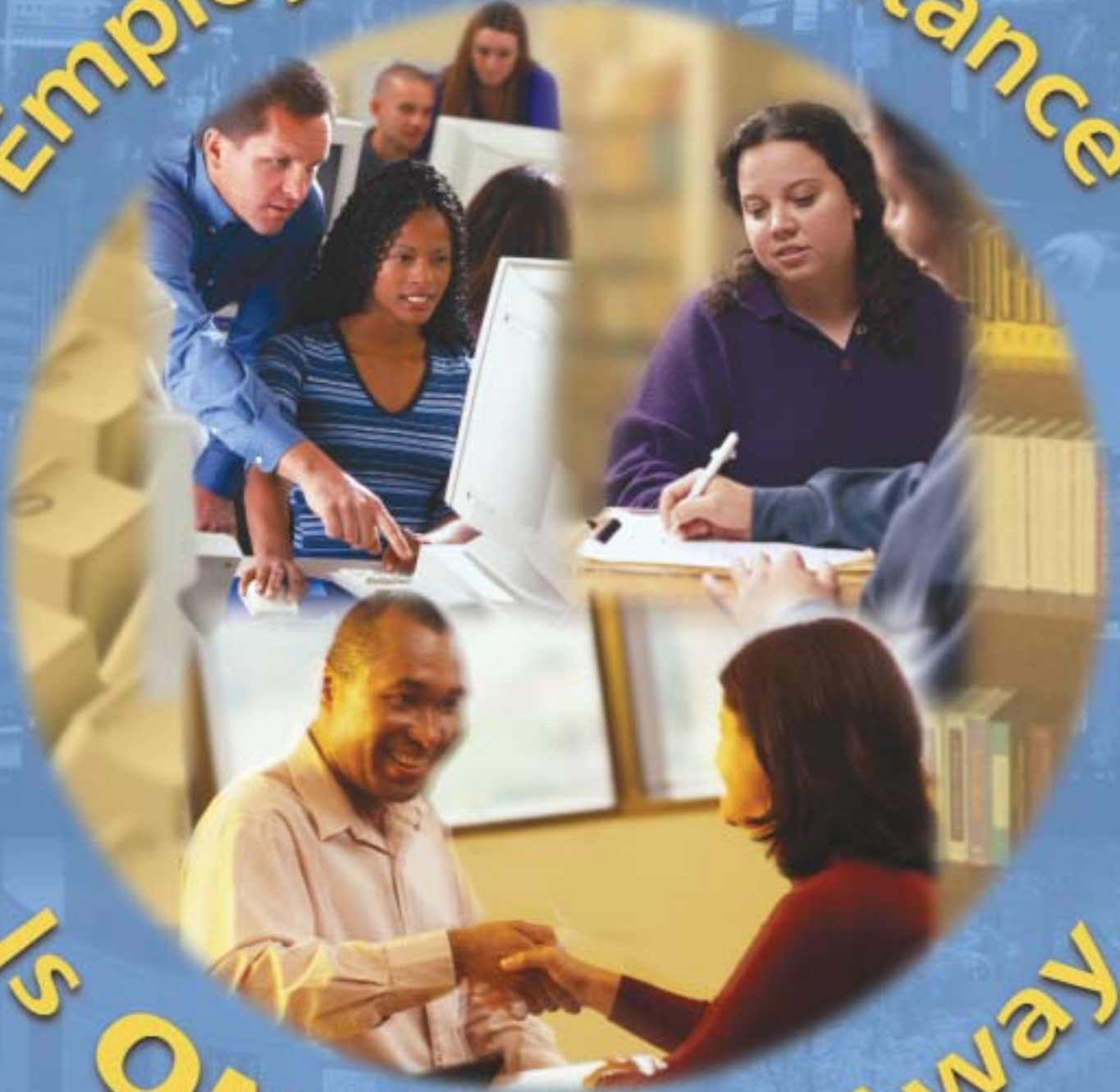


Employment Assistance



Is ONE-STOP Away



Dear Colleague:

In this booklet, you will find valuable information outlining the federal-state Workforce Investment System and ways to access these resources at the local level.

To support you in your efforts, the Department of Labor's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives has designed new programs that will help level the playing field and create opportunities for faith-based and community organizations. We started with a project to create new partnerships between the Job Corps and faith- and community-based mentor programs. Following a competitive grant process, DOL awarded the first federal government grants for the purposes of building links between small faith-based and community groups and the national premier job training and employment institution, the One-Stop Career Centers system.

The Department of Labor's Center for Faith Based and Community Initiatives, along with the Employment and Training Administration, the Department of Justice and Public/Private Ventures based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has launched *Ready4Work*, a business-faith-community-criminal justice partnership program to assist men and women returning from prison in finding and keeping jobs. The Center has also worked with the Veterans Employment and Training Administration to strengthen services for the homeless, the Office of Disability Employment Policy to encourage faith- and community-based mentoring of youth with disabilities, and the International Labor Affairs Bureau to work with faith-based and community groups throughout the world to reduce human trafficking and fight the spread of HIV/AIDS in East Africa. And, believe it or not, we are just getting started!

We are very proud of the work that the Department of Labor and its Center have done to empower faith-based and community organizations. I congratulate you on your interest in learning more about the federal-state Workforce Investment System and how you can utilize those resources to serve those in need. With your compassion and commitment, we can make a real difference for America.

Sincerely,

Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Secretary of Labor

Table of Contents

The Workforce Investment System

The Workforce Investment System: An Introduction	2
Workforce Investment System and Leadership Structure	3
One-Stop Career Centers	4
One-Stop Career Center Services	5
Youth Programs	6
Career One-Stop Web site	7

Critical Roles Community-Based Organizations (FBCOs) Can Play In Meeting the Employment Needs of Their Communities

Help Your Community Members Access Career Services through the One-Stop Career Center	8
Support Your Members as They Seek Employment Assistance	9
Make Your Services Available Through the One-Stop Centers	10
Make Your Organization’s Site a “One-Stop Center Access Point”	11
Supervise Your Local Workforce Investment System by Participating on an Oversight Body	12
Serve as a Provider for Those in Need through the Local Workforce System	13
Serve as a Provider for Those in Need through Participating in a National Grant Program	14
U.S. Department of Labor Discretionary Grants	15
Grant Writing Guidance	17
Checklist: Critical Ways Faith-Based and Community-Based Organizations Can Help Meet Their Community’s Employment Needs	19

The Workforce Investment System: An Introduction

In 1998 Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act, the first major reform of the nation's job training system in over 15 years. It was designed to replace the patchwork federal system that developed over the previous sixty years with a locally designed and driven system to improve the quality of the workforce and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the nation.

