



Local Workforce Development Programs

A City Practice Brief

October 2007

America's local elected leaders understand that the economic vitality of their cities and towns depends on the availability of skilled and qualified workers. In addition to the benefits to local economic development, enhancing workers' skills can improve one's quality of life, help alleviate poverty, and provide a wealth of benefits to society as citizens realize their stake in the success of their local and regional economy. This City Practice Brief presents examples of cities' local workforce development efforts.

For more information, please see NLC publications *Strengthening Your Local Workforce* (Municipal Action Guide), *Lessons and Insights from NLC's Workforce Development for Poverty Reduction* (Report), and *Transitional Jobs: A Workforce Strategy for Cities* (Report) - all are available on the NLC website, www.nlc.org.

For more examples, visit the City Practice database also on the NLC website.

Career Academy

City: **Baltimore, Maryland**

Population: 631,366

For more information, contact: Callie Greene, Program Coordinator
cgreene@oedworks.com
(410) 396-3009

The Mayor's Office of Employment Development runs the Career Academy, one of nine campuses of Harbor City High School. The Academy provides non-traditional educational for out-of-school youth ages 16 to 21. Students may pursue a high school diploma with a business/technical concentration, a GED, or participate in the Diploma Plus program. Students also serve internships with employers for work-based learning. The city partners with the school district, local community colleges, and other local groups for funding and administration.

Office of Workforce Development

City: **Cambridge, Massachusetts**

Population: 101,365

For more information, contact: Susan Welsh, Director
swelsh@cambridgema.gov
(617) 349-6234

The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) was created to serve as a planning, coordinating, and oversight body for youth and adult employment and training services. OWD's achievements include delivering information and referral services to over 1,000 youth and adult residents on an annual basis; developing school-to-career initiatives to increase young people's preparedness for employment; coordinating the city summer jobs campaign engaging the private sector as work site trainers and supervisors for over 250 youth; and, establishing a citywide Career Pathways Initiative, which is aimed at developing a sequenced set of career exploration and internship options for students. On the adult employment side, accomplishments include facilitating an alliance between community agencies meeting weekly to share over 200 job leads annually to match employers needs more efficiently; establishing a new community college campus in partnership with the city; and upgrading the Cambridge Employment Program, the city's job matching service, to serve over 150 residents annually. OWD advertises its programs through a Youth Employment Center at the high school, publishes a directory of employment

and education opportunities for residents, and works with other organizations in the city. This program won a 1996 Innovation Award from the National League of Cities.

Workforce Development and Sustainability Plan

City: **Colleyville, Texas**

Population: 23,210

For more information, contact: Kelly Cooper, Human Resources Director
cooperk@ci.colleyville.tx.us
(817) 503-1115

Colleyville's workforce development program reduces the impact of retiring baby boomers by strengthening the existing workforce. The development program addresses employee needs and training such as competitive compensation, succession planning, and in-depth staff development. The plan provides the city with a cohesive, broad-based, and collaborative approach for addressing each aspect. City officials have been invited to discuss the plan with surrounding municipalities. The program won an award for Management Innovations from the Texas Municipal League in 2006.

EVOLVE (Educational and Vocational Opportunities Leading to Valuable Experience)

City: **Las Vegas, Nevada**

Population: 591,536

For more information, contact: Dr. Lisa M. Morris, Deputy Director
Neighborhood Services Department
lmorris@lasvegasnevada.gov
(702) 229-2330

Since 2002, the city of Las Vegas has worked with the criminal justice system and other community partners to build and create a specialized center/program designed to address the social, economic, vocational, and workforce development needs of ex-offenders. Although initially created to provide services to ex-offenders, the center's target demographic expanded to include providing services to other "hard to serve" populations. Due to the increase in the demand for services related to discharge planning, reentry, workforce development and self-sufficiency, in 2005, the EVOLVE Center began providing services to the Chronic Inebriates, Women In Transition (i.e. women recently released from prison), and other re-entry populations. EVOLVE provides wraparound supportive services such as housing and transportation assistance, job coaching, counseling, job development, and other employment related services to assist them on their way to self sufficiency. The EVOLVE program, enrolled 536 participants from FY 03-06, and is entering into its record year of performance by serving 451 participants to date for FY 2006-07. Additionally, more than 1,000 individuals per year utilize the referral or self-services offered at the EVOLVE Center.

Littleton Learning Center

City: **Littleton, New Hampshire**

Population: 6,162

For more information, contact: Paul J. McGoldrick
pmcgold@ncia.net
(603) 444-5246

The Littleton Learning Center provides educational opportunities and job training for the area's workforce so it can remain competitive in an increasingly technologically-oriented economy. The facility houses New Hampshire's College for Life-Long Learning, the Community Technical College, the North Country Health Consortium, public safety training courses, and state employment security services. The work of the Learning Center also serves to keep employers from leaving the Littleton area. A \$1 million Community Development Block Grant enabled the town to purchase the facility, and individual donations gave the town more than \$850,000 for the center.

Alamo Area Aerospace Academy

City: **San Antonio, Texas**

Population: 1,296,682

For more information, contact: Robert Peche, Director, Economic Development Department
(210) 207-8080

San Antonio, in a community partnership with local school districts, aerospace, manufacturing, and information technology industry employers, the Alamo Community College District (ACCD), Alamo Worksource, and the Port Authority of San Antonio established the three Alamo Area Academies focused on key targeted industries in the community; Aerospace, Information Technology & Security, and Manufacturing Technology. The Academies, with training sites located throughout the city, provide local high school students with two-years of training and internship programs introducing them to career opportunities while providing a seamless transition from high school to college to the workplace. Upon graduation, students are prepared for jobs where they can complete their technical training, or apply college credits towards a college degree. Some of the industry partners providing valuable internships, training, and employment to our high school students include: Lockheed Martin (15% of their workforce are Aerospace Academy alumni), Boeing, Standard Aero, HEB, Rackspace, OnBoard software, Chromalloy, Toyota, UTSA, Pratt & Whitney, KLN Steel, and Texas Composites.

Advantage Topeka Loan Program

City: **Topeka Kansas**

Population: 122,113

For more information, contact: David Bevens, Public Information Officer
dbevans@topeka.org
(785) 368-1642

The Advantage Topeka Loan Program, a partnership between the City of Topeka and the University of Kansas, recruits students in high demand occupational areas. Eligible students qualify for up to \$2,500 in loans per year, and \$5,000 maximum for the program. If they find employment in one of the designated areas of high need, Topeka will forgive one year of the loans for each year the student is employed. Areas in high demand include construction, transportation, installation, maintenance, repair, computers, engineering, architecture and health care.

Connect! Job Seeker Center

City: **Sunnyvale, California**

Population: 131,760

For more information, contact: Kathy Puryear, Connect! Coordinator
kpuryear@novaworks.org
(408) 730-7232

The Connect! Job Seeker Center in Sunnyvale offers a wide variety of services for those who are unemployed, looking for a different job, or seeking a career change. Available services include career counseling, resume critique, networking groups, employer recruitment presentations, education and training information, an extensive career resource library, and the use of computers, printers, photocopiers and fax machines. Workshops are also provided on such topics as career exploration, planning a job search, resume building, and interview skills. Connect! is a collaborative of more than 25 organizations dedicated to workforce and business solutions for Silicon Valley. The services are available free of charge.

This Brief was developed by Katie Seeger, Staff Associate, National League of Cities.

City Practices Briefs contain examples from NLC's City Practices database, available at www.nlc.org. Series editors: Bruce Calvin and Larry Foxman. For more information contact the NLC Municipal Reference Service at (202) 626-3130 or email mrs@nlc.org.