



# Camp RISE

## Program Report

# 2024



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# Dear Partners, Supporters, and Friends,

As we reflect on another remarkable year of Camp RISE, I am proud to present the 2024 Camp RISE Program Report. This past summer, we witnessed firsthand the transformative impact Camp RISE continues to have on Milwaukee's youth. Through meaningful career exploration, hands-on experiences, and personal growth opportunities, our young participants were empowered to dream big and explore the paths that can lead them to bright futures.

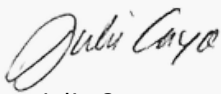
At its core, Camp RISE is a vital stepping stone for youth in Milwaukee. It provides an early introduction to workforce development, equipping students aged 10-13 with skills and experiences that set them on the right track. This year, we are proud to have seen 31 Camp RISE participants transition into Employ Milwaukee's Earn & Learn program, intentionally connecting them and their families to other Employ Milwaukee programming. Camp RISE focuses on career exploration, giving campers access to a range of fields, from healthcare and manufacturing to public services and technology. These experiences lay the foundation for future success, and we are thrilled that many of our Camp RISE participants are continuing to build on these early experiences through paid work and career readiness training.

The outcomes detailed in this report showcase the success of this summer's programming. From mastering essential life skills to gaining a deeper understanding of civic awareness, our young participants have grown in confidence and self-worth while building connections with their community.

**Camp RISE wouldn't be possible without the support from our community partners and funders. Together, we are investing in the future workforce of Milwaukee and ensuring our youth have access to career pathways and mentorship that will lead them to success.**

As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited to build on this momentum. Camp RISE continues to grow, and with your support, we can further expand the program's reach, offering more youth the chance to rise above their circumstances and pursue their dreams.

**Sincerely,**



Julie Cayo  
Interim CEO  
Employ Milwaukee



# About Our Campers

All campers attend a Milwaukee Public School and are 10-13 years old. Nearly all youth live in high-need neighborhoods\*. Over **40%** of campers this summer were returning youth from 2023, highlighting Camp RISE as a trusted program in the community and the shared desire for continued exploration and growth from both participants and their guardians.

**93%**

youth of color

**81**

different Milwaukee Public Schools attended by campers

**95%**

living across 18 Milwaukee zip codes in high-need areas due to low-income, high crime, and low economic opportunity.\*



\*as determined by City of Milwaukee Community Development Grants Administration Five Year Consolidated Plan 2020 - 2024

# 1,066

applications received

# 281

youth engaged

# \$94,800

earned by campers



To promote financial literacy, increase youth engagement, and invest directly in the community, campers who successfully completed the program earned a \$400 stipend. This earn-and-learn approach is innovative for this age group, as paid career exploration for youth ages 10-13 is not typically offered in other workforce programs, where federal funding for youth payments begins at age 14. **Through Camp RISE, these young participants are launching their journey on Employ Milwaukee's opportunity pathway, which will provide them with continued growth and support throughout their teen and high school years, ultimately preparing them for success in the workforce.**



# Camp Activities

Camp RISE provides a well-rounded experience through three key categories of activities: Career and Interest Exploration, Life Skills and Enrichment, and Civic Awareness and Engagement. These categories are designed to inspire personal growth, equip campers with practical skills, and foster a sense of community responsibility. Each activity offers valuable lessons and opportunities that prepare youth for future success in their careers and civic life.

- 1 CAREER AND INTEREST EXPLORATION**
- 2 LIFE SKILLS AND ENRICHMENT**
- 3 CIVIC AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT**

# 1 Career Interest and Exploration

Camp RISE exposes youth to a wide range of career paths through hands-on activities, field trips, Career Days, and interactions with professionals. Campers learn about potential careers in sectors such as healthcare, public safety, trades, technology, and more. These experiences spark curiosity and help youth identify their interests and aspirations. By connecting with real-world opportunities and hosting employers at camp, campers gain valuable insights that guide their future career choices.

