

Chicago CBO Bridge Report

Chicago Workforce Investment Council
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Introduction

The Chicago Workforce Investment Council's Literacy-to-Work initiative aims to coordinate resources and promote best practices in combining literacy and job skills training. The end goal is to increase Chicago's return on investment for public spending on low-skilled individuals. Research shows that the best way to achieve this goal is to increase the number of low-skilled individuals who complete at least one year of education past high school or earn an industry recognized credential. Bridge Programs accelerate educational attainment for low-skilled individuals to "bridge" them to skills training and community college programs. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) have agreed on the core components of bridge programs:

- **Contextualized instruction** that integrates basic reading, math, and language skills with occupational knowledge
- **Career development** that includes career exploration, career planning, and understanding of the world of work
- **Transition services** that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of moving from adult education to credit or occupational programs

The following report is a description of bridge programs operated by Chicago community-based organizations. A description of the funding agencies is appended.

Community Based Bridge Programs

Asian Human Services

Asian Human Services' Literacy Education for Adults and Families (LEAF) program offers English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to low-income adult immigrants living on Chicago's north side. The program offers English classes for beginning and intermediate level students as well as basic and intermediate computer skills courses. The adult education program also offers a weekly parenting class for families with children in their preschool program. Childcare Professions for ESL Students is a new course designed to attract ESL students who are interested in pursuing childcare credentials. The class, offered for the first time in September of 2011, meets three times a week from 9 am-1 pm and will run for 12 weeks. Students will prepare to enter community college by developing their academic skills while becoming acquainted with the early childhood profession through readings, field trips and discussion. Successful students will transfer into the Child Development Program at Truman College. This bridge class is funded through the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Fry Foundation. The program serves 15 students.

Association House

Association House's Career Center provides employment, career-oriented adult education and sector training programs to community members, Chicago Housing Authority residents, immigrants, and ex-offenders. The Vocational Bridge Academy is a 3-level Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Educational Development (GED) program where students can improve basic skills to prepare for sector training. Based on their Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores, students are placed in reading, writing and math courses for a 16-week term. Funding from the Fry Foundation, Polk Foundation, McCormick Foundation, Partnership for New Communities and United Way support the Vocational Bridge Academy. Once their basic skill levels improve, students have an option of three career tracks.

Through the Community Technology Center, a Microsoft Certification Center, students can earn Microsoft certificates or take the College Prep and Computer Repair Course that prepares them for the A+ certification course at the Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center at Wright College. Students can use this certification to become an entry-level computer service technician or enter networking or wireless networking occupations.

Students can enter the Customer Service and Retail Training Program and earn the National Retail Federation Foundation's customer service certificate for jobs in hospitality, food service, retail, or finance. The National Retail Foundation certificate program is funded through

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) adult funds and grants from LaRaza and the Wal-Mart Foundation.

Lastly, students can enter the Bilingual Pre-Certified Medical Assistant program (a partnership with *Carreras en Salud*) that will prepare them to pass the COMPASS test and enter the Certified Medical Assistance program at the Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center at Wright College. The Pre-Certified Medical Assistant is funded through a Department of Labor grant. Association House is a Center for Working Families site. The Vocational Bridge Academy serves 350 people a year.

Breaking Ground

The Manufacturing Training Center (MTC) is an industry-driven program offering education, job training, and employment services to ex-offenders on Chicago's west side. MTC provides comprehensive training and employment in the manufacturing sector. Students can enter with a 5th-6th grade reading level and receive intensive math, reading and writing instruction customized to match their needs. Once basic skill levels have improved, students will learn how to operate manual, lathe and computer numerical control machines, read blueprints, and use calipers and micrometers. Students will be eligible for two to four National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) credentials by the end of the program. The 16-week machinist class is taught by a seasoned machinist with 10 years teaching experience and 30 years industrial experience. Classes are held Monday through Thursday, 3 hours a day. Students can elect to take a morning or afternoon session. Students receive a stipend of \$250 every two weeks. Breaking Ground works in partnership with the Tooling and Manufacturing Association to place its graduates into jobs. The program is funded by the McCormick Foundation, Fry Foundation, Chase Foundation and Polk Bros Foundation. The program serves 75 students a year.

