

# New Castle youth employment to grow

**Program rolling out for 150 people in age range of 16-24**

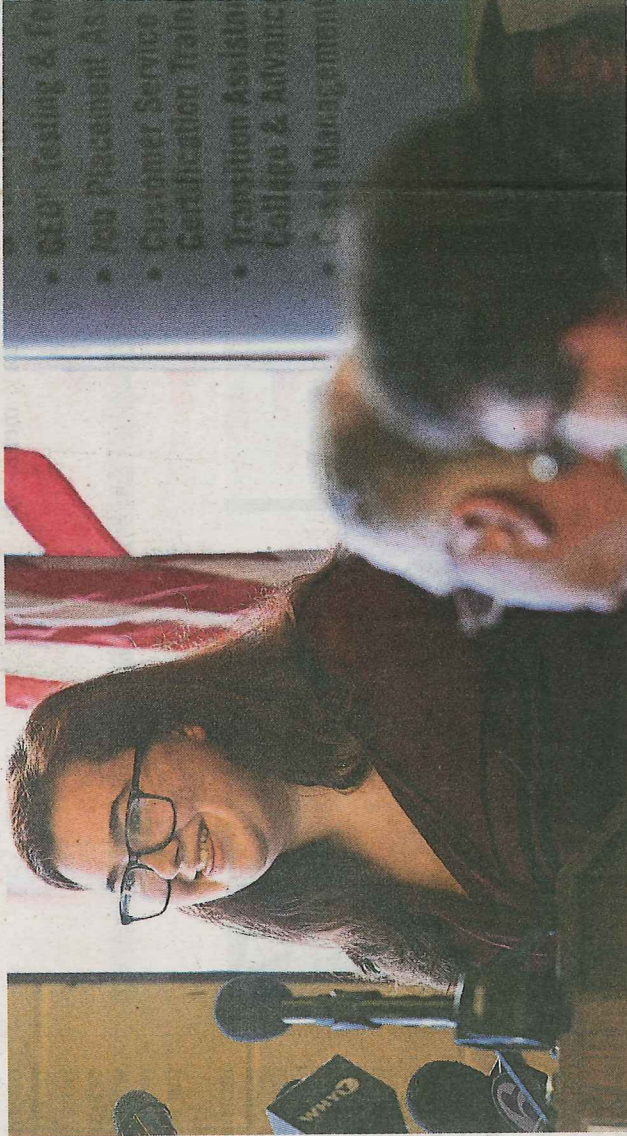
**ADAM DUVERNAY**  
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New Castle County youth will be some of the beneficiaries of new employment opportunities made possible for non-profit organizations around the country.

With a mission focused on self-sufficiency, the West End Neighborhood House and its county partners are rolling out a paid career program for 150 people in the age range of 16-24. The city and county were one of 15 communities to receive funding — \$250,000 — from Citi Foundation for such efforts.

The opportunities will target disadvantaged areas across the county, according to West End Neighborhood House Executive Director Paul Calistro. The goal is bridge the gap between employers who can't find qualified workers and young people who need some experience to get those jobs.

"We're going to identify what is their career pathway. What would they like to do? What would they like to be in the future," Calistro said. "Unemployment in Delaware is a real sig-



Nicole Webb, a graduate from the agriculture program at William Penn, speaks at a press event where West End Neighborhood and New Castle County kicked off an initiative that will build upon existing career path programs and broaden their reach. SUCHAT PEDERSON/THE NEWS JOURNAL

nificant issue." United Way of Delaware and the New Castle County government are collaborating with West End Neighborhood House on the job initiative.

More than 40 businesses already have signed up, Calistro said, such as Wilmington firm Architectural Alliance and the William Penn School District. Many employers already in-

olved in county summer job programs will get additional slots for youth workers. West End Neighborhood House will receive \$134,000 to build upon existing career path programs. The number and type of job placements will be expanded, and the non-profit also will offer industry-specific job training.

New Castle County will receive \$116,000 to support its 2018 Summer Youth Employment program, which provides career counseling, job training and paid summer job placements.

"Any large business or small business leader you speak to will tell you that their future depends on the people in their organization. They're looking for quality people," said County Ex-

ecutive Matt Meyer.

The City Foundation's Pathways to Progress Youth Workforce Fund launched in 2014 with \$50 million and a commitment to help more than 100,000 people become career ready, said Citi's Wilmington Site Director Dennis McCarthy. In February, the program expanded to include additional cities.

Citi also is doling out money to support programs in cities like Washington, D.C., New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago. More than 450 communities applied, and Wilmington is the smallest city to make the list.

"Community engagement is a large part of Citi culture. Giving back and making a difference in the communities where we operate is very important to us," McCarthy said. "As someone who was born and raised in Wilmington, I'm proud to be here today."

Youth and employers interested in learning more about the New Castle County Summer Youth Employment Program should contact Michael Begatto in the New Castle County Department of Community Services at MBegatto@nccde.org or (302) 395-5624.

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