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) became fully effective on July 1, 2000. Passed by a wide bipartisan majority, WIA was designed, in part, to permit communities and states to build workforce investment systems that respect individual choices, reflect local conditions, and result in increased employment, retention, and earnings of participants while increasing occupational skills attained by participants. The Workforce Investment Act redesigned the nation's workforce development system to:

- (1) streamline multiple employment and training programs into an integrated One-Stop Career Center system, simplifying access to services for job seekers and employers;
- (2) empower individuals to get the services and skills they need to improve their employment opportunities through qualified training programs of their choosing;
- (3) increase accountability of states, localities, and training providers for their performance based on job placement rates, earnings, retention in employment, skills gained, and credentials earned;
- (4) involve local elected officials and the private sector in business-led workforce investment boards for the local areas focusing on strategic planning, policy development, and local oversight;
- (5) allow state and local flexibility to implement innovative and comprehensive workforce investment strategies to meet the needs of their communities; and

- (6) improve youth programs by creating local Youth Councils that are linked more closely to local labor market needs and the community.

Partnerships at all levels — local, state, and federal — and across the system are the hallmark of the workforce investment system. All levels are required to coordinate and collaborate with agencies and entities that have not been a part of the traditional workforce development system. Accountability and responsibility for outcomes at all levels of the system now exist, with each level having unique and integral roles and responsibilities.

The Workforce Investment System Leadership Structure

One-Stop Career Centers

A One-Stop Career Center is a site that offers federal, state and local education and training services in one location. These services range from self-service to more hands-on staff-assisted services. Customers must receive at least one core service before receiving intensive services, and at least one intensive service before becoming eligible for training.

Federal

U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (www.doleta.gov)

Provides federal funding, primarily to states, for employment and training programs and services. The largest division of the U.S. Department of Labor, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), provides oversight to the national workforce investment system, which includes over 1,900 One-Stop Career Centers across the nation. ETA also provides emergency grants to states and local areas that experience disasters and/or large business closings, operates Job Corps, and manages the National Apprenticeship System. Special national programs administered by ETA provide services to targeted populations, such as older workers, Native Americans, and migrant and seasonal farm workers. The Department's Veteran's Employment and Training Service (VETS) funds and administers programs targeted at veterans.

Business Relations Group

Created to increase the capacity of the workforce investment system to serve the workforce needs of business and to help business and industry better access the services of the state and local workforce investment system.

State Governor

Designates a state agency as the lead workforce administrative entity and appoints the members of the business-led State Workforce Investment Board. Negotiates with the U.S. Secretary of Labor on performance levels to be achieved by the state.

State Workforce Agency

Serves as the lead state administrative agency for the federally funded job training, employment, unemployment insurance, and labor market information programs.

State Workforce Investment Board

Comprised of high-level business leaders (51%), state employment and training or workforce development leaders, and representatives from organized labor, education, state legislatures, and youth service providers that assist the Governor in developing and updating a comprehensive five-year strategic workforce investment plan. Oversees workforce investment activities in the state.

Local

County Commissioners/Mayors

Appoint members of Local Workforce Investment Boards that govern the workforce system within the local areas designated by the governor.

Local Workforce Investment Board (WIB)

Comprised of appointed business leaders (51%) and representatives from organized labor, education, One-Stop partners, community-based organizations and youth service providers. The local WIB designs the local One-Stop Career Center delivery system and determine how employment and training funds are invested in the local area based on local needs.

One-Stop Career Centers

At the integrated local One-Stop Career Centers, individuals can access high quality local information on available jobs, skill requirements, and training provider performance. While the Workforce Investment Act establishes certain minimum requirements for the structure of the local system, it allows local communities significant flexibility in the design and implementation of their One-Stop Career Center systems. The partners required by the law to be part of the One-Stop Career Centers are:

- WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities
- Employment Service
- Adult Education
- Post-secondary Vocational Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Welfare-to-Work
- Title V of the Older Americans Act
- Job Corps
- WIA Indian and Native American Programs
- WIA National Farm Worker Jobs Program
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance
- Veterans' Employment and Training Service Programs
- Community Services Block Grant
- Employment and training activities carried out by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Unemployment Insurance

Each One-Stop Career Center partner is required to be represented on the local board and to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local board describing what services are to be provided at the One-Stop Career Center, how the costs of the services and the operating costs of the system will be funded, methods of referral of individuals between the One-Stop operator and the One-Stop partners, the duration of the MOU, and the procedures for amending the MOU.

A One-Stop operator is designated to manage the day-to-day functioning of the local One-Stop Career Center. Post-secondary educational institutions, local Employment Service offices, com-

munity and faith-based nonprofit organizations, private for-profit entities, and government agencies may be designated as the One-Stop operators. A local board may be designated with the agreement of the chief local elected official and the governor.

Each local area must have at least one physical "full-service" center where customers can access services from each of the One-Stop partners. Additional service structures may include other full-service centers or a network of affiliated sites, or a network of One-Stop partners that can consist of physical sites or electronic access points. Regardless of the design, all One-Stop Career Centers must be based on a "no wrong door" approach that assures customers access to information on all of the core services.

A business-led state WIB is appointed by the governor to oversee each state's One-Stop Career Center system and to develop a statewide five-year strategic plan. The governor also designates a state agency to oversee the eligible training provider identification process. In most cases, the governors have designated the state workforce agency that carries out the state's labor exchange programs.

The federal role in the One-Stop Career Center system is generally to coordinate activities between federal agencies and to provide administration and oversight to ensure financial accountability of programs and compliance with legal requirements.

