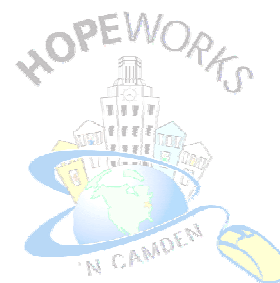


Youth in Camden Thrive with The One Page Business Plan!

by Patrick Keenan, Formation Director, Hopeworks



Urban youth achieving their dreams in an environment that fosters positive change and forward movement: that is what Hopeworks 'N Camden is all about.

In a place named the second deadliest city in America, where nearly 60 percent of the population lives in poverty and where the public schools cannot even graduate 50 percent of its student body, youth at Hopeworks are learning computer-driven skills in web design, earning jobs in our two non-profit businesses, engaging our corporate community partners as interns, going to college, and preparing themselves for life-giving opportunities. While the environment in which these youth mature expects little of them, we, as a community, believe in, support and encourage them to define, own and achieve their goals.

Residents of Camden started this neighborhood initiative in 2000 as a response to the overwhelming problems in their community. To date, Hopeworks has worked with over 1,000 youth and created 235 youth jobs that have generated \$545,818 in revenue. We have reinvested all revenue in the community in the form of wages and enhanced programs.

In these jobs, youth have built 207 professional-grade web sites, have completed 51 geographic information systems projects, and have earned 1,323 college credits from technical training. Seventy-eight youth have matriculated into college because of their involvement with Hopeworks. Beyond this, youth are gaining a 2 to 3 grade level increase in their literacy and numeracy skills due to our daily one-on-one tutoring.

All of this is happening because youth are growing confidence and becoming aware of their personal competence. Youth recognize this and learn about themselves through a process called formation. Formation celebrates positive visions for the future, reveals to youth their sense of purpose, empowers their strengths and leadership abilities, and pushes them to set small, short-term goals to which they hold themselves accountable. These goals help them see their dreams as realizable and attainable.

The One Page Business Plan[®] is the anchor of this crucial work. It brings together all a youth's successes at Hopeworks in one simple, accessible and shared place.

Anthony, a 23-year-old who left high school before graduating explains: "The One Page Plan keeps you organized and keeps you focused on what you really want to do, your dream, and when you look at it, it's all there... It keeps me moving forward."

Janina, an 18-year-old who also left school, echoes: "Sometimes stuff is pulling me down, and I feel stuck and insecure. When I look at my One Page Plan, it makes me feel better and it makes me go back and keep working toward my future and not let my dreams go."

The structure of the One Page Plan creates a welcoming space for dialogue and connections around complex subjects. It also enables youth to move beyond the anxiety and fear they often feel after damaging educational experiences, experiences that leave them discouraged and without hope. Through the One Page Plan, youth claim ownership of the positive parts of their lives.

Often for the first time, youth speak concretely about their dreams as achievable, dynamic and effective, because the One Page Plan links small, accomplishable goals to a bigger vision.

Janina sees this: "I believed in my dream, but after I had the One Page Plan, after I put everything in writing and started following it, I started to see my dream come true, step by step it is coming true. I can look back and see that last month I was this low, and this month, I'm this high. I actually see my success and it helps me so much."

Anthony concurs: "Most people, when they think of their dreams, they only think of the huge steps they need to take. With the One Page Plan, it helps you with the small steps you need to take and doing that helps you achieve more goals, and the more goals you achieve, the better you feel about yourself."

Thus, the One Page Plan drives our positive youth development practices in Camden. With it, our youth thrive.



Our Sincere Thanks

Hopeworks is grateful for Skip Torresson of The Stewardship Group and Jim Horan of The One Page Business Plan Company for their deep generosity in making the One Page Plan possible here.

Skip believes it is his calling to help people identify and bring forth the best in themselves. He uses his gifts and 40+ years of business experience in service of servant-leaders, the good stewards. He has spent countless hours helping Hopeworks understand the One Page Plan and serves on its board. He hopes youth learn that dreams are realizable if they can be clear about what they are, layout a plan, and do the work. Please visit his website at www.stewardshipgroup.com

Jim is the founder of The One Page Plan Business Plan Company and has donated his One Page Business Plan web software to Hopeworks since it started using One Page Plans in 2004. He provides great encouragement and support in seeing Hopeworks integrate the plan into its work. Please visit his website at www.onepagebusinessplan.com.

