



## **PATHWAYS TO JUSTICE CAREERS FOR YOUTH**

The Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Pathways to Justice Careers for Youth grants is a pilot program that will provide combined mentoring and career exploration in the field of justice and emergency services personnel (for example, police officers, firefighters or paramedics) for youth enrolled in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades between the ages of 16 to 21 in public or alternative high school. The purpose of these grants is to improve employment opportunities for youth that are at-risk of dropping out of school and at risk of becoming involved in the juvenile or adult justice systems (some youth may have already become involved with the juvenile justice system) by giving them mentorship and a career pathway that leads them to careers in justice and emergency services. ETA's PJC grants will be located in high-poverty, high-crime communities. Each PJC grant will include all of the following activities, though all participants may not be involved in each activity, career exploration in the field of justice and law enforcement, technical and employability skills training applicable to justice and law enforcement careers, mentoring, post-secondary exploration and preparation of application documents, summer employment, and post-program support and follow-up.

The Department plans to award approximately 5 grants of up to \$1,000,000 each, as authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These grants will provide case management for in-school youth ages 16 to 21, that are eligible to graduate within 2 years and are at risk of dropping out of school or at risk of entanglement in the criminal justice system, or both; the eligible youth must be enrolled in a public secondary school or alternative secondary school.

Pathways to Justice Careers grant program is modeled after ETA's Training and Service-Learning grants which provided career exploration, hands-on training at jobsites and mentoring in selected career fields. Further, PJCs will use the career pathways model to ensure participants are prepared to enter the workforce, post-secondary education or Registered Apprenticeship. A Career Pathways is a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career/technical courses resulting in educational and skills credentials. The goal of these projects is for students to graduate from high school ready to move into post-secondary education, advanced technical education or employment in high-demand occupations. PJC grants offer the opportunity for communities and local law enforcement and justice agencies to work together to form better relationships in their communities through motivated and empowered young people acting as positive influences in their communities. It is our hope that these programs will also foster relationships between law enforcement and other justice professionals while also exposing youth to future careers in service to their communities.