One-Stop Career Center Services

Each One-Stop Career Center offers services ranging from self-service activities to more concentrated staff-assisted services. The Workforce Investment Act provides for a continuum of three levels of services that individuals are to progress through: core services; intensive services; and training, with the more extensive levels of services being provided only after the individual is unable to obtain employment with basic services.

Core Services

The Core Services required to be available at each One-Stop Career Center include:

- Outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the One-Stop Career Center
- Initial assessment
- Job search and placement assistance, and career counseling
- Provision of labor market information
- Provision of information on:
 - Eligible providers of training and other services
 - Local performance outcomes
 - Activities at the One-Stop Career Center
 - Filing claims for Unemployment Insurance
 - Supportive services
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for Welfare-to-Work and financial aid assistance
- Follow-up services

Intensive Services

Intensive services may be provided to adults and dislocated workers who are unemployed, have received at least one core service and are unable to obtain employment through core services, or who are employed and have received at least one core service if the One-Stop operator determines the individual is in need of more intensive services in order to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency.

Intensive Services include:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels (e.g., diagnostic testing)

- Development of an individual employment plan
- Group counseling
- Individual counseling and career planning
- Case management
- Short-term prevocational services

Training Services

Individuals who have met the eligibility requirements for intensive services and are unable to obtain or retain employment through intensive services may receive training services. Through One-Stop Career Centers, these individuals will be evaluated to determine whether or not they are in need of training and if they possess the skills and qualifications needed to participate successfully in the training program in which they express an interest. Training services must be directly linked to occupations that are in demand in the local area, or in another area to which the individual receiving services is willing to relocate. As with intensive services, in areas where the local board and the governor have determined that adult funds are limited, those with the greatest need may receive priority in the use of funds for training services.

One-Stop Career Centers provide access to consumer information about training providers that can assist individuals in gaining relevant skills—including information on the performance of such providers in placing graduates in employment.

Through local boards, each state maintains a list of eligible training providers that meet performance levels set by the governor. The performance levels may be adjusted upward, as appropriate, by local boards. Individuals may choose any provider from the list of approved providers, whether or not the provider is located in the local area where the individual resides.

With limited exceptions, training services are provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). States and local boards determine the structure of the ITA system in their local areas that may take a variety of forms including vouchers, credit cards or debit cards.

Youth Programs

The Workforce Investment Act reforms the youth training system and the Job Corps program, creating a system that is closely linked to the labor market. It also gives local areas greater discretion in determining how to allocate resources and provide services to youth within a comprehensive statewide system.

The new youth program is based on integrating academic and vocational education, integrating work-based and classroom-based instruction, creating connections with employers and private sector involvement.

The Act requires the creation of a Youth Council under each local board. The Youth Councils include representatives of youth service agencies, parents, public housing authorities, Job Corps, former youth program participants, and other appropriate individuals.

The Youth Council may serve various roles, such as developing portions of the local plan relating to youth, recommending the providers of youth activities to be awarded grants by the local board, conducting oversight of these providers, and coordinating youth activities in the local area.

Youth services are delivered by entities that are competitively awarded a grant or contract by the local board. Such entities may or may not be the same as those providing other WIA services under the One-Stop Career Center system in the local area. Each local area can determine the extent to which they want to integrate youth services with the adult and dislocated worker delivery system in the One-Stop Career Center.

In order to be eligible for youth services, a youth must be 14–21, low income, and meet at least one of six specified barriers to employment: basic skills deficiency; a school dropout; homeless, a runaway, or a foster child; pregnant or a parent; an offender; or require additional assistance to complete an educational program, or secure and hold employment.

Five percent of the youth served in a local area may be non-low-income if they experience one or more specified barriers to graduation or

employment. In addition, in an attempt to focus resources on those most in need, thirty percent of funds in each local area must be expended on out-of-school youth. Youth who do not meet the eligibility requirements must be referred to the One-Stop Career Center or another appropriate program for further assessment in order to meet the basic skills and training needs of the individual.

The Workforce Investment Act requires an individual assessment of skill levels and service needs and the development of a service strategy for each youth participant. The Act also outlines ten required elements of the youth program, including:

- Tutoring and study skills training and instruction
- Alternative secondary school services
- Summer employment opportunities
- Paid and unpaid work experiences
- Occupational skill training
- Leadership development activities
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Follow-up services

WIA emphasizes longer-term service by providing such things as: adult mentoring both during and after participation, for at least one year, and follow-up services for at least one year.

The Workforce Investment Act also strengthens the Job Corps program and ensures that it functions as an integral part of the workforce investment system.

Career OneStop Web site

Career OneStop is a portal Web site (www.careeronestop.org) that connects users to relevant links, resources, and community services offered over the Internet. It also directs them to the information and services provided through these core products:

America's Job Bank (www.jobsearch.org)
America's Job Bank is the biggest and busiest job market site in cyberspace, with over a million jobs nationwide and 400,000 resumes online. New jobs are added daily. It's simple to use. Employers can post job listings and search resumes nationwide. Job seekers can post resumes electronically and reach employers all across the country.

America's Career InfoNet (www.acinet.org)
America's Career InfoNet is great source of information to help individuals make smart career decisions. It is an electronic storehouse of national, state and local labor market data with employment trends, wages and more. It also lists millions of employers by industry, occupation, and name.

America's Service Locator
(www.servicelocator.org)
America's Service Locator helps individuals locate public service offices with information on finding a job, planning a career, locating training, dealing with job loss and recruiting employees. Visitors to the site can get a map and driving directions to the nearest location providing the desired services, just by typing in their address.

Workforce Tools of the Trade
(www.workforcetools.org)
Workforce Tools of the Trade is designed to help workforce development professionals gain the knowledge and skills they need to excel at their jobs. It contains real life examples of what's happening in the field, an extensive database of training resources and providers and links to workforce Web sites across the nation. It also is a tremendous reference tool with access to extensive information on publications, including cutting edge research.

