

MEMORANDUM

TO: Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness and Housing
FROM: HomeBase
RE: Innovative Models for Ending Homelessness through Employment
DATE: July 23, 2010

Background

For over twenty years, the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) has brought together homeless advocates and service providers to discuss and analyze how effective community-based services such as education programs, mental health and substance addiction treatment, soup kitchens, and employment projects are in meeting the needs of homeless individuals. In the past decade, the focus on addressing homelessness has been on housing access, stability and retention. However, the current political climate – including the focus on ending and preventing chronic homelessness, the threats facing cash benefits from entitlement programs, and the efforts to increase HUD Homeless Assistance funds to establish more permanent supportive housing rather than supportive services – has culminated in a strengthened push to develop employment opportunities for homeless individuals.

On January 19th 2007, the RSC discussed best practices in efforts to reduce chronic homelessness through employment strategies. The dialogue particularly focused on the “Work Fast” strategy, which pairs housing services and customized employment support. Today we will be looking at the range of innovative programs that have been developed to help persons experiencing homelessness, and how they are being funded in these tough economic times.

Where We Stand

The economic crisis that is currently facing the United States, and the subsequent rise in unemployment rates, has dramatically increased the need for effective employment programs that address skills training, job development and placement, and job retention. One of the most recent studies on homeless individuals, conducted in Sacramento in 2009, found that over 90% of homeless individuals interviewed were not working, despite the fact that 87.4% desired employment.¹ Of this unemployed population, 43% said their lack of training, interview skills, or education created a barrier to their finding a job.² Almost 40% commented that their appearance or lack of appropriate clothing prevented a successful job search.³ Forty-two percent said that the greatest barrier they faced was the fact that they were homeless.⁴

¹ Julia Acuña & Bob Erlenbusch, Homeless Employment Report: Findings and Recommendations (2009), <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/homelessemploymentreport/index.html>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

Additional research has suggested that job efforts are further hampered by many homeless individuals' difficulties with managing stress, independent living, and social interactions.⁵ Further problems can stem from an individual's lack of stable housing, financial resources, or prior vocational training.⁶ Complications in finding a job are further exacerbated by mental health and physical health problems, along with substance abuse disorders.⁷ Many homeless youth face additional obstacles, including a lack of education or vocational preparation.⁸ A daunting array of counterproductive and debilitating legal and practical barriers to employment and educational opportunities face homeless individuals who were formerly incarcerated.⁹ Moreover, many homeless individuals are on the wrong side of the "digital divide," meaning they are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with increasingly prevalent modern technology such as computers.¹⁰

Question to Consider:

- In addition to the list of burdens faced by homeless job seeking individuals enumerated above, what are some other obstacles that your clients face? What strategies do you implement to address those barriers?

Local Supportive Housing and Employment Programs

Research into employment opportunities for homeless individuals has found that supportive housing providers that also adopt employment and training programs are amongst the most successful agencies in helping clients find and keep jobs.

A study of several joint-housing programs, including Bay Area-based organizations Rubicon and Episcopal Community Services (ECS), found that such programs greatly benefit participants without resulting in prohibitive costs and burdensome expenses.¹¹ Sample participants earned between 12 and 22% more than they would have otherwise, and those gains continued long after participation in the programs ended.¹² Those enrolled in housing programs with employment assistance components became less dependent on SSI/SSDI, general assistance, and veteran benefits payments.¹³ The study also suggested that where governments fund programs through mental health

⁵ David Long et al., *Employment and Income Supports for Homeless People 3* (2007), <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/homelessness/symposium07/long/report.pdf>.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Roberta Meyers-Peeples, *National Blueprint for Reentry: Model Policies To Promote The Successful Reentry of Individuals with Criminal Records Through Employment and Education*, Legal Action Center, National H.I.R.E., October 2008.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *See generally* David A. Long & Jean M. Amendolia, *Next Step: Jobs: Promoting Employment for Homeless People* (2003), <http://documents.csh.org/documents/pubs/NEXTSTEPJOBSFINALREPORT.pdf>.

