

# Pathways and Summer Success

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT (YEAR THREE)

LADUMA STRATEGY | NEW ORLEANS, LA  
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Mayor's Office  
of Youth & Families

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Background

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As part of her commitment to prioritizing the wellbeing of New Orleans youth, Mayor LaToya Cantrell created the Office of Youth and Families (OYF). OYF's mission is to: "improve child well-being by increasing coordination between agencies, expanding resources, ensuring equitable policymaking, and engaging youth and community input." The **Summer Success and Pathways Programs** are a three-year strategic initiative created by OYF in partnership with the WK Kellogg Foundation and the Greater New Orleans Foundation to fill a critical gap in youth workforce development capacity. The programs connect services with youth who lack the ability or networks to reach out for help themselves. Through this pilot, OYF aims to engage system-involved youth in summer employment and year-round workforce assistance in order to improve economic mobility, safety, and overall well-being. The pilot programs seek to demonstrate that city resources can and should be used to serve the most difficult to reach young people, gather data points to share with stakeholders, inform future design conversation, and spark additional investment.

The Summer Success and Pathways Programs are designed based on the premise that system-involved youth can and will choose positive pathways when they are presented with real work opportunity, offered structured coaching/support, and incentivized through stipends. In particular, the programs prioritize employer engagement, case management, incentivizing participation through stipends, and hard/soft skills training as key components of a successful intervention strategy. The long-term goal is that youth benefiting from this intervention will change behavior patterns, improving their own safety and the safety of the community at large.

OYF has assembled a team with expertise in youth/workforce development and mental health/wellness to lead program design and implementation. Other key stakeholders include internship providers, supportive service providers, and referral partners.

### Evaluation Objective and Methodology

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With this **Year 3** evaluation, OYF is again seeking support to gather and analyze both qualitative and quantitative evidence and feedback on overall program effectiveness. This evaluation presents observations and insights about program design and implementation, systems and processes, and external challenges. The evaluation revisits recommendations from one year ago and offers new recommendations for continued growth and improvement as the program completes its pilot phase.

The evaluation methodology consisted primarily of individual interviews with stakeholders across all aspects of the program. It also included an extensive review of OYF/Gracefully Mindful documentation and tracking. Pathways and Summer Success youth offered feedback through surveys and focus groups. Information was gathered from 3 OYF team members, 4 Gracefully Mindful staff, 5 Pathways employers, 7 Summer Success partners, 8 referral partners, 8 currently enrolled Pathways youth, and 15 Summer Success youth.

## **External Challenges**

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For the first time since its inception, the program was able to complete a full year without any major external events negatively impacting service delivery. Nonetheless, the impacts of a major weather event in summer 2021 and a two-plus year pandemic continued to significantly disrupt the lives of the youth served by these programs.

## **II. YEAR THREE SUMMARY**

In Year 3, OYF continued its relationship with **Gracefully Mindful Wellness Institute, LLC** (“Gracefully Mindful”) to oversee and conduct all operations related to the Pathways Program, while Summer Success continued to be operated internally by OYF.

### **A. PATHWAYS**

In Year 3, **Pathways** continued to follow the curriculum established by Gracefully Mindful in 2021, including:

- 15-week life skills curriculum complemented by a concurrent 13-week hands-on internship in an industry field of the participant’s choosing
- Mindfulness, meditation, and other wellness programming
- Interview and resume writing
- Etiquette
- Budgeting
- Overnight, out of town retreat experience
- Recreation time
- Intensive case management with active follow up and support
- Intentionally diverse internship offerings
- Cap and gown graduation
- Mentoring sessions with community elders
- Transportation assistance for youth

Year 3 Pathways program enhancements include:

- Feedback loops (virtual surveys) for both youth and employer partners
- Two half-day trauma workshops for staff
- Communication skills workshop with a particular focus on communication in a courtroom setting (specifically, expressing remorse)

- One cohort created their own theme song!

Again this year, Gracefully Mindful staff were observed working directly with Pathways youth. It was clear that the youth in the program respect, admire, and even love the mentors in the program. While this is a difficult data point to measure, it is clearly reflected in the youth survey, and it bears highlighting in this report.