O*NET OnLine (online.onetcenter.org)
The Occupational Information Network is an integral component of Career OneStop. The O*NET database is a comprehensive source of descriptions and skill sets for specific occupations. O*NET OnLine allows both the public and private sector to directly access key data for identifying and developing the skills of the American workforce. Using O*NET information enhances hiring and retention for business, supports workers and students in career planning, and informs the development of skill-based curriculum.

Critical Roles Community-Based Organizations Can Play In Meeting the Employment Needs of Their Communities

Help Your Community Members Access Career Services through the One-Stop Career Center

If your organization is like many others, the needs of your community far outweigh your resources. If that is your situation, you may want to supplement your staff and volunteers by having your local One-Stop Career Center assist you with the employment needs in your community.

The staff at your local One-Stop Career Center is trained to help people achieve their career goals. By referring those in your community with employment needs to their local One-Stop Career Center Web site, you can get workers in touch with the help they need, while freeing up you and your staff's valuable time to concentrate on other critical matters. There are many ways you can encourage those in your community to get the help they need at their local One-Stop Career Center, including:

- Recommending and referring them to One-Stop Career Centers electronic tools (www.careeronestop.org) in appropriate casual conversations, meetings and counseling sessions.
- Including articles about One-Stop Career Centers and in organization newsletters.
- Providing One-Stop Career Center and Career OneStop information on bulletin boards.
- Sponsoring a trip to a local One-Stop Career Center.
- Sponsoring a training session on the One-Stop Career Center Web site.
- Hosting a special career-planning seminar featuring a One-Stop Career Center staff member.

FBCO leaders can provide this vital assistance without depleting your limited time and financial resources. In fact, it requires no formal agreement with the local One-Stop Career Center but can pay tremendous dividends in the lives of individuals.

Extra Tips

In order to provide the most attention to individuals who face the biggest barriers to employment, consider arranging for someone to accompany the individual to the One-Stop Center. This is particularly valuable in helping community members with limited English proficiency.

Your organization may also wish to consider assigning a team of volunteers to familiarize themselves both with the One-Stop Center resources as well as the One-Stop Career Center's online tools so that team members can better refer individuals in need.

Critical Roles Community-Based Organizations Can Play In Meeting the Employment Needs of Their Communities

Support Your Members as They Seek Employment Assistance

One of the greatest strengths of many community organizations is the sense of caring, compassion and support they demonstrate in their communities. People facing critical employment problems are often in need of that type of support. Whether a person is facing the loss of a job, an impending layoff, or the need to change jobs, your organization is well positioned to provide those individuals with some of the support they need during these stressful situations.

Your organization may want to serve the people in your community by leveraging the skills and talents of people who are involved with your organization. Your organization can empower your supporters and volunteers to help those facing employment problems in numerous ways, including:

- **Work experience** – Ask your members or supporters who own businesses and those who are managers to provide work experience to someone with employment problems. This can result in critically needed income, newly acquired work skills, valuable experience and positive references for their resume.
- **Communications assistance** - Ask your members with good communications skills to help a job seeker create and proof read resumes and cover letters for proper grammar, punctuation and content.
- **Interview preparation** – Ask your members who have management or human resource experience to help a job seeker prepare for upcoming interviews.
- **Education tutoring** – Ask those in your organization who are well educated to tutor those wanting to improve their skills in reading, writing, mathematics and English speaking skills.
- **Job Fair/Career Days**- Invite volunteers to organize an opportunity for businesses seeking employees to educational forums

about job opportunities and job search skills. Invite the One-Stop Career Center to co-sponsor the event.

- **Job Clubs** – Host a group that supports individuals looking for jobs through regular meetings and networking sessions.
- **Mentoring** – Pair someone with employment problems with a volunteer or team of volunteers who can provide the support that person needs during their time of transition and difficulty. These mentors can provide advice and encouragement, and can serve as real-life success stories that perseverance will get results. Mentors can also help individuals access the resources they need.

All of these activities serve individuals by leveraging the skills, talents, and resources of others in your organization and community. By empowering your volunteers and supporters to help those facing serious challenges, your organization provides an invaluable service to them even as you strengthen your organization's impact and standing within the community.

If your organization is committed to contributing to and collaborating with a wider network of services within the community, you might consider two options discussed in the next two sections:

1) Making your services available through the One-Stop Career Centers;

2) Making your organization's site a "One-Stop Access Point".

Critical Roles Community-Based Organizations Can Play In Meeting the Employment Needs of Their Communities

Make Your Services Available through the One-Stop Centers

Your organization may already offer critical support services to remove barriers to employment for those in your community. These services are often ones that may fall between the cracks of government programs, including such things as:

- Child Care
- Transportation
- Clothing (In particular interview/office clothing)
- Life Skills Training or Mentoring

These resources can mean the difference between someone being able to work or having to go on public assistance. However, publicity about these services is often spread by word of mouth. Community organizations seeking to expand their reach into the community should consider forming a relationship with their local One-Stop Career Center.

Your organization can expand the number of people it reaches in the community by:

- Informal Arrangement – Letting One-Stop Career Center leaders know about the services your organization already provides and inviting the local One-Stop Career Center staff, particularly the case managers, to refer people in need of those services.

For instance, a community-based organization might let the One-Stop know about English as a Second Language (ESL) classes which are being offered at the community center.

It might strengthen your organization's goals to find out what resource guides the One-Stop Center uses, to request to be included in those guides, and to obtain copies or access to the resource guides for your community members.

- Formal Arrangement – Once approved by the local board and your community's chief elected official, you can sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the local board to become a formal One-Stop partner located

on the One-Stop site or offsite. For more information contact your local WIB or your local One-Stop Career Center.

- On-Site Partners - On-site partners place staff at the One-Stop Career Center site to educate customers about the services their organizations provide. For smaller organizations with limited resources, this usually is not the best choice. For small organizations it is frequently helpful to form coalitions and designate an intermediary to represent the services of a number of different organizations.

The next section will explain in more detail steps to becoming an offsite "One-Stop Access Point".

