

Do You Know the Way
to Self-Sufficiency?



PROGRAM PROFILES

A Companion Document to:
**A Case Study Report on
Using a Self-Sufficiency
Framework to Guide Workforce
Development Programs and Policies**

A Collaborative Study from:



**Program Profiles:
Community-Based Organizations That Deliver
Workforce Education and Training Programs and Support Services**

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Program Profiles: Community-Based Organizations That Deliver Workforce Education and Training Programs and Support Services

Introductory Note

With the support of the federal Department of Health and Human Services, the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, the Commonwealth Corporation, and the Massachusetts Community Action Program Directors' Association partnered in a project to strengthen family economic self-sufficiency. The goal of the project was to design and disseminate training and technical assistance tools for community-based organizations and workforce development stakeholders to create better access to a continuum of integrated education, training, employment, and support services. In order to gather materials for these tools, the project team and FutureWorks¹ conducted a series of research activities, including the following:

- Conduct a review of programs within and outside the national and Massachusetts Community Service Networks.
- Identify criteria to focus the development of case studies based on this review.
- Prepare case studies that describe specific programs that are successfully delivering coordinated services from a variety of sources to assist working families in moving toward self-sufficiency.
- Map coordinated services and stages on the self-sufficiency continuum.
- Evaluate and synthesize measurement and reporting methods to record, track, and report the movement of families along the self-sufficiency continuum.

For the review of programs in Community Service Networks, researchers interviewed 18 community-based organizations submitted for review by the project team.² This document includes profiles of eight of those organizations that exhibit "promising practices" in delivering workforce development training programs and support services. Profiles include:

- Action Employment and Training, Action, Inc., Gloucester, MA
- Certified Nurse Aide Training Program, Community Action, Inc., Haverhill, MA
- Culinary Arts Institute, Guadalupe Centers, Inc., Kansas City, MO
- Hotel (and Hospitality) Industry Training, International Institute of Boston, Boston, MA
- *Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion*, Boston and Chelsea, MA
- Medical Office Administration Training Program, Montachusett Opportunity Council, Fitchburg, MA
- Step-Up Training Program and Saving for Success IDA Program, Allston-Brighton Community Development Corporation, Allston-Brighton, MA
- Computerized Office Skills Training, Training, Inc., Boston, MA

This document is a companion piece to the project's larger report, which includes results of the other four research activities, including the criteria, self-sufficiency continuum mapping, and the case studies. For electronic versions of the case study report, the program profiles document, a workbook, and other materials developed as part of this research project, visit any of the following Web sites:

- MASSCAP: <http://www.masscap.org/wfd.html>
- DHCD: <http://www.state.ma.us/dhcd>

¹ FutureWorks is a research and consulting firm in Arlington, MA, that helps build and manage state and regional strategies, policies, and institutions to promote sustainable economic development. The project team hired this firm to assist with research activities.

² The interview protocol can be found in attachment A. In most cases, the interview was conducted by telephone and lasted between 45 and 60 minutes.

Action Employment and Training

Background

Interviewee

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Program reviewed

Action Employment and Training
Action, Inc. (community action agency)
Gloucester, MA (serves Cape Ann and Ipswich)
<http://www.actioninc.org/index.html>

Mission of this organization/program: (From 2002 Annual Report) “Since 1965, Action, Inc. has been Cape Ann's first and only designated anti-poverty agency. Action, Inc. helps individuals and families in poverty achieve economic and family stability. Action, Inc. provides access to opportunities through advocacy, education and training, and a wide range of resources to assist people in the process of self-help.

“Our approach to service is comprehensive, addressing all aspects of a person's well-being. In addition, services are coordinated with colleague agencies to be cost-effective, avoid duplication, and enhance benefits. They are delivered with respect and dignity to promote self-esteem, empowerment, and confidence in those who seek our help.

“Action, Inc. is a major Cape Ann employer, with a staff of over one hundred trained professionals, who are dedicated to providing the services described in [the] Annual Report.”

Additional program documentation: Annual Report at <http://www.actioninc.org/annualreport.pdf>, as well as other information and articles of interest on the Web page.

Program overview

Purpose/intent/vision of this program: Train and retrain area residents to find a job or better job, increase basic skills, upgrade computer skills, increase self-confidence, and secure stable housing. Action, Inc. has existed since 1965. The Employment and Training division was established in 1996; however, the organization has been involved in workforce development since its founding.

Target population for this program: This program serves both rural and urban populations. Additionally, it serves:

- Unemployed individuals such as welfare recipients and others in and out of the labor force
- Underemployed individuals
- Limited English-proficient individuals
- Immigrants and refugees
- Minority populations
- Persons with disabilities, as well as ex-addicts
- Persons with criminal records
- Individuals (and families) living in poverty
- Other: homeless, transitional homeless, displaced fishing families, anyone who wants to take the fee-for-service computer classes, elderly, persons with AIDS

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- At-risk youth ages 14 to 21 years old

This program serves individuals with multiple barriers, including:

- Language barriers
- Literacy barriers
- Life and job skills barriers
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of child care
- Lack of health care
- Lack of access to workforce development system

The process for determining if clients are part of the target population includes applicants completing an intake form that identifies basic information as well as potential barriers to self-sufficiency and complete skill assessments. An additional interview process explores issues and barriers in more depth. The whole process takes about 45 minutes to one hour.

This program trains participants for entry-level jobs. One of the biggest challenges in the Cape Ann area is that jobs are very scarce and many residents refuse to look outside of the immediate area for employment. In addition to reluctance to leaving Cape Ann, a major factor is lack of transportation. Most clients do not have cars so, if they are not within walking distance of the commuter train station or on the limited local bus lines, they can only get jobs to which they can walk or get a ride. According to the Director of Employment and Training Programs, many clients often "refuse to go over the bridge" to the mainland for employment.

Design of the program

Main components and structure of the program: This program provides computer and general employment skills training. Additionally, it offers Intensive Adult Basic Education, an Adult Diploma Program, ESOL classes, and Compass, an at-risk youth program. The 12-week courses (recently revised to 18 weeks) include training on computer literacy, career readiness, and life skills. As the program consists of only two full-time staff (a job developer and program director) and a few part-time staff (a computer teacher, an ABE teacher, and a tutor), there are very few resources for formal case management. Each employment and training client receives this service, but staff members are stretched very thin. Some clients receive additional case management with a social worker (who also serves as the Director of Advocacy). Additionally, an in-house lawyer works with Employment and Training staff and the advocacy director. This team approach to case management works well for the organizations.

Most funding sources require a 90-day follow-up on graduates. The staff makes these follow-up calls as they can. Staff often have contact with graduates who initiate contact outside of the 90-day requirement, and the staff encourage graduates to see the program and organization as a long-term resource.

Partnerships: This program has created many partnerships with other organizations to pursue funding opportunities, including housing agencies, a local sober house, and others. An innovative partnership has just been forged with a for-profit business to increase funding streams into the program, create new computer-driven training programs, offer more classes to qualified students, upgrade the computer lab with no cost to the agency, reduce the payroll burden, and create revenue while still offering free or low-cost computer classes to targeted populations.

Employer involvement: The one job developer does outreach to area employers to develop job placements and belongs to the Chamber of Commerce to develop these relationships.

Performance measurement and assessment

General goals/outcomes for this program: Action, Inc., has an organizational workplan and each department has corresponding plans that outline goals and objectives. Most of the goals are focused on specific program outputs, and longer-term outcomes are not specifically measured. Specific goals and outcomes vary by funder.

The department has an electronic client tracking system for the organization. However, it does have to balance other management information systems that funders require, e.g., HMIS for homeless funding. This organization is considering using the ROMA Scales and Ladders tool for program performance measurement; therefore, its performance measurement system is in transition.

The results from the performance measurement systems are used to improve program management, report to funders, and report to the public through an annual report.

Conclusion

The Director of Employment and Training programs provided the following concluding remarks. "We know that people want to be independent; we/they know that a dependent lifestyle robs the individual of their dignity, causes them to lose hope, and causes them not to be able to see a future for them or their families. We know that poverty creates not only financial crisis with the family, but also strikes a repetitive chord of chaos, despair, clinical depression, violence, false salving of hurts and wounds with drinking, drugs, and often the irreparable dissolution of the family unit. We know that being poor and financially desperate creates stress and stressors that mimic, or are, or become in fact, mental illnesses that for the most part is not diagnosed or treated. We know that clients who come to us for a job or a better job are looking for more than that and need more than that. With an array of holistic wrap-around services, we, at Action, Inc.'s E & T are positioned to better serve the clients needs. We can assess their needs and skills, get them training and a job and help with long lasting job retention. It does not happen without the team approach from the entire agency.

"The more formal education part of what we do has been a work in progress. Our Intensive ABE course funded in whole by the SEWIB has three benchmarks for students. The goals are: to get a job or a better job; go up at least a grade level in math and reading; or move forward to another free training course sponsored by the WIB. What we learned was that instead of Adult Basic Education, we really needed to have in place a Literacy or even a Pre-Literacy program that could eventually lead to ABE courses. Even clients who had worked for many years and were displaced workers had reading levels and math levels below the third grade level. Additionally, even those who tested at the acceptable 7th grade levels as well as the very low scorers were not close to being job-ready even if their scores were to go up several levels. This is because their confidence levels and self-esteem levels rendered them stuck. We needed to add to the curriculum the soft skills needed to prepare them for interviews, the workplace or additional schooling. The process of tutoring this targeted population toward the stated goals became a much longer process than the WIB envisioned. We would rewrite the grant when it comes up again for refunding."

