



Educator and Student Summits Foster *TRANSFORMATIONS* in Detroit

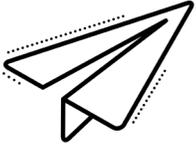


2019 immersive events
offering transformational
experiences



youth entrepreneurs®

Executive Summary



Youth Entrepreneurs exists to empower and mobilize educators so they are equipped to facilitate transformation in young people through experiential learning and confidence building. Its curriculum seeks to increase the business acumen of students while also giving them the opportunity to discover, develop and apply their innate talents and abilities as they progress through the program via the Four Pillars: Foundational Values; Soft Skills; Currency and Auctions; and The Transformation Mindset. It is the belief of Youth Entrepreneurs that its unique offering of educator freedom in the classroom is the conduit by which educator and student transformation ensues; to capitalize on and solidify these transformations in both educators and students, Youth Entrepreneurs hosted nearly 260 educators and 240 alumni in Detroit for the 2019 YEedu and Summit conferences, respectively.

At these two events for Youth Entrepreneurs, educator and student attendees alike reported transformation and mindset shifts during the five-day immersive experiences. YEedu, an annual professional development and engagement conference, seeks to empower educators to implement the Youth Entrepreneurs program in their classrooms while also rejuvenating their passion for teaching via leave-to-learn excursions. Summit served as an event for Youth Entrepreneurs alumni who have recently completed the program; its focus lies in helping these alumni deepen their understanding of the applicability of their talents and abilities through interactive sessions and field trips into the host city's local communities. The findings of both studies conducted during these conferences indicate the two Youth Entrepreneurs events positively impacted the lives of educator and alumni attendees.

Introduction



YEedu

As the 21st-century workforce becomes more challenging to imagine and equip students for, educators bear a responsibility not previously attributed to their role: preparing students to succeed in their current academic mandates while also instilling in them a drive and a passion to succeed in an amorphous future job market. With this unprecedented shift, the education sector has turned to the professional development of educators to support them in their journey to teach their students skills such as problem-solving, communication and critical thinking (“13 Essential 21st Century Skills for Today’s Students”, 2019).

One study from *The Learning Policy Institute* found multiple design elements that effective professional development opportunities possess, such as ones that are “content focused, incorporate active learning strategies, engage teachers in collaboration, [...] and are of sustained duration”

(Hammond, Hyler, Gardner, & Espinoza, 2017). These critical characteristics speak to the shift in education: current students in education systems around the world can no longer rely solely on their academic achievements to carry them through their career. Thus, the market demands the education system begin offering professional development opportunities for educators that will help them to adapt and innovate in this new climate, in turn trickling down to students. As displayed in the results below, YEedu offered all of these design elements to attendees in its programming, resulting in impressive mindset shifts and transformations in educators.

Summit

As mentioned previously, one of the greatest challenges of the 21st-century workplace lies in preparing current students to adapt to multiple work environments and industries throughout their careers while also possessing advanced communication, critical thinking and collaboration skills (“13 Essential 21st Century Skills for Today’s Students”, 2019). Given this challenge, it is imperative students are given opportunities to practice these skills in an immersive, real-world setting with their fellow comrades. Youth Entrepreneurs sought to fill this market need through hosting nearly 240 alumni for five days at Summit.

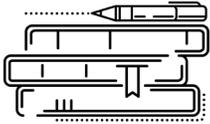
Beyond the development of 21st-century skills in alumni, the vision of the Youth Entrepreneurs Summit was to challenge students’ capabilities while also allowing them to learn new perspectives about themselves. This union of teaching applicable life skills while also facilitating mindset shifts via interactive sessions and hands-on learning proved to be valuable for the majority of attendees. As shown in the results below, Summit facilitated transformations in the lives of alumni by exposing them to scenarios and settings that allowed them to learn more about the world around them while also fostering the development of their talents and abilities.

■ Methods and Limitations ■



The purpose of this study was to determine the level of transformation in educators and students attending the two annual Youth Entrepreneurs events, YEedu and Summit. Three unique surveys were distributed to educators and students via text and email over the course of YEedu and Summit, respectively. An average of 110 educators participated in the three YEedu surveys; a total of 258 educators attended the conference. An average of 58 students participated in the three Summit surveys; a total of 237 students attended the five-day event. Despite the lower average response rates for both events, the demographics of respondents remained consistent.