¹² *Id.* at 21.

¹³ *Id.* at 23.

or vocational rehabilitation agencies, government budgets actually experience gains due to increased tax revenues, and reduced payments to supportive housing residents.¹⁴

The HomeWork Program in Boston, which included a study on the effectiveness of housing services and employment programs, found that within four years participants experienced significant increases in stable housing, employment, and job tenure.¹⁵ One of the agencies that participated in the HomeWork Program, Project Place, is discussed below.

Rubicon Programs Inc.

Rubicon Programs Inc. provides supportive housing for homeless persons, along with case management, life-skills training, and legal assistance.¹⁶ Rubicon also offers the possibility of employment many agency-run ventures, including a landscaping service.¹⁷ Rubicon has numerous employer partners, including Macy's, Best Buy Co., UC Berkeley, Wells Fargo Bank, Safeway, and the California Highway Patrol.¹⁸ Rubicon Programs also operates Career and One-Stop Centers throughout the Bay Area, with locations in Berkeley, Hayward, and Richmond, CA.

The Rubicon landscaping service has been contracted by a wide range of property owners, including commercial campuses, office parks, retail shopping centers, and city parks.¹⁹ Rubicon Landscaping offers a variety of installation services, including plant installation, irrigation installation, sports field installation, and erosion control.²⁰ At the Ford Store in San Leandro, Rubicon employees installed palm trees, provided irrigation, and planted a variety of trees and flower arrangements.²¹

As of 2008, Rubicon had helped over 40,000 individuals become self-sufficient through its employment and housing services.²² Rubicon Landscape Services began in 1978 as a small retail plant nursery, and has since expanded into a larger commercial landscape company with accounts all over the Bay Area, and with offices in Palo Alto, Menlo Park, San Francisco, Oakland, and Richmond.²³

¹⁴ *Id.* at 27-28.

¹⁵ See Commonwealth Corp., Center for Research and Evaluation, The Boston Private Industry Council: Homework Year 4 Quantitative Report (2007), <http://www.bostonpic.org/resources/homework-year-4-quantitative-report>.

¹⁶ Rubicon Programs: Our Integrated Services, <http://www.rubiconprograms.org/programs.html> (last visited June 20, 2010).

¹⁷ See *id.* at 13, see also Paul Parkhill, Vocationalizing the Homefront: Promising Practices in Place-Based Employment (2000), <http://documents.csh.org/documents/pubs/NEXTSTEPJOBSFINALREPORT.pdf>.

¹⁸ Rubicon Programs, Workforce Services, http://www.rubiconprograms.org/workforce_services.html (last visited July 22, 2010).

¹⁹ Rubicon Landscape, <http://rubiconlandscape.com/> (last visited July 22, 2010).

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ *Id.*

²² Fast Company, Social Capitalists: Rubicon Programs Inc., <http://www.fastcompany.com/social/2008/profiles/rubicon-programs.html> (last visited June 20, 2010).

²³ Rubicon Landscape, About Us, <http://rubiconlandscape.com/about.html> (last visited July 22, 2010).

The CHEFS Program (Episcopal Community Services)

Episcopal Community Services provides its clients with life-skills training services, and supports homeless individuals hoping to find and maintain stable employment and housing. Through Conquering Homelessness through Employment in Food Services, also known as the CHEFS program, homeless adults and formerly homeless disabled individuals can partake in an intensive culinary internship program complete with paid fieldwork and several months of continuing support.²⁴