Career and Interest Exploration activities included:

- Aurora Healthcare
- Bell Ambulance
- Esports
- Kinship Urban Farm
- Marcus Theatres
- Milwaukee Art Museum
- Milwaukee Bucks
- Milwaukee School of Engineering
- PepsiCo

*“The exposure to new jobs has been very valuable”  
-Meg, parent of two campers*



## 2 Life Skills and Enrichment

Camp RISE equips youth with essential life skills through engaging workshops and practical activities. Campers build critical competencies valuable in both personal and professional settings. Enrichment activities also promote creativity and personal development, helping campers gain confidence in their abilities. These skills lay the foundation for long-term success and personal growth.

Life Skills and Enrichment activities included:

- Professional phone call etiquette
- Mock interview workshops
- AI agility and and best practices
- Team-building exercises
- Communication workshops
- Problem-solving challenges
- Art and creativity sessions
- Personal development workshops
- Leadership training
- Confidence-building activities

*“I enjoyed making new friends and not being shy. I built up enough confidence to be comfortable around people.” -Gabrielle, 13*





# 3 Civic Awareness and Engagement

The 2024 Camp RISE program focused on *Civic Awareness and Engagement*, offering campers meaningful experiences to connect with their city and understand the critical services that shape their community. Campers visited **City Hall**, toured the **Milwaukee County Courthouse**, and participated in dynamic discussions with the **Milwaukee Health Department**, **Department of Public Works**, **Department of Employee Relations**, and the **Common Council**, learning firsthand how these institutions operate and contribute to the well-being of the city.

In addition to these immersive experiences, campers rolled up their sleeves for park clean-ups with the **Milwaukee Police Department** and explored city resources like the **Milwaukee Public Library** and the **Port of Milwaukee**. These activities not only gave campers a greater appreciation of their city but also instilled a sense of ownership and responsibility for their community's future. By engaging in these activities, campers were empowered with the knowledge and confidence to become active contributors and potential leaders in their communities.

**83%** of campers learned something new about government

**85%** of campers learned something new about public health



# Success Story

## Robert Ramos

A standout camper this summer, Robert Ramos, 13, has truly embodied the values of Camp RISE. A driven, entrepreneurial young leader, Robert's initiative and commitment have made a lasting impression on both staff and his fellow campers. Early in the summer, Robert brought snacks for his entire group, a thoughtful gesture that fostered a sense of unity and camaraderie within his team. His leadership extends beyond simple acts of kindness—he consistently stepped up to guide his peers during group activities, demonstrating maturity and responsibility well beyond his years.

Outside of camp, Robert spends his evenings helping his uncle with the family business, balancing his entrepreneurial spirit with the same diligence he brings to camp. His ability to manage these commitments while staying engaged and focused at camp is a testament to his character. When asked to reflect on this camp experience, Robert acknowledged camp has been an opportunity not only to explore new career paths and participate in fun activities but also to build lasting friendships—all while earning a stipend for his hard work. His enthusiasm for learning and connecting with others perfectly captures the spirit of Camp RISE.

*"Robert is a natural leader," said Camp Director, Romell Greer. "He's always the first to lend a hand, encourage his peers, and share his perspective. The future is bright for Robert, and we're confident he'll continue to make a positive impact wherever he goes."*

In recognition of his efforts and leadership, Robert was named Camper of the Week during the first week of camp, an honor that perfectly reflects the outstanding qualities he brings to the Camp RISE community.



# Impact and Outcomes

Employ Milwaukee administered a post-program survey to guardians and campers to gather feedback and make improvements for future programming.

97%

of guardians would enroll their camper again next summer.

88%

of guardians noticed positive changes in their camper's social skills.

84%

of guardians reported an increase in their camper's confidence and self-esteem.

70%

of campers feel more confident choosing a career path after attending camp.

*“My son loves this program and the different experiences he has over the summer. He is developing great tools to take with him throughout the school year.”*



# THANK YOU

*to our generous funders and partners who made Camp RISE possible.*




Forest County Potawatomi  
FOUNDATION



Interested in sponsoring or partnering with Camp RISE? Email us at [CampRISE@employmilwaukee.org](mailto:CampRISE@employmilwaukee.org) to learn more about how you can get involved.

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