

**Job Retention and Advancement
Strategies for Low-Wage
Young Adult Workers**

**A Report to
The Annie E. Casey Foundation Jobs Initiative**

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Preface

The primary mission of the Annie E. Casey Foundation is to improve the lives of disadvantaged children and families. Its strategies are to reform human service systems and community supports.

Toward those ends, the Annie E. Casey Foundation launched the Jobs Initiative in 1995, a commitment to invest more than \$25 million over eight years in demonstration projects aimed at creating or improving access to good jobs for disadvantaged young job seekers. The Foundation defines "good jobs" as, at minimum, those paying \$7 to \$8 per hour and offering career advancement opportunities and adequate benefits. The Initiative specifically targets post-high-school-age young adults (between the ages of 18 and 35) who are low-income single-parent mothers, members of working two-parent families, and minority males.

The Jobs Initiative targets six cities: Denver, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Seattle. In each city, Development Intermediaries submitted Strategic Investment Plans in December 1996 for applying Foundation resources, with the proviso that any single project be part of an overarching plan. The plans aim to reform the multiple *systems*, public and private, that affect the creation of and access to decent jobs. As priority strategies, the plans: (1) target specific industry sectors with large numbers of entry-level jobs and prospects for career advancement; (2) emphasize employment brokering that links the target population with employers seeking workers; and (3) seek to link employment strategies more directly to local economic development and jobs creation initiatives.

Each Development Intermediary is targeting an Impact Community of 50,000 to 100,000 residents with a demonstrated need for good jobs, adequate incomes, and effective supportive services for young adults. Within each Impact Community, large numbers of young adult workers are attached to the labor force and work, but too often they are locked into jobs that offer a low quality of work life and fail to provide family-supporting incomes. For these workers, employment is generally entry-level and low-wage—and offering few, if any, benefits. Supervision may be inept or abusive, the location inconvenient, hours of work insufficient, opportunities for learning and advancement nonexistent, and the work itself dangerous, boring, or exhausting.

Young workers in these circumstances change jobs frequently in search of more congenial work or working conditions and more convenient locations, travel, and hours. Individually or as families, they may seek to enhance their household incomes by holding down two or more jobs or, in some cases, turning to the underground, perhaps illicit, economy.

Disadvantaged, young adult workers need "enrichment" experiences that go beyond the subjective working conditions or accumulating additional working hours in multiple low-wage jobs. Viable strategies are needed that help young workers advance into jobs with better wages and benefits and opportunities for careers.

The strategic challenge for Jobs Initiative sites is to enable disadvantaged, young adult workers to move beyond job readiness and placement in low-wage employment into dealing with what happens *after* employment in this first, lower tier of jobs:

- Can the jobs themselves be upgraded to provide "good" employment?
- If that is unlikely, can Jobs Initiative sites help young workers move out of entry-level jobs into good jobs and careers?
- Alternatively, can Jobs Initiative sites enrich the experience of low-wage jobs, making these stepping stones to better employment and careers, rather than millstones that lock incumbents in poverty-wage employment?

To provide input to the Jobs Initiative planning process, the Casey Foundation invited Jobs for the Future to undertake a reconnaissance of job retention and advancement strategies that could help disadvantaged young adults move from low-wage, entry-level employment to family-supporting jobs and careers. The charge to Jobs for the Future stems from an awareness by the Foundation and Jobs Initiative sites that providing "good" jobs for disadvantaged young adults requires new kinds of services in the labor and training markets. Particularly important are "back-end" or "post-placement" services that enable disadvantaged people to hold jobs and advance in careers.

The assignment to Jobs for the Future was to *review strategies and approaches to upgrading and career advancement for low-wage workers*. The purpose is to inform Jobs Initiative sites planning by providing:

1. A framework for thinking about job retention and advancement; and
2. Specific descriptions and examples of best practices in "job enrichment" that they may learn from and adapt in their strategic plans.¹

¹ This report uses the term "job enrichment" as a shorthand phrase for "ways to enrich the overall experience of working in low-wage, dead-end jobs in ways that enhance the ability of such jobholders to attain jobs paying at least \$7 to \$8 per hour, with decent benefits and family-supporting career potential."

Jobs for the Future convened a project team comprised of Richard Kazis, Basil J. Whiting, Judith Combes Taylor, and Katrina Buchau. Other staff with relevant knowledge and experience were consulted periodically. Marc Miller provided editorial services.

The reconnaissance began with a literature review that surveyed the traditional literature on employment and training for the disadvantaged, traditional industrial training literature, and the newer body of work on training networks and consortia. The project team also conducted over three dozen telephone interviews with policy analysts and practitioners in the fields of employment and training and welfare-to-work, as well as with representatives of various industry associations involved in workforce development efforts.

Throughout the reconnaissance, the team collected materials on innovative models or resources that could help Jobs Initiative sites. A limited number of field visits and personal interviews added depth on specific projects; project team members conducted interviews in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Sacramento, and Washington, DC.

Based on the first phase of its research, Jobs for the Future prepared a draft concept paper that categorized and discussed a broad range of promising practices in job enrichment for disadvantaged young adults. That draft formed the basis for a facilitated meeting of Casey Foundation staff, Jobs Initiative project staff, Jobs for the Future's project team, and selected outside experts (see Appendix C for a list of attendees). Held in Baltimore on March 7, 1997, the meeting gave Foundation and Jobs Initiative site staff the opportunity to review and respond to the direction and findings of the project at its mid-point. This review guided subsequent activities, including the preparation of this report.

The central elements of this report are:

- A *conceptual model* of career advancement in low-wage sectors and, drawn from that, a set of *categories* of techniques, approaches, and services that can facilitate such career advancement;
- A *listing* of relevant techniques, approaches, and services organized by these categories;
- *Closing observations on the March 7 meeting* and Jobs Initiative site priorities; and
- *Case studies* of promising retention and advancement strategies in the hospitality and health industries.

Jobs for the Future has sought out, described, and categorized a broad range of labor market and training initiatives that are trying to help people move from poor to good jobs. This report includes strategies that are in development as well as those that currently operating. It is no way intended to be definitive. Rather, it is a first cut at helping Jobs Initiative sites organize their thinking, connect to sources of information on a wide variety of relevant experiences from ongoing practice, and develop their own strategies and project designs. It is meant as the beginning of a road map for sites. Categories, specific examples, and even the framework itself are likely to require refinement as sites head down the road of focusing not just on job access but on the critical challenges of retention and advancement.