Certified Nurse Aide Training Program

Background

Interviewee

Nancy Tariot
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Program Reviewed

Certified Nurse Aide Training Program
Community Action, Inc. (community action agency)
Haverhill, MA (serves Haverhill, Amesbury, and Newburyport)
<http://www.communityactioninc.org/>

Mission of this organization/program: (From organization's brochure) "Community Action, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization established in 1965 to address the causes and consequences of poverty in the Greater Haverhill, Amesbury and Newburyport area. Our mission is to help empower individuals and families to help themselves through advocacy, education, training, and prevention programs and through services to meet basic human needs. CAI works to improve the attitudes and practices towards low-income people and offers assistance with respect, understanding and courtesy."

Additional program documentation: See the program description below.

Program overview

Purpose/intent/vision of this program: Offer intensive hands-on training to low-income individuals who were not able to meet the academic levels of other CNA training programs. The program has existed for 10 years.

Target population for this program: This program serves both rural and urban (Haverhill and Lawrence) populations. Additionally, it serves:

- Unemployed individuals such as welfare recipients and others in and out of the labor force—some are very long-term welfare recipients.
- Underemployed individuals.
- Limited English-proficient individuals—this population has grown significantly over the years.
- Individuals living in poverty.

This program targets individuals with multiple barriers:

- Language barriers
- Literacy barriers
- Life and job skills barriers

The process for determining if clients are part of the target population includes screening applicants (by ValleyWorks, the One-Stop Career Center) for TANF eligibility, income eligibility, and/or occupational training needs. Applicants also complete an interest assessment and skill assessments - they must meet certain levels of reading and English scores to be considered for the program. CAI did much recruiting in the past; however, now most of the clients hear about the program through word of mouth. When a potential client approaches CAI for training, the staff interview the person, and then send them to ValleyWorks for the eligibility testing; if eligible, the person returns to CAI for the training.

This program trains participants to be Certified Nurse Assistants. It is widely known that this is an in-demand job. Although this program trains for jobs in only the healthcare sector, it is not a full sectoral program because it does not attempt to influence the industry.

Design of the program

Main components and structure of the program: This program offers the traditional Red Cross training in Certified Nurse Assistant; however, it complements this basic three-week training curriculum with nine weeks of basic and soft skills training in order to reach those who are not prepared for the core CNA training. The program operates with three staff: a registered nurse (RN), who delivers the hard skills training; an instructor/coordinator, who delivers the employability/soft skills training; and a case manager, who assesses each client for needs and then works with them to develop plans of action to overcome barriers. Additionally, the case manager works with the instructors, the client, and employers on job placement.

The case manager works with the clients to help them think through and solve their own challenges and provides resources and referrals, as necessary. This case manager works with about 12 clients per 12-week training cycle three times annually (36 clients over the year). Weeks one and two of the training are considered "crisis weeks," in which the case manager works with clients to overcome challenges that arise from making the transition to participating in training for 30 hours per week. The focus is to help clients develop skills and networks to deal with these challenges even after they have graduated from the program. The case manager does not use a standard tool; each case is dealt with on an individual basis.

This program does not include any career ladder components, but the industry does have some career ladder opportunities for graduates.

Partnerships/employer involvement: The CNA program receives referrals from the One-Stop Career Center and the welfare-to-work office. It works with long-term care facilities and hospital employers in the area for job placements. Typically, the graduates of this training program are placed in long-term care facilities. However, the CAI is attempting to work with the area hospitals to provide job placement by offering sub-acute care training that these employers need and that will widen the job opportunities of the graduates.

Funding: The major sources of funding for this program are Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) through the Workforce Investment Act and funding from the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA). The continuation program funding through DTA was threatened earlier this year by state cuts to the Employment Services Program. The local workforce investment board allocated some funding to the program to enable the current cycle of trainees to complete their training on June 19, 2003. DTA funding after this date is uncertain. The Employment Services Program money for FY 2004 will be available July 1, 2003, but the overall amount remains at the February cut level.

In the recent past, the program had funding to provide *post*-employment support for some graduates. However, this funding was cut from the DTA's funding. Follow-up is now done on an ad hoc basis and must be initiated by the graduate.

The program has secured a PES grant to provide training to individuals under the 70% rule. These individuals are reaching the end of their benefit time or have exhausted their benefits. This funding differs from the ITA and DTA Employment Services Program in that it is funded only for the most difficult-to-serve clients. This program will continue to run throughout the summer months.

Performance measurement and assessment

General goals/outcomes for this program: The overall goal of this program is to train and place CNA.s. Generally, the program aims for all graduates to attend every training, graduate, get a job, and pass the CNA exam. Specifically, students on ITAs must be in the training program for four weeks before CAI can get reimbursed for the training tuition. Additionally, these students must maintain a 75% attendance rate, and the program must report on job placement, placement wages, six-month retention rate, and six-month wage rate.

The last class of 12 graduates had a 99% attendance rate, a 100% placement rate, and a 95% six-month retention rate. Placement wages were between \$9 and \$9.50 per hour, and six-month wages were between \$10 and \$11 per hour. All data are entered into the MOSES database system.

This program has piloted the Massachusetts ROMA Scales and Ladders tool.

Conclusion

Significant lessons learned about moving people from poverty to self-sufficiency: First, the most important aspect of helping clients toward self-sufficiency is to improve their self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-advocacy. Most trainees view themselves in such a negative light that they have difficulty overcoming barriers. Acquiring skills that are valued in the job market and learning that they are able to achieve lifts their self-confidence and allows them to improve their self esteem. In this way the program moves these participants toward self-sufficiency.

Secondly, family support is key. This program uses a full graduation ceremony (with graduates in cap and gown) to honor the graduates. Whole families attend and are recognized by the staff and graduates for the support given to the participants throughout the program.

Finally, the program does not offer a lot of "hand holding," but does work hard to provide trainees with the necessary tools to use during and after the training to overcome barriers and move toward self-sufficiency.

CAI Summary of the Certified Nurse Aide Training Program

The CNA Program at Community Action, Inc., began in the fall of 1993. At that time the program was designed to be a 27-week program offering intensive hands on-training to low-income individuals who were not able to meet the academic levels of other training programs. It has since become a twelve-week program, offered three times during the year. Up to 15 students are enrolled in each cycle. Participants who come in on ITAs must meet eligibility guidelines of the Department of Training and Development/WIA and complete the intake and assessment procedures at the local One Stop Career Center.

The participants who enter the program are often considered to be the "hardest to serve." Most have short or poor work histories, receive welfare benefits or are coming to the end of unemployment benefits, and have housing, childcare, domestic, and/or transportation issues. They come from backgrounds that include domestic abuse, recovery issues, and limited educational attainment. Recently, an increasing number of participants enrolled have limited English proficiency and are in need of additional English vocabulary development as well as skills in reading and writing in English.

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In the last five years, 131 adults (both men and women) have enrolled in the CNA program at CAI. Of this number 109 successfully completed the training program. Of those successfully completing, 99 are still working in the field. Two students have applied for further training to become LPNs. Several have begun the climb up the career ladder for CNAs with increased job responsibilities.

The CNA program at CAI offers intensive case management, academic remediation, skills training, and continuous hands-on experience for its participants. The program offers whatever supports are necessary to increase the opportunities for success of the participants. Employability skills training, including all the “soft skills” necessary for getting and retaining jobs, are integrated throughout the program. Job placement of program graduates is a team effort of combined staff and participant energies. The program has earned a reputation for turning out well-trained and conscientious employees.

Over the years, additional components have been added and the length of the program has been shortened. The participants become certified in CPR, receive 15 hours of training in the care of Alzheimer patients, and receive additional training in Home Health Aide care. Participants are supported up to and beyond the State Certification Test. The case manager follows up on participants after job placement and continues to encourage and support them long after they have completed the program.

The long-term health care business continues to need trained and skilled employees and provides career ladders beyond the occupation of CNAs. Graduates of CAI’s program have found good jobs with benefits in all the area nursing homes. These include: Penacook Place, Lake View, Baker Katz, Kenoza Manor, Hannah Duston, Haverhill Crossing (Assisted Living) in Haverhill; the Mariner and Mary Immaculate in Lawrence; Academy Manor in Andover; Sutton Hill and the Meadow in North Andover; and Woodbriar Nursing Home in Wilmington.

Guadalupe Centers, Inc. - Culinary Arts Institute

Background

Interviewee

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Program reviewed

Culinary Arts Institute
Guadalupe Centers, Inc. (GCI) (community-based organization)
Kansas City, MO
<http://www.guadalupecenters.org/>

Mission of this organization/program: This organization's mission is to improve the quality of life for the Latino population and urban core of the Kansas City metropolitan area. It serves as an advocate for the community with the goal of increasing community awareness and participation in issues relevant to their interests. The culinary program was started in July 2000. GCI was founded in 1919; it is the oldest continuously Latino-serving agency in the United States.

Additional program documentation: See Guadalupe Centers, Inc. description of the program below.

Program overview

Purpose/intent/vision of this program: The aim is to increase the employment rate of the Hispanic community and urban core and to decrease long-term vacancies in the local culinary industry (a dual purpose).

