



CAREER EXPLORATION WEEK

4/2/24 - 4/5/24



HOST INFORMATION

CONTENTS

THANK YOU	3
ABOUT REALITY CHANGERS	4
CAREER EXPLORATION WEEK GOALS	6
WHAT TO EXPECT	7
HOW TO ENGAGE YOUTH	10
SAMPLE SCHEDULE	12
MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED	13



THANK YOU

Dear Career Exploration Week Host,

Thank you so much for partnering with Reality Changers! **Our mission is to prepare youth to become first-generation college graduates and agents of change in their community.** Since 2001, we've helped more than 3,300 students become the first in their families to go to college.

We know, however, that just getting students into college isn't enough. Nationally, 90% of first-generation, low-to-middle-income students don't complete college. This is why it is essential for us to help students begin working towards graduation and career in high school... and that's where you come in!

Career Exploration Week is an opportunity for students to see what real offices and job sites are like, identify interests, practice professional conversation skills, and understand the connection between college and career. Many of our graduates say that Career Exploration Week experiences were a key part of their decision-making process for where to apply to college and what to study.

Because of programs like Career Exploration Week, **Reality Changers students are eight times more likely to graduate from college than their peers.** Thank you for helping to spark passion and build professionalism for future first-generation college graduates.



Sincerely,



Tamara Y. Craver

President & CEO, Reality Changers

YOUR REALITY CHANGERS CONTACTS



Rosa María Hernández

Vice President of Programs

619-516-2231

RosaMaria@RealityChangers.org



Melanie Stanek

Volunteer & Outreach Manager

619-516-2224

MelanieS@RealityChangers.org

ABOUT REALITY CHANGERS

WHO WE SERVE

Our students will be the first in their families to graduate from college. They come from racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds which are typically underrepresented on college campuses.

Many of our students are likely to be overlooked by colleges and, prior to coming to Reality Changers, may not have considered themselves “college material”.

- ▶ *English is a second language for 44% of our students.*
- ▶ *95% of our students' families are have 'extremely low' to 'moderate' income (based on HUD parameters).*

OUR WHY

College degrees create new opportunities for youth.

AND, college degrees build equity for families, neighborhoods, and communities. This is not only because our graduates bring more economic resources into communities, but also because our program increases civic engagement among participants.

- ▶ *On average, a Bachelor's degree increases lifetime earnings by 125%.*



ABOUT REALITY CHANGERS

OUR PROVEN MODEL FOCUSES ON GETTING FIRST-GENERATION YOUTH TO, THROUGH, AND BEYOND COLLEGE GRADUATION.



Step 1 (8th - 11th Grade)

Create a strong foundation of academic, personal, and community-building skills. Grow student support systems in order to increase individual resiliency.



Step 2 (12th Grade)

Help youth get into the 2- and 4- year institutions that are the best fit for them. Assemble financial resources for college.



Step 3 (college students)

Ensure students have the resources, strategies, and support system they need to graduate from college



Step 4 (college students & graduates)

Prepare first-generation graduates for real-world success.

CAREER EXPLORATION WEEK GOALS

During Career Exploration Week, high school and college students visit job sites to observe, assist, and learn from working professionals. This opportunity helps students to see what workplaces are really like and gives them new ideas about their potential future.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



Understand the connection between school and career



Identify future career interests



Increase awareness of skills necessary for career success



Practice networking



Observe and develop workplace professionalism



WHAT TO EXPECT

BEFORE CAREER EXPLORATION WEEK

Reality Changers' Role

- Match students with worksites based on interest and experience
 - Prepare the students for the visit
 - Support you in designing activities and planning the day
 - Communicate student needs (ex: dietary restrictions, prayer room) ahead of time.
- Preliminary info will be available 3/15. Final details will be shared a week before your visit.*

Your Role

- Fill out the Career Exploration Week Sign Up Form
- Work with Reality Changers to establish details: date, time, dress code, etc.
- Plan your activities:
 - Create a schedule.
 - Gather materials.
 - Prep meeting spaces.
 - Brief co-workers.
- Plan to provide students with a meal.
- Confirm a backup host in case of emergencies/schedule change

PRE-VISIT CHECKLIST

- ☐ **By 2/16:** Fill out Career Exploration Week Sign Up Form
- ☐ **By 2/23:** Finalize details with Reality Changers. This includes: date, time, dress code, number of participants, transportation logistics, etc.
- ☐ **By 3/15:** Submit any paperwork you will need students and guardians to sign. Let Reality Changers know of any participant requirements (ex: need names ahead of time).
- ☐ **By 3/15:** Create a plan for the day's schedule and prepare your team for their roles. Plan to feed student participants a meal.
- ☐ **By 3/22:** Confirm a backup host in case of emergencies/schedule change.
- ☐ **By 3/29:** Gather materials and create any presentations/worksheets/handouts/etc.
- ☐ **By 4/1:** Place the meal order.
- ☐ **Day-of:** Meet with students and have fun!

