



Chinese American
Service League

OAI, Inc.

Jane Addams
Resource Corporation

Transitions of
Western Illinois

The Center - Resources
for Teaching & Learning

Greater West Town Community
Development Project

PARTNERSHIPS FOR JOB TRAINING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

AN EVALUATION OF ILLINOIS' JTED PROGRAM

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CHICAGO JOBS COUNCIL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings from an evaluation of Job Training and Economic Development (JTED), an innovative program unique to Illinois that fosters community-business partnerships for economic and workforce development. Started in 1998 and administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), JTED provides grants to community-based organizations (CBOs) to support training programs developed in partnership with local businesses to serve low-income job seekers and low-wage incumbent workers. Between 2000 and 2004 JTED served 5,624 participants and funding amounted to \$10,787,471 in grants.

JTED is the state's only job training program that directly funds eligible CBOs to help improve individuals' job and career potential, businesses' competitiveness, and communities' vitality. The model has several key features:

- 1) It promotes *community-business partnerships* that bring community-based job training providers into direct partnership with local businesses to help them identify and satisfy their workforce needs
- 2) It funds *job-linked training* to give disadvantaged job seekers the skills and connections they need to get good jobs with quality employers and to help disadvantaged workers already on the job to develop the skills they need to be more productive
- 3) It *targets key local industries and occupations* that pay well, offer opportunities for advancement, and contribute significantly to community economic vitality
- 4) It is *flexible but accountable*, so while JTED supports a variety of creative job training initiatives, all providers secure a significant share of funding based on performance in job placement and retention for disadvantaged job seekers, and job retention and wage growth for incumbent workers.

The study presented here finds that JTED completers do fare better in the labor market:

- *JTED Graduates Are More Likely To Be Employed.* JTED job training graduates who were unemployed prior to the program were approximately one-third more likely to be employed one year later than comparable job seekers who did not receive training. Graduates continue to show roughly ten percent higher employment rates through two years after completing JTED programs.
- *JTED Graduates Earn More.* Participation in JTED-funded training leads to greater post-program earnings, both in the short- and longer-terms. JTED graduates increased their earnings by nearly \$2,500 more annually, relative to similar job seekers in the period six to 18 months after program completion, and over \$3,200 more annually in the period nine to 12 quarters afterward. JTED graduates earn nearly 40 percent more than similar non-participants.
- *JTED-Trained Incumbent Workers Increase Their Earnings.* Low-wage incumbent workers who completed JTED-funded training also increased earnings. Average quarterly earnings increased from \$5,406 in the nine months prior to beginning of company-sponsored, on-the-job skills training, to \$6,240 in the period nine to 18 months afterward.

This report also examines why JTED generates such good results, describing its unique and important program elements. Although JTED has an underlying program model, it funds a diverse array of organizations throughout Illinois, each with a somewhat different approach to worker advancement and business partnership. Through interviews, case studies, and outcome data, this report also identifies some of the JTED grantees' promising practices:

- *Getting the right participant mix.* JTED provider organizations understand the value of serving a mix of participants with varying

levels of job readiness, both so the provider can better achieve its performance outcomes and also for cultivating peer motivation and support in the classroom.

- *Complementing occupational skills with basic and soft skills.* JTED providers generally offer both occupationally oriented skill development and soft skills modules to help participants prepare for the work environment.
- *Networking with other community-based providers.* JTED providers sometimes partner with other community-based organizations to provide support services and informal case management networks.
- *Combining “strong ties” and “loose ties” with employers.* JTED providers form “loose ties” with businesses for job placements and new opportunities for contract training, and “strong ties” over time with a core set of businesses, which hire multiple JTED graduates, contract for onsite training, and/or participate in industry advisory panels.
- *Having instructors who “speak the language of business.”* JTED providers hire instructors with industry or private sector experience to interact with business partners and bring real world experience into the classroom, which helps build and maintain credibility with business partners.
- *Coordinating incumbent training and training for placement.* Evidence suggests that knowledge acquired onsite through contract training (JTED Category I training for incumbent workers) helps providers to better understand the human resource requirements of their client companies, which feeds into more responsive and relevant training programs for unemployed job seekers (Category II for unemployed workers).
- *Maintaining ongoing relationships with graduates after placement.* Many providers maintain client relationships for much

longer than the required 90 days, through personal calls or by offering placement resources such as job banks and job clubs to program graduates.

- *Mediating between workers and employers.* JTED providers frequently help to resolve misunderstandings between managers and workers. This requires trusting relationships between employers and providers, who are placed in the sometimes difficult position of reconciling an employer’s needs with the interests or privacy of a program graduate.

The findings of this evaluation strongly indicate that the JTED program is effective in accomplishing its intended goals. This success can be attributed to JTED providers’ ability to work effectively on both the demand side — understanding and responding to employers’ skill needs — and the supply side — translating employer needs into successful training programs for job placement and advancement. And, importantly, JTED supports organizations that are grounded in the communities they serve.

Few training programs outside of Illinois take such a community-business partnership approach to linking workforce, business, and community development. Most programs for disadvantaged job seekers provide job search assistance, which may help participants find jobs, but typically do not enable them improve their earnings, nor are they generally responsive to the needs of employers. Illinois should be applauded for establishing this innovative program and encouraged to expand its reach for the benefit of the state’s workers, employers, and communities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Supportive public policy is crucial to helping workers, businesses, and communities prosper in Illinois. Workers, especially those facing economic disadvantage or job dislocation, need help preparing for and securing quality jobs and careers in an increasingly complex labor market. Employers, navigating a climate of economic uncertainty and persistent change, need help securing the skilled labor force they need to be successful. At the same time, communities need help building lasting economic and social assets.

These challenges are deeply interrelated, yet many existing Illinois programs and policies for workforce, economic, and community development are highly fragmented. Federally sponsored workforce development programs (for example, those funded by the Workforce Investment Act or WIA) tend to focus on short-term, “work first” policies that do not help individuals build the skills they need to secure livable incomes and long-term earnings growth. Although in recent years Illinois has experimented with using WIA funds to support industry-specific training initiatives through its Critical Skill Shortages Initiative, low-skilled individuals have not been the primary target of these efforts.

A host of state and local economic development programs target business needs for growth and expansion, including a few targeted at their workforce needs. Meanwhile, numerous public agencies and nonprofit organizations throughout the state promote community development by helping to serve the human and social needs of individuals, promoting neighborhood investment, and attending to local business concerns. Funded through a maze of public and private sources, this assortment of disconnected programs does not form a system to address these challenges holistically.

One innovative Illinois program has attempted to bridge these divides by fostering community-business partnerships for economic and workforce

development. Started in 1998, Job Training and Economic Development (JTED), administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), provides grants to community-based organizations (CBOs) to support training programs developed in partnership with local businesses to serve disadvantaged job seekers and low-wage incumbent workers. JTED is the state’s only job training program that directly funds eligible CBOs to help improve individuals’ job and career potential, businesses’ competitiveness, and communities’ vitality.

This evaluation assesses the effectiveness of JTED by determining whether individuals who participate in JTED-funded job training programs achieve better outcomes, in terms of earnings and employment, than similar individuals who did not participate. It does this by assessing whether the JTED program model effectively helps participants secure employment, retain their jobs, and increase earnings. The report also presents the key JTED program practices providers use to ensure success.

II. ABOUT THE JOB TRAINING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The 1990s was a time of significant innovation in the field of workforce development. Prolonged economic expansion brought Illinois and the rest of the nation to historic lows in unemployment, reaching jobless rates below five percent statewide and below seven percent in Chicago. Tight labor market conditions forced employers to work harder than ever before to find the skilled workers they needed. Yet even amid these favorable conditions, many disadvantaged workers continued to struggle in the labor market to find good-paying jobs with opportunities for advancement. Welfare reform and “work first” policies in the mid-1990s compelled many individuals with few skills and little job experience into the labor market, resulting in many working dead-end, low-paying jobs.

Against this backdrop, a handful of leading workforce programs bucked the conventions of practice and reached out actively toward both sides of the labor market — toward disadvantaged individuals, to provide the training and career guidance they need to escape dead-end work, and also toward employers, to help them identify and fulfill their workforce needs through placements of trained workers and/or additional training for their existing workforce. This approach to workforce development also had a unique, community-based component, as many providers, like Chicago’s Greater West Town Project and Jane Addams Resource Corporation, emerged out of neighborhood-level initiatives to bring jobs and income to distressed communities. Many did so by targeting industry

sectors with a significant presence in their communities. The goal was to improve access to good-paying jobs while also improving the vitality and competitiveness of the businesses that provide those jobs.

Despite the promise of these community-based efforts, the funding environment remained distinctly unfavorable. Federal programs for workforce development, which provide most available funding, had shifted significantly away from intensive, occupationally oriented training, and toward job placement assistance and short-term job readiness programs.

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

The overall decline in training activity following WIA’s implementation (by more than 50 percent in Illinois¹) made it increasingly difficult for community-based programs to serve disadvantaged workers and employers in low-income communities. And while many states, including Illinois, had come to recognize the value of incumbent worker training during the 1990s, existing programs tended to favor larger, more established providers of contract training, such as community colleges and proprietary schools. As a result, many community-based intermediary programs have had to rely on local and national foundations, such as the Ford, Rockefeller, Sara Lee, and Annie E. Casey Foundations, to support their programming.²

In 1998, the Illinois Legislature addressed this funding gap by authorizing a pilot of Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) with \$1 million in general revenue funds. The program, managed by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (now called the Department of Commerce and Economic

¹ Figures for WIA Program Year 2001 compared to final year of JTPA. *Improving Our Response to Workforce Needs: Recommendations for Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998* (Chicago: Chicago Jobs Council, February 2003) p. 9. Rates of WIA-sponsored training have increased in recent years, with nearly 48% of Illinois WIA clients obtaining Individual Training Accounts in program year 2003, compared with only 28% in 2001. Federal Research and Evaluation Database, www.fred-info.org/WIA.htm.

² Jerry Rubin, Marlene B. Seltzer, and Jack Mills, “Financing Workforce Intermediaries,” in *Workforce Intermediaries for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Robert P. Giloth, 293-313 (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2004).

Opportunity or DCEO), offered grants to community-based job training providers to develop and operate employer-connected training for two distinct populations: low-wage incumbent workers (JTED Category I) and disadvantaged job seekers (JTED Category II). JTED Category I grants require direct partnerships between community-based providers and local businesses for skill upgrading of incumbent workers earning less than 175 percent of the federal poverty threshold. JTED Category II grants fund intensive, short- to medium-term training programs for economically disadvantaged individuals (e.g., homeless, public assistance recipients, low-income, disabled). JTED Category II business partners generally advise on training content and agree to hire from the program. JTED has typically provided Category I funding of up to \$1,500 per person trained, and Category II funding of up to \$5,000 per person trained.