### Pathways Leadership Cohort

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Gracefully Mindful established a new **Leadership Cohort** for Pathways graduates who desire longer term engagement with the program (following a recommendation from last year’s evaluation). This new extended program option is open to all Pathways alumni. In addition to ongoing life skills development, the Leadership Cohort includes support for job searches, securing important documents (ID, social security card, etc.), and accessing health services. Participants also participate in field trips, group meals, and other social activities. Parents have been very pleased with the extended programming option and have even begun asking for more. Gracefully Mindful has responded by offering one Saturday per month with additional programming for all youth who complete the Leadership Cohort.

### Pathways Youth Participation

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Pathways served 36 youth in Year 3. Participation remained consistent with Year 2, with 81% (29) of Cohort 6-8 participants completing the program (compared to 77% in Year 2 and 57% in Year 1). Cohorts 6 and 7 saw 100% completion. Cohort 8, larger than the prior two cohorts combined with 20 participants, had a 65% completion rate (13). Of the 7 youth who did not persist through the program in Year 3, 6 (86%) did not meet attendance requirements, and 1 (14%) moved away.

### Pathways Geographic Distribution

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Of the 36 participants in Year 3, 32 had permanent addresses in Orleans Parish. They came from 15 different Zip codes, with the heaviest concentration of participants coming from Mid-City, New Orleans East, and the Westbank. All Council districts were represented.

Geographic Distribution by Council District									
District A		District B		District C		District D		District E	
70118	1	70112	1	70114	3	70126	2	70127	1
70119	5	70113	2	70116	1			70128	3
		70115	2	70117	1			70129	4
		70125	1	70131	3				
		70130	2						

	6 (17%)		8 (22%)		8 (22%)		2 (6%)	8 (22%)

### Pathways Youth Gender Distribution

Of the 36 participants in Year 3, 89% (32) identified as male and 11% (4) identified as female.

### Pathways Youth Survey Results

This year, all youth in Cohorts 6-8 were surveyed about their experience in Pathways. Youth in Cohort 8 completed an additional survey specifically for this evaluation. As in prior years, survey results specifically for this evaluation reflected **very positive youth impressions of the program**. Internal survey results reinforced the evaluation survey. Again this year, 100% reported feeling respected by their supervisor “always or most of the time.” Youth also reported high confidence knowing who to talk to if there is a problem, with 87% responding “always or most of the time.” Transportation continued to pose challenges for some youth, with just 63% saying it was easy to get to Pathways “always or more of the time.” In a significant departure from prior years, only 12% of youth reported being motivated by the opportunity to earn a paycheck through Pathways. Notably, only one participant mentioned “getting paid” in the open answer questions as well, fewer than in prior years. This underscores the survey responses.

	Always + Most of the time (2020)	Always + Most of the time (2021)	Always + Most of the time (2022)	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Does not apply
I enjoy coming to Pathways.	86%	92%	87%	4 (50%)	3 (37%)	1 (13%)	--	--
I learn something at Pathways every day.	71%	100%	88%	6 (75%)	1 (13%)	1 (13%)	--	--
My supervisor treats me with respect.	86%	100%	100%	5 (63%)	3 (37%)	--	--	--
Earning a paycheck makes me want to come to Pathways.	100%	85%	12%	1 (13%)	--	7 (87%)	--	--
It's easy to balance Pathways with school.	43%	84%	75%	2 (25%)	4 (50%)	2 (25%)	--	--

If I have a problem at Pathways I know who to talk to.	71%	100%	<b>87%</b>	7 (87%)	--	1 (12%)	--	--
Getting to Pathways every day is easy.	100%	61%	<b>63%</b>	4 (50%)	1 (13%)	3 (37%)	--	--
The work I'm doing at Pathways is hard.	29%	8%	<b>0%</b>	--	--	1 (13%)	6 (75%)	1 (13%)
I have a lot of down time at Pathways.	29%	8%	<b>12%</b>	1 (13%)	--	4 (50%)	3 (37%)	--
I'm too busy at Pathways.	67%	55%	<b>37%</b>	1 (13%)	2 (25%)	1 (13%)	4 (50%)	--
The work I do at Pathways is too easy.	43%	37%	<b>50%</b>	2 (25%)	2 (25%)	2 (25%)	2 (25%)	--
The people at Pathways make me want to come to work.	57%	70%	<b>63%</b>	3 (37%)	2 (25%)	2 (25%)	--	1 (13%)

In their free response questions, Pathways participants highlighted the importance of “code switching” as well as the opportunity to “learn new things” as key reasons why they enjoy their internship experience. Youth reported feeling “safe” and “free” at Pathways, and they mentioned “respect,” “accountability,” and “listening” among their own positive attributes.

