

15 Percent of U.S. Youth Not in Work or School

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Recently released results from research conducted by Opportunity Nation, a bipartisan, cross-sector national campaign, has shown that 15 percent of U.S. youth between the ages of 16 to 24 are neither in school nor at work. In addition, the study claims that this 15 percent will never be able to realize their full potential, will be unlikely to have high salaries and will drain public resources in the future.

“We know that engaged young adults can keep us from paying steep financial and social costs,” Opportunity Nation’s Executive Director Mark Edwards said, according to the Washington Times. “Young adults who are not in school or working cost taxpayers \$93 billion annually and \$1.6 trillion over their lifetimes in lost revenues and increased social services.”

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate of Americans is now the lowest it has been since December 2008. One factor that is keeping the youth out of work is the economy. Since former employees get to keep their jobs, with last-in, first-out policies at many organizations and a preference at companies to freeze hiring before they start firing em-

ployees, the recession is particularly hard on inexperienced, untrained youth. The result is fewer opportunities on the lower end of the job ladder, which has kept the young adults on the sidelines.

“If you have two candidates for a job, and one has experience and will take \$10 an hour, and the other is a teen with no experience, who do you think would get the job?” Renee Ward, founder of job posting site Teens4Hire said. “When jobs aren’t there for anyone, it’s that much harder.”

Numerous organizations aid young people in finding a job. For example, Year Up, a non-profit organization that trains young adults for careers and aids them in the process of finding a job, spends a year teaming up with and teaching high school graduates necessary career skills, such as computer programming. Currently, an es-

timated amount of 4,500 U.S. youths from urban areas have completed Year Up, with 84 percent of the participants finding work afterwards.

A youth’s community also correlates with their success in life. Among the factors that impact the availability of opportunities in a state or community are Internet access, college graduation, income equality and public safety.

“Their destiny is too often determined by their ZIP code,” Year Up employee Charlie Mangiardi said, according to The Daily Cougar.

Young people are more likely to be successful in their job hunt if they have prior work experience.

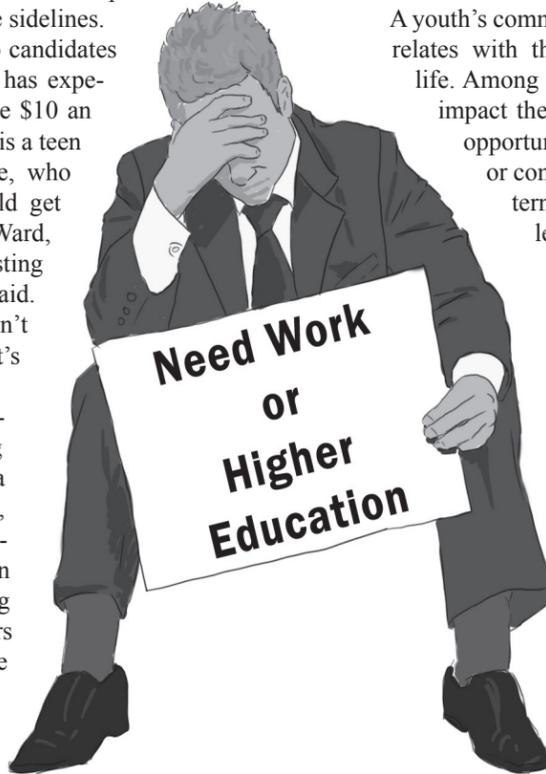
A recent study by High Fliers Research stated that graduates who have had no previous work experience at all are unlikely to be successful during the selection process and have little or no chance of receiving a job.

“Seeing how some jobs expect so much from one person really causes me to feel the need to join the working force,” senior Hoangoanh Nguyen said. “My intention of joining the workforce was to get great working experience and to build confidence in speaking to anyone and everyone without feeling judged or [having] the thought of being judged. The experience made me see that school is just something that [...] helps one’s understanding of how to do anything.”

Most high school students are still finding their interests, and working experience can be a way to sample career options.

