

# 2009 PROJECT JERICHO YOUTH SUMMIT DATA

Through a partnership with The Center for Civic and Urban Engagement at Wittenberg University Project Jericho was able to collect research data from the participants' regarding their experience at the Youth Summit. Results were analyzed and summarized by Wittenberg student Paul Weber under the supervision of Dr. Stephanie Little.

On Friday December 4, 2009 middle school students from Project Jericho's After School Arts Program, Clark State Community College's Champion City Scholar Program, The Springfield Academy of Excellence, and Avetec's STARS program attended an interactive day at Clark State Community College about their future, jobs and job skills. This day-long event, entitled *Project Jericho Youth Summit*, had students focusing on three key theme words – *Tolerance*, *Exploration* and *Courage* – and how those words could help them to find a job and to work successfully with others. Dee Garwood, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Clark State Community College, opened the day with a keynote introducing the themes of the day. The students then had breakout sessions with dynamic artists who through their own discipline - comedy, juggling, visual art, and others – helped the students to learn *Tolerance* with themselves and others as they learned about what it takes to have a job; *Exploration* of jobs that might interest the students; and the *Courage* to learn new things.

A second series of Youth Summit activities took place in the Clark County Juvenile Detention Center during December 2009. Incarcerated youth could participate in up to three sessions aimed at helping them become more thoughtful and confident about future job possibilities as well as better prepared for obtaining and keeping a job. The three sessions included 1) a script-writing exercise examining “Tolerance” with artist Michael Lippert on December 21; 2) a “Courage” workshop involving juggling with artist Curtis Zimmerman on December 7; and 3) an “Exploration” restaurant simulation during which the youth assumed various job duties (e.g., waiter, hostess, busboy) and served a meal to actual guests on December 18.

## *Method*

### **Participants**

**Clark State.** One hundred and twenty youth participated in the Youth Summit, including 77 girls (47.8%) and 43 boys (26.7%). The majority of the youth were eighth graders ( $n = 54$ ; 45.0%), although there were 39 sixth grade (32.5%), 26 seventh grade (21.7%), and 1 ninth grade (.8%) participants as well. Race of the participants was not recorded. That actual number of student responses included in the analyses varied from 112 to 118 due to students not answering some items.

**Detention.** Twenty-seven youth participated in the “Tolerance” session with Michael Lippert, including 8 girls (28.6%) and 19 boys (67.9%); however, only 22 of them completed both the pre- and post-surveys. In the “Courage” session with Curtis Zimmerman, nineteen students participated, including 5 girls (26.3%) and 14 boys (73.7%). For the “Exploration” restaurant simulation, approximately 34 youth completed surveys, although many were missing or incomplete because they missed either the beginning or last half of the day; thus, only 14 youth completed both surveys.

### **Materials**

**Clark State and Detention Sessions with Curtis Zimmerman and Michael Lippert.** Both the pre and post surveys for the Youth Summit included eleven questions that were adapted from the short form of the Career Decision Self-Efficacy scale (CDSE-SF; Betz, Klein, & Taylor, 1996; Betz & Taylor, 2001). The original CDSE-SF has 25 items that are designed to assess college students' confidence in completing steps in the career decision making process (Taylor & Betz, 1983). From those 25 items, eleven were selected that best captured the goals of the Youth Summit which were to expose the students to arts activities that would get them thinking about their future, jobs and job skills. The retained items were re-worded slightly to make them more appropriate to an adolescent (pre-college) sample. The questions were answered on a Likert scale from 1 (*No Confidence*) to 5 (*Complete Confidence*). Past Youth Summit evaluations had utilized the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991); in both 2007 and 2008 Youth Summit participants demonstrated significant increases in their hope for the future. In order to begin assessing additional benefits of the Youth Summit, it was decided to choose a new measure. The CDSE-SF was chosen because it more directly assesses the primary goals of the summit; that is, to boost the participants' level of interest and confidence in their futures, specifically pursuing

jobs. This scale demonstrated a high level of internal consistency reliability (all Time 1 coefficient alphas  $\geq .82$ ; all Time 2 coefficient alphas  $\geq .85$ ). A sum of the eleven items was used. Because the CDSE-SF was altered significantly for this evaluation, we will call the items utilized from here on the Job Self-Efficacy Scale.

