

## OUR APPROACH

Career Exploration is a workforce development program for court-involved youth that provides employment readiness training, career guidance, and meaningful work experience through paid internships, with the aim of setting our participants on a track of life-long learning and achievement.

### Goal-Setting

Participants work with a coordinator to research fields of interest, take a personal inventory of strengths and challenges, learn about the educational and training requirements necessary to meet their career goals, and plan concrete steps that will help them achieve their desired careers.

### Exposure

During the 14-week program, Career Exploration participants visit job sites, host guest speakers from a variety of industries, tour local colleges, and engage in other activities aimed at broadening their knowledge of educational and vocational options.

### Connection

Career Exploration works with dozens of internship providers to develop challenging internships in the arts, education, law, construction, retail, journalism, and other fields. Participants are connected to internships that complement their interests and provide them with first-hand knowledge of potential career paths. An active alumni network also ensures that program graduates continue to build skills and make contacts that will support their personal and professional development.

### ABOUT CASES

CASES develops innovative programs that provide the justice system with sentencing options and rehabilitative services for court-involved youth and adults with special needs.

The mission of CASES is to increase the understanding and use of community sanctions that are fair, affordable, and consistent with public safety. By addressing factors that underlie criminal behavior, such as lack of education, unemployment, and untreated mental health and substance use problems, CASES' programs provide humane and cost-effective alternatives to jail, prison, juvenile detention and placement that are client-centered and community-focused.



Court Employment Project  
346 Broadway, 3 West  
New York, NY 10013

[www.cases.org](http://www.cases.org)

For information about this program, or to learn more about hiring a Career Exploration intern, please contact us at:

(212) 553-6636 or  
[careerexploration@cases.org](mailto:careerexploration@cases.org)

## CAREER EXPLORATION PROJECT

A Workforce Development Program  
for Court-Involved Youth

## PROGRAM SERVICES

**Employment Readiness Training:** During the first month of the program, Career Exploration participants meet four days a week to develop résumés, role play employment interviews, build their knowledge of workplace procedures and conduct, and explore team-building and problem-solving techniques. Group exercises and individual meetings with a program coordinator also help participants gain a better understanding of their unique skill sets and develop their specific knowledge of potential career paths.

**Internships:** After the training period, participants interview at internship sites that are matched with their skills and interests. During their eight- to ten-week internships, participants are paid a weekly stipend by CASES and meet at our office weekly to share their work experiences as a group and receive more advanced job skills training. Internship supervisors act as mentors for participants and check in regularly with Career Exploration coordinators to report on interns' progress.

**Academic Services:** Career Exploration participants who have not yet received a high school diploma or equivalent must be attending school or a GED program in order to remain in the program. Students set educational goals in accordance with their desired career paths and receive educational services as needed, including tutoring, GED prep, college advisement and financial aid planning. The program regularly sponsors tours of area colleges.

**Support Services:** Through CASES' youth programs, Career Exploration participants are able to access comprehensive services, including after-school enrichment activities, in-school education advocacy, family support, clinical services, and ongoing case management.

**Alumni Services:** Monthly alumni meetings are held to assist participants with post-program challenges and to offer a support network for participants as they pursue employment and education goals established during the program. Career Exploration alumni are also invited back for regularly scheduled events, including guest speakers, job-shadowing trips, recreational outings, and college tours.



## OUR RESULTS

Of the most recent year of Career Exploration graduates:

- nearly 90% continued their education
- two-thirds found employment after finishing the program

Of Career Exploration participants who were originally placed in a CASES program because of a felony conviction, less than 5% had a new felony conviction in the two years following program completion.

## AWARDS

Career Exploration is a recipient of the Juvenile Court Centennial Institute's National Juvenile Justice Award and a two-time recipient of the National Youth Employment Council's Promising and Effective Practices Network Award (1999 and 2003).

## OUR SUPPORTERS

Career Exploration is largely supported by private donations. Current and previous funders include: the Achelis & Bodman Foundations, African Heritage Network, American Express Foundation, Barker Welfare Foundation, Bernard F. & Alva B. Gimbel Foundation, Colgate-Palmolive Company Contributions Program, Con Edison, David Rockefeller Fund, Frances L. & Edwin L. Cummings Memorial Fund, Heckscher Foundation, Independence Community Foundation, JP Morgan Chase Foundation, Louise and Ardè Bulova Fund, New York Community Trust, Open Society Institute, Peter R. & Elga Anderson-Gimbel Memorial Trust, Pinkerton Foundation, Prospect Hill Foundation, Richard Salomon Family Foundation, Robin Hood Foundation, Tiger Foundation, Time Warner, and the generous support of individual donors.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Career Exploration accepts applicants from CASES' youth programs, including:

- jail- or prison-bound young men from the Bronx, Kings, New York, and Queens County Supreme Courts who participate in the **Court Employment Project**;
- participants in our **GirlRising Program**, serving young women from Supreme and Family Courts in New York City; and
- students from **Community Prep High School**, our transitional high school for youth returning from custodial settings.