



PATHWAYS TO JUSTICE CAREERS FOR YOUTH

The Department of Labor's Pathways to Justice Careers (PJC) grants combined mentorship, summer internships, and career exploration in justice and emergency services fields, giving youth a chance to interact with police officers, firefighters, and paramedics. The program targeted youth enrolled in the 11th and 12th grades between the ages of 16 to 21 who were at-risk of dropping out of school and becoming involved in the juvenile or adult justice systems.

The Department awarded PJC grants totaling \$6.5 million to five non-profit organizations and two local governments in 2016, and it funded an additional 6 grants in 2017. The PJC projects operated in the cities of Boston, Bridgeport, Fall River/New Bedford, Fort Worth, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Rochester, San Diego, Tucson, and Utica. Grantees were encouraged to locate their programs in high-poverty, high-crime communities within their cities.

Due to the danger of having high school students accompany police officers and firefighters on live patrols and live fires, grantees needed to coordinate with local police and fire departments to find creative ways of introducing youth to justice and emergency fields. In Boston, the Fire Department began a summer fire team academy for PJC participants. In Utica, the police and fire departments involved PJC participants in a summer police and fire academy. In Long Beach, PJC youth participated in a law and justice academy provided by the police department. In Bridgeport, the police department runs annual summer safety camps for younger youth, and the police department used the PJC participants as safety counselors in these summer camps. Overall, the PJC grants enrolled 2,895 participants, and provided work experience or summer internships to 1,884 or 65 percent of these participants.

Mathematica Policy Research and Social Policy Research Associates conducted an evaluation to understand the implementation of and services provided by Pathways to Justice Careers grants. Their report "*Developing Pathways to Justice and Emergency Services Careers for At-Risk Youth: A Formative Evaluation*" can be found at:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/Brief-FormEvalonPathwaystoJustice&EmergSvcsCareers.pdf>