On the pre survey the only additional item was an open-ended question that asked youth what they were looking forward to most at the summit. Post surveys also included an open-ended question that asked youth what they thought the future holds for them. Youth also rated the summit overall on a Likert Scale from 1 (*Not so good*) to 5 (*Excellent*). Clark State participants indicated which group they were in (Red, Blue, or Yellow). Participants then evaluated each of the artists/presenters (Dee, Curtis, Ronve, Michael, and Sarah/Kristi) on a Likert Scale from 1 (*Not so good*) to 5 (*Awesome*). The next nine questions were true/false items that asked youth “I discovered things about myself I didn’t know,” “I felt the adults that helped with the event were interested in my future,” “I learned about Tolerance,” “I learned about Exploration,” “I learned about Courage,” “I learned useful skills that will help me at a job,” “I am glad that I was able to participate today,” “I had never thought about my future before this week,” and “I am thinking positively about the future.” Of note, for the Youth Summit sessions with Michael and Curtis at the Detention Center, only 7 True/False items were administered since each only focused on one of the key themes. The last three open-ended questions asked youth to share what their favorite part of the summit was, what their least favorite part of the summit was, and to share additional comments or suggestions.

**Detention Restaurant Simulation.** The restaurant simulation pre and post surveys included the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) that had been used with the summits the previous two years at Clark State. The Hope Scale is an 8-item questionnaire assessing Agency, the determination to accomplish a goal, and Pathways, the planning of what needs to be done to reach a goal. The questions were answered on a Likert scale from 1 (*Not True*) to 5 (*Very True*). The Hope Scale was chosen in part because it was used in a previous study that assessed the effects of a 1-day ropes course on at-risk youth’s hope for the future (Robitschek, 1996). In the current sample, the Agency and Pathways scales were combined into an overall measure of hope. This scale demonstrated a high level of internal consistency reliability (Time 1 coefficient alpha = .58; Time 2 coefficient alpha = .82). A sum of the eight items was used.

In addition, the youth answered the following questions on the same 5-point Likert scale as used for the Hope Scale on both the pre- and post-surveys: “I want a job,” “I am interested in working in a restaurant,” “I want a job but do not know how to get one,” and “I feel ready right now to work as a \_\_\_\_\_” (answered for each of the following : waiter/waitress, bus boy/girl, hostess, cook, and cashier. On both surveys the youth also indicated *yes/no* if they had ever had a job, had ever applied for a job, and had ever interviewed for a job. If they had held a job, they listed all the jobs they had ever had.

### **Procedure**

**Clark State.** Youth were given pre surveys to complete as they arrived at the summit. When they turned in the pre survey they received a colored, rubber bracelet with one of the key words of the day (Exploration, Tolerance, or Courage). After the summit was complete, youth were instructed to fill out post surveys in their final session before returning to the main room to collect a backpack full of free gifts (e.g., t-shirt, pens, notepad) and departing.

**Detention.** Before each of the sessions in the Detention Center, the youth completed the pre-surveys. Then, after the sessions were over, they completed the post-surveys.

### **Results**

**Clark State.** A one-sample t-test was conducted on the Job Self-Efficacy Scale. Using the difference in the sum of the items on the scale between pre and post surveys, the t-test determined if the youths’ job self-efficacy changed significantly throughout the day (i.e., the difference between the pre and post surveys was significantly different from zero). The one-sample t-test revealed that youth’s job self-efficacy significantly increased,  $t(110) = 5.58, p < .001$ . Youth’s reported job self-efficacy increased an average of 2.78 points after completing the summit (Pre Survey mean score = 44.88;  $SD = 6.11$ ; Post Survey mean score = 47.66;  $SD = 6.47$ ). In terms of the response scale (1= *No Confidence*; 5 = *Complete Confidence*), youths’ average response to each item went from a 4 to a 4.3. Thus, although they started out fairly high in their levels of job self-efficacy, the youth summit increased that confidence even further. These results were similar regardless the youths’ grade level and which group they were in during the summit. However, the increases in job self-

efficacy from pre to post survey were significantly greater for female participants (mean increase = 3.68,  $SD = 5.01$ ) than for males (mean increase = 1.18,  $SD = 5.32$ );  $t(109) = 2.47, p < .05$ .