Students enrolled in CHEFS, who frequently come from shelters, transitional housing, or directly off the street, learn about cooking methods, nutrition, and the importance of teamwork.²⁵ They are taught how to prepare ethnic, vegetarian and vegan meals, and are instructed by a variety of well-known chefs and culinary experts, including Michael Bauer of the San Francisco Chronicle. Bravo's "Top Chef" contestant Marissa Churchill is an outspoken supporter of CHEFS, and the program is frequently praised in local publications.²⁶ CHEFS clients intern at numerous well-known establishments, including La Boulange Bakery, 1300 on Fillmore, and Nopa.²⁷

The CHEFS Program offered by ECS is sponsored in part through private donations, and is one of many programs to receive financial assistance through HUD's Supportive Housing Program (SHP).²⁸

Buckelew Programs

Buckelew Programs offers a variety of employment services to its clients, including pre-employment counseling, vocational training, and job placement and coaching.²⁹ Those who turn to Buckelew for support and assistance can find help with the Blue Skies Personnel Services, through which clients are able to find work with local businesses and government agencies. Buckelew also provides clients with training and paid janitorial work through the Blue Skies Cleaning Services.³⁰

Just over a year ago, Buckelew Programs opened the Blue Skies Café on the Marin County Health and Wellness Campus in San Rafael, further expanding its already expansive range of employment services.³¹ At the Café, adults with mental illnesses are given the chance to develop a variety of important skills, including the ability to prepare specialty beverages, sell an array of foods, use the cash register, and understand and keep track of the Café's inventory and accounts.³²

²⁴ Episcopal Community Services (ECS) of San Francisco: CHEFS, <http://www.ecs-sf.org/programs/chefs.html> (last visited June 20, 2010).

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ ECS Newsroom, <http://ecs-sf.org/newsroom/ecsnews.html> (last visited July 6, 2010).

²⁷ ECS: Chefs, *supra* note 24.

²⁸ Fiscal Year 2009 Continuum of Care Competition: Homeless Assistance Award Report, www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/budget/2009/09_california_totals.xls (last visited June 20, 2010).

²⁹ Buckelew Services, Our Programs, <http://www.buckelew.org/2services/index.htm> (last visited July 6, 2010).

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ Press Release, Buckelew Programs, Blue Skies Café Grand Opening (March 10, 2009), <http://www.buckelew.org/4pressroom/pdfs/Blue%20Skies%20Opening%20Release%20March%202011.pdf>.

³² *Id.*

In addition to its commitment to provide environmentally sound services, the focus of Buckelew Programs is towards those persons experiencing mental health difficulties. According to Buckelew’s mission statement, “anyone of us can be impacted by a mental illness, and... if we are, we still deserve the opportunity for full participation in all aspects of our society.”³³ Through the support of Buckelew Programs, over 900 clients are able to live independently.³⁴ Buckelew employs roughly 120 individuals throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.³⁵

Questions to Consider:

- Jobs in the culinary industry are amongst the more prominent employment opportunities for persons experiencing homelessness. Outside of working in a bakery or café, what are some other employment possibilities that seem a strong fit for homeless persons?
- What are some particular skills that your employment program has helped homeless persons develop?
- How might an organization go about addressing the “digital divide,” and many homeless individuals’ concerns over using technology?
- For those whose programs involve internships or associations with other businesses, how do you find willing and able partners? What are some keys to successful partnerships?
- What types of support does your program have in place to make sure that exiting clients are able to remain self-sufficient and independent? Does your program only teach clients a particular trade, or does your program provide other services, such as educational support or mental health care?

Youth-Oriented Employment Programs

V.O.I.C.E.S. (On the Move)

The V.O.I.C.E.S. Program, developed by the On the Move organization, is aimed at helping unaccompanied youths. V.O.I.C.E.S. offers a variety of career development workshops and counseling opportunities to assist young people between the ages of 16 and 24, with an emphasis on those transitioning from foster care.³⁶

³³ Buckelew Programs, About Us, <http://www.buckelew.org/about/mission.htm> (last visited June 25, 2010).

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ V.O.I.C.E.S. Napa Program Components, <http://www.onthemovebayarea.org/voicesnapaprogramcomponents> (last visited June 20, 2010).