Central States SER

Central States SER's Healthcare Careers Pathway Program works in partnership with Daley College and the Arturo Velasquez Institute (AVI), to help residents who lack the basic math and reading skills needed to access entry-level occupational training at the college level. To participate in the healthcare bridge, candidates must be below a 9th grade level in math or reading and be either a Chicago Housing Authority resident with a FamilyWorks provider or be a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) eligible low-income adult. Through Central States SER, students complete a contextualized literacy and numeracy program so that they may gain admission into a healthcare-focused occupational training program at the City Colleges of Chicago and ultimately find employment in the healthcare field. Classes are Monday through Thursday from 8 am to 2 pm and last for 8 weeks. Staff at Central States SER and AVI jointly interview and hire bridge instructors. The contextualized literacy education and career training model is an integrated, tiered system with multiple entry points and multiple points of exit,

depending on the student's needs and goals. Nursing Assistant and Personal Care Technician programs serve as entry opportunities into Radiology Technician and Nursing positions. Central States SER has three career development specialists and two industry specialists on staff who work closely with employers like Rush Medical University Center, St. Anthony's Hospital, and MacNeal Hospital to place students in jobs. Central States SER is expanding its offerings to include Allied Health options at Malcolm X College this fall and will work with Morton College in Southern Cook County with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Professional Opportunity Grant (HPOG). The Healthcare Careers Pathway Program is funded by Partnership for New Communities, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) bridge funds, and an Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Training for Tomorrow grant. Central States SER is a Center for Working Families site. This year the program will serve 100 students.

Chicago Federation of Labor

The Chicago Federation of Labor's Health Care Career Bridge Program is tailored specifically for laid-off workers interested in transitioning to a career in healthcare. Students receive four weeks of math and reading instruction then two weeks of introduction to healthcare instruction which covers topics such as medical terminology, human anatomy, physiology, ethics and healthcare safety, and rules and regulations. The program staff includes math, reading, and healthcare instructors and four case managers. The program connects individuals with further training including radiology, ultrasound, and sonography programs at Olive-Harvey College, registered nursing programs at Truman College, and medical records and billing programs at the Tukiendorf Training Institute as well as other Workforce Investment Act (WIA) approved training providers. Students are enrolled in the WIA dislocated worker program for support services and job placement assistance. Instruction is funded with Chicago Department of Family and Support Services Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) contextualized literacy grant. The program serves 30 individuals each year.

Chicago Urban League

The Chicago Urban League, in partnership with Dawson Technical Institute at Kennedy-King College, recruits, trains and prepares individuals for careers in the construction industry in its Pre 2 Construction Apprenticeship Training Program. Students meet Monday through Friday, 3 hours a day, for 6 weeks at the Chicago Urban League for an introduction to the construction industry, math and language drills and workplace readiness. Students are prepared to take the COMPASS placement test and then transfer to Dawson Technical Institute for 16 weeks of vocational training in the Carpentry Program or Concrete Masonry Program. Students earn a \$375 monthly stipend while in the program and continue to receive support services from the Chicago Urban League including travel related expenses, payment for drivers' license fees, and toolkits while they are enrolled at Dawson. The program is funded through Illinois Department

of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Employment Opportunities Grant Program (EOGP) and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) bridge funding. Since 2009 the program has served 105 individuals.

Erie Neighborhood House

Pathways to Success is a career preparation program designed to bridge the gap between English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE) and workforce development for Erie's adult program participants. Pathways to Success has two career tracks: manufacturing and healthcare. In manufacturing, students learn math, blueprint reading, quality control, and Mastercam Computer-Aided Design and Computer-Aided Manufacturing software. After twelve weeks, students can get hands on experience or advance training at the Careers in Manufacturing Program at the Jane Addams Resource Center (JARC), Wright College, or Symbol Job Training, Inc. and earn National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) credentials in metalforming, computer numerical control turning and computer numerical control milling. Students can also transfer to the Greater West Town Community Development Project's Shipping and Receiving program.

The healthcare track prepares participants for Certified Medical Assistant training. Students take medical terminology, anatomy, and physiology at Erie Neighborhood House, and by presenting a portfolio can earn three credits at Wright College and test out of English 101, Math 099, and Biology 120. Staff helps students fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) form to determine financial aid. Students can continue at the Humboldt Park Vocational Educational Center at Wright College and will be eligible for a Wright College scholarship fund specifically for Erie students to help cover the costs of books or unmet financial need. Students receive free childcare and three months of transportation assistance while in the program. Many participants are also unemployment insurance recipients. Staff provides job placement assistance to students after receiving certification. Erie Neighborhood House works closely with Erie Family Health Center, the Alliance of Chicago Community Health Services and a list of over 90 manufacturing business to place people in jobs. The program has a director, two full-time instructors, a job developer, a part-time data entry specialist and two part-time childcare staff. Pathways to Success is supported by private foundations including the McCormick Foundation, Fry Foundation, United Way, and Microsoft. The program also receives money from the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) grant program through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). The program serves 100 students per year.

