

# DETROIT

# NATIVE SUN

Detroit youth can now register for summer jobs as Mayor Sheffield announces opening of the 2026 GDYT application portal

City of Detroit, Project Clean Slate recipients of 2026 Michigan Justice Fund Grant;

allows work to continue unabated for two more years



Grow Detroit's Young Talent (GDYT), the City's official summer jobs program for local youth, returned as Mayor Mary Sheffield announced that the registration portal opens Friday, March 13 at 9 a.m. in honor of 313 Day.

The GDYT program is hosted annually to connect Detroit youth, ages 14-24, to summer employment. Participants will work with corporate employers, small businesses, community organizations and partners throughout the Metro Detroit area, and across a wide range of City of Detroit departments.

"Grow Detroit's Young Talent is more than just a summer job program — it's an investment in the future of our city's youth," said Mayor Mary Sheffield. "By providing meaningful work opportunities, we're equipping young Detroiters with valuable experiences to help them succeed in their careers and in life. This year, up to 8,000 young people will have the opportunity to prepare for bright futures."

To help kickoff 313 Day, and starting March 13, Detroit youth can register for summer work experiences to participate in this six-week program. Its goal is to help cultivate on-the-job experience for the next generation of talent and provide op-

portunities for local youth to build valuable workforce readiness skills.

"At DTE, we believe one of the most meaningful investments we can make is in Detroit's young people," said Joi Harris, president and chief executive officer, DTE Energy. "Grow Detroit's Young Talent helps students explore careers, build real-world skills and see what's possible for their future—right here in their own city. We're proud to keep this partnership going as we help develop the next generation of leaders, and we encourage other employers to join us in expanding opportunities and strengthening Detroit's workforce."

The program has become an invaluable resource for young Detroiters who are approaching the end of high school and looking to move into post-secondary education or a career. For older youth, the ability to gain experience across a range of industries allows them to make better-informed career choices.

The application portal can be found at GDYT.org, and will remain open through May 15, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. It serves as a starting point for any Detroit youth 14-24 looking to participate, as well as for any employer, philanthropic or community partners who would like to take part in this year's program.

The City of Detroit and Project Clean Slate (PCS) have been awarded a Michigan Justice Fund grant, an initiative of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan. This grant will allow Project Clean Slate to continue providing essential expungement services to the Detroit community by supporting expungement hearing attorney coverage over the next two years.

The Michigan Justice Fund awarded \$200,000 to the City of Detroit/Project Clean Slate. The funding will help fill a critical gap in attorney support, which will enable the program to continue providing free, efficient legal services to Detroit residents and City of Detroit employees.

Project Clean Slate provides Detroit residents and City of Detroit employees with high-quality legal care that aids in the expungement of eligible criminal convictions. Criminal records create long-term barriers to employment, housing, and educational opportunities. PCS' expungement process alleviates these barriers by permanently sealing criminal convictions from clients' records.

The program, launched in 2016, began with just a handful of expungements and

has since grown into the country's leading municipal expungement initiative. The PCS team has helped Detroiters expunge over 19,000 convictions and expunges thousands of criminal convictions each year.

"The Michigan Justice Fund has been a constant supporter and funder of Project Clean Slate dating back to 2021," said Stephani LaBelle, Executive Director of PCS. "The funding is critical to the program and will enable PCS hearing attorneys to expunge thousands of convictions for eligible Detroiters."

During the two-year grant period, PCS expects more than 15,000 Detroit residents to apply for the program, and the team will expunge 10,000 convictions during the grant period.

The funds from the Michigan Justice Fund grant have been released to Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC), who serves as PCS' fiduciary. DESC is the City of Detroit's workforce agency and a member of the Michigan Works Agency network. They specialize in helping Detroiters, including "returning citizens" who have been through Project Clean Slate find work.

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