

**Workforce Development Group Summary  
 January 8, 2008**

<b>Attendee</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Lois Hummel	
Tanya Iida	A+ Illinois
Alberto Ortega	Alternative Schools Network
Pola Jaramillo	Association House of Chicago
Jessica DeVries	Bethel New Life, Inc.
Gloria Williams	Breaking Ground
Ken Howard	Chicago Anti-Hunger Federation
Megan Winzeler	Chicago Jobs Council
Rose Karasti	Chicago Jobs Council
Bob Wordlaw	Chicago Jobs Council
Ellen Johnson	Chicago Jobs Council
Jennifer Keeling	Chicago Jobs Council
Liz Bomgaars	Chicago Jobs Council
Steve Simmons	Chicago Jobs Council
Sam Long	DESI
Joe Chiappetta	DisabilityWorks - Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
Crystal Odom	Easter Seals
Jerome Collins	Harborquest, Inc.
Sainey Jobe	Heartland Alliance
Veronica Zapata	IMAN
Angela Morrison	Inspiration Corporation
Jennifer Miller-Rehfeldt	Inspiration Corporation
Tom DuBois	Instituto del Progreso Latino
Trina Whatley	Jobs for Youth
Lois Snyder	League of Women Voters of Chicago
Jan Kay	League of Women Voters of Illinois
Margie Gonwa	LEED Council
Evelyn Diaz	Mayor's Office
LaKeeta Charley	Mercy Housing Lakefront
Jill McClendon	National Able Network
Terri Graham	National Able Network
Michele Anderson	Neighborhood Tech Resource Center
Kristen Nash	Neighborhood Technology Resource Center
Judy Davis	Safer Foundation

Attendee	Organization
Ivette Sosias	Safer Foundation
Michaella Furman	Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Marlene Fuertes	Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Wendy Pollack	Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
James Zangs	St. Leonard's Ministries
Logan Quan	The Cara Program
Brent In	U.S. Probation Office

## I. Welcome and Introductions

## II. Chicago LEADS Presentation (Evelyn Diaz, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office)

Jen introduced Evelyn Diaz, the former Associate Director of CJC, who now works at the Mayor's Office. She told the group that Evelyn was here to tell them about Chicago LEADS, a new Mayoral-led initiative.

Evelyn explained that she would first give a brief overview of Chicago LEADS, and then spend the bulk of her time answering questions and hearing feedback from participants. Chicago LEADS is a 2-year, Mayoral-led initiative that seeks to align the education, workforce development, and economic development systems in order to meet the needs of businesses and successfully train workers for jobs in industries that are projected to grow. CJC helped lay the groundwork for this initiative in its *Big Shoulders, Big Challenges* report, which called for this sort of systemic integration. LEADS will focus its efforts on four industries: hospitality, healthcare, finance and insurance, and TWL. They have created an advisory council for each industry that includes employers, trade associations, unions, CPS, CCC, proprietary schools, and the relevant city agencies (MOWD, DPD, CWB, etc.). The initiative is being advised by a Civic Advisory Council of business leaders who meet directly with Mayor Daley. It is also advised by a Policy Advisory Group (chaired by CJC and Women Employed), which is charged with providing input on proposed policies and their implementation. Throughout the initiative there will be an emphasis on data collection, data analysis, and achievement of outcomes. Ultimately programmatic funding decisions will be based on the ability to meet benchmarks and outcomes defined by LEADS.

Evelyn then asked participants for their questions and comments.

- Question: What will the impact of LEADS be on the existing WIA system? Where does the WIA system fit in? Answer: WIA is restrictive, and is ineffective in its structure. It fails at meeting business needs in that employers do not widely use the WIA system when seeking to fill job openings. LEADS will go outside WIA and create a system that works better for employers. However, it will also leverage WIA funds (especially for training).
- Question: Does LEADS have more general goals for creating an educated workforce or is it just focused on meeting the needs of employers in specific industries? Answer: At the first Civic Advisory Council meeting there was discussion about the need to support CPS and help raise the education level of all students. Though LEADS is specific to four industries, it does seek to create career academies, which would serve the dual purpose of educating students and teaching them industry-specific skills.
- Question: Will the Chicago Workforce Board take over administration of LEADS at the end of 2009? Answer: Yes, this is the plan because LEADS is aligned with the Board's mission. The Mayor's Office is already trying to prepare the Workforce Board to take over the

initiative. One way they are doing this is by having the directors who will lead each industry pilot be employed by the Board.