Instituto Del Progreso Latino

Instituto Del Progreso Latino offers bridge career tracks in manufacturing and healthcare. *Carreras en Salud*, a partnership between Instituto Del Progreso Latino, Association House of

Chicago, the Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center at Wright College and the National Council of La Raza, was established to bridge limited English-proficient individuals into Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) positions. *Carreras en Salud* offers students seven levels at which they can enroll. Students enter and advance according to their capacity and test scores. Each level is designed to be completed in 16 weeks and students are expected to advance at least two basic skill levels per quarter. Designed for English as a Second Language (ESL) students at language grade level 6, the Pre Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) bridge program includes two 16-week modules and a review class that will move students to language grade level 8. Class content is contextualized to general concepts in the healthcare industry. If interested, students can continue on to the Pre-LPN bridge for two 16-week modules of contextualized language and math focused on biology, anatomy, physiology and psychology. Students take electrocardiogram and phlebotomy classes that when combined with a CNA certificate make them eligible for a patient care technician certification. Association House provides intensive case management during the Pre-LPN classes. Following the Pre-LPN, students take a full year of classes at the Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center at Wright College and sit for the state exam. To be eligible, students must apply for federal and state financial aid, or Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds. Students interested in becoming a Registered Nurse (RN) can take chemistry and microbiology at Wright College.

Instituto's Computerized Numerical Control: Fast Track Program is a partnership between Instituto and the Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center of Wright College. Computer Numerical Control: Fast Track works to address the challenges of advancing individuals in lower skilled manufacturing positions into higher paying jobs and helps them develop more competitive skill sets. There are 5 levels in the pathway. Students as low as the 4th grade level start in Manufacturing Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) A and after 16 weeks of contextualized English, math, and computers, can advance to Manufacturing VESL B with a 6th grade reading level. The students then enter Computer Numerical Control Fast Track, a 320-hour non-credit training course that provides students with skills in computer numerical control machine operations, blueprint reading, applied math and metrology, computer technology training, and workplace safety. Students continue on to the Computerized Numerical Control program at Wright College or to the Associate Degree program in Manufacturing Technology at Daley College. Instituto's bridge programs are supported by Workforce Investment Act (WIA) bridge, adult and dislocated worker funds, Trade Adjustment Act individual training accounts (ITAs), Chicago Department of Family Support Services' Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) contextualized literacy grant, and a Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG). Instituto is a Center for Working Families site. The programs serve 110 people a year.

Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC)

JARC provides technical training and literacy instruction to incumbent workers at manufacturing companies throughout the Chicago area and to low-income jobseekers. The organization's

Technical Training Center offers 3,500 square feet of space to train students on machine tools, punch presses and related equipment, quality control, blueprint reading and forklift safety. The manufacturing bridge program is open enrollment and available to students who test between 5th to 8th grade level equivalent. Students meet Monday-Thursday from 9 am to 1 pm. In addition to math and reading, students receive supportive services and financial literacy instruction. JARC uses an internally produced Metalworking Skills Assessment as a pre and post test to customize instruction to address student needs. Successful students can enter JARC's Careers in Manufacturing Program or go to a community college. In the Careers in Manufacturing program, students can earn National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) credentials including metalforming, computer numerical control milling and computer numerical control turning as well as a Forklift license, American Welding Society credential, and OSHA10 Hour Workplace Safety Certificate. A job developer works with the student to find a job that accommodates the student's preferences in terms of shift and commute. JARC received initial funding for its bridge program through Workforce Investment Act (WIA) bridge funds. Currently it uses a combination of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) dislocated worker funds and a Chicago Department of Family and Support Services Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) contextualized literacy grant to fund the bridge program. Students can use individual training accounts (ITAs) to attend the Careers in Manufacturing Program. The Careers in Manufacturing Program is supported by the McCormick Foundation, Polk Bros Foundation, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) grant, and the Eleanor Foundation. JARC is a Center for Working Families site. The program serves 40 people each year.