Target population for this program: The program serves the urban population, specifically all of Kansas City, including parts of the city in Missouri and Kansas (including bi-state service area). The three main requirements of the program are that an individual be 18 years or older, able to work legally in the United States, and be committed to working in the culinary industry for at least 6 months.

Additionally, it serves:

- Unemployed individuals, such as welfare recipients and others in and out of the labor force—the program recruits from public agencies (e.g., TANF).
- Underemployed individuals.
- Limited English-proficient individuals.
- Immigrants and refugees—only legal workers; the program cannot serve the undocumented.
- Minority populations—although the center focuses on Hispanics, the program serves all minority and non-minority populations.
- Persons with disabilities—often learning and mental disabilities.
- Persons with criminal records—not a target, but the program does serve some.
- Individuals living in poverty.
- Other: Spanish speakers who have not been served elsewhere.

This program serves individuals with multiple barriers:

- Language barriers
- Literacy barriers
- Life and job skills barriers
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of child care
- Lack of health care
- Lack of access to workforce development system
- Financial barriers

Process for determining if clients are part of the target population: This process includes recruiting at a number of different venues, including social service agencies, Spanish-language radio, Spanish-language newspapers, and Latino events (e.g., Cinco de Mayo and Hispanic Heritage Month cultural fairs). Materials include flyers, leaflets, brochures, etc. A major article in a mainstream newspaper on the program in January 2003 resulted in a great number of inquiries by community members. Interested applicants make an appointment to learn more about the program. They complete an application form and an interview with staff to determine the appropriateness of the program for them. The application includes questions on family needs.

This program trains participants for in-demand culinary jobs, as there has been an increase in need for prep cooks in the area. The program focuses on one sector—culinary arts— however, it does not attempt to insert itself into the industry to assist with business operations.

Design of the program

Main components and structure of the program: The nine-week training program consists of three parts: 1) In the first three weeks, Associates³ complete the ServSafe certificate training. This is an industry-based certification offered through the National Restaurant Association. The program administers the training and tests and the Association grades the tests and issues the certificates. 2) The heart of the training is the next several weeks, in which Associates engage in food preparation training. This consists mostly of learning through teamwork in our instructional kitchen; at that point there is very little classroom training. The Associates learn classical cooking techniques. Upon completion of the training, the Associates will have mastered certain competencies such as breakfast preparation; cooking of meats and vegetables; utilization of commercial cooking equipment; chopping and cutting of vegetables; salad and sandwich preparation; identification of acceptable food products such as meat, fish, poultry and vegetables; and other competencies pertinent to Preparatory Cook duties. 3) During the last few days of the program, Associates engage in life skills training, in which they learn ways to find and keep jobs. All training occurs four days per week for four hours each day. At the end of training, Associates are honored with a major graduation ceremony.

Support services: The program provides support services through case managers. One full-time case manager and a part-time assistant case manager provide services to the Associates in each class, plus the accumulated Associates from the prior classes. In total, they have worked with **517** clients. This staff works with clients to meet the family needs that have been identified in the application and that surface during the training program. Often, support services can be accessed through GCI's other programs.

This organization, with a staff of 100 and more than 14 different programs, serves community needs from pre-school to senior citizen; therefore, many support services needs can be met through connection with

³ Program participants are referred to as "Associates."

the parent organization. For example, Associates can take the CGI English language courses; can enroll their children in the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC) accredited child development center; can turn to the agency for limited emergency financial assistance; can get help through the homeless program, the emergency assistance program, the substance abuse program, and the AIDS prevention program; can enroll their child in the charter high school that CGI runs; and so on.

Additionally, transportation is a significant issue for many clients because the Kansas City area is so geographically large and because there is not a comprehensive public transportation system. Therefore, the program has established a transportation plan for Associates to get to and from the training (and to and from the child development center for child care).

Case managers: Case managers work with Associates using an “Individual Improvement” Client Assessment Plan which is a paper-based system in which they record their goals and action plans to work toward them. Some of the information is entered into an emerging Access database system; however, this is relatively new.

The program conducts some follow-up with clients for up to six months after placement; however, the very mobile population presents challenges to keeping in touch with all Associates. As much data are collected as possible at the six-month point to record Associate's employment and wages. The program also has many anecdotal success stories.

Partnerships: Because the organization can provide many of the support services Associates may need, they are few external partners in the support services area. However, the program's job developers work closely with employers for job placement. GCI partners with the local workforce investment board agency, the Full Employment Council (FEC). They provided a Job Development Specialist. GCI also partnered with the University of Missouri at Kansas City (UMKC). They worked on the program evaluation.

Employer involvement: The program's two job developers work with employers and Associates for job placement. Culinary staff is involved with employers through a program advisory board, membership and being a board member in the Missouri Restaurant Association, membership in the Chef Association and the Alliance of Community Educators.

Funding: This program was funded by a Congressional earmark grant for \$2 million. It is administered through the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The program was scheduled to end in July 2002; however, they were able to extend the contract period with no new funding until June 30, 2003. Funding beyond this date is pending. The state of Missouri through its Department of Economic Development, Workforce Development Division, has provided a \$216,000 grant to continue the program.

Performance measurement and assessment

General goals/outcomes for this program: This program's goal is to increase the employment rate of Hispanics and to decrease the vacancy rate in the culinary industry. The goals established for the program with DOL revolved around training completions, job placements, placement and 6-month wages, Association certification in ServSafe, and employer satisfaction. Goals include:

- 500 trained as prep cooks

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- 80% “positive” placement rate⁴
- 70% of placements retained after 6 months of employment
- 100% of placement wages at \$1.00 over minimum wage (\$6.25 for the Kansas City area)⁵
- 90% of placements will receive a \$1.00 wage increase by 6 months of employment
- 85% of trainees will earn a ServSafe certificate
- 80% of employers will be satisfied with the culinary and life skills training and the graduates’ working knowledge

The goals are not articulated along a self-sufficiency continuum, the whole idea is to produce persons who obtain unsubsidized employment and become self-sufficient, productive residents of the community. They are reported to DOL in standard report format. The program generally uses paper files; however, it is starting to adopt a database system based on Access.

The results of the performance measurement systems are used to improve program management, report to funders, and share performance information through a variety of means, including profiles on the program.

As of the date of this interview, the program has trained **517** Associates and placed **302** (58% placement rate, which is below the 80% placement rate goal). Hourly placement salaries range from \$7 to \$13, with an average of \$9 (this is above the placement wage goal).

The GCI has partnered with the University of Missouri at Kansas City to evaluate the program.

Conclusion

The interviewee listed several “best practices” that the program utilizes:

- Take a holistic, culturally knowledgeable, and gender-knowledgeable approach to each Associate.
- Use an assets-based model and build on Associates' strengths.
- The Board of Directors is Latino-driven, but diverse.
- Committed, caring, bilingual, and culturally knowledgeable staff.
- Recruiting is diverse, but focused on the urban core.
- Recognized by the City Council and local workforce investment board as a partner.
- Focus on retention in the program. Have Spanish translators provide simultaneous translation during class for non-English speakers. 30-40% of the Associates are non-English speakers. The Spanish translators are in the evening classes because that is the time most Spanish speakers attend the program.
- Provide extra study sessions for the ServSafe certification training to ensure that Associates pass. Also, will pay for Associates to re-take test once if necessary.
- Have an attendance reward system. Also have a policy that terminates Associates from the program if they have three unexcused absences. Staff meets on the particular instance and decides to implement the policy based on the elements of the situation. Whenever an Associate misses a class, the case manager calls, finds out why, and makes arrangements to get them back in class.
- Retain a staff consultant who knows the industry well (he actually started the nationally known Johnson County Community College hospitality and culinary arts program).

⁴ A positive placement can include job placement for the unemployed, an incumbent worker earning a promotion or an increase in job responsibilities, an Associate opening a culinary business, a current owner improving operations in an existing culinary business, or an Associate continuing enrollment at an institute of higher education.

⁵ After these goals were established, the program realized that wage gains in this industry did not occur in the structure of a \$1.00 increase within 6 months. Therefore, to meet the wage goals, they have opted to place graduates in jobs that start at \$2.00 above minimum wage (\$7.25).

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- Provide childcare at their childcare facility or pay a nominal fee to a childcare provider for infants and/or children unable to attend the childcare facility.
- Transportation within the urban core is provided, bus tokens are also provided.
- Serve clients from both Kansas and Missouri.
- Provide financial assistance for emergencies.
- Provide translated materials, recipes, text book (one used at Johnson County Community college), and ServSafe test.
- The teamwork approach helps to integrate English and non-English speakers.
- Have firm “work-like” expectations, i.e., Associates clock-in, must call in for absences, and are terminated if break rules. Have a “firm but fair” policy. Utilize and emphasize the teamwork approach.
- Have established a professional atmosphere and relations between staff and Associates.
- Provide a significant graduation ceremony with certificates and major keynote speakers.
- Have two full-time job developers to help with job placement.
- All Associates must go through a mandatory program orientation in order to understand the program expectations and rules. This orientation is provided in both Spanish and English.
- At present, the program location is at a community college. An unintended advantage of this location is that Associates begin to explore the campus and taking courses. By the summer of 2003, the program will be moved to a brand new building to house a Culinary and Cultural Arts Center. The program plans to begin a catering program to serve outside meals, giving Associates real-life experience in preparing food. Currently the Associates and culinary staff participate in the agency’s annual Thanksgiving luncheon, where they feed over 600 persons. The Associates also participate in other agency events such as Cinco de Mayo.