WHAT TO EXPECT

DURING THE VISIT

Reality Changers' Role

- Bring students to and from your workplace
- Provide supervision
- Take photos of activities

Your Role

- Review all safety and emergency procedures. Provide all necessary safety gear.
- Introduce yourself and your company/organization/agency. Explain how your college & professional pathway led you to your current job.
- Lead an interactive session with variety throughout the day.

IDEAS FOR THE VISIT

Give a tour of your workplace.

Introduce your colleagues to students.

Share a piece of advice that helped you in college or your career.

Discuss how the company impacts the community.

Give out branded swag.

Lead hands-on activities.

Provide handouts to supplement your talking points.

Provide an overview of your departments. Explain how each supports the company.

Show a brief video about your company or industry.

See page 12 for a sample schedule with more ideas!

WHAT TO EXPECT

AFTER CAREER EXPLORATION WEEK

Reality Changers' Role

- Debrief with students
- Recognize you and your workplace on social media (with your approval)
- Follow up on any feedback you provide

Your Role

- Follow up on any discussions with students (e.g., if you offered to send them a link to a relevant news article)
- Share your experience and feedback with Reality Changers



HOW TO ENGAGE YOUTH

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

There may be cultural differences between you and visiting students. Our students are used to interacting with adults who are older than they are and who come from different backgrounds. However, they may be a bit intimidated in an unfamiliar, professional workspace. Teenagers and young adults sometimes use shyness or false bravado as a defense mechanism; do not take it personally.

As with most relationships, kindness, respect, patience, and displaying genuine interest will go a long way!



Listen

- Listen intently to students.
- Restate what they share to clarify meanings.
- Avoid “talking at” students for long periods of time.



Connect

- Use students’ names frequently.
- Ask questions & encourage students to ask you questions.
- Find commonalities.

Our students come from diverse backgrounds. Involving diverse team members can help put them at ease and give them role models. Be sure to mention if you are a first-generation college graduate yourself!

PLEASE NOTE

This year’s Career Exploration Week occurs during Ramadan, the Muslim holy month. This means that some students may be fasting during their visit and will need alternate activities during meal time. Additionally, students may need a quiet space to pray. We will communicate these needs ahead of time and help you plan.

HOW TO ENGAGE YOUTH

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Break the ice by initiating discussions. You can help students sharpen their conversation skills.

What is your dream job?

What's your favorite subject?

Who do you look up to?

What is your dream college?

What is the best advice you have ever received?



SAMPLE SCHEDULE

10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

- Welcome students as they arrive.
- Explain what to expect. Identify where the restrooms are. Explain any safety procedures.
- Introduce yourself. Ask each student to introduce themselves.
- Give them a tour of your facilities. Introduce colleagues as you go.

10:45 AM - 11:15 AM

- Bring students to a conference room.
- Show students an org chart.
- Explain how your college education relates to your current position.
- Answer questions about the company.

11:15 AM - 12:00 PM

- Show the students a hands-on task they can try out.
 - Past examples - *DNA extraction, mock trial, sales role-playing, taking blood pressure, engaging in a brainstorming session, shadowing a meeting*
- Let the students work on the task. Check in and provide feedback.

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM

- Lunch
- Debrief the morning discussions and activity.
- Invite colleagues to lunch with students and get to know them.
- Take a group photo with your company logo in the background.

MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

PR/COMMUNICATIONS

Looking to share your Career Exploration Week event? We'd be happy to collaborate with your Communications Team on any of the following:

- Press release
- Social media or blog posts
- Photos and video
- Student interviews

Contact: Ally Welborn, Associate Director of Marketing & Communications, ally@realitychangers.org, (619) 516-2223

VOLUNTEERING

There are many ways for you or your company to volunteer with Reality Changers!

- Weekly tutoring
- Professional mentors
- Pro-bono services
- Special events

Contact: Melanie Stanek, Volunteer & Outreach Manager, melanies@realitychangers.org, 619-516-2224

DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING

Your company can invest in the future and help make college dreams come true! Contact us to learn more about:

- Sponsorships
- Teambuilding through online fundraising
- Special events & sponsorships

Contact: Sarah Verduco Singh, Development Manager, sarah@realitychangers.org, 619-516-2221