Frequencies as well as means and standard deviations were calculated to find how the youth rated the program overall as well as each individual artist. The average rating for the Youth Summit overall as 4.66 ( $SD = .72$ ); the vast majority of the youth gave the program a rating of Excellent-score of 5 (74.3%) or just below Excellent-score of 4, (21.0%), indicating that in general the youth enjoyed the experience. In addition, each of the individual artists received high scores. Curtis received the most positive evaluation with 86.1% of the students rating him as awesome (mean score = 4.81;  $SD = .55$ ). Ronve received the next highest score with 81.8% of students rating him as awesome (mean score=4.75,  $SD=.61$ ). Sarah and Kristi received the next highest rating, with 63.9% of students giving these presenters a solid '5,'—denoting that they were "Awesome" speakers (mean = 4.51;  $SD = .79$ ). Dee and Michael both had similar ratings, with 51.4% of students giving Dee a score of 5 (mean = 4.22,  $SD = .99$ ), and 54.7% of students giving Michael Lippert a score of 5 (mean = 4.25,  $SD = 1.04$ ).

Frequencies were conducted on the true/false post survey items to further examine how youth were impacted by the event. Frequency counts revealed that 79.2% of youth discovered things about themselves that they did not know, 93.5% felt that the adults who helped with the event were interested in their future, 98.1% learned about Tolerance, 95.3% learned about Exploration, and 98.1% learned about Courage. Also, 91.5% of participants learned useful skills that they felt would help them get a job someday. Overall, an astounding 99.1% were glad that they participated, 43.8% never thought about their future before the summit, and 98.1% thought more positively about the future.

Students' written responses to the open-ended items were also examined. For the question about what is in store for these students in the future, answers were extremely positive and ranged from "Lots of things!" and "I want to be a successful scientist and writer" to "Acting and singing" and a very insightful—"Successes and failures." As for their favorite part of the summit, 99.1% of students responded—leaving positive and encouraging remarks about the speakers and the activities of the day. Curtis was clearly a huge crowd pleaser with just a little under half ( $n = 42$ ) of the students writing "Curtis," "magic," "juggling" or something similar in response to that question. Others did, however, say that "lunch and singing" ( $n = 13$ ), "acting" ( $n = 7$ ) or "everything" ( $n = 9$ ) was their favorite part. As for the negative comments, 77.8% of participants responded with something that they wish could have been changed. The most frequently mentioned least favorite activity was the "dancing", followed by "acting," and even "taking this survey." However, on a lighter note, several students cited "going home," as their least favorite part of the 2009 Youth Summit. Other comments were listed by approximately 35 participants (making it about 34% of the entire sample) and often included: "It was great," "I can't wait to come back next year," and even "How can I get my friend to join Project Jericho?"

**Detention Center: Curtis Zimmerman.** Data was collected using Pre- and Post-surveys for Curtis' section of the Detention Center Youth Summit. The one-sample t-test on the difference between the youths' responses to the Job Self-Efficacy Scale before and after the summit revealed that their job self-efficacy significantly increased.  $t(18) = 4.64, p < .001$ . The youth's total scores on the Job Self-Efficacy Scale increased an average of 4.32 points after completing the summit (Pre Survey mean score = 42.89;  $SD = 6.22$ ; Post Survey mean score = 47.21;  $SD = 5.29$ ). In terms of the response scale (1= *No Confidence*; 5 = *Complete Confidence*), youths' average response to each item went from a 3.9 to a 4.3. This average increases translates to what might be the difference between choosing a 4 and a 5 or a 3 and a 4 for several items. These results indicate that Curtis' section of the Youth Summit was extremely effective in raising the adolescents' job self-efficacy.

Frequencies as well as means and standard deviations were calculated to find how the youth rated the program overall as well as Curtis. The average rating for the session was 4.37; the vast majority of the youth gave the program a rating of *Excellent*, score of 5 (57.9%), or just below *Excellent*, score of 4, (21.1%), indicating that in general the youth enjoyed the experience. Curtis also received a very positive evaluation with 73.7% of the students rating him as *Awesome* (mean score = 4.74,  $SD = .45$ ).

