

For Immediate Release – November 2021

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Experience Works! Youth Empowered to Reach Their Full Potential

WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PA (November 5, 2021) – The Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Investment Board’s (FWWIB) Experience Works! Program does more than just provide local youth with paid work experiences and career readiness training. The program also provides unique and valuable opportunities for youth to make a difference at local businesses and gain life-long lessons that support their career goals. Funded by the FWWIB and provided through the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc. (PIC), the participating program worksite Waypoint Youth and Community Center was able to host several youth as they learned the ins and outs of running a small business.



Throughout this past summer, Haley Bittner, Mikalah Chewning, Dom Long, Austin Matthews, and Autumn Matthews (pictured) participated in the Experience Works! Program at Waypoint Youth and Community Center, located in West Newton, PA. Wanting to educate them on how to run a small business, the center’s Executive Director Chris Morse assigned the group to work at *The Outpost Rivers Edge Eatery*, a food stand located along the Great Allegheny Passage bike trail that is owned and operated by the center.



Once a shipping container, the food stand provided Experience Works! participants with the extraordinary opportunity of designing its menu, organizing its daily operations, calculating food and business costs, and more. Morse, wanting to ensure each participant understood what was required to successfully operate a restaurant, had the participants spend time performing each job duty. This method of assigning tasks helped each participants conclude the program knowing how to run a business from the ground up successfully.

On Wednesday, October 27, the Waypoint Youth and Community Center held an end of the year event to celebrate the participants’ hard work and reflect on the lessoned learned. The group discussed their experiences from start to finish, shared what they thought they did well and where they could improve, and how the experience could carry into their future careers. FWWIB Youth Service Manager Courtney Venick attended the event to listen in on how the FWWIB program impacts local youth.

“I thoroughly enjoyed listening to the participants discuss what they learned this summer,” shared Venick. “They talked about how they worked as a team, how they networked with people in their community, and what their individual strengths and weaknesses were.”

Now closed for the season, *The Outpost Rivers Edge Eatery* plans to re-open spring of 2022. The WFWIB would like to extend its appreciation towards Waypoint Youth and Community Center and PIC for hosting and coordinating a well-rounded and valuable experience for participants.

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About the Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Investment Board

The Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Investment Board (WFWIB) is a non-profit entity consisting of appointees from the business, education, and labor sectors of Westmoreland-Fayette counties. The board is empowered to lead workforce development activities in Fayette and Westmoreland counties. The WFWIB is funded by the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA), which provides funding to federal workforce programs and local Workforce Development Boards. The WFWIB oversees the three PA CareerLink® centers that are located in Westmoreland and Fayette counties: PA CareerLink® Westmoreland County at Youngwood, PA CareerLink® Fayette County, and PA CareerLink® Alle-Kiski. The Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Investment Board is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request for individuals with disabilities. For more information about the Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Investment Board, please visit www.WestFayWIB.org.