

County gets jobs for youth

Times Tribune staff

A 2-year-old county summer employment program has found jobs for at least 68 East Palo Alto youths since May, according to the south county coordinator of the program.

Alonzo Emery, head of the Summer Jobs for Youth program from East Palo Alto to San Carlos, said 136 East Palo Alto residents between the ages of 14 and 21 had filed applications with the employment program as of August 2. Since then, more have applied and more have gotten jobs, he said.

Emery said the 68 placements in the first two summer months varied in duration. Some of the jobs were as short as three days and others were longer. Most of the

East Palo Alto

jobs were for fast-food restaurant workers, secretaries, housecleaners, yard workers and babysitters, he said. A few offered long-term job training.

For the most part, the summer job program is designed to put cash into the hands of the young while keeping them out of trouble, Emery said. Some of the jobs, however, can last beyond the summer.

"The employers always have the option of keeping the student on after school starts," Emery said.

Emery said he considered the statistics on East Palo Alto applicants encouraging.

"There aren't too many jobs in their own neighborhood, so we help them broaden their base of opportunity," he said. "Sometimes transportation is a problem if a job is only available in Redwood City or San Carlos. But it's an opportunity they never would've gotten if they didn't come here."

Overall, the Summer Jobs for Youth program has accepted 534 applicants from the south county since May, and has placed 275 of them in jobs.

Of the 275 placements, 108 jobs have gone to blacks, 99 to whites, 58 to Hispanics and 8 to Asians.

Emery said the students fill out applications listing basic personal and work experience information and then they are interviewed by a program worker.

The program tries to match students with job openings, which are specified by employers in need of workers.

"Employers must be saying this is a worthwhile program because they keep calling when they have openings," Emery said. The number of applicants and the number of placements have doubled this summer over last year's figures, he said.