Guadalupe Centers Culinary Arts Institute - Program Summary

The Guadalupe Centers Culinary Arts Institute meets a community need for training and job placement. The Institute received a \$2,000,000 grant award from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, to train 500 preparatory cooks and place them in employment.

Program goal: The goal is to place Hispanics, urban core residents, and other interested persons into local food service industry jobs. This activity has a positive, two-fold effect. It reduces unemployment and underemployment rates in the Hispanic community and in the urban core. It also reduces long-time local food service industry job vacancies. This program addresses both needs by finding culinary-related employment for individuals.

Program Requirements: The eligibility requirements are: 1) be 18 years or older, 2) be able to work legally in the USA and 3) and have a commitment to work in the local food service industry for six months after completing the training.

Training: Staff instructors teach the basic skills in classical cooking for an Associate (our term for the students or trainees in the program) to become a preparatory cook. Additionally, food handling/sanitation skills are an important part of the training. In this regard, the Associates earn a nationally recognized certificate called the ServSafe. Please note that two of our Associates have received a 100% on this exam and 85% of our graduates have received the certificate. The Associates also receive life skills training designed to help them find, obtain and retain a position. The training course takes nine weeks. There are classes in the morning, afternoon (depending on demand) and evening from Monday through Thursday. Simultaneous translation for Spanish language dominant individuals is available in the evening classes. Friday and the Weekend are then available for the Associates to work in this industry’s traditional busy

time. The Associates earn a certificate from the Institute and participate in a graduation ceremony at the end of the training session.

Training site: The current location is leased space in former small cafeteria at the Pioneer Community College Campus. The space minimally meets our needs in terms of classroom and kitchen instruction. GCI is currently constructing a new building to house an expanded Culinary and Cultural Arts program. The new space will have enough space to fully conduct instructional activities. Additionally, the new building configuration will allow the consolidation of food service for both the catering and instructional agency needs.

Associates will have real life “hands-on” culinary experience at appropriate stages during their training. The catering kitchen may produce up to a thousand meals a day for the agency program participants. Staff and Associates will cater special events either onsite or offsite. These activities will provide a multitude of training experiences for the Associates. There will be additional employment activities to either produce or serve food at regular or special events.

Case management/support service: Case managers work with the Associates to help insure a successful training and placement experience. Program resources include childcare, transportation and indirect financial assistance. The Associates may enter the agency’s English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and/or obtain other agency services. Staff will refer Associates to external agencies when necessary.

Employment outcomes: The Institute partners with the Full Employment Council (FEC) to provide employment related services through a sub-contract. It calls for an FEC staff member to work with a GCI Senior Job Developer to place the Associates in jobs after their training. To date, we have trained 517 individuals and placed 302 individuals in jobs. This is a placement rate of 58%. The salaries range from \$7 to \$13 per hour with a general average rate of \$9 per hour.

The Center has always done good social service work. Now our agency is also contributing to the local economy. As stated earlier our Preparatory Cooks can earn around \$9 per hour to start. After several years, they can earn up to \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year. We project that the Institute’s Preparatory Cooks have generated almost \$2,000,000 worth of salary earnings within the local economy since the program began in July 2000. Our employers include major casinos, hotels, restaurants, health care providers, cafeteria, restaurant chains, retirement and nursing homes and other food-service related organizations. Guadalupe Center’s work has resulted in positive social and economic contributions to society that would not have occurred without this program.

Program evaluation: The Institute partnered with the University of Missouri at Kansas City to provide an evaluation of the program and a computerized management information system. Preliminary information shows the Associates’ ethnicity and gender composition is Hispanic 38%, African American 48%, Anglo 12% and Asian/Pacific Islander 2%. Males comprise 48% and females comprise 52%. The evaluation component has yielded other detailed information on the program and goal accomplishment.

Hotel (and Hospitality) Industry Training (HIP)

Background

Interviewee

Westy Egmont, Executive Director
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Program reviewed

Multiple programs in the organization, with focus on the Hotel (and Hospitality) Industry Program (HIP) International Institute of Boston (IIB) (one-stop center for immigrants and refugees/resettlement service provider)

Boston, MA (IIB also has organizations in Lowell, MA, and Manchester, NH)
<http://www.iiboston.org>

Mission of this organization/program: IIB is a professional service provider helping newcomers to the United States to achieve self-sufficiency and adjustment to a new country, in the form of English and literacy classes, citizenship education, economic development assistance, job counseling and placement, legal aid, and social services.

Additional program documentation: 2002 Annual Report at:
<http://www.iiboston.org/Annual%20Report%202002%20for%20Website.pdf>

Program overview

Purpose/intent/vision of this program: IIB has seven services areas: resettlement, employment and training, social services and treatment of torture and trauma, education (English and literacy training), economic development/literacy, cultural education, and legal services.

In the social services area, “IIB offers a wide variety of linguistically and culturally sensitive services that enable our clients to overcome economic, social, and psychological barriers that inhibit self-sufficiency and integration into their new communities. Newcomers who are victims of violence in the United States or who suffer intense emotional trauma brought on by war in their homelands are often afraid to seek professional services. At IIB, more than 400 people utilize our social services every year. IIB staff are also active in advocating on behalf of refugees and immigrants in forums such as the Refugee and Immigrant Mental Health Steering Committee, the Subcommittee on Refugee and Immigrant Domestic Violence and the Family Access Collaborative.” (From the home page of organization’s Web site.)

Social services are open to both refugees and immigrants, are free, and include:

- Counseling
- Crisis intervention
- Victim advocacy and assistance
- Casework
- Housing assistance (eligibility may be limited by residency or other qualifications)
- Access to shelter
- Food pantry
- Translation and interpretation for clients (eligibility depends on specific problem)
- Support groups
- Specialized mental health and case management for survivors of torture (International Survivors Center, ISC)

Employment and training services include:

- Refugee Employment Services—open to newly arrived refugees referred by the Massachusetts Refugee Resettlement Program.
- On-the-Job Training with local employers—serves refugees who have been living in the United States less than 5 years.
- Hotel Industry Program—short-term job readiness training program with on-site job shadowing at local hotels. This program is open to low-income individuals and people receiving Transitional Assistance.
- Structured Job Search Program—offers job readiness and placement services for immigrants and refugees on public assistance who are referred by their local Department of Transitional Assistance.

The purpose of the HIP program is to help immigrants and refugees gain employment, as well as pre-employment skills such as ESL and job procurement. It has existed for four years.

Target population for this program: This program serves the urban population and is designed to serve immigrants and refugees.

This program serves individuals with multiple barriers, including:

- Language barriers
- Literacy barriers
- Life and job skills barriers
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of child care
- Lack of health care
- Lack of access to workforce development system
- Other: psychological stress due to torture and violence against their persons

The process for determining if clients are part of the target population involves IIB receiving referrals from community-based organizations, churches, and employers and then working in partnership with the One Stop Career Centers. Potential clients are assessed by Institute staff for necessary supports.

This program currently trains in the food and hospitality sectors. When this program began, the hotel industry was considered an in-demand industry. Since the economic slowdown and the terrorist attacks of 2001, hotels have suffered the consequences of reduced travel and tourism and employment in this industry has become less in demand. In response, the IIB has expanded its hotel training program to include more training in the food and hospitality sectors in order to offset reduced demand in the hotel sector. (This program has a “sectoral” focus.)

Design of the program

Main components and structure of the program: This six-week training program provides training in English for the workplace, how to negotiate the American workplace, job shadowing, and cultural training on the hotel and hospitality industry. One of the biggest challenges to training immigrants and refugees in this industry is the cultural stereotypes and biases against it. For example, some Asian immigrants understand hotels as brothels; therefore, it is very important to help them understand the differences in the industry between countries and cultures. The program also includes help with preparing for and finding employment, including job placement and resume/interview assistance.

Continuum of integrated services: The key to this whole model is the personal relationships that are formed between the clients and the staff. The teacher and the job counselor form a team to work with each client to understand his/her needs (this requires a meaningful self-assessment by the client as well as an assessment by the staff), build trust and openness, and help put together a plan and supports to move the client to stability and self-sufficiency. Many of the support services can be accessed “in-house,” including the food pantry, clothing closet, domestic and other violence help and counseling, legal services, and other education. IIB also partners with other organizations to provide the wrap-around support services (e.g., the St. Francis shelter for homeless people, the city food bank, ROCA for the immigrant children, and the International clinic at Boston Medical Center).

Continuum of post-job placement services: Clients are invited to remain in touch with IIB; however, this organization is not specifically funded to do formal follow-up. IIB does stay in close contact with the employers through the HR representative in order to help manage any challenges in the workplace due to cultural differences. IIB has an employer advisory group to help with these issues, as well. This group has about a dozen company personnel representatives on it to orient employers to new cultural issues and challenges, e.g., a new group of refugees or immigrants with new cultural issues has been placed in their workplaces, and to deal with other cultural issues.

Lack of funding for post-employment follow-up is a significant challenge for this organization and the clients that it serves. Immigrants and refugees often need continual supports at key points in their individual journeys to settling in the United States and moving to self-sufficiency. They need assistance in stabilizing their lives when they first enter the country. As they become accustomed to the United States and acquire more language skills, they want help to access continuing education. The issue is not that they need constant, long-term support, but that they need assistance and support at key milestones as they progress up the ladder to self-sufficiency.