I. The Need for Better Career Advancement Policies

For those unable to move directly from high school to a four-year college, the traditional path of career mobility during much of the twentieth century involved starting at the bottom, climbing internal career ladders, and attaining credentials leading to higher status, family-supporting work. Many people following this path benefited from enough support from earnings, contributions by extended families, and government programs (e.g., the G.I. Bill) to enable them to secure further education and training, often at night and over a period of several years. In the post-World War II decades, high-paying, relatively low-skill jobs in manufacturing and construction were relatively plentiful, and for those who could break into the primary labor market, employer/employee attachments were fairly stable and long-term. In this environment, millions of American workers and their families joined the middle class.

The labor market has changed. Decently paying low-skill work has become more difficult to find, given the stagnation of manufacturing employment, the sharp decline in unionization, deregulation in many industries, the introduction of new technologies, and the reorganization of work. Contingent employment offering fewer benefits and less-than-full-time jobs has grown rapidly. Aggravating the situation, the "hurdle bar" has risen, even for entry into starting jobs in many occupations and industries.² Most low-wage jobs now require basic literacy, numeracy, and communication and teamwork skills, as well as familiarity with computers.

At the same time, "work your way up" internal career ladders have collapsed in many industries in which they had once been strong. Moreover, many industries that are growing rapidly have no tradition of advancement from within. Instead, they hire from outside for mid-level career jobs, looking for experience and educational credentials obtained elsewhere.

The collective impact of these changes on the wages and employment of less-skilled workers has been profound. Prospects for advancement for entry-level workers have weakened: rungs have been eliminated and the distance between rungs has widened. The high-wage, low-skill jobs and family supports that previously enabled many low-skilled individuals to advance over time through skill development and seniority have eroded. Traditional career paths upward depend more and more on prior education and work

² Harry Holzer. 1996. *What Employers Want: Job Prospects for Less-Educated Workers*. New York: Russell Sage.

experience. As the demand for low-skill workers has weakened, the earnings of individuals, particularly of younger workers, with a high school diploma or less have retreated disastrously.

In this environment, employment and training policy that emphasizes short-term intervention and ends with placement in a low-wage job is inadequate and inappropriate. More attention must be paid to helping lower-skill and disadvantaged populations stay in and move up in the labor market, not just secure an entry-level job. In effect, new career ladders must be built, involving partnerships between individual firms, consortia of firms in the same industry, or across industries, catalyzed by public resources and new forms of intermediaries.

Unfortunately, only rarely has public policy in the United States emphasized upgrading and career advancement for workers already in the labor market. For decades, employment and training policy has focused on placing people in jobs. The limits on post-placement services are especially strict under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Upgrading and career advancement are presumed to be the province of individuals and employers, not public policy. For their part, employers, especially private employers, spend most of their training dollars on skill development and upgrading for managerial and professional employees.

In fact, the bias of public policy *against* long-term training and supports that can move individuals up to higher-paying, more stable employment has intensified in recent years (although, this trend has also opened up some avenues for funding support services, on-the-job training, and other efforts targeted to employed low-income individuals). The disappointing performance of most federal employment and training programs for the disadvantaged (coupled with the political weakness of the poor) made Labor Department training programs vulnerable to budget cutting by Congress. JTPA funding, particularly for youth programming, has been reduced significantly. Less money is available for long-term programming, even for those who need serious skill enhancement before they can hold a job.

Welfare reform also has dramatically changed public policy in this area. "Human capital" approaches that emphasize long-term training have fallen out of favor, replaced by an emphasis on "work first," i.e., getting people into jobs rather than giving them a lot of pre-employment services. Based on some evidence that quick job placement can benefit a segment of the welfare population, as well as the fiscal imperatives of getting recipients off the rolls, federal and state policymakers now structure incentives and resource streams to promote rapid job placement and, to some extent, support services such as daycare and transportation that can help individuals stay on the job when personal or other troubles arise.

In this environment, community-based employment and training providers and others working with disadvantaged populations face new challenges. The evolving system will make it more difficult to provide stand-alone educational services for welfare recipients and disadvantaged males. At the same time, however, by emphasizing work as the way to advance, policy is redirecting attention to the challenges of keeping a job and advancing out of dependence through improved work situations. This may be an auspicious time to craft innovative approaches to career advancement, more in keeping with the realities of today's labor markets and policy climate.

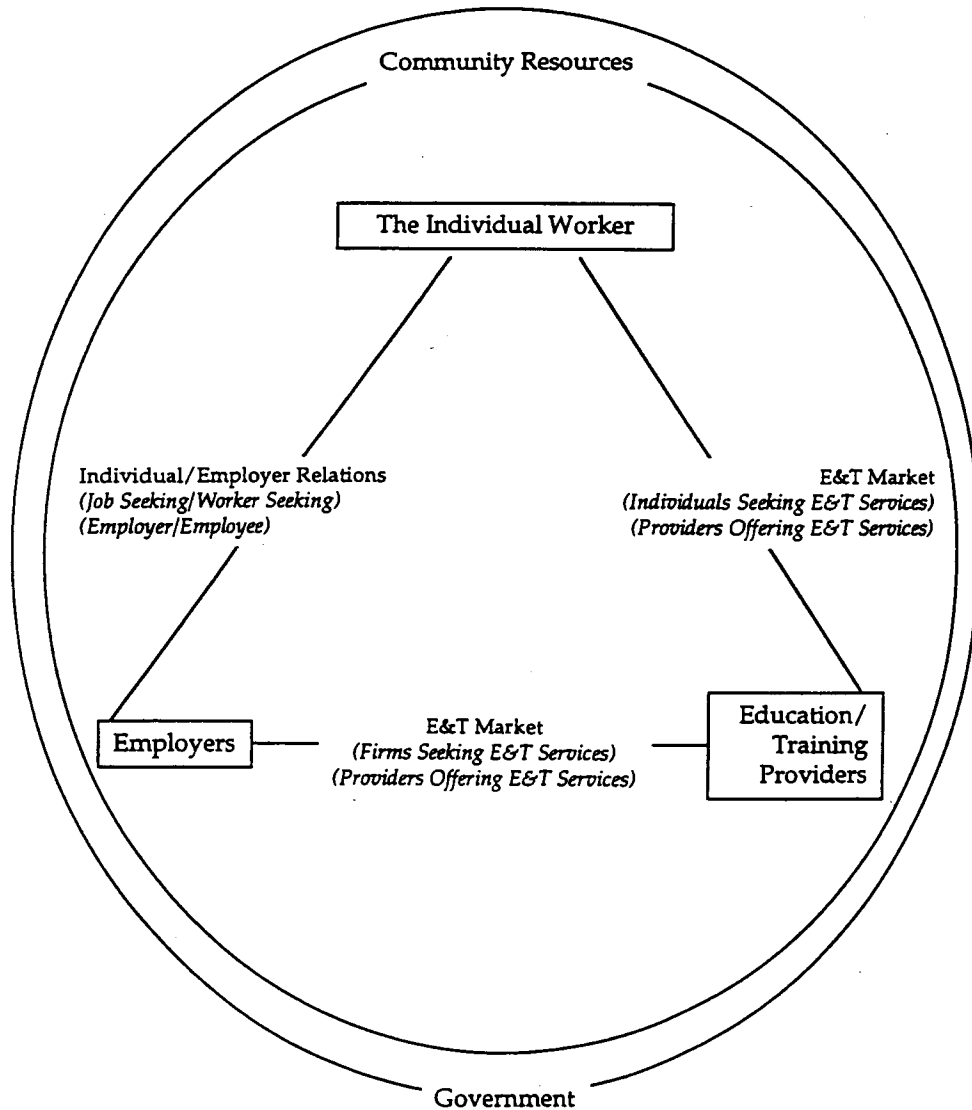
In addition to the signals from state and federal policy, there are other reasons why job retention and advancement issues are coming more to the fore. For example, retention and advancement are becoming more salient for employers of low and higher skilled workers. In the current tight labor market, the costs of recruiting, hiring, and training new workers is rising. Moreover, with the growing complexity of technology, employers are beginning to spend more on the training and skill development even of their front-line workforce.