JTED grew from a pilot program to a line item in the state budget only a year later, and its appropriation increased to a high of \$3 million in FY 2002. Reflecting broad consensus on the program's value, then-U.S. Representative Rod Blagojevich pledged to grow the JTED program to \$10 million as governor.³ Unfortunately, dire fiscal circumstances led the governor and legislature instead to cut the JTED FY 2003 budget to \$1.45 million, leading to reductions in the number of businesses and individuals served by the program, and causing significant fiscal stress for many JTED grantees. Although JTED grantees have done more with less, limited funds have made it difficult to meet the demands of their business partners and have resulted in waiting lists of interested participants.

PROGRAM MODEL

The JTED program model has several key features: it promotes community-business partnerships, it funds job-linked training, it targets key local

industries and occupations that pay well, and it is flexible but accountable.

Community-Business Partnerships. JTED brings community-based job training providers into direct partnership with local businesses to help them identify and satisfy their workforce needs. These partnerships help JTED providers to make their training more relevant to businesses, which helps JTED graduates succeed on the job.

Job-Linked Training for Good Jobs and Better Jobs. JTED supports job training programs that give disadvantaged job seekers the skills and connections they need to get good jobs with quality employers. JTED also helps disadvantaged workers already on the job to develop the skills they need to be more productive and better prepared for advancement into better jobs.

Industry and Occupation Targeted. JTED supports efforts to target key local industries and occupations that pay well, offer opportunities for advancement, and contribute significantly to community economic vitality. As such, JTED providers are key agents for industrial retention and growth, and for guiding community residents to jobs and job advancement in fields of importance to local economies.

Flexible but Accountable. Within its broad programmatic framework, JTED supports a wide variety of creative job training initiatives between community-based organizations and local employers. However, JTED providers are accountable for their performance, securing a significant share of funding based on job placement and retention for disadvantaged job seekers, and job retention and wage growth for incumbent workers.

PROGRAM FUNDING, GRANTS, AND OUTPUTS

This section, based on JTED program data provided by DCEO for fiscal years 2000 to

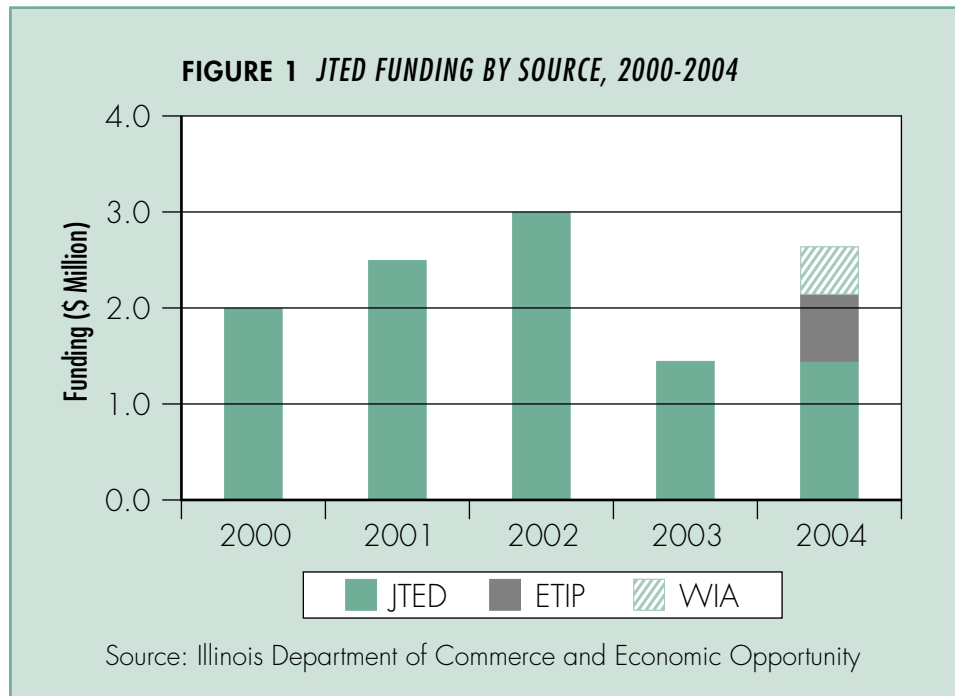
³ Rod for Us Campaign, "The Blagojevich Partnership for a New Economy: A Plan for Illinois' Future," 2002.

2004, presents the amount of program funding, grant awards, and program participants; the distribution of funding by program type, location, and sector; and basic outputs such as program completion, retention, and placement wage levels.

Figure 1 shows that legislative funding for the JTED program increased steadily from its inception until 2002, rising from \$2 million in FY 2000 to \$3 million in FY 2002. In FY 2003, JTED funding fell by half, to \$1.45 million, in response to a state budget shortfall. In FY 2004, DCEO augmented the \$1.45 million allocated for JTED by the Legislature with approximately \$1.2 million from other job training funds.⁴ However, this was simply a redistribution of existing state and federal funding and the state investment in JTED remains at its lowest level since its inception.

Table 1 shows a total of 83 JTED grants were awarded between fiscal years 2000 and 2004, with a high of 31 awards in 2004 and a low of eight in 2003. Over 5,600 Illinois residents have received training through JTED since 2000, although figures by program year vary significantly, from a low of 508 in FY 2003 to a high of 1,903 in FY 2004.⁵ Across all years, a significant majority of grants (81 percent), funding (83 percent), and participants (72 percent) have been awarded for Category II (disadvantaged job seeker) projects, compared with Category I (incumbent worker) projects. This is at least partly due to the fact that there are few CBOs with expertise in incumbent worker training, therefore fewer applicants for Category I funds.

Per-participant funding has fluctuated from year to year, especially for Category II projects. In 2004, per-participant funding for Category II



⁴ This was \$700,000 from the Employer Training Investment Program (ETIP), which funds incumbent worker training initiatives, and \$500,000 from (discretionary) statewide Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds.

⁵ Figures for FY 2004 are based on projections JTED grantees provided to DCEO. Program years do not necessarily correspond to the year in which training was delivered, since JTED awards are usually biannual, meaning, for example, that an award for fiscal year 2004 would run from late 2003 to mid-2005.

TABLE 1 JTED GRANTS, FUNDING, AND PARTICIPANTS BY PROGRAM YEAR AND CATEGORY, 2000-2004

PROGRAM YEAR	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	TOTAL, 00-04
Grants Awarded	10	15	19	8	31	83
Category I (incumbent)	1	2	3	2	6	14
Category II (job seeker)	9	13	16	6	25	69
Funding Awarded	\$1,422,138	\$2,421,533	\$2,874,600	\$1,442,200	\$2,627,000	\$10,787,471
Category I	\$270,990	\$296,020	\$438,193	\$307,200	\$693,000	\$2,005,403
Category II	\$1,151,148	\$2,125,513	\$2,436,407	\$1,135,000	\$1,934,000	\$8,782,068
Participants	543	1,258	1,412	508	1,903	5,624
Category I	147	272	362	149	650	1,580
Category II	396	986	1,050	359	1,253	4,044

Source: UIC analysis of data from Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

projects was \$1,543, nearly 25 percent lower than the five-year average of \$2,172, reflecting in part the agency's efforts to distribute a smaller pot of funding more broadly. This is also due to providers offering more training for industries other than the more costly manufacturing training programs (See Table 2). However, less funding per participant has made it difficult for many JTED providers to cover the full cost of training, forcing them to seek supplemental sources of funding.

Table 2 shows the distribution of JTED funding by location and sector, demonstrating that most JTED funding has been awarded to community-based organizations in Chicago and its suburban communities. Many of the Chicago-based JTED grantees serve individuals who live in the suburbs and work with businesses located outside Chicago. However, the relative lack of JTED projects outside the Chicago region is of concern for the program. JTED program funding has been concentrated in Chicago to date because there

TABLE 2 JTED FUNDING BY LOCATION AND SECTOR, 2000-2004

PROGRAM YEAR	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	TOTAL, 00-04
Location						
Chicago-Area % of Total	94%	92%	90%	100%	89%	92%
Sector						
Manufacturing (%)	54%	17%	28%	39%	36%	32%
Healthcare (%)	25%	36%	19%	27%	22%	26%
Service (%)	21%	14%	41%	20%	26%	26%
Office (%)	0%	15%	7%	0%	12%	8%
Other Industrial (%)	0%	18%	4%	13%	4%	8%

Source: UIC analysis of data from Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

was little marketing of the program in its early years, so the Chicago providers involved in creating and advocating for the pilot knew about funding availability. In addition, there are more providers with capacity to run community-business partnerships located in Chicago than in other areas of the state. DCEO and advocates now spread the word widely when the annual Request for Proposals is released, and several JTED grantees have offered to serve as mentors to providers that want to start programs.

Table 2 also shows that in terms of industry sector, the largest share of JTED funding has gone to projects oriented toward manufacturing. Between FY 2000 and 2004, just under one-third of funding (32 percent) went toward manufacturing, compared with approximately one-fourth (26 percent) each toward healthcare and service (e.g., hospitality), with the remainder going toward other sectors, such as financial services and construction. In terms of participants, service-oriented programs serve slightly more individuals (31 percent) than manufacturing (29 percent). This difference is attributable to program costs, as manufacturing programs tend to cost more per

person. Overall, there do not appear to be any clear trends toward or away from any particular sector over the last five program years.

Table 3 shows rates of program completion, job placement, and job retention. In program years 2000 to 2003, 80 percent of JTED participants completed their programs. Although individual programs vary greatly in their outcomes, overall nearly 60 percent of JTED completers found and retained jobs for at least 90 days after placement.⁶ Retention rates dipped in 2001 and 2002, recovering somewhat in 2003, possibly because of better labor market conditions, but perhaps because a smaller number of awards were given that year to better-established JTED providers.

Placement wage rates for graduates of JTED Category II (disadvantaged job seeker) programs have fluctuated somewhat over the years, but are generally \$8 to \$9 per hour, as shown in Table 3. These wage levels are significantly higher than minimum wage jobs and generally offer benefits as well. Differences in wage levels across sectors are noteworthy, with placements in manufacturing and healthcare paying roughly one to two dollars per hour more than service sector jobs.

