

Overview of RAMP-SF: Reconnecting All through Multiple Pathways

RAMP-SF is a gateway to positive employment and educational opportunities for San Francisco's hard-to-serve and alienated young adults.

The Need. Approximately 4,000 young people in San Francisco are not making positive connections to the labor market, particularly young people who:

- Are involved with the justice system,
- Reside in public housing,
- Are exiting foster care, and/or
- Have dropped out of school.

These young people frequently lack the skills to get or maintain a job and the basic support structure to make a successful transition to adulthood. This leaves them at-risk of substantial periods of unemployment, homelessness, criminal justice system involvement, and poverty.

The Strategy. RAMP-SF is a workforce and educational development program that provides these youth (ages 18-24) with an opportunity to address barriers to employment within the context of a work environment. RAMP-SF equips them with the skills and opportunities they need to get on a path towards self-sufficiency and productive participation in society. The program model combines job readiness training, paid work experience, educational services, and intensive support.

Partners. OEWD has partnered with Goodwill Industries, San Francisco Conservation Corps, and Rubicon Programs Inc. to implement RAMP-SF. Several existing community networks and initiatives have also been engaged to outreach to and refer these young adults into the program. These include. HOPE-SF, Communities of Opportunity, the Community Response Network, the Housing Authority, and the Adult Probation Department.

Program Components

Assessment. The program includes intensive assessment of each youth's educational level, workforce history, interests and current barriers to employment. Drug testing is a mandatory component of the program as the inability to pass a drug test severely limits the employment opportunities available after completion.

Job Readiness Training (JRT). The rigorous 6-week JRT class is designed to build workplace skills, develop positive attitudes and behaviors, and provide positive teamwork experiences.

Employment, Vocational Training, and Education. Following the JRT, youth will be placed in transitional jobs or a skill-focused job training program. They will also be connected to an educational program that will at a minimum lead to the attainment of a high school diploma or GED and may connect also them to post-secondary education opportunities.

Coaching Support. An assigned coach will work individually with participants to monitor their performance, assist them with any challenges they are facing and connect them with outside support services as needed (e.g. childcare, transportation, substance abuse services, etc.).

Key principles of the RAMP program:

- Maintaining high standards and expectations,
- Acknowledging personal barriers to success
- Challenging negative behaviors,
- Building up skills and competencies, and
- Coaching and support throughout the process.

While many of the youth being targeted have never experienced success in school or the workplace, RAMP aims to break this cycle and show these young people what they are capable of.