<p><b>I like coming to Pathways because:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I get paid</li> <li>• I feel free</li> <li>• I feel safe and valued here</li> <li>• I like learning new skills</li> <li>• They teach me how to have a change mindset</li> <li>• It help me become a better person</li> <li>• They teach me about stuff I need to know</li> <li>• I learn something new every day</li> </ul>	<p><b>One thing that makes me a great member of Pathways is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am reasonable</li> <li>• My enthusiasm</li> <li>• My accountability</li> <li>• I show my respect</li> <li>• My listening to everything they teach me in the program</li> <li>• I can say I made it to the end of the program</li> <li>• That I am a great listener</li> <li>• I learned code switching, meditation, and important skills</li> </ul>
<p><b>The most important thing I have learned at Pathways is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code switching (3)</li> <li>• How to control and conduct myself</li> </ul>	<p><b>One way I could improve at Pathways is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be more approachable</li> <li>• Joining the alumni group</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always think before you do</li> <li>• Taking accountability and sharing responsibility</li> <li>• Soft skills, hard skills, and deep breathing</li> <li>• Deep breathing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be more enthusiastic</li> <li>• By being on time</li> <li>• My listening</li> <li>• Understanding my soft skills and my hard skills so I can use them in the future</li> <li>• To make sure of what I am doing and talk more</li> <li>• My behavior</li> </ul>
<p><b>One thing that would make my Pathways experience better is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting paid on time</li> <li>• The staff members treat me with respect</li> <li>• I don't know. I think my experience is good enough</li> <li>• More activities and skills to learn</li> <li>• More outside activities</li> <li>• More people they could save</li> <li>• Nothing. I had a great time</li> <li>• Doing more activities</li> </ul>	<p><b>If my friend asked me what I do at the Pathways Program, I would tell them:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They teach you how to code switch and solve problems</li> <li>• I code switch and learn to stay positive</li> <li>• Learn how to be a better person</li> <li>• I learn about life skills</li> <li>• I learn life skills and learn showing and taking accountability and having morals</li> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• Learn how to be professional</li> <li>• I learned a lot of life skills</li> </ul>

### Pathways Youth Recidivism

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A key goal of the Pathways Program is that youth will change long-term behavior patterns, reducing recidivism and improving public safety. In Year 3, the 60-day recidivism rate was 3.4%, with 1 student out of 29 re-offending. The 90-day recidivism rate was 10.3%, with 3 out of 29 re-offending.

### B. SUMMER SUCCESS

In Year 3, **Summer Success** prioritized:

- Earlier recruitment of youth, reaching out to referral partners in January/February 2022
- Maintaining diversity of internship options and offering a wide range of experiences for youth to explore
- Offering job fairs to expose youth to different internship opportunities
- Working with internship providers to strengthen recruitment

### Summer Success Youth Participation

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Five of the 10 internship sites returned from 2021. Across 10 partner sites, 98 youth participated in Summer Success. Overall attendance was 81%, a 9% improvement over Year 2. Perfect attendance declined from 15% to 6%. In all, just 5 (5%) of 98 did not achieve at least a 50% attendance rate. This was a marked improvement from 2021. One participant was detained while enrolled early in the summer and was unable to complete the program. One factor that may have contributed to improved overall attendance was that host sites were permitted to recruit their own participants, provided they aligned with Summer Success program goals of serving youth at high risk of offending. This enabled some programs to work with youth in their immediate surrounding area. The combination of program familiarity and mitigation of transportation challenges (as a result of proximity) likely contributed to higher average attendance. Partner sites had the following attendance rates:

	Average Attendance (Days)	Minimum Attendance (Days)	Maximum Attendance (Days)	Total Youth
Café Reconcile	17 (73%)	11	21	3
Community Avengers	20 (88%)	14	23	6
Freddie Marshall	19 (81%)	14	22	19
Heroes of New Orleans (HONO)	18 (78%)	11	23	28
LevelUp	20 (85%)	14	23	6
MicAmped	19 (82%)	11	23	8
NOVAC	19 (83%)	11	22	7
Studio 4212	16 (71%)	1	21	9
Taking Back Our Youth	22 (94%)	21	23	6
The NET	20 (86%)	17	22	6
<b>Average</b>	<b>19 (81%)</b>			<b>98</b>

### Summer Success Geographic Distribution

Summer Success participants came from 14 Zip Codes, with 4 out of 98 offering no permanent address. More than 50% of participants came from the Westbank of New Orleans (the two largest program sites by far, Freddie Marshall and HONO, were located on the Westbank in 2022).