One of the most innovative developments taking place at V.O.I.C.E.S. is the opportunity for young people to serve as “Solar Outreach Associates.”³⁷ In a co-venture between On the Move, One Block off the Grid, and Community Action Napa Valley (CANV), youths are being trained on how to market solar energy.³⁸ Their work includes canvassing neighborhoods, and telling members of the community about the merits of switching to solar energy.³⁹ The youths are also paid to provide information about solar energy at local conferences and fairs⁴⁰.

If their work pays off, and solar sales in Napa begin to increase, the Solar Outreach Associates could easily transition into sales, or possibly installation work. In addition to learning social skills and a strong workplace ethic, members of V.O.I.C.E.S. are becoming educated about an important and burgeoning employment field, and the future of energy-based technology.

The Solar Outreach program is funded through a Community Service Block Grant award that was made available under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 and issued to CANV.⁴¹

Dream Center and Coffee Shop

In 2008, a variety of non-profit and government agencies in Kern County, including the Department of Alternative Education and the United Way, joined together to create an employment program for current and recently emancipated foster youths. At the Dream Center, youths are trained to work as case management advocates to help future foster youths learn about the educational and social services that are available to them.⁴² Other participants are employed at the Dream Center Coffee Shop, where they learn how to handle money, work with customers, keep track of the inventory, and serve specialty beverages.⁴³

In addition to having access to mentors, tutors, and employment support, young people who visit the Dream Center can find computer access, a photocopier and fax machine, and a resource library.⁴⁴

Foster Youth Services of Mendocino County

The employment project for foster youths in Mendocino is part of the Foster Youth Services, a state, grant-funded project created in 1998.⁴⁵ The program offers job-

³⁷ See Lorelee Stevens, *Napa Groups Join in Solar Partnership*, North Bay Business Journal (Apr. 4, 2010), <http://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/19916/napa-groups-join-in-solar-partnership/>.

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ *Id.*

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ *Id.*, see also Grant: Cmty. Servs. and Dev., CA Dep’t of Health and Human Servs., <http://projects.propublica.org/recovery/item/20100630/51670> (last visited July 13, 2010).

⁴² Kern High School Dist., Promising Foster Youth Transition Practice: The Dream Center and Coffee House, <http://www.newwaystowork.org/initiatives/ytat/promisingpractices/KernCounty2008.pdf/> (last visited June 20, 2010).

⁴³ Dream Center and Coffee House: About the Coffee House, <http://kcsos.kern.org/dreamcenter/coffee/> (last visited June 20, 2010).

⁴⁴ *Id.*

training services to participants, who are then matched with appropriate employers that align with their career interests.⁴⁶

Participants are instructed on a variety of skills, including how to behave professionally during an interview, give proper notice when leaving a position, and properly call in sick.⁴⁷ Many youths have been hired on as full-time employees at the end of the program, or have had additional hours added to their schedules.⁴⁸

The program covers all worker compensation costs in order to minimize costs to the employer, and youth wages, up to ten hours a week at minimum wage, are paid by Foster Youth Services.⁴⁹ Future plans for the Foster Youth Services employment program include hiring Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialists to address barriers that prevent youths from getting jobs, and providing clients with case management and rehabilitation services.⁵⁰

Questions to Consider:

- In addition to youths, what other individuals/groups of individuals should receive special attention from employment support programs? How might one go about addressing the particular needs of such groups?
- What are some effective strategies for reaching out to target populations? What kinds of agencies might be most effective partners in this effort?
- For those whose programs include a youth-focus, what are some of the challenges that you have encountered? How have you addressed them? What are some of the rewards?