Critical Roles Community-Based Organizations Can Play In Meeting the Employment Needs of Their Communities

Make Your Organization's Site a "One-Stop Center Access Point"

For 2002-2003, the Department of Labor invested nearly \$20 million in projects designed to:

- 1) Increase the number of faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) serving as committed and active collaborators in the One-Stop delivery system.
- 2) Expand the access of FBCO clients and customers to the services offered by the nation's One-Stops.
- 3) Identify, document, highlight and replicate successful and innovative instances of FBO/FBCO involvement in One-Stop delivery system.

One successful strategy has involved partnerships to house "One-Stop Access Points" or "Mini-One-Stop Career Centers" inside FBCOs. These projects included agreements between FBCOs and the One-Stop Career Center that included the following components:

- **Internet access-** the FBCO provided a resource room where job seekers could access Career One-Stop (www.careeronestop.org) to search for jobs, develop and advertise resumes, or explore career opportunities.
- **Volunteers-** individuals from the FBCOs were available to help individuals in their job search, usually including resume preparation and other pre-employment issues. Volunteers could also refer customers to the main One-Stop as appropriate.
- **Volunteer Training-** The One-Stop Centers frequently helped provide training for the volunteers in the on-line resources as well as other basic job search support.
- **Flexible Hours-** In some cases, the Access Points had hours in the evenings and on weekends that were convenient for job seekers. In other cases, volunteers were

available as needed and clients could sign up for a time in advance.

One-Stop Centers are increasingly in search of organizations that can help reach populations facing significant barriers to employment. We recommend you contact your local Workforce Investment Board or One-Stop Center operator to let them know of your organization's interest in partnering with the workforce development system. Some local systems are already exploring competitive grant opportunities to fund "Access Points," while others are interested in recruiting organizations to volunteer as employment resource rooms in the community.

Critical Roles Community-Based Organizations Can Play In Meeting the Employment Needs of Their Communities

Supervise Your Local Workforce Investment System by Participating on an Oversight Body

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) established governing bodies at the local and state levels. In order to better serve the community, you might seek to help supervise your local workforce system by serving on the local or state WIB or simply attending board meetings and researching board activities. In addition to public meetings, a great deal of WIB planning and decision making is conducted by a committee process. We recommend investigating your WIB's committee structure and seeking opportunities to become an active participant in committee deliberations.

The WIA established a workforce investment system that depends upon the active participation and leadership of businesses and community leaders. The supervisory bodies at the local and state levels created by WIA are:

- Local Workforce Investment Board – The chief local elected officials of each local area must appoint a business-led local WIB to:
 - Establish the workforce investment policies in the local area;
 - Develop the local workforce investment plan, which specifies the types of services that are provided;
 - Conduct oversight of the One-Stop Career Center system in the local area, designate and/or certify One-Stop operators, identify optional One-Stop partners from participating programs and negotiate and enter into Memoranda of Understanding under which One-Stop Career Centers are administered; and
 - Negotiate, with the governor, the performance levels that apply to local areas and that could result in incentive funds or sanctions.
- Local Youth Council – Each local WIB is required to have a local Youth Council, whose responsibilities may include:
 - Developing portions of the local plan relating to youth;
 - Recommending the providers of youth

activities to be awarded grants by the local board;

- Conducting oversight of these providers; and
 - Coordinating youth activities in the local area.
- The Youth Councils include representatives of:
 - Youth service agencies;
 - Parents;
 - Public housing authorities;
 - Job Corps;
 - Former youth program participants; and
 - Other appropriate individuals.
 - State Workforce Investment Board(WIB) – Each state is required to establish a business-led state WIB, consisting of the governor and appointees of the governor representing business, education, labor, local elected officials and others. The board assists the governor in developing a five-year strategic plan, continuously improving the system, designating local workforce investment areas, developing state performance measures, conducting oversight for the One-Stop system and developing certain discretionary funding formulas.

Each of these supervisory bodies needs people who care about helping individuals meet their full potential and providing a qualified workforce for area employers.

Critical Roles Community-Based Organizations Can Play In Meeting the Employment Needs of Their Communities

Serve as Provider for Those in Need Through the Local Workforce System

As discussed previously, WIBs have discretion at the local level as to how to invest resources. Many WIBs, particularly through the parallel Youth Council structure, issue standard Request for Proposals to solicit providers of youth services or other support or training services. To find out about these local funding opportunities, you must contact your local WIB directly. Information on contacting your WIB can be found at the National Association of Workforce Boards, www.nawb.org. In addition to looking for direct contract and grant opportunities, organizations should consider partnering with current grantees and larger organizations in their applications to provide WIB services. Organizations might be able to find opportunities to act as “subcontractors” providing part of a larger service.

When pursuing both local and national grant opportunities, remember that the government (at all levels) focuses upon investing in organizations that produce measurable outcomes in people’s lives. Performance accountability is an important principle which strongly influences how grant programs are structured, including reporting requirements.

For some non-profit organizations, it may be appropriate to pursue the opportunity to become an Eligible Training Provider. With this designation, the Eligible Training Provider would receive payment for each individual trained through an Individual Training Account “voucher.”

For more information on state requirements for Eligible Training Providers, we recommend contacting your state Workforce Investment Board.

The Common Measures

As part of the President’s budget and performance integration initiative, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has developed common performance measures for programs with similar goals. The first four measures for performance are used for all federal employment and training programs serving adults. The second four measures apply to youth and life-long learning programs. Various grant and contracting programs, including Eligible Training Providers, set different benchmarks for these measures.

Adult Measures

- Entered Employment – Percentage of participants who entered employment upon completing the training;
- Retention – Percentage of participants who stayed employed upon completion of training;
- Earnings Increase – Percentage of participants in program who increase their earnings
- Efficiency – Annual cost per participant.

Youth and Lifelong Learning Measures

- Placement in Employment or Education – Percentage of participants entering employment or enrolled in education and/or training in the first quarter after program exit.
- Attainment of a Degree or Certificate – Percentage of participants earning a diploma, GED, or certificate.
- Literacy and Numeracy Gains – Attainment of literacy and numeracy skills.
- Efficiency – Annual cost per participant.

Critical Roles Community-Based Organizations Can Play In Meeting the Employment Needs of Their Communities

Serve as Provider for Those in Need Through Participating in National Grant Programs

Your organization may desire to become a provider of federally funded services through contracts, sub-contracts, grants and sub-grants. There are opportunities available for interested organizations to become such service providers, and President George W. Bush has undertaken an initiative to enhance the opportunities to do so.