Geographic Distribution by Council District									
District A		District B		District C		District D		District E	
70119	5	70112	1	70114	25	70122	4	70127	3
		70113	1	70116	2	70126	9	70128	6



		70115	6	70117	6			70129	6
		70125	2	70131	18				
	5 (5%)		10 (10%)		51 (52%)		13 (13%)		15 (15%)

### Summer Success Gender Distribution

In 2022, 57% (56) of Summer Success participants self-identified as male, with 41% (40) identifying as female and 2% (2) identifying as non-binary.

### Summer Success Youth Survey Results

The timing of this year’s Summer Success youth survey was a bit delayed, resulting in lower participation rate than years past. Nonetheless, survey responses continued to reflect **very positive impressions of the program**. For the second year in a row, 100% described “always” feeling respected by their supervisor. Additionally, 100% said they enjoyed coming to their internship “always or most of the time.” And for the first time, 100% said their Summer Success experience “always” helped them stay away from making bad choices. Just 13% reported significant downtime at their internship site, down from 30% the prior summer. Nearly 3 out of 4 (73%) said they learned something almost every day in Summer Success.

	Always + Most of the time (2021)	Always + Most of the time (2022)	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Does not apply
I enjoy coming to work.	93%	100%	12 (80%)	3 (20%)	--	--	--
I learn something at work every day.	83%	73%	7 (46%)	4 (27%)	4 (27%)	--	--
My supervisor treats me with respect.	100%	100%	15 (100%)	--	--	--	--
Earning a paycheck makes me want to come to work.	90%	60%	6 (40%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	--
If I have a problem at my job I know who to talk to.	87%	80%	11 (73%)	1 (1%)	2 (13%)	1 (7%)	--
Getting to my job every day is easy.	80%	80%	9 (60%)	3 (20%)	1 (7%)	2 (13%)	--

The work I'm doing at my job is hard.	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	--	--	1 (7%)	14 (93%)	--
I have a lot of down time at my job.	<b>33%</b>	<b>13%</b>	--	2 (13%)	5 (33%)	8 (53%)	--
The work I do at my job is too easy.	<b>36%</b>	<b>40%</b>	2 (13%)	4 (27%)	5 (33%)	4 (27%)	--
The people at my job make me want to come to work.	<b>77%</b>	<b>87%</b>	10 (67%)	3 (20%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	--
Summer Success helped me stay away from doing negative things.	<b>87%</b>	<b>100%</b>	15 (100%)	--	--	--	--

In the free response question, Summer Success participants had only positive reactions to their experience, noting that the program helped them with things like “taking responsibility,” “treating others with respect,” and “make connections.” Some youth said that Summer Success “kept them off the streets,” and without the program they would have just been “sitting around all day.”

**How did participating in Summer Success affect your life this summer?**

- It was great. Wouldn't have done anything other than chill this summer.
- It helped me with a lot of stuff.
- It taught him things he didn't know like how to create shirts, jackets, be a radio producer, etc.
- It kept me busy.
- Opened my eyes to the theater industry and helped me adapt to environment with the people I worked with, and make greater connections and learn more about being off camera than on. And How to work and write checks. Take responsibility and be responsible for money.
- Helped by teaching me things I didn't know, and how to treat others and myself. Gave me a different perspective on how to see the world.
- Helped me learn stuff I didn't know and about life itself. Taught me Human anatomy, and about sex. I got to meet new people and gave me something to do instead of sitting around all day.
- It was great
- Helped me to stay busy and make money on a job.
- Helped me stay doing positive things.