TABLE 3 JTED OUTCOMES: COMPLETION, RETENTION RATES, PLACEMENT WAGES, 2000-2003

PROGRAM YEAR	2000	2001	2002	2003	TOTAL, 00-03
Completion % of Enrolled	78%	88%	79%	82%	82%
Category I	94%	85%	83%	74%	84%
Category II	72%	83%	77%	85%	79%
Retention % of Completed	81%	51%	51%	73%	58%
Category I	95%	32%	60%	87%	62%
Category II	74%	55%	47%	68%	56%
Average Placement Wage (Cat. II)	\$7.88	\$8.71	\$8.48	\$9.38	
Manufacturing	\$7.75	\$9.58	\$9.80	\$9.31	
Healthcare	\$8.65	\$8.77	\$8.99	\$9.32	
Service	\$7.39	\$7.26	\$7.43	\$8.24	
Office	–	\$8.32	\$8.71	–	
Other Industrial, incl. Construction	–	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$13.60	

Source: UIC analysis of data from Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, based on provider self-reports.

⁶ Data on the proportion of JTED participants who found jobs within the sector for which they received training are not available.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

JTED can be considered effective if the people whose training it funds fare better in the labor market than they would have had they not participated in the program. This evaluation seeks to determine if JTED completers: 1) are employed at higher rates than similar people who did not participate in the training, and 2) show higher earnings levels upon program completion and later.

This section presents earnings and employment outcomes, based on state unemployment insurance records, for over 1,600 individuals who received JTED-funded training from 14 different organizations between 2001 and 2003. They represent just over half (51%) of the persons trained through the JTED program during that period. Thus the results presented here can be considered suggestive of the program's overall impact.

To assess the impact of JTED Category II, this evaluation compares participant outcomes with those of similar individuals who did not take part in the program. This evaluation used information on the demographic characteristics and employment and earnings histories of JTED Category II (disadvantaged job seeker) participants and a comparable non-participant population.

In this case, the comparison group was drawn from job seekers who registered for the Employment Services program, funded through Wagner-Peyser. Employment Services uses Illinois Skills Match (ISM) to quickly match qualified applicants to employers to fill job openings.

Very few — less than one percent — of the individuals in the comparison group were referred to WIA-funded or other training options; most were given only job search and placement assistance.

This evaluation matched JTED Category II participants with individuals from the comparison group who have similar characteristics and then compared the outcomes of the two groups. This statistical technique, known as quasi-experimental evaluation, is well established and has been used to evaluate job training efforts around the United States.⁷ The matching process linked each JTED participant with up to five individuals from the comparison population of individuals registered for Employment Services in the same labor market area and at about the same time. The resulting comparison group matches the JTED population in terms of race and ethnicity, gender, age, education level, previous earnings, and employment history. Table 4 shows the characteristics of the two groups. For more information on the data and techniques used for this analysis, see Appendix A: Methodology.

To assess the earnings impact of the JTED Category I (low-wage incumbent worker) program, this evaluation simply analyzes earnings trends before and after training. No methodologies exist to date for studying the impact of incumbent worker training relative to a comparison group.

⁷ Michael A. Stoll, Steven Raphael, Edwin Melendez, Alexandra de Montrichard, and Michael P. Massagli, "An Evaluation of Massachusetts' Workforce Development Programs: The Earnings and Employment Impacts of Participation in Employment and Training Programs on Low-Income Adults" (working paper, The Center for the Study of Urban Poverty, University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, 2003); and James J. Heckman, Robert J. LaLonde, and Jeffrey A. Smith, "The Economics and Econometrics of Active Labor Market Programs," in *Handbook of Labor Economics*, Vol. 3, ed. Orley Ashenfelter and David Card, 1865-2097 (Amsterdam: Elsevier Science, 1999).

EVALUATION FINDINGS

TABLE 4 DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS, JTED CATEGORY II vs. COMPARISON GROUP

	All Participants		Graduates Only	
	JTED (N = 1359)	COMPARISON	JTED (N = 1177)	COMPARISON
Gender				
Female	64%	64%	65%	65%
Male	36%	36%	35%	35%
Race/Ethnicity				
African American	58%	58%	60%	60%
White/Caucasian	21%	21%	19%	19%
Hispanic	14%	14%	14%	14%
Asian	6%	6%	6%	6%
Age				
Less than 25	25%	27%	25%	26%
25 - 34	28%	27%	28%	27%
35 - 44	27%	25%	27%	25%
45 - 54	16%	15%	16%	15%
55 and older	4%	7%	4%	7%
Average Age:	34.2	34.4	34.4	34.5
Education Level				
Less than HS	25%	25%	23%	24%
High school or equivalent	56%	55%	57%	56%
Some postsecondary, less than bachelor's degree	16%	14%	16%	15%
Bachelor's degree or higher	4%	6%	4%	6%
Average Earnings, 8 Pre-Program Quarters				
No earnings	25%	26%	25%	26%
\$1 - 999	35%	31%	34%	32%
\$1,000 - 2,999	22%	23%	22%	23%
\$3,000 - 4,999	10%	11%	11%	11%
\$5,000 or more	8%	8%	8%	8%
Average Quarterly Earnings:	\$1,532	\$1,530	\$1,566	\$1,554
Average "Pre-Dip" Earnings:	\$1,718	\$1,678	\$1,766	\$1,711
Pre-Program Quarters Worked (out of 8)				
None	25%	26%	25%	26%
1 - 3	26%	26%	25%	25%
4 - 7	35%	34%	35%	34%
8	15%	14%	14%	14%
Average Quarters Worked:	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5

JTED GRADUATES ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE EMPLOYED

Individuals who participated in and graduated from JTED-funded Category II job training programs were approximately one-third more likely to be employed one year later than comparable job seekers who did not receive training. As shown in Table 5, 59 percent of JTED graduates were working in the fourth quarter after completing the program, compared with 46 percent of the comparison group. Graduates continue to show roughly ten percent higher employment rates through two years after completing JTED programs.

JTED GRADUATES EARN MORE

Participation in JTED-funded training leads to higher levels of post-program earnings, both in the short- and longer-terms. Table 6 shows that JTED graduates increased their earnings by nearly \$2,500 annually (\$617 per quarter), relative to similar job seekers in the period six to 18 months after program completion, and over \$3,200 annually (\$802 per quarter) more in the period nine to 12 quarters (three to four years) afterward. Figure 2 shows the trends in pre- and post-program average earnings of JTED program completers, program dropouts, and the Employment Service comparison group. JTED

graduates and their comparison group have similar pre-program earnings profiles, including the tendency for their earnings to dip prior to program enrollment, reflecting the fact that many of the disadvantaged job seekers are workers displaced from other jobs or workers who decreased their hours to attend a training program. The trend in average earnings of JTED graduates splits from that of the comparison group in the second and third quarters following program completion. With average quarterly earnings of approximately \$2,400 in post-program quarters three to six compared to only \$1,750 for the comparison group, JTED graduates earn nearly 40 percent more than similar non-participants.

The results of this analysis offer compelling evidence that participation in JTED-funded job training programs does indeed lead to meaningful and significant increases in employment rates and earnings for disadvantaged job seekers. The results of this comparison of participants to similar job seekers strongly suggest that many participants would have experienced ongoing unemployment and stagnation in earnings similar to that of the individuals in the comparison group.

TABLE 5 EMPLOYMENT RATES, JTED CATEGORY II GRADUATES vs. COMPARISON GROUP

	JTED GRADUATES	COMPARISON	DIFFERENCE
Pre-program			
8 quarters before entry	50%	46%	3.8%
4 quarters before entry	45%	44%	1.5%
Post-program			
4 quarters after exit	59%	46%	13.4%
8 quarters after exit	56%	45%	10.8%

Note: Employment rates reflect share of JTED graduates and comparison group with any UI-covered earnings in quarter. Data shown for JTED graduates with at least 8 quarters of post-program earnings data available (N = 875).

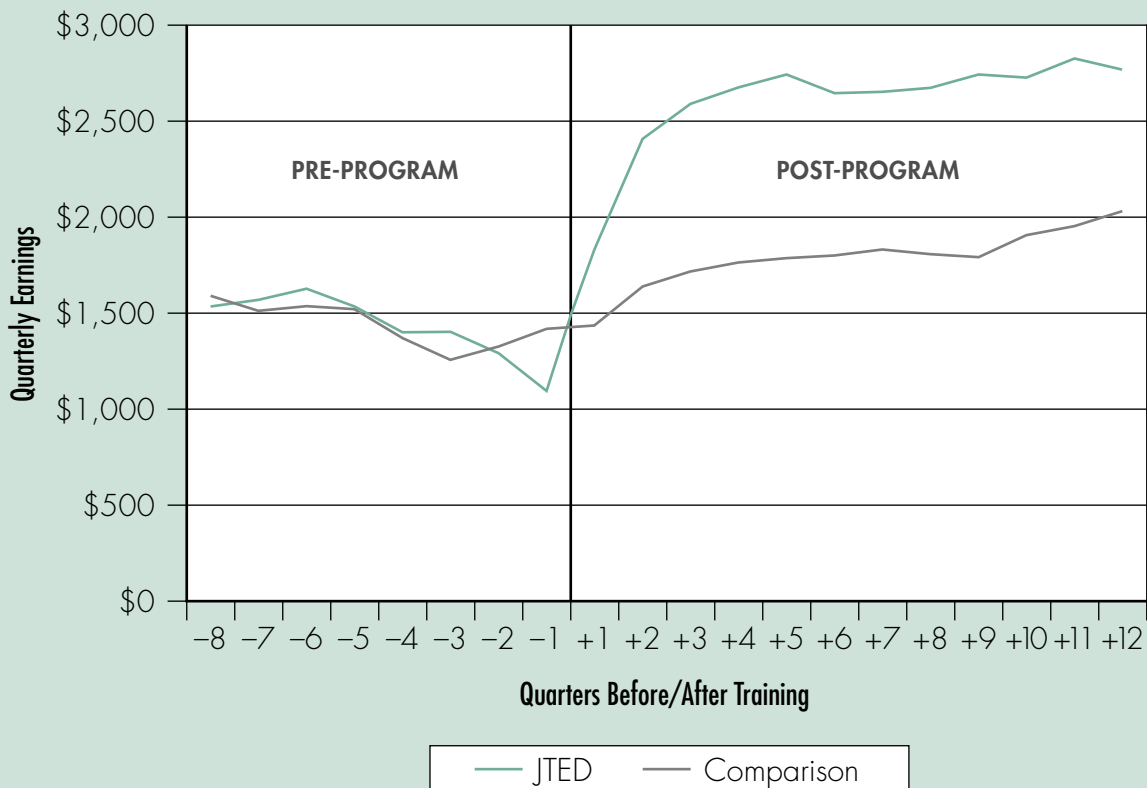
EVALUATION FINDINGS

TABLE 6 EARNINGS GAINS, JTED CATEGORY II GRADUATES vs. COMPARISON GROUP

	JTED GRADUATES	COMPARISON	DIFFERENCE (Quarterly)	DIFFERENCE (Annual)
Pre-program				
Average "pre-dip" earnings (3 to 8 quarters before entry)	\$1,756	\$1,710	\$45	\$181
Post-program				
Short-term (3 to 6 quarters after exit)	\$2,417	\$1,755	\$662	\$2,647
Long-term (9 to 12 quarters after exit)	\$2,763	\$1,916	\$847	\$3,388
			Short-term earnings impact:	\$617
			Long-term earnings impact:	\$802

Note: Pre-program earnings and short-term earnings impact calculated for all JTED graduates with at least 6 quarters of post-program data (N = 1086); Long-term earnings impact only for graduates with 12 quarters of post-program data (N = 394).

