

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Report



Yuma Private Industry Council

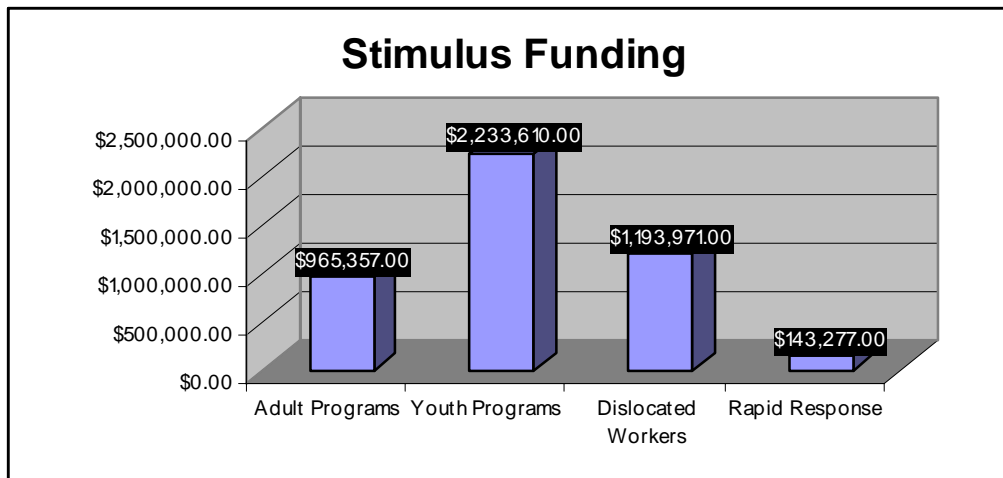
Reporting Period:
February 17, 2009 to April 17, 2009
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Introduction

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was signed into law by President Obama on February 17, 2009. The Recovery Act is intended to preserve and create jobs, promote the nation's economic recovery and assist those most impacted by the recession. Yuma County was awarded \$4.5 million for activities authorized under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) which will be administered by the Yuma Private Industry Council (YPIC). The Yuma Private Industry Council is a private non-profit organization whose purpose is to provide job seeker and employer services in the Yuma County labor market. Incorporated in 1988, YPIC serves as the Private Sector partner in the Public/Private Workforce Development Partnership with the Yuma County Board of Supervisors. With the advent of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Yuma County Board of Supervisors designated YPIC as the official operator or the "One-Stop" delivery system for workforce development services in Yuma County. The Yuma County Board of Supervisors also appoints the Workforce Investment Board which is housed in the organizational framework of YPIC. The Board draws membership from the community and is made up of representatives from all areas of the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Summary of Activities

The Yuma Private Industry Council (YPIC) received \$4.5 million from the American Recovery and Investment Act and is already well into the planning stages of putting that money to work for the residents of Yuma County. One such way is through hiring dislocated workers to assist with the Summer Youth program.



The new employees will be answering phones and scheduling youth for eligibility appointments, assisting with the eligibility appointments, then they will work in the summer youth program. When first hired, everyone received two weeks of training. The training included an overview of YPIC and its many programs, an in-depth explanation of the summer youth program, telephone etiquette training, and customer service training. Some of the new employees are Carla, Carmina and Julio.

Carla was recently laid off from the retail industry; she is married and has 4 children ages 5-13. Carla has worked in retail sales most of her life and is excited about the opportunity to work for YPIC because she enjoys new challenges. "This job means everything to me; it provides my family with the funds to survive." Carla had been unemployed for 2 months when she was hired by YPIC. However, Carla stated that she was not just sitting at home; she was taking computer training at Goodwill of Central Arizona. She believes the computer training she received helps her in her current job.



Carmina, a single mother with one daughter, was rehired by YPIC to work the Summer Youth Program. Carmina received her GED and was certified as a Nurse Assistant (CNA) through YPIC; she had worked the Summer Youth program in 2004. She was then hired as a full-time employee at YPIC's Charter High School as a Para-Educator. She left the Charter High School two years ago for a higher paying job, but has recently lost that job. She returned to YPIC's One Stop to look for work as a dislocated worker and was hired

for the Summer Youth Program. Carmina said she enjoys working the summer youth program because she thinks she is a great role model for teenagers.

Julio is a single young man whom recently visited YPIC's Career Resource Center to search for employment. Julio had been working in a long-term temporary position in a manufacturing plant, however as the economy started slipping, the temporary employees were the first to get laid off. Julio had been looking for work for two months when he was hired for the summer youth program.

In addition to the Summer Youth Eligibility workers, a Documentarian and Communications Officer have been hired.

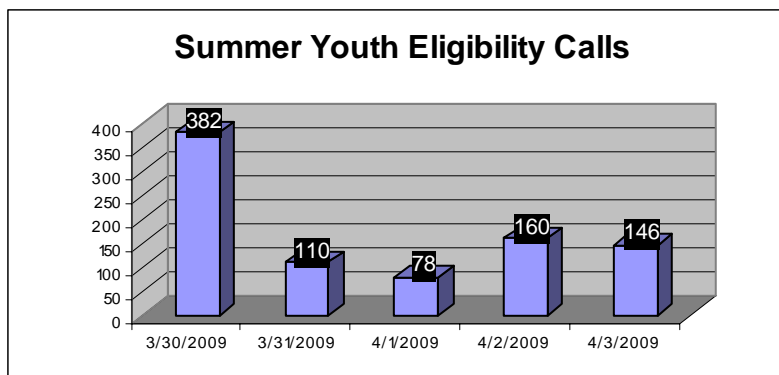
Timeline

Prior to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act being signed on February 17, 2009, the Yuma Private Industry Council learned about the stimulus funds and began brainstorming programs and processes to effectively and efficiently spend the funds.

