

Making a Difference 2010

Workforce Development in Tarrant County

Relevance

There is a strong need to develop and maintain sustainable communities using appropriate community and economic development tools and programs. The most recent Texas Community Futures Forum (2004) identified Community and Economic Development as the number one issue in Texas. This has continued to be identified as an issue in Tarrant County. Consequently, the need to develop adults in Tarrant County to improve their ability to be quality employees and citizens has been an identified area of need as voiced through program area committee input and stakeholder feedback.

Response

In Tarrant County, there were three major programming efforts implemented to impact workforce development:

The ***Tackling the Tough Skills*** Program is geared toward the development of adults in Tarrant County in skills essential to effective functioning in the workplace, in their families, and in the community. Individuals and groups increase their knowledge and repertoire of skills associated with attitude, responsibility, communication, problem solving, and workplace related skills and abilities. A customized sub-program was also developed entitled “***Career Seeker Toolbox***” that focuses on job readiness and preparation, specifically. Both of these programs, although open to the public at large, is specially marketed to the re-entry population of Tarrant County.



2010 Wesley Mission Center
Staff Professional Development



2010 Poverty Simulation
In Collaboration with the
Partnership for Stronger Communities

The **CIA (Connections in Action) Program** is a youth-friendly version of the Tackling the Tough Skills program and is implemented with a re-entry youth audience through a special partnership with the Texas Youth Commission. This 12-session series is implemented through a partnership with Prairie View A&M’s Cooperative Extension Program – educational sessions focus on conflict resolution, character development, and job readiness.

“**Access Tarrant’s Urban Scene**” is a blog site that provides Tarrant County residents with up-to-date information on local job opportunities and career fairs open to the general public.

Results

238 adults and 29 youth participated in the *Tackling the Tough Skills and CIA programming*. According to post-programming case studies and follow-ups, adults increased their abilities in resume preparation, interviewing skills and techniques, dressing for success, and career exploration and preparation, while youth showed improvement in their abilities to resolve conflict, research their careers of interest, and making healthy decisions when faced with difficult circumstances. Adult and youth audiences ranged from community residents to Texas Youth Commission students and federal inmates and state parolees/probationers.

Access Tarrant's Urban Scene - A total of 631 entries were shared with the Tarrant County public in the form of job opportunities, open positions, and career fairs. After surveying a sample group of users, the following was communicated: **94%** use it for clients, **72%** for themselves, **33%** for friends, **28%** for their families. Also, **94%** have either referred others to it or have expressed an intention to do so!



2010 Professional Development of County Workforce Specialists with a Re-Entry Focus



2010 Denton 4H Council Board Training & Retreat

Acknowledgements

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