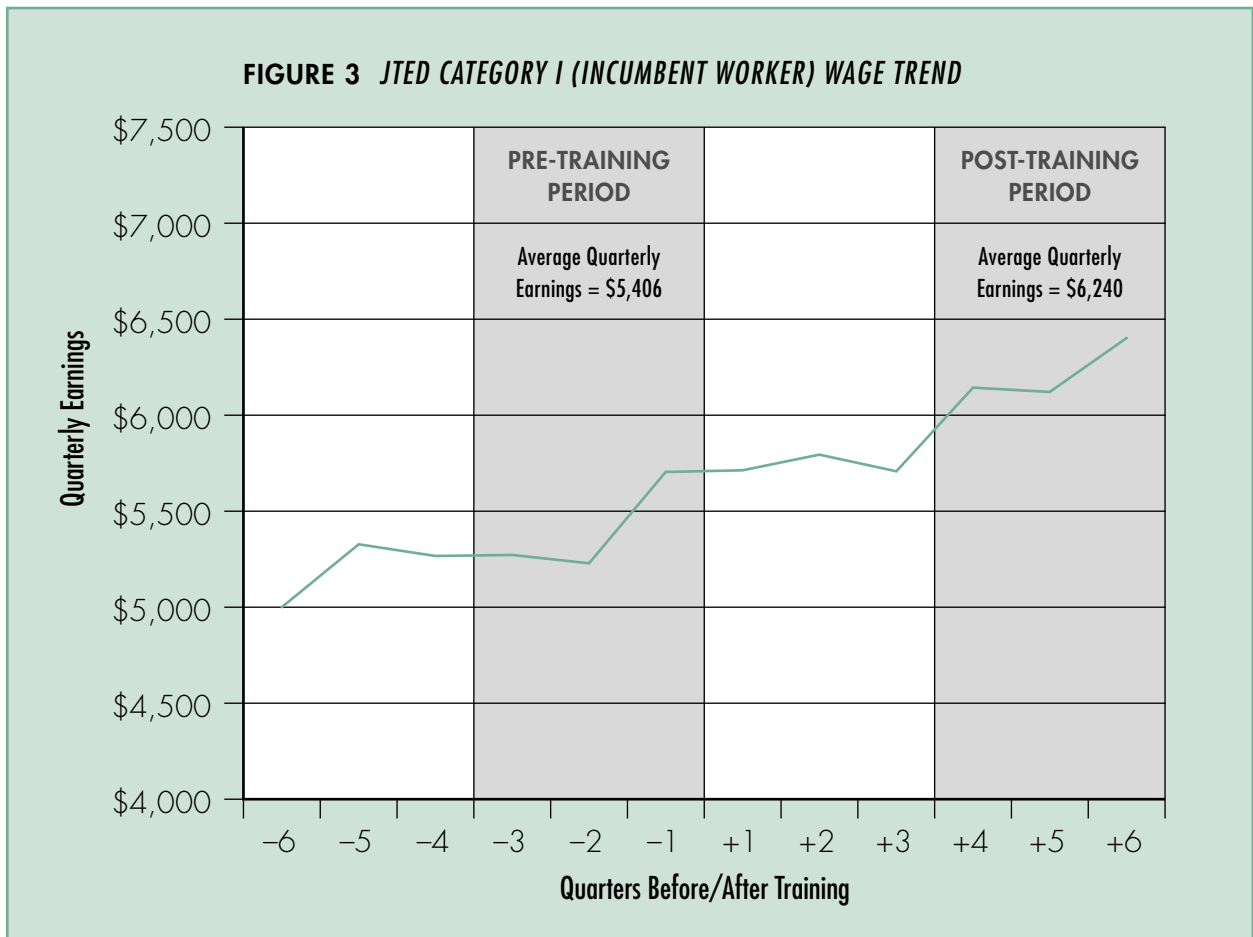
FIGURE 2 AVERAGE QUARTERLY EARNINGS, JTED CATEGORY II vs. COMPARISON GROUP



JTED-TRAINED INCUMBENT WORKERS INCREASE THEIR EARNINGS

Incumbent workers who completed training through JTED Category I grants also showed substantial increases in earnings. Figure 3 shows data from 255 Category I participants — approximately one-third of the total from 2001 to 2003 — that demonstrate that average quarterly earnings increased from \$5,406 in the nine months prior to beginning of company-sponsored, on-the-job skills training, to \$6,240 in the period nine to 18 months afterward. This 15 percent increase in average earnings is particularly impressive since the cases were in the manufacturing sector, where employers have been facing significant pressures to cut costs in recent years, which have reduced their capacity to pass along higher wages to their workforce. However, unlike the Category II outcomes,

there is no comparison group against which to benchmark these outcomes. Still, they suggest the potential for JTED-funded incumbent worker training to increase workers' earnings, while at the same time contributing toward the competitiveness of businesses in key sectors.



IV. PROGRAM PROFILES

CHINESE AMERICAN SERVICE LEAGUE

The Chinese-American Service League (CASL), founded in 1978 to help improve the economic and social well-being of Chinese Americans in Chicago and the surrounding area, serves more than 15,000 people a year in four areas: employment and training, elderly care and services, family and community services, and child education and development.

CASL has offered employment and training services since 1980, primarily in food service. Since 1985, nearly 900 individuals have graduated from CASL's food service training programs. These programs are supported by a variety of public sources, including city, state, and federal funds, as well as private sources such as the Sara Lee Foundation.

The only eligibility requirements for CASL's JTED-funded Chef Training program are the income threshold set by DCEO and at least basic knowledge of English. Most participants are women, 70 percent are Chinese American, and 20 percent are African American.

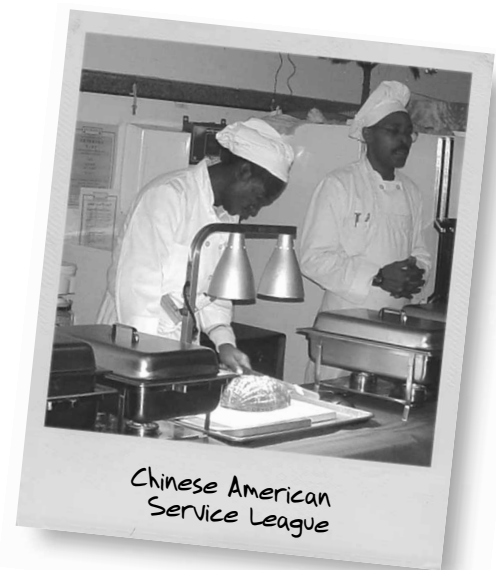
CASL receives three applications for each available training opening, so is able to carefully screen potential participants for those most interested in the program and most likely to complete the training. This allows CASL to thoroughly assess whether the program is a good match with the applicants' career interests and readiness, while keeping eligibility requirements very low.

The 16-week Chef Training program prepares participants for entry-level employment in the food service industry. It includes 14 weeks of hands-on kitchen training and two weeks of pre-employment training. Participants learn

basic kitchen skills such as cutting and food preparation, and cooking concepts (e.g., sauces, procedures) that are not necessarily required for entry-level positions, but are helpful for advancement. All of the program's instruction is geared toward Western-style cuisine. Participants with low English language proficiency also enroll in a two-week job-specific language course.

The program's focus on entry-level food service positions is relatively unique among training programs. Most programs at community colleges or private cooking schools focus on higher-skill positions that would likely be unattainable for program participants.

During the training, CASL offers participants free onsite child care and a transportation stipend. After placement, CASL's counselors meet with graduates every other week for the first month, and then monthly afterward until the 90-day retention goal.



The Chef Training program prepares participants for placement in hotels, restaurants, and food service companies. CASL works with many of Chicago's top hotels and restaurants, including The Peninsula, Sofitel, and the Drake. More than half of CASL's business partners are in downtown Chicago, but others are clustered around O'Hare airport. CASL's job developers and employment counselors work with employers and participants to ensure high-quality matches, enhancing job retention and advancement in an industry known for high turnover rates.

About 90 percent of participants complete the program, with a total of 51 graduates last year. About 80 percent secure employment; and of those, 85 percent retain their jobs for at least 90 days. Nearly all the positions are full-time with benefits after 90 days, and the average placement wage is \$8.50 an hour. The program's average cost per participant is \$4,850.

ANNY, CASL CHEF TRAINING GRADUATE

Anny arrived in Chicago five years ago from the Guangzhou region of southern China. Like many immigrants with limited skills, Anny worked in a series of low-paying, dead-end jobs before finding out about the Chinese American Service League (CASL). Anny took advantage of CASL's programs to help improve her English skills, learn how to use a computer, and think about finding a career. She eventually enrolled in CASL's Chef Training program and graduated near the top of her class.

With her high marks and some help from CASL's placement staff, Anny secured a good-paying job with The Peninsula Hotel. Since starting as a chef assistant four years ago, she has steadily risen to the position of lead Dim Sum chef in Shanghai Terrace, one of the hotel's restaurants.

Anny expressed excitement about how much she has learned on the job at The Peninsula, where she has helped to recruit and mentor other CASL graduates. She enjoys her job and career, and looks forward to continued career growth and advancement.

Read how The Peninsula partners with community organizations on page 26.

GREATER WEST TOWN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Greater West Town Community Development Project is a Chicago nonprofit organization that offers educational and employment services for low-income youth and adults. Established in 1988, Greater West Town offers direct services, including vocational training, an alternative high school, and job placement, as well as research and advocacy. These programs expand employment and training opportunities for area residents and support local business retention and expansion. Through all of its programs, Greater West Town serves about 2,700 low-income people a year.

Greater West Town offers two programs that have been funded by JTED Category II since 1998. The Woodworkers Training Program addresses the clients' need for technical skills training that leads to careers offering decent wages, stable employment, and growth potential. It also addresses the needs of a local industry to develop the skilled workforce it requires to remain in the area and expand operations, while competing successfully in the global economy.

