

INSIGHTS

A MERCY WORKS NEWSLETTER | SUMMER 2022



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Letter from the Program Director

BY NATI TORRENCE, MERCYWORKS PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Looking back at what we have accomplished this summer I am filled with deep gratitude. We are so thankful for every individual, agency, organization and the many donors that joined our effort to galvanize our collective resources to help our young people thrive!

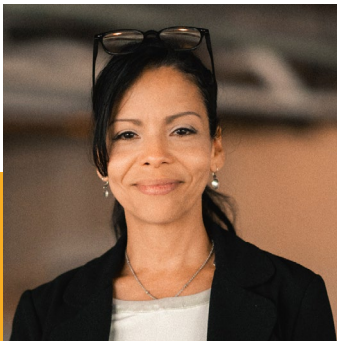
As an organization it has been our priority to engage in projects, programs and partnerships that bolster learning and growth in our young people. As a community, we have reached 151 young people through vision-based programs this second quarter of 2022.

Someone recently asked me, “what’s the best part of your job?” I responded, the transformation that occurs in the hearts of those that give and those that receive. It’s individuals like Cheryl Palmer who has been volunteering at the Clarence Jordan Vision Center since 2018 who does not waiver in her resolve to give back to our community. It is facilitators like Twan Gyder who has faithfully grown our Vision Velocity program stewarding and building character in so many young men. Or Walter Walker who gives his all to equip our high school students for their first job. And I can’t forget Mr. Larry Goodman who leads our entrepreneurship, coding and robotic programs, who cries at every graduation because of the bond he builds with every youth. It’s the many young people and families who keep coming back because they know we believe in them and can provide the structure, safety and acceptance they need. We have become a family and I have observed from behind the scenes how adopting the mission and vision of MercyWorks has transformed both the giver and the receiver.

Our robust summer programming schedule included Synergy, a 10-week paid professional development internship for undergraduate college students; a seven week paid job-readiness training program for high schoolers in partnership with Onondaga Earth Corps; our monthly mentorship program for young men called Vision Velocity; a high energy summer camp experience that reached local youth ages 5-15 with vision based programs in partnership with the Dunbar Association.

Finally, we hosted a transformative week-long conference for junior high and high school girls. The theme for this summer’s Passport 2 Vision conference was “Unmasking Your Inner Beauty,” and will take our young ladies through an exploration of confidence building self-awareness simulations, vision-based workshops and resiliency development. I can’t think of a better way to wrap up our summer line-up of programs!

If you would like to contribute to the mission and vision of MercyWorks whether through volunteering, instructing or donations please know we need you! Reach out anytime.



NATIVIDAD TORRENCE
MercyWorks Program Director

Impact by the NUMBERS

Our partnerships with local agencies, local leadership and worksite partners bolster our efforts to effect change at a local level with vision-based programs. In the second quarter of 2022, we have reached 151 young people through direct programs and partnerships.

48 *Synergy College Students*
Paid summer internship for college students.



35 *#FRESH Participants*
Paid job readiness training for high school students.



68 *Hello Summer Camp Experience*
A vision based camp experience for youth ages 5-15.



17 *Passport 2 Vision Participants*
Weeklong experience that fosters positive self-image, vision and resiliency in high school girls.





48 Scholars

Complete Leadership Development & Paid Internship Program

Before the presentations took place, Synergy student Chris Cedano took to the stage to provide a recap of this year’s program:

Great morning! My name is Christopher Cedano. I am a Business Administration Major at Onondaga Community College. This summer I was fortunate to intern at Brackens Financial Solutions where I learned so much and was able to serve the vision and mission of the organization. I would like to thank you for joining us today to celebrate the achievements of this summer’s cohort of young professionals.

During the past 10 weeks we delve into topics on: Leadership; shifting our perspective to serving others rather than being served.

We delved into the 4 Quadrants of Relational Nutrients with MESH Teams: Being Present; Conveying the Good; Providing Reality; and Call to Action.

We journeyed with Brackens Financial Solutions discussing topics like debt management, wealth building, investing, insurance and home ownership. Michael Jennings handled all our questions without a flinch during our Q&A sessions!

We went through rigorous training on Service Growth and we are thankful to Barb Knight, Christina Papaleo, Marie Fagan, and Tiffany Rush of REACH International for the hours of training leading to our Community Outreach. Today you’ll hear more about the Community Service projects from the teams.

We spent quality time with Deputy Mayor Sharon Owens addressing issues and opportunities within Syracuse and how we can take the lead in effecting change in our community.

We are grateful to C&S Companies for their professional development workshop during the Synergy Orientation week which helped bolster our preparedness to enter our respective worksites.

We are thankful to Syracuse University for taking our Gallup StrengthFinder 2.0 experience to a whole new level by arming us with in-depth understanding of our 5 super powers!

And what a time we spent with Dr. Shanelle & Todd Reid who infused us with a vision of what could be with hard work, an understanding of our core values and developing a vision for our future that extends beyond us! Touring Access Dental Lab and meeting the team was such a bonus to our time with them.

I could keep going, but there are other fellow students that will speak to the collective effort of all of the amazing people and organizations that made Synergy 2022 the huge success that it was!

This year’s Synergy graduation took place at Upstate Medical University’s CNY Biotech Accelerator building on Friday, August 5th. The room was filled with friends, family, worksite partners and the nervous excitement of students as they completed the final steps towards completing their 10-week leadership development and paid internship program: a group presentation on their community projects.

