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JobTrain Graduates are Successful in Challenging Economy

JobTrain graduates are having no problem landing quality jobs, even in the current economic climate. Although unemployment rates are the highest they've been in 30 years, 89% of JobTrain's adult graduates were placed at an average starting wage of \$16 per hour during the first six months of this fiscal year. Youth placement rates are running at 92% with an average placement wage of \$11.43 per hour.

JobTrain's track record draws more and more jobless people to the training center for help. Demand for JobTrain services spiked significantly over the past several months. Bi-weekly orientation sessions that last year enrolled 20-25 new students are now enrolling more than 80 per session. JobTrain

is committed to being an effective part of the solution to the current unemployment crisis.

Reliable relationships with employers are central to JobTrain's success. To make sure that classes are relevant and that graduates have the skills employers seek, each JobTrain course is connected to an industry-specific Technical Advisory Committee. TAC members are employers and supervisors who give practical advice to instructors and administrators about changing needs and priorities in the field. JobTrain counts on TAC's to set the stage for successful career placements.

JobTrain's primary strategy for success is placing students in career positions within their vocational training fields; but job opportunities are not limited to those directly related to training. According to Jasmine Baluyot, JobTrain's Corporate Relations Coordinator, JobTrain students, PeninsulaWorks participants and the broader community benefit tremendously from on-site recruitment and hiring sessions held at JobTrain. In the past 6 months, JobTrain has hosted UPS, the Census Bureau, Early Childhood Education Staffing (to hire nannies, preschool teachers, cleaners, etc.), SkyWest Airlines, FedEx, and Citizen Schools (to hire tutors for children after school). JobTrain also hosted an educational resource fair in November to make the community aware of various educational and training options and to help them evaluate what they can do to launch new careers. Many current JobTrain students access this resource to find temporary or part time work to support themselves while in training.

For more information about our recruitment and job placement efforts, please contact JobTrain's Corporate Relations Coordinator, Jasmine Baluyot, at 650.330.6430 or jbaluyot@JobTrainworks.org.



On-site job fairs, like the one pictured above, are just one of the many ways JobTrain helps students obtain quality jobs.

January 2009

JOBRAIN

FORMERLY OICW **The Works**

The Quarterly Newsletter of JobTrain



Director's Corner: *JobTrain Supporters Are True Givers!*

YOU are wonderful. I predicted in our last newsletter that you would remain loyal to JobTrain even if your personal wealth had been diminished by a rogue economy. You didn't let us down. Most of you continued to give, and the average size of your gifts actually increased. How did I guess you would come through against the odds? I pinned my prediction on the size of your hearts, not the size of your wallets. Our Holiday Campaign was successful because YOU are TRUE GIVERS.

The proverbial glass of water

We have all heard that a pessimist sees a glass of water as half empty and an optimist sees that same glass of water as half full. But when a giving person like you sees a glass of water, you tend to look around for someone who is thirsty. We hope you are still looking at JobTrain, because even with a successful holiday campaign under our belts, our resources are strained. Other important funding sources did shrink. In fact, over the last 18 months, JobTrain has had to cut staff by more than 20% at a time when demand for our services is steadily climbing.

More with less

JobTrain continues to deliver on our promise to trainees and the community even though we have fewer staff and a challenging job market. So far in this fiscal year, we've placed 89% of our graduates in career positions paying an average starting wage of \$16 an hour. Our staff and volunteers are amazing, but they are stretched thin. The resolve of our students is inspirational, but they could use more help. We are all a little thirsty.

Volunteer at JobTrain

We hope you will consider volunteering at JobTrain. The span of volunteer opportunities is nearly limitless: from counseling and classroom help to office work and events. We can guarantee that there's no feeling quite as wonderful as knowing that you've changed a life. You will change lives at JobTrain. We hope you'll join us.

To volunteer, contact JobTrain's Volunteer Manager, Holly Hanson at 650.330.6419 or hhanson@JobTrainworks.org.

Sharon

Sharon Williams
Executive Director

FUNDRAISING NEWS

Save The Date!

Mark your calendars now for our upcoming events:

- Breakfast of Champions 2009
May 1, 2009
- Golf Classic 2009
July 27, 2009

JobTrain in the News

Vanessa Sanchez, a student in JobTrain's GED and Project Build classes, was featured on December 2, 2008 in the San Jose Mercury News. Named JobTrain's Trainee of the Month in November 2008, Vanessa's story is one of determination, hard work, and personal sacrifice. She is working hard to support her family and is building her skill set to prepare her for a successful career to better support her children. You can find a copy of her story on JobTrain's website under the "JobTrain in the News" section.

