



Frontline Focus Flyer

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR WORKFORCE PROFESSIONALS



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Mission

The Frontline Focus Training Institute delivers trainings and resources to help frontline workforce professionals build their capacity to better meet the employment needs of disadvantaged job seekers, low-income workers and employers. We currently offer seven different trainings in three programmatic areas.

Thank You . . .

to our funders! With the generous support of the Grand Victoria Foundation and the JPMorgan Chase Foundation, CJC is able to keep fees for training courses affordable for our Frontline Focus participants.



Behind the Frontline . . .

As this fiscal year drew to a close and CJC celebrated its 28th anniversary, the Frontline Focus Training Institute had much to be proud of. Over the past year, we doubled the number of courses we offer, training 453 people from 177 unique organizations. This represents an 81 percent increase in number of participants served over last year. Additionally, we added two new courses: Working with Out-of-School Youth and Working with Job Seekers with Disabilities; adopted a new logo; and took the first steps towards developing a business plan to help guide our growth.

This next year, we have several exciting things planned! At the repeated request of our past participants, we will be offering a new course on retention strategies this winter. This multi-session course will focus on how to keep job-seekers employed and how to keep employers coming back to you to fulfill their hiring needs. Additionally, for those job developers who have taken our past classes and are now in supervisory positions, we will be offering a multi-session management and leadership course next spring. We have over twenty trainings planned for this fiscal year, in addition to our Annual Holiday Reunion. We look forward to seeing you around CJC!

Despite the expanded services we were able to offer this past year, we are well aware that training may feel like more of a luxury than a necessity during these uncertain economic times. With the state's budget in crisis and many grant-makers cutting back, nonprofit staff are being asked to do more with less. Providing training at a low cost has always been part of the Frontline Focus mission. During these lean times, please don't hesitate to let us know how we can support you. If there are new types of training or resources we can provide to help your organizations better serve clients, we want to know. As always, we're here to support your efforts to serve disadvantaged job seekers and people living in poverty.



CJC Staff at 2009 Annual Meeting

INDUSTRY CORNER: Nonprofit Social Enterprise



In recent years, many nonprofit organizations have embraced the idea of social enterprise as a way to generate both unrestricted funds for their organizations and provide jobs for some of their hardest-to-serve clients. During these tough economic times, the earned income generated by social ventures can sometimes be enough to help an organization stay afloat. Additionally, social enterprises have the potential to “build and sustain real jobs while providing wages, career tracks and supportive services for people who have substantial barriers to employment.”² In Chicago alone, several nonprofits have successfully adopted the social enterprise model; the organizations below are just a sample. If

you have clients interested in a career or job training in any of these areas, please contact the organizations for more information.

Blue Sky Inn www.blueskyinn.org

This employment program provides homeless and at-risk youth with employment at Blue Sky Bakery & Cafe. Youth gain valuable experience in cooking, baking, customer service and cash-handling. In addition, youth participate in a weekly Job Club that addresses “soft skills” such as teamwork, conflict resolution, interpersonal communication, accountability, critical thinking and problem solving.

Bright Endeavors www.brightendeavors.org

Through their transitional jobs program, Bright Endeavors manufactures a natural candle line called Dreambean Candles. In addition to this paid, on-the-job work experience, participants have access to life skills development guidance, workplace communication skills development, counseling and recovery services, and one on one job coaching and job placement.

Cafe Too www.cafetoo.org

As a social enterprise of Inspiration Corporation, Cafe Too is a 13-week restaurant skills training program designed to help students learn basic culinary skills and concepts. Trainees gain hands-on experience preparing and serving meals to the paying public at the Cafe Too restaurant during the internship period. Each student is tested to receive a City of Chicago food service sanitation management certificate at the end of the program.

Cleanslate www.cleanslatechicago.org

As a social enterprise of The Cara Program, Cleanslate provides transitional jobs related to neighborhood beautification, including cleaning sidewalks, parkways, public gardens and vacant lots. All Cleanslate participants are individuals affected by homelessness and poverty.

