

City Year Improves Student Outcomes Through Civil Service and Collaboration



Since 1993, Cisco and City Year have been working together to help students succeed by mobilizing a corps of young role models. City Year corps members develop problem-solving, mentoring, and leadership skills while keeping students on track to graduate.

Challenge

- School dropout levels are reaching crisis proportions
- Limited access to training materials for growing number of corps members
- Low levels of engagement in full-time service among recent U.S. graduates

Solution

- Develop innovative, research-based service model to keep students engaged in learning
- Collaborative, Web 2.0 learning platform for improved scalability, training, and support
- Raise profile of service as an opportunity to gain skills while giving back to society

Strengthening Schools Through Service

Whole School, Whole Child is an innovative year-of-service program developed by City Year that connects students at risk of dropping out of high school with near-peer mentors, who provide guidance and targeted interventions to help keep students on track to graduate. In 2009, Cisco and the Cisco Foundation announced a three-year cash, product, and services grant of up to US\$4.5M to help City Year build a collaboration and communications platform to help improve, expand, and deliver on their Whole School, Whole Child program.

After completing a four-week training program, Whole School, Whole Child corps members provide classroom support, one-on-one tutoring, and small group instruction to help students succeed. Corps members also organize enriching in-school and afterschool activities, and help reinforce the power of service by teaching students how they can address important social issues such as poverty, environmental protection, health and wellness, and violence. Most corps members are recent high school and college graduates who receive a stipend to help cover living expenses during their year of service and an AmeriCorps education award of approximately \$5000 they can apply toward college or graduate studies.

To help strengthen the effectiveness of their solutions, City Year has introduced an In School & On Track initiative to reach 50 percent of U.S. students at risk of dropping out with targeted interventions in third through ninth grade. This initiative builds on research from Johns Hopkins University that identifies three indicators that a student is at risk of dropping out: poor attendance, behavioral problems, and course failures in math or English. The research also suggests that mentoring and tutoring are effective strategies to help offset these risks and keep students engaged in learning.

Impact and Future Plans

During the 2008-2009 school year, 723 corps members delivered the Whole School, Whole Child service model in 88 schools and 720 students received targeted interventions, while more than 56,000 students benefitted from classroom support. During the 2009-2010 school year, 1090 Whole School, Whole Child corps members delivered interventions to more than 13,000 students at 131 schools, with more than 76,000 students benefitting from indirect academic assistance. For the 2010-2011 school year, City Year hopes to engage 1900 corps members in the Whole School, Whole Child program and deliver targeted interventions to 19,000 students.

City Year continues to focus their efforts on refining and expanding programs in the United States to reach more students in each of their 20 U.S. locations. All City Year solutions are designed with a focus on scalability, and they plan to increase their collaboration using Cisco® technologies to share resources across their network, conduct trainings, and connect corps members with the resources they need to address specific challenges and deliver targeted interventions. City Year hopes that increased use of collaborative technologies will help them expand the size of their service corps to 6000 members, and deliver on their In School & On Track initiative.

International affiliates are delivering City Year programs in South Africa and the United Kingdom, and City Year continually investigates partnership opportunities to enhance the impact and reach of their services.

For More Information

To learn more about City Year, please visit www.cityyear.org.

To learn more about Cisco, please visit www.cisco.com.