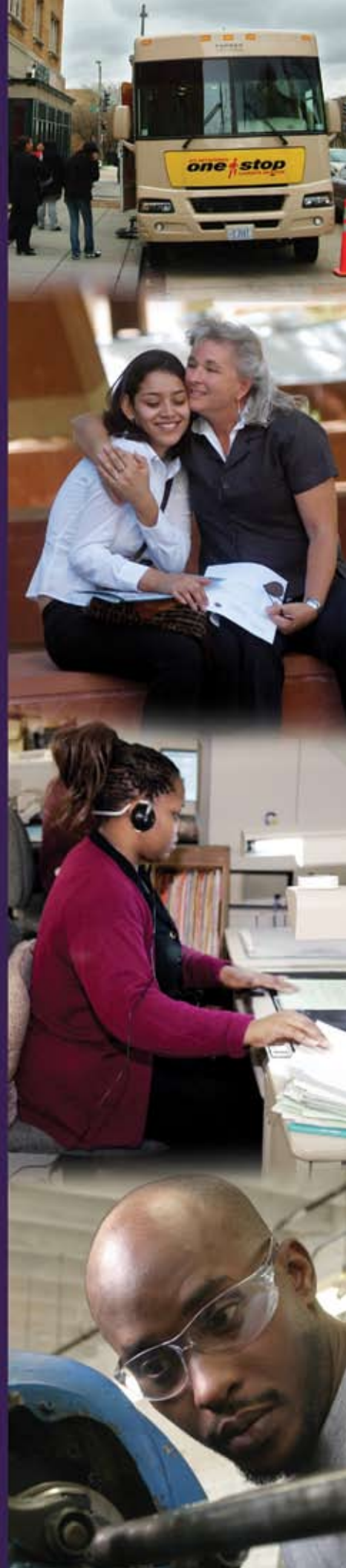# Creating Communities of Hope, Innovation, Productivity, and Prosperity: Lessons Learned from Grantees

Transforming performance, capacity, communities, regional economies.

workforce investment boards and community-based nonprofits

THE VALUE TO YOU...

Purpose

In response to shrinking federal dollars, increasing need, and a changing economy, the workforce system is becoming more innovative, efficient, and global. One strategy for maximizing service delivery is to partner with community-based nonprofit organizations whose missions align with workforce system goals. By aligning service delivery strategies and leveraging these valuable community resources, the workforce system can ensure that it's limited resources are used efficiently to maximize benefits to workers and businesses.

Between 2004-2006, the U.S. Department of Labor (the Department) invested $10 million dollars for workforce boards to engage grassroots nonprofit faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) and connect disadvantaged job seekers with high growth industries and businesses. These Boards have learned many lessons and developed many tools that can contribute to how other workforce boards and local One-Stop Career Centers (OSCC) can work with community-based nonprofit organizations.

In an effort to demonstrate how the workforce system can maximize relationships with community-based nonprofits, this resource provides:

- A summary of successful strategies from lessons learned,
- A variety of relevant resources, and
- Access to peers who are successfully forging relationships between the workforce system and community-based nonprofits and who are willing to answer your questions and share their experience.

Intended Audience

This resource is intended to be of value to:

- Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs);
- One-Stop Career Centers, partners, and providers;
- Stakeholders in regional economic initiatives;
- Nonprofits;
- Elected officials; and
- Other stakeholders in the workforce system.

PEER CONTACTS

For a list of grantee peer contacts access Appendix A.

Additional Information

Several of the resources included here will help the workforce system connect to community-based nonprofits and can be customized to a local/regional workforce system. Valuable examples, toolkits, guides, and reports are included on the accompanying disc. For more information from grantees, contact one of the peer contacts located in this resource (See Appendix A). For additional copies or information from the Department contact:

Janet Sten
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Office of Workforce Investment
Division of Workforce System Support
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20210
Phone (202) 693-3980
Fax (202) 693-3981
www.workforce3one.org

BACKGROUND

This resource is intended to support collaborative relationships between WIBs and community-based and regional nonprofit organizations to connect disadvantaged job seekers with high growth industries and businesses. Information for this resource was gleaned from the experience of WIBs and their small community-based nonprofit subrecipients* funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration as well as various research papers and evaluations funded and/or released by the Department.

The grantees whose experiences are reflected in this resource were funded through competitive solicitations. Funding was intended to:

- Increase access to the workforce investment system among underserved populations;
- Provide new or enhanced services to individuals entering or in the talent pipeline;
- Build faith-based and community organizations' (FBCOs) (to be referred to as community-based nonprofits) capacity and enable their ongoing participation in the workforce investment system;
- Strengthen sustainable relationships between FBCOs and OSCC to serve disenfranchised populations including ex-offenders, youth, people with disabilities, victims of violent and domestic crime, with limited English proficiency, homeless veterans, etc.;
- Provide capacity building for community-based nonprofits;
- Build relationships across the workforce system; and
- Achieve employment outcomes in high growth, high demand sectors.

A list of reports, evaluations, and research utilized to create this resource are found in Appendix D.

The solicitations required WIB grantees to work with small community-based nonprofits (FBCOs) with no more than six full-time equivalent employees or an annual social services budget of $350,000 or less.

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◆ The investment in and the return on connecting with community-based nonprofits ◆ Strategies for connecting community-based nonprofits to the workforce system ◆ What is different about working with community-based nonprofits	◆ Expediting the alignment and leveraging of assets within a short timeframe ◆ Visible and tangible assets community-based nonprofits can bring to the workforce system ◆ Less visible and tangible characteristics of nonprofit assets	◆ Characteristics of community-based nonprofits that are complementary to the workforce system ◆ The transformational elements of nonprofit service delivery ◆ Using community-based nonprofits as a way to extend and diversify the talent pipeline	◆ The role of the workforce system in facilitating nonprofit-business relationships ◆ The value businesses bring to community-based nonprofits ◆ The value community-based nonprofits bring to businesses	◆ Integrating leadership of community-based nonprofits into the workforce system ◆ Attracting other leadership and organizations through the success of the grant ◆ Various dimensions of leadership opportunities with community-based nonprofits	◆ How the success of and value placed on relationships with community-based nonprofits leads to sustainability and growth ◆ What is really worth sustaining and growing ◆ Challenges that were overcome

"So we've come a long way…but there's still a long way to go. The problem is that you have to get people to understand that it's not as hard as you think it is…everybody gets hung up on the details of the separation between church and state…that's the problem with us…we always take the two or three things that we disagree on and forget the 450 things that we do agree on…and we let those two or three things separate us. This is one of the things that I think we've done a good job on…just getting people to come together…"[1]

Dan Eckstrom
Retired County Supervisor
Pima County, Arizona

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Forging relationships between the publicly funded workforce investment system and community-based nonprofits is beneficial to transforming performance, capacity, communities, and regional economies in a way that government cannot do alone. The need to embrace businesses, community-based nonprofits, and other government agencies to create the collective capacity and innovation necessary to transform the workforce system in a more global economy is embodied within the spirit of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

To support these public-private relationships, the Department invested $10 million dollars to support WIBs in engaging grassroots, community-based nonprofits and working with them to connect disadvantaged job seekers with high growth industries and businesses. While the WIB grants awarded by the Department were an impetus for some grantees to partner with community-based nonprofits, some grantees had been trying to be more inclusive of nonprofit stakeholders and/or were looking to expand relationships with community-based nonprofits in more formal, comprehensive, and sustainable ways. The projects that were most successful were those that found common ground between the willingness and commitment of representatives of the workforce system and nonprofit community to achieve shared workforce system goals through a joint plan of operation.

Together, WIB grantees and community-based nonprofits, developed strategies for:
- Connecting community-based nonprofits to the workforce system;
- Aligning and leveraging community-based nonprofit assets;
- Helping the unserved, underserved, and individuals with multiple barriers meet their goals and transition into the workforce systems' talent pipeline;
- Leveraging community-based nonprofit-business relationships;
- Tapping community-based nonprofit leadership; and
- Sustaining and growing the connection.

The workforce system's long-term vision will continue to be the growth and sustainability of the capacity necessary to meet the needs of individuals, businesses, communities, and global economies. These grants gave the workforce system the opportunity to learn how to strengthen and nurture relationships that are, and will be, the framework for creating communities of hope, innovation, productivity, and prosperity. Together WIB grantees and community-based nonprofits overcame their differences and focused on transforming lives, communities, and economies.

The Employment Ministry at the Giving Tree recruited participants for the employment program from their feeding sites for the homeless.

"Fortunately, the passion for helping these target populations has kept all the groups motivated to cooperate despite the differences and frustrations."[2]

Lindan Johnson
Evaluator
Macro International Inc.

Connecting Community-Based Nonprofit Organizations to the Workforce System

Key Take-Aways

In this section you will discover grantee lessons learned about:

- The investment in and the return on connecting with community-based nonprofits;
- Strategies for connecting community-based nonprofits to the workforce system; and
- What is different about working with community-based nonprofits.

