



**GREEN  
FOR ALL**

CASE STUDIES FROM THE GREEN COLLAR ECONOMY

**American YouthWorks, Casa Verde YouthBuild  
Austin, Texas**

American YouthWorks has been providing a second chance to high school drop-outs for 30 years through its Charter School and career development program. Sixteen years ago it started its Casa Verde YouthBuild program teaching students how to build green houses using green construction methods. Fourteen years ago it started the Environmental Corps (eCorps) land remediation program and eight years ago it started a Computer recycling CCorps. Each year about 400 students are enrolled in its Charter school and 100 enrolled in its three green job training programs. Its mission is to bring Green Jobs preparation to youth who have been disengaged from the mainstream economy and mainstream school settings. This year it will launch the Green Jobs Training Center as a physical center for green jobs instruction.

This case study is current as of April 2009. For more information, visit <http://www.americanyouthworks.org>, or contact Richard Halpin [rhalpin@americanyouthworks.org](mailto:rhalpin@americanyouthworks.org).

<p><b>Training methodology</b></p>	<p>Casa Verde Youth Build participants spend half a day in school at the American YouthWorks Charter school working on high school and GED classes and half a day at Casa Verde in on-the-job green building training. In Casa Verde students build a complete house (in a team with others) from the ground up. American YouthWorks created the Green Master Construction Curriculum. It includes not only building instruction but also practical tool skills like chain saw safety, cutting skills and artisan stone carving. It also developed curriculum for trail building, hydrology studies, and other conservation topics for its eCorps program. Its newest project, the Green Jobs Training center, will have an applied learning curriculum in several area specific green jobs. Construction of the Green Jobs Training Center will be underway shortly and completed by August '09.</p>
<p><b>Participants and how recruited</b></p>	<p>Participants are 16 to 24 year olds from central Texas who have dropped out of high school and are from impoverished backgrounds. Of the Casa Verde YouthBuild students in last year's class, 86 percent were from families living in poverty and 18 percent were homeless themselves. The ethnic breakdown is 53 percent Latino, 33 percent African American and 14 percent Anglo-American. 70 percent of Casa Verde participants are male. The</p>

**This case study is meant to give a snapshot of the program profiled here. For the most up to date information on this program, please visit their website**

	program does not have educational requirements but participants must be willing to work.
<b>Green program from the outset?</b>	Casa Verde YouthBuild was conceived from the outset as a green building training program sixteen years ago.
<b>Length and frequency of training</b>	There are two program cycles a year. Most programs last 11 months with students' days split between attending school at the Charter school and participating in on-the-job training. Students attend five days a week.
<b>Include on-the-job training or paid apprenticeships?</b>	Casa Verde YouthBuild, eCorps and CCorps are all on-the-job training programs. The students receive stipends while they are in the training programs.
<b>Funding</b>	Funding comes from the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Dept. of Labor YouthBuild/WIA and Wagner Peysner program and AmeriCorps in that order.
<b>Key relationships</b>	American YouthWorks has excellent relations with employers and <u>community colleges</u> . It also has had successful long-term collaboration with <u>workforce development</u> agencies. However has not developed relations with unions. Local <u>employers</u> provide jobs and work experience. They also sometimes provide materials. American YouthWorks already defined the skills and competencies needed and does not rely on employers for that information.
<b>Eligibility</b>	American YouthWorks does not require certain education attainments to be eligible for the program. It only asks for a willingness to work.
<b>Credentials</b>	Credentials that graduates receive include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A high school diploma or GED</li> <li>- Home Builders Basic Skills credential</li> <li>- Construction Industry Certificate</li> <li>- Computer Certificates</li> <li>- Red card training (fire fighting)</li> <li>- Two nationally recognized construction certificates</li> <li>- OSHA certification</li> <li>- First Aid and CPR training.</li> </ul>
<b>Placement and follow-up services</b>	American YouthWorks follows the progress of its students in graduation rates, job placements, job retention ability and wage gains.