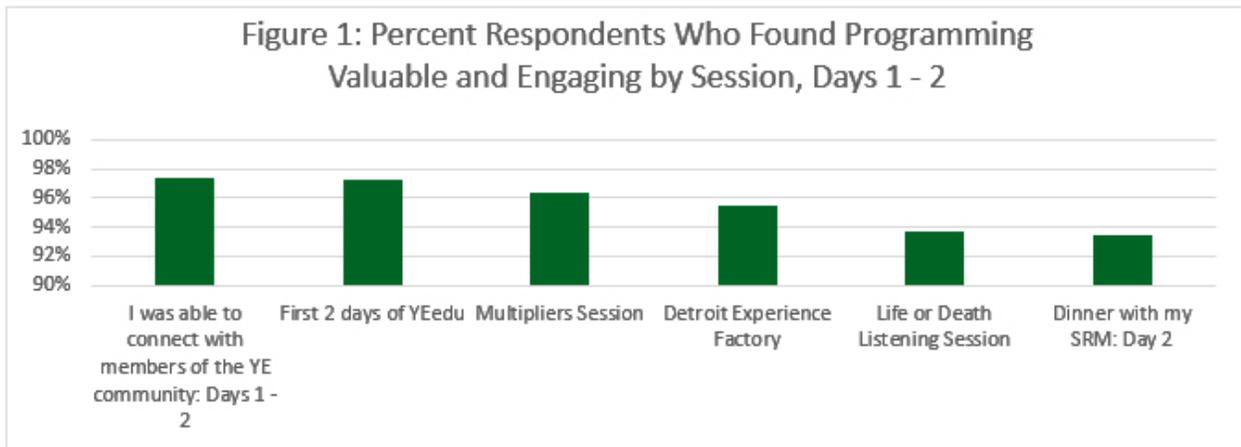
YEedu



As described previously, YEedu serves as the key event for Youth Entrepreneurs educators each year. Combining professional development and leave-to-learn activities, attendees are encouraged to engage with their fellow educators while leaning into the vision of Youth Entrepreneurs: mobilizing and empowering educators to make a marked difference in the lives of their students through freedom in their classrooms. As seen in the survey results, educators realized deep insights while connecting with fellow members of the Youth Entrepreneurs community throughout YEedu.

As shown in Figure 1, the events and sessions offered during Days 1 and 2 of YEedu were well-received by educators. Of 130 respondents, 97% found the first two days of YEedu to be valuable and engaging, with 96% finding both the Multipliers Session and the Detroit Experience Factory to be their preferred activities. The Multipliers Session featured co-author of *The Multiplier Effect* Elise Foster; the book discusses the characteristics of a “Multiplier”: one who achieves more with fewer resources, develops and mentors others, drives innovation and welcomes change (Wiseman, Allen, & Foster, 2013). Ms. Foster in turn related this concept to how teachers lead in the classroom and the education system daily.

The Detroit Experience Factory was an engaging bus tour that took educators to visit various entrepreneurship centers and start-ups around Detroit to highlight the entrepreneurial spirit of local neighborhoods while also emphasizing the positive changes that are realized when entrepreneurs invest in their community. This particular session integrated an active-learning opportunity for educators, which has also been cited by McREL Insights as being a key contributor in helping educators understand and apply new learnings in their classroom (Snow-Renner & Lauer, 2005).



As seen in Figure 2, Days 3 and 4 of YEedu allowed educators to form stronger connections with the YE community, with 100% of the 85 respondents citing this view. In alignment with this sentiment, 94% of educators found their small-group dinners with their Stakeholder Relations Manager (SRM) to be valuable and engaging, indicating the key role SRMs play in facilitating educator mobilization and empowerment. 91% of educators also cited the training session over the Youth Entrepreneurs Core Curriculum (eight Foundational Values, Soft Skills, Currency & Auctions and Transformational Mindset) to be valuable and engaging as they prepared for the upcoming school year. These results speak to the impact the training and small-group sessions had on strengthening the inner connections of the Youth Entrepreneurs community.