From society's point of view as well, a focus on upgrading and career advancement makes sense. Low-wage low-skill work does not pay enough to keep individuals and their families out of poverty and dependence. The federal "safety net" provides insufficient protection to enable those who want to work to escape poverty through work in the low-skill, low-wage labor market. Without real opportunities to advance, welfare reform and "work first" strategies will unravel. Moreover, if rebuilding career ladders makes it possible for many at the bottom to move up, they will relieve the oversupply of low-skill workers at the bottom of the labor market, making it possible for others to climb on the first rung.

A new focus on upgrading, rather than initial job access, requires new tools and resources. Short-term interventions designed to ready the hard-to-employ for initial placements will not suffice. As Alan Zuckerman, head of the National Youth Employment Coalition, notes, "Anyone thinking that short-term, limited efforts will work is kidding themselves—and their clients." Moreover, new approaches and tools that help employers provide or participate in career upgrading strategies for their own workforce will be critical. As the focus on policy and practice shift to issues of learning and supports *at and around work*, rather than before it, new relationships between training providers, employers, and individuals will be necessary.

What is needed, says Zuckerman, is not a new bureaucratic "system." Rather, he advocates "a nerve center for a set of services in the community," a "place where young workers—and employers—can turn for advice and assistance," a place that mobilizes, links, and brokers a full range of community resources so that those who try to enter the workforce, those trying to move up, and

Figure 1: Relationships that Affect Job Retention and Advancement Options



The challenge for policymakers and Jobs Initiative sites is to identify the most promising opportunities and those that third parties can most effectively influence by aggregating interests, changing cost/benefit calculations, or strengthening bilateral and multilateral relationships. This report focuses on skill development more than other needs and supports that must be part of a viable job retention and career advancement effort. Its framework, and the resource list that builds from it (see Chapter 4), could be expanded to include other equally important aspects of these relationships.

Options that Might Be Available to the Primary Actors

All three primary actors can take actions that result in young workers' advancing in their careers and attaining family-supporting incomes. Some of the actions might be taken unilaterally; others through bilateral, or trilateral, relationships among the primary actors.

Individual Workers

In American society, every individual is expected to take responsibility for his or her success in life. Individuals are responsible for planning their futures, keeping their eyes open for advancement possibilities, and improving their ability to compete for better jobs. They can unite with others to take advantage of services and opportunities as members of groups, but choice and primary responsibility rest with the individual.

As individuals, people could pursue a range of strategies to better position themselves to advance in their working lives to higher paying and more satisfying employment (see Table 1A). For example, they might try to increase the hours they work or move from temporary, casual, or part-time work to full-time, permanent work. They could also claim public or other subsidies established for those with low incomes (e.g., food stamps, Earned Income Tax Credits) or for training and education (e.g., Pell Grants and deductions for training expenses). Or they could draw on a range of community and employer resources (such as child care, public transportation, and other services that help people function effectively) to meet personal and family needs that would impede their ability to attend and perform at work.

Barriers Affecting the Actions Open to Individuals: However, many factors limit the ability of any individual to take such actions. The challenges may be especially daunting to those from severely disadvantaged backgrounds.

To begin with, individual low-wage workers may not know how to assess their own career potential and education or training deficits—or how to write a résumé or design an "individual development plan." They may be unaware of sources of information on education and training either through their

employer or externally in the community. They may be unaware of career ladders or other promotional opportunities with their employer—let alone in other, better jobs, whether locally or elsewhere.

Even workers who are aware of advancement opportunities may not know how best to approach or apply for them. Further, financial, geographic, family, cultural, psychological, or other circumstances may hinder their ability to take advantage of opportunities.

Table 1A

To advance their income and career, low-wage, young adult workers could:

- Claim Earned Income Tax Credits
- Move from temporary or casual work to a permanent job
- Move to full-time hours, with benefits, with current or different employer
- Join a union that would improve their wages and benefits
- Use employer or community resources (such as child care, social services, public transportation, and substance-abuse services) to meet personal and family needs and improve their ability to keep a job or advance
- Use flex-time, if available, to meet such needs and facilitate job retention and advancement
- Plan for self-advancement by:
 - * Seeking mentoring from peers and senior coworkers
 - * Seeking information and advice from coworkers and union, employer, family, community, and government resources
 - * Improving education, skills, attitudes, and credentials from resources in the firm or the community
 - * Seeking and using public and other education and training subsidies or loans
 - * Seeking a job with better pay, benefits, or learning opportunities, whether with the current employer, elsewhere in the same occupation or sector, or in the general labor market

Employers

Employers also can engage in many activities that could improve the income and career status of low-wage, young adult workers (see Table 1B). Employers could increase wages and hours and maintain positive labor relations (with or without a union). They could design jobs and human resource policies so that jobs present workers with multiple learning opportunities, with the work performed through team structures and pay based on skills learned. They could provide good training for supervisors and charge them with developing the skills of subordinates. They could offer career guidance and opportunities, internally and externally, for employee education and training.

And, as appropriate, employers could band together into networks and consortia to undertake these functions.

Barriers Affecting the Actions Open to Employers: Few employers—particularly of low-skill workers—provide the state-of-the-art array of human resource policies and practices listed in Table 1B. Supervisors may be ill-trained in the arts of developing subordinates. Training for workers may be limited to casual, “Joe will show you,” approaches. In-house employee services may be limited or non-existent.