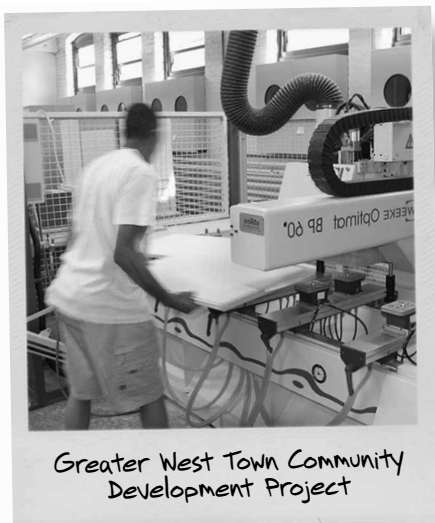
The Shipping and Receiving Training Program links the workforce needs of local business and

of area residents by opening a wide range of entry-level career starting points in transportation and logistics-related careers, while producing workers with skills in demand by virtually all employers engaged in manufacturing or distribution.

More than 90 percent of participants in both programs are African American or Latino, and most are men. While about 60 percent have a high school diploma or GED, more than half test lower than ninth grade math and reading at enrollment. Also, more than half of program applicants lack the basic skills to qualify for the program, which requires them to test at the seventh grade or higher.

The Greater West Town JTED programs combine basic, occupational, and employment readiness skills training. The basic skills (reading and math) component is taught within the context of workplace scenarios, making those skills more relevant and applicable. Classes are taught daily at Greater West Town's West Side training facility, which helps to simulate the work environment for individuals with limited or poor work histories. The average training cost per participant is approximately \$5,500 for the Shipping and Receiving Program and \$6,800 for the Woodworking Program, and in addition to JTED is funded through WIA (Title II) Adult Basic Education funds and WIA (Title I) Individual Training Accounts, Community Development Block Grant awards, and philanthropic sources.

Greater West Town also offers trainees support services to help them complete the program, and find and retain a job. These services include transportation stipends, referrals to housing providers, clothing for interviews, and incidentals such as eyeglasses. Many trainees are referred from other social service organizations, which help to build a network to support participants.



From 2001 to 2003, more than 80 percent of enrollees completed the two programs, with a total of 272 graduates during that period. Approximately 90 percent secured employment at an average starting wage of \$9.08 per hour, plus benefits.

The Woodworking Program has 100 to 150 business partners, including about 50 who participate as advisors and regularly hire program graduates. Many are small firms, such as cabinet shops, that require entry-level workers with specific skill sets. Graduates of the Shipping and Receiving Program are employed in a wide array of businesses, including local manufacturers and third-party logistics companies in the O'Hare area.

Greater West Town's programs help small manufacturers to find the skilled workers they need to grow and prosper. Businesses like Troscan Design, a high-end woodworking company on Chicago's West Side, have been able to expand their production capacity within the city. At the same time, Greater West Town helps these companies see the value of training and career advancement for their entry-level workforce.

Greater West Town's model of community-business partnership served as one of the primary templates for the JTED Category II grant program.

**FRANCISCO, GREATER WEST TOWN
WOODWORKING GRADUATE**

Francisco had just lost his restaurant job when he saw an advertisement in a local Spanish-language newspaper for Greater West Town's Woodworking Training Program. A Mexican immigrant who arrived in Chicago at age 27, he had never thought about a career in woodworking before, but applied and was accepted into the program.

After Francisco graduated from the 14-week training program, Greater West Town helped him to get a job with Troscan, a small start-up company that designs and produces high-end furniture for residential and commercial markets. Francisco was Troscan's fourth employee, hired to be an all-purpose

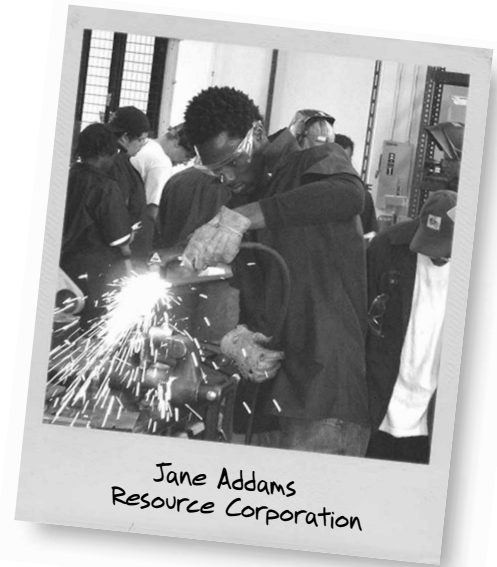
helper in the company's craft-style production process.

Since he was hired, Francisco's responsibilities have grown with the company, where he is now in charge of quality control, inspecting the products as they move from production to finishing. In part because of Francisco's success on the job, Troscan's co-owner Bill Robinson has continued to turn to Greater West Town for skilled entry-level woodworkers.

Francisco reports that he feels like he has a career with good pay and growth potential, and wants to stay in woodworking. And he is continuing to improve his skills, taking English as a Second Language classes through Wright College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago.

JANE ADDAMS RESOURCE CORPORATION

The Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC), a community development corporation founded in 1985, offers sectoral training and economic development services on Chicago’s North Side and throughout the metropolitan area. Concerned with the flight of major manufacturing companies from Chicago and its effect on low-income communities, JARC offers workforce development services and helps employers access city and other resources to help them remain in the city. As a sectoral training provider, JARC targets specific occupations within the metalworking industry, with its potential for career advancement, relatively high wages, and job openings as older workers retire.



JARC offers two main programs: the Metalworking Skills Training Program (MS), which provides onsite instruction for incumbent workers; and the Careers in Metalworking (CM) program, which trains unemployed individuals to fill the entry-level positions that become vacant as incumbent workers advance to higher-skilled jobs. The MS program provides courses in areas such as Computer Numerical Control (CNC), Trigonometry for the Metal Trades, and Supervisory Training. Many courses are offered in Spanish and Polish in addition to English. The courses typically last between 24 and 32 hours over six to eight weeks, and many are taught at the job site. Annually, the MS program serves 150 to 250 people.

The CM program helps harder-to-employ participants to develop basic, industry-specific vocational, and employability skills, while also offering case management and job placement. The 14-week program teaches elementary blueprint reading, vocational math, milling and drill pressing, punch press die setting, CNC machining, and forklift operation, as well as soft skills such as conflict resolution and financial management. JARC also provides job search assistance and case management. After placement, JARC staff follow up with the new employees and their supervisors. CM serves 30 to 50 people a year.

JARC’s employer partners are mostly small manufacturing companies, many with fewer than 100 employees, that struggle to recruit and retain skilled workers. JARC works with 15 to 30 companies annually, and places CM graduates with many of the same companies that benefit from incumbent worker training through the MS program. In addition to JTED funds, JARC works with manufacturers to secure funds from programs like the Employer Training Investment Program and Chicago’s TIFWorks to help cover training costs. JARC has received JTED funding for both the MS (Category I) and CM (Category II) programs since 1999.

Incumbent workers participating in the MS program average a four-and-a-half to five percent wage increase within 90 days of program completion.⁸ CM has an 85 percent completion rate and program graduates qualify for entry-level positions with starting wages ranging from \$8.00 to \$12.00 per hour, plus benefits.

Business partners report improved worker productivity, lower scrap rates, and higher quality work after their employees participate in the MS program. In some cases, JARC interventions have transformed employers’ hiring and training practices. For example, JARC has used job and task analysis processes to help some participating employers identify career paths for each position

⁸ Wage information is solicited from the employers at the start of training and three months after program completion. Earnings increases six to 18 months after training are shown in Figure 3.

in their company, and designed customized training to enable workers to start this career progression. By promoting from within, employers improved job retention and decreased shortages of higher-skilled job applicants. Additionally, JARC worked with a group of companies and the

Precision Metalforming Association, a national trade association, to develop the Metalworking Skills Assessment Test, which is a nationally validated test that companies can use to develop individual training plans for new hires and incumbent workers.

AMD INDUSTRIES, JARC BUSINESS CLIENT

AMD Industries in Cicero designs and manufactures point-of-purchase displays for retail settings. A small, family-owned company in business since 1922, AMD's clients include Brach's Candies, Pella Windows, and Energizer Batteries. In addition to its management and design staff, it employs a small core of 15 to 20 metal fabrication production workers, who punch, bend, and weld the foundations for their displays.

In recent years, AMD has streamlined its production process, by, for example, redesigning work flow to improve efficiency. One barrier the company encountered during the streamlining was the low skill level of its workforce. Set-up workers, who are responsible for programming and overseeing the production equipment, could not effectively determine whether the parts coming off the line were defective or not. Most of these workers had risen to their positions from entry-level jobs as machine operators, but never learned basic metalworking skills, such as math and measurement, along the way.

JARC was able to offer an eight-week, JTED-funded metalworking course in Spanish, the workers' native language, taught by an instructor with substantial metalworking experience. The courses were offered near the end of the workday, with the company contributing an hour of paid release time and the workers an hour of their time.

After only a few weeks of the class, scrap rates and production turnaround time improved significantly, as the set-up workers are better equipped to diagnose and fix problems on the spot. By upgrading the skills of AMD's workforce, JARC's JTED-funded metalworking training has helped them to stay competitive and to position them for growth.

OSCAR, JARC CAREERS IN METALWORKING GRADUATE

Kicked out of his parents' house at age 15, Oscar dropped out of high school a year later. After three years of working in a local copy shop, Oscar lost his job and eventually became homeless. Despite managing to earn a GED at age 19, he continued to work a series of low-paying jobs, none of which earned him enough to get off the streets and into a place of his own, much less onto a satisfying career path.

Oscar entered JARC's Careers in Metalworking program after seeing an advertisement for it. Soon after graduation he secured a job with Rubicon Technology, a fast-growing high-tech manufacturer that makes synthetic sapphires for industrial applications. Rubicon invests heavily in employee training, and offers good wages and benefits, such as fully paid health insurance, to minimize employee turnover. Rubicon had turned to JARC to fill several entry-level production positions.

Oscar's job of monitoring the intricate process of synthetic sapphire growth is complex, but he reports that he enjoys the challenge and the company's friendly atmosphere. Oscar likes his job and the stability it has brought him, including his own apartment. He credits JARC's staff for taking a chance on him, helping him to better understand what employers expect, and giving him the opportunity for a career.

OAI, INC.

OAI, Inc. is a nonprofit organization in Chicago founded in 1976 as the Office of Applied Innovations to assist with resettlement and education of refugees from Southeast Asia. From 1990 to 2001, it was affiliated with DePaul University. It offers a variety of employment and training programs for youth and disadvantaged adults, as well as employer-focused customized training and workforce development. OAI offers JTED-funded training programs in both Category I and Category II in four separate sectors. Category I programs target low-wage workers in manufacturing and healthcare, while Category II programs prepare participants for employment in pharmacy and document technician fields.