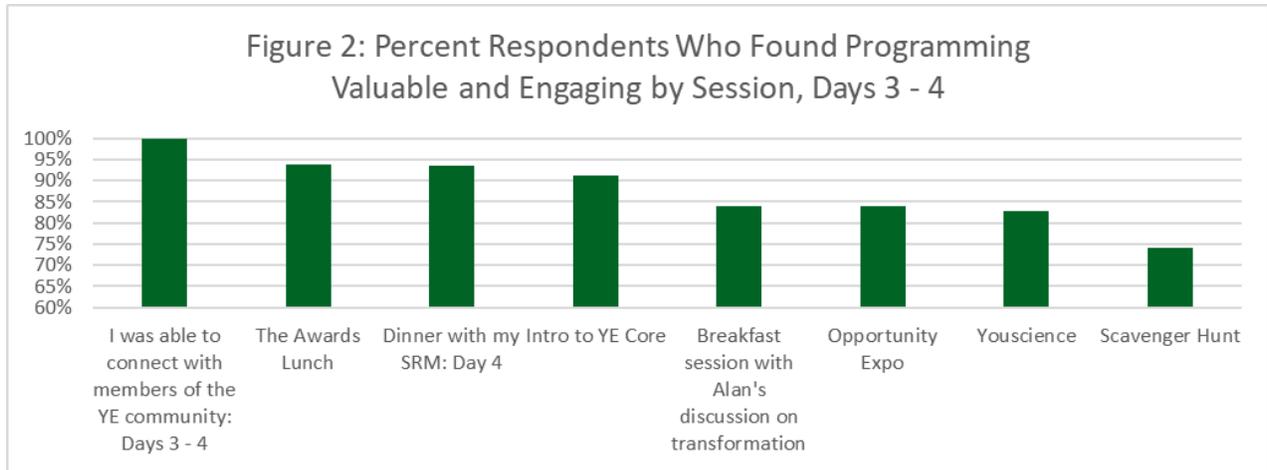


Figure 3 displays the efficacy of YEedu in mobilizing educators. Of 115 respondents, 100% found YEedu to be valuable to their professional development and that the event provided them with excellent networking opportunities, a stark contrast when compared to findings from a study conducted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that found only 29% of educators are satisfied with their professional development opportunities ("Teachers Know Best," 2014). Additionally, 97% of educators believe Youth Entrepreneurs should continue offering YEedu to future educators, a testament to the impact of this conference in the lives of educators. With findings such as these, it is clear YEedu is a high-value professional development opportunity for educators to attend that will be continued in subsequent years.