- It helped me learn more about what I want to do later I life. It also helped me get the feeling of waking up every morning and going to a job, I feel like that somehow is preparing me for the real world.
- This program helped me learn more about technical theater and gave me an opportunity to socialize with more people. My supervisor also taught us life skills like how to write checks. This experience was incredibly helpful and educational.
- It thought me basic life skills.
- It kept me off the streets, kept me out of trouble, gave me something to do
- It showed traits that I needed to prepare for getting a job in the future

### III. INSIGHTS

The following insights reflect qualitative data and feedback from individual interviews and/or completed surveys with 3 OYF team members, 4 Gracefully Mindful staff, 5 Pathways employers, 7 Summer Success employers, and 8 referral partners. It also incorporates OYF/Gracefully Mindful document review, including youth enrollment and attendance, participant data collected during the program, and internal surveys.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION	
<b>Program Purpose/Goals/Objectives</b>	
<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As they have done every year, referral partners noted the significant need for Pathways as a critical service for system involved 14-17 year olds – they all say there are <b>no other options out there</b> to serve these young people.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Challenges</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some internship providers for both Pathways and Summer success expressed a <b>desire for more extended engagement</b> with the youth in the program. Some noted that they didn't have enough time to teach their participants the higher-level skills they had hoped to teach.</li> </ul>
<b>Program Activities</b>	
<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation at Pathways and Summer Success <b>remained strong</b></li> <li>• Pathways and Summer Success <b>youth are overwhelmingly positive about their experience</b> in both programs.</li> <li>• The incorporation of a Leadership Cohort enabled <b>youth to sustain their engagement</b> over a more extended period,</li> </ul>	<p><i>Challenges</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pathways interns were frequently only available after 4:30pm or on weekends. In some cases, Pathways employer business activities take place mostly on weekdays from 9-5, <b>limiting the quality of the experience they can provide</b> for their interns.</li> <li>• Some Pathways employers requested <b>support in establishing structure and setting learning objectives</b> for their interns.</li> </ul>

<p>increasing the likelihood of forming positive habits and avoiding activities that lead to incarceration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gracefully Mindful noted some <b>difficulty this year with employer recruitment</b> due to a number of factors including negative perceptions of youth. Two employers withdrew from Pathways because of negative experiences with youth.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES</b></p>	
<p><b>Data Collection</b></p>	
<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Attendance and enrollment status records</b> were maintained and submitted consistently for Summer Success.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Challenges</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Collection of documentation</b> for youth (birth certificate, social security card, etc.) remained a significant challenge for referral partners. Fewer mentioned it as a disincentive for referring youth, and some noted that the earlier recruitment cycle for Summer Success made the process more reasonable for them</li> <li>Gracefully Mindful had intended to partner with Youthforce NOLA to implement MHA Labs as a way of <b>assessing skills acquisition</b> for Pathways participants, but this did not happen in Year 3. Plans are in place to implement this with the next cohort, however.</li> <li>Summer Success encountered <b>lots of headwinds</b> attempting to implement MHA Labs as a new assessment tool for the program.</li> <li>While Pathways data collection has improved, the Data Tracker tool that Gracefully Mindful has built is <b>clumsy and not fully utilized</b> by staff. Each cohort is tracked in its own spreadsheet, making it more difficult to produce reports and observe trends. Also, <b>case note confidentiality</b> is a concern with the current system.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication</b></p>	
<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both internship providers and referral partners report <b>seamless lines of communication</b> with Pathways and/or OYF staff when they had a question.</li> <li>Most partners recalled participating in a structured and informative <b>orientation session</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Challenges</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referral partners note that <b>many judges still do not appear to appreciate</b> the scope and impact of Pathways or Summer Success.</li> <li>Pathways youth <b>did not always communicate effectively</b> with employers when they were unable to make it to their internship.</li> </ul>

Operations	
<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilization of Summer Success sites for recruitment support appears to have contributed to <b>increased engagement</b>.</li> <li>Summer Success internship providers were guaranteed a <b>minimum grant</b> to support service delivery as opposed to a per student allocation – a big support to smaller programs.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Challenges</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Summer Success partner sites noted that <b>OYF funding does not cover the full cost of programming</b>. Some scaled back programs (eg. eliminated field trips) due to budget constraints.</li> </ul>

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

##### YEAR TWO

The following recommendations, made one year ago, were intended to support internal conversation about how to achieve maximum programmatic impact in Year 3 of Pathways and Summer Success. Below is a status update:

##### PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION	
Recommendation	Status
<input type="checkbox"/> Explore possible scheduling integration with public schools in order to make Pathways Program a part of the school day, and potentially for credit.	Scheduling integration with public schools was not prioritized in this program year. Staff reported that students in non-traditional school settings (like The NET) tended to have better experiences in their internship because they could complete their internship during normal business hours.
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider opportunities for youth who remain system-involved to participate in Pathways a second time (possibly in a newly defined “peer mentor” or “counselor in training” role).	A new Leadership Cohort was introduced for Pathways participants, providing them with structured ways to continue their life skills and job skills development and maintain supportive relationships with the mentors at Gracefully Mindful.
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to strengthen Pre-Post Testing to measure skills gains related to specific program modules.	With support from YouthForce NOLA, a leader in workforce development for school enrolled youth, Gracefully Mindful plans to implement the industry best practice MHA Labs as their in-house tool to measure skill attainment for Pathways youth.

<input type="checkbox"/> Support employer partners by helping them develop back-up plans for their participants when obstacles prevent them from conducting regular training activities.	Gracefully Mindful remained in close contact with employers through the program. Ultimately this problem will be solved by finding employers whose schedules align with after hours and weekend internships.
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider contracting with external partner (Gracefully Mindful or similar entity) to oversee/manage Summer Success.	OYF did not contract with an external partner for Summer Success in 2022, but they have expressed an interest in doing so for the coming year.
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiate recruitment process for Summer Success in January to ensure timely collection of documentation and reach full enrollment.	Recruitment started earlier for the 2022 Summer Success cohort, and referral partners commented that they appreciated the additional time they had to collect all of the documentation required for enrollment.
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide support for referral partners with collection of all documentation required for Summer Success participation.	A number of referral partners note that the heavy paperwork/documentation requirement continues to pose challenges.
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide a Certificate of Completion to each Summer Success participant who completes all five weeks of the program.	Participants received certificates this year.

SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES	
Recommendation	Status
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider all options to improve transportation access for Pathways Participants.	Transportation improved significantly with the purchase of a van and a dedicated driver. Rideshare services continued to be used when the van was not available. Despite these improvements, transportation remains a significant barrier for many participants.
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that internship sites have back-up plans in order to provide training when unforeseen issues (supply chain delays, weather events, etc.) prevent anticipated work activities from happening.	This issue was addressed partially through partner selection. The partners who noted these issues in the past are no longer participating in the program.
<input type="checkbox"/> Actively educate judges on the program's structure and duration, as they frequently lack understanding.	Education efforts took place informally but a formal education strategy with judges was not implemented.

<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to improve timeliness of payments to Summer Success internship providers.	Fewer internship sites noted issues with timeliness of payments this year than in previous years.
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### YEAR THREE

The following new recommendations are intended to refine and build on the significant programmatic enhancements made in Year 3.

### PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

#### Summer Success

- Contract with external partner (Gracefully Mindful or similar entity) to oversee/manage Summer Success. [From Year 2]
- Collaborate with YouthForce NOLA/MHA Labs to identify key program objectives and create pre/post tests to measure outcomes
- Extend Summer Success to 6 weeks or even 8 weeks if possible
- Increase funding for host sites if possible

#### Pathways

- Explore possible scheduling integration with public schools in order to make Pathways Program a part of the school day, and potentially for credit – explore possible integration/collaboration with New Orleans Career Center [From Year 2]
- If school integration is not possible, focus on recruiting employer partners who can commit to creating meaningful experiences for interns on weekdays after 4:30pm or on weekends.
- Continue to provide opportunities for extended engagement, not only in life skills, but in internship as well
- Develop a strategy to intensify employer recruitment efforts – promote Pathways and identify additional Black-owned small businesses through the Regional Black Chamber, Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs, Fraternities/Sororities, etc.
- Work with internship providers to help them structure the experience they are providing for their interns (help them create goals/objectives and activity schedules as needed)

- Implement MHA Labs to measure skills gains related to specific program modules
- Coordinate with NOPD to more effectively track recidivism

## **SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES**

### **Summer Success**

- Continue to utilize host sites for recruitment support
- Improve youth survey participation by incorporating it into Summer Success programming (eg. distribute it to youth in person during final week)

### **Pathways**

- Improve communication with employers when youth will be absent from their internship
- Subscribe to a database platform or work with a data consultant to strengthen the current approach to data collection and reporting
- Contract with evaluator earlier in program year and/or improve opportunities for collection of feedback from Pathways youth
- Actively educate judges on the program's structure and duration, as they frequently lack understanding [From Year 2]



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