

Economic Development and Quality of Life for People and Communities

TeenBiz

Issue

Young and mid-adolescent youth often don't have a clear idea of the careers they would like to pursue, or how to prepare themselves for the work world. A summer program annually sponsored by the Division of Retailing and Consumer Studies, the Southwest Retail Center for Education and Research, and Cooperative Extension, all at The University of Arizona, offers pre-college youth a chance to participate in a hands-on retail strategy and management program geared for careers in retailing.

What has been done?

"TeenBiz," now in its sixth year, is a week-long residential campus experience held at The University of Arizona during the summer. Between 30 and 35 students participate in tours and job-shadowing at local businesses to learn more about their operations.

Funding

Sears Roebuck Co
J.C. Penney
Basha's grocery
Arizona Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development

Contact

Ellen Goldsberry, director, Southwest Retail Center for Education and Research
The University of Arizona
PO Box 210033, Tucson, AZ 85721-0033
Telephone: (520) 621-1140, FAX: (520) 621-3209
Email: elleng@ag.arizona.edu

They explore retailing business decisions involving merchandise assortments, store or office design, pricing policies, business plans, bookkeeping, personal products and/or services. They also attend sessions on presentation skills, prepare resumes, participate in mock interviews and explore retailing career options. The week concludes with group presentations which are judged by selected retail store managers. Youth must apply to the program, and represent a diverse group from across the state.

Impact

Five students from the 1995 program went on to establish the Players 9th Street Youth Center in Parker, Arizona. They used the business plan they drew up on the last day of the workshop to design the center, secure funding and equipment, and open the facility. The center provides a badly needed place for Parker youth to go in a

small town without many resources for youth entertainment. The Center now sponsors a 4-H special interest club devoted to the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse among youth.

Several alternative school students who completed the TeenBiz program have now completed their schooling and obtained jobs with TeenBiz retail cooperators. Others are furthering their education to prepare for the work world as a direct result of the TeenBiz experience:

"TeenBiz helped me develop skills that I have used often throughout my first year at The University of Arizona. The world of the retail industry, how to develop a presentable resume, and how to approach a job interview were some key elements I got out of the experience. This experience also influenced my choice in selecting Agriculture Technology Management as my major. I also discovered how much I really enjoyed public speaking and working with other people—the business side of me." —Teresa Noon, TeenBiz participant