In January 2001, the President established the White House Office for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and centers in the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Education, and Justice. These centers work to identify and eliminate barriers to participation in discretionary and formula grant programs. Discretionary grant programs are issued directly to non-profit organizations or other entities such as educational institutions, or government. Formula grants are issued to state governments to invest in their areas.

Organizations wanting to learn more about the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiative may visit www.fbc.gov. This Web site includes links to other Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives outside the Department of Labor. The Web site also contains a document called "Guidance for Faith-Based and Community Organizations on Partnering with the Federal Government", which describes the rights and responsibilities of organizations receiving government dollars. The Department of Labor's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (CFBCI) keeps its Web site, www.dol.gov/cfbci, updated with information about Department of Labor discretionary grants relevant to FBCOs and intermediaries. CFBCI works within the Department to simplify the grant process so that it can be accessible to FBCOs.

Within the Department of Labor, the following agencies issue grants:

- Employment and Training Administration
- Veterans' Employment and Training Services

- Bureau of International and Labor Affairs. \
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- Mine Safety and Health Administration
- Women's Bureau

Some of these discretionary grants are issued consistently; other discretionary grants are pilot demonstration projects, which may be only issued once or every few years. For more in-depth descriptions of grant programs through these agencies, please see the following pages.

Please note that if your organization registers to receive updates at www.dol.gov/cfbci, you do not need to register to receive grant information from individual agencies. Agencies generally seek grant applications by issuing a "Solicitation for Grant Applications" or SGAs; for advice on writing SGA, see page 17.

U.S. Department of Labor Discretionary Grant Opportunities

Veteran's Employment and Training Service (VETS)

www.dol.gov/vets

Mission: To provide veterans with the resources and services to succeed in the 21st century work force by maximizing their employment opportunities, protecting their employment rights and meeting labor-market demands with qualified veterans. For more information about VETS, please visit www.dol.gov/vets.

Discretionary Grant Opportunity:

Homeless Veteran's Reemployment Program Grant (HVRP)

The Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP) seeks to "expedite the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force." It was authorized under Section 738 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in July 1987. Funds are awarded competitively to units of State or local governments, state and local workforce investment boards, and nonprofit organizations.

Grantees provide an array of services directly and through linkages in the local community. The program is employment-focused and veterans receive the employment and training services they need to reenter the labor market. Job counseling, resume preparation, and job development and placement are among the services that may be provided. Supportive services such as clothing, shelter, referral to medical or substance abuse treatment, and transportation assistance are also provided to meet the needs of this target group. Since its inception, HVRP has featured an outreach component using veterans who themselves have experienced homelessness. In recent years this requirement was modified to allow the projects to utilize formerly homeless veterans in other positions where there is direct client contact if outreach was not needed extensively, such as counseling, peer coaching, and intake and follow up.

In 2003, VETS awarded 43 new grants for between \$200,000 - \$500,000. Within the HVRP

competition, VETS reserved a certain amount of money to award to organizations who had never received a grant before.

Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP)

The statutory intent of P.L. 105-220, Workforce Investment Act, Section 168, Veterans' Workforce Investment Programs (VWIP), is to support employment and training programs, through grants or contracts, to meet the needs for workforce investment activities of veterans with service-connected disabilities, veterans who have significant barriers to employment, veterans who served on active duty in the armed forces during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, and recently separated veterans. VWIP grantees provide direct services to assist eligible veterans in obtaining employment, job training, on-the-job training, educational opportunities, and focus on developing programs that eliminate civilian licensing and certification barriers for veterans.

In PY 2003, with the performance period of July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004, VWIP was authorized \$7,377,000. With these funds, VETS awarded second year funding of nine (9) PY 2002 grants for a total of \$6.4 million and awarded three (3) competitive grants and one (1) demonstration grant that targeted incarcerated veterans with residual funding in the amount of \$440,000. In addition, VETS provided \$500,000 to support the Chronic Homelessness effort in collaboration with other DOL agencies and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The 13 VWIP grantees assisted 3,728 veterans with 2,561 participants placed into employment for a 69% placement rate at an average wage at placement of \$12.67, and an average cost per placement of \$2,424.

In PY 2004, with the performance period of July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005, VWIP was authorized \$7,505,000. With these funds, VETS awarded six (6) months extensions for the nine (9) PY 2003 grants for a total of \$3,160,720 and competitively awarded 17 grants for a total of \$3,786,180. In addition, VETS provided an

additional \$500,000 to support the Chronic Homelessness effort in collaboration with other DOL agencies and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Employment and Training Administration (ETA)

<http://www.doleta.gov/>
<http://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce>

Mission: The mission of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is to contribute to the more efficient functioning of the U.S. labor market by providing high quality job training, employment, labor market information, and income maintenance services primarily through state and local workforce development systems.

Below are examples of some of ETA's discretionary grants. For past examples, you may also visit www.doleta.gov/sga. The majority of ETA's funding for employment and training system is invested in the Workforce Investment system.

Grassroots/ Small FBCO Workforce Development Grants

In 2002, 2003, and 2004 ETA awarded small \$20,000-\$25,000 grants to grassroots organizations as part of a pilot demonstration program.

During the last competition, the eligible organizations met the following criteria:

- Have social services as a major part of their mission;
- Are headquartered in the community where services are provided;
- Have a total annual operating budget of \$350,000 or less; or
- Have six or fewer full-time or equivalent employees.

In 2004, the DOL designated over \$1,000,000, and gave 48 grants to grassroots organizations across the country.

The purpose of these grants is to create partnerships between grassroots FBCOs and the

Nation's One-Stop Career System to help put people to work. The Department anticipates holding a similar grant competition in 2005.

Grants for Workforce Investment Boards

In 2004, the DOL invested over \$ 5,000,000 in grants to Workforce Investment Boards that committed to partner with grassroots faith-based and community organizations and work with those organizations to transition people into High Growth Industries.

The Department anticipates holding a similar grant competition in 2005.