Category I: Manufacturing

Most of OAI's work with manufacturers had been in workplace literacy training until its first JTED grant in 2001 allowed it to expand its training to meet a wider range of employer skill needs, both basic (e.g., math) and applied (e.g., blueprint reading, statistical process control).

OAI customizes its incumbent worker programs based on each employer's needs. It works with employers to identify the incumbent workers who will receive training, administering pretests to determine those most in need of remedial skills training. Workers trained by OAI reflect the demographics of the industries — most are non-native English speakers, particularly Latino,



and mostly male. For the workers, limited basic skills, such as literacy, is a significant barrier to occupational mobility and advancement, especially because manufacturing employers are increasing basic skills requirements as a result of new technology investments.

All classes are taught onsite, typically during the workday, with workers receiving paid release time to attend. Although program length varies, it typically includes six- to nine-week topical modules. Instructors often also develop informal relationships with workers to help them to better understand skill and advancement needs.

OAI has worked with the Tooling & Manufacturing Association, a trade association comprised of small- and medium-sized manufacturers throughout the Chicago area, to identify potential business partners. Most of its manufacturing clients are relatively small, with fewer than 200 employees, and face significant challenges to securing an adequately skilled workforce.

Category II: Pharmacy and Document Technician

OAI's Category II training programs are designed in conjunction with specific employers, such as Osco for the Pharmacy Technician program and IKON Office Solutions for the Document Technician program. The employers participate in all aspects of the program and commit to hire completers.

OAI recruits, tests, and screens program participants in conjunction with the business partners, who establish entry requirements. For example, IKON requires candidates to have at least a high school diploma or GED, an eighth grade reading level, and the ability to lift at least 50 pounds. OAI recruits Pharmacy and Document Technician program participants through referrals from the Illinois Department of Human Services and other community partners, community television, job fairs, and word of mouth. More than 90 percent of these participants are African American women, mostly single, aged 19 to 36 with children. Most participants are unemployed or underemployed with limited work histories.

The Document Technician program lasts two weeks and includes soft skills training such as

time management and teamwork, and job-specific vocational skills. The Pharmacy Technician program lasts seven weeks, and includes an on-the-job internship.

The average training cost for the Pharmacy and Document Technician programs is \$3,450 per participant, which is covered through a combination of JTED and other government funding, as well as in-kind resources from its business partners.

OAI offers training participants additional services to help them to complete the program, and to secure and retain employment. For

example, since most participants are single mothers, OAI helps them with child care through referrals. OAI also tracks graduates for a year once employed to help them address problems and retain their jobs.

Because of a rigorous screening process for enrollment, these programs have high completion rates and all participants are placed upon completion. Average wages for the Document Technician program are approximately \$8.00 per hour, and \$8.50 per hour for the Pharmacy Technicians, plus benefits. The 90-day retention rate is approximately 60 to 70 percent for both programs.

THERESA, OAI DOCUMENT TECHNICIAN GRADUATE

Theresa was receiving public assistance after being laid off from her job in banking when she was referred to OAI through a program to help people on public assistance get training and find jobs. After a series of interviews with OAI and IKON Office Solutions, she was accepted into the Document Technician program.

Although she had interviewed for other jobs offering higher starting pay, Theresa was drawn to the challenging nature of the work and the opportunities for growth within IKON. After two weeks of training at OAI, she began her new job with IKON. On her first day she achieved an “unheard of” level of productivity for a new employee, according to Mik Erwin, IKON’s recruiter and liaison to OAI. She remains a top employee.

Although Theresa came into the program with more education and work experience than many of her peers, she still credits OAI with helping her get started with her new career. OAI has kept in regular contact with her since she began working at IKON, and OAI staff have encouraged her when she has felt frustrated or discouraged, such as when a slowdown in business forced the company to temporarily reduce her hours. Theresa remains optimistic about the prospects for her new job and career.

**ADVOCATE TRINITY HOSPITAL,
OAI BUSINESS CLIENT**

Human resource managers at Chicago’s Advocate Trinity Hospital recently identified problems of high turnover and dissatisfaction among entry-level workers in areas such as housekeeping and food and environmental services. Although the hospital offers internal training and advancement opportunities, many workers lack the confidence and basic skills to take advantage of them.

Advocate Trinity teamed up with OAI to develop the Step Up initiative to provide foundational skill training for the hospital’s entry-level workforce. This 12-week course, taught onsite during the workday, covers a variety of topics, including applied literacy and math, communications, time management, basic computer training, and career pathways in healthcare.

A total of eight employees completed the Step Up program across two course sequences. Step Up helped some of these workers to advance to further educational pathways, including the hospital’s School At Work program, certificate programs in radiology or respiratory therapy, and nonclinical fields like health information systems. For others, the program simply helped them to do their jobs more effectively.

THE CENTER-RESOURCES FOR TEACHING & LEARNING

The Center-Resources for Teaching & Learning is a nonprofit based in Des Plaines, Illinois, that offers a broad range of professional development and instructional resources for businesses, educators, and communities throughout Illinois. The Center's Workplace Education division focuses primarily on employer-sponsored literacy and basic skills training.

The Center began offering workplace literacy programs with companies like Bank One, Felpro, and Fresh Express in the late 1980s with funding from the federal Department of Education and the Illinois Secretary of State. Its first JTED grant was awarded in 2001 to work with entry-level workers in financial services and manufacturing. However, more recently, the Center has shifted its focus toward the fast-growing healthcare and hospitality industries.

The Center's JTED-funded training programs target low-wage, mostly immigrant, healthcare and hospitality employees. The programs target workers at the lowest levels within these sectors (e.g., housekeepers), who have basic skill deficiencies — especially language and literacy — that prevent them from moving up within these sectors. Business partners do not require this training, but they target workers who are interested in advancement to participate.

All of The Center's training programs are conducted in the workplace, where employers typically offer workers at least some paid release time. Most of the training is related to language and literacy, but also may include basic job-related skills such as computer, safety, and basic math training. The Center customizes modules for each employer, with the most commonly requested module a 32-hour classroom-based training over eight weeks. The Center supplements the training with self-study assignments and on-the-job application activities, and frequently provides additional one-on-one tutoring to help participants

successfully complete the training. Training can cost \$1,500 to \$3,000 per participant, depending on the training goals. These programs are funded through JTED and other public sources, and private contracts with employers such as the Resurrection Health Care Systems.

The Center's business partners include many of the top hotels in the area, such as the Hyatt, Marriott, The Peninsula, Chicago O'Hare Airport Hilton, and Motel 6. Within the hospitality industry, increased competition has led to a growing emphasis on customer service, even reaching entry-level positions such as housekeepers. Additionally, many larger hotels have computerized many of their basic internal functions, raising skill requirements throughout their workforce. The same is true within the healthcare sector, where The Center works primarily with assisted living facilities, a highly customer-oriented service demanding a combination of soft skills, basic skills, and technical skills such as safety and basic medical training.

Participants in The Center's training programs are able to move from entry-level positions paying \$7.00 to \$8.00 per hour to more semi-skilled jobs paying \$10.00 to \$11.00 per hour, plus



benefits. For example, within the hospitality industry, entry-level workers in housekeeping positions can often move into more skilled, higher paying positions such as chef assistants and front desk workers. Within healthcare, the foundational skills acquired through the Center's training programs allow those workers to move into health

careers such as certified nursing assistant. The hotels and healthcare facilities that partner with the Center have better-trained employees and are thus better able to meet the demands of their customers. The training also leads to increased retention and advancement of the existing workforce, reducing turnover costs.

THE PENINSULA, THE CENTER BUSINESS CLIENT

Since opening in 2001, The Peninsula in downtown Chicago, one of only seven locations worldwide for this Hong Kong-based luxury chain, has become the city's most highly rated hotel, earning national awards from *Zagat's* and *Conde Nast Traveler* magazine. To maintain its high standards, The Peninsula must offer its customers impeccable service at all levels of the business. This means hotel management must cultivate a skilled and committed workforce.

In addition to using hiring referrals from local community organizations such as the Chinese American Service League (see page 17), The Peninsula offers its workforce higher pay, better benefits, and more stability than the industry standard. Less than five percent of its 500-person staff is part-time. This commitment to job quality translates into significantly lower turnover rates than the industry average.

Building internal job ladders is an important part of The Peninsula's workforce approach.

The Center has designed a customized curriculum to help The Peninsula prepare entry-level workers, such as room attendants and kitchen assistants, for opportunities to advance into supervisory positions at the hotel. Each person has an individualized training plan that includes classroom and one-on-one training, self-study, and/or on-the-job application/observation. Classroom training is delivered onsite during working hours and focuses primarily on customer service skills, but also includes other applied skills such as computer literacy.

The Center has become an essential part of The Peninsula's efforts to build and maintain a high-quality workforce. Larry Riordan, the hotel's human resource manager, noted that the value of their partnership with The Center extends beyond its positive impacts on worker skills and customer service levels. By advertising internally for advancement training, The Peninsula communicates to its entry-level workers the company's interest in investing in their careers.

TRANSITIONS OF WESTERN ILLINOIS

Transitions of Western Illinois (TWI) was established in the mid-1950s as the Adams County Mental Health Center to provide mental health services. In 1967 the agency began offering vocational training through its Center for Rehabilitation Services division, primarily as a “sheltered workshop” for persons with disabilities.

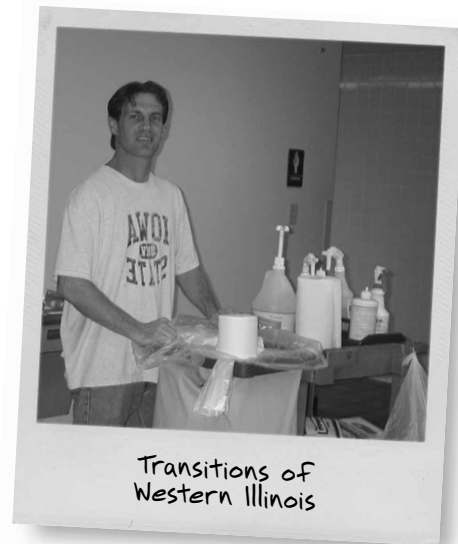
TWI first secured JTED funding in 2001 to offer vocational training in four areas: janitorial services, laundry services, food service, and pallet manufacturing, most of which built upon existing TWI training programs. In 2003, TWI added a fifth area of training that targets entry-level housekeeping positions.

JTED Category II funding allowed TWI to more broadly target training to disadvantaged job seekers, while previously it had worked primarily with participants eligible for training through the Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services.