Career ladder components: This training program has a limited career ladder component; however, organization staff is working with the Boston PIC on healthcare career ladders and has redesigned HIP for career ladder coaching and training. Health care involvement originated because many doctors and nurses from other countries cannot practice their vocation in this country due to differing educational qualifications. The PIC and IIB are trying to overcome this workforce challenge.

Partnerships/employer involvement: IIB works with at least 85 employers in their network to develop and maintain the training curriculum and for job placement. IIB also has employers on its Board of Directors.

Funding: IIB receive about two-thirds of its funding from federal or state funds. Major sources of funding for training are from displaced worker funds and the linkage money from the Boston City Job Trust.

Performance measurement and assessment

General goals for this program: This program's main objectives are job placement, retention, wages, and benefits. IIB set goals of sustainable living wage with benefits and job retention and has been successful in job placement. Specific goals are measured based on the expectations of the funding source. Client outcomes goals are based on funding source and are reported to the funder. IIB has established organization-wide process goals for improving operations. It appears that this program is achieving its intended goals and outcomes.

The results of the performance measurement systems are used to improve program management, to report to funders, and to report to the public.

This program is closely monitored by several different agencies, including the United Way, the U.S. Department of State, IRSA (Immigrant and Refugee Services of America), etc. The amount of record-keeping required by these agencies is onerous.

Conclusion

Support services along the self-sufficiency continuum cut across organizations in an area. Because different organizations serve different populations and/or populations at different points in their journeys to self-sufficiency, the service map needs to include a hand-off of clients up through the continuum as well as a clustering of organizations in wrap-around support service partnerships at one point on the continuum. For example, IIB serves immigrants and refugees when they first enter this country. For clients with low levels of literacy, IIB helps them stabilize, set up basic living needs, and gain basic literacy skills. At this point, the client can enter the IIB HIP program or be passed onto another local training provider for other skills training, i.e., Jewish Vocational Service for office skills training.

HIP is currently expanding its format and function for incumbent workers. Director Westy Egmont feels that the Boston workforce players work together well by providing cross-referrals and developing complementary programs. Local CBOs have established “hard won” collaborations, respect, and trust though controlling egos and avoiding turf wars. There are still service needs out there; however, this does not mean that the service organizations have failed. It really means that that the resources have not been available to serve all the needs.

Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion (IBA; "Puerto Rican Tenants in Action")

Note: The programs described in this profile are not job training programs and do not use a self-sufficiency continuum; however, they are good examples of additional services that some clients may need to progress toward self-sufficiency.

Background

Interviewee

David Cortiella, Executive Director
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Program reviewed

IBA (community development corporation – IBA is the service arm of a CDC)
Boston and Chelsea, MA
<http://www.iba-etc.org/>

Mission/history of this organization/program: (From Web site) “IBA was established in 1968 largely by the Puerto Rican residents of Parcel 19, a South End community whose existence was threatened by Urban Renewal. Rallying to the cry ‘No nos mudaremos de la Parcela 19’ (We shall not be moved from Parcel 19), the residents conducted a multi-year campaign that won them the right to control the redevelopment process of their community. The result was the creation of Villa Victoria, an 884 unit low- and moderate-income neighborhood which today houses more than 3,000 residents. IBA is proud to hold the distinction of being one of the most successful community development models in the U.S.

“ETC Developers, INC., a subsidiary of IBA established in 1970, is dedicated to providing professional property management and security services to all residential and commercial properties developed by IBA.”

Program overview

The IBA sees its contribution to the self-sufficiency of its constituents (most living in the Villa Victoria neighborhood, though the IBA serves people from many neighborhoods) along two dimensions: 1) building family financial literacy and strength and 2) education and workforce development.

The IBA builds family financial literacy and strength through four main programs. First, it offers courses on the FDIC's "Money Smart" curriculum in partnership with seven banks. The goals of this training are general financial literacy, opening a bank account (preferably at the IBA's credit union), and credit counseling and repair. The first round of training was in English and graduated 6 people. The second round was in Spanish and graduated 11. This is an ongoing program, and staff is starting to track outcomes measures on the graduates.

Second, IBA runs a first-time homebuyers program in partnership with the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Association. The first round of this training was in English and graduated 20 people (eight were from the Villa Victoria neighborhood). A second round of training will be offered in April or May 2003 and will be in Spanish.

Third, IBA is participating in the city-wide Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Campaign to help residents file their taxes and take the EITC. This is IBA's first year participating in the program. Their original

goal was to file taxes for 100 people; however, during the first three weeks of the program they filed 100 returns. The service is offered on Monday nights and on Saturday and uses 14 volunteers.

Finally, in May, IBA will launch a small business training and development component. This program will draw on the resources available through the 23-year-old community credit union. Partners in this initiative are the Small Business Administration (providing guaranteed loans to credit unions making small business loans) and Service Corp of Retired Executives (SCORE).

The other strand of self-sufficiency-supporting initiatives involves education and workforce development. IBA operates three initiatives in this strand. Most importantly, this organization makes education and workforce development a strategic imperative. At every turn, it seeks to emphasize the value of education for its constituents.

First, this organization operates many general education programs from pre-school programs to youth, teen, after-school, and summer programs to elder programs. Additionally, recognizing the need for computer and Internet literacy among its residents, IBA has established a Network Operating Center in Villa Victoria. This initiative provides high-speed Internet access and technical assistance for all residents of the low-income housing community for \$10 per month.

Additionally, Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) will locate a satellite campus at Villa Victoria in September 2003, offering intermediate ESL, math, and other courses, as well as the first few courses in certificate programs such as medical assistant and early childhood development. The partnership with BHCC grew out of a strategic decision to enter the workforce development field. IBA determined that there are five important components for serving their low-income residents in workforce development: 1) recruitment; 2) assessment; 3) content training; 4) case management; and 5) job placement. IBA knew that it could not and did not specialize in all five; however, it could provide the recruitment and case management components. In putting together a strategic partnership, IBA turned to BHCC to do the assessment and content training pieces. BHCC offered three key aspects of training: a) remedial education that many residents would need; b) short-term certificate programs; and c) access to higher education for those residents who choose to further their education. IBA turned to City Skills for the job placement component because it was proven as a facilitator to industry. This partnership will begin in September 2003, when BHCC locates the satellite campus at Villa Victoria and begins to deliver the education and training.

Second, IBA has partnered with the Fenway CDC and the Charles River Technology Group (in Waltham) in a Training and Technology Consortium to deliver training in CISCO Certified Network Administration. The 10-month program also will include training in basic skills and soft skills, as well as internship opportunities. Funding is through Boston's Jobs Trust. To date, 18 have enrolled in the program and 12 have remained with the program (3 are Villa Victoria residents). Most of the trainees are working full-time and taking the training at night.

Third, IBA started a STRIVE training program in the Chelsea location in October 2002. This program is designed for residents who are not prepared for or interested in the CISCO training. It includes four weeks of intensive soft skills and attitudinal training followed up with a technology training component, financial training through the New England School of Finance, or commercial driver license training. Since October, 17 have graduated from the program in two cycles. Twenty-two people are enrolled in the current and third cycle. Most of the trainees are Latino/a. As a STRIVE program, this program makes a two-year commitment to the graduates for post-employment support and opportunities.

Partnerships: An important aspect of this program is the partnership that was forged to deliver the program. IBA worked closely with the city officials in Chelsea to locate the program in the housing

authority. This strategic alliance has resulted in great political support for the program and even jobs in City Hall for some of the program graduates.

Performance measurement and assessment

Although IBA does not currently use a self-sufficiency continuum framework to assess or track clients, deliver case management support, or measure client and program progress, the organization has recently hired a Director of Administration to establish an organization-wide performance measurement system to measure *organizational* impact on improving client self-sufficiency. The decision to focus on performance measurement in such a clear way grew out of IBA's latest strategic planning process. This organization is poised to learn from other organizations that have implemented and used self-sufficiency continuums to help clients toward self-sufficiency and measure progress.

Medical Office Administration Training Program

Background

Interviewee

Joe Cannon, Director of Planning
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Program reviewed

Medical Office Administration Training Program
Montachusett Opportunity Council (MOC) (community action agency)
Fitchburg, MA
<http://www.masscap.org/agencies.html#moc>

Mission of this organization/program: This community action agency targets low-income individuals to assist them toward self-sufficiency, especially those who cannot get access to services elsewhere. Additionally, this CAA advocates for better self-sufficiency opportunities.

The MOC has 6 "delegate" agencies at various storefront locations throughout the community, e.g., food pantries. Each of the agencies operates as outreach centers to different cultural groups in the community.

Program overview

Purpose/intent/vision of this program: “MOC believes that families move towards self-sufficiency when they make decisions for themselves. MOC's role is to offer adequate information, review the pros and cons of possible life choices, highlight potential benefits and consequences, and then allow families to make their own decisions, based on facts.” (From “Families First” Web page.) This program has existed for eight years.

Target population for this program: This program serves both the smaller urban areas outside Boston and the rural communities around them. The four small cities served are Fitchburg, Leominster, Gardner, and Clinton. Additionally, it serves:

- Unemployed individuals such as welfare recipients and others in and out of the labor force.
- Underemployed individuals—some of the organization's programs target this population, but not all do.
- Limited English-proficient individuals.
- Immigrants and refugees—both Hispanic (Central American, Latino/a, Puerto Rican) and Hmong clients.
- Minority populations.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Persons with criminal records—although this population is not a target, there is a substantial minority of clients who have had some interaction with the criminal justice system.
- Individuals living in poverty.
- Other: high school drop outs (both younger and older) and youth at-risk of dropping out of high school.