- December 2008, John Morales, Executive Director of YPIC and the President of the National Workforce Association (NWA), returned from an NWA conference where he learned about the possibility of a stimulus package.
- January 5, John Morales attended the Arizona Association of Workforce Developers (AAWD) meeting in Phoenix and recommended that Arizona be prepared with projects if the stimulus package obtains approval and monies are provided for Youth and Dislocated Worker's programs.



- January 20-22, YPIC staff attended the California Youth Workforce Association Conference. During this conference staff learned more about the stimulus funds and heard from other agencies about how they would spend the funds.
- January 27, upon YPIC staff's return from California they met with local agencies concerning the summer youth program.
- February 8, met with Arizona Western College (AWC), a provider for WIA programs to share ideas and plan for summer youth programs.
- February 17, Representative Grijalva held a press conference at YPIC to inform the community about the stimulus package.
http://www.yumasun.com/news/grijalva_47974_article.html/stimulus_newly.html
- February 20, YPIC staff attended webinar with David Bradley, CEO of NWA in preparation for the stimulus funds.
- February 23, John Morales and other YPIC staff met with the AAWD and discussed best practices for summer youth programs, adult, and dislocated worker programs.
- March, to plan the Summer Youth Program:
 - Developed commercials and radio spots
 - Met with employers to develop worksites and give employers orientation
 - Hired and trained temporary Summer Youth staff
- March 2, YPIC received the Arizona State Draft of Guidance, giving them a heads-up that the Training and Employment Guidance Letter's (TEGL's) would be forthcoming.
- March 3, YPIC staff met with Arizona Western College to discuss program options
- March 12, received allocations for Yuma County
- March 18, TEGL released, YPIC determined # of participants to serve, staffing requirements, possible programs to run and how the media would be involved in the summer youth program.
- March 19, newspaper article "YPIC getting \$4.5 million in aid funds"
http://www.yumasun.com/news/teens_48735_article.html/money_help.html
- March 23, YPIC staff met to discuss needs of adult and dislocated workers. Ideas included rapid response, re-employment and job fairs just to name a few.
- March 30 through April 3, YPIC took calls from youth interested in the Summer Youth Program, scheduling eligibility appointments for a total of **876**.



- April 2, newspaper article “YPIC seeks summer workers for youth program”
http://www.yumasun.com/news/ypic_49081_article.html/employment_participants.html
- April 13 through April 16, conducted eligibility screening for about **800** applicants for the Summer Youth Program.

Partnerships

- Arizona Western College – program provider
- Arbor – refers Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) participants to YPIC
- California Career Schools – program provider for CDL licensure
- City of Yuma & County Housing Authorities – allows summer camps in each community in Yuma County for the Summer Youth Program
- City of Yuma Arts and Cultural Council – provides staff & materials for mural projects for youth programs; partner for 11 years
- Interfaith Council – provides input for English classes for monolingual Spanish speakers
- Regional Center for Border Health, Somerton – program provider; teach certified nursing assistant (CNA), medical biller/coder and food service management classes
- Yuma County Library District – provides worksites where reading is taught to youth in communities across Yuma County during Summer Youth Program
- Yuma County Reading Council – program provider for adult programs

Successes

- The hiring of dislocated workers for Summer Youth Program.
- Unprecedented level of cooperation from the State (Department of Economic Security, Department of Commerce, and State WIA Directors).
- The sharing of ideas with state-wide representatives of workforce developers association.
- YPIC has numerous staff who have worked in past summer youth programs. They are excited about the new funds and have been willing to take on new responsibilities. This interest led to the quick planning of a successful summer youth program.
- Enthusiasm from partners.

Challenges

- Lack of Federal guidance and mixed messages from Department of Labor have been obstacles for a smooth roll-out.
- Due to serving older youth, YPIC did not directly market to the local high schools announcing the Summer Youth Program which resulted in the lack of youth calling in for eligibility appointments.
- To reach the goal of 900 eligibility appointments, YPIC staff contacted the media and a local TV station prepared a story around the Summer Youth Program and staff talked on various radio stations.

Next Steps

- Summer Youth Program implementation: staffing programs, finalizing projects and worksites.
- Engaging the community in adult and dislocated worker programs is an excellent opportunity to expand services as a result of 50% of funding being reduced in the last eight years. The success of the workforce system depends on convincing the public and congress that YPIC is effectively impacting people's lives.
- Hiring of a part-time payroll clerk to assist with Summer Youth payroll and two full-time temporary resume writers for the adult and dislocated workers programs.
- Developing employer workshops and Employer Lunch and Learn meetings for the adult and dislocated workers programs. These brownbag lunchtime workshops will introduce local employers to the services that YPIC and the Career Resource Center provide and hopefully increase the number of on-the-job training and work experience opportunities.
- Plan a Career Expo where residents of Yuma County would attend various workshops: resume writing, interviewing skills, using the internet for job searches, then two weeks later we would host a job fair.
- Increase training opportunities for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) programs, medical billers/coders and truck drivers CDL licensure.