These JTED-funded training programs last three to four weeks and combine basic job readiness and work habit training with applied vocational skills training. For several program areas, participants train in a real-world setting. For example, in the janitorial program, participants go with trainers to local organizations that contract with TWI for janitorial services. Participants are paid minimum wage while enrolled in the program.

The participant profile is typical of short-term job training programs. Nearly 20 percent live in a shelter, 40 percent lack a high school diploma or equivalent, many have criminal records, many receive public assistance, and most have limited work histories. Nearly 40 percent of participants are African American, compared to only five percent of the overall county population.

In addition to financial criteria for enrollment, TWI requires participants to have the physical ability to perform one or more of the job types, and a stated interest in one of the program



areas. TWI also prefers participants to have at least one positive work experience in their past.

TWI provides training participants with support services, including vocational counseling to help them identify potential career paths, case management to assist with child care, transportation, and housing issues, and job coaching to help them prepare for job interviews. Once placed with an employer, TWI tracks graduates directly for 90 days, and often beyond through employer contacts.

Over the years, TWI has cultivated relationships with local businesses to hire program graduates, with several even signing partnership agreements. TWI’s placement staff works closely with these businesses to ensure good matches between program graduates and the available positions. In many cases, these business partners contact TWI to fill entry-level job openings.

From 2001 to 2003, nearly 60 percent of the 100 individuals who started training completed, 44 percent were placed, and about 25 percent retained their job for 90 days. While this rate

of attrition is common for this disadvantaged population, TWI staff cite lack of stable transportation and housing as key issues to address.

Wage levels for completers vary across fields, with an average placement wage of \$6.38

an hour. Opportunities for advancement exist across all the fields, but are most prevalent for healthcare graduates, with some getting the chance to pursue further training through the local community college. Training costs an average of \$1,400 per participant.

EMILY, TRANSITIONS OF WESTERN ILLINOIS GRADUATE

Emily was unemployed and receiving public assistance for an extended period of time. Hoping to get a fresh start, she found TWI on the recommendation of her welfare caseworker and enrolled in the housekeeping training program. After finishing the three-week course, she was ready to apply for jobs in the field. But having been out of the workforce for many months, she was nervous about interviewing with prospective employers.

TWI placement staff helped Emily prepare a resume and get ready for an interview with the Fairfield Inn in Quincy. The staff support was instrumental in the hotel's decision to take a chance on Emily, according to Deb Carstens, the hotel's general manager. Emily has now been with Fairfield Inn for two years. The work hours are flexible, and she earns enough to support her two young children.

V. COMMON PROGRAM PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES

The programs profiled in this report highlight some of the benefits of the JTED program design. These benefits are described below, organized in terms of supply-side (individual participant) practices, demand-side (employer) practices, and practices relating to retention and advancement.

SUPPLY-SIDE: HELPING INDIVIDUALS FIND GOOD WORK

Getting the right participant mix. Because many providers, especially those offering longer-term training (e.g., JARC, Greater West Town), receive many more applicants than can be enrolled, they face difficult choices regarding who to enroll. Although all of the JTED provider organizations are dedicated to helping the hardest-to-employ and most economically disadvantaged individuals, the providers also realize the value of serving a mix of participants with varying levels of job readiness. This helps the provider better achieve its performance outcomes and cultivates peer motivation and support in the classroom. Effective providers try to mix, for example, dislocated workers who have significant work experience with younger participants lacking such a work history. This allows providers to achieve solid performance outcomes while still reaching the populations most in need of their assistance.

Complementing occupational skills with basic and soft skills. Most individuals served by JTED providers face multiple skills deficiencies, including basic skills such as reading and math, and soft skills such as teamwork and customer service. JTED providers generally offer both occupationally-oriented skill development and soft skills modules to help participants prepare for the work environment. Some organizations, such as Greater West Town, dedicate significant

portions of the curriculum (10 to 20 percent) to basic skills such as reading and math taught contextually, in part because of the availability of WIA Title II Adult Education funds for this type of training.⁹

Networking with other community-based providers. Many JTED participants face multiple barriers to securing and retaining stable employment, so JTED providers use whatever discretionary resources they can find to offer individuals transportation stipends, clothing for interviews, and incidentals such as eyeglasses. JTED providers also sometimes partner with other community-based organizations to provide support services. For example, JARC works with Greater Chicago Food Depository to offer its students daily meals at no cost. In other cases, these organizational relationships form extended case management networks, since many JTED participants are recruited through referrals from other community-based organizations, which continue to maintain ties with those individuals. Networked, community-based social support allows JTED providers to focus on their core competency of workforce training, while at the same time providing the support services their clients need to succeed in the training and later on the job.

DEMAND-SIDE: WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH EMPLOYERS

Combining “strong ties” and “loose ties” with employers. To be effective, JTED providers need to cast a wide net within the business community, drawing on intermediaries such as Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) groups, trade associations, and chambers of commerce to cultivate new contacts. These “loose ties” are most instrumental for job placements and identifying new opportunities for contract training. Yet most JTED providers also develop trusting relationships, or “strong ties,” over time with a

⁹ Recent studies in Washington and Massachusetts found that contextual basic skills training yields better results than traditional adult basic skills training. See Stoll et al., 2003; and Kevin M. Hollenbeck and Wei-Jang Huang, *Net Impact and Benefit-Cost Estimates of the Workforce Development System in Washington State* (Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, Upjohn Institute Technical Report No. TRO3-018, 2003).

core set of businesses. These business partners hire multiple JTED graduates, contract for onsite training, and/or participate in industry advisory panels to the programs. Organizations that target a specific occupational or industrial group are perhaps best positioned to develop these strong ties, because knowledge accrued through interactions with similar firms allows them to relate better to those firms' particular needs.

Having instructors who “speak the language of business.”

One of the biggest challenges for all job training organizations — especially those in the public and nonprofit sectors — is establishing and maintaining credibility with business partners. Many JTED providers have instructors with significant industry or private-sector experience, which helps those organizations interact with business partners and “speak their language.” This helps providers to frame their relationships with employers in terms of identifying and meeting their workforce needs, rather than simply hiring program graduates or selling training services. These instructors also bring their knowledge of the business environment into the classroom, which helps participants to better understand the industry where they will work after program completion.

Coordinating incumbent training and training for placement.

The complementary relationship between contract training through JTED Category I and training for placement through JTED Category II is underappreciated. Although only a relatively small number of JTED providers, such as JARC and OAI, offer both types of programs, evidence suggests that knowledge acquired onsite through contract training (JTED Category I training for incumbent workers) helps providers to better understand the human resource requirements of their client companies, which feeds into more responsive and relevant training programs for unemployed job seekers (Category II for unemployed workers). By offering both types of programs to a company, a provider can offer a pipeline of workers to employers.

PROMOTING RETENTION AND ADVANCEMENT

Maintaining ongoing relationships with graduates after placement.

Although JTED only requires providers to track participant outcomes for 90 days, many providers maintain relationships for much longer. This can be done actively, for example, OAI calls and/or sends postcards to program graduates for up to a year after placement. In other cases, providers offer placement resources such as job banks and job clubs to program graduates in search of new or better jobs. However, funding cuts to JTED and other sources have severely limited the capacity of many providers to do post-placement tracking and other activities geared toward retention and advancement.

Mediating between workers and employers. JTED providers commonly play an important role in mediating the employment relationship between their program graduates and the businesses where they have been placed. Particularly in the first several weeks of employment, when the likelihood of attrition is greatest, JTED providers frequently help to resolve misunderstandings that arise between managers and workers. This requires trusting relationships between employers and providers, who are placed in the sometimes difficult position of reconciling an employer's needs with the interests or privacy of a program graduate (e.g., when family or personal issues result in absenteeism or lateness).

VI. CONCLUSION

More than eight years after the inception of the JTED program, this report seeks to assess the program's value as part of the State of Illinois' workforce and economic development toolkit. In particular, it evaluates whether the program fulfills its primary objectives of helping disadvantaged individuals succeed in the labor market while promoting economic and community development goals. Additionally, the report seeks to understand what aspects of the JTED program make it innovative and lead toward successful outcomes.

The findings of this evaluation strongly indicate that the program is effective in accomplishing its intended goals. This success can be attributed to JTED providers' ability to work effectively on both the demand side — understanding and responding to employers' skill needs — and the supply side — translating employer needs into successful training programs for job placement and advancement. And, importantly, JTED supports organizations that are grounded in the communities they serve.

Few training programs outside of Illinois take such a community-business partnership approach to linking workforce, business, and community development. Most programs for disadvantaged job seekers provide job search assistance, which may help participants find jobs, but typically do not enable them improve their earnings, nor are they generally responsive to the needs of employers. Illinois should be applauded for establishing this innovative program and encouraged to expand its reach for the benefit of the state's workers, employers, and communities.

“The findings of this evaluation strongly indicate that the program is effective in accomplishing its intended goals.”

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

This evaluation assesses employment and earnings outcomes for graduates of JTED-funded training programs. For JTED Category II (disadvantaged job seeker) programs, the report presents a “matched pair” analysis of outcomes for JTED participants compared to demographically and socio-economically similar non-participants and analyzes outcomes for certain individuals receiving JTED-sponsored training in fiscal years 2001 through 2003. This form of quasi-experimental evaluation has been used recently to analyze workforce training outcomes in the states of Washington and Massachusetts.¹⁰ For Category I programs, this report presents a simple analysis of quarterly earnings trends of JTED training graduates.

This analysis followed these steps:

1. Collect demographic data for JTED participants

With the approval of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Chicago Jobs Council (CJC) contacted all organizations that received JTED funding in program years 2001 to 2003, asking for their participation in the evaluation. Toward this end, CJC asked JTED grantees to provide, for each program participant, demographic data (age, gender, race/ethnicity, education level), program participation data (dates of program entry and completion, placement date), and personal identifiers (i.e., social security numbers) for matching purposes. Because DCEO does not

require JTED providers to collect demographic data on participants, only 15 of 26 providers were able to respond, providing information on approximately 1,900 participants.¹¹ These 15 JTED providers served a majority (60 percent) of total Category II participants from 2001 to 2003, and a significant share (37 percent) of Category I participants. Because information was not obtained from all JTED providers, the results of this analysis cannot be considered exhaustive, but rather suggestive of the overall program impacts.