Noteworthy National Programs

Jericho Project (New York)

For nearly thirty years, the Jericho Project has been helping homeless individuals with alcoholism and drug addiction difficulties attain self-sufficiency through its employment and supportive housing programs.⁵¹ In addition to helping clients find careers in the maintenance and food service industries, the Jericho Project has closely partnered with a vast array of diverse employers who are inclined to hire program

⁴⁵ Mendocino County Office of Educ.: Foster Services, <http://www.mcoe.us/d/sped/foster> (last visited June 20, 2010).

⁴⁶ Promising Foster Youth Transition Practice: Mendocino County Foster Youth Servs. Uses WorkAbility Model to Match Foster Youth with Employment Opportunities, <http://www.newwaystowork.org/initiatives/ytat/promisingpractices/MendocinoMAY2009.pdf> (last visited June 20, 2010).

⁴⁷ *Id.*

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ *Id.*

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ Parkhill, *supra* note 17, at 9.

participants, including bookstores, supermarkets, hospitals, construction companies, and the US Postal Service.⁵²

Vocational and Educational Counselors help individuals identify their own education and employment goals, while simultaneously fostering important work-related skills. Jericho clients are offered a variety of work-related services, including living-skills classes and in-house paid internships.⁵³ Fifty-three residents at the Jericho Project found employment in 2008.⁵⁴ The average starting salary of Jericho participants was \$10.85 per hour, a significant improvement over the \$500 average monthly income of incoming clients.⁵⁵

The Jericho Project receives funding from a variety of sources, including private donors, and funds made available through the Department of Housing and Urban Development under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.⁵⁶

Alpha Workshops (New York)

Alpha Workshops was founded in 1995 in order to provide employment for homeless persons living with HIV/AIDS.⁵⁷ Alpha offers a basic and advanced program for HIV-positive individuals that teaches the fundamentals of decorative arts, including gilding, paint finishes, color theory, and wallpaper production.⁵⁸ Tuition fees are covered when trainees become clients of the New York State Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities Program, and Alpha Workshop employees are able to assist applicants with the process.⁵⁹ Those who enroll in the advanced program, which is 26 weeks long, receive an hourly salary during their training.⁶⁰ Many individuals who complete the training are subsequently hired on as Alpha employees.⁶¹

In less than ten years since its opening, Alpha Workshop's earnings had increased by nearly a hundredfold.⁶² Employees at Alpha have worked on projects for such well-known companies as Benjamin Moore and Lifetime Television.⁶³ Finished goods from Alpha have been featured in House & Garden and O at Home magazines, and can be seen at the National Design Museum and Smithsonian Institution.⁶⁴

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ Jericho Project: Vocational and Educational Program, http://www.jerichoproject.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=25&Itemid=54 (last visited June 24, 2010).

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ Bill Egbert, *Stimulus Funds Spur the Jericho Project, Housing for Homeless Veterans*, Mar. 17, 2004, http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/2010/03/17/2010-03-17_stimulus_funds_spur_housing_project_for_homeless_vets.html.

⁵⁷ Alpha Workshops, About Us, <http://alphaworkshops.org/about.html> (last visited June 25, 2010).

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ Alpha Workshops, Advanced Training, <http://alphaworkshops.org/advancedtraining.html> (last visited July 6, 2010).

⁶⁰ *Id.*

⁶¹ *Parkhill, supra* note 17, at 49.

⁶² Alpha Workshops: About Us, <http://www.alphaworkshops.org/about.html> (last visited June 24, 2010).

⁶³ *Id.*

⁶⁴ *Id.*

Alpha receives grant monies from the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program, and sales revenues cover over half of Alpha's expenditures.⁶⁵

Questions to Consider:

- Alpha Workshops in New York works closely with individuals with HIV/AIDS. Does your program have a similar component? Is this something you have considered?
- Funding for Alpha participants comes from tuition-covering grants. Is this a funding possibility for your organization? Do you help your clients apply for financial assistance, or fill out applications for other services?