This program serves individuals with multiple barriers:

- Language barriers
- Literacy barriers
- Life and job skills barriers
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of child care
- Lack of health care
- Lack of access to workforce development system

In order to determine if clients are part of the target population, the organization uses the TABE test to assess potential clients' basic academic skills. Those clients who engage with MOC for more than one episode (i.e., are interested in enrolling in a course or program vs. needing one-time fuel assistance) are assessed for potential barriers to self-sufficiency using the Families First Case Management Model developed by MOC.⁶ This model uses a 14-domain scale to assess families for barriers. It is important to note that this is a *family* assessment and case management model - it is not used for individuals unless they have no immediate family. This assessment becomes the basis for the case management process.

Additionally, each of the case managers at the MOC have earned a Family Development Credential and are thoroughly trained in case management techniques.⁷

This program trains for medical office work. It focuses on one sector of employment, but does not attempt to alter or affect the industry directly.

Design of the program

Main components and structure of the program: The program consists of training for hard skills in medical office administration, soft skills, pre-employment and jobs skills. Case management, job search, and job placement also are provided.

“The MOC Medical Office Administration Program provides adult skills training in medical terminology, medical coding, medical office assisting—both administrative and clinical—medical insurance and third party billing, computer skills including MS Word, MS Excel, MS Access and Medisoft (medical insurance software), law, liability and ethics. Additionally, all program participants receive individual and employment counseling to empower them to achieve both programmatic and personal goals. The program, which is 26 weeks in length, consists of a classroom component of 18 weeks followed by an 8-week internship in an appropriate medical office situation. Job shadowing, guest speakers, and several site visits to area medical facilities are also included. Pre-employment and work maturity skills building, job development, job search and placement activities are provided to all participants.

“The Medical Office Administration Program has operated for eight years. Two hundred and ten (210) students were enrolled during that period. One hundred and seventy (170) completed the program and one hundred twenty four (124) have obtained long term employment at starting rates ranging from \$8.60

⁶ This model is based on an Iowa case management model and was one of the piloted Massachusetts Scales and Ladders models.

⁷ The MOC has several case managers throughout its programs: 7 in Community Services (education and training and Latino services); 1.5 in Elder Services; 12 in Child Care and Head Start; 4-5 in other divisions of the organization; and one at each delegate agency.

to \$15.00 per hour. In the last class of 30 participants 26 graduates from the program and 22 achieved long-term employment.” (From a summary of the program provided by the interviewee.)

The Families First case management model is used in each program. Case managers in each program use the initial family assessment tool to work with the entire family on a plan of action to move toward self-sufficiency. They provide referrals to support services and record family progress through the Scales and Ladders tool.

Although each program division is charged with implementing the model, one case manager-director coordinates cross-divisional training and information sharing for useful resources. In this way, the tools, techniques, and information are centralized. Additionally, all case managers meet monthly in an interdivisional team meeting to share information and coordinate service activities.

Continuum of post-job placement services: The philosophy of the organization is that clients never stop being clients. There is a strong commitment to providing continual service as needed; this is made easier by the fact that the organization is in a fairly small community and it is easier to keep in touch with clients. Depending on the funding source, the program can formally track the clients for six, nine, or twelve months. Under a welfare-to-work contract, the organization had received funds for a full-time staff to do post-placement support and follow-up with clients and their employers, as well as some job development (career advancement counseling). However, this funding was cut.

The program does not have a formal career ladder strategy; however, it does aim to help clients who return with job advancement.

Partnerships: Partners include Project Bread, Mt. Wachusett Community College, three school systems, hospitals, and other CBOs. The CAA and the community college share each other's spaces for classes. The community college offers some courses at the Opportunity Center in Fitchburg and the CAA offers some classes at the community college, creating a direct connection to higher education for the CAA's clients. However, the transition may not always be "seamless" because many students have difficulty passing the entry-level courses in order to enroll in college-level programs. The CAA works with clients to help them meet the entry requirements for college.

The relationship with the community college is maintained through quarterly meetings between the Executive Director of MOC and the community college division directors.

Employer involvement: The program maintains relations with about 30 employers (five are large). It does not have the funds to support job developers, so the case managers and instructors work with these employers for job placement opportunities. Additionally, the Executive Director of the CAA sits on the local workforce investment board and other staff serve on sub-committees.

Performance measurement and assessment

General goals/outcomes for this program: This organization uses the Massachusetts ROMA Scales and Ladders throughout its programs; therefore, the general goals are reflected in that tool. Most of the programs operated by the organization are very small; therefore, no specific goals outside of those set by the funding sources are set. The organization uses ROMA, but is not quite in position to set organizational goals using this framework.

The case management process is a combination of paper and electronic files.

The results of the performance measurement systems are used to review and improve programs (done by the organization's Continuous Improvement Team), report to funders, and submit quarterly reports to the Board of Directors. DHCD collects information on a statewide basis and reports to the public.

In the eight years that the program has been in operation, it has enrolled 210 people, of whom 170 completed the program (81% completion rate) and 124 were placed in jobs (73% job placement rate for program graduates). Placement wages ranged from \$8.60 to \$15 per hour. The program does not have data on longer-term employment rates.

Conclusion

Other programs this organization operates or has operated:

- The CAA runs a community health center, a dental center, a housing coalition, and provides other community services.
- When the Gardner Furniture Company closed, 18 French-Canadian workers with very limited English and basic skills were laid off. The CAA worked with the Rapid Response team at the Career Center to provide a 46-week program in ESL, GED, and hard skill training in 4-5 different occupational areas in order to re-employ these workers.
- The CAA provides customized workplace education for approximately seven area companies (three regular customers; the CAA has worked with one for 14 years). Most of this workplace education was funded with Department of Education Adult Basic Education funds; however, most of this funding has been shifted to the community colleges. When this shift occurred, the community college used the CAA's ABE instructors to continue the workplace-based ABE.
- This CAA runs a CNA program.
- This CAA is involved in a career ladder program with Health Alliance (a hospital system in the area) funded through one of the state Department of Employment and Training's workforce development grants. In this six-month program, the CAA provides the participants with case management support and soft skills training. When they complete a cycle, they are guaranteed a \$0.50 hourly wage increase. Retention seems to be very strong.
- The CAA runs after-school and youth programs.
- In the past, it has operated other adult skills training programs, depending on the need and the funding. These have included regular office skills training and a production distribution program. These training programs were funded with money from the Department of Transitional Assistance; however, most of the training funds from this agency have been cut with the changing focus to work first.
- The CAA operates a computer technology program, in which participants earn an A+ certification. After an 8- to 10-week training cycle in which participants learn how to refurbish computers, they can earn their certification and the computers are donated to parents in the CAA's Head Start program. Unfortunately, it has been more difficult to locate employment for the graduates of this program.

Step-Up Training Program and Saving for Success IDA Program

Note: The Allston-Brighton CDC had two programs that were submitted as part of this project. Although neither one of them addresses the full range of self-sufficiency, together, they help to address significant parts of it.

Background

Interviewee

Joanna McKenna, Economic Development Director
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Program reviewed

Step-Up Training and Saving for Success
Allston-Brighton Community Development Corporation
Allston-Brighton, MA
<http://www.allstonbrightoncdc.org>

Mission of this organization/program: (From web site): “Allston-Brighton Community Development Corporation engages neighborhood residents in an on-going process of shaping and carrying out a common vision of a diverse and stable community in the face of sustained economic pressures.

“That vision is evident in community-led projects that protect and create affordable housing, create green space, foster a healthy local economy, provide avenues for economic self-sufficiency, and increase understanding among and between our neighborhood’s diverse residents.”

Note: In addition to the Step-Up Training Program, this CDC continues to operate an Individual Development Account program (“Saving for Success”). See the summary of this program at the end of this profile.

Program overview

Purpose/intent/vision of this program: This program aimed to provide people with access to hard (computer office) and soft skill training to help them get higher wages and access to job advancement and career ladders.

The training program started in 2001, and the CDC was able to offer two cycles of the 16-week training program. After they finished the second cycle, they had to table the program. Due to the weak economy, the CDC had a hard time placing graduates. As the funding was performance-based, they could not afford to do the training unless they had some guarantee that the graduates would be placed. The program has been tabled until the organization can get more flexible money to cushion the funding mix.

Target population for this program: The target population of the program was urban. The average income for the target population was at or under 200% of poverty. Additionally, it served:

- Unemployed individuals such as welfare recipients and others in and out of the labor force.
- Underemployed individuals—this was the initial target population.
- Limited English-proficient individuals—this was not a target population, but was part of the population served.
- Immigrants.
- Minority populations.

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- Persons with disabilities.
- Persons with criminal records.
- Individuals living in poverty.

This program targeted individuals with multiple barriers:

- Life and job skills barriers.
- Lack of access to a workforce development system, especially those not eligible for other programs.

The process for determining whether clients are part of the target populations involved assessing clients for skills levels. Client also receive income, residency, and other eligibility assessments. All trainees had to possess a high school diploma or GED. If they did not have one of these, they were referred to an adult basic education/GED-training provider.

