



# NEWS RELEASE

## Workforce Development Board

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## Workforce Development youth selected for national initiative



The Colton-Redlands-Yucaipa Regional Occupational Program (CRY-ROP) was one of four agencies nationwide selected by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth to participate in the Youth Action Council on Transition (YouthACT). YouthACT is a national initiative designed to get more youth with disabilities to partner with advocates and organizations to improve opportunities for disabled young adults. The initiative is led by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability (NCWD/Youth). Program funding was provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

The San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board (WDB) is a nationally recognized leader in workforce issues, and is often used as a model for other boards across the country. CRY-ROP, one of the San Bernardino County WDB youth service providers, now joins the national ranks on the youth perspective, serving as a testament to how the Workforce Development Board's funded youth employment programs are making a positive impact on the lives of at-risk youth.

CRY-ROP's YouthACT team is working with teams across the nation to discuss and plan leadership, advocacy and transitional strategies for young adults.

"I am proud to be named the adult partner for the YouthACT team out of Colton-Redlands-Yucaipa ROP. The partnerships between youth and adults that the program creates are powerful forces," said Nicole Drazin, placement specialist. "As we collaborate, we are creating a new energy in our communities that will pave the way to better opportunities for transitioning youth."

The Workforce Development Board is making efforts to gain input from youth about what they need during their transitioning years. This input helps provide the right opportunities, services, and support for this population.

YouthACT aims to increase positive youth-adult partnerships where young people and adults work together, share information and learn from each other. All individuals in the partnership have the opportunity to engage in planning, decision-making, and action consistent with their own interests and skills.

"It's imperative for us to point youth in the right direction to succeed in life during their transitional years," said James Ramos, Chairman of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors. "Colton Redlands Yucaipa ROP is a voice for our San Bernardino County youth community and their needs will be heard at the federal level."

In 2016, the YouthACT team and peer leaders from CRY-ROP's WDD-funded employment program will be making presentations at community and school organizations on how students with disabilities can advocate for themselves and their families, and identify short and long term plans to support personal and career goals.

"We are very proud that one of our youth service providers was selected as one of four national cohorts to be the voice for YouthACT. This is a testament to the high caliber of our Workforce Development Board funded youth programs," said Workforce Development Executive Director Sandy Harmsen.