Project Place (Boston)

One of the organizations involved in the Boston HomeWork Program discussed above, Project Place is a HUD-award winning supportive housing agency that provides a vast array of job-training programs such as Community Re-Entry for Women, a program crafted specifically for female ex-offenders.⁶⁶ Since 1967, Project Place has served over 1,000 clients a year through a variety of services, including case management, educational development, and computer training.⁶⁷ Project Place participants are given several employment opportunities.⁶⁸

Project Pepsi:

Through Project Pepsi, men and women learn technical skills, customer service techniques, and how to deal with money by delivering Pepsi products to vending machines throughout Boston. Along the way they also make needed repairs and collect money from accounts.

Clean Corners...Bright Hopes:

Clean Corners...Bright Hopes is a facilities maintenance service that operates throughout Boston. Participants learn a variety of skills that can be applied in future careers involving custodial services, public maintenance, and waste management and landscaping.

HomePlate

Participants with HomePlace work out of an on-site commercial kitchen. Their responsibilities include operating pushcarts throughout the city, and fulfilling catering requests for corporate and private clients. Program participants also provide lunch to Project Place staff and clients.

⁶⁵ *Id.*

⁶⁶ See Project Place: Strategic Plan 2010-2012, http://www.projectplace.org/Media/StratPlan_2010-2012.pdf (last visited June 24, 2010).

⁶⁷ Project Place: Job Training, <http://www.projectplace.org/jobtraining.html> (last visited June 24, 2010).

⁶⁸ Project Place: Strategic Plan 2010-2012, *supra* note 52, at 7.

Questions to Consider:

- Like Buckelew Programs, Project Place is an agency that offers a variety of paid employment programs to its clients. What are or might be the difficulties with managing such an organization? The benefits? Is this something your organization has considered in the past, or might try out in the future?

Government Funding
Specialized Initiatives and Specially Funded Programs

Ending Chronic Homelessness through Employment and Housing

Throughout the years, a variety of specialized initiatives and funding opportunities have been offered to support employment programs. While the grants that were offered to sustain it are no longer being offered, the Ending Chronic Homelessness through Employment and Housing initiative was a demonstration project that allowed organizations such as Hope House in San Francisco to provide customized employment services to homeless persons.⁶⁹ At Hope House, which at the time was led by the Private Industry Council of San Francisco, Inc., clients received the support of an employment staff, housing case managers, vocational rehabilitation workers, a general assistance provider, and a team from the One-Stop Career Center.⁷⁰

Ending Chronic Homelessness through Employment and Housing was a five-year funding initiative created in 2003 through the coordinated efforts of various federal agencies, including the Office of Disability Employment Policy, the Department of Labor, the Veterans Employment and Training Service, the Employment and Training Administration, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.⁷¹ An evaluation of the program, and its successes and shortcomings, demonstrated the need for targeting resources and services to individuals experiencing homelessness, providing mental health care and substance abuse treatment to those seeking employment, and linking supportive housing, mental health services, employment and training providers, and local One Stop Career centers.⁷²

⁶⁹ Ending Chronic Homelessness through Employment and Housing Demonstration Projects at 6, http://documents.csh.org/documents/cheta/HUD_DOL_ProjectDescriptionsFINAL.pdf (last visited June 20, 2010).

⁷⁰ *Id.* at 182.

⁷¹ U.S. Dep't of Labor, Ending Chronic Homelessness, <http://www.dol.gov/odep/programs/homeless.htm> (last visited on June 24, 2010).

⁷² *See generally*, CHETA: Ending Chronic Homelessness through Employment and Housing at 85-92, <http://documents.csh.org/documents/doclib/CHETAECHEHProgamandPolicyHandbookFINALpdf.pdf> (last visited July 6, 2010).

