



Tough summer job market for teenagers

Posted: Jun 25, 2010 8:48 PM EDT

Updated: Jun 25, 2010 8:48 PM EDT

By Kimberly Holmes

CINCINNATI, OH (FOX19) - Tri-State teenagers are facing a tough summer job market. Last year, economists at Northwestern University reported only a third of American teenagers found jobs. That's the lowest level on record, and things are only expected to be worse this year.

One organization in Hamilton County is working to turn around that trend: the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency.

Aaron Thomas, 18, said he's grateful to be able to do the simple things, including answering phones and running errands because it means he has a summer job.

"To be able to learn that when you get older you have to have a job," Thomas said. "Not just be able to always have fun. Be able to have a job. Keep money in your pocket."

Tyonna Richardson said it took her weeks to find a job, but she finally find one. She's worked at an office doing clerical work for the last two weeks. Richardson celebrated her 17th birthday on Friday. She said her best present was receiving her first paycheck.

"Every job I applied for, I didn't get it," said Richardson. "So now this was my first time getting a job. I'm happy, and I just want to stay out of trouble because a lot of things go wrong now a days so I just don't want to get into none of that."

The CAC's summer youth employment program helped both teenagers find jobs. Every year, the program offers nearly 400 summer jobs to young people throughout Cincinnati and Hamilton County, but this year, organizers said need ballooned.

"Last year we had over 1,200 {applicants,}" said CAC Youth Development Director Shawn Kerley. "This year, to go from 1,200 to 2,100. It almost doubled. The demand was great. The need is there."

Fewer business also signed up to help. And this year, Kerley said the recession has taken a big toll on his program; putting teenagers at the back of the unemployment line behind baby boomers and new college graduates.

"Your Krogers or grocery stores or your Burger Kings or McDonalds or even your Kings Islands, now are being occupied and absorbed by adults," said Kerley.

But many said the teen summer job shortage is a serious problem. Many young people need the income to support their families.

"It can help me and my family out," said 15-year old Jessica Blythe. "My mom won't have to go through so much. Or any parent won't have to go through that. Like school supplies, school clothes. I can help with that."

This year, Uncle Sam decided to help, too. Last week, Hamilton County received \$1.3 million. That grant allowed CAC to offer 500 more jobs to county residents. Currently,

the CAC receives funding from three sources: the city of Cincinnati, the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (AARA) and now the Hamilton County Temporary Assistance for Needy Families grant or (TANF).

There are three different levels of criteria. Eligible participants are between 14-24 years old, will make at least \$7.30 an hour, and work at least 15 hours a week. At this point, the CAC is no longer accepting applications from youth for their 2010 program.

Organizers are still looking for employers. The grant covers the cost of the teenagers' paychecks. The CAC needs places for the teenagers to work. Businesses can call (513) 569-1840 x1466 to find out how to help with this initiative.

Copyright 2010 FOX19. All Rights Reserved.



All content © Copyright 2000 - 2010 WorldNow and WXIX-FOX19, a [Raycom Media](#) station. All Rights Reserved.

For more information on this site, please read our [Privacy Policy](#) and _____