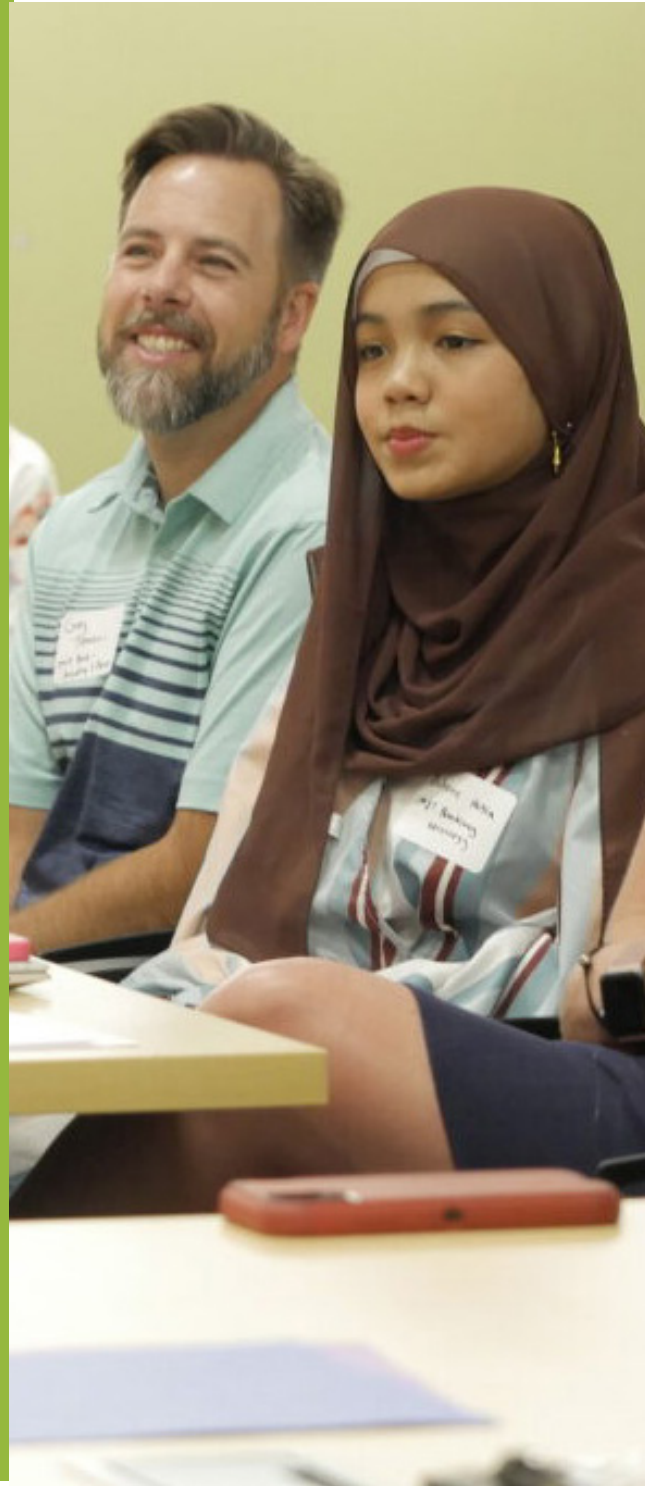
- Interviews will begin. The Career Coach Supervisor will help coordinate scheduling and logistics with you. But, you will determine the process.
- Determine top three candidates per position and communicate them to the Career Coach Supervisor. Revisit additional candidates if top 3 do not accept the position.

APRIL/ MAY

Send offer letter to hired candidate(s).

MAY

- Update HUB with accepted status.
- Close roles in the HUB.



EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION

As you approach the start date of employment, it is an exciting and anxious time for apprentices. There are some ways you can help your apprentices prepare.

ATTEND SUPERVISOR MEET & GREET AND EMPLOYER SITE VISIT

Employer supervisors meet with their apprentices during Apprenticeship University where they are guided through a series of ice breaking activities which provide an opportunity to connect on a more personal level. During the Employer Site Visit, apprentices spend time on site with their employers where they are given a chance to navigate the logistics of transportation and scheduling.

HR PROCESSES/ORIENTATION

Each employer should provide the Career Coach Supervisor and Business Partnerships Manager, the requirements of onboarding (finger printing, background check, and any orientation dates and requirements).

Each employer will provide an overview of their company's HR processes to their apprentices during onboarding. CWGB will also provide apprentices with an Apprentice Handbook to set the tone for expectations and procedures at work.

