

ROI Statement

The **Alexandria Seaport Foundation** empowers young adults to build new futures through hands-on learning in our Apprentice Program. Located on Alexandria's waterfront, we are a safe haven for young adults ages 18-23 who are disconnected from school, work, or community. Apprentices learn boatbuilding, woodworking, maritime trades, job readiness, and life skills while working alongside experienced mentors in a supportive, team-based environment. Through project-based tasks and encouraging relationships, Apprentices gain confidence, practical skills, a network of supporters, and pathways toward employment opportunities, education, and long-term stability.

Integrating the detailed cost structure into the ROI analysis demonstrates that the Seaport Foundation's program is not only a high-yield social investment but also an increasingly efficient one as it scales. Based on current and projected data, the investment case is as follows:

1. The Cost of Support vs. Lifetime Burden

The economic burden of a single "disconnected" young person—one not in school or the workforce—is estimated at **\$975,420** over their lifetime in 2023 dollars. This figure represents the cost of social welfare, healthcare, and criminal justice spending that can be avoided through successful career and life-skill training.

2. Current ROI: Scaling Success

The current total investment to support one Seaport apprentice is **\$50,000**.

- **Wages for Participation:** Of this amount, approximately **\$14,500** for stipends paid directly to the Apprentices plus their payroll taxes.
- **Direct Program Costs:** The remaining **\$35,500** covers the specialized "three-tier" curriculum of trade, soft, and life skills.
- **Net Benefit:** Subtracting the \$50,000 investment from the \$975,420 lifetime burden yields a net economic benefit of **\$925,420 per apprentice**, a return of **18.5 to 1**.

3. Future ROI: Efficiency through Expansion

As the Seaport Foundation expands, the program is projected to become significantly more cost-efficient through economies of scale.

- **Estimated Future Cost:** The total investment per apprentice is estimated to decrease to roughly **\$43,000**.
- **Improved Apprentice Wages:** Despite the overall cost reduction, apprentice wages are expected to *increase* to **\$16/hour** and we will extend the program from 24 weeks to 32 weeks (totaling approximately **\$22,500** over the program duration).
- **Reduced Direct Program Costs:** The non-wage program costs are estimated to drop from \$35,500 to **\$20,500** per apprentice.
- **Enhanced Net Benefit:** With a total investment of \$43,000, the net economic benefit rises to **\$932,420 per apprentice**, increasing the ROI to over **22 to 1**.

Conclusion

By paying apprentices a living wage while they learn, the Alexandria Seaport Foundation ensures that financial barriers do not prevent the most at-risk youth from participating. Reducing the direct program cost to **\$30,000** while simultaneously increasing apprentice wages to **\$16/hour** makes the program a premier example of a high-efficiency social investment. Every dollar invested in a Seaport apprentice today prevents over **\$18** in future public spending, a figure that will rise to **\$22** as the program grows.