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

The ARRA provided nearly \$4 billion for Workforce Investment Act Programs, which include adult employment and training activities, and youth-oriented projects.⁷³ In Los Angeles, the YWCA received over \$82 million to fund its Job Corps Center, while the Treasure Island Job Corps Center in San Francisco received funding to cover equipment expenses.⁷⁴ The Treasure Island Job Corps provides young people between the ages of 16 and 24 with career technical training in a variety of trades, including carpentry, masonry, facilities maintenance, and food preparation.⁷⁵

Additionally, throughout California, at least 1,000 at-risk youths between the ages of 16 and 24 will be placed in green jobs during the 20-month Green Corps program funded by the ARRA. The program will consist of green job training, a stipend, and an education and community service requirement for participants.⁷⁶

Welfare to Work Grants Program

Starting in 1998, the Congressionally-authorized Welfare to Work grant program made funds available to local governments and community-based organizations.⁷⁷ Funds could be used for activities intended to help at-risk individuals and those experiencing homelessness find steady employment, including job readiness and placement services.⁷⁸ Recipients of the Welfare to Work grants included the Private Industry Council of San Francisco, Inc., which led the Hope House project, and Rubicon Programs.⁷⁹ The spending of the Welfare to Work grant money was limited to a five-year period that ended in 2004.⁸⁰ The program is lauded for having demonstrated the need for linking welfare recipients with One-Stop Career Centers, strengthening the role of workforce agencies, and allowing for the development and testing of new strategies to reach the hard to employ, including employer partnerships, transitional employment, and retention services.⁸¹

⁷³ U.S. Dep't of Labor, DOL Information related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, <http://www.dol.gov/recovery/implement.htm> (last visited June 24, 2010).

⁷⁴ U.S. Dep't of Labor, Recovery Act (ARRA) Contract Awards by State, <http://www.dol.gov/recovery/contracts.htm> (last visited June 24, 2010).

⁷⁵ Treasure Island Job Corps: Career Training, <http://treasureisland.jobcorps.gov/vocations.aspx> (last visited July 6, 2010).

⁷⁶ Press Release, Office of the Governor of California, Governor Schwarzenegger Launches the California Green Corps (<http://gov.ca.gov/press-release/11754/>)

⁷⁷ Demetra Smith Nightingale & Kathleen Brennan, The Welfare-to-Work Grants Program: A new Link in the Welfare Reform Chain, <http://www.urban.org/publications/308017.html#tab3> (last visited June 25, 2010).

⁷⁸ *Id.*

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ Welfare-to-Work Grants Programs: Adjusting to Changing Circumstances: Executive Summary, <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/wtw-grants-eval98/adj03/execsum.htm#Update> (last visited June 25, 2010).

⁸¹ *Id.*

Mainstream Funding Opportunities

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

There are a variety of funding opportunities available through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. A certain amount of funding is available to programs that cater to individuals with HIV/AIDS through the HOPWA program.⁸² HOPWA funding may be used to finance housing projects, as well as employment programs such as Alpha Workshops.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

In addition to jointly co-funding the Ending Chronic Homelessness through Employment and Housing demonstration project with HUD, the Department of Labor offers awards to employment programs through the Homeless Veteran's Reintegration Program (HVRP).⁸³ The funds are available to public agencies, commercial entities, and nonprofit organizations that help reintroduce veterans into the workforce through meaningful employment opportunities.⁸⁴

As of 2007, nearly 14,000 individuals had been served by the HVRP, and nearly 60% had retained employment for at least six months.⁸⁵ Project Place in Boston is an example of a program that has received funding through the HVRP, along with the San Francisco-based Swords to Plowshares organization,⁸⁶ which offers resume workshops, interview preparation, computer labs, counseling, and voicemail and email accounts to veterans.⁸⁷

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Through the Job Opportunities for Low-income Individuals Program (JOLI) offered by HHS, funds were made available to organizations that help low-income individuals, including homeless persons, attain self-sufficiency through non-traditional methods, including microenterprise development, business expansion, and new business ventures.⁸⁸ Several JOLI grant recipients have included those experiencing homelessness as one of their target populations.⁸⁹

⁸² HUDHRE.info, HOPWA Formula Program, http://www.hudhre.info/hopwa/index.cfm?do=viewHopwaFormulaPrgm_1&tpc=app#e_app (last visited June 25, 2010).