Volunteer Opportunities

JobTrain is successful in achieving our mission because of the fantastic support we receive from the community. This includes our large staff of dedicated volunteers. We are always looking for new volunteers who want to help our students change their lives and help us eliminate poverty in the Bay Area. Below are 2 of our current volunteer openings. If you are interested in either of these positions, or if you'd like to hear about our other current volunteer opportunities, please contact Holly Hanson at 650.330.6419 or hhanson@JobTrainworks.org.

Development Assistant

We are currently looking for someone to help us with our fundraising efforts. This position's responsibilities include conducting prospect research projects, filing, and entering and tracking information in our fundraising database. The time commitment is entirely up to you, and training and workspace will be provided.

Teacher's Aide (several people needed)

We are currently looking for several volunteers to assist students in daily education and/or lectures. Current class opportunities include: Microsoft Office Applications, Academic Tutoring for GED (Math is the highest need), Culinary Arts, and English as a Second Language (evenings only).

Newsletter Staff:

Kate Bryan
Writer and Editor

Marc Santuccio
Layout and Design

Our Mission

JobTrain is committed to helping those who are most in need to succeed. Our purpose is to transform the lives of people in our community through assessment, attitude and job skills training and high potential career placement.

1200 O'Brien Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025
650.330.6429 www.JobTrainworks.org

JobTrain is a 501c3 nonprofit service provider, established in 1965. Programs and services are provided to our low-income students at no cost, thanks to generous support from individual, corporate, and foundation donors, as well as government grants.

JobTrain Welcomes New Chairman

JobTrain is happy to introduce our new board chairman, John Laing. John took office in January for a two-year term. He joined the JobTrain board three years ago and became a favorite with staff and trainees through his classroom employment seminars. John has 35 years of business experience in local companies, including IBM, Apple and Symantec. He is enthusiastic about JobTrain and intends to help the organization advance to "the next level." Outgoing Chairman Bud Colligan will remain on the board as the leader in a long-term sustainability effort.



Happy Holidays for Children

Each year, JobTrain organizes a Holiday Giving project for the children of our JobTrain students and the children in our Child Development Center. This year, 181 children benefitted from the project: 75 children received gifts from the congregation of St. Nicholas Church; 60 children were gifted by San Mateo County; 5 children were "adopted" by Crate & Barrel Hillsdale Shopping Center; and the remaining 41 children received gifts from JobTrain's staff and Board of Directors. Smiles and holiday cheer prevailed!

On JobTrain's Wishlist...

JobTrain's Child Development Center provides top-of-the line preschool services to approximately 35 children each year (24 at a time). The playground equipment and surface see lots of action! In fact, at this point they are worn and need to be replaced. JobTrain has secured grants to cover most of the expense, but still needs \$5,000 to complete the project. If you'd like to help us with this project, please specify "CDC playground" on your donation. Any support you can provide will create a safe and nurturing environment for our children to learn and grow!



**Be sure to check out
JobTrain's WEBSITE!
www.JobTrainworks.org**

JobTrain is looking for underwriting sponsors to cover the production costs for its quarterly newsletters. The sponsor will have exclusive logo or name placement in the publication. Our newsletter is a fantastic way to communicate to our various audiences and will provide a unique naming opportunity for the sponsor(s). Depending on the desired level of support, it is possible to underwrite one, two, three, or all four of the quarterly newsletters. For further details about this opportunity, please contact Kate Bryan at 650.330.6499 or kbryan@JobTrainworks.org.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Culinary Arts Students Bring Joy to the Jails

The holiday season is a special time of year to celebrate with family and friends. For people in jail, however, the holidays can be a time of loneliness instead. JobTrain took part in a cookie baking project to give inmates gifts when they ordinarily would receive none. The project is organized by the Service League of San Mateo County, with an annual goal of distributing 6 cookies to 1,200 inmates. In the past, various community agencies and schools have donated the 7,200 cookies needed. However, with resources spread thin this year, extra help was needed and they asked JobTrain to contribute 1,000 cookies.

