



## **NOTES FROM THE DC JOBS COUNCIL MEETING September 10, 2009**

Joan Kuriansky, executive director of Wider Opportunities for Women and co-chair of the DC Jobs Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting at the offices of the Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, one of the DC Jobs Council's funders.

The meeting opened with introductions and member announcements. Kuriansky also asked members present to share one major current challenge.

- OIC reported challenges as a result of expanded enrollment in their programs.
- Academy of Hope is facing funding challenges, as are many other organizations. On the positive side, the fall term has begun, and AOH is building its College Prep program.
- DC Employment Justice Center is working on a worker-initiated advocacy program.
- Wider Opportunities for Women is expanding its Connections to Careers programming. WOW is determining how to share its DC Metropolitan Area Self-Sufficiency Calculator (DC MASSC) more strategically, and how to use the calculator more effectively in advocacy.
- Southeast Ministry is challenged by funding pressures, and by a lack of sufficient time to advocate strategically.
- Training Grounds recently held a fundraising breakfast with local developers, during which the young people who participated in its program were able to demonstrate how their experiences had changed their thinking.
- The Ward 8 Workforce Development Council is also facing funding challenges, as it works to building workforce system capacity and access to jobs in Ward 8. They are promoting a Ward 8 Jobs Tour in October, beginning at Covenant Baptist Church.
- STREATS is working to develop practical ways to offer job training and related services to homeless people. They reported how the One-Stop system fails to service homeless clients adequately.

Members present discussed how to prioritize advocacy. Marina Streznewski, DC Jobs Council coordinator, agreed to begin developing a policy update to further inform members.

Kuriansky then discussed the Pathways Out of Poverty grant offered by the US Department of Labor. The DC Department of Employment Services is submitting a proposal for funding under the local grant on behalf of the District of Columbia. DOES is partnering with a number of District organizations, as required by the RFP, but the process for selecting those partners is not clear. Elizabeth Lindsay is drafting the proposal.

The balance of the meeting was spent discussing how local adult job training funding should be disseminated. The resulting notes have been incorporated into a concept paper, which is incorporated into these notes by attachment.

The next meeting of the DC Jobs Council will take place on Thursday, October 8, from 2:30 until 4:30 pm at the DC Housing Authority Southwest Family Enhancement Center at 203 N Street SW.

***To sign up for DC Jobs Council Yahoo! List:***

- A. Send a message to [dcjobscouncil-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:dcjobscouncil-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). The message will come to Marina, who will approve your membership.  
OR
- B. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dcjobscouncil> and click on the blue button marked Join This Group!

**Concept Paper**  
**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PILOT HOLISTIC ADULT JOB TRAINING PROGRAM**

*What does it really take to help those unemployed District residents who are hardest to serve?*

The DC Jobs Council proposes using a substantial portion of the \$4.6 million allocated as local job training funds in the District of Columbia budget for FY2010 to develop and implement a pilot holistic adult job training program.<sup>1</sup> Preliminary estimates indicate that the pilot program will require an investment of \$2-3 million, which would provide training and related services to approximately 100 people.<sup>2</sup> Such an investment will provide quantifiable benefits to the District in the form of reduced costs to provide public benefits, as well as, over time, a growing contribution to the city's tax base.

The pilot program will serve several purposes.

- Provide quality job training to a cadre of individuals with the most serious barriers to employment.
- Place individuals in jobs following training.
- Provide holistic assistance to these individuals in the form of work supports, literacy training, and mentoring, to help ensure they are able to retain jobs.
- Gather solid data on what investment is required to help an individual move from consuming public benefits to self-sufficiency.
- Contribute to a body of knowledge on best practices in workforce development.
- Serve as a model for future workforce development programs supported by District funds.

Development and implementation of the pilot program – including selection of the providers – will proceed with the greatest possible degree of transparency. We anticipate that funding for this program will be disseminated via a competitive process. To permit potential participation by the full spectrum of community-based organizations, we recommend that providers beyond those certified to accept Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds be encouraged to apply. Further, the program will be structured to encourage collaboration among the broadest range of job training and other service providers. Those providers who can demonstrate effectiveness in working with a full range of relevant District agencies will receive preference.

The pilot program will focus on those District residents with the greatest need for workforce development services -- those who face the greatest barriers to employment. These include, but are not limited to, members of the following groups:

- Homeless (or recently homeless) individuals
- Returning offenders
- Older workers
- Single parents

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<sup>1</sup> The balance of the funding allocated in the Budget Support Act to adult job training will be distributed in accordance with the language of that Act, as amended.

<sup>2</sup> This figure is based on a preliminary review of costs incurred by community-based organizations providing job training and related services. A detailed analysis is forthcoming.

- Disabled workers
- Individuals receiving TANF
- Individuals living in neighborhoods with poverty rates above 15 percent
- Individuals lacking a high school degree or GED
- Individuals with significant health challenges, including mental health and/or substance abuse concerns

It will be up to the community-based organizations applying for funding to demonstrate whom they will serve and how those clients will be identified and recruited.

The pilot program will focus on jobs that offer career ladders to self-sufficiency,<sup>3</sup> and on industries that are – and will continue to be -- hiring for jobs that offer career ladders. In the District, some of those industries are health care (both patient care and electronic health records), hospitality, banking and finance, construction, and green-collar jobs. Employers, job training providers, and other service providers will cooperate closely to:

- Develop appropriate curricula;
- Develop protocols and criteria to assess the full range of needs of District residents wishing to participate in the pilot program;
- Provide training and access to related services;
- Place participants in jobs;
- Provide post-hiring support to program participants;
- Follow and track the progress of participants for at least two years following the completion of training; and
- Evaluate the pilot program.

Workforce readiness (i.e., “soft skills”) training will be an essential part of the pilot program. Adult literacy will be integrated into job training as necessary, and will focus on contextualized learning. Those participants without high school degrees or GEDs will be prepared to take and pass the GED exam. Mentoring from peers, employers, and service providers will be an essential feature of the pilot program.

Support services that will be provided or for which assistance will be arranged will include:

- Comprehensive case management
- Child care
- Transportation
- Substance abuse counseling
- Access to health care (including mental health)
- Assistance in finding shelter and/or housing

We recommend that the pilot program permit distribution of a portion of funds (perhaps 20 percent) at the time an award is made. In addition, community-based organizations may use funds awarded through the pilot program to defray program-associated administrative costs of up to five percent.

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<sup>3</sup> We refer readers to the District of Columbia Metro Area Self-Sufficiency Calculator for specific income levels that allow for self-sufficiency for particular family types and sizes. Please see [www.dcmassc.org](http://www.dcmassc.org).

The pilot program will provide funding for professional development opportunities for workforce development workers and service providers.

A report will be prepared at the end of the first year of the pilot program, detailing successes and challenges, and offering suggestions for continuing, adapting, and/or increasing the capacity of the program.