⁸³ Long et al., *supra* note 5, at 20.

⁸⁴ *Id.*

⁸⁵ *Id.*

⁸⁶ Department of Labor, 2010 HVRP Grantees: First, Second and Third Year Grantees, [http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/hvrp/2010 HVRP Grantees - 1st 2nd & 3rd yr separated.xls](http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/hvrp/2010%20HVRP%20Grantees%20-%201st%202nd%20&%203rd%20yr%20separated.xls) (last visited July 2, 2010).

⁸⁷ Swords to Plowshares, Employment: Veterans, <http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org/employment-veterans> (last visited June 29, 2010).

⁸⁸ Long et al., *supra* note 5, at 10.

⁸⁹ *Id.*

In 2009, the Mission Economic Development Association, an agency based in San Francisco, received nearly \$440,000 dollars to support its programs,⁹⁰ which include business development and microenterprise training for low-income persons.⁹¹

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Although many employment programs for veterans experiencing homelessness receive funding through DOL's HVRP, additional funding has historically been made available through the VA's Per Diem program.⁹² While the focus of the program has evolved over time, the sample grant application states that eligible programs include those that help veterans achieve residential stability, increased incomes, and greater self-determination.⁹³ The sample application also notes that funds can be used to increase clients' skill levels, employment prospects, or chances of getting higher-paying work.⁹⁴

The San Francisco-based Swords to Plowshares organization is a recipient of the Per Diem program grant.⁹⁵ The Swords program has proven extremely effective in helping clients overcome substance abuse problems, and find stable housing and employment.⁹⁶

Questions to Consider:

- What are some of the primary funding sources for your employment program? Have you received non-mainstream funding before? What about financial support from a provider such as the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund?
- How have changes in the economy affected your organization? How have you been able to compensate for losses in funding? Can such strategies be implemented elsewhere?

Conclusion

Numerous challenges stand in the way of homeless individuals seeking jobs. In addition to facing a volatile job market, many people experiencing homelessness are already encumbered by various difficulties ranging from mental health problems to recently being emancipated from foster care. Fortunately, there are a number of programs in place

⁹⁰ US Dep't of Health and Human Servs., Admin. for Children & Families, Office of Community Servs., Job Opportunities for Low-Income Individuals (JOLI) Program, Funding, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/joli/funding.html#2009> (last visited June 25, 2010).

⁹¹ Mission Economic Dev. Agency, Business Dev., <http://www.medasf.org/ProgramsandService%28BusinessDevelopment%29.html> (last visited June 25, 2010).

⁹² Long et al., *supra* note 5, at 20.

⁹³ Department of Veterans Affairs, Homeless Provider Per Diem Only Application, *available at* http://www1.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/GPD/2010_PDO_Section_B.pdf (last visited June 29, 2010).

⁹⁴ *Id.*

⁹⁵ Nat'l Coal. for Homeless Veterans, Homeless Veterans Serv. Providers, Swords to Plowshares, <http://www.nchv.org/page.cfm?id=170> (last visited June 29, 2010).

⁹⁶ *Id.*

that are effectively helping unemployed individuals find work. The organizations that implement these programs, such as those discussed above, can provide a valuable opportunity to see what works in terms of attaining funding, and what services are best suited for the homeless population.

Questions for Discussion:

- Would you like RSC to bring more focus to homeless employment programs or related topics we touched on today?
- What forum would you like to see offer more information regarding these topics?
- What topics did you find useful and what areas would you like to know more about?

If you would like further information or resources regarding these topics, please contact Danielle Wildkress, HomeBase Staff Lawyer, at danielle@homebaseccc.org or (415) 788-7961 x 301. This memorandum was constructed by Sean Rodriguez, HomeBase Legal Intern.