Frequencies were conducted on the true/false post survey items to further examine how youth were impacted by the event. Frequency counts revealed that 84.2% of youth discovered things about themselves that

they did not know, 94.7% felt that the presenter was interested in their future, and 100% learned about Courage. Also, 94.7% of participants learned useful skills that they felt would help them get a job someday. Overall, an astounding 94.7% were glad that they participated, 36.8% never thought about their future before the summit, and 100% thought more positively about the future.

Regarding the open-ended items, found only on the post surveys—questions included “What was your favorite (and least favorite) part of the Youth Summit. For their favorite part of the summit, 100% of students responded—leaving positive and encouraging remarks about Curtis and the activities of the day (e.g., “Curtis,” “coin trick,” “juggling”). One student wrote that her favorite part was “How Mr. Zimmerman actually seemed interested in our future and wanted to help and did not lie to us and try to make it easier; he was brutally honest.” As for the negative comments, only 31.6% of participants responded with something that they wish could have been changed. Some of the least favorites mentioned included “the references to orange,” “when he was talking,” and “learning how to do the circle and square (too hard).” However, several youth wrote things such as, “I liked it all,” “everything was good,” or that “nothing” was their least favorite. Other comments were listed by only 6 participants (making it about 31.6% of the entire audience sampled) and often included positive reinforcement such as: “Thanks it showed me alot,” “Curtis Zimmerman is great,” and “Come back next year!”

**Detention Center: Michael Lippert.** Data was collected using Pre- and Post-surveys for Michael’s section of the Detention Center Youth Summit. The one-sample t-test conducted on the youth data revealed that youth’s job self-efficacy *significantly* increased,  $t(21) = 2.83, p < .05$ . The sum of the youth’s responses to all 11 questions of the Job Self-Efficacy Scale increased an average of 1.68 points after completing the summit (Pre Survey mean score = 45.15;  $SD = 7.24$ ; Post Survey mean score = 46.86;  $SD = 7.00$ ). Responses to each item, on average, raised about .18 points over the course of Michael’s Youth Summit—a big impact considering the results are based on a 1 to 5 Likert Scale rating.

Frequencies as well as means and standard deviations were calculated to find how the youth rated Michael’s section of the Detention Center Youth Summit. The average overall rating was 4.17 on a 5 point scale. The majority of the youth gave the Youth Summit a rating of Excellent (score of 5)—52.2% or just below Excellent (score of 4)—13%, indicating that in general the youth enjoyed the experience. As for the individual artist/presenter—which in this case, was Michael Lippert—participants gave generally high remarks; 36.4% of participants rated Michael Lippert as an “Excellent” presenter, 31.8% of them rated him one step below this (4) and another 31.8% rated him in the middle (3)—at just average.

Frequencies were conducted on the true/false post survey items to further examine how youth were impacted by the event. Frequency counts revealed that 52.4% of youth discovered things about themselves that they did not know, 65.0% felt that the presenter was interested in their future, 75.0% learned about Tolerance. Also, 80.0% of participants learned useful skills that they felt would help them get a job someday. Overall, an astounding 95.0% were glad that they participated, 25.0% never thought about their future before the summit, and 90.0% thought more positively about the future.

Regarding the open-ended items, found only on the post surveys—questions included “What was your favorite (and least favorite) part of the Youth Summit. For their favorite part of the summit, 90.9% of students responded—leaving positive and encouraging remarks about Michael Lippert and the specific activities of the day, including “thinking about imagination,” “being able to put my input in,” and “we got out of our cells.” As for the negative comments, only 36.4% of participants responded with something that they wish could have been changed. Some of the most interesting least favorite activities included “having to do silly things,” and “the making of the script” Yet, several noted, “I liked everything” or made a similar comment that indicated no least favorite parts. Only one other comment of significance was listed and it was: “Keep up the good work!”