Growing Home www.growinghomeinc.org

Through its innovative agricultural program, participants work through a curriculum that focuses on skills such as planting, cultivating, and organic harvesting, as well as learn about food and nutrition education, and basic life skills, including personal money management. Participants have an opportunity to sell their food at local farmer’s markets around the city.

Sweet Beginnings LLC www.beelinestore.com

As a transitional jobs program of the North Lawndale Employment Network, Sweet Beginnings manufactures the Beeline brand of skin care products made from raw honey. On-the-job training includes inventory control, basic sales and marketing skills, product manufacturing and shipping and receiving. Participants are primarily those who have been incarcerated.

The Enterprising Kitchen www.theenterprisingkitchen.org

Through this six month transitional jobs program, low-income women receive life skills seminars, computer literacy training, personal financial literacy, and individual career counseling while learning how to manufacture natural soap and bath products. Participants are paid for their time and are placed in outside permanent employment upon completion.

WomanCraft www.womancraft.net

As a social enterprise of Heartland Human Care Services, WomanCraft uses recycled office paper and reclaimed flowers to create unique, sustainable, handmade paper products. WomanCraft’s permanent artisan positions offer union employment while the transitional jobs positions are part-time, short-term paid positions. WomanCraft serves women who face a variety of barriers to employment.

QUICK DEFINITION:

“A social enterprise is a revenue-generating venture that provides a nonprofit with unrestricted funds and enhances the organization’s core mission.”¹

MORE RESOURCES:

- www.se-alliance.org
- www.sereporter.com

1 City of Chicago. <http://egov.cityofchicago.org/>

2 *Ibid.*

Special Thanks to our Video Stars

At our Annual Meetings, CJC traditionally summarizes the past year's accomplishments with a power point presentation. This year, we decided to do something different. Instead of us describing the ways in which we touch lives, we asked some of our key stakeholders to talk about the role CJC has played in their day to day work. These interviews were edited into a video montage and played at the meeting. Special thanks to Halimah Jackson and Jennifer Miller-Rehfeldt for their willingness to be interviewed about Frontline Focus! The full video can be found online here.

If you want to become a member of CJC . . .

Please visit cjc.net/membership/

Or contact Cheryl Hester at: cheryl@cjc.net
312.252.0460 x108

As a CJC member, you will have the opportunity to:

- Receive discounted rates on Frontline Focus trainings
- Attend CJC's Member Meetings free of charge
- Promote your services through CJC's online Member Directory
- Vote on members of CJC's Board of Directors
- Post job openings at your organization on CJC's website

Become a fan of CJC on FACEBOOK!



Alberto Ortega honored as CJC Volunteer of the Year

At CJC's Annual Meeting on June 19, Alberto Ortega was honored as CJC's 5th Annual Betty Wilhoite Volunteer of the Year. An alum of our flagship course, *Skills & Strategies for Working with Employers*, Alberto has become an indispensable part of our training team. As a veteran job developer, Alberto helps us update our curriculum to incorporate best practices, develops new material for our courses related to communicating with employers, and helps us find new ways to collaborate with like-minded organizations. For those of you that have participated in our courses, his stories about hot sauce, Japanese hornets, and faulty plumbing may well be one of the things you remember most! His optimism is both inspiring and contagious; we are lucky to have him on our team. We look forward to continuing to work with Alberto in the coming years.



American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Youth Ready Chicago Summer Employment Program



In February, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in an effort to jumpstart the economy and create millions of jobs. As part of this stimulus package, funding was earmarked to provide increased summer employment opportunities for the neediest youth across the nation. In Chicago, the Youth Ready Chicago program was created to help distribute this

funding. The goal of the program is to engage up to 8,000 Chicago youth between the ages of 14 and 24 in paid work experiences. The program will operate during a four month period from June 1 through September 30, 2009.

