

# Work & Learn After-School Program

## End-of-Year Report

Fiscal Year 23/24

(7.1.2023 – 6.30.2024)



### Activities & Outcomes:

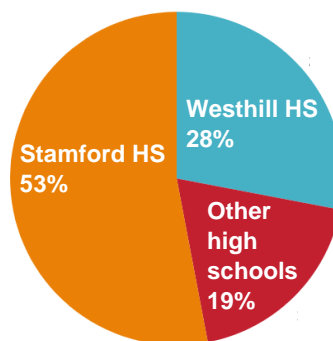
- 93% of youth successfully completed an after-school session, defined as 80%+ attendance rate<sup>1</sup> and completion of 5+ soft-skill classes.
- 86% of youth self-reported they were very/extremely confident in their ability to obtain a job after completing the after-school session.



<sup>1</sup>Summer session met 10 times; to be successful, youth could not miss more than 2 classes; school-year sessions met 17 to 19 times, and youth could not miss more than 3 classes.

### Youth Demographics:

- Average age of program participants: 16
- School attended



### Program Details:

- We offered four sessions serving 86 unique youth across 105 program slots<sup>2</sup>.
- Skills-building opportunities offered included money bootcamp, culinary, painting, and music production studio.

**Summer 2023:** served 23 youth; average attendance rate was 91%.

**Fall 2023:** served 25 youth; average attendance rate was 95%.

**Winter 2023/2024:** served 26 youth; average attendance rate was 95%.

**Spring 2024:** served 31 youth; average attendance rate was 96%.

<sup>2</sup>Youth may attend more than one session.

### About the Program:

Work & Learn is a pre-employment training program where young adults can get excited about working. The program runs three 11-week after-school sessions during the school year and one 6-week summer session. Youth are offered fun and enriching skills-building opportunities such as painting, culinary, and music production. Additionally, youth participate in six life-skills classes: First Impressions, Goal Setting, Communication, Financial Literacy, Resumes, and Professional Interviews.

## The Domus Relational Model:

The entirety of our work is based on the undeniable power of love to transform lives. Our staff work relentlessly to engage young people, never giving up until they feel a sense of safety and belonging. We use a unique and powerful combination of trauma-responsive, anti-racist practices, positive youth development, loving relationships, and Thoughts, Emotions, & Behaviors (a form of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) skills-building. Together, these elements engage a young person's entire nervous system to increase their safety, health, wisdom, resilience, and skills. Fundamentally, they help youth regulate, relate, and reason as they practice shifting from a chronic stress response (“fight, flight, or flee”) to engage their “calm and connect” systems. Thus, when facing life’s inevitable challenges, youth can interrupt unproductive, automatic reactions and respond more skillfully. Through these loving, evidence-based interventions, Domus empowers young people to achieve life-changing outcomes.

“

Cooking in the kitchen gives me a chance to practice my recipes and then bring [them] home to share with my family.

”

### FY24 Program Highlights:

- Painting and cooking classes had a professional come in and teach youth how to design clothing. Each participant was able to create their own article of clothing.
- Culinary class had a free-style cook off competition. Each youth had ingredients put on their table and had to create a meal, which was evaluated by a panel of judges. One judge was from local restaurant Soul Tasty.

### FY24 Organizational Highlights:

- The Domus organizational focus this year was *A Year of Wellness and Healing*. Activities included connecting program youth with nature as well as providing 400 families with *Spring into Spring* gifts they could use together as a family. The year culminated in providing \$100 wellness scholarships to 80 Domus young people to support their mental and physical well-being.
- Domus partnered with the City of Stamford on the Stamford Kindness Project. During the month of December, Domus youth and staff made kindness walls at all our program locations. Domus then provided breakfast to all youth and staff to celebrate kindness.
- Domus provided holiday gifts and food to 476 families and Thanksgiving support to 357 families across all our programs.



“

”