

# Youth Co-Design Program

Youth Co-Design is an innovative approach that empowers young people to collaborate with adults in designing and implementing community-driven solutions. The process emphasizes experiential learning, relationship-building, and leadership development, allowing youth to take ownership of initiatives that address real-world challenges. By focusing on co-creation, the program bridges the gap between intention and action, ensuring projects are meaningful and impactful for all stakeholders.

**7** Youth

**\$90k** Invested

**14 +** Partners

**3** Career Pathways

The youth co-designer program significant progress in its first year, overcoming initial challenges and achieving key milestones. The grant from the Legacy Foundation has been instrumental in supporting these efforts, and the program is on track to meet its goals for the upcoming year. Seven youth participated, over fourteen partners were engaged, three career pathways were explored in industries the high school had not provided career exploration for (Economic Development, Non-profit, Government). Additionally youth co-wrote grants securing \$90,000 for their initiatives.

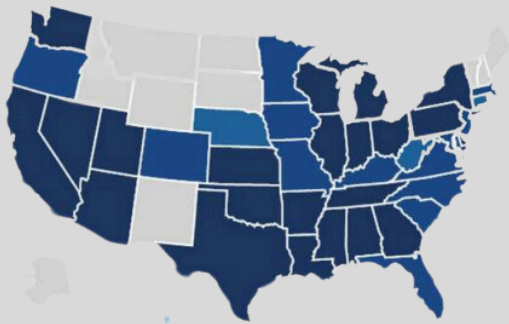
**5 Skill Areas**

**[County] at a Glance**

- Research and Evaluation
- Logistics and Event Planning
- Marketing and Media
- Grant Writing and Management
- Strategic Planning and Facilitation

# Why Co-Design?

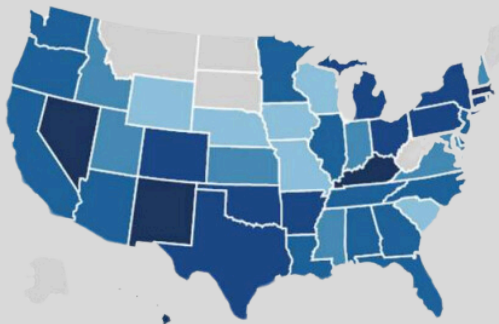
## BLACK YOUTH



IOWA

17.3% OF BLACK YOUTH  
ARE DISCONNECTED

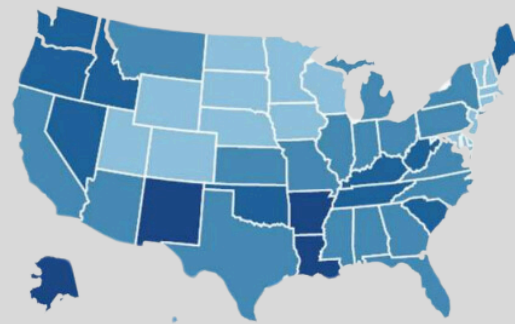
## LATINO YOUTH



IOWA

8.4% OF LATINO YOUTH  
ARE DISCONNECTED

## WHITE YOUTH



IOWA

8.5% OF WHITE YOUTH  
ARE DISCONNECTED

## Program Success

### 1. Ottumwa Youth City Council Formation

Seven students were appointed to the city's first Youth City Council, giving them a direct role in influencing local policies and youth-focused initiatives.

### 2. Legacy Youth Alliance Collaboration

Partnered with the Legacy Youth Alliance to fund and execute projects addressing literacy, mental health, and post-secondary education, enhancing youth engagement in community development.

### 3. iJAG Program Integration

Aligned with Ottumwa High School's iJAG program to provide students with career readiness experiences and opportunities to contribute to meaningful community service projects.

Ottumwa, IA