The funding is being distributed through the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS). Through a competitive RFP proposal, DFSS awarded contracts to 34 organizations to serve as "hubs" for youth employment. Through the hub program model, these 34 agencies are responsible for recruiting youth, registering them into WIA, establishing and connecting with work sites, and placing youth into summer jobs. Hubs range from After School Matters to Chicago Public Schools to La Casa Norte to the Museum of Science and Industry. Hubs can place youth in their own organizations, as well as in the over 200 other organizations that have applied to be worksites. Worksites range from a small salon employing one youth to a YMCA camp employing 15 youth to the South Shore Drill Team employing up to 110 youth to assist and instruct kids in drill and dance techniques.

This is the first time in several years that the city has received federal funding to subsidize summer youth employment. This means that actual businesses and community based organizations who employ youth are *not* responsible for paying their wages. All youth served must be WIA eligible (low-income). The age for youth WIA eligibility in this program was increased to 24 years, allowing a larger number of teens and young adults to participate. "Work Readiness" is the only WIA performance measure that must be met in this program. If youth remain WIA registered beyond the summer months, then all WIA performance measures must be applied.

Most youth enrolled in the program have already begun their jobs, taking advantage of this unique opportunity. For more information about Youth Ready Chicago, please visit www.youthreadychicago.org. For more information about ARRA at a national, state and local level, please visit www.cjc.net/resources/arra.php.

Upcoming Events

Office Closed

Working Group Meeting
9:30 - 11:30

July 2009						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2009						
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2009						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Job Developer Orientation
(Chicago)
9:00 - 4:00

Job Developer Orientation
(Aurora)
9:00-4:00

Working with Job Seekers with Criminal Backgrounds
9:00-4:00

Working with Job Seekers with Criminal Backgrounds
9:00-4:00

Skills & Strategies for Working with Employers
Time Varies

Introduction to the Workforce Investment Act
9:00-12:30

Working with Out-of-School Youth
9:00-4:00

Course Descriptions

Job Developer Orientation (\$75 members/\$115 non-members)

This full-day workshop is designed for new workforce development staff who work directly with employers to create opportunities for job seekers. Participants will be introduced to key skills, strategies and concepts for reaching out to employers, making good placements, and working effectively in their new role as job developers.

Working with Job Seekers with Criminal Backgrounds (\$190 members/\$275 non-members)

This multi-session course focuses on specific information, resources and strategies that help job developers work more effectively with clients who have criminal backgrounds. Topics covered include: barriers ex-offenders face when reentering the workforce; understanding employment discrimination and navigating the public benefits, rights, and legal services available to ex-offenders; dealing with expungement and sealing of records; and addressing employer concerns about hiring candidates with criminal backgrounds.

Skills & Strategies for Working with Employers (\$315 members/\$450 non-members)

This multi-session course is designed for entry-level job developers. During this hands-on, interactive course, participants will learn practical skills and strategies for reaching out to employers and making effective placements. The course will focus on how to build and maintain relationships with employers, how to make good job matches, and how to work most effectively as a job developer.

Intro to WIA (\$50 member/\$75 non-member)

This half day workshop focuses on raising awareness and understanding of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and providers' role in the workforce development system. Topics covered include: the five goals of the federal legislation; mandated one stop partners and services; state and local governance including allocation processes; definitions and examples of types of customers and services provided through WIA; and information about performance measures.

Working with Out-of-School Youth (\$75 members/\$115 non-members)

This half-day workshop focuses on working with out-of-school youth. Topics covered include: addressing youth barriers to employment; understanding the specific challenges in working with "millennial" youth; understanding and addressing employers' concerns in hiring youth; and challenging the stereotypes and barriers job developers bring to the table when working with youth.

Working Group (free)

This group meets the second Tuesday of every month. Through discussion of local, state and federal workforce and economic development, education and welfare policies, the group works to influence policy creation and implementation and monitor local experiences to effect change. This group is free and open to all workforce development professionals. Please contact Liz Bomgaars at liz@cj.net for more information.



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