



## *Communities Need Young People With These Skills*

# WHAT COMMUNITIES NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CIVIC & WORKFORCE SKILLS

### YOUR MISSION MEETS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Community-based organizations are uniquely positioned to develop the skills young people need for both career success and civic engagement. Whether your focus is youth development, social services, arts and culture, faith-based programming, or neighborhood organizing, you're already doing this work.

The challenge? These skills are often invisible or undervalued. When we name them as both civic competencies and workforce skills, we unlock new funding, partnerships, and recognition for the impact you're already creating.

**Your programs don't just serve communities. They build the talent pipeline and strengthen democratic capacity.**

### THE CORE COMPETENCIES: DEFINED FOR COMMUNITY IMPACT

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Critical Thinking</b>       | Community application: Evaluating community needs, analyzing root causes of local challenges, assessing program effectiveness, making strategic decisions about resource allocation |
| <b>Effective Communication</b> | Community application: Facilitating community meetings, representing constituent voices, storytelling for fundraising and advocacy, bridging diverse community perspectives         |
| <b>Collaboration</b>           | Community application: Coalition building, cross-sector partnerships, volunteer coordination, collective impact initiatives, intergenerational programs                             |
| <b>Problem-Solving</b>         | Community application: Community needs assessments, participatory action research, grassroots organizing, program design addressing local challenges                                |

## THE CORE COMPETENCIES: DEFINED FOR COMMUNITY IMPACT

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Perspective Taking</b>          | Community application: Cultural competency, conflict mediation, understanding diverse community needs and assets                                                                  |
| <b>Negotiations and Compromise</b> | Community application: Resolving community conflicts, facilitating stakeholder dialogues, building consensus across diverse groups, navigating competing priorities               |
| <b>Collaboration</b>               | Community application: Coalition building, cross-sector partnerships, volunteer coordination, collective impact initiatives, intergenerational programs                           |
| <b>Civil Disagreement</b>          | Community application: Bridging divides in polarized communities, facilitating difficult conversations, maintaining coalitions across differences, modeling constructive dialogue |

## WHY CBOS ARE CRITICAL TO THIS FRAMEWORK

- Community-based organizations provide what schools and businesses often cannot: authentic community connections, trusted relationships across diverse populations, flexible programming responsive to local needs, safe spaces for youth to practice leadership, and deep understanding of community assets and challenges.
- Your programs already develop these skills. Youth leadership programs build decision-making and advocacy skills. Service projects teach collaboration and problem-solving. Mentorship programs connect young people with adult role models. Arts and cultural programs develop communication and creative expression. Sports and recreation build teamwork and resilience. Faith-based programs strengthen character and ethical reasoning.
- When we frame this work as integrated civic and workforce skills development, you gain leverage for funding, partnerships, and policy support.

## THE VALUE THIS FRAMEWORK BRINGS CBOS

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Immediate Benefits</b> | Stronger case for funding by demonstrating workforce development outcomes, New partnership opportunities with employers and schools, Enhanced program design with clear skill development goals, Better evaluation data showing tangible youth outcomes |
| <b>Long-Term Impact</b>   | Sustainable funding streams bridging youth development and workforce sectors, Recognition as essential talent pipeline infrastructure, Increased community investment in your mission, Greater impact through aligned cross-sector efforts              |

## THE IMPACT CBOS CREATE

### When Youth Lead Community Projects Through Your Organization:

**They learn** project management, stakeholder engagement, team coordination, and accountability for real outcomes. All while addressing needs they care about in their own neighborhoods.

### When Youth Participate in Your Mentorship Programs:

**They develop** professional communication, goal-setting, networking skills, and career awareness. All while building relationships with trusted adults who open doors to opportunity.

### When Youth Engage in Your Service Programs:

**They practice** collaboration across differences, problem-solving in real contexts, and connecting values to action. All while making tangible contributions to community wellbeing.

### When Youth Join Your Arts, Sports, or Cultural Programs:

**They build** communication, teamwork, discipline, and creative problem-solving. All while developing cultural identity and belonging.

## HOW CBOS CAN ENGAGE WITH THIS FRAMEWORK

### Recognition

#### Adopt the Civic & Workforce Skills Framework in program design and evaluation

- Use this language in grant applications and fundraising materials
- Document the workforce skills your programs develop
- Share stories demonstrating both civic and career outcomes

### Partnership

#### Partner with schools to provide experiential learning opportunities

- Connect with employers to create internships and mentorship pathways
- Collaborate with other CBOs using this shared framework
- Join coalitions advocating for integrated civic and workforce skills development

### Capacity Building

#### Train staff to intentionally develop and assess these competencies

- Design programs that explicitly integrate civic knowledge, dialogue skills, and workforce readiness
- Create evaluation tools measuring growth in these skills
- Build partnerships that enhance youth access to career pathways