- Question: What will the Civic Advisory Council and the Policy Advisory Group do after the first two years? Answer: The details of the structure after 2009 have not been worked out yet. Many components may undergo changes, including the composition of the Board.
- Comment: There needs to be an emphasis on mature workers. These are people who are not in school and may not be interested in going to CCC to receive training. They probably have been in the workforce and may possess the skills needed in these industries. It is growing population, and LEADS should consider a way to tap into their skills and abilities.
- Comment: LEADS also needs to consider the inclusion of workers with disabilities when developing their industry-specific programs.
- Question: Are there avenues for CBOs who work with hard to serve populations to participate in the industry-specific pilots? Answer: The goal of LEADS is to serve the needs of businesses, and the pilot projects will be housed at the City Colleges. However, it is likely that CCC will rely on bridge programs (and partnerships with CBOs) to recruit participants for their programs. Ideally, bridge programs would be able to go to scale and serve as a pipeline to get disadvantaged workers into the LEADS-supported system.
- Question: What is the City's financial commitment to the pilot projects and beyond? Answer: The City is not contributing anything in addition to what already exists in the budgets of the agencies involved. Instead, LEADS seeks to raise funds from businesses in two primary ways: 1) making direct asks for contributions, especially to companies that sit on the Civic Advisory Council, and 2) by working with DPD to develop public benefits agreements that include supporting LEADS initiatives as one way that businesses can give back to the city in return for the benefits they receive. This has the potential to generate large sums of money. The fundraising goal for LEADS in 2008-2009 is \$20 million.
- Question: What will be the benefit of Chicago LEADS to CBOs? Answer: One benefit is that CBOs could potentially receive contracts to conduct industry-specific training. Asking CBOs to focus more on training (rather than job readiness and job placement activities) will require them to change how they operate. It is not clear yet the best way to encourage CBOs to make this shift. Hopefully the Policy Advisory Group will help think through the most effective way to involve CBOs.
- Question: Will funding be diverted from job placement and job readiness activities to fund training? Answer: No, not through LEADS. This initiative will generate new money with which to fund its training activities. However, within the WIA system, there is a new minimum training expenditure requirement that will necessitate a larger percentage expenditure on training (which will mean less funding for job placement / readiness).

Jen thanked Evelyn for her time and told the group that if they had any comments or questions to forward them to her by the end of the week. This will enable her to incorporate them into her participation at the Policy Advisory Group on 1/14.

### **III. Looking Ahead in 2008: Opportunities and Challenges**

Rose told the group that there are several events which motivate us to do some brainstorming as the New Year begins. One of these is the election year; soon Illinois will hold its own presidential primary and by year's end we will vote for federal representatives and a new president. Also, this year CJC will complete a new organizational strategic plan and participate in a strategic planning process with its steering committee partners for the Illinois Works for the Future campaign.

Some of the questions that arise as these events roll out pertain to opportunities and challenges. In the city, as just discussed, some new opportunities for sector-focused training will be available for job seekers. We know that more WIA dollars will be directed to vocational training in the city and across the state. Illinois is also engaged in the Joyce-funded Shifting Gears initiative to improve transitions from adult education to vocational certification, and remedial education to degree completion. And the state is a participant in a National Governor's Association funded project exploring economic development through sector clusters. This is only a small portion of what is happening in Chicago and Illinois, and we would like to get a sense of the workforce development environment from your perspective; in your role, at your organization, with your eyes and ears.

Rose then asked the group to share their thoughts about the opportunities they see this year in the workforce development arena.