“[Working] is a valuable experience [that] helps you get a better understanding of how the system runs, it also helps you find out what you are really interested in,” ceramics teacher Jayson Pineda said. “If the job is not something you like or it’s not like what you are expecting, you can still learn important skills like how to communicate with others and how to handle different situations. It helps you grow.”

MOOR graphic by SIMON ZHAO



Common App Flubs and Snubs

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College applicants, need more to stress about? On top of the multiple personal statement essays and applications to complete, college applicants now have another issue on their plate if they are using the Common Application to apply to colleges.

Common Application first began in 1975, started by 15 private colleges that wanted a college application process that could be used by any affiliate. As the number of participating colleges gradually increased throughout the years, the medium of submitting applications shifted from paper to floppy disk. The first online system of application was launched and used in 1998. Since then, they have renovated the site three more times, allowed public and international members to join the system, and, starting August 2013, stopped the paper application.

An updated online version of their program was initiated in August. However, a multitude of users have been reporting various technical glitches, such as not being able to upload letters of recommendation and issues with resetting their password. The degree of technical issues varies from person to person, and Alhambra High students are no exception.

“There were times when you couldn’t even log in to your account,” senior Ivy Dang said.

Teachers also had difficulties in terms of submitting recommendation letters.

“I couldn’t access my account. I changed to a new password and tried to access it

lines, a handful of technical roadblocks such as encountering unnecessary error messages still exist that can hinder ongoing applicants, even with Common Application’s efforts to solve the issues.

Senior Nhi Bui also encountered technical issues while using the Common Application.

“I had to send my recommender request forms a few times before they got through,” Bui said.

The technical glitches have some colleges thinking about other application options, such as the Universal College Application, which is used by 37 colleges.

According to NBC News, Christopher Watson, the dean of undergraduate admissions at Northwestern University, stated, “I’m sure after this, we’ll start looking into other options, not necessarily because we want to abandon Common Application, but maybe it’s important for students to have a couple of choices.”

Technical issues are not new to the Common Application. In December 2010, a select group of students, when using the Common Application, encountered a glitch that would cut their essay at the margins when submitted. With three major renovations of the online application, the website would have been open to glitches. The Common Application continues to tackle technical issues that have been reported.

“It’s important for students to have a couple of choices.”
- Christopher Watson

again, but I still couldn’t get in,” English teacher Kristin Keenan said. “I emailed Common Application, and they fixed the issue three days before the application was due.”

However, looking past the glitches, Ms. Keenan was pleased with the new updates.

“Before, the questions were listed as a continuous survey, and there were times I missed questions. Now, the question are viewed individually. As a visual person, the new format is much easier to read,” Keenan said.

With numerous applicants reporting problems, the Common Application has been working to fix the technical glitches. Due to the influx of issues, many universities and colleges who use the Common Application, such as Georgia Tech and Northwestern, have extended their early action and early-decision deadlines, respectively. However, even with the extended dead-

Alhambra Ranked Among Top U.S. Cities

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Alhambra was recently named one of the top 100 places to live in the U.S. by Livability.com, coming in at number 21 behind fellow San Gabriel Valley city Pasadena. The cities were given individual scores based on economics, health care, housing, social and civic capital, education amenities, demographics and infrastructure, which were then summed up for a grand total, or a “LivScore” as referred to on Livability.com. The scores were taken from resident surveys about the quality of life in their respective cities.

Alhambra came out with a total LivScore of 619 out of a possible 1000 points. The highest marks received were in health care with 81 points and demographics with 79 points. Alhambra also did well in the education portion of the survey, scoring 68 points. Alhambra “showcases the rich mix of cultures with an array of eateries, entertainment and shopping,” as reported by Livability.com.

“I cannot believe that Alhambra is ranked number 21 because we do not seem like a rich community,” sophomore Michael Chen said.

Among other top ranked cities were Palo Alto, California; Berkeley, California; Miami Beach, Florida and Santa Clara, California.