



Youth business group exceeds revenue goal

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Nashville-based entrepreneurial youth training program Youth About Business has exceeded last year's program services revenue in the first nine months of 2005. Revenue for 2004 was \$660,000.

Youth About Business (YAB), a nonprofit organization started in 1992, helps train children ages 10-18 to get real life experience by running their own companies. Unlike school-based programs that help students learn about company set-up and dissolution, students in this program work with real companies on an ongoing basis.

"I was tired of losing our children," YAB founder Sam Kirk said. "Education in itself does not totally prepare us for the real world. It is our experiences that mold and shape us. That is what I want for our youth.

"Our programs engage children in a way they get excited about how the world functions. Their grades get better because what they are doing in school becomes relevant. It connects the dots," he said.

Vanderbilt University hosted a YAB summer business camp where local business people and executives volunteered to teach students about mergers and company acquisitions. "We started out serving economically underserved children but now less than 70 percent of our student base is from economically disadvantaged families," Kirk said. Students ages 10-14 join the mentoring program while rising sophomores 15-18 are trained to actually run companies.

Currently YAB operates training centers in Nashville and New York. Students can choose to work at a specialty company that sells custom-made T-shirts and pens, or join the real estate company where they learn about lease agreements and land investments. Murfreesboro operates a third 30,000-square-foot facility which houses a used-goods retail center.

YAB Nashville has 350 students while the New York program has 180.

The nonprofit plans to announce its annual revenue for 2005 at its banquet 6-9 p.m., Nov. 11 at the Tennessee Ballroom in Opryland Hotel.

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