Small and medium-sized employers may have little knowledge of the providers of education and training, child care, or social and other employee services in their vicinity, or they may be uncomfortable in approaching these agencies. In contrast, large firms usually mount a roster of such services in-house. Similarly, small and medium-sized employers may be unaware of the availability of job-creation, wage, or training subsidies or reluctant to use them because they detest the government “red tape” that they presume accompanies such programs.

Even if employers belong to local trade associations, such groups typically limit their agendas to lobbying for a particular industry or community. Employers may have little experience in collaborating with other employers (including possible competitors) on training and other potential joint needs, despite the emergence of a significant body of experience on the benefits of employer consortia or networks.

Competitive pressures, which may inhibit an employer from cooperating with others, actually push firms in contradictory directions. On the one hand, cost-cutting measures are thinning, and reducing the functions of, middle management, which could organize and deliver effective on-the-job training and support services. Yet competitive pressures also call for businesses to invest time and resources in reducing costly turnover and upgrading employee skills to boost productivity and improve the quality of products or services.

Table 1B

To advance the income and careers of low-wage, young adult workers, employers could:

- Shift the job mix toward more full-time, permanent work
- Design jobs with multiple learning opportunities
- Use teams
- Maintain state-of-the-art human resources practices for all employees, including:
 - * Flex-time
 - * Internal career ladders
 - * Performance evaluations
 - * Making subordinate development part of supervisors' job descriptions
 - * Offering mentoring services
 - * Offering career guidance and advancement services, such as information on internal and external career education and training opportunities
- Provide education and training, including credentialing, by:
 - * Maintaining internal education and training capacity
 - * Seeking out and engaging external education and training providers
 - * Using available government supports and subsidies for education and training
 - * Providing full employee-assistance and service programs from internal or community and government sources (e.g., family leave, child care, substance abuse prevention/treatment, and other services workers need for performing effectively)
 - * Join with other firms in networks or consortia on a sectoral or geographic basis to facilitate education and training and provide employee benefits and services, including transportation to work

Education and Training and Other Service Providers

Many education and training providers, especially community colleges and the industrial extension centers of four-year colleges, are beginning to more aggressively pursue the agenda outlined in Table 1C. To be sure, a number of postsecondary institutions have experience in short-term training for incumbent workers. Also, some experience has been gained under federally funded workplace literacy and basic education programs for providing adult basic education, through firms or networks of firms, for workers who need to upgrade basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Barriers Affecting the Actions Open to Service Providers: Far too many colleges at all levels are reluctant to embrace roles that extend beyond traditional course catalogs offering on-campus courses or traditional lecture-based pedagogy in accordance with academic-year schedules. Moreover, postsecondary institutions, particularly four-year schools, tend to focus on

high-end skills associated with adapting workforces to advanced workplace technologies.

In general, rising costs in the low-productivity education and training sector, combined with cut-backs in government funding for postsecondary education, impede the efforts of educational institutions to develop and exploit incumbent worker markets. Similarly, community-based education and training providers are funded primarily to prepare the unemployed and to facilitate initial placements; they lack the resources to extend their services to low-wage incumbent workers. Partly for this reason, community agencies generally have little experience working directly with employers.

Table 1C

To advance the income and career of low-wage, young adult workers, education and training and other service providers could:

- Target low-wage incumbent workers
- Target small and medium-sized firms
- Establish close liaisons with general or sectoral employer associations
- Establish close liaisons with unions
- Offer diagnostic services to identify workplace needs for education and training
- Organize employer networks and consortia for education and training
- Tailor basic education, ESL, and diploma/GED programs to these markets
- Tailor specific skills-upgrading programs to the needs of employers, employees, and new technologies
- Combine the above into Associate Degree programs or occupational and professional credentialing programs
- Use state-of-the-art, contextual, applied pedagogy and technology
- Obtain or broker government and other subsidies to providers, employers, or workers to defray the cost of education and training
- Offer education and training services at times and that are:
 - * At the work site or a convenient central location
 - * During convenient hours (e.g., weekends or the end or beginning of the workday)

The Context of Government and Community Resources

The relationships among individuals, employers, and service providers are shaped by both government action and community resources.

Government Resources

Sometimes government can help young adults in low-wage jobs (see Table 2A), but government programs—particularly education and training subsidies to the primary actors—are limited in nature and scale. Upgrading and career advancement have never been a major component of national education and training policy or practice. In recent decades, such programs have generally been part of anti-poverty policy rather than of economic development.

Table 2A

To advance the income and career of low-wage young adult workers, government could:

- Regulate the terms and conditions of employment
- Facilitate or regulate collective bargaining relationships
- Operate or regulate labor market matching mechanisms
- Offer income subsidies to individuals (e.g., food stamps and Earned Income Tax Credits)
- Offer wage subsidies to employers (e.g., job-creation tax credits)
- Offer education and training subsidies to individuals (e.g., income tax deductions and direct subsidies like Pell grants)
- Offer training subsidies to employers (e.g., state training subsidies funded by unemployment insurance surcharges)
- Offer services or service subsidies that facilitate retaining and advancing in jobs (e.g., child care and social services)

Community Resources

Funding limitations impede the ability of community resources to provide disadvantaged young adults with the services in Table 2B. First of all, the amount of funding for these services is modest. Just as important, legislation and policy frequently target funds to the unemployed or the very poor.

Further, both government and community agencies frequently do too little to reach either young workers or their employers so that even existing services may be underutilized. Individual or employers may not take advantage of the opportunities either from sheer lack of knowledge about them or because the programs are not presented in a "user friendly" way. For example, programs might require, or even appear to involve, the "red tape" that firms and workers both detest.

Table 2B

The following types of community resources could advance the income and career of low-wage young adult workers:

- Child care agencies
- Substance-abuse prevention and treatment agencies
- Social service agencies of various kinds
- Community development and community service agencies
- Recreational programs linked to employment
- Churches and other civic/community agencies

III. What the Primary Actors Need— and Vehicles for Providing That

The deficiencies of today's skeletal "system" for worker upgrading seem clear. The primary actors too rarely or too ineffectively take actions that could improve job retention and advancement for less-skilled, low-wage workers. In general, they lack the knowledge, skills, or resources—or the motivation—to do so. They perceive neither self-interest nor a likelihood of success in such actions. Moreover, the relationships among the primary actors are generally inadequately developed and exercised for effective upgrading. The internal and external labor markets do not work well for these purposes, and the linkages in the relevant education and training markets are poorly developed.

These shortcomings call for information, advice, and technical assistance, mainly to individual workers and employers—and to groups of similarly situated individuals and employers. Just as important, they also call for ways to broker, facilitate, and link services among the three primary actors.