**Detention: Restaurant Simulation.** A one-sample t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the difference between the youth’s hope at pre- versus post-test significantly differed from 0; that is, did it increase from before to after the restaurant simulation. The one-sample t-test revealed that youth’s hope significantly increased,  $t(13) = 5.58, p < .001$ . The 14 youth completing both sets of surveys reported an average increase on the Hope scale of 7.11 points after completing the summit (Pre Survey mean score = 28.07;  $SD = 2.92$ ; Post

Survey mean score = 35.18;  $SD = 4.41$ ). Of note, the participants in the restaurant simulation also were significantly more likely to respond “true” to the following items at post-survey than they were at pre-survey: “I feel ready to have a job right now” [ $t(13) = 2.62, p < .05$ ], “I feel ready right now to work as a busy boy/girl” [ $t(13) = 3.23, p < .01$ ], and “I feel ready right now to work as a cashier” [ $t(13) = 2.94, p < .05$ ]. Of note, the participants’ scores increased on all items except one (“I am interested in working in a restaurant”) from the beginning to the end of the restaurant simulation, despite each of them only having one job as part of the simulation. Moreover, the small number of youth completing both surveys (13) limited the ability to detect significant differences between the two surveys.

Open ended questions were administered on both the Pre and Post surveys, to which almost all of the participants responded. Responses on the Pre-survey to “What do you hope to learn from participating in the Restaurant Simulation” included “I hope to learn how to get a job for the future” (about 85% of respondents indicated this), “I hope to make money and to follow through on an interview,” and “I want to learn to work with people better.” Finally, participants were asked what they learned from the Restaurant Simulation and often responded with “I learned ways around a problem,” and “I learned how to communicate with people.”

### **Discussion**

As hypothesized, attending the various Youth Summits significantly increased at-risk youth’s job self-efficacy. That is, they indicated greater confidence at the end of each summit than they did at the beginning to complete a number of job-related tasks, such as determine their ideal job and identify alternative job possibilities. The summit positively impacted youth in other ways, too. Youth discovered new things about themselves, felt that the adults cared about them, and learned about Tolerance, Exploration, and Courage and how those traits will help them in the workplace. These results add to the analysis of previous Youth Summits that found the event also produced increased hope among the participants, as did the restaurant simulation this year. Thus, providing youth with positive role models, enlightening and engaging activities, and encouragement can influence the way they view themselves and their future.

### **References**

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### **Summary of Adult Youth Summit Surveys**

Twenty adults completed surveys at the end of the Youth Summit, although some left items missing because they did not attend the whole summit. Below is a brief statistical summary of their responses.

Overall rating: 72.2% rated the event a 5; 27.8% rated the event a 4;

Dee's rating: 41.2% gave her a 5; 41.2% gave her a 4; 11.8% gave her a 3 and 5.9% gave her a 2;

Curtis' rating: 84.2% gave him a 5; 15.8% gave him a 4;

Ronve's ratings: 36.8% gave him a 5; 42.1% gave him a 4; and 21.1% gave him a 3;

Michael's ratings: 41.2% gave him a 5; 41.2% gave him a 4; 11.8% gave him a 3; and 5.9% 2;

Sarah and Kristi's ratings: 27.8% gave them a 5, 66.7% gave them a 4 and 5.6% gave them a 3;

For the true/false items, 100% of respondents answered *true* to all of the items except for the first (learned something new about oneself) to which 77.8% answered *true* and the second question to which 93.8% responded *true*. Most of the adult participants (94.7%) listed some aspect of the Youth Summit being their favorite, and 68.4% of them stated some aspect of the summit that was their least favorite. As with the youth, the adults most often listed "Curtis" or "juggling" as their favorite part of the Youth Summit. As far as least favorite parts, complaints ranged from "short sessions" to "overpopulated sessions." The adults were also asked to name one or two things they learned at the summit that they can use to teach others and 78.9% of the adults were able to do so; the answers ranged from "juggling" and "acting" to "thinking before you act" and that it is "ok to fail."



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Project Jericho is a collaborative program of the Clark State Performing Arts Center and Job & Family Services of Clark County with additional funding provided by the Ohio Arts Council and The Turner Foundation. Project Jericho's *Inside the Walls, Outside the Box* program at the Clark County Juvenile Detention Facility is funded, in part, by RECLAIM Ohio, the Ohio Department of Youth Services and the Clark County Juvenile Court.



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Coming Up Taller is an initiative of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH). The President's Committee partners with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to administer the program.

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