IDENTIFY INTERNAL MENTOR (First 90 days) See page 6

Identify a mentor who has previous experience working with youth and who has the eagerness to help youth navigate the work environment.

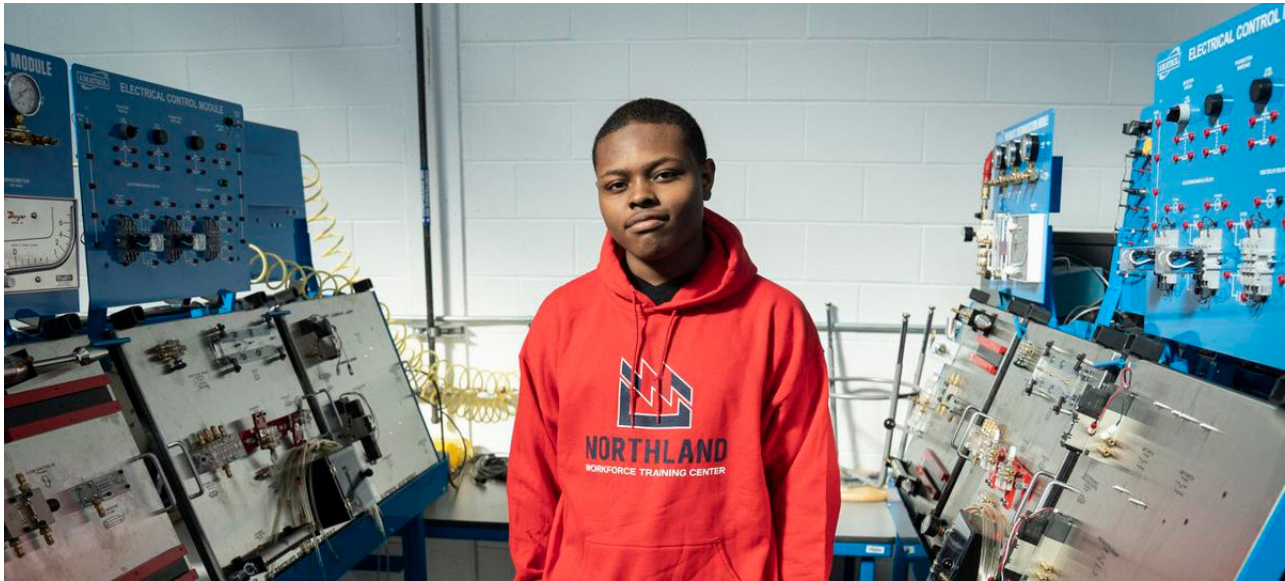
INTERNAL TRAINING (if applicable)

Employers lead the way in this area. For many, working with a young adult new to the workforce is unexplored territory and challenges and/or needs can arise along the way. Our team is committed to supporting each employer through training and workshops to aid in strengthening your skillset and ability in coaching and developing your apprentice. We encourage open communication of needs and work diligently to identify experts to answer the call.

START DATE & SCHEDULE DETERMINATION

Apprentices are able to start working at their respective worksites the Monday following the completion of Apprenticeship University. When determining an apprentice's schedule, their college class schedule should also be taken into account. As their class schedule changes from semester to semester, so will their work hours.





EMPLOYER TEAM LEAD CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

We are excited to build relationships with our Employer Team Leads. This strong partnership is crucial for the success of apprentices and their supervisors. Throughout the apprenticeship, there are many opportunities to build your foundation as a Modern Youth Apprenticeship leader.

CONTINUE TO ATTEND EMPLOYER ALL MEETINGS

Employer All Meetings are one hour and held virtually monthly to maintain high level programmatic updates. This is an opportunity to troubleshoot any issues and learn from other employers in the cohort.

MONTHLY 1:1 CHECK INS

These meetings address your unique high level needs as the employer and provide an overall report and monitoring of the Modern Youth Apprenticeship Program and partnership.

INTERNAL STAFF CHANGES

If an apprentice's supervisor, mentor, or if you, as the employer, are leaving or if an apprentice is going to be reassigned, please let me know as soon as possible.

ADDITIONAL EMPLOYER SUPPORT & ENGAGEMENT UPON REQUEST

If you ever need assistance outside of our regularly scheduled meetings, do not hesitate to call or email the Business Partnerships Manager.