For this project, we scouted and identified a number of organizations that are engaged in innovative efforts toward these two sets of needs—information and brokering. This chapter delineates the categories of services or supports that can help primary actors play a more effective role in career advancement. It is offered as a framework for helping Jobs Initiative sites think about opportunities, limits to existing opportunities, and both barriers to and directions for innovation.

This framework is a map in progress, one that will require sharpening and rethinking with time and use. Some categories may not hold up in the long run. It is intended, and most useful, as the "just-in-time" input that Jobs Initiatives sites seek for their strategic planning processes, suggesting leverage points for improving retention and advancement strategies and differentiating among them. It provides a wealth of specific resources for Jobs Initiative sites to contact.

Strategies for Improving Job Retention and Advancement

Tables 3A, 3B, and 3C summarize the results of our field research and our efforts to categorize *services* and *intermediaries* that could help improve job retention and advancement for the Jobs Initiative target population.

The first table describes services for individual workers. Our research suggests that these fall into four general categories:

- Job retention services;
- Career management services;
- Knowledge/skill development; and
- Financial support for, or advice on, career advancement.

Table 3A	
Components of Strategies to Improve Job Retention and Career Advancement: Services for Individual Workers	
<u>Job Retention Services</u>	
•	Orientation to work/occupation/employer cultures
•	On-the-job conflict resolution
•	Support, encouragement, and advice from counselors, buddies, mentors, peer groups, and supervisors
•	Personal and family supports—child care, health care, transportation, case management of social and other services
<u>Career Management Services</u>	
•	Assessment of skills, knowledge, experience, interests, and goals
•	Career advice, planning, and guidance
•	Labor market information on alternative jobs, community career ladders, etc.
•	Education and training market information on providers, courses, credentials, costs, etc.
•	Advancement skills (e.g., networking, interviewing, résumés)
•	Prompting, monitoring, check-ins, oversight, reminders
<u>Knowledge/Skill Development</u>	
•	Basic and advanced academics
•	Technical skills
•	“Soft skills”
•	Understanding of large, complex systems and events
•	Credentials for all of the above
<u>Financial Support for, or Advice on, Career Advancement</u>	
•	Claiming Earned Income Tax Credit
•	Tuition reimbursement, education/training grants/subsidies, etc.

Table 3B describes services that employers need. These fall into three general categories:

- Organizing employers for collective activities;

- Brokering services to employers; and
- Technical assistance and advice.

Table 3B	
Components of Strategies to Improve Job Retention and Career Advancement: Services Needed by Employers	
<u>Organizing</u>	
•	Casual work into firms, cooperatives, hiring halls, temporary staffing organizations, labor exchanges
•	Employers into networks and consortia for education and training (e.g. sector networks, geographic networks)
•	Employers and others into formal or informal community career ladders
•	Union-employer networks (e.g., construction pre-apprenticeships, hospitality industry networks)
<u>Brokering</u>	
•	Employers and networks to education and training providers
•	Employers and networks to sources of training subsidy
•	Employers and networks to transportation, child care, and social and other services
<u>Technical Assistance and Advice On</u>	
•	Returns on investment in training
•	Mentoring and supervisor roles in developing subordinates and training supervisors and mentors
•	Education and training: assessing internal needs, designing internal employee development policies and practices, staffing and programming (e.g., on the job, classroom training), tuition reimbursement programs
•	Work design: jobs with learning opportunities, team structures, internal career ladders
•	Full, modern human resources practices to enable job retention and career advancement (e.g., skill-based pay, benefits, career guidance, flex-time, supportive services)
•	Claiming Earned Income Tax Credit

Table 3C describes services needed by education and training and other service providers. In this important area of leverage and influence, third-party intermediaries can be of great value by strengthening the connections among providers, employers, and individuals. Because our field reconnaissance capacity was limited, we leave the issue of how intermediaries can aggregate the interests of training and service providers as a fruitful area for further research and data collection. Thus, Chapter 4, which lists “best

practices," does not include examples of these services, which fall into three general categories:

- Organizing;
- Brokering; and
- Technical assistance and advice.

Table 3C
Components of Strategies to Improve Job Retention and Career Advancement: Services Needed by Education and Training and Other Service Providers
<u>Organizing</u>
• Into networks and consortia to better serve employers and incumbent workers
<u>Brokering</u>
• To link more effectively to employers, incumbent workers, unions, and sources of education and training grants and subsidies
<u>Technical Assistance and Advice On</u>
• State-of-the art, contextual, applied pedagogy and learning technology
• Tailoring education and training services to the needs of low-wage incumbent worker and employer markets in terms of offerings, location, and timing

Intermediaries as Community "Nerve Centers"

In categorizing the components of job retention and advancement strategies, we do not deal with the question of *who* or *what organization* should provide a particular service. There appear to be two answers to that question:

In some instances, one of the primary actors can receive services from another primary actor.

Hence, individual young workers can receive some or all of the indicated broad categories of services from employers or education and training providers. Or employers can receive organizing, brokering, or advice and technical assistance from education and training providers. Community colleges and business service programs of colleges are well-positioned to provide such services and some do.

However, as noted above, many employers in the low-wage sectors lack the knowledge or resources to provide the upgrading services young workers need. And many education and training providers have yet to offer organizing, brokering, and technical assistance to employers, particularly to the low-wage sector, although they frequently provide some career guidance to enrolled students or trainees, who may or may not be young adult workers.

This leads to the second option:

Intermediary organizations can serve as effective, efficient providers of information, service, and brokering.

Such intermediary organizations stand between, and provide services to, the primary actors and facilitate or broker them into new relationships. Such intermediaries can also facilitate the effective use of government and community resources (see Figure 2).

Several kinds of intermediary organization might play this role. These could be existing organizations or new entities. Chapter IV specifies a number of examples, which fit within the following general types of institution:

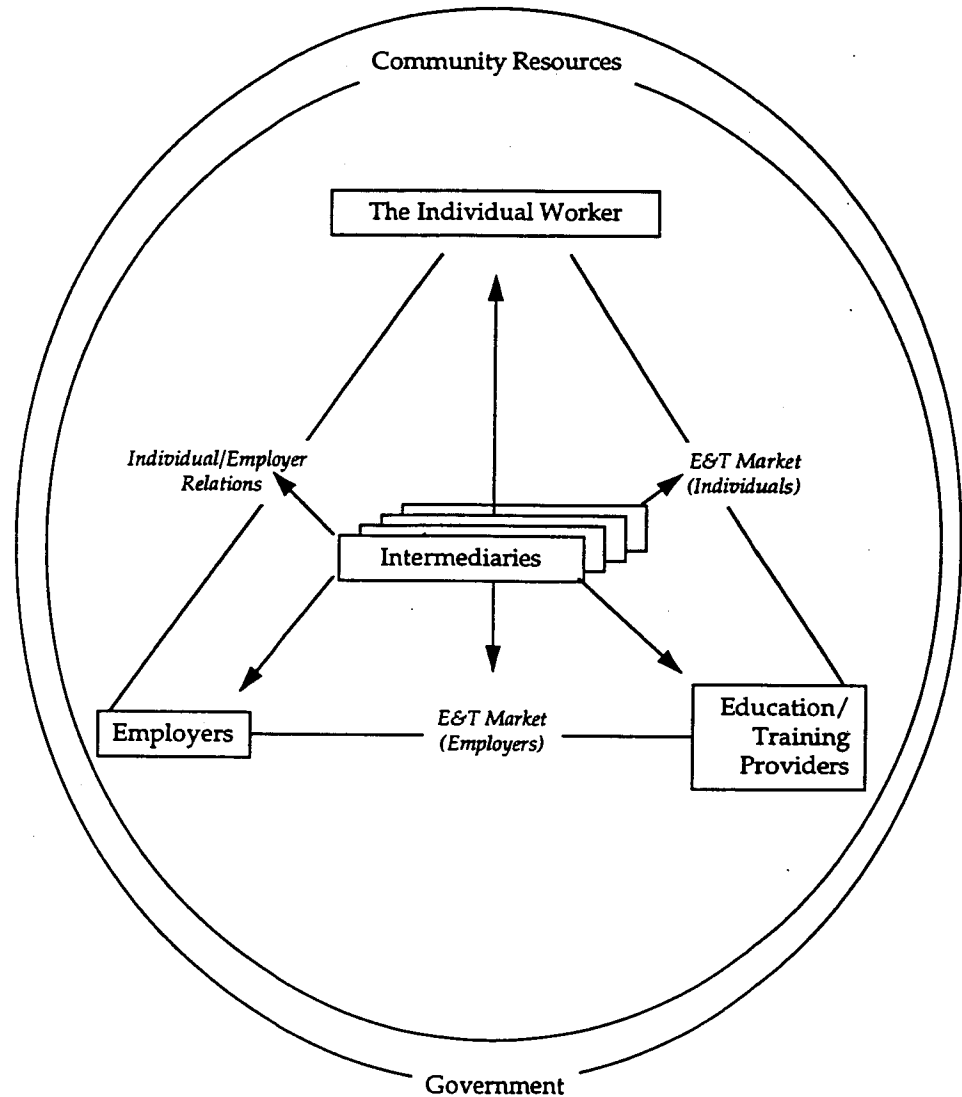
- *A Private Industry Council (PIC)*, or an education and training provider it works with, could extend its present functions to include career advancement if funded for more extensive post-placement services to individuals or advisory services to employers. The human resource development or workforce development councils/boards springing up across the nation to replace and broaden PICs might do so as well.
- *An employer organization with a multisectoral membership*—such as a Chamber of Commerce or a Business and Industry Association—might play such a role, as could consortia, networks, or associations organized to serve specific sectors or occupations.
- *Community-based organizations* or other social service or government bodies could play an intermediary role for some activities and actors.
- *Unions* are natural intermediaries in the employer/employee relationship. They usually work to improve wages and working conditions, and a number of them have a broad vision of how to serve their members, for instance, by organizing consortia of employers of low-wage workers and linking them to education and training providers.
- *A new organization might be created to provide young workers with the services listed in Table 3A.* As a variant of a career advancement or career resource center, an entity could offer services to workers who would enroll for a prolonged time (one to three or more years), until they are in full-time postsecondary education or a career ladder job with family-supporting pay and benefits. With appropriate resources, such an organization could be created from scratch. More likely, an existing community-based, job-preparation organization would graft

services onto a program now funded to provide "front end" preparation and placement services to the unemployed. The organization would extend its reach into a more prolonged post-employment period than present funding allows in order to assure greater job retention and eventual career advancement.

- *Another kind of new organization might be created specifically to assist low-wage employers, perhaps along the model of the successful Manufacturing Extension Partnerships (MEPs). The Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology has set up 78 MEPs with 300 staffed field offices. They assist the efforts of mainly small and medium-sized manufacturers to upgrade the skills of employees to use the advanced technologies that MEPs help bring into workplaces. A single organization in a community could provide the full array of employer services listed in Table 3B, although it is more likely that a number of employer-oriented institutions would each provide some of these services to clusters of employers, either major firms and supplier networks or networks of firms in the same sector.*

In any given community, the mix of intermediaries and the roles of each are important issues to work through on a local basis. Intermediaries will succeed or fail based on their credibility and value for different actors and will vary greatly from one community to the next, based on past experience, existing networks and institutions, and other factors. This arena—the structure, roles, methods, and economics of intermediaries—deserves further research from the Jobs Initiative perspective.

Figure 2: Role of Intermediaries in Improving Prospects for Career Advancement



IV. Models from the Field

This chapter presents the fruits of our field research: an annotated listing of specific techniques and services for improving job retention and advancement that Jobs Initiative sites might want to explore further and adapt. Jobs Initiatives planners can use this material as:

1. A *framework* to react to, argue with, and use to push their own thinking about how they might approach job retention and advancement;
2. A *work in progress* providing an initial guide to innovative projects and practices. Keep in mind that this is uncharted territory, and such efforts are quite difficult to root out and find.

The chapter focuses on the second purpose. It is based on what we could cull in a short period of time with limited resources, and it places the emphasis on specificity rather than comprehensiveness. The listing is intended for Jobs Initiative sites to *use*, and for that reason, we devoted a great deal of effort to providing accurate contacts for getting more information. It highlights specific practices and innovative community level strategies and projects.

The headings follow the framework presented in Chapter 3 but emphasize the perspective of Casey Jobs Initiative site planners, who seek options for action. It focuses first on *services targeted to individuals* that could improve job retention and help individuals "manage" their careers more effectively, build knowledge and skills, and increase income and affordability of services. It then turns to *services targeted to employers*, including: organizing employers in ways that aggregate interests, increase information flows, and lower risks and costs to individuals employers; brokering relationships between employers and education and training providers, funding sources, and employment-related support services; and technical assistance to employers on human resource, work organization, and other challenges affecting the prospects of low-skill, entry-level employees.

Because of limited resources and a lack of initial success in identifying promising practices, the listings do not extend to the third category of primary actor, *education and training and other workforce and workplace development services*. Further research and data collection are encouraged.

Efforts of Jobs Initiative sites are not included here, but much can be learned from their early activities. In an October 1997 meeting, Jobs Initiative sites discussed strategies they are using to help promote job retention and advancement. Blair Forlaw, of the East-West Gateway Coordinating Council,

grouped these strategies into those that target workers, employers, and education and service providers through defining desired outcomes, designing innovative approaches, and institutionalizing changes. Table 4 summarizes both this framework and the directions being pursued by Jobs Initiative sites.