Culinary Arts Instructor Adam Weiner asked his students if they would be willing to put in the extra time and effort to bake 1,000 cookies. "This will be in addition to your regular class assignments," Chef Adam explained, "not in place of." The students' response was that they knew they could do more. They committed to bake 3,600 (300 dozen) cookies. Chef Adam puts a student in charge of every project and this time a trainee named Troy asked to be the project lead. Troy said he knew first-hand what it was like to spend Christmas in jail and he wanted to be responsible for making the inmates' holiday happier. He rallied the class: "Chef Adam says food is love; let's make some people feel better. Let's bake!"

And bake they did. Every afternoon beginning December 11th, JobTrain's culinary arts students stayed late to bake. Within a week, they had exceeded their goal of 3,600 cookies. In total 4,000 cookies were picked up by Service League on December 19th from JobTrain's campus. JobTrain's culinary arts students demonstrated the joy of giving by using their personal time to make the holiday season better for others.

To find out more about this project or JobTrain's culinary arts program, please contact Adam Weiner at 650.330.6413 or aweiner@JobTrainworks.org.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: *East Palo Alto Parolee Re-Entry Program*

The East Palo Alto Parolee Re-entry Program was launched last year as a collaborative effort between the City, the EPA Police Department, Free at Last, JobTrain and other local nonprofit and faith-based organizations. The goal of the program is to prepare recent parolees for a productive life in society and to decrease the high rate of recidivism that currently exists in the community. Clients are individuals from East Palo Alto who are released from state prisons. The program is designed to serve 250 clients each year.

Parolees begin with an assessment process at Free at Last, which includes an evaluation of the individual's skills and challenges, assistance with obtaining a driver's license, and help with drug and alcohol treatment, if needed. JobTrain's role is to provide job readiness training and life skills classes to the clients at Free at Last. Additionally, those clients who are not computer literate and have not graduated from high school come to JobTrain for computer literacy and GED preparation. At any given time, there are about 50 clients enrolled in the program, resulting in at least 10 being at Free at Last each day working to develop their skills and preparing for a new career. Once the assessment team at Free at Last determines that an individual has completed everything required for the basic program, the clients are able to either find jobs or enroll in a JobTrain vocational training class to better qualify them for a new career.

"The biggest challenge for these clients," says Alonzo Emery, Director of JobTrain's Adult Services, "is teaching them how to handle their newfound freedom. We are teaching them a new mindset, one of following through with commitments and being responsible and accountable." Many of the people served by this program are challenged by the rules of society outside of prison. This program helps clients with the transition and teaches them to cope with the challenges of finding a job, succeeding in a job, managing personal finances, and dealing with family and relationship issues.

To find out more about the Parolee Re-Entry Program, please contact Deborah Picar at 650.330.6441 or dpicar@JobTrainworks.org.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: *Francisco Valle*

Francisco Valle stopped going to school when he was barely 15 years old. His parents were no longer together, with his mom living in East Palo Alto and his dad living in Gilroy. Because he was no longer in school, he worked with his dad painting houses in Gilroy. Francisco's mother received a call from the school district regarding his absence so she brought him to JobTrain to see what could be done. Allan Johnson, Director of JobTrain's Youth Services, worked with the family. "It seemed that Francisco could not get an exemption from school because he had passed the completion exam," said Allan. "That made the school district hesitant to grant him an exemption." Allan worked to have Francisco moved to JobTrain to study for and complete the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) and the school district agreed.

Because Francisco was too young to enroll in JobTrain's GED program, the class's instructor, Karen Lundberg, enrolled him in the Skills for Employment class and helped him study for his CHSPE. In late spring 2007, one of JobTrain's volunteers, Ruth Short, took a special interest in Francisco. Francisco told Ruth of his dream to one day become an architect, so Ruth took him to various architecture firms, showed him important structures in San Francisco, and visited Foothill College with him. Francisco successfully passed the CHSPE. He will be enrolling at Foothill College in January and will be taking 19 units, with the personal and financial support of Ruth. After 2 years at Foothill College, Francisco plans to transfer to Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo to obtain his degree in architecture.

Francisco will have completed one semester of college before others his age graduate from high school. He is a great example of a youth to whom JobTrain provided direction, counseling, and support, and as a result is on his way to achieving his goals.

Donor Honor Roll

With your help, JobTrain is changing the lives of people through training and employment. The following is a list of donors who contributed \$100 or more, or other goods and services, **between September 1, 2008 & November 30, 2008.**

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