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Media Contact:
Michelle Tincher | 407-319-6966
MTincher@careersourcecf.com

City of Apopka through Partnership with CareerSource Central Florida Receives Prestigious Award for Youth Employment



(L-R) Apopka Mayor Bryan Nelson, NAWDP Chairman Mary Ann Lawrence, NAWDP President Melissa Robbins, Youth Symposium Chair Samuel DeCarlo

Orlando, Fla., January 13, 2020--- The City of Apopka was recently awarded 2019 Outstanding Employer Partner by the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) through its successful partnership with CareerSource Central Florida (CSCF) in exemplary contributions to the workforce development system that supports youth in gaining meaningful employment. Apopka Mayor Bryan Nelson accepted the award at the NAWDP Youth Symposium in Chicago in December.

“We are very proud of the Apopka Youth Works program here at the City and honored to receive this prestigious award,” said Mayor Nelson.

Each year, NAWDP solicits nominations in awarding several outstanding workforce professionals, programs and employers for valuable employment opportunity contributions and accomplishments. Ideal candidates have a track record of creating sustainable employment opportunities that result in jobs for youth.

CSCF nominated the City of Apopka because of the positive outcomes achieved throughout their five- year partnership. Teaming up together through the Apopka Youth Works (AYW) program, the goal of this career education program is to prepare young people for their first entry into the workplace and to team them with members of the local business community that will guide them through a summer of fulfilling and educational employment. The exposure and experiences can help fuel their career and educational growth potential.

“CSCF is very committed to providing talent solutions that ignite the youth’s potential. We strive to create and deliver value through relationships. Our valued partnership with City of Apopka strategically aligns with CSCF’s mission of preparing Central Florida residents for careers that meet local businesses’ needs,” said CSCF Chief Operating Officer Mimi Coenen.

“This program is part of CSCF’s continuous efforts in staging more impactful partnerships and bringing out solutions and efforts on how we actually train and inspire young adults. CSCF continues to develop similar partnerships to replicate the success in other central Florida regions,” added Coenen.

Each summer of 2015 to 2019, the AYW included a week-long training program to provide essential lessons such as how to write an effective résumé and cover letter, interview techniques, communication skills, conflict resolution and professional workplace etiquette. Students also participated in a financial literacy course designed to teach money management skills.

Students spent seven weeks at work. Participating businesses had the opportunity to hire students while the program provides the training and pay. Students earned \$11 an hour for 30 hours a week during the summer.

The strong engagement campaign of City of Apopka and CSCF has helped the program to increase participating AYW youth from 32 to 113 youth in four years. In summer 2019 alone, these 113 youth worked 20,613 hours earning wages totaling \$226,743. Of the 27 unique business partners that participated in the program, a full 95 percent of worksite employers stated they were positively satisfied with results. These employers include major retailers, professional services firms, municipal and community organizations, healthcare companies and nonprofits.

The program has bolstered the ongoing commitment of both the City of Apopka and CSCF to invest in future workforce and help connect the community with opportunities in youth workforce development.

“CSCF Youth Programs are designed to increase the skills of the next generation of workers, resulting in new partnerships and opportunities for youth and strengthening CSCF’s reputation as a reliable talent resource,” added Coenen. #

CareerSource Central Florida (CSCF) is Florida’s second largest regional workforce board that is state and federally funded with an annual operating budget of \$30.5 million. CSCF provides comprehensive services to connect career seekers and local businesses at no cost. Services include screening and hiring talent; employee training and education; and no cost skills training and education programs. CSCF provides services at five Career Centers located in Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Sumter counties. The administration office is located in Downtown Orlando. For more information, visit www.CareerSourceCentralFlorida.com.