	<u>Organizing</u>	<u>Employers</u>	<u>Systems</u>
<u>Defining</u>	job tenure, wages advancement	"beating the average" outcomes of other	jobs targets in non-traditional programs
<u>Designing</u>	innovative skill training, coaches, hot lines	coaching, training, trial placements	"systems-based" interventions in non-employment and training systems (e.g., drug court)
<u>Institutionalizing</u>	outcome-based contracting with retention targets	saved turnover costs reinvested in retention programs	policy incentives and administrative coordination

The listings are of two types, integrated under the relevant categories:

1. *Specific examples* of programs and models, including one or more organizations offering or using them and a contact for more information; and
2. *Information and resources* regarding techniques, approaches, and services. In general, we culled such entries from literature searches or from written materials gathered from site visits and interviews.

This "menu" could be organized along other useful dimensions. An obvious one is by industrial sector. Different sectors have their own histories, labor market dynamics, and hiring, recruitment, and advancement patterns. We chose not to treat sectors separately, in part because many approaches are common across sectors or are designed explicitly to link different sectors in new partnerships. The brief descriptions clearly note the sector for each item listed.

Similarly, this approach does not capture distinctions between efforts that are organized sectorally, those that are focused occupationally (e.g., office workers across sectors), and those that are more geographic in approach (e.g., community career ladder ideas). These distinctions are also worth noting and have significant implications for strategy, priorities, and staffing decisions.

Finally, as in any categorization, the listings separate techniques, approaches, and services in ways rarely found in local practice. An intermediary

organization at the local level is likely to engage in a range of activities, as will Jobs Initiative sites. And local practitioners will "bundle" services and models that we isolate below in a vast number of ways. For this reason, the listings include examples of intermediaries whose efforts encompass a wide variety of approaches. In addition, several resources are listed more than once, under different categories.

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Services Targeted to Individuals

Intermediaries that Provide a Range of Job Advancement Services

- ♦ *Twin Cities RISE!* serves mainly men of color having serious problems finding and holding jobs, providing them with one to three years of comprehensive follow-up, reinforcement, and career advancement services. It works closely with employers. **Contact:** Steve Rothschild, President, 112 North 3rd St., Suite 500, Minneapolis, MN 55401; tel: 612-338-0295, fax: 612-338-0191
- ♦ *Moving Up Career Advancement Program, Vocational Foundation*, provides low-income young adults (17-24 years old) with job training and placement and two years of weekly job retention and career advancement counseling and comprehensive services in the hotel and hospitality field. **Contact:** Lorraine Jacobs, Vocational Foundation, 902 Broadway, New York, NY 10010; tel: 212-777-0700, fax: 212-673-8975
- ♦ *Cleveland Works and Columbus Works, Inc.*—Four-step programs for disadvantaged young people: (1) six weeks of full-time classroom training in job readiness, life management, and basic education; (2) four to fourteen weeks of concurrent education, employer-based occupational training, and work involving both voluntary work experience and paid transitional employment; (3) full-time permanent employment; (4) career development with postsecondary vocational education and volunteer service to the program and community alongside continued full-time employment. **Contacts:** David Hamilton, Columbus Works, 65 South 4th St., 2nd Floor, Columbus, OH 43215; tel: 614-224-8009, fax: 614-224-1552, and David B. Roth, Cleveland Works, The Caxton Office Building, 812 Huron Road, 8th Floor, Cleveland, OH 44115; tel: 216-589-9675, fax: 216-566-6980
- ♦ *Project Strive, East Harlem*, provides low-income young adults (18-25 years old) with both placement and extended (two years) post-placement comprehensive services stressing positive attitude development and including deep upgrading services applicable to Casey areas. **Contact:** Lorenzo Harrison, Deputy Executive Director, 1820 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10029; tel: 212-360-1100, fax: 212 360-5634
- ♦ *Laubach Literacy Center for Workforce Education* works with Depaul University to provide unemployed young adults (18-25 years old) with comprehensive services including job skills training, basic education, mentoring, and job placement in the environmental industry. **Contact:** Bill McVey, Director, 730 South Fairview Ave., Park Ridge, IL 60068-4748; tel: 847-825-0830, fax: 847-825-6878
- ♦ *Suburban Job-Link Corporation* connects residents of low-income, minority, inner-city neighborhoods with good suburban job opportunities using employment, work-readiness, and transportation services. The goal is to make opportunities in the regional economy accessible to inner-city residents. Its Job Oasis model, pioneered in 1995, puts a worker mobility center for inner-city residents in key suburban sites. The center offers shuttle transportation, general and specific work-readiness training, job search resources, and a home-away-from-home for job seekers. **Contact:** John Plunkett, Suburban Job-Link Corp., 2343 South Kedzie Ave., Chicago, IL 60623; tel: 773-522-8700, fax: 773-522-8098
- ♦ *Delivering Cost Effective Service*—This practical guide for workforce and workplace development providers contains descriptions and case studies of exemplary work-based programs and strategies. 100 pages, 1996, \$15.50 (inc. shipping). **Contact:** NAB Member Services; tel: 800-787-2848, fax: 202-289-1303 (general), fax: 301-206-9789 (purchase orders)

Job Retention Services: Orientation to Work Culture

- ♦ **Employer-Supported**
Pathways to Independence—Marriott Corporation's six-week pre-hire orientation and skill training program. **Contact:** Janet Tully, Marriott International, 1 Marriott Dr., Dept. 52-935.47, Washington, DC 20058; tel: 301-380-6896, fax: 301-380-1729. Also, see: "Donna Klein and Marriott International," a case study by the Business Enterprise Trust, Nr. 9-996-058, available from the trust at 204 Junipero Serra Blvd., Stanford, CA 94305; tel: 415-321-5100; or from Harvard Business School Publishing, Customer Service Department, 60 Harvard Way, Boston, MA 02163, tel: 800-545-7685

Job Retention Services: On-the-Job Conflict Resolution

- ♦ **Training Modules in Communication and Conflict Resolution**
Conflict-resolution strategies for racially and ethnically diverse people and paraprofessionals in geriatric care from the Stanford Geriatric Education Center. **Contact:** Dr. Gwen Yeo, 703 Welch Road, Suite H1, Stanford, CA 94305; tel: 415-723-7063, fax: 415-723-9692

Job Retention Services: Motivation, Support

Peer Support Meetings

* *For home health aides* to develop skills for resolving problems with clients and receive support and information. **Contact:** Ms. Wanda Pruitt, Partners in Care, 350 Fifth Ave., Room 437, New York, NY 10118; tel: 212-290-3000 ext. 3140