The President's High Growth Job Training Initiative (HGJTI):

The President's High-Growth Job Training Initiative, as implemented by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, is designed to provide national leadership for a demand-driven workforce system that ensures no worker is left behind. The foundation of this initiative is partnerships that include the public workforce system, business and industry, education and training providers, and economic development working collaboratively to develop solutions to the workforce challenges facing these industries and to develop maximum access for American workers to gain the competencies they need to get good jobs in these industries.

Examples of HGJTI Industries:

- Health Care
- Information Technology
- Biotechnology
- Geospatial Technology
- Automotive
- Retail
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Construction
- Transportation
- Hospitality
- Financial Services
- Energy

Throughout 2005, ETA will announce grant competitions related to High Growth industries which

will require partnerships between non-profits organizations, businesses, academic institutions and the Workforce system.

For example, in 2004, ETA awarded \$41.5 million in discretionary funds for the Biotechnology and Healthcare High-Growth Job Training Initiative Grants. These grants will address labor shortages, innovative training strategies, and other workforce challenges in the Healthcare and Biotechnology industries as identified through the President's High-Growth Job Training Initiative.

Grant funds awarded under the HGJTI should be used to develop and implement innovative solutions to workforce challenges identified by the Healthcare industry or Biotechnology industry. Each solution should take place in the context of a strategic partnership between the public workforce system, business and industry representatives, and education and training providers such as community colleges.

ETA planned to fund 10-12 recipients at a range of \$750,000 to \$1 million.

Valuable information for FBCOs:

- <http://www.doleta.gov/business/> -- At this site you can learn more about some of our targeted industries by clicking on the appropriate title. Information available includes industry snapshots, occupational outlooks, types of jobs created in each business sector, workforce issues, and industry forums.
- http://www.doleta.gov/BRG/IndProf/download_profile.cfm -- At this Web site FBCOs can access additional pertinent information on different high-growth sectors including a profile of many industries in the President's High-Growth Job Training Initiative as well as some of the industry investments that have been funded by the Department of Labor.
- <http://www.doleta.gov/BRG/JobTrainInitiative/SuccessStories.cfm> -- At this site FBCOs can read some success stories of partnerships that have been created.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

SCSEP serves individuals with low incomes who are at least 55 years old and have limited employment prospects. The program provides part-time community service jobs at minimum wage in settings such as day care centers, hospitals, and schools in occupations ranging from literacy tutoring and conservation to financial consulting and economic development. Some national and states grantees sub-grant to regionally-based grantees that must identify host agencies who will hire the older workers.

For the first time since its creation in 1964, SCSEP was published for competition in 2003. FBCOs were specifically cited as eligible as grantees, sub-grantees and host agencies. Contact names for SCSEP grantees are available at:
http://wdsc.doleta.gov/seniors/html_docs/directory.cfm.

The FY 2003 appropriation level: \$442,306,000. A small competition concerning senior workers may take place in 2005.

President's Reentry Initiative

The President's Prisoner Reentry Initiative seeks to strengthen urban communities characterized by large numbers of returning prisoners through an employment-centered program that incorporates mentoring, job training, and other comprehensive transitional services. This program, which involves several federal agencies, is designed to reduce recidivism by helping inmates find work when they return to their communities, as part of an effort to build a life in the community for everyone. The Department of Labor (DOL) will award approximately \$19.8 million dollars in grants under this competition to faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) to be the agencies carrying out this demonstration in 2005. Grant sizes will be approximately \$660,000; the grant applications are due on July 17, 2005 and the funded projects will begin in Fall of 2005.

Responsible Reintegration of Youthful Offender Grant

In 2005, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) will award approximately \$15 million dollars for the Responsible Reintegration of Youthful Offenders grant. The purpose of these grant funds is to address the specific workforce challenges of youth offenders and to utilize strategies that prepare them for new and increasing job opportunities in high-growth/high-demand and economically vital industries and sectors of the American economy. Projects funded under this competition are consistent with both the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative and the Department of Labor's Youth Vision. Applicants may submit proposals within the range of \$800,000 to \$1.2 million. Applicants may be public, private for-profit, and private non-profit organizations, including faith-based and community organizations. Applications are due on May 25, 2005 and the funded projects will begin July 1, 2005.

National Farmworker Jobs Program

In July 2005, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) will award grants for operating the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP), under section 167 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). ETA will award approximately \$71,690,318 to states, Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs), faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher learning, and other entities capable of delivering services on a statewide basis. Through training and other workforce development services, the program is intended to assist eligible migrants and seasonal farmworkers and their families to prepare for jobs likely to provide stable, year-round employment both within and outside agriculture. Applicants did not need to be a current or prior WIA Section 167 grantee to establish eligibility and be awarded a grant under this solicitation. Applications are due May 27, 2005 and the funded projects will begin on July 1, 2005.

Grant Writing Guidance

Elements of a DOL SGA

The Department of Labor generally announces funding opportunities by publishing a Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) in the *Federal Register*. A typical SGA contains the following elements:

Billing Code-

1. **Agency:** Identifies the department, agency, and program putting out the notice.
2. **Summary:** Gives an overview of the program and services being sought by the solicitation.
3. **Dates:** Identifies the deadline for submitting an application (response to the notice).

Supplementary: Authorities- Lists the DOL regulations and OMB circulars that are applicable to the different categories of DOL grant recipient, as well as any additional grant specific requirements.

Funding Opportunity Description-

1. **Overview:** Provides an overview of the program under which grant is announced.
2. **Administration Strategy:** Describes reasoning for the grant program.
3. **Project Objectives:** Identifies expectations of grantees.

Award Information- Identifies total funds appropriated, estimated number of grants to be given, and average amount to be allocated to each grantee.

Eligibility Information-

1. **Eligible Applicants:** Defines who can apply for grants.

Application and Submission Information-

1. **Application Forms:** Describes the method of obtaining application forms.
2. **Submission Date and Times:** Identifies opening and closing dates for grant applications.

Address- Identifies the address to which applications must be mailed.