COMPETENCY EVALUATIONS

CareerWise Greater Buffalo sends out competency evaluations twice per year in August and February. These evaluations show your apprentice's progress towards attaining the standard of success—100% proficiency on their occupational competencies and 75% of the career-ready competencies. These evaluations are the best way to capture their skill development over time.

CONFLICT/ISSUE MEDIATIONS

Is your apprentice showing up late or not responding to feedback? Maybe you feel frustrated because their school schedule is problematic, or they aren't integrating into the team. When in doubt, let me know what is going on. Often, I'll have tips from other employers on navigating this process. You can send me an email, call me, or text me.

APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETION

Throughout this journey you can expect checkpoints to assess the overall progression of your apprentice moving from “Here to Hire.” The starting point, or Day-1, is your apprentice’s first day of employment with the competency review helping to fuel and guide the overall pathway.

At least 6 months before the completion of an apprentice’s’ journey within MYA, a direct in-depth team meeting will be held to discuss their transition to/from full-time employment.

EMPLOYER RENEWALS

Conversations about renewing a CWGB/Employer partnership start in the summer.

- If you are interested in renewing for the following cohort, we will discuss what the next cohort looks like for your organization, any change in number of apprentices, and any change in types of roles/ verticals offered.
- You will set up meeting with Business Development Supervisor to review prior MOU and make any needed changes.
- You will submit the signed MOU in August.
- You will submit any new job descriptions.
- Identify new supervisors.
- If applicable, establish new education pathways.

If NOT interested, we will continue the current partnership, determine future level of engagement, and reengage in partnership conversations if/when appropriate.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: *If my apprentice needs to take a LOA and/or access NYS Disability, who do I contact?*

A: *An apprentice is a direct employee of their employer. All LOA's and/or disability related needs should be managed by an employer's HR department. The apprentice and their supervisor should also contact the Apprentice Success Coach and Business Partnerships Manager at CWGB for notification of the LOA as well as other support.*

Q: *If my apprentice is not complying with program and/or employer guidelines, at what point does CWGB step in to offer support?*

A: *Concerns that arise with an apprentice should be addressed directly to them by their supervisor and/or mentor. If the concern is not remedied in a timely manner, the Apprentice Success Coach should be notified asap for support.*

For concerns more immediate in nature, the Apprentice Success Coach and Business Partnership Manager should be contacted directly.

Q: *What if my apprentice wants to end employment with my company?*

A: *Contact the Apprentice Success Coach as well as the Business Partnerships Manager asap.*

Q: *What happens if school interferes with working hours?*

A: *Once the conflict is identified, meet with your apprentice to determine if a new schedule is needed to ensure ongoing compliance with their work requirements. If barriers persist, contact the Apprentice Success Coach asap.*

Q: *What if I can't identify a mentor for my apprentice?*

A: *Contact the Apprentice Success Coach to discuss barriers and solutions.*

Q: *What if the mentor/apprentice relationship is not a good match/not effective?*

A: *A new mentor can be identified by the apprentice in agreement with their supervisor. The Apprentice Success Coach should be notified of this change asap.*

Cont. ►



Frequently Asked Questions (Cont.)

Q: What trainings are required of an employer prior to hiring an apprentice? Are there any on-going training expectations during the partnership?

A: Prior to hiring an apprentice each employer is required to attend Inclusive and Youth Centered Hiring & Onboarding training.

We will offer additional Racial Equity Impact opportunities for employers to volunteer and/or attend community training to increase their knowledge in this area through, but not limited to, our Employer Think Tank (ETT) Series.

Prior to working directly with your apprentice Supervisor Training is provided. Attendance is required.

Once an apprentice's mentor is identified, they will be required to attend a Mentor Training workshop.

Additional training for support is provided during the monthly All Employer Meetings and also at the bi-monthly All Supervisor Meetings.

Q: Does CWGB have any requirements for a youth apprentice?

A: Yes, youth must be engaged in both the employment and educational requirements. Apprentices are required to complete either a specialized training program, certificate or associate degree with our education partners using predesigned curriculum specifically made for this program. Apprentices are required to maintain a 2.0 GPA, which aligns with Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship guidelines. In addition, apprentices must meet and communicate regularly with their Apprentice Success Coach, including quarterly cohort meetings with other apprentices.

Q: Does the apprentice employer have to submit their time/worked hours to Careerwise Greater Buffalo?

A: Yes, this helps to track their 2000-hour requirements to be considered an apprentice after their journey.

THANK YOU!