The program trained clients in accounting and general office skills. Since 1999, the CDC has run an Individual Account Program and a Technology Goes Home program (parents and their children complete a 10-week training program on computers; upon completion, they get to take home a computer). In both of these programs, the participants indicated that they wanted more training opportunities at the CDC. After a lengthy strategic planning process on workforce development, the CDC determined that it wanted to offer neighborhood residents a general and portable training program.

Design of the program

Because this training program was designed by Training, Inc., its components were similar to those of the training program described in the next profile; however, there were some differences of note.

The Step-Up Training program courses met from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for 16 weeks. The hard skills training was in computerized accounting and office skills. Most of the 16 weeks consisted of classroom training; however, for three weeks, students in the Step-Up program participated as a satellite office of the Lester Hill company simulation that is the hallmark of Training, Inc. At the end of the training, the CDC set up volunteer internships for students. Students were also exposed to speakers and offered help with resume writing, interviewing, etc. Life skills were not a part of the training. Additionally, the CDC developed workshops on asset planning (from their IDA experience), and other life skills. Unfortunately, because the training program has been tabled, these workshops have not been delivered.

Step-Up did not offer case management services. Instead, staff worked with clients with barriers to self-sufficiency to help them solve the problems on their own. The instructors and program manager were the only staff available to help clients with these barriers and they providing coaching and referrals as possible.

Additionally, these staff provided what the interviewee termed “medium intensity” job placement help. They worked with the clients to connect them with job fairs and employer partners. The program worked with four main employer partners, all of which agreed to at least interview the program graduates.

The program never had resources to provide intense post-employment support. Now that the program has been tabled, there are even fewer resources to provide this support. However, because all of the trainees are connected to the CDC as an organization, they have access to the other programs and services it offers. For example, seven of the program graduates are enrolled in the CDC’s IDA program.

Partnerships: The staff established informal partnerships with support service providers for referrals and with a few employers.

Employer involvement: The CDC developed partnerships with 4 employers, who at a minimum interviewed the program graduates. The employers were within the Allston-Brighton neighborhood and considered “good neighbors” to the CDC. Additionally, Step-Up was able to capitalize on Training, Inc.’s employer partners.

Funding: A major source of funding for this program came from Massachusetts Jobs Trust funds. The CDC obtained funding through MACDC and CEDAC to offer a training program. Through an RFP process, the CDC hired Training, Inc. to establish a satellite office skill-training program at the CDC.

Performance measurement and assessment

Goals/outcomes for this program: The general goals of the program were to train neighborhood residents in a portal skill set and help them increase their employability. Specific goals were set by the funder. Step-Up was required to place 70% of the graduates in full-time employment with benefits at an hourly wage of at least \$9.50. If they did not meet all of these requirements, they did not get reimbursed.

This program did not articulate goals along a self-sufficiency continuum, nor has this organization articulated such a continuum.

Saving for Success

The CDC started its IDA program in 1999. This program is focused not only on increasing a family’s income but on building an asset base that can be used as a family safety net and to invest in the next generation and interrupt the cycle of poverty. The IDA program was funded through corporate grants. It consists of a 4:1 match, in which the participant contributes \$1 to the account and the funder contributes \$4, up to a maximum of \$50 per month for the individual and \$200 per month for the funder. At the end of two years, a participant can maximize the account at \$6,000 (\$1,200 from the participant and \$4,800 from the funder).

All of the program participants are employed, but not all are full-time. Most earned around 60% of the area’s median income, but the program allowed clients who earned up to 200% of poverty. Most are single parents. 80% are immigrants, not born in the United States, or do not speak English as their first language. The program has more men than the CDC’s other programs.

Over the two years of program participation, the participant attends workshops on asset management and works to repair their credit. Originally, the accounts were limited to saving to buy a house. However, the poor affordability limits the usefulness of such a small savings account. Therefore, participants can use accounts opened in 2000 to invest in their own human capital with education and training. The staff believes that this alternation to the program is in line with a vision of an “asset continuum.” This means that participants build their investments over time, starting with a job training investment, which can then lead to a home investment.

In 2001, 11 people graduated from the program and a total of \$75,000 was saved. During the second two years of the program, 21 participants are saving. The program staff has noticed a difference in the way participants view themselves as a result of participating in the program. Instead of feeling like they have no control over their money and financial well being, most see themselves as “economic entities with some control.”

Training, Inc.

Background

Interviewee

Elsa Bengel, VP/Executive Director, YMCA Education & Training (telephone interview)
617-542-1800 x 31, ebengel@traininginc.org
and
Anne Meyerson, Training, Inc. Director (on-site interview) 617-542-1800 x22,
ameyerson@traininginc.org

Program reviewed

Computerized Office Skills as offered by Training, Inc.⁸ (other community-based organization)
Sponsored by YMCA
18 Tremont Street, Suite 400
Boston, MA
www.traininginc.org/boston.htm

Mission of this organization/program: (From organization's Web site) "Training, Inc., a national nonprofit organization, provides low-income individuals with job skills training that helps them obtain living-wage employment. The organization's curriculum offers the combination of technical training, soft skill development and ongoing support that trainees need to find and retain good jobs.

"Programs provide participants with the skills to enter careers with good growth potential. By moving people off of public assistance and on to self-sufficiency, the Training, Inc. program benefits the government, taxpayers and the families of its graduates."

Additional program documentation: See a profile of this program starting on page 25 in "Hard Work on Soft Skills: Creating a Culture of Work in Workforce Development," by Ted Houghton and Tony Proscio, Working Ventures, Public/Private Ventures, October 2001:
<http://www.ppv.org/pdffiles/softskills.pdf>

Program overview

Purpose/intent/vision of this program: This program trains participants in "soft" and hard skills, using both classroom and office simulation (with emphasis on the latter). Training, Inc. is a national program that started in 1975 in Chicago (around the same time the Center for Employment and Training started). The Boston-based program was the third Training, Inc. started, and it is in its 20th year. Training, Inc. sites work in partnership with over 500 employers across multiple sectors (an occupational skills cluster model). Sites have also developed sectoral strategies.

Target population for this program: This program serves an urban population, but it serves six service delivery areas, including the North Shore, Woburn, Medford, Brockton, and just about any community on the subway or commuter rail.

⁸ Training, Inc. has 6 full-time and one part-time staff. They operate as a team, with each staff person working directly with trainees in some capacity from the trainee's first day. This team approach helps to ensure that all staff are capable and ready to assist trainees as needed.

The program serves:

- Unemployed individuals such as welfare recipients and others in and out of the labor force, especially those on unemployment and displaced workers affected by mass layoffs.
- Underemployed individuals.
- Limited English-proficient individuals.
- Immigrants and refugees.
- Minority populations.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Persons with criminal records.
- Individuals living in poverty.

Additionally, the program serves individuals with multiple barriers:

- Language barriers
- Literacy barriers
- Life and job skills barriers
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of child care
- Lack of health care
- Lack of access to workforce development system
- Lack of computer literacy

Process for determining if clients are part of the target population: Many trainees come to the program through the One-Stop Career system and have funding through an Individual Training Account, although some are able to use private scholarships. Although the program most received funding for 16 welfare recipients, it had more trainees in the past when more funding was available. Additionally, some trainees may be on a Mass Layoff grant, i.e., airport workers.

Prospective trainees complete an application, receive a tour and basic information on the program, engage in a one-on-one interview, and take a basic skills test. Very few applicants are turned away. All trainees must have a high school diploma or GED; however, the program may take some students who are in the process of earning their GEDs. Generally, trainees must have stable support service plans in place before they start training on day one. However, Training, Inc. staff does provide some help with problem-solving any support challenges.

This program trains people for in-demand office jobs across all major industry sectors. This need was determined when program staff saw an increase in job offers for office jobs.

Design of the program

Main components and structure of the program:

Training: The training program lasts four months, running 35 hours/week from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. During the first seven weeks of training, trainees learn skills such as business communication, keyboarding, customer service/receptionist, Microsoft Office skills, etc. During the next two months of the program, trainees participate in a workplace simulation, move into unpaid part-time internships while they continue to develop specialized skills, and launch their job search. In the workplace simulation, trainees gain real-world experience by running a simulated business. All classroom training stops and the simulation is strictly adhered to. See the attached profile of the program for more detail. Trainees' progress is charted on individual spreadsheet progress reports throughout the program for staff and trainees to track learning gains.

Job placement: The one job developer in the program assists trainees with finding employment. It should be noted that trainees are responsible for taking the initiative to locate potential jobs using the job board and other resources at Training, Inc.; however, the program does provide a significant amount of help with resume and cover letter writing, interviewing, and other job search skills. Employer partners assist with job search and refer job openings to the job developer.

Case management/support services: This program does not provide traditional case management or direct support services. Instead of "managing" a "case," Training, Inc. staff works with trainees in a "problem solving process" to help them figure out how to solve their own support service needs. Each Training, Inc. staff person is a "supervisor," and each trainee has a supervisor (a "coach" who serves as the initial contact person for problem solving).⁹ These supervisors can provide some referrals to resources, but there is no direct traditional case management support. This model strictly follows the workplace simulation theory in that workers in the real workplace do not have case managers; they have to solve their own problems. However, Training, Inc. provides more coaching and supportive supervision than is found in the workplace to help trainees think and work through their challenges. One staff person is a counselor and assists trainees with crises or severe barriers. The director also helps with these situations as needed. Additionally, the program allocated Wednesday afternoons for trainees to make appointments and deal with family needs.