Submission of Applications- Defines proper format for submission of grant applications. Applicants usually must include:

1. **Application for Federal Assistance:** Directs applicant to the form SF-424, which requires the signature of an authorized person to enter into the grant agreement.
2. **Budget Information:** Identifies DOL budget requirements for use of awarded funds.
3. **Technical Proposal (Statement of Work):** Sets forth a plan for use of awarded funds.

Application Review Information-

1. **Criteria, Review and Selection Process:** Identifies the method of grantee selection.
2. **Reporting Requirements:** Lists reports and documents required from grantees.

Should I apply for this grant?

Each Solicitation for Grant Application (SGA) contains sections called Summary and Supplemental background Information. While these sections provide insight into the services being sought, pay particular attention to the eligible applicant and deliverable sections to determine if your organization should consider submitting an application.

The eligible applicant section will let you know if your organization can apply. For example, some solicitations for grant application are only for states or state agencies to respond.

The SGA may include a deliverables section that describes the products and meetings required to fulfill this particular grant. If the requirements are unfamiliar or seem overwhelming, you may want to call the "for further information contact" person and determine if the requirements are feasible for your organization. Finally, does your organization provide the serv-

ices requested in the SGA? The closer the match between your organization's mission and activities and the services being sought, the better your chance of success in competing for funds. Be sure your organization is capable of providing the services the federal government is seeking to fund.

How do I write a winning proposal?

If your organization is an eligible applicant, is capable of providing the services sought and capable of fulfilling the requirements outlined in the solicitation, there are just two sections to concentrate on when writing the proposal – the evaluation criteria and selection process and the application contents.

The application contents enumerate what the application must contain to be considered. Sometimes there is extra information describing these elements. Do not use this information as the sole guidelines for constructing your proposal. Rather, make sure every piece of information required is included, but also review the evaluation criteria and selection process for information about how to organize your proposal content.

The evaluation criteria and selection process usually should be used to organize your proposal. The reviewer must evaluate your proposal using these criteria and points structure. Make sure that every question and request for information from the evaluation criteria is answered in the proposal. Use headings to let the reader know what question you are answering. To the extent possible, follow the order of the rating criteria when writing your proposal. Finally, in reviewing your proposal, make sure it is within the allowable page limit, uses the correct margins and font size, and is received on time.

How to Respond to Commonly Requested Elements of SGA

Need: Use statistics to show how the community needs the proposed services. Information such as unemployment rates, poverty rates and high

school dropout rates are standard statistics that can tell a convincing story for a particular community. America's Career Infonet, local One-Stop Career Centers, and the state employment service can provide some of these statistics.

Use of Partnerships: Show how the whole community is interested in working together by demonstrating that other organizations, such as schools, government, businesses, FBCOs, are a part of the team effort. Include letters from the partnering organization describing its commitment to the project, unless the SGA specifically says not to include supporting letters. It is helpful to begin your outreach early if you plan to include support letters.

Goals and Objectives: Clearly number each goal and objective. Ensure that measurable indicators exist to evaluate whether the program attains the goals and objectives. Some common goals for DOL programs include: entered employment, retention in employment, and wage increases for adults and attainment of degree or certificate, entering employment or secondary education, or increase in literacy and numeracy for youth.

Evaluation: Describe the method for collecting data and how it will be analyzed to determine if the goals and objectives are reached.

Critical Ways Faith-Based and Community Organizations Can Help Meet Their Community's Employment Needs:

Help Your Community Members Access Career Services through the One-Stop Career Center

- ✓ Locate your closest One-Stop Career Center by calling 1-800-US2-JOBS or go online at www.servicelocator.org.
- ✓ Refer individuals seeking employment assistance to their local One-Stop Career Center or Career One-Stop (www.careeronestop.org).

Support Your Members as They Seek Employment Assistance

- ✓ Use your organization's strengths and resources to aid those in need with their employment search.

Make your Services Available Through the One-Stop Centers

- ✓ Speak to the One-Stop Career Center operator about the possibility of partnering through an informal arrangement, formal arrangement or a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Make Your Organization's Site a "One-Stop Center Access Point"

- ✓ Arrange for your organization's resource room to be connected the local One-Stop's online resources and arrange training for volunteers in those resources.
- ✓ Arrange for an MOU with your local One-Stop.

Supervise your Local Workforce Investment System by Participating on an Oversight Body.

- ✓ Contact leaders of the local WIB to find out about their 5-year strategic plan and its allocation of resources. Contact information for WIBs may be found at www.nawb.org under Member Directory.
- ✓ Attend local WIB meetings.
- ✓ Inform the WIB about your organization, its commitments and its projects.

Serve as Provider for the Local Workforce System or in National Grant Programs

- ✓ Ask your WIB, Youth Council, county and city employment agencies about upcoming grants to be released through requests for proposals (RFPs). If appropriate, find out requirements for becoming an eligible training provider.
- ✓ Build relationships with other larger non-profits and apply to be a subcontractor for that organization.
- ✓ If appropriate, work on developing a track record for your organization so that you can show your performance using the "common measures" used to evaluate workforce development, employment and training programs
- ✓ Locate grants online by visiting your State Workforce Agency Web site, which you may access at www.naswa.org or by visiting the U.S. Department of Labor's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Web site at www.dol.gov/cfbc and looking under "Funding Opportunities. Locate other agencies with "Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives" using www.fbc.gov.



U.S. Department of Labor

Produced by the Center for Employment Security Education and Research (CESER) and the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration and Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

All photographs and images in these resource materials are copyrighted and protected under the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976. Stone Images, IMAGE BANK, Photodisk, and Getty Images, have, by license, authorized the United States Department of Labor to use the photographs and images in these resource materials. Photographs and images may not be reproduced without permission from Stone Images, IMAGE BANK, Photodisk, and/or Getty Images or used otherwise separate and apart.

Permission is hereby granted to reproduce, copy, and distribute this work in whole or in part, provided that costs recovered are at or below cost (i.e., noncommercial use), and that the author, source, and copyright notice are included. This permission is in addition to rights of reproduction granted under Sections 107, 108, and other provisions of the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976. For uses other than described in this paragraph, please contact the copyright owner.

Copyright © February 2002, CESER