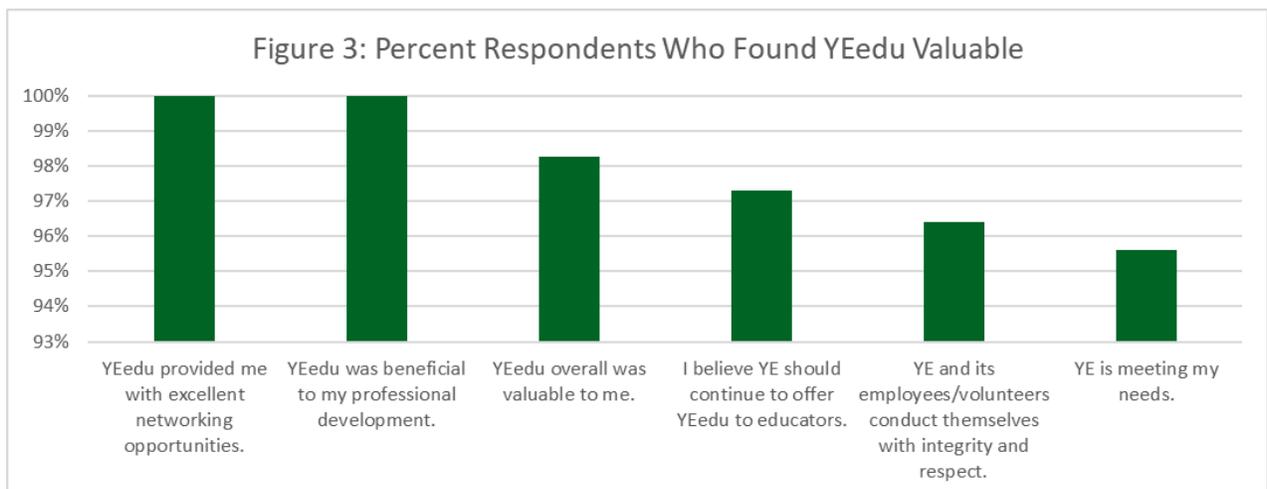
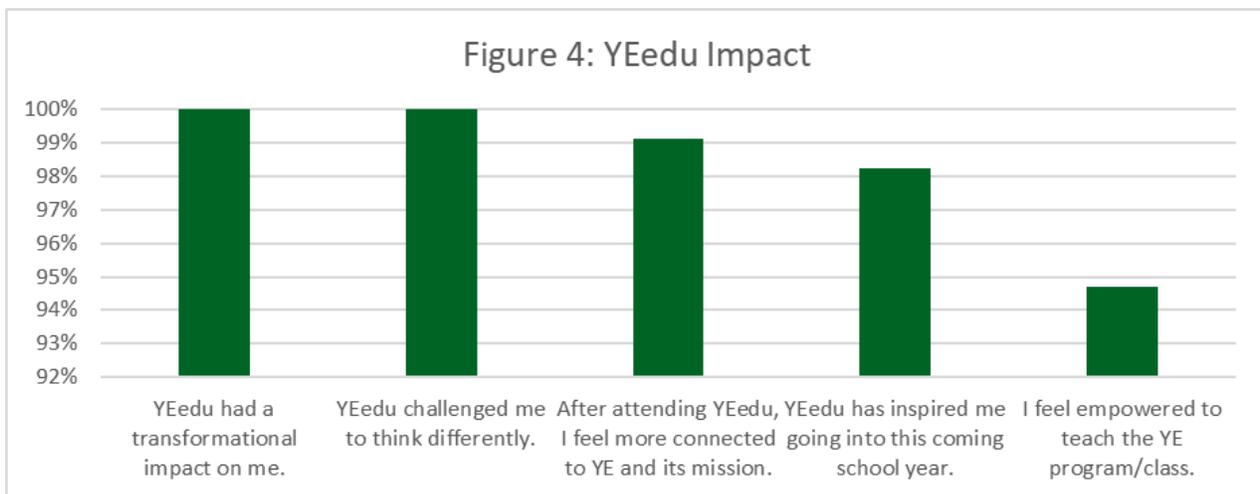


Figure 4 demonstrates the transformation that transpired from educators attending YEedu. Of 115 respondents, 100% stated YEedu had a transformational impact on them and challenged them to think differently, an indication of the mindset shifts resulting from the collaborative event that will benefit their future students. These results are supported by findings discussed by The Alberta Teachers' Association regarding professional development that implemented collaborative and cooperative models: "this form of professional learning was foundational to increasing teacher efficacy and collective efficacy, and was essential for supporting student achievement and engagement" (Beauchamp, Klassen, Parsons, Durksen, & Taylor, 2014). Clearly, immersive experiences such as YEedu facilitate greater impact.

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Additionally, 98% of participants reported being inspired to begin the upcoming school year, a positive indicator of educator preparedness following the in-depth YEedu experience. Lastly, nearly 95% of educators concluded their YEedu experience feeling empowered to teach the Youth Entrepreneurs class. These results stand as positive indicators of the realization of the organization's vision of educator mobilization.