* *Working it Out: Support Groups for Nursing Assistants.* **Contact:** Mary Ann Wilner 387 Sixth St., Brooklyn, NY 11215; tel: 718-965-1337, fax: 718-965-1332

- ♦ **Information About Support Groups in Home Health Care**
The Iowa Caregivers Association has established caregiver support groups for direct care paraprofessionals in locations throughout Iowa. **Contact:** Diane Findley, Director, 1117 Pleasant St., Suite 221, Des Moines, IA 50309; tel: 515-241-8697, fax: 515-241-5038

Job Retention Services: General Support Services

- ♦ **Transportation Assistance**
Bridges to Work—This R&D project administered by Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) with HUD funding provides targeted commuting service connecting inner-city workers to otherwise inaccessible suburban job locations, along with placement and on-the-job retention services (counseling, child care, etc.). Cities are Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Milwaukee, and St. Louis. **Contact:** Beth Palubinsky, P/PV, One Commerce Sq., 2005 Market St., Suite 900, Philadelphia, PA 19103; tel: 215-557-4400, fax: 215-557-4469
- ♦ **Legal Assistance**
Cleveland Works provides criminal and civil legal assistance for low-income clients to clear records and dispose of problems that otherwise interfere with the ability to get and keep jobs. **Contact:** David Roth, Executive Director, The Caxton Building, 812 Huron Rd., 8th Floor, Cleveland, OH 44115; tel: 216-589-9675, fax: 216-566-6980
- ♦ **Advocacy Services**
Cooperative Home Health Care of Boston provides a client advocate who works with welfare offices to ensure that clients continue receiving the full range of services to which they are entitled during the early phase of employment. **Contact:** Seth Evans, 295 Huntington Ave., 2nd Floor, Suite 201, Boston, MA 02115; tel: 617-262-2422, fax: 617-262-2480

Career Management Services: Assessment of Skills

- ♦ **Skills Assessment/Development**
Twin Cities RISE! is using and improving the Advance Educational Spectrums, Inc., model for highly individualized skills assessment and skill building based on the 37 skills identified in the 1991 SCANS report. *Twin Cities RISE!* has feedback on its strengths and weaknesses. **Contact:** Steve Rothschild, President, 112 North 3rd St., Suite 500, Minneapolis, MN 55401; tel: 612-338-0295, fax: 612-338-0191

Career Management Services: Career Planning

- ♦ **Automated Case Management System**
Software for case management, career guidance, and tracking. **Contact:** Chuck Tetro, Training and Development Corporation, Career Advancement Services, Bucksport, ME 04416; tel: 207-469-6385, fax: 207-469-6348

Career Management Services: Information about Local Jobs that Advance Careers

- ♦ **Community Career Ladders**
This concept paper from the Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) in Madison rethinks career ladders in the context of community/regional labor markets. It discusses formalizing skill requirements of employers and skill assessments of community members, with training opportunities provided to close gaps between the two. **Contact:** Joel Rogers or Laura Dresser, tel: 608-263-2889, fax: 608-262-9046

Career Management Services: Career Advancement Skills (e.g., Networking)

- ♦ **Career Ladder/Minorities**
Recruitment and Retention Program for the dietetics profession is college level but seems to be a potentially transferable model. **Contact:** Lillie R. Williams, Nutritional Science, Howard University, Washington, DC 20059; tel: 202-806-6238, fax: 202-806-9233
- ♦ **Supportive Organizations for Career Advancement**
 - * *The National Association of Black Hospitality Professionals* helps members find jobs from supervisory to general manager levels. **Contact:** NABH, P.O. Box 5443, Plainfield, NJ 07060; tel: 908-354-5117
 - * *The National Society of Minority Hoteliers* is dedicated to advancing the careers of African Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. **Contact:** Hospitality Association, 225 Eppley Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1121; tel: 517-355-5420
 - * *The National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners*, with over 600 members, seeks to increase management opportunities for African Americans. **Contact:** NCBMP, 8630 Fenton St., Suite 126, Silver Spring, MD 20910; tel: 202-628-3952, fax: 301-588-0011

Career Management Services: Ongoing Check-ins, Reminders, Prompting, Monitoring Progress

- ♦ **Career Coaches/Mentors**
Twin Cities RISE! has developed an extensive process for assessing, hiring, and "launching" coaches for their clients. It is developing an extensive database to use in creating a comprehensive "coach profile." **Contact:** Steve Rothschild, President, 112 North 3rd St., Suite 500, Minneapolis, MN 55401; tel: 612-338-0295, fax: 612-338-0191

Knowledge/Skill Development: Academics

- ♦ **Alternative Education Programs (Youth) Working Closely with Employers**
The *Coalition of Alternative Schools* and the *Boston PIC* are collaborating to infuse school-to-career approaches (work-based learning, career paths, etc.) into schools that serve out-of-school youth. **Contact:** Susan Lang, PIC, 2 Oliver St., Boston, MA 02109; tel: 617-423-3755, fax: 617-423-1041
- ♦ **Workplace Literacy Programs**
 - * *First Chicago Corp.* is a public/private collaborative for adult literacy/basic skills for 900 incumbent workers through contextual curricula with SCANS skills. **Contact:** Tamara Baloun, 312-407-5195
 - * *Northeastern Illinois University*—Multi-site contextual basic skills, ESL, GED, SCANS training based on job/task analysis. **Contact:** Margaret Boyter-Escalona, Suite 420, Chicago Teacher's Center, 770 North Halsted, Chicago, IL 60622; tel: 312-733-7330, fax: 312-733-8188
 - * *Maryland Hospital Skills Enhancement Program*—Essex Community College in Baltimore serves 850 hospital workers in 13 hospitals with basic skills, SCANS skills, GED prep. **Contact:** Niki Amarantides, 2600 Liberty Heights Ave., Baltimore, MD 21215; tel: 410-383-4040, fax: 410-383-4583
 - * *Global 2000*—Consortium of eight high-tech, Boston-area manufacturers using employee involvement teams to stimulate and target workplace literacy and communications. It includes an adult diploma program. The Continuing Education Institute, a nonprofit consortium partner, delivers the training and education. **Contact:** Lloyd David, Continuing Education Institute, 108 Water St., Watertown, MA 02172; tel: 617-926-1864, fax 617-926-1865
 - * *Alpena Community College*, Michigan, has developed work-site literacy programs for employed individuals. The model is learner-driven, and the teacher becomes a facilitator encouraging workers to be responsible for their own learning. **See:** "Empowering Workplace Students: A Practitioner's Challenge," by Richard Lessard, 1995, (ERIC Accession Number