- In December 2007, there was a collaboratively-sponsored Green Collar Jobs Summit, which discussed the potential for new jobs within the green industries. Many of these are entry level jobs with opportunities for advancement.
- There is a great opportunity to continue collaborative efforts, build new partnerships, and cultivate additional relationships with employers. For example, Jobs for Youth is collaborating with Y-ME to train their clients to do all the data entry work for Y-ME races this year. Both organizations will benefit from this new partnership.
- At the community level, the completion of Kennedy King College's new campus has presented a great opportunity in Englewood by spurring local economic development.
- Chicago's position as an applicant city for the 2016 Olympics has the potential to create new jobs - perhaps in the fields of construction and customer service. If awarded the Olympic bid, there will be a huge demand for employees with these skills.
- Older workers will continue to retire, and we have the opportunity to train and place their replacements.

Rose then asked what potential challenges we will face in 2008.

- We need to increase union membership among minorities and women.
- We need to develop a large scale way of bridging the soft skills gap that employers so often mention. We have figured out how to train people for the skills they need at a given job, but we have not yet developed a system-wide method for ensuring our emerging workforce has the soft skills they need to be successful.
- Funding for various support services is not adequately built into contracts. These services often make the difference in someone's ability to retain a job, and there is never enough funding to meet the need.
- Contracts often place unrealistic performance expectations on contractors. The requirements to not take into account the challenges faced by the populations being served.
- The newly approved CHA work requirement and the tight timeline for its implementation presents a challenge to the FamilyWorks system and the rest of the workforce development system in Chicago.

#### **IV. FY 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill Overview**

Rose informed the group that the week before Christmas, Congress passed an omnibus appropriations bill that included few gains and continued losses for workforce development. There was a 1.75% rescission across all DOL and DOA programs, which resulted in the following changes in funding levels for workforce development related programs:

	<b>Total 2008 Budget</b>	<b>Difference from 2007</b>
<b>Department of Labor</b>		
Job Corps	1.6 b	+32.2 m
Community Service Employment for Older Americans	521.6 m	+38 m
Veterans Employment and Training	228 m	+4.9 m
YouthBuild	58.9 m	+9.4 m
Reintegration of Ex-Offenders	73.4 m	+4.7 m
WIA Adult	861.5 m	-2.7 m
WIA Youth	924 m	-16.4 m
WIA Dislocated	1.3 b	-8.7 m
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	735.6 m	-13.7 m
<b>Department of Education</b>		
Pell Grants	16.2 b	+2.6 b
Perkins Vocational Education Grants	1.3 b	-10.8 m
Adult Education	567.5 m	-12 m

In addition, the following changes were also made to related programs:

- Human Services saw small gains and losses
- Energy assistance, the child care development block grant, and social services block grant were level-funded.
- The cut to the Head Start program will mean serving an estimated 26,500 fewer children.

## V. TANF Ad-Hoc Update

Rose told the group that the working group's ad-hoc committee on the new TANF regulations directed a letter to Illinois' federal delegation regarding our concerns prior to finalization of the TANF Final Rule. We have tried to reach a staffer in Rahm Emanuel's office, but have not been successful so far. We will keep the working group updated in future meetings.

## VI. Announcements

- Tanya Iida from A+ Illinois (a statewide coalition that seeks to improve schools) announced that they are conducting a series of town hall forums in the next several weeks. All candidates are confirmed to attend, and she encouraged working group participants to attend as well to voice their concerns about our schools and school system.
- Margie Gonwa from the LEED Council announced that they will have several training classes beginning next week. People should contact her for more information.
- Jen announced that the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce is launching a new initiative: *When Work Works*, which urges organizations to apply for the Alfred Sloan Foundation award for workplace flexibility. This award is given to workplaces with flexible work practices. The kickoff event is on 1/10, and people can register on the Chamber's website.
- Jen announced that CJC's next 10 week course for job developers will begin on 2/27 and registration will open within the next couple of weeks.