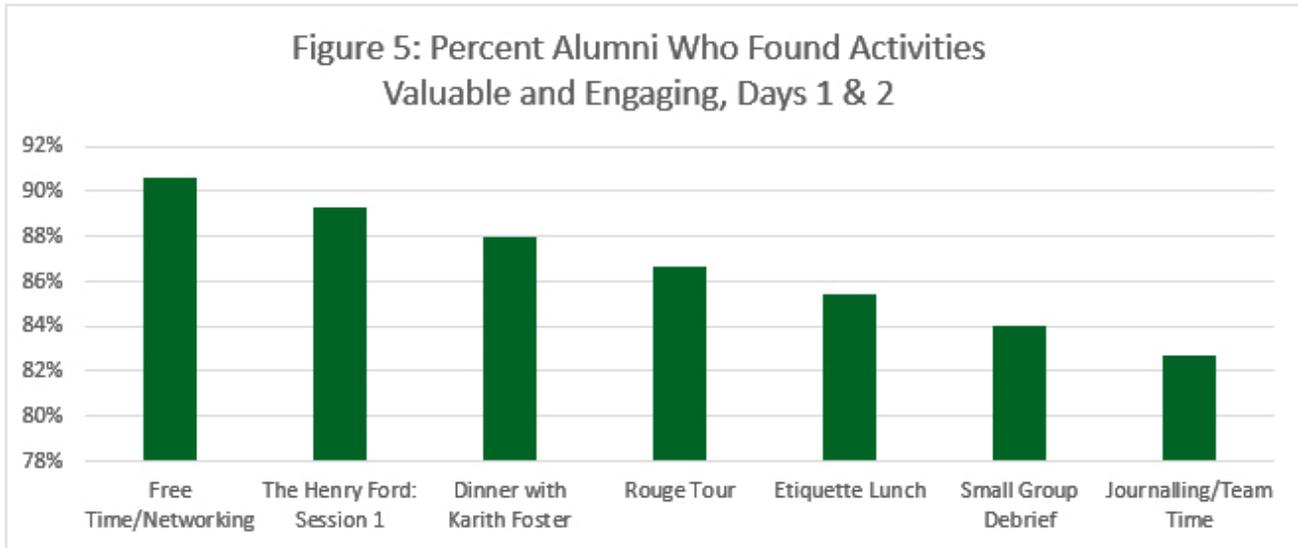


Summit

As described previously, Summit serves as an event for Youth Entrepreneurs alumni who seek out further engagement with Youth Entrepreneurs beyond their class experience. Through a mix of training sessions and leave-to-learn activities, participants are encouraged to engage with fellow attendees while leaning into the vision of Youth Entrepreneurs for current students and alumni: creating opportunities for young people to realize their innate talents and abilities while also discovering how to apply them in their daily lives and careers. As seen in the survey results, alumni realized deep insights while connecting with fellow members of the Youth Entrepreneurs community throughout Summit.

Of 71 respondents, 91% found their networking sessions to be valuable, as shown in Figure 5. Additionally, 89% of students found their time at the interactive Henry Ford Museum to be worthwhile and engaging; this experience in particular allowed students to experience a leave-to-learn opportunity.

nity that displays the value an entrepreneurial mindset can have on a local and global scale. 85% of respondents also found the Etiquette Lunch to be beneficial in preparing them for their future professional interactions beyond the classroom, pointing towards Youth Entrepreneurs' vision of exposing students to real-world experiences that will carry value into their adult life.



Sessions during Summit covered a variety of topics, including learning to identify opportunities, seeing the impact entrepreneurship can have on local communities via leave-to-learn activities and learning to apply one's innate talents and abilities, among other concepts. As seen in Figure 6, 100% of 33 respondents found the concepts introduced during Summit to be understandable and applicable. 94% and 91% of alumni found the Partner Dinner and the Mocktail event to be valuable and engaging, respectively. Both of these sessions were specifically designed to help alumni practice their communication and social skills to increase their confidence levels when interacting with new people, which are two of the 21st-century skills required for success in the worldwide market ("What are 21st-Century Skills?", 2019).

