



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 nine different trainings in four programmatic areas.

Thank You . . . to our funders!

- Alphawood Foundation
- Chicago Tribune Charities, a Fund of the McCormick Foundation
- Fry Foundation
- JPMorgan Chase
- Polk Bros. Foundation

With this generous operational support, CJC is able to keep fees for training courses affordable for Frontline Focus participants.

Behind the Frontline . . .

Happy New Year! With the close of 2010 and the arrival of 2011, CJC and the Frontline Focus Training Institute have much to reflect upon and exciting new opportunities to share. The run-up to the holidays was jam-packed with trainings and Frontline Workforce Association events. From October through December, we offered nine different trainings, serving 115 people. Additionally, we partnered with the Chicago Housing Authority and The United Way to offer two separate trainings for their workforce development grantees. Looking ahead, we have several courses coming up, including our multi-session *Working with Job Seekers with Criminal Records* in February and *Skills & Strategies for Working with Employers* in March. Visit www.cjc.net/frontline for more information and to register.

Over the past few months, the Frontline Workforce Association (FWA) also hosted several events. For those of you that aren't familiar, FWA provides free professional development and networking opportunities for frontline workforce development professionals. The informational meeting in November focused on developing marketing materials for employers. In December, the group hosted a social hour in the South Loop at the Weather Mark Tavern. Future meetings and social events will be held in different neighborhoods around Chicago. We hope you can join us! For more information, please visit our website, by clicking www.cjc.net/frontline/FWA.php. If you are interested in joining the steering committee for FWA to help determine future meeting topics and social events, please contact Ellen Johnson at ellen@cjc.net.

Finally, Frontline Focus is doing some research and needs your help! Specifically, we want to know what you think about the timing, cost, and content of our current trainings, and gather your thoughts on new curriculum ideas, e-learning, and certification. Please click [here](#) to access the survey. It will take about 10 minutes to complete. Your opinions are incredibly valuable to us and we want to reward you for your time. So, if you provide your name and email address at the end of the survey, you will be entered to win one of three \$25 Starbucks gift cards. Thanks in advance for your help!



Participants at the November FWA meeting

Chicago's Workforce Development Strategy: What the Next Mayor Needs to Know

To Certify or Not
To Certify?

FFTI is in the process of determining whether to adjust certain aspects of our training model in order to offer a nationally recognized job developer certification. As such, we are conducting a series of focus groups to help us make this decision. If you are interested in sharing your opinion on the topic of certification, please contact Ellen Johnson by clicking ellen@cjc.net. Your input is important and we want to hear from you!

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

Please visit
cjc.net/membership/

Or contact
America Lewis at:
america@cjc.net
312.252.0460 x800

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

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With the election of a new mayor for Chicago on the horizon, nonprofit and advocacy organizations like CJC have the unique opportunity to help shape candidates' visions for a 21st century workforce development strategy. This strategy must recognize that businesses will continue to locate and expand in Chicago only if there is a trained workforce to respond to evolving skill needs. Additionally, workforce development must be prioritized as a public safety issue with the recognition that public safety depends on economic opportunity. Further, strong Mayoral leadership is necessary to ensure that Chicago is well positioned to leverage upcoming federal, state, and local funding opportunities. Because workforce development is such an important issue for our next mayor, CJC has created the following recommendations:



Prioritize the Individual: Unemployed Chicagoans Depend on Workforce Development Services

Annual funding for the workforce development field is modest, enabling the system to only serve a relatively small number of Chicagoans each year. Further, the current system does not adequately serve those with significant barriers to employment, such as ex-offenders, out-of-school youth, and public housing residents. It is the Mayor's responsibility to prioritize the provision of targeted services for the most disadvantaged job seekers and use every available resource to ensure that Chicago is adequately preparing all of its residents to participate fully in the labor market.

Prioritize the Community: Communities Thrive with Locally-Based Services

Employed individuals support communities and their economies. This tie between workforce development and economic development suggests the need for a coordinated strategy between the two. Chicago would greatly benefit from a more explicit strategy around the integration of workforce and economic development, especially at the community level. Better integrating workforce and economic development, as well as ensuring that the communities across Chicago have the capacity to provide needed employment services to residents will lead to more vibrant communities. The Mayor should ensure that a person with decision-making authority within the administration is charged with achieving these goals through increased collaboration across City departments, community-based organizations, and others engaged in relevant work.

Prioritize System Reform: Aligned Systems Result in Effective and Efficient Public Services

The current system of multiple administrators and different performance goals has led to poor alignment across the education, workforce development, and economic development systems. However, there is a mechanism in place that seeks to better align the investments of various workforce development funding: the Chicago Workforce Investment Council (CWIC). As Chair of the CWIC Board, the Mayor should continue existing system reform and human capital development efforts. The next Mayor should also enhance the transparency of CWIC activities and develop a series of community-based public meetings to educate residents about CWIC, and seek their feedback. Additionally, the new mayor should ensure that the CWIC Board is informed by the needs of community members by adding three representatives from community based organizations to the board.

As providers in the workforce development field, your voice matters. We encourage you to use these priorities as talking points to persuade the next mayor to adopt strategies that support service providers and ensure that all Chicagoans have the tools and skills they need to contribute to the city's economic prosperity. See CJC's full report by clicking [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Office Closed

Working Group Meeting
9:30 - 11:30am

January 2011						
S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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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					

February 2011						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28					

March 2011						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

How to Launch an Employer Advisory Council
(hosted by the Frontline Workforce Association)
January 20, 3:00-5:00pm
at Jobs for Youth

Job Developer Orientation
9:00am-4:00pm

Working with Job Seekers with Criminal Records
9:00am-4:00pm

Skills & Strategies for Working with Employers
9:00am-4:00pm

Introduction to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA-101)
9:00am-12:00pm

Course Descriptions

How to Launch an Employer Advisory Council
(hosted by the Frontline Workforce Association)
(free--registration required)
This meeting is intended to help front-line professionals launch (or improve) an employer advisory council for their organizations. Establishing such a council can deepen the relationships you currently have with employers and provide you with valuable insights.

Job Developer Orientation
(\$75 members/\$115 non-members)
In this full-day workshop, new workforce development staff 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 Records
(\$190 members/\$275 non-members)
This three day training focuses on specific information, resources and strategies to help employment staff work more effectively with job seekers with criminal records. Specific topics covered include: assessment, pitch-practice, understanding the criminal justice system, sealing and expungement.

Skills & Strategies for Working with Employers
(\$315 member/\$450 non-member)
During this 5-day course, frontline staff will learn practical skills and strategies for reaching out to employers and making effective placements. The course focuses on how to build and maintain relationships with employers, make matches, and work most effectively as a job developer.

Introduction 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.

Working Group
(free)
Held the second Tuesday of every month, this group meets to discuss local, state and federal workforce policies. The group is free and open to all workforce development professionals. Please contact Liz Bomgaars at liz@cjcn.net for more information.

All our trainings are held at the **Chicago Jobs Council** office located at:
29 E. Madison St., Suite 1700
Chicago, IL 60602

Please visit:
www.cjc.net/frontline
for more information and to register!



Chicago Jobs Council
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