Post-job placement services: Once trainees graduate from the program, they can and do return for more job help or support. In the current economy, staff may work with graduates for several months to gain employment. However, formal client follow-up is no longer a funded part of the program, except for participants from the Department of Transitional Assistance. One interviewee indicated that she thought that about 20 percent of the graduates did return to the program for follow-on services, mostly involving employment. Staff noted that, with 3,000 total graduates, it can be difficult to follow up with most. A particular challenge is that graduates are very mobile and do not often provide updated contact information. The national Training, Inc. office has provided the program with a comprehensive client tracking database (in Lotus Notes format); however, the organization has limited time and resources to use this system beyond minimal data entry. Staff and the program director use this system and other management information processes to track and report data on enrollments, job placement, and other outcomes important to funders.

Partnerships: The program has informal relationships with various service providers for referrals. Additionally, the program relies on over a hundred volunteers to review resumes, do mock interviews, make class presentations about jobs and the workplace, conduct workshops, etc. Many of the volunteers are recruiters from the program's employer partners.

Employer involvement: This program works extensively with over 200 employers, who help with day-to-day program activities and assist with job postings and hires. Additionally, employer partners work with Training, Inc. staff to develop industry-driven training curricula.

Funding: Most funding is from vouchers including Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), some welfare-to-work funds,¹⁰ Mass Layoff funds, and private scholarships. Very little or none of the funding is performance-based. The DTA contract and WIA funding are contingent on performance, primarily placements.

⁹ Five of the six full-time staff serve as supervisors. These five supervisors coach approximately 42 trainees per four-month cycle.

¹⁰ Recent cuts in Massachusetts' employment services program (ESP), resulted in Training, Inc., losing some funding for trainees; however, the Mayor of Boston reinstated enough funding for current trainees to complete their program. ESP funding for the next budget year is in doubt.

Performance measurement and assessment

Goals/outcomes for this program: The most significant goals of this program are training completion, job placement, and job retention. The faltering economy is making achievement of any of these goals challenging; however, by extending job search as long as necessary, Training, Inc., is meeting its placement benchmarks (although not within 90-day timelines in some cases.)

The program does not set strict overall goals for itself; however, staff members do attempt to place graduates in jobs that pay closer to a living wage than minimum wage, i.e., \$10 to \$16 hourly wage. Generally, this program strives to attain performance goals as set by each funding source. For example, state funders require a placement rate of 60%.

Furthermore, goals are articulated based on funding source; they are not articulated along a self-sufficiency continuum.

Finally, goals are measured using a combination of paper and electronic systems. Generally, when a funder asks for performance measurement information, the job developer or executive director provides the information directly to the funder on an ad hoc basis. The organization also creates and uses enrollment, placement, and trainees progress reports for use in each training cycle. The results of the performance measurement systems are used to improve program management and to report to funders on an “as needed” basis.

Program achievements: In 2001, the program had a placement rate of 95 percent; however, due to the weakening economy, this rate has fallen to 70 percent. Nevertheless, this was still above the 60 percent required by state workforce programs. An ESL/Accounting Support program was discontinued in January 2003 because placement rates were below the standard. Additionally, the program attempts to place graduates in full-time jobs with benefits earning \$10 to 16 per hour. The average starting wage was \$11.58 in 2001. The current average starting wage is \$11.75 per hour; however, in the last six months, staff has noticed a disturbing trend: the lower end of the range of starting wages has fallen. Some graduates have had to start at wages as low as \$8.50 per hour. Interviewees noted that such a low wage does not support a family and it demonstrates the inconsistency of entry level wages for similarly-trained workers.

Additionally, the program has high retention rates (although the data was not readily available for this interview). Staff attributes these rates to motivated trainees and the program partnering only with “good” employers who have a track record of investing in employees by offering full benefits, additional training, and growth opportunities.

Program impact: In 1992, the Ford Foundation funded a survey of 1,000 program graduates up to 10 years post-graduation to understand the longer-term impacts of the program. There were several positive impacts reported. For example, one-third of the graduates had continued their education; of those with college-age children, 50% had children enrolled in college; incomes increased, among others.

Conclusion

One interviewee was very concerned about the decreasing number of entry-level jobs available in this country due to automation and companies moving jobs overseas. Additionally, the high unemployment rate in the current labor market forces Training, Inc. graduates to compete against college graduates for good paying office jobs. However, the program staff is aware of industry needs and alters the training curriculum as necessary to improve the employment rate of their graduates. They have found that, over

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the past two years, the health care/insurance/claims sector has produced the most office support jobs for their trainees.

Attachment A

Telephone Interview Protocol: Strengthening the Self-Sufficiency Continuum

Introduction

[The interview will have already been set up through previous e-mail or telephone contact; therefore, the interviewee will have had some information about this review process.]

Thank you for your time during this interview. As I mentioned before, this interview is part of a review of promising practices by community-based organizations in moving unemployed and underemployed adults and their families out of poverty and to economic self-sufficiency. We are particularly interested in programs that provide a comprehensive package of services to clients—education, skills training, wrap-around supports, and post-employment supports for career advancement—and operate under a defined self-sufficiency framework.

Through this review, we hope to find such programs that can then be the subject of more in-depth case studies (3-5 for this project). Information from the review and the case studies will be used to create a report outlining common themes of promising practices and promising self-sufficiency models. This information and the report will be used to create a package of technical assistance materials for community action agencies and other community-based organizations to help them better assist their constituents in their advancement to economic self-sufficiency.

If you think this information would be valuable to you, I can certainly include your organization on the distribution list.

Background

1. Name of interviewee:
2. Title of interviewee:
3. Contact information for interviewee (telephone and e-mail address):
4. Name of Program for review:
5. Name of Organization managing this program:
6. City and State where Program is located:
7. Mission of this organization/program:
8. Webpage URL for Program and/or organization:
9. Type of organization [check]:
 - Community action agency
 - Community development corporation
 - Other community-based organization
 - Faith-based organization
 - Other:
10. Are there any additional resources on this program that I should review, i.e., reports, evaluation, case studies, online resources, etc.? Please direct me to them or forward them to me.

Program overview

- 1) What is the purpose/intent/vision of this program? [watch for phrases around "moving individuals toward economic, social, and/or political self-sufficiency"]
- 2) How long has this program existed?
- 3) What is the target population for this program? Rural or urban?
 - a) Does the program serve:
 - Unemployed individuals such as welfare recipients and others in and out of the labor force?
 - Underemployed individuals?
 - Limited English-proficient individuals?
 - Immigrants and refugees?
 - Minority populations?
 - Persons with disabilities?
 - Persons with criminal records?
 - Individuals living in poverty?
 - Other:
 - b) Does the program serve individuals with multiple barriers?
 - Language barriers
 - Literacy barriers
 - Life and job skills barriers
 - Lack of transportation
 - Lack of child care
 - Lack of health care
 - Lack of access to workforce development system
 - Other:
 - c) What is the process for determining if clients are part of the target population, i.e., assessment?
- 4) What types of jobs does this program train for? [look for: "in demand in the local labor market and/or quality or "good jobs"]
 - a) If focus on "in demand" or quality/"good" jobs, how are they determined?
 - b) Does this program have a "sectoral" focus? (Explain: does it focus on a particular type of occupation or a narrow set of industries?)
- 5) What is the design of the program?
 - a) In general, what are the main components and structure of the program? [Look for things like case management, job coaching, mentoring, basic education, ESOL, skill training ("hard" and "soft"), bridge to/post-secondary education, economic literacy and general life skills, entrepreneurial training/small business development, asset development, etc.]
 - b) Does this program provide a continuum, of integrated services for clients, i.e., basic education, skill training, wrap-around support services? What are the services, how are they delivered, who delivers them (your organization or in partnership with another?), and how are clients assessed for needing them?
 - c) Does this program provide a continuum of post-job placement services, i.e., post-employment support service access, access to continued skill and/or education, development, mentoring, other services focused on job retention and career advancement? What are the services, how are they delivered, how delivers them (your organization or in partnership with another?), and how are clients assessed for needing them?
 - d) Does this program include any career ladder components?

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- 6) Does this program involve other/external partners?
- 7) To what extent/how does this program work with/involve employers?
- 8) What are the major sources of funding for this program?

Performance measurement and assessment

- 1) What are the general goals/outcomes for this program?
- 2) Does this program set specific goals, objectives, and outcomes that are concrete and clearly measured?
 - a) If so, what are they? [If they seem interesting, ask for a copy of them.]
 - b) How are they articulated, i.e., along a self-sufficiency continuum? Along a career ladder/pathway? ROMA Scales and ladders? By program goal?
- 3) How are the specific goals and objectives measured, i.e., paper files and counts, MIS system?
- 4) How are the results of the performance measurement systems used?
 - a) To improve program management?
 - b) To report to funders?
 - c) To report to the public, i.e., an annual report?
- 5) Is the program achieving its intended goals and outcomes? What are the success rates, as measured in the program's own performance measurement system?
- 6) Has the program been evaluated (process or impact)? If so, what are the findings from that/those evaluation(s)?

Conclusion

- 1) Is there any other information about your program or organization that I should know about? (over)
- 2) Are there any significant lessons learned about moving people from poverty to self-sufficiency that you would like to share with me? (over)

Thank you again for your time and information.