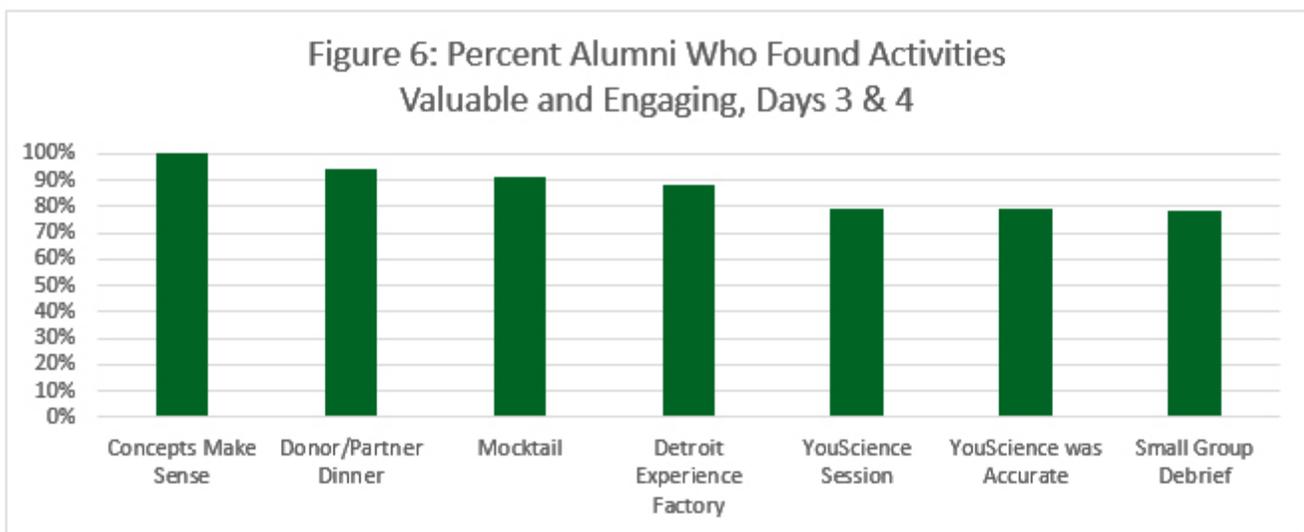
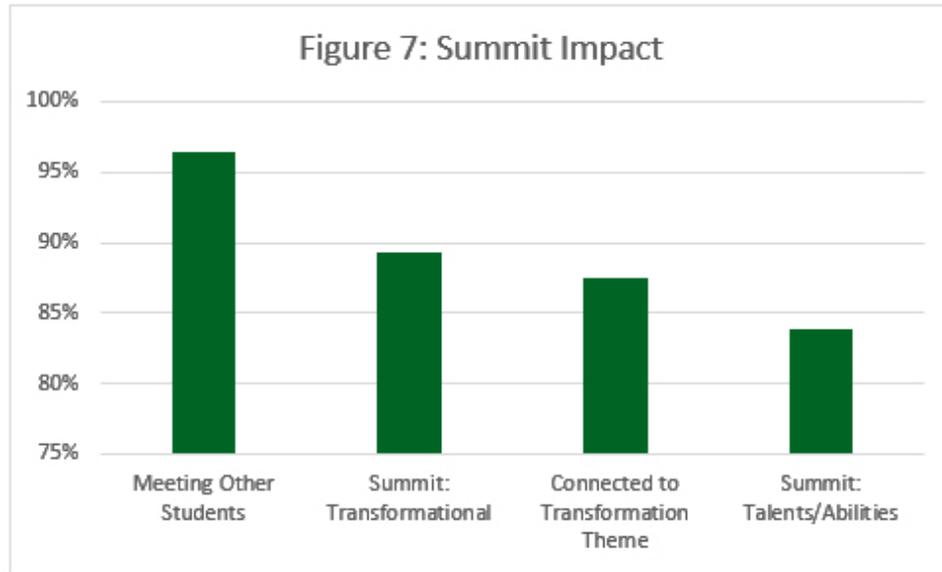


Figure 7 displays the impact Summit had on alumni. Of 55 alumni, 89% found the experience to be transformational, and 84% reported Summit as being instrumental in helping them further discover, develop and apply their innate talents and abilities. Lastly, 88% of alumni felt connected to the 2019 Summit theme, "Transformation." Given the amount of alumni reporting Summit was transformative to their lives, it is clear this theme resonated.

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Conclusion



As shown in the survey results, YEedu and Summit made a positive mark on the lives of educators and alumni. The visions of both events were realized while simultaneously aligning with the overarching Youth Entrepreneurs vision of empowering and mobilizing educators. Given these results, the organization intends to fully capitalize on the momentum generated in Detroit by hosting transformative experiences in Dallas, Texas, in 2020.

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