

Ageing Worker Initiative: Strategies for Regional Talent Development

Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County



Grantee: Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (Washington)

Industry Focus: Healthcare, Information Technology, and Green Jobs

Location of Grant Activities: City of Seattle/King County and Snohomish County, Washington

Key Partners: Snohomish County Workforce Development Council; King County Work Training Program; King County Labor Council; Bellevue Community College; South Seattle Community College; Everett Community College; Edmonds Community College; Seattle Community College District; Shoreline Community College; Small Business Administration; Puget Sound Regional Council; enterpriseSeattle; Snohomish County Economic Development Commission; Health Work Force Institute; McKinstry Company; Microsoft Corporation; AARP Foundation; National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (SCSEP grantee); Seattle Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens (SCSEP grantee); Washington Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Department of Services for the Blind.

Grant Amount: \$1,000,000

Leveraged Funds: \$2,990,395

Challenge: While the region is facing challenges due to the economic downturn, key regional industries – healthcare, information technology, and the emerging green jobs sector – are seeking a pipeline of skilled workers and hiring in specific occupations, even during the downturn. Older workers in the region lack access to high-quality, short-term occupational skills training customized to their needs. They are also unfamiliar with information and communication technologies widely employed in today's workplace. Furthermore, need exists for customized case management and support strategies that provide instruction and training as well as access points for older workers with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and ex-offender status.

Addressing the Challenge: To meet these challenges, the *Reinvesting in Older Workers* project will enable workforce partners to provide direct training and placement of older workers in order to close skill gaps and create new career pathways. This project is a regional expansion of the Mature Workers Alliance of Puget Sound and will target three disadvantaged populations of older workers: individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, and individuals with low-level English proficiency. The project's alignment with and customization of regional postsecondary training options will increase the number of access training points for older workers. Workshops and trainings in information and communication technology will be customized to the needs of older workers. Entrepreneurial training will help participants better understand their skills, marketability, and options for self-employment.

Projected Outcomes:

- 148 older workers will begin occupational education/training activities.
- 118 older workers will complete occupation education/training activities and receive a degree/certificate.
- 89 older workers who complete occupational education/training activities will enter employment, and 80 will enter training-related employment.
- 300 older workers will receive information and communications technology training.
- 112 older workers will receive entrepreneurial training.
- 90 older workers will receive limited English proficiency "bridge" training in green jobs.

