

Workforce Development PROGRAM OUTCOME INFORMATION

July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Agency Mission and Description:

The mission of the Urban League is to enable African-Americans and other disadvantaged persons to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights.

Program Goal:

The goal of the Urban League's Workforce Development program is to provide job placement assistance, skills training and support to unemployed & the underemployed City of Chattanooga residents. Families that are economically strong are more stable and contribute to stable neighborhoods and communities. As Chattanooga's (and the Nation's) unemployment rate has improved, we have been able to better serve our clients and offer valuable links to local employers. The Urban League's Workforce Development program served 809 people last year and placed 383 (47%) in livable wage positions. The Urban League staff tracks clients for the first 90 days of employment; many employees began in contract positions and after 90 days become permanent with full benefits. The Urban League offers one-on-one job search assistance, job fairs, small group meetings with local employers, basic computer training and Internet access, and access to an 18-workstation computer lab for resume editing, job search, and application submission.

Impact Area:

Please indicate the impact area(s) the outcomes address.

Invest in Children and Youth - Early Childhood Education and Quality Youth Services

Building Stable Lives - Family stability in Basic Needs, Housing, Employment/Education and Support Services

Supporting the Most Vulnerable - Caring for elderly and disabled adults and children that cannot care for themselves

Outcome Objectives:

- *Offer job placement and training support to individuals in need with the goal of placing them in un-subsidized, living-wage employment.*
- *Provide skills training to unemployed or underemployed Hamilton County residents.*

Collection Method:

- *Offer job placement and training support to individuals in need.* Each person who visits the ULGC Workforce Development Department completes an application and extensive interview. This helps the Urban League staff to evaluate and assess the previous work history, any background check barriers, and determine the next steps such as documenting transferrable skills. Urban League staff track clients in an MS Access database with skills specified using “keywords”. This helps to identify candidates when matching them to employers’ needs. At the completion of each job fair and job information session, demographic and “customer satisfaction” information is collected. Because the Urban League staff pre-screens participants, it is not difficult to follow up after a job fair or information session continue the support relationship.
- *Provide skills training to unemployed or underemployed Hamilton County residents.* Attendance is collected at each training session, as is the use of the computer lab. All participants complete a sign in sheet and a session evaluation. Each client is administered a “customer service” feedback form which is used to improve services and identify trends in client need.

Results:

- *Offer job placement and training support to individuals in need.* During the year reported the Urban League staff worked with 809 persons. Forty-seven percent (383 people) were counseled and placed in jobs. Of the forty-seven percent placed, 84% (323 people) remained in their new job at the 90-day probation period benchmark. Increased retention is a positive milestone for employers. Many clients that visit the Urban League are in dire need of skills improvement and re-training beyond what the organization can offer. Building referral relationships with Chattanooga State (for Hi-Tech Training) The

LAUNCH program at the Bethlehem Center; (less-than-perfect backgrounds), Re-Start (GED completion and prep) TN Career Center; and Enterprise Center's Chattanooga Environmental Job Training Program (Environmental and Green Jobs Training) extends services to clients needing additional help and further training. The Enterprise Center program was hosted at the Urban League and our Workforce Development staff assisted graduates of the program with job placement services. Three hundred and ninety-three of our clients completed the Urban League's *Participant Satisfaction Survey* during the reporting period and the majority of them reported that our workforce development staff, volunteers and consultants were: professional, knowledgeable, courteous and helpful. During the same period, we documented 618 individual visits, related to workforce development and job search assistance, to our computer lab.

- *Provide skills training to unemployed or underemployed residents.* Two key elements of workforce development trainings are: understanding employee expectations and improving soft skills. Conflict resolution is also a key factor in sustainability. All workforce efforts are held in conjunction with private employers, human resource managers, faith based organizations and community partners. A critical component of the Urban League workforce development program involves putting employers and employees together in a structured setting, focused on employment. The Urban League offered four Job Information sessions so that job seekers could meet with employers one-on-one to talk about their company; present open positions, review clients' resumes and discuss qualities needed to land a particular position. This helps to build confidence; expedite the interview process and allows clients to tweak resumes for specific jobs. Our typical session enrolled 40 to 50 pre-screened participants. In the year reported EPB, Volkswagen, Cigna, Chattem, Orange Grove Centers, and many others co-hosted these sessions with the Urban League. The sessions led to about 50% of participants being interviewed and many of those were hired. During the year reported, the Urban League offered two large job fairs. We documented 250 - 300 pre-screened attendees at each of the large fairs. Over 20 companies participated in the fairs

including: Chattem, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Wal-Mart, BI-LO, Hamilton County 911, TVFCU, Orange Grove Center, US Xpress, T-Mobile Cigna, Komatsu, Volkswagen, Tennessee Valley Federal Credit Union, and Regions Bank.

Data Source:

The Urban League Workforce Development Staff collect data from the following sources: Intake Application, Intake Interview (pre placement), Follow-up In-person and Phone Interviews (post placement), Session Evaluation Forms, Computer Lab Usage Log, and Customer Service Feedback Forms

Comparative Data:

The Urban League workforce development staff uses the previous year's outcomes as a comparative benchmark. Each year we set out to place at 50% of the persons we reach in livable wage, unsubsidized employment. It is our desire to always achieve a better placement retention rate. The Tennessee Career Center located at East Gate Town Center compares most closely with the work we do. Like the Career Center we assist partners with recruiting efforts for training classes for Mature Workers, Environmental Job Training, computerized labor market information, Internet access, Workshops, How to's of Internet Job search, Resume building, and job placements. However, clients report that the Urban League offers a more personalized experience, because the organization is smaller and clients are allowed unlimited use of the computer lab for job searches; cover letters, resume creation and/or completing online applications. We offer more personalized skill trainings and many people prefer the Urban Leagues services because we are a smaller operation, with a national reputation. Many persons new to the City of Chattanooga look to us for help because they have accessed services at one of the other ninety-eight other Urban League Affiliates across the Country.