2. Match JTED participant data with Unemployment Insurance wage records

Once CJC collected and organized JTED participant demographic data, it transferred the data set to the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University (NIU) under a data sharing agreement between DCEO and the Illinois Department of Economic Security (IDES). NIU matched the participant demographic data to quarterly earnings data from the unemployment insurance wage record file, resulting in an earnings history for JTED participants spanning from two years prior to program entry through the first quarter of 2005.¹²

3. Match JTED records with records of similar Employment Service program participants

NIU used demographic and earnings characteristics of JTED participants to match Category II participants to similar individuals registered in the Illinois Employment Service (ES) database.¹³ ES participants register at the Illinois

¹⁰ Hollenbeck and Huang, 2003; and Stoll et al., 2003.

¹¹ These organizations include: Association House, CABET, Central States SER, Chicago Women in Trades, Chinese American Service League, Chinese Mutual Aid, Council for Jewish Elderly, Greater West Town Project, STRIVE/Harborquest, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Jane Addams Resource Corporation, OAI, Inc., Polish American Association, Transitions of Western Illinois, and YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago.

¹² By law, all employers with employees eligible for unemployment insurance (UI) are required to report to the state where each employee is employed his or her quarterly earnings. States use this information to calculate unemployment insurance benefits. The data for this study were provided by the Illinois Department of Employment Security through an agreement with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs.

¹³ A total of 1,360 JTED Category II participants were included in the matching algorithm; 228 out of 1,588 Category II records (including all the data from Council for Jewish Elderly) were excluded due to incomplete demographic data.

Department of Employment Security offices, many of which are located at the Illinois Employment and Training Centers (IETCs, also sometimes referred to as the Illinois One Stop Centers). The ES program, funded through Wagner-Peyser, uses Illinois Skills Match (ISM) to quickly match qualified applicants to employers to fill job openings. In selecting candidates for the openings, ISM identifies qualified persons based on the job requirements and refers applicants who face barriers to employment to support services. Very few — less than one percent — of the individuals in the comparison group were referred to WIA-funded or other training options; most were given job search and placement assistance.

This comparison group offers the advantage of a large and relatively diverse pool from which to draw matches. For example, the ES comparison population for the approximately 1,250 Chicago-based JTED participants was over 500,000. Data was drawn for all ES registrants from the same labor markets as JTED participants and merged with UI wage data, as described in Step 2.

The matching takes the form of a “nearest neighbor” algorithm that pairs JTED participants with five individuals from the ES database based on the following demographic and socioeconomic characteristics:¹⁴

- Age (date of birth)
- Race/ethnicity
- Gender
- Education level
- Local labor market
- Earnings and employment history
- Reference period (to minimize time-specific labor market factors)

Earnings and employment history variables include average pre-program earnings in the eight quarters prior to program entry (registration for ES population), number of quarters with earnings, earnings trend, presence/amount of pre-program earnings “dip” (e.g., for dislocated workers), and earnings variance.

Once NIU completed the matching process, the data set was stripped of personal identifiers and transferred to the University of Illinois at Chicago Center for Urban Economic Development for analysis.

4. Analyze labor market outcomes of JTED participants

Earnings and employment outcomes for JTED Category II participants are presented primarily in relation to their matched pairs from the ES registration. Because NIU matched each JTED participant with five ES registrants, the mean of those five observations was taken to represent the comparison level of pre- and post-program earnings. The earnings impact of program participation is measured in terms of the “difference-in-difference” — that is, the change in the difference between each JTED participant and his or her respective comparison value between the baseline and post-program periods. The baseline value is calculated in quarters three to eight prior to program entry (to avoid the pre-program dip in earnings), and post-program values in quarters three to six (short-term) and quarters nine to 12 (long-term) after program exit. The results presented in this report are given primarily for JTED program graduates. A total of 1,094 JTED graduates had at least six quarters of post-program earnings data; only 394 had a full 12 quarters (three years) of post-program earnings data available.

¹⁴ For a more technical description of the matching algorithm, and the models used to estimate the results presented in this report, see Greg Schrock and Davis Jenkins, “Estimating the Earnings and Employment Impacts of Participation in the Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) Program” (working paper, Center for Urban Economic Development, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, January 2006).

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B: JTED GRANTEES 2000-2004

FY 2000

Organization	Location	Field(s)	JTED Category	Award
The Center	Des Plaines	General manufacturing	I	\$270,990
Chicago Commons	Chicago	Metalworking	II	\$125,000
Vietnamese Association	Chicago	Electronics	II	\$55,000
Greater West Town	Chicago	Woodworking; shipping and receiving	II	\$198,000
Bridge Communities	Glen Ellyn	Healthcare — data entry/file clerk	II	\$154,194
The Center	Des Plaines	Housekeepers; food service; stewards	II	\$101,672
Instituto del Progreso Latino	Chicago	Machine operators	II	\$125,000
Sertoma Centre, Inc.	Alsip	Security officers	II	\$190,000
STRIVE - Chicago Employment Service, Inc./Suburban Job Link	Chicago	Healthcare — medical records	II	\$123,600
New Start	Springfield	Nurse assistant — CNA	II	\$78,682

FY 2001

Organization	Location	Field(s)	JTED Category	Award
The Center	Des Plaines	Manufacturing; hospitality	I	\$200,000
Promised Land Employment Service	Rockford	Hospitality	I	\$96,020
Operation ABLE	Chicago	Vending machine technician	II	\$187,396
Greater West Town	Chicago	Woodworking; shipping and receiving	II	\$200,000
Erie Neighborhood House	Chicago	Banking	II	\$190,341
Howard Area Community Center	Chicago	Retail; manufacturing; telecom; child care	II	\$88,700
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago	Chicago	Banking	II	\$184,405
Commission on Economic Opportunity	Ford Heights	Power plant; recycling	II	\$167,832
Chinese Mutual Aid Association	Chicago	Healthcare	II	\$103,339
Jane Addams Resource Corporation	Chicago	Metalworking	II	\$104,400
Polish American Association	Chicago	Healthcare	II	\$171,930
OAI, Inc.	Chicago	Healthcare	II	\$200,000
STRIVE - Chicago Employment Service, Inc./Suburban Job Link	Chicago	Healthcare	II	\$193,500
Central States SER	Chicago	Healthcare	II	\$200,000
ASPIRA, Inc. of Illinois	Chicago	Janitorial services	II	\$133,670

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FY 2002

Organization	Location	Field(s)	JTED Category	Award
Jane Addams Resource Corporation	Chicago	Metalworking	I	\$93,876
OAI, Inc.	Chicago	Manufacturing	I	\$147,837
The Center	Des Plaines	Hospitality	I	\$196,480
Council for Jewish Elderly	Chicago	Healthcare (CNA)	II	\$168,250
OAI, Inc.	Chicago	Healthcare	II	\$202,935
Central States SER	Chicago	Healthcare (CNA)	II	\$183,092
Association House	Chicago	Printing Technicians	II	\$196,535
Greater West Town	Chicago	Woodworking; shipping and receiving	II	\$297,700
Instituto del Progreso Latino	Chicago	Manufacturing	II	\$66,000
Goodwill Industries	Peoria	Computer skills	II	\$35,580
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago	Chicago	Computer skills	II	\$174,074
Commission on Economic Opportunity	Ford Heights	Power plant; recycling	II	\$119,976
CABET	Chicago	Hospitality	II	\$150,000
Chinese American Service League	Chicago	Food service	II	\$159,295
Lakefront SRO Corporation	Chicago	Call center	II	\$124,080
Southside Office of Concern	Peoria	Healthcare; food service	II	\$60,000
Transitions of Western Illinois	Quincy	Housekeeping	II	\$190,118
United Cerebral Palsy of Chicago	Chicago	Hospitality; clerical	II	\$131,012
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago	Chicago	Culinary	II	\$177,760

FY 2003

Organization	Location	Field(s)	JTED Category	Award
OAI, Inc.	Chicago	Manufacturing	I	\$189,200
The Center	Des Plaines	Hospitality	I	\$118,000
Chicago Women in Trades	Chicago	Construction	II	\$190,000
Polish American Association	Chicago	Healthcare — CNA	II	\$200,000
OAI, Inc.	Chicago	Pharmacy technician	II	\$195,000
Greater West Town	Chicago	Woodworking; shipping and receiving	II	\$260,000
Jane Addams Resource Corporation	Chicago	Metalworking	II	\$120,000
Chinese American Service League	Chicago	Food service	II	\$170,000

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FY 2004

Organization	Location	Field(s)	JTED Category	Award
La Voz Latina Hispanic Resource Center*	Rockford	Automated systems worker	I	\$60,000
Prologue, Inc.*	Chicago	Healthcare technician	I	\$97,500
Jane Addams Resource Corporation*	Chicago	Metalworking	I	\$155,500
OAI, Inc.*	Chicago	Manufacturing — machine operators	I	\$140,000
Illinois Manufacturing Foundation*	Chicago	Waste system treatment operators; electroplater	I	\$112,500
The Center*	Des Plaines	Hospitality	I	\$127,500
Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center	Chicago	Misc. office	II	\$48,000
Commission on Economic Opportunity	Ford Heights	Misc. industrial	II	\$39,000
Chicago Women in Trades	Chicago	Construction	II	\$55,000
OAI, Inc.	Chicago	Healthcare — various	II	\$111,000
Two Rivers Council Foundation**	Quincy	Healthcare — CNA	II	\$98,000
Polish American Association	Chicago	Healthcare — CNA	II	\$81,000
Central States SER	Chicago	Healthcare — administrative	II	\$78,000
Spanish Coalition for Jobs, Inc.	Chicago	Healthcare — various	II	\$67,000
Council for Jewish Elderly	Chicago	Healthcare — CNA	II	\$54,000
Greater West Town**	Chicago	Woodworking; shipping and receiving	II	\$259,500
Jane Addams Resource Corporation	Chicago	Metalworking	II	\$105,000
LEED Council	Chicago	Manufacturing — various	II	\$80,000
Instituto del Progreso Latino	Chicago	Manufacturing — machine operators	II	\$22,500
Jobs for Youth	Chicago	General office	II	\$97,500
CABET, Inc.	Chicago	Service	II	\$90,000
CARA Program	Chicago	Finance and banking	II	\$60,000
Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois, Inc.	Peoria	Office — account representative	II	\$30,000
Chinese American Service League**	Chicago	Food preparation	II	\$147,500
Suburban Job-Link Corporation	Chicago	Packaging	II	\$102,000
Transitions of Western Illinois	Quincy	Misc. service	II	\$96,000
Sertoma Centre, Inc.	Alsip	Security guards	II	\$57,000
Belle Court Place Organization, Inc.	Harvey	Misc. service	II	\$48,000
Messiah-St.Bartholomew Episcopal Church	Chicago	Food preparation	II	\$48,000
Chicago Anti-Hunger Federation	Chicago	Food preparation	II	\$37,500
Chicagoland Youth and Adult Training Center	Chicago	Auto technician	II	\$22,500

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