



YELLOWSTONE STRENGTHS ACADEMY

CAREER
DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS



Curriculum, mentoring, field experience and coaching that considers the student's natural talents (Strengths) as the foundation to achieve greater personal and professional success.



YELLOWSTONE STRENGTHS ACADEMY

The Academy is a place where workers can gain stronger insights into their natural talents while sharpening their communication, interpersonal and professional skills. Academy engagement is designed to build student confidence and competence as a foundation for setting and achieving goals for their education and career development.

Training courses will be structured to cover four key elements for successful transition into the workplace and continued growth and development:

- **Managing Self: Strengths-Based Approach for Growth & Development**
- **Communication**
- **Technology & Skill Development**
- **Customer Service**

People who learn to use their
STRENGTHS every day are

7.8%

MORE PRODUCTIVE*

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

- *Program Orientation*
- *Foundational Course: "Infinite Possibilities: Your Strengths Journey Starts Here"*
- *Activities to explore different career fields and forge connections with local employers and professionals*
- *Mentoring/coaching from area business leaders*
- *Coursework focus: Managing Self; Communication; Technology & Skill Development; and Customer Service*
- *A personal journal to log insights and reinforce learning*
- *Field experience (onsite job shadowing)*
- *Graduation celebration with mentors and program leadership*

BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYERS

- *A concentrated curriculum, blended with mentoring and field experience better prepares students to succeed in the workplace*
- *Orientation, resources and personal support for employers who desire to partner with the Academy, the colleges or other programs (internships, job shadowing)*
- *Prominent brand placement with a positive community development initiative*
- *Opportunities to sponsor and teach courses in the Academy*
- *Recognition in Billings Gazette advertisement*



CURRICULUM

PROGRAM ORIENTATION

Students, parents, mentors and agency supervisors meet to review details of the Academy with program leadership. Program director and partner organizations review the roles and expectations for participation and highlight additional resources available to support students.

FOUNDATION WORKSHOP

Infinite Possibilities: Your Strengths Journey Starts Here

Content is designed to help students understand how beliefs impact our ability to manage everyday activities. This interactive course will help demolish 'limiting beliefs' and harness the power of emotions. Students will also complete the Clifton StrengthsFinder Assessment, which reveals the student's top five themes of talent. The resulting report offers action items each student can take to direct these talents—at school, in a career and in their personal relationships—to achieve better results and greater personal fulfillment.

MANAGING SELF: STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH FOR GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

A Strengths-Based Approach to Better Performance

Students review their personal Clifton StrengthsFinder results and participate in a facilitated coaching session designed to help each student better understand their top talents (Strengths) and how to apply those talents within work settings. These sessions encourage development of personal connections to improve performance and strengthen relationships.

5 Happy Hacks for Technology Boundary Setting

Students will learn how to set good personal boundaries and develop the strategies/mindset to improve focus.

Career Exploration & Setting SMART Goals

Students will explore how personal interests intersect with career options, then review careers and academic areas that support those fields. Students will also learn the art of SMART goal setting with reinforcement of how the student can leverage their personal talents (Strengths) and behaviors to help them reach goals.

Financial Literacy

Becoming financially literate is a lifelong process that begins with something as simple as putting a few pennies in a piggy bank and evolves to more advanced subjects such as budgeting and risk. Students will gain knowledge and skills to make effective and informed money management decisions in life and work.



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

How to Find and Land Your Ideal Job

- Powerful Job Search Essentials
- Resume & Cover Letter Writing
- Professional Interview Prep

On the Job Communication

- Active Listening
- Negotiation
- Judgment & Decision Making

TECHNOLOGY & SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Core Employer Expectations for Workplace Conduct

- Attendance/Punctuality
- Attire
- Telephone Usage
- Performance
- Boundaries/Accountability

Lab Courses on Varied Topics

- MS Office
- Business Acumen (i.e., email protocol; project management; task management)
- Universal Class Topics – free courses offered through the library's website

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer Service Best Practices:

How Exceptional Service Drives Customer Loyalty

In this two-part series, students learn best practices in customer service; receive tools to assess and improve their (internal and external) customer service skills; and develop a strong understanding of the important role customer service plays in attracting and retaining the ideal customer.

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT IN 2014:

- 44% of US customers switched from one business to another due to poor customer service
- In one year, 89% of consumers switched businesses due to negative customer service
- 34% of consumers posted their negative service experiences online for other consumers

Team Dynamics & Quality Control

Within the Customer Service modules, students will also learn ways to recognize, report and correct flaws/errors to ensure your organization meets the customer's expectations.

People who FOCUS on using their STRENGTHS are

3x more likely to report having an excellent quality of life*



ENROLLMENT & PROGRAM DETAILS

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

The eligibility for each Academy is targeted by unique cohorts. Our first pilot cohort will serve students ages 16 – 23 years who reside in Yellowstone County. Student referrals from behavioral health programs and other community programs should be completed by supervisor of the program.

FEES

The Yellowstone Strengths Academy is offered to select students free of charge (or for a nominal fee). The pilot program has been made available through the generous contributions of the Billings Public Library, Billings Works (of the Big Sky Economic Development Authority), Kynexions, the Sam and Judy McDonald Foundation, and select business partners within Yellowstone County. The Academy will seek to develop new partnerships that enable us to expand this offering to various segments of our community.

HOW TO APPLY

Students may complete online registration for the Yellowstone Strengths Academy at YellowstoneStrengthsAcademy.com

Application includes:

- Personal/demographic information
- Current academic status (year in school, completion of high school, GED, etc.)
- Student's personal information

NOTE: If students will be participating as a part of a public or private school class or program, please have the supervisor/teacher of the group complete the registration for all members.

COURSE SCHEDULE

LOCATION:

Skyview High School

ORIENTATION:

Wed | February 13

ACADEMY COURSES & MENTORING:

Wednesdays | 2:15pm-3:15pm | FEB-APR

Final course schedule announced during orientation.

FIELD EXPERIENCE:

Students will work with YSA program administrators and mentors to identify a site for field experience. These visits will take place throughout the month of May.

GRADUATION:

May 29



People who get to use their STENGTHS every day are

6x as likely to be ENGAGED on the job*



Teams that FOCUS
on STRENGTHS
every day have

12.5%
GREATER
PRODUCTIVITY*



CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The Yellowstone Strengths Academy is an innovative community education partnership that enhances overall wellbeing through education, communication, research, sharing and self-assessment programs. Specialized instruction designed by a Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach is coupled with strategies, motivational techniques, mentorships and practical experience to help workers gain stronger insights into their natural talents while sharpening their communication, interpersonal and professional skills.

This ambitious, privately-led, publicly-endorsed educational project is intended to inspire students by building confidence and competence as a foundation for setting and achieving educational and career goals.

Individuals, foundations, organizations, nonprofits and the public sector will be asked to unite and support this community-focused effort to strengthen personal and career wellbeing.

FOR EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES, COURSE
INSTRUCTION, STUDENT
ENROLLMENT OR OTHER ACADEMY
QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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*SOURCE: Gallup