Jewish Vocational Services

In February 2010, Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) initiated a pilot healthcare bridge class based on a curriculum developed through an Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) grant and in partnership with Truman College. JVS helps students transition into Truman College's healthcare bridge program where they will prepare for entrance exams and learn the vocabulary and basic concepts necessary to succeed in a variety health-related programs including Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Phlebotomy Technician, Pharmacy Technician, Electrocardiogram Technician, or Medical Billing and Coding. Students are also referred to JVS Home Health Aide or Pharmacy Tech Programs. The class meets at Howard Area Community Center or JVS's site in West Rogers Park, 2-4 days a week, 3 hours a day and includes one-on-one tutoring. The clients, mostly refugees, need immediate employment and often see caregiving as a viable option that allows them to build skills, network, and practice English. JVS works with a transition specialist at Truman College to help students connect with the resources they need to succeed. A grant from the Fry Foundation pays for a program director, student supports, follow-up services, and monthly employment-related workshops at the JVS Rogers Park Community Technology Center. The program runs three sessions a year and serves 45 people.

Polish American Association

The Polish American Association (PAA) provides comprehensive bilingual and bicultural services to the Polish community in the areas of education, employment, social services, and immigration assistance. The organization serves approximately 1,300 English as a Second Language (ESL) students a year. PPA has been providing Certified Nurse Assistant training for 20 years. The Certified Nurse Assistant Program is 14 weeks long and consists of 150 hours (100 hours of theory and 50 hours of clinical) in the basic principles and procedures of patient care. Classes are offered every day of the week for 5-7 hours a day; most students attend two or three days a week. In addition to coursework, students participate in job readiness activities including resume writing, job search, and interview practice. Upon successfully passing the state exam, students can also take Physical Rehabilitation Aide training. This training is 30 hours long and is conducted over two consecutive weekends. Students receive the textbook and other materials free of charge. If an individual does not qualify for free training, he or she can take the course for \$940. The ESL instruction is funded through the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). An Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) grant and a Chicago Department of Family and Support Services Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) fund job placement services. The program serves 100 students a year. PAA is exploring adding a contextualized manufacturing course.

Pui Tak

Pui Tak's adult English as a Second Language (ESL) program helps students learn and use functional English skills needed at home, on the job, and in the community. Each year, about 1,300 adults attend weekday morning and evening ESL classes and citizenship preparation classes. Each class term, the organization offers 36 classes which meet four days a week. All ESL teachers have been trained in workforce development instruction that covers five critical skill areas: job search, oral communication, self-management, teamwork, and problem solving. The healthcare integrated ESL course was piloted in 2009 through an Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) development grant. The class meets for 21 weeks, 4 days a week and is offered two times a year. Students involved in the program lack U.S. credentials and English language skills and work with an instructor on reading comprehension and health care concepts to prepare for the COMPASS test. Students attend Certified Nurse Assistant training at Malcolm X College or Harold Washington College. Pui Tak partners with the Chinese American Service League to help clients with resume writing and job placement. The program serves 80 students a year.

School at Work (SAW)

School at Work (SAW) is career development system for entry-level workers in healthcare created by Catalyst Learning. SAW helps students refresh essential skills and gain an understanding of healthcare specific subjects. The program works with incumbent workers who work in admissions, dietary, environmental service, housekeeping, or as nurse's aides and helps them consider pursuing careers in nursing, allied health, clerical and support services. The six month program is facilitated by an employer sponsored site coach who acts as a project manager. Students meet once a week for two hours over a six month period. Site coaches lead students in DVD instruction, internet activities and workbook assignments. The 12 module curriculum includes lessons on life management skills, communication in the workplace, principles of patient safety and satisfaction, grammar, reading, writing, math, medical terminology and planning for the future. All students create a Career and Learning Plan that allows them to do a personal interest inventory. In Chicago, Saint Anthony Hospital, Resurrection Medical Center, Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center, Saint Mary of Nazareth Hospital, John H. Stronger Hospital, Provident Hospital, Sinai Health System, Norwegian-American Hospital, Mercy Hospital and Medical Center, and Rush University Medical Center participate in the program. Nationally, a third of the students enroll in local continuing education programs within 90 days of completing the session. Of these students, 67 percent enroll in healthcare-related certificate or degree programs. The program is funded by Chicago's Department of Family and Support Services. The program serves 120 students.

FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNER AGENCIES

Centers for Working Families (CWF)

Centers for Working Families (CWF) are community-based organizations funded by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) that specialize in taking a holistic approach to people's employment and financial needs, linking job placement and career improvement with financial education and maximizing public benefits. In Chicago, 12 community-based organizations operate CWFs to increase financial stability among low-income residents in neighborhoods throughout the city. CWFs provide job services and long-term case management, one-on-one financial and money management counseling, customized banking products, free tax preparation services, and screening for public benefits eligibility.

Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS)

Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

WIA funding supports Chicago's employment system which is designed to meet the needs of businesses and job seekers. WIA Title I funds the "One-Stop" delivery system, with career centers in neighborhoods where customers can access core employment services and be referred directly to job training, education, or other services. There are separate funding streams for adults and dislocated workers. In 2009, with additional money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), a specific funding stream was created for WIA bridge programs. WIA also provides a limited number of Individual Training Accounts (ITA) that customers can use at approved training providers. All WIA funded agencies report their outcomes in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS).

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) distributes Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) by formula to provide communities with resources to address community development needs. The CDBG program works to ensure decent affordable housing, provide services to vulnerable residents, and to create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses. DFSS uses CDBG funds for contextualized literacy grants.

Chicago Housing Authority FamilyWorks

In conjunction with the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), FamilyWorks centers provide current and former CHA residents with a comprehensive array of direct services including case management, employment services, education and job training, youth opportunities, clinical

services and senior support. FamilyWorks assists residents, who are engaged in the Plan for Transformation relocation process, as they move out into new mixed income developments, rehabbed units, or utilize the housing choice voucher program. There are six community-based FamilyWorks providers: Centers for New Horizons, Employment and Employer Services, Heartland Human Care Services, Jane Addams Hull House Association, Metropolitan Family Services, and Uhlich Children’s Advantage Network (UCAN).

City Colleges of Chicago (CCC)

City College of Chicago is a system of seven community colleges plus satellite sites located throughout Chicago that offer career and technical education, adult basic education, and associate degree programs.

Daley College (Arturo Velasquez Institute satellite site)

Harold Washington College

Kennedy-King College (Dawson Technical Institute satellite site)

Malcolm X College (West Side Learning Center satellite site)

Olive-Harvey College (South Chicago Learning Center satellite site)

Truman College (Lakeview Learning Center satellite site)

Wright College (Humboldt Park Vocational Educational Center satellite site)

CCC is currently engaged in *Reinvention*, a system-wide initiative to increase the number of students earning degrees of economic value; increase the rate of transfer to Bachelor’s degree programs following CCC graduation; improve outcomes for students requiring remediation; and increase the share of Adult Basic Education, General Educational Development, and English as a Second Language students who advance to and succeed in college-level courses. COMPASS is the CCC placement exam.

Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG)

The Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) program is a national demonstration program designed to help TANF recipients and other low income individuals acquire the skills and credentials needed for entry into, and advancement in, high demand healthcare occupations. Funding comes from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Locally, the grant is administered by the Workforce Boards of Metropolitan Chicago. The Workforce Investment Board of Will County acts as the project’s fiscal agent.

Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)

WIA Title II funds are administered by the Illinois Community College Board and pay for adult education and literacy programs that serve individuals who lack the sufficient mastery of basic

educational skills or are unable to speak, read, or write in English. Agencies report their outcomes in the Data and Information System Illinois (DAISI).

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)

Employment Opportunities Grant Program (EOGP)

The Employment Opportunities Grant Program (EOGP) aims to expand the number of individuals in historically underrepresented populations who enter and complete building trades apprenticeship programs and achieve journey-level status within building trades unions.

The Job Training and Economic Development (JTED)

The Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) grant program provides grants to community-based organizations that work with small local businesses to develop curricula, train eligible workers, and provide ongoing support. Community-based organizations work with local economic development organizations and employers to identify industries experiencing problems recruiting skilled entry-level workers, training economically disadvantaged individuals in the needed skills, and placing them in employment with these companies.

Training for Tomorrow

The Training for Tomorrow program promotes workforce revitalization by providing employment and training opportunities that meet the specific skill needs of local employers and residents. Grants are made to community-based organizations that serve individuals who are low income, face multiple barriers to employment and/or are recipients of public assistance or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Client served must reside in the target communities: Albany Park, Auburn Gresham, Austin, Brighton Park, Cicero, East Garfield Park, Englewood, Grand Boulevard, Greater Grand Crossing, Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Maywood, North Lawndale, Lower West Side (Pilsen)- Little Village, Rogers Park, Roseland, South Shore, Gage Park, Chicago Lawn, West Garfield Park, and Woodlawn.

Partnership for New Communities (PNC)

The Partnership for New Communities is a funding collaborative of business, civic and foundation leaders working together to support Chicago's Plan for Transformation, an effort to rehabilitate or redevelop public housing in Chicago. Opportunity Chicago is a \$27.5 million workforce development initiative developed jointly by the Chicago Housing Authority, the City of Chicago and The Partnership for New Communities, to place 5,000 public residents in jobs over a five year period. The Partnership for New Communities will conclude operations in the spring of 2012.