Student Spotlight

Meet Chris Cedano



Major:
A.S BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

School:
ONONDAGA
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

**Anticipated
Graduation:**
DECEMBER 2022

Describe what your internship experience has been like. What major lesson have you learned through your internship experience?

Throughout my internship, I have conducted research, been provided with the resources and support to study for the Securities Industry Essential Exam (SIE), and mentored by everyone around me. It has been an intellectually challenging experience but the environment has allowed me to grow as an individual. A major lesson I have taken away from this is to persevere even when facing new challenges. Some of the tasks I was assigned were new to me but I stuck with them and learned plenty by the end.

What are your career goals? What is your dream job?

currently, my goal is to become a registered representative in the financial industry. This would put me in a position to work with investments, individuals, and even corporations. For me, a dream job would be intellectually challenging but would also be a position where the work I'm doing is meaningful.

Would you recommend Synergy to another student? If so, why would you recommend this program to another student?

I would completely recommend Synergy to another student who has the desire to meet new people, network, and develop professionally but also personally. The program really pushes an individual to work hard but to also step out of their comfort zone.

Advancing Diversity in Environmental Science:
Mercy Works Partners with SUNY ESF to Offer

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE INTERNSHIPS



HIBA SHAALAN
Chemistry & Engineering Major
Oberlin College, Class of 2025

“ Synergy gives me the skills to become a young professional and the resources to develop my professional and academic goals. I also wanted to stay in Syracuse and give back to the community as much as I could, and I am able to do that with Synergy’s volunteering project. During my internship, I was able to learn about new research and new programs that will help me to further develop in my academic career.”

“ The synergy internship program is a bridge to future success. It has the potential to foster a diversified workforce by offering professional and personal development opportunities to women and underrepresented groups in STEM.”



OBSTE THERASME, PHD.
Assistant Professor
SUNY ESF

Upcoming Programs & Events

9/12
-
11/16 **BMB Vision Ventures**

Formerly Teen Tech, BMB Vision Ventures presents an expanded version of Teen tech that will meet twice a week for 10 weeks. BMB Vision Ventures encourages students to take a philanthropic approach to entrepreneurship. Students will hone in public speaking skills through drills that will prepare them to present their business plan to a panel of community judges. Instructors will guide students through the process of taking their goods and services to market while being given the opportunity to participate in the BMB Vision Ventures Expo! For ages 10-16. Meeting Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:30pm to 7:30pm.

Learn more at www.vcsyracuse.com/bmb-vision-ventures

9/13
-
11/29 **Digital Music Lab**

In partnership with Syracuse University, the Music Production Lab meets every Tuesday, from 4 to 6pm during two 12-week semesters. Students develop music composition and production skills. At the end of each semester, students present a finished product that includes their finished tracks and a brief abstract about the meanings that underlie their compositions.

For more information, visit www.vcsyracuse.com/digitalmusiclab

Volunteer Opportunities:

You have something special to give to our students.

Let us show you how.

Our science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) programs and personal development programs are reaching students with the message of hope and vision. We are in need of volunteers for all of our programs.

You don't need to have a STEAM background to participate.

Just a desire to pour into tomorrow's leaders.

Please visit www.vcsyracuse.com/volunteer or connect with Nati Torrence, MercyWorks Program Director at ncabrera@mercy-works.org for more information about volunteer opportunities.

Making an IMPACT with COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Now in our second year of partnership, Mercy Works provided facility and programming support for the Dunbar Association's Summer Day Camp. The Clarence Jordan Vision Center welcomed students ages 5 to 15, hosting interactive activities and workshops that explored subjects in STEAM. Some highlights include students learning how to play chess and literacy development in partnership with Syracuse University.



About the Dunbar Association, Inc.

Located in the heart of the Southside of Syracuse, The Dunbar Association, Inc. offers families the opportunity to engage with other members from the community while taking part in sports, activities, and special events. The core mission of the Dunbar Association, Inc. is to enhance the quality of life, break the cycle of generational poverty, and develop racial equality in the community.



Ways to Support

1

Give Online

Visit www.vcsyracuse.com/donate. You can make a one-time donation or set up monthly giving to support a specific program or all of our programs.

2

Through the United Way

If your employer participates in the United Way campaign, go to your Human Resources Department and fill out a form for the donor. Option Program, designating MercyWorks, Inc. as the recipient.



3

Donate Your Excess Vehicle

Do you have a surplus vehicle that you've been meaning to get rid of? No matter the make, model or year of your surplus vehicle, you can donate your vehicle to support our programs. Learn more at www.vcsyracuse.com/donate

4

Mail a Check

Do you prefer sending a check? You can mail checks payable to MercyWorks, Inc. at 1221 South Salina St., Syracuse, NY 13202.

5

Shop at Smile.Amazon.Com

Make online purchases through smile.amazon.com where 5% of your purchase will be donated to MercyWorks, Inc. when you designate your giving to our organization. Amazon.smile is the same as Amazon: Same products, same prices, and same service!



6

Estate Planning

You can't choose the legacy you receive. But you can choose the legacy you leave. We accept legacy gifts that include contributions from retirement plans, life insurance, real estate, securities or bequests.

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mercyworks

Mercy Works is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that operates the Clarence Jordan Vision Center.

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