Lessons Learned

Workforce investment board grantees learned how to connect to community-based nonprofits in a way that is beneficial to each organization, the workforce system, and local and more global communities. This section focuses on grantee experience that provides answers to the following questions posed by stakeholders in the workforce system:

- Why invest in relationships with community-based nonprofits?
- Why are community-based nonprofits effective?
- Who are community-based nonprofits?
- What do community-based nonprofits do?
- With whom do community-based nonprofits work?
- Where do they work?
- How do workforce systems connect with community-based nonprofits?
- What role do grantees and community-based nonprofits have?
- What is different about working with community-based nonprofits?

"We have been pleased with the results, and have found that the retention rates for the [prisoner re-entry program] was twice as high as it was for people we were hiring off the street."[3]

Plant Manager

"What makes a person get out of bed and go to training...or a job every day? We recognize that this is an ineffable thing...that's beyond federal workforce reinvestment programs. There's a spiritual, a character, and a motivational development aspect to this and teaming up with the FBCOs makes sense. This becomes very important for the people who have defined themselves by their job. If anything happens to that job – it's not just a personal identity crisis – it can send the entire family into turmoil. This isn't always apparent and might not be addressed if a person just fills out a form to apply for a job. How can you detect that even with an advanced computer networking system? This is something that a person needs to identify and is an area that the people at the FBCOs perform well."[4]

Dorthee Harmon
Employment and Training
Pima Community Services

Why Invest In Relationships With Community-Based Nonprofits?

Grantees reported that each organization and the workforce system as a whole worked more effectively and were better able to achieve their goals together than in isolation. The WIBs and grassroots community-based nonprofits found their commonalities outweighed their differences. The WIB grantees and community-based nonprofits shared:

- Complementary missions;
- Workforce investment areas and regions;
- Same talent pipeline and business customer base;
- Many of the same challenges;
- Consensual growth strategies; and
- Diverse assets.

The start and the foundation for relationship building and sustainability were to focus on common ground. From this common ground, the system could integrate diverse assets to achieve more effective and global outcomes.

The WIB grantees created relationships across their communities in an effort to contribute to economic competitiveness, community development, and self-sufficiency of its residents. By joining together, they have helped:

- Reduce costly duplication and inefficiencies of services;
- Increase the capacity of the system by leveraging and diversifying the capacity of individual organizations;
- Dispel the negative perception sometimes associated with government services;
- Lower the burden on government assistance by reducing recidivism, unemployment, and drop-out rates, and addressing at-risk behaviors to prevent incarceration, poverty, and chemical dependency, for example;
- Better align assets to gaps and needs in timely ways;
- Harvest underdeveloped talent pools; and
- Improve the "livability" of communities.

Grantees discovered the investment in developing relationships with community-based nonprofits brought varying dimensions of returns over time including the potential of reducing the tax burden on local businesses, the ability to attract additional funding, and to contribute to more economically viable communities where people would want to live and where businesses would want to invest. The system's collective effectiveness is contingent on the individual effectiveness of each community-based nonprofit.

> **"Freed from the profit motive that dominates business and from the constraints of government, the nonprofit sector serves as a forum for the creation and dissemination of new ideas, an efficient vehicle for delivering social services, and a guardian of our environment, values, and heritage."[5]**
>
> **Independent Sector**

Why Are Community-Based Nonprofits Effective?

Grantees reported that community-based nonprofits were effective because they took a grassroots approach. Being located within the communities they served, they were likely to have a first-hand experience with the issues and culture of the people they served, resources available, and local political and economic environments. Their close proximity to people in need and a history of infusing communities with hope, forging renewal, and transforming lives and communities, have established very positive, long-term relationships of trust. These long-term relationships are networked closely within and across communities, leadership circles, and funding sources.

Nonprofits leverage these relationships, the expertise of leadership within their organization and across leadership circles, and the quality of the services and products they provide to:

- Serve some of the hardest to serve in some of the most challenging areas of the nation;
- Integrate a continuum of intensive, individualized, comprehensive services;
- Bring access to the workforce system for the unserved and underserved; and
- Deliver services in innovative and timeless ways.

The WIB grantees first had to identify who the community-based nonprofits were in their community, with respect to their mission, effectiveness, and willingness to align their assets to the workforce system. Their effectiveness could then be transitioned and applied to the success of the workforce system.

Who Are Community-Based Nonprofits?

The WIB grantees demonstrate that regional, integrated relationships between private and public sectors can become part of the backbone of workforce system delivery. For decades community-based nonprofits have embraced the mission of transforming lives, communities, and regions beyond their contiguous influence. Community-based nonprofits are both contributing businesses and conduits of talent development, embracing the collective resources of communities to generate and sustain hope, innovation, productivity, and prosperity. There are over 25 classifications of community-based nonprofits including foundations, charities, social welfare organizations, and professional and trade associations.[6] Some of the WIB grantees brought a successful history of integrating their resources with community-based nonprofits to achieve mutual goals for their respective organizations, individuals, and communities.

What Do Community-Based Nonprofits Do?

Nonprofits are businesses driven by a mission responsive to a need, innovative idea, and/or opportunity. Many are started by business leaders and are entrepreneurial in nature, pioneering change, organizing and managing talent and resources, and taking on the risk of starting something new in sometimes less than optimum conditions.

These organizations are champions of harnessing community resources in the form of donations, volunteers, government grants, foundations, leaders, investors, and other stakeholders and aligning these resources with their mission. They are experienced in blending public and private funds to maintain their vision and capacity in times of economic stability and uncertainty. Some have developed products and services that are commercialized and distributed nationally and internationally.

They are driven by a culture shared by staff and with a vision that leads to unity of purpose, high level of commitment, and positive results consistent with their mission. The community-based nonprofits involved with the WIB grantees ranged from those with expertise providing very specific services such as outreach, culturally-relevant training, and mentoring to those with little or no experience providing workforce activities or workforce activities connected to OSCCs. At the heart of their culture and mission are the lives of people in need of transformation.

With Whom Do Community-Based Nonprofits Work?

Many of the community-based nonprofits working with the WIB grantees tapped unserved and underserved labor pools and many in unmined geographic locations, expanding the reach of and access to the workforce system and talent pipeline. In general, the populations served by grantees had multiple barriers to employment, were disconnected from and/or disenchanted with government services, and required long-term assistance often beyond that available through many government programs. In addition, many faith-based organizations (FBOs) had congregations with heterogeneous talent pipelines consisting of unemployed people with professional experience and college degrees in addition to passive talent. This grant opportunity made it possible for the workforce system to extend its reach to these populations without being physically located in each community.

Where Do They Work?

The community-based nonprofits involved in this funding typically worked in the communities of the people they serve, on their block, within their circles of influence, and from their culture. Some community-based nonprofits have more far reaching missions being part of larger national and international organizations. Regional, statewide, national, and international commitments and consumers of their services and products make it possible for some community-based nonprofits to operate from more global powerbases. Workforce investment areas and community-based nonprofits with more global missions have additional reasons to connect.

How Do Workforce Investment Board Grantees Connect With Community-Based Nonprofits?

Two of the most successful WIB grantees spent months prior to applying for the grants facilitating community exploratory meetings, identifying organizations that shared common goals, assessing collective assets, and envisioning what the structure and outcomes of the relationship would look like.[7, 8] While some grantees had already embraced the nonprofit community prior to applying for funding, others engaged in outreach efforts through the Request for Proposal (RFP) and Request for Application (RFA) processes as a means of connecting with them and providing grant funds by making them subrecipients. The RFP or RFA process was the means of flowing funding from the WIB grantees to community-based nonprofits.

A range of formal and informal means were used to recruit community-based nonprofits into the workforce system, from highly structured, far-reaching outreach campaigns to informal community networking by word of mouth. Some grantees wanted to embrace community-based nonprofits with which the workforce system had never worked. The WIB grantees also focused on exploring different opportunities and dimensions of existing relationships with community-based nonprofits. The intent of each relationship was to better mine the assets of individual organizations and align them to common workforce system's needs, goals, and innovation.

Most grants were not of sufficient duration to allow for formal asset mapping. In the majority of cases, community-based nonprofits proposed the services they could provide through the RFP/RFA process. The WIB grantee was responsible for choosing subrecipients and connecting the dots between organizations, services, and outcomes.

Grantees who facilitated the RFP process had to maintain a tight timeframe to accomplish their goals. Several successful WIB grantees created a single point of contact between them and community-based nonprofits in an effort to better get to know one another over a short period of time. This person might be staff from the WIB or the OSCC. They would serve as a conduit between the WIB and community-based nonprofits. This person was available to answer questions posed by the community-based nonprofits, provide guidance related to recordkeeping and reporting, and translate the world of workforce development to community-based nonprofits.

Some WIBs contracted with a nonprofit intermediary organization that had significant experience and capacity and could serve effectively in an intermediary role between the WIB and the group of community-based nonprofits engaged in the grant. More information on the role of intermediaries is provided in the last section, Sustaining and Growing the Connection.

While there were a variety of strategies for connecting with community-based nonprofits, it appears the clear identification of the role of intermediaries, the WIB, OSCC, community-based nonprofits, government agencies, businesses, and other stakeholders was critical to sustaining and nurturing their connectivity.

RESOURCES ON ASSET MAPPING
- **Asset Mapping for WIBs and Nonprofits: Drilling Down and Across the Community Workforce System**
  info@nyswtwrn.com

- **Asset Mapping Roadmap: A Guide to Assessing Regional Development Resources**
  www.compete.org/images/uploads/File/PDF%20Files/CoC_Illuminate_2008.pdf

WIB PEER CONTACT
- **Art Eckstrom**
  Pima county Employment and Training Program Manager
  (520) 243-6777

What Role Do Grantees and Community-Based Nonprofits Have?

Workforce investment board grantees worked with community-based nonprofits to develop roles that were most conducive to meeting common workforce goals, congruent with each other's respective missions, resources, and needs. Workforce investment board grantees created the following roles for themselves:

- Managed the procurement and monitoring process and flowed funding to nonprofit subrecipients that were responsible for achieving the outcomes of the grant;
- Secured intermediaries or points of contact from the nonprofit community, WIB, or OSCC to be a point of transfer between the grantee and community-based nonprofits;
- Provided training;
- Linked community-based nonprofits to the OSCC; and
- Leveraged the integrity and value of the workforce system to create positive relationships with and grow the capacity of community-based nonprofits.

There were three primary roles that emerged for community-based nonprofits:

- The "recruit and refer" role consisted of community-based nonprofits providing outreach to individuals unserved and/or underserved by the workforce system. Basic support services were provided. Job-ready candidates were referred to the OSCC for job placement;
- The "specialized job readiness training" role consisted of community-based nonprofits customizing services to a specific population and providing job placement services or referring jobseekers to the OSCC; and
- The "comprehensive services" role consisted of community-based nonprofits providing a range of comprehensive employment and social services.[9]

Some WIB grantees created a fourth role for a single nonprofit which acted as an intermediary between the nonprofit network and the workforce system and WIB grantee. Some of the WIB grantees who experienced challenges or added new organizations to the network found it necessary to more fully develop, revise, and/or more clearly articulate distinctive roles. The roles between the grantees and community-based nonprofit subrecipients needed to ensure that the Equal Treatment and Religious-Related regulations were followed.

> "The FBCO partners have established ongoing connections with 216 employers for future job opportunities for their clients."[10]
>
> **Lindan Johnson**
> *Evaluator*
> **Macro International Inc.**

> "...the One Stop has encouraged organizations and agencies to collaborate rather than to compete with one another."[11]
>
> **Lindan Johnson**
> *Evaluator*
> **Macro International Inc.**

What Is Different About Working With Faith-Based Organizations?

The WIBs and OSCCs used proven strategies to forge, nurture, and sustain relationships with businesses, partners, and providers to develop new relationships with community-based nonprofits. The workforce system embraced FBOs long before the passage of the WIA and has a long-standing, successful history of meeting the needs of a shared customer base, particularly with respect to services for youth.[12]

What then is different about working with community-based nonprofits, specifically FBOs? The WIB grantees shared there were more commonalities than differences between them and nonprofit subrecipients. However, when working with FBOs, the workforce investment system may need to:

- Review and have greater familiarity with the Equal Treatment and Religion-Related Regulations, which address, among other things, when federal money or other forms of financial assistance may support inherently religious activities and when it may not;
- Provide an orientation to all nonprofits on how government works; and
- Ensure nonprofits are familiar with the WIB's procurement process.

Equal Treatment Regulations and Religion-Related Regulations

The purposes of the Department's Equal Treatment and Religion-Related Regulations are to:

- Ensure equal treatment of and religious liberty for organizations and individuals, regardless of religious affiliation or lack thereof;
- Lift unnecessary restrictions on a participant's use of "indirect" assistance for services that contain religious content or lead to employment in a religious vocation; and
- Clarify proper Constitutional uses of the Department's assistance.[13]

These regulations apply to, among other things, the Department's discretionary and formula funds; all federal, state, and local government agencies that administer the Department's assistance; the beneficiaries of the Department's-supported services; and any state, local, or private funds that are commingled with the Department's assistance or required as a match.[14]

All grantees have been encouraged to complete the Equal Treatment online training course, *Transforming Partnerships: How to Apply the U.S. Department of Labor's Equal Treatment and Religion-Related Regulations to Public-Private Partnerships*, at http://partnership.dolelearning.org. The training is included on the accompanying disc. Additional information and resources on the Equal Treatment and Religion-Related regulations including information on the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) are found in Appendix B.

> "The WIB expected more [proposals] but in follow-up interviews with potential applicants found a wide range of reasons not to apply, chiefly concern over red tape they might encounter from federal funding."[15]

William Wubbenhorst
Evaluator
Macro International Inc.

EQUAL TREATMENT RESOURCES

- **Promoting Equal Treatment: A Guide for State & Local Compliance with Federal Regulations**
  www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/equal-treatment.html

- **Equal Treatment Regulations,**
  www.dol.gov/cfbci/legal guidance.htm

- **Equal Treatment Online Training**
  http://partnership.dolelearning.org/fb_12.htm

Inherently Religious Activities and Federal Support

It is important that all grantees understand the restrictions governing the use of federal support and inherently religious activities (*e.g.,* religious worship, prayer, and proselytizing). Faith-based organizations may not use direct federal funds or other types of direct federal financial assistance to support inherently religious activities. Organizations receiving direct federal support, may still engage in inherently religious activities, but such activities must be offered separate in time or location from the federally-supported program or activity. In addition, any participation in inherently religious activities by federal program participants and beneficiaries must be purely voluntary. Further, federal program participants beneficiaries must be made aware that a decision to participate or not in the inherently religious activity will in no way affect the quality of services they receive under the federally-supported program or activity.

In contrast, the FBOs receiving *indirect* federal funds or other types of indirect federal financial assistance may integrate inherently religious activities into their programs or activities receiving this indirect federal support and require that such activities be made mandatory for all participants. In order for federal support to be considered indirect, the beneficiaries of the federally-supported program or activity must be given genuine and independent choices about where to direct the aid, including having at least one secular option. And, the beneficiaries must be able to *freely* choose where to direct the aid. To avoid any conflict regarding the use of the support, faith-based organizations may wish to establish separate nonprofits to receive federal support.

To ensure that federal support is used properly, WIBs will need to:
- Continue to educate faith-based and community organizations about the proper uses of federal support;
- Monitor grantees to ensure they are in compliance with the federal Equal Treatment and Religion-Related Regulations; and
- Examine each questionable issue on a case-by-case basis in light of the most recent court precedent.

Grantees used orientation sessions and bidder's conferences to help community-based nonprofits better understand the requirements of organizations who receive federal funding.

Orienting Community-Based Nonprofits On How Government Works

Some WIB grantees realized that some community-based nonprofit subrecipients did not understand the intent and purpose of the WIA and their role as subrecipients in the workforce system. Responding to this need, WIB grantees created a context in which community-based nonprofits could better understand how government works and how their organization could work most effectively within the WIB's contractual process. This context building included providing community-based nonprofits with:
- Information on how funding flows from the federal government;
- The purpose of the WIA;
- Compliance and other relevant resources such as Office of Management and Budget Circulars, Code of Federal Regulations, Executive Orders, Training and Employment Guidance Letters, and Training Employment Notices;
- Opportunities to learn, understand, and respect each other's culture, goals, and operating structure; and
- Opportunities to develop an awareness of and commitment to meeting performance measures, where applicable.

> **STREAMLINING**
> One successful procedure was to designate One Stop Coach Managers to work specifically with referrals from nonprofits. Nonprofits only made referrals to the Coach Managers designated to work with them. This made for stronger, more trusting relationships for these hard-to-serve populations.[17]

Orienting community-based nonprofits to the WIB procurement and monitoring process was part of the orientation on how the federal government works and specifically how community-based nonprofits would have to work as a subrecipient of federal dollars. Additional strategies used for helping community-based nonprofits understand how government works are found in Appendix C.

The WIB Procurement and Monitoring Process

Successful relationships between WIB grantees and community-based nonprofits were often based on WIBs following the same well-proven procurement process, generally accepted accounting principles, and monitoring processes with FBOs as they do with all other contractors, partners, and/or providers. Since the grants were restricted to small community-based nonprofits with small budgets and staff, some community-based nonprofits did not have the internal infrastructure to handle the procurement and/or compliance requirements. Therefore, some WIBs have simplified the procurement and monitoring process for community-based nonprofits by:

- Creating a simplified RFP/RFA process;
- Customizing a RFP for this specific purpose, flexible enough to capture the wide range of nonprofit assets, but with specific and stringent criteria;
- Providing a list of terms that may be unfamiliar to community-based nonprofits;
- Providing a bidder's conference and grant writing workshops to explain the procurement process and RFPs/RFAs;
- Creating an outreach strategy to widely advertise the availability of RFPs/RFAs;
- Offering training specific to issues of accountability such as electronic recordkeeping, reporting, and compliance;
- Awarding contracts on a fee-for-service to keep paperwork and receipts required to a minimum;
- Streamlining the referral process;
- Establishing standard operating procedures and placing procedures, checklists, client forms, and tools into a technical assistance manual;
- Establishing Internet connectivity between OSCCs and community-based nonprofits for purposes of recordkeeping and access to employment information for individuals ready to enter into the talent pipeline; and
- Designating a point of contact in their organization to answer questions of prospective and new subrecipients.

Additional resources used for helping community-based nonprofits understand the procurement and monitoring process are found in Appendix C.

> "The folks that we anticipated would step up as partners in this effort had a wide range of capabilities and assets, so we needed to avoid a cookie-cutter approach to the RFA. We also wanted to keep the process simple so we wouldn't scare people off with an overly burdensome application process."[16]
>
> **Russ Davis**
> **Workforce Investment Board of**
> **Herkimer/Madison/Oneida** Counties

SIMPLIFIED RFP PEER CONTACT
⬩ **Russ Davis**
Workforce Investment Board of
Herkimer/Madison/Oneida Counties
(315) 798-5908
rdavis@ocgov.net

Recap

The WIB Grantees learned the benefits of and strategies necessary to invest in relationships with community-based nonprofits. Together WIBs and community-based nonprofits realized what they had in common could be aligned to achieve the goals of the workforce system in more innovative and global ways and their differences could be respected and prevented from interfering with their collective mission. Some grantees needed to work closely with community-based nonprofits to help them better understand how government works and to customize their processes to accommodate the needs and learning curve of these new relationships. Having connected to community-based nonprofits, grantees then had to learn how to best align and leverage their assets within the context of the workforce system.

"The FBCOs were able to add services and competencies that the [OSCCs] did not have such as outreach mechanisms, training services, or language proficiency."[18]

Michelle Voll
Evaluator
Macro International Inc.

CONNECTING NONPROFITS TO THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM PEER CONTACTS

⬩ **Trenda Rusher**
Washtenaw County Employment Training and Community Services, Michigan Works!
(734) 544-2955

Aligning and Leveraging Community-Based Nonprofit Assets

Key Take-Aways
In this section you will discover grantee lessons learned about:
- Expediting the alignment and leveraging of assets within a short timeframe;
- Visible and tangible assets community-based nonprofits can bring to the workforce system; and
- Less visible and tangible characteristics of nonprofit assets.

Lessons Learned
Workforce investment board grantees learned how to work with community-based nonprofits to align and leverage their assets across the system. The grant application process was the main tool for helping grantees align and leverage community-based nonprofit subrecipeint assets. However, in order to produce quality results and sustain relationships, and sometimes realign or mine assets more deeply within the limited timeframe, it was necessary to:
- Communicate the collective need and outcomes;
- Nurture a commitment to common goals;
- Create a spirit of willingness to share assets;
- Respect and preserve the integrity and mission of each organization; and
- Develop interdependence at a level comfortable and appropriate for all organizations.

Just what types of assets were leveraged by community-based nonprofits? The most common assets were:
- Leadership capacity;
- Services and delivery strategies;
- Referrals to and from the workforce system (outreach);
- Facilities; and
- Fiscal.

What made these assets of value? The value of these community-based nonprofit assets included:
- The function community-based nonprofits had within the workforce system,
- Characteristics of their services, and
- Characteristics of their fiscal assets.

NONPROFIT FISCAL CAPACITY
- The annual revenue of nonprofits is $670 billion.

- One in 12 Americans works for a nonprofit.

- There are 1.5 million nonprofits.

- Fifty-six percent of Americans volunteer in nonprofits.

- If a country, the nonprofit sector would be the sixth largest economy in the world.[19]

Functions Provided

- Cross-pollinating creative strategies and resources
- Communicating the workforce system message to their constituents and partners
- Networking additional partners
- Bringing multiple perspectives and resources that expand the thinking and reach of the system
- Serving as economic barometers
- Aligning talent development to a local or regional economic infrastructure
- Supporting consensual growth strategies
- Diversifying the talent pipeline (including professional and passive talent)
- Complementing community and economic development
- Operating from a customer orientation
- Transferring the knowledge of their organization to the workforce system

Characteristics of Services

- "Timeless" (*e.g.,* variations of 24/7 availability and beyond employment and the life of federal funding)
- Interaction with people is relational in nature (*e.g.,* relationships with individuals needing help and with representatives from other organizations)
- Transition individuals to work, career advancement, self-sufficiency, and other educational, personal, and employment-related goals
- Accessibility (*e.g.,* services available where unserved and underserved individuals live)
- Individualized
- Extended service reach (*e.g.,* services available where workforce system services are not provided and often include not just the individual, but his or her family, significant others, and sometimes businesses)
- Address gaps in services
- May be the only service provider in the area or for a specific service
- Holistic in nature, meeting all of the needs of the individual
- Transformational
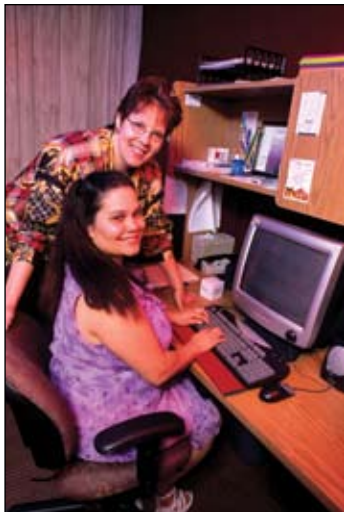
Characteristics of Fiscal Assets

- Diverse funding (*e.g.,* donations, fundraising, and investors)
- Blend private and public funding
- Improve economic impact (*e.g.,* lower need for government services, improve geographic livability, and attract additional investors)
- Maintain and nurture renewable resources (*e.g.,* volunteers and staff capacity)
- Physical space for services funded by the grant
- Access to technology
- Are realigned, reinvested, and/or exchanged to bring greater flexibility and unobligated resources to the system
- Innovative in resource development and transformation
- Identify challenges of aligning and leveraging assets

Some of the less visible and tangible assets were the most valuable in achieving outcomes and sustaining and growing the connections.

Recap

Although WIB grantees did not have sufficient time to map the assets of community-based nonprofits, most were able to successfully align and leverage nonprofit assets through the RFP/RFA process. The lack of time to develop and implement the grant required all organizations to be nimble, committed, and remain solely focused on their collective mission. Grantees shared their relationships with community-based nonprofits was more about the way community-based nonprofits deliver services rather than just the existence of another "service". This was demonstrated by the strategies community-based nonprofits use to help people overcome barriers to employment and to channel people into the workforce system's talent pipeline.

VOLUNTEER CURRENCY

Grantees from a recent Department grant to grassroots FBCOs leveraged the power of 70,710 volunteer hours for a value of $413,653.[20]

Overcoming Barriers and Channeling People Into the Talent Pipeline: Community-Based Nonprofit Delivery Strategies

Key Take-Aways
In this section you will discover grantee lessons learned about:
- Characteristics of community-based nonprofits that are complementary to the workforce system;
- The transformational elements of nonprofit service delivery; and
- Using community-based nonprofits as a way to extend and diversify the talent pipeline.

Lessons Learned
Workforce investment board grantees learned that the value of the service provided by most community-based nonprofits rests in their delivery strategy, one that can be very successful in helping individuals overcome barriers to employment and transition into the talent pipeline. What did WIB grantees discover about nonprofit delivery strategies? These community-based nonprofit strategies can be organized by the following categories of focus:
- Culture;
- Missions and populations served;
- Location; and
- Networking.

Culture of Community-Based Nonprofits
The culture of nonprofits deeply informs their services. In the case of community-based nonprofit subrecipients with the WIBs, their culture served as a framework for success. Within the culture of many community-based nonprofits is a mission and a spirit of serving that mobilizes the organization to serve an individual until his or her needs are met and not necessarily when funding ends. Also, community-based nonprofits may serve individuals irrespective of income, and education level, for example. This may translate into:
- Deeper intensity of services;
- Services of greater duration;
- Individualized services;
- Greater access to a diverse audience of talent;
- Bundling of services from private and public sources;
- Extended availability (*e.g.,* on-call, evenings, weekends, and no time limit); and
- A multidimensional, integrated, continuous approach to the spiritual, educational, personal, and employment needs and goals of the individual and sometimes his or her family, significant others, and businesses.

Part of an organization's culture is their mission.

NONPROFIT CULTURE
- Common vision
- Unity of purpose, action
- Passion
- Commitment
- Nimble
- Responsive
- Safe, neutral, and nonthreatening
- Creators and keepers of trust
- Kinship
- Communicate core values, norms, and customs

"**Many of the faith groups intended to continue this work as a ministry of the church. Some will be smaller in scope, because they will be funded out of the church's budget.**"[21]

Lindan Johnson
Evaluator
Macro International Inc.

CULTURAL CURRENCY
Nonprofits brought with them cultural currency needed by the OSCC. For example, in one area, the Adult and Adult Protective Services Program had difficulty finding culturally and ethnically qualified candidates. Three FBCO grantees combined their resources to develop a curriculum for Personal Care Assistants. They shared ideas, exchanged teachers, and standardized what is expected in the training.[22]

Missions of and Populations Served by Community-Based Nonprofits

Because of the specific missions of community-based nonprofits, very often their services are targeted and customized to specific populations (*e.g.,* at-risk youth, ethnic minorities, those living in poverty, incarcerated, ex-prisoners, and people with multiple barriers to employment who are unserved or underserved). In the case of some community-based nonprofits the individuals being served consist of people from various ethnic, economic, and educational backgrounds, making the talent pipeline heterogeneous. Nonprofits have a customized organizational delivery structure to meet the needs of a specific population. This may translate into:

- Well established, successful outreach strategies for specific populations and in certain communities;
- Taking services to these populations;
- Provision of services and delivery strategies consistent with their mission;
- Culturally-relevant services and delivery strategies; and
- Transitioning some of the hardest to serve into the talent pipeline.

Very often a nonprofit's mission influences their location for service delivery.

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Location of Community-Based Nonprofits

Because many community-based nonprofits are located in the communities of the people they serve, they are established, trusted entities. Some individuals may already have established relationships with staff. This may translate into:

- Access to underserved or unserved populations, passive talent, and untapped labor pools;
- The opportunity for community-based nonprofits to dispel the negative perception sometimes associated with government service;
- Longer service retention periods and higher completion rates;
- Growth and nurturing of mutual respect, trust, and integrity with individuals, their family, significant others, and sometimes businesses; and
- The potential for the nonprofit to make referrals and follow-through on needed services from other organizations, including the workforce system.

No organization can be in all places at all times providing all services. It was necessary for community-based nonprofits to work in and across the community and/or regional networks.

Networking of Community-Based Nonprofits

Because many community-based nonprofits do not have the means to meet the holistic needs of their customers, it is necessary for them to network across organizations and the range of public and private sector options using innovative strategies. This may translate into:

- Creative ways to use volunteers;
- Investing in renewable resources (*e.g.,* investing in health care and training of staff, nonstop recruitment of volunteers, and constant fundraising);
- Relational networks;
- Growth and nurturing of mutual respect, trust, and integrity across organizations;
- Greater receptivity to work with the WIB and the workforce system;
- Innovation born of desperation; and
- Connecting the dots in the service constellation of each individual thereby making services more integrated.

Strategies for networking the characteristics of the culture, mission, populations served, the location, and relationships of community-based nonprofits with other organizations have better enabled the workforce system to provide services sometimes unavailable in depth, time, and space by the system.

Recap

Community-based nonprofits bring services to the workforce system that complement and expand its capacity to serve those with multiple and significant barriers. The deep and sometimes exhaustive investment in the individuals served by the community-based nonprofit subrecipients in these grants was necessary to channel them into the talent pipeline. Some WIB grantees shared that the system's inclusion of the community-based nonprofits' work with the hard-to-serve was nothing short of transformational. In addition, another strategy for overcoming barriers to employment and channeling job-ready individuals into the talent pipeline is the relationship some community-based nonprofits had with businesses.

"…this network of contractors reached into the community and brought other groups and employers into their network to strengthen the support available to their clients."[23]

Lindan Johnson
Evaluator
Macro International Inc.,

"We have employers beating down the doors – they can't find qualified workers, and we have less and less funding overall to upgrade the skills of workers today. The One Stop has a history of trying to get organizations to work together – we need to include the faith-based and community organizations so that we can tap new populations to form a more robust pipeline into our workforce system."[24]

Art Eckstrom
Director of Employment and Training
Pima County, Arizona

Leveraging Community-Based Nonprofit/Business Relationships

Key Take-Aways

In this section you will discover grantee lessons learned about:

- The role of the workforce system in facilitating nonprofit/business relationships;
- The value businesses bring to community-based nonprofits; and
- The value community-based nonprofits bring to businesses.

Lessons Learned

Workforce investment board grantees learned how to leverage nonprofit-business relationships. Some community-based nonprofits had interpersonal relationships with and access to business representatives serving on their boards and/or as part of their congregations or organizations. These informal and sometimes formal relationships can have significant value to community-based nonprofits. This value can be transferred to the workforce system by community-based nonprofits that can act as intermediaries between the workforce system and the business community in which they are networked.

For the majority of community-based nonprofits, the foundation of relationships between community-based nonprofits and businesses is three-fold:

- The reputation and infrastructure of the workforce system;
- Businesses who made an investment in community-based nonprofits; and
- Community-based nonprofits who invest in businesses by providing services and prepared talent.

Building this foundation required the investment of the workforce system, businesses, and community-based nonprofits.

"The FBCOs were the primary drivers of business partnerships...with the WIB offering support. FBCOs took the lead because of their role in helping retention, which is critical for ex-offenders. A procedure manual was developed for the FBCOs for this purpose, including guidance on how to engage businesses. There was also coordination between the One Stop and the FBCOs and they often went out together to visit businesses as well."[25]

William Wubbenhorst
Evaluator
Macro International Inc.

The Role of the Workforce System in Connecting Businesses and Community-Based Nonprofits

Some of the small community-based nonprofits involved in the grant had little or no experience working formally within the workforce system. It was necessary for the WIB grantees to help these community-based nonprofits learn how to build on and leverage the positive reputation and infrastructure of the OSCC. Their strategies for building this capacity within community-based nonprofits included:

- Communicating to businesses that community-based nonprofits were part of the credible infrastructure of the workforce system;
- Training and mentoring community-based nonprofits on building business relationships;
- Introducing representatives of community-based nonprofits to businesses;
- Inviting community-based nonprofits staff to be co-located at the OSCC; and
- Providing representatives of community-based nonprofits with access to the OSCC's placement staff and job bank.

The WIBs' investment in leveraging the reputation and infrastructure of the workforce system paved the way for businesses to be more willing to work with some of the smaller, less experienced community-based nonprofits.

Business Investment in Community-Based Nonprofits

There were primarily three opportunities for business investments in these grant initiatives:

- Offering workshops to community-based nonprofit staff on what companies are looking for, hiring processes, and career ladder opportunities;
- Opening their place of business for job shadowing, work experience, and/or internship opportunities; and/or
- Contributing employee time to work with representatives of community-based nonprofits to conduct follow-up on new employees and inquire about new job openings.

BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS PEER CONTACT
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> "To avoid multiple business contacts, we developed a system that would allow for job referrals to pass through the FBCO [subrecipient] who had developed relationships with a particular employer"[27]
>
> **Dorsine Jenkins**
> The Workforce Investment Board
> of Herkimer/Madison/Oneida
> Counties

> "Employers are also willing to respond creatively to problems such as lack of transportation. One of the employer partners for this program was [name of electric company] that needed electricians in the field including in more remote areas...The company made vans available and assigned team leaders to pick up team members at neighborhood locations accessible to them." [26]
>
> **Michelle Voll**
> *Evaluator*
> **Macro International Inc.**

Businesses were willing to make these investments, in part, because they valued the existing and potential value of the investments community-based nonprofits were willing to make in talent development.

Community-Based Nonprofit Investment in Businesses

The most common services provided to businesses by community-based nonprofits included:
- Mentoring new employees (*e.g.,* especially for youth and ex-prisoners);
- Making referrals for employment opportunities (*e.g.,* screening and references);
- Training talent;
- Monitoring job shadowing, work experience, and/or internships;
- Training businesses to help them know how to supervise and support employees who face barriers related to poverty; and
- Case management for new employees and/or employees in transition.

Recap

Together, community-based nonprofits, WIB grantees, OSCC, and businesses created sustainable relationships that allowed each organization to achieve the goal of preparing and placing valued talent in the hands of businesses. Leadership from the WIB grantees, county officials and offices, businesses, and community-based nonprofits was necessary to make these connections.

> "FBCOs are the first point of contact for many people who are in need of support services. The faith community provides a holistic approach to service delivery and is a critical link to workforce development."[28]
>
> **Representative from a Business**

Tapping Community-Based Nonprofit Leadership

Key Take-Aways

In this section you will discover grantee lessons learned about:
- Integrating leadership of community-based nonprofits into the workforce system;
- Attracting other leadership and organizations through the success of the grant; and
- Various dimensions of leadership opportunities with community-based nonprofits.

Lessons Learned

Workforce investment board grantees learned how to tap into and integrate the leadership capacity of community-based nonprofits into the workforce system. By working more closely with community-based nonprofits in these relationships, many WIB grantees had a better opportunity to meet and work with some of the business leaders who grew community-based nonprofits from an innovative idea, need, and/or opportunity to a viable nonprofit business.

Perhaps the most significant lessons learned by the WIB grantees regarding leadership were:
- The benefits of tapping and integrating new leadership resources; and
- Better aligning existing leadership through additional organizations that became part of the system as a result of this funding.

Representatives from WIB grantees, community-based nonprofits, government organizations (*e.g.,* parole, probation, and sheriff's office), and businesses had the opportunity to share and leverage leadership capacity across their boards, businesses, and the workforce system. Additional leaders and organizations were drawn to the opportunities born of the success demonstrated by grantees and community-based nonprofits.

Several dimensions of leadership opportunities were tapped:
- Relationships were made between leaders of the WIB grantee, businesses, other organizations, and community-based nonprofits;
- Nonprofit leaders connected representatives of the workforce system with emerging and/or potential leaders;
- Champions of the workforce system were grown through the leadership circles of these organizations;
- Some WIB grantees had leadership groups such as advisory councils, committees on faith-based initiatives, and a Community Interfaith Liaison office that grew out of their commitment to embracing the nonprofit community; and
- Nonprofit leaders and other organizations that became involved mobilized their powerbases and resources on behalf of the workforce system with respect to their political, economic, business, social, leadership, and kinship networks.

COUNTY-LEVEL LEADERSHIP
The bipartisan Board of Supervisors unanimously passed Pima County Board Resolution 2003-224, establishing a Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Program as proposed by the Supervisor. With this resolution came a staff person for Pima County, Arizona whose role was to encourage interaction and understanding between the government and the FBCOs of Pima County.[29]

While some of the smaller community-based nonprofits' leadership capacity may have initially had more to gain than give in the relationship, it was the collective success of the relationship between grantees and varying degrees of community-based nonprofit leadership capacity that attracted other leadership, assets, and growth to the workforce system.

Recap

The projects that were most successful in tapping the leadership of community-based nonprofits were those that could find a common ground across missions. Together the leaders of the workforce system, businesses, government agencies, and community-based nonprofits are becoming powerful drivers of innovation, asset development, and deployment, and inventors of opportunities sustained collectively by the workforce system.

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"The WIB and its core partners spent several months assessing what could be done within existing revenue streams, so that at a minimum, agencies serving ex-offenders could increase collaboration and cooperation. This process was one of the major keys to the [name of program] project's ultimate success because it helped partners learn one another's ways of doing business and helped agencies that are not normally workforce partners, such as probation, parole, and other law enforcement agencies, develop a relationship with the project."[30]

William Wubbenhorst
Evaluator
Macro International Inc.

Sustaining and Growing the Connection

Key Take-Aways

In this section you will discover grantee lessons learned about:

- How the success of the value placed on relationships with community-based nonprofits leads to sustainability and growth;
- What is really worth sustaining and growing; and
- Challenges that were overcome.

Lessons Learned

Workforce investment board grantees learned how to sustain and grow the connection with community-based nonprofits, government organizations, and businesses that were networked through this funding opportunity. The WIB grantees attribute sustainability and growth to the following factors:

- Early planning and relationship and capacity building across stakeholders;
- Identification of intermediaries or points of contact between the WIB grantee and community-based nonprofits;
- Effective communication from the start and throughout growth;
- Provision of ongoing, cross-training;
- Effective, strong networking; and
- Institutionalization of what works across the system.

Early Sustainability Planning and Relationship and Capacity Building Across Stakeholders

The common denominator of the WIBs' success in sustaining relationships with community-based nonprofits was early planning and the way they approached relationship and capacity building. This context setting not only led to sustainability, but grew a strong, healthy connection between organizations and their individual and collective capacity. By spending time planning prior to applying for the grant and after receiving the award, WIB grantees had an opportunity to engage government officials, community-based nonprofits, county government offices, and businesses in some or all of the following activities:

- Clarification and validation of community issues, assets, and possible solutions from different perspectives;
- Understanding each organization's mission and culture and what each organization must receive from the relationship and then identifying complementary characteristics;
- Evaluating community and individual organization readiness and commitment;
- Consensus and relationship building;
- Visioning that would lead to a consensual path with realistic timeframes; and
- Clearly articulated outcomes and expectations, and role development and clarification.

In the early stages of planning, many WIBs either integrated existing intermediary groups and champions of the proposed initiative and/or identified new intermediaries to be part of the strategic planning and implementation processes.

Identification of Intermediaries or Points of Contact Between the WIB and Nonprofits

An intermediary is a point of transfer, a conduit, a person who stands in the gap between one person and another or between organizations. Many grantees identified points of contact or intermediaries as part of the process of articulating roles and role development and clarification right from the start. Sometimes intermediaries were selected from the workforce system, a designated person to work with community-based nonprofits. This would be a person with a depth of workforce system experience, expansive networks, and credibility in the community. Some grantees contracted with a type of "lead" nonprofit organization to act as a conduit between the WIB and the community-based nonprofits as a group. This arrangement was formed sometimes when the WIB needed someone more familiar with the nonprofit culture to nurture relationships between the WIB and community-based nonprofits. Creation of these positions relieved current OSCC staff from many of the additional responsibilities that accompanied new grantees. Their roles included:

- Communicating with community-based nonprofits on a regular basis and across all organizations involved;
- Serving as a liaison between the WIB and subrecipients to connect them with the workforce system's job matching and tracking systems, include them in job fairs, and develop relationships with job developers;
- Providing monitoring and oversight (including the service delivery process);
- Helping grow the capacity of community-based nonprofits through mentoring and training (*e.g.,* administrative, cross-cultural, and administrative issues; procurement process, and grant writing); and
- Fostering sustainability.

Sometimes there were intermediary groups and champions of the initiatives. Some counties had advisory councils, others had committees on faith-based initiatives, and one had a Community Interfaith Liaison office.[31] Intermediaries, contact people, and groups of champions were another key to the success, sustainability, and growth of these relationships. According to one project director, intermediaries "…were instrumental in closing the gap between government requirements and FBCO capacity."[32] One of the most effective means of closing this gap was through effective communication.

INTERMEDIARY PEER CONTACTS

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  Investment Board
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Effective Communication From the Start and Throughout Growth

Some WIBs started communicating with community-based nonprofits before applying for funding. In some cases this required extensive outreach to the nonprofit community. By engaging a variety of organizations early in the dialog, organizations more readily became stakeholders in and embraced the planning and implementation process. The WIBs used a variety of methods to maintain communication:

- Planning sessions before and once the grant began;
- Bidder conferences;
- Orientation sessions on how government works and an introduction to the procurement process;
- Manuals developed specifically on the procurement process, compliance issues, and procedures;
- Regularly scheduled site visits, sometimes weekly;
- Peer learning sessions;
- Mini-conferences focusing on sustainability strategies;
- Cross-agency communication; and
- Biweekly meetings to discuss tips for approaching business relationships.

The provision of training emphasized and reinforced the need for effective communication.

Provision of Ongoing Cross-Training

Part of the success of sustaining and growing the connection between organizations was ongoing training that took place from the inception of relationship-building and sometimes on weekly, monthly, and certainly on a regular basis. In addition to providing an orientation on how government works, the WIA and an explanation of the WIB's procurement process (reference Connecting Nonprofits to the Workforce System), additional topics for training included:

- Information on community and employment resources;
- Building infrastructure;
- Accountability;
- Capacity building;
- Continuous improvement; and
- Building business relationships.

Intermediaries were instrumental in providing a substantial amount of training and facilitating networking across the system.

"I have found that a good partnership amongst the FBCOs consists of their willingness to be open, flexible, respectful of each other, and nonpossessive of the clients...."[35]

Dorsine Jenkins
Herkimer/Madison/Oneida County WIB

"The outcome numbers tell you how many people we have served, which was staggeringly more than we thought. What the numbers don't tell you is the greater sophistication of these organizations, their greater ability to track their own outcomes, their greater accountability for what they're doing, their connection to each other. These outcomes may be the ones that live on the longest."[33]

Linda Marrama
Program Director
North Virginia Workforce Investment Board

NETWORKING FBCOS PEER CONTACT

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Effective, Strong Networking

An effective, strong network was built and nurtured across all organizations involved. In many cases, these organizations included county offices (*e.g.*, parole, probation, and sheriff's), community-based nonprofits, WIBs, other workforce system providers and partners, and elected officials. Strategies for effective networking across organizations included:

- Creating strong relationships built on a common purpose and outcomes that transcended differences, challenges, and individual missions;
- Discussing, embracing, and nurturing sustainability and growth;
- Valuing and integrating flexibility into the collective thinking and processes;
- Identifying and using a common language;
- Including change agents and workforce system champions from different social and political networks; and
- Developing and nurturing political will.

In addition to the success of the system, organizations were encouraged when an individual organization or a group of organizations in the network was successful in securing additional funding. This type of success helped institutionalize the relationships within and across the workforce system.

Institutionalization of What Works Across the System

Sustained and growing relationships within the workforce system are indications that whatever has brought people together has been not only institutionalized within their own organization, but across organizations in the system. It was the experience of several of the WIB grantees that what worked, begins to work better, and then it begins to work better across the workforce system. Something that is successful and institutionalized is more likely to survive changes in funding streams, staff, and political environments. People recognize the value of what is happening and perpetuate its worth through replication, leveraging additional funding, and creating innovative ways to expand its current value. A staff person from an OSCC articulates the lasting relationships that exist as a result of these connections.

> "The goal was not to start services, but to start conversations and build off of existing services so that we were closing gaps and supporting effective service providers, not re-inventing the wheel"[34]
>
> **Russ Davis**
> **Workforce Investment Board**
> **of Herkimer/Madison/Oneida**
> **County**

> "One of the things we were initially trying to do with this project was to connect the faith-based and community groups with the One-Stop. Now, because of this program, they know the One-Stop, they know we are here, and they know the process. This project brings us people that, for whatever reason, weren't coming in the door before....Now when the FBCOs have someone in their congregation or in their local community who is looking for a job, they steer them to the One-Stop. That is true sustainability...the sustainability factor is that the connection has been institutionalized."[36]
>
> **Charles Casey**
> **Pima County OSCC**

This is not to say there were no challenges involved in relationship building and with implementing the grant. The WIBs shared that some of the following challenges had to be overcome.

- The dynamics of some of the faith-based communities made it challenging to find common ground when it came to the perceived "red tape" associated with federal funding.
- Local and federal government rules, regulations, and requirements sometimes had to be explained and seemed overwhelming to some.
- Every organization brought with it a unique culture with sometimes competing interests (*e.g.,* some OSCC staff were afraid of community-based nonprofits taking credit for job placements).
- Dealing with eligibility was a challenge for some community-based nonprofits that recruited many individuals who did not meet WIA eligibility criteria.
- The time limitation of the grant was not sufficient for some individuals to comply with necessary paperwork and/or receive training and job placement.
- It was a challenge for some individuals to satisfy the definition of "continuous employment" within the time constraints of the grant.
- Changing job markets meant some new employees were laid-off, making it challenging for the workforce system to forecast future labor markets within the time constraints of funding.
- If roles were not clearly articulated, sometimes there were too many people providing direction, a challenge resolved by an effective intermediary.

Organizations working with federal funding may encounter some of these same issues. These grantees demonstrated it was possible to work successfully with community-based nonprofits and other organizations to achieve a shared vision despite seemingly competing interests, changing economies, and the lack of sufficient time.

Recap

Together the WIB grantees, community-based nonprofits, community organizations, elected officials, and businesses sustained and grew their relationships. They did this by embracing the collective capacity and the value they as a workforce system and the community found in the services, outcomes, and innovation they created and in the lives and communities they helped transform.

The workforce system can continue to create communities of hope, innovation, productivity, and prosperity within and across communities by embracing community-based nonprofits.

SUSTAINABILITY PEER CONTACTS

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Beyond Sustainability

One WIB grantee reported that not only did the relationships between the WIB, nonprofits, various county offices, and elected officials continue, they expanded the collective capacity of the workforce system.

- Additional funding for a re-entry taskforce has greatly enhanced communication efforts and relationships.
- The taskforce submitted a grant to the U.S. Department of Education.
- The county Sheriff engaged the group to create an in-jail program to link with the community which later became a jail-to-community project for younger adults sent to the local county jail.
- The referral network has more of a solid partnership, increasing the WIB's ability to serve customers, and does not require additional funding.
- There are two projects addressing the needs of the homeless.
- There is a strong community commitment to work as a team to keep the relationships active because the relationships have helped all the partners better accomplish their missions.[37]

"These [new grants] were truly an unexpected benefit to the community. No one realized what an injection of cash could mean to some of the smaller FBCOs. Their passion to help was only matched by their creativity in maximizing the new money and new networks into great new programs for the community."[38]

Lindan Johnson
Evaluator
Macro International Inc.

Endnotes

[1] *Johnson, 2008, p. 16*
[2] *Johnson, 2008, p. 2*
[3] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 8*
[4] *Johnson, 2008, p. 9*
[5] *Independent Sector, 2001, p. 11*
[6] *Independent Sector, 2001, p. 6*
[7] *Johnson, 2008*
[8] *Wubbenhorst, 2008*
[9] *Burwick, Derr, Max, and Paulsell, 2007, p. xxii*
[10] *Johnson, 2008, p. 10*
[11] *Johnson, 2008, p. 8*
[12] *Bender, 2003, p. 21*
[13] *20 CRF Part 37*
[14] *29 U.S.C. Sec. 2938 (2000)*
[15] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 4*
[16] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 3*
[17] *Johnson, 2008*
[18] *Voll 2008, p. 7*
[19] *Independent Sector, 2001 p. 6*
[20] *Butler, 2008*

[21] *Johnson, 2008, p. 14*
[22] *Voll, 2008, p. 6*
[23] *Johnson, 2008, p. 7*
[24] *Johnson, 2008, p. 3*
[25] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 7*
[26] *Voll, 2008, p. 5*
[27] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 7*
[28] *Voll, 2008, p. 5*
[29] *Johnson 2008, p. 1*
[30] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 2*
[31] *Johnson, 2008, p. 1*
[32] *Johnson, 2008, p. 10*
[33] *Voll, 2008, p. 8*
[34] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 3*
[35] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 5*
[36] *Johnson, 2008, p. 5*
[37] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 9*
[38] *Johnson, 2008, p. 5*
[39] *Wubbenhorst, 2008, p. 9*
[40] *Voll, 2008, p. 4*

APPENDICES

> "All in all, [the prisoner re-entry initiative] has given us all something to feel good about, and that's important for a town like this that needs hope."[39]
>
> *Executive Director*
> **Workforce Investment Board**

A. Peer Contacts

Name and Contact Information	Asset Mapping	Business Relationships	Connecting Nonprofits to the Workforce	Culturally Viable Programs	Formal Outreach and Planning Information	General Information	Intermediaries	Leadership	Networking FBCOs	Simplified RFP	Sustainability	Workforce (Regional)	WIB
Bender, April Partnerships for Quality P.O. Box 160 Hannawa Falls, NY 13676 (315) 265-4294 april@nyswtwrn.com	X					X							
Casey, Charles Financial Program Manager Pima County One Stop and Liaison to the WIB 2797 E. Ajo Way Tucson, AZ 85713 (520) 243-3742 charles.casy@pima.gov											X		
Davis, Russ WIB of Herkimer/ Madison/ Oneida County 209 Elizabeth St. Utica, NY 13501 (315) 798-5908 rdavis@ocgov.net					X						X		
Eckstrom, Art Pima County Employment and Training Program Manager 2797 E. Ajo Way Tucson, AZ 85713 (520) 243-6777													X

A. Peer Contacts (continued)

Name and Contact Information	Asset Mapping	Business Relationships	Connecting Nonprofits to the Workforce	Culturally Viable Programs	Formal Outreach and Planning Information	General Information	Intermediaries	Leadership	Networking FBCOs	Simplified RFP	Sustainability	Workforce (Regional)	WIB
Eckstrom, Dan Retired Pima County Supervisor 2619 S. 8th Ave. Tucson, AZ 85713 (520) 247-9250 DWEMGT@aol.com								X					
Elkins, Rita Performance Excellence Partners, Inc. 5970 Cannon Ave. Cocoa, FL 32927 (321) 806-4223 jelkins6@cfl.rr.com			X										
Fowler, Gordon Fowler Communications 1722 J St., Suite 17 Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 442-1394 Gordon@3foldcomm.com			X										
Hunn, David President and CEO The SkillSource Group, Inc. 8300 Boone Blvd. Suite 450 Vienna, VA 22182 (703) 752-1606 david.hunn@myskillsource.org							X				X		

A. Peer Contacts (continued)

Name and Contact Information	Asset Mapping	Business Relationships	Connecting Nonprofits to the Workforce	Culturally Viable Programs	Formal Outreach and Planning Information	General Information	Intermediaries	Leadership	Networking FBCOs	Simplified RFP	Sustainability	Workforce (Regional)	WIB
Jenkins, Dorsine Herkimer/Madison/ Oneida County WIB 209 Elizabeth St. Utica, NY 13501 (315) 794-6037 djenkins@working-solutions.org									X				
Letherman, Linda Pima County WIB, Arizona Pima County Faith-Based Coordinator 2797 East Ajoway Tucson, AZ 85713 (520) 243-6780 lleatherman@csd.pima.gov					X		X	X					
Marrama, Linda N. Virginia Workforce Investment Board (Retired) 117 Conch Ct. Emerald Isle, NC 28594 Cell (571) 215-0775 lmarrama@earthlink.net				X			X						
Ramos, Richard The Latino Coalition 5201 California Ave. Suite 440 Bakersfield, CA 93309 (661) 326-8845 rramos@latinocoalition.org				X									

A. Peer Contacts (continued)

Name and Contact Information	Asset Mapping	Business Relationships	Connecting Nonprofits to the Workforce	Culturally Viable Programs	Formal Outreach and Planning Information	General Information	Intermediaries	Leadership	Networking FBCOs	Simplified RFP	Sustainability	Workforce (Regional)	WIB
Rusher, Trenda Washtenaw County Employment Training and Community Services, Michigan Works! 310 W. Michigan Ave. Suite 400 Ypsilanti, MI 48197 (734) 544-2955			X					X					
Vander Hulst, James 103 Colelge Ave. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49503-5921 (616) 454-8738 jvanderhulst@westmichiganteam.org											X		
Wing, Steve CVS Pharmacy 1920 Enterprise Parkway Twinsburg, OH 44087 (330) 487-6957 SMWing@cvs.com		X											
Wubbenhorst, William Macro International Inc. 11785 Beltsville Drive Suite 300 Calverton, MD 20705 (301) 572-0561 William.H.Wubbenhorst@orcmacro.com						X							

To locate the Department's WIB and nonprofit grantees in your area, access the Department's web site at www.dol.gov/cfbci/tlc/grantee/statesearch.aspx.

