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Venice:

U.S. Department of Labor awards youth job training program \$1.1 million

The Venice Community Housing Corporation's YouthBuild program has been selected to receive \$1.1 million in funding over three years from the U.S. Department of Labor.

YouthBuild is one of only five programs in California and 31 programs nationwide to receive funding through a competitive bidding process, according to the Department of Labor.

The YouthBuild program provides at-risk youth in Los Angeles with education and employment services to help them achieve self sufficiency. Participants in the program have faced challenges such as gang involvement, criminal records, high school dropout, substance abuse, and teen parenthood.

VCHC is currently nearing the end of its ninth YouthBuild cycle

and the federal funding will support cycles 10 and 11, through 2014, a corporation spokesperson said.

Over 250 youths have enrolled in the program over the past eight years and 179 youths have remained in the program for six months or longer. Of those who participated beyond the six month period, 93 percent graduated from the program and 82 percent of

those graduates began employment/post-secondary education/training within the first quarter after graduation, according to VCHC. Since the program began, 105 students have received their high school diploma or GED through Venice YouthBuild.

For more than 22 years, VCHC has worked to develop neighborhood-based solutions for low-income families and individuals.

Tenants of VCHC's nearly 200 units of affordable housing and other low-income community members are supported by a comprehensive range of life skills coaching, job training and youth development, the spokesperson said.

Information about VCHC, www.vchcorp.org.