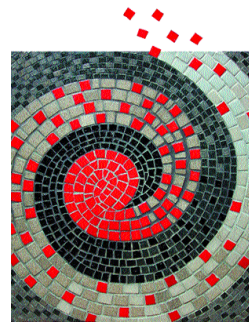


Explore a Career in Youth Work



Myranda Warden
Abiding Faith Lighthouse

“When people think of a career in youth work, they automatically think of becoming a teacher. They don’t know that youth work is a field with many different avenues and opportunities.”

CAREER SUPPORT

The pastor and youth pastor at Abiding Faith Lighthouse Church in Indianapolis, Indiana recognize the benefit of providing regular renewal experiences and relationship building for their staff. Each month, they meet at a nice restaurant for their Leaders Meeting. The meetings are an opportunity for staff to encourage and support one another, with the first part of their time together devoted to the sharing of the work each individual is doing. The remainder of the time is spent socializing and getting to know one another better. In addition, the day before their congregational retreats, which are held four times a year, the leaders go to the site and spend the day renewing and preparing themselves for conducting the experience.

CHALLENGES TO PURSUING A CAREER IN YOUTH WORK

The Performance Arts Ministry Director/Assistant Youth Director at the Abiding Faith Lighthouse is a college sophomore majoring in Communication Studies and Philanthropy. Through her Journey Fellowship, she was able to explore the reasons she wanted a career in youth work and gain experiences helpful to making that decision. For her, working with youth is “all about making a difference in the lives of young people”.

What to study is one of the challenges faced by college-aged individuals interested in careers in youth work. While some colleges and universities are beginning to consider developing a course of study specific to youth work, to date no degree programs exist. Therefore, students must engage a certain amount of creativity when making decisions about degree programs in which to enroll. In spite of this challenge, however, getting a degree in something that students consider relevant to the work they want to do is important and will give them more credibility when looking for a job. Likewise, doing as much volunteer work for as many different organizations as possible gives students more experience, credibility, and motivation to pursue a career in youth work.

***The Abiding Faith Lighthouse** serves 25 inner city youth in the Indianapolis area. Since they are a small organization, their youth staff consists of one paid part-time employee and three volunteers, with 75% of staff being White (non-Hispanic/Latino) and 25% African-American.*