Workforce Investment Board Grantees

◆ Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (MD)
◆ Area Community Service Employment (MI)
◆ Brockton Area Workforce Investment (MA)
◆ Capital Area Michigan Works! (MI)
◆ Capital Workforce Partners (CT)
◆ City and County of Denver Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (CO)
◆ Coastal Bend Workforce Development Board, dba Workforce 1 (TX)
◆ County of Cumberland (NJ)
◆ District of Columbia Government, Department of Employment Services (DC)
◆ Jefferson County Commission (ALB)
◆ LaFourche, Assumption, Terrebonne WIB, Inc. (LA)
◆ Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MD)
◆ Metro North Regional Employment Board (MA)
◆ New Hampshire Community Technical College System (NH)
◆ Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board (VA)
◆ Ottawa County (MI)
◆ Pima County Workforce Investment Board (AZ)
◆ San Diego Workforce Partnerships, Inc. (CA)
◆ Santa Ana Workforce Investment Board (CA)
◆ The Workplace, Inc. (Southwestern Connecticut's Regional Workfoce Investment Board) (CT)
◆ Workforce Investment Board of Herkimer Madison and Oneida Counties (NY)
◆ WorkNet Pinellas, Inc. (FL)

B. Equal Treatment and Religion-Related Resources

Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination Obligations of Government Contractors,
Executive Order 11246, as amended; Exemption for Religious Entities [09/30/2003] 41 CFR Part 60-1
www.dol.gov/esa/regs/fedreg/final/2003024295.htm

Equal Treatment in Department of Labor Programs for Religious Organizations;
Protection of Religious Liberty of Department of Labor Social Service Providers
and Beneficiaries 29 CRF Part 2, Subpart D
www.dol.gov/dol/allcfr/title_29/Part_2/Subpart_D.htm

Equal Treatment Online Training
http://partnership.dolelearning.org/fb_12.htm

Equal Treatment Regulations
www.dol.gov/cfbci/legalguidance.htm

Executive Order 11246 EEO and Affirmative Action Guidelines
for Federal Contractors Regarding Race, Color, Gender, Religion, and National Origin
www.dol.gov/esa/ofccp/regs/compliance/fs11246.htm

Executive Order 13279 Equal Protection of the Laws for Faith-Based and Community Organizations
www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/12/20021212-6.html

Guidance to Faith-Based and Community Organizations on Partnering with the Federal Government
www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/guidance_document.pdf

Job Corps Policy and Requirements Handbook
http://jobcorps.dol.gov/docs/prh.pdf

Memorandum Opinion for the General Counsel, Office of Justice Programs,
Re: Application of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to the Award of a
Grant Pursuant to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (June 26, 2007)
www.usdoj.gov/olc/opionions./htm

Nondiscrimination and Programmatic Regulations Specific to the WIA
(29 CFR 37.6(f)) www.dol.gov/cfbci/Part37.htm and (20 CFR 667.266) and (20 CFR 667.275)
www.dol.gov/CFBCI/regs/FedReg/final/finalregs071204.htm

Promoting Equal Treatment: A Guide for State & Local Compliance with Federal Regulations
www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/equal-treatment.html

Q & A on Guidance and Monitoring of Faith-Based Organizations That Receive Government Funds
www.religionandsocialpolicy.org/interviews/interview.cfm?id=179

B. Equal Treatment and Religion-Related Resources (continued)

Religious Freedom Restoration Act (42 U.S.C. § 2000bb (2000)
http://caselaw.lp.findlaw. com/scripts/ts_search.pl?title=42&sec=2000bb and
www4.law.cornell. edu/uscode/42/usc_sec_42_00002000--bb000-.html

Training and Employment Guidance Letter 1-05
http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2088

Training and Employment Guidance Letter 17-01
http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=1376

Training and Employment Guidance Letter 29-07
www.dol.gov/cfbci/20080501TEGL.pdf

Workforce Investment Act--Equal Treatment in Department of Labor
Programs for Faith-Based Community Organizations; Protection of Religious Liberty,
and Limitation on Employment of Participants; Final Rules [7/12/2004]
20 CFR Parts 667 and 670 and 29 CFR Parts 2 and 37
www.dol.gov/cfbci/regs/fedreg/final/finalregs071204.htm

C. Connecting Community-Based Nonprofits to the Workforce System

These checklists include resources a WIB and/or OSCC can provide community-based nonprofits in an effort to create positive relationships and connect them to the workforce system.

√ Information on how funding flows from the federal government and their procurement or RFP/RFA process

√ The purpose and laymen's explanation of the WIA and other funding sources used to fund community-based nonprofits and individuals served through the system

√ Overview of the relevant sections of the local and/or state WIA plan

√ Relevant Office of Management and Budget Circulars, Code of Federal Regulations, Executive Orders, Training and Employment Guidance Letters, and Training Employment Notices

√ Opportunities to learn, understand, and respect each other's culture, goals, and operating structure

√ Developing an awareness of and commitment to meeting performance measures, where applicable

√ Creating a simplified RFP/RFA

√ Providing a list of terms that may be unfamiliar to FBOs

√ Providing a bidder's conference to explain the procurement process and RFP/RFA

√ Creating an outreach strategy to advertise the availability of the RFP/RFA, specific to community-based nonprofits

√ Offering training specific to issues of accountability such as electronic record keeping, reporting, and compliance

√ Designating someone in their organization specifically to answer questions of prospective grantees and work with new grantees

Relevant Information on WIA

These checklists include resources a WIB and/or OSCC can provide community-based nonprofits in an effort to create positive relationships and connect them to the workforce system.

√ 21st Century Workforce Initiative

√ Accountability

√ Assessment

√ Board development and operation

√ Community participation of the workforce system

√ Community-driven youth programs

√ Continuous improvement

√ Counseling

√ Customer characteristics

√ Customer choice

√ Customer satisfaction

√ Delivery system

√ Eligibility

√ Flexibility of block grants

√ Job club

√ Job Corps Centers

√ Life skills

√ Memorandums of understanding

√ Outreach, including recruitment

√ Planning

√ Private sector led

√ Rehabilitation Act

√ Screening, selection, and assignment of enrollees

√ Strategies for sharing practices for innovation, sustainability, and entrepreneurship

√ Support services

√ Training services

√ Youth services

> "All procedures, checklists, client forms, and tools were contained in a detailed technical assistance manual…developed for the grantees."[40]
>
> Michelle Voll
> *Evaluator*
> Macro international Inc.

For a copy of WIA state plans and annual reports, nonprofits can access www.doleta.gov/USWORKFORCE/WIA/planstatus.cfm.

Relevant Resources on Regional Workforce Investment

These checklists include resources a WIB and/or OSCC can provide community-based nonprofits in an effort to create positive relationships and connect them to the workforce system.

√ *Asset Mapping Roadmap*

www.compete.org/images/uploads/File/PDF Files/CoC_Illuminate_2008.pdf

√ *Clusters of Innovation: Regional Foundations of U.S. Competitiveness*

www.usistf.org/download/documents/Clusters-of-Innovation/Clusters-of-Innovation.pdf

√ *Innovate America Report*

www.compete.org/images/uploads/File/PDFFiles/NII_Innovate_America.pdf

√ *Measuring Regional Innovation*

www.compete.org/images/uploads/File/PDFFiles/Regional_Innovation_Guidebook.pdf

√ *Regional Innovation, National Prosperity Report*

www.iedconline.org/EDAmerica/Summer2006/Regional_Innovation.pdf

√ *The Role of Regional Clusters in Unlocking Rural Competitiveness*

www.c2er.org/memberarea/pdf/RuralCompetitivenessCluster.pdf

Resources for Connecting Nonprofits to the Workforce System

The FBCOs can act as satellites or access points of the OSCC. For more information on how to connect nonprofits to the workforce system as access points contact:

Elkins, Rita
(321) 806-4223
jelkins6@cfl.rr.com

Fowler, Gordon
Fowler Communications
(916) 442-1394
Gordon@3foldcomm.com

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    4 F.R. 15708 (2004).

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