



COUNTY OF ORANGE

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THE COUNTY OF ORANGE ANNOUNCES NEW INNOVATIVE PROGRAM PAYING YOUTH TO LEARN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUILD SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

SANTA ANA, Calif. (August 24, 2020) – The County of Orange announced today the launch of a new “Earn and Learn” program, an innovative workforce model offered to prepare Orange County’s youth for future business and life skills while earning wages.

“COVID-19 has presented a special struggle for Orange County’s youth trying to find relevant work experience and navigating their future career paths,” said Chairwoman Michelle Steel, Second District Supervisor. “The ‘Earn and Learn’ program will provide youth the opportunity to earn wages while learning modern-day workforce skills to prepare them for the future.”

The “Earn and Learn” program will be offered through the County’s Ready S.E.T. Orange County (OC) Initiative and is designed to assist youth in making a successful transition to unsubsidized employment, post-secondary education, military, apprenticeship or trade placement to ensure self-sufficiency and a long-term positive employment outlook.

“A wide range of activities, services, and training needs to be accessible to youth, particularly at-risk youth and youth with disabilities,” said Vice Chairman Andrew Do, First District Supervisor. “The ‘Earn and Learn’ program is designed to equip youth participants with the proper workforce development training to successfully transition into adulthood.”

Youth enrolled in the “Earn and Learn” program will earn wages for participating in occupational skills training; financial literacy; leadership development, which includes peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non-school hours; mentoring; and entrepreneurship.

“Businesses today are facing new challenges in how they operate due to COVID-19,” said Supervisor Donald Wagner, Third District. “This program allows the County to help the next generation of entrepreneurs anticipate and learn the skills needed to succeed in the years to come.”

Youth ages 14-21 will also have the opportunity to undergo a unique 10-week Entrepreneurship Academy delivered online. The courses will be delivered live by instructors with professional business experience who guide students through the process of turning a skill or idea into a venture. Students will learn the fundamentals of business and graduate with a prototype, business plan, and venture pitch.

“COVID-19 is impacting the community financially and that includes our youth,” said Supervisor Doug Chaffee, Fourth District. “The County is offering a unique model allowing youth to pursue their passion for business while also earning wages investing in themselves.”



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The first academy for the “Earn and Learn” program begins on August 31, 2020, and enrollment will be on a quarterly first-come, first-served basis. Students will be able to choose among various days and times for their weekly classes. To sign up, students must be enrolled in the Ready S.E.T. OC Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program. To review eligibility criteria or to sign up for the Ready S.E.T. OC WIOA Youth Program, please visit www.oconestop.com/young-adults.

“The ‘Earn and Learn’ program will provide significant opportunities to our youth in underserved communities, and give them the necessary tools and resources to be successful in their future career endeavors,” said Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Fifth District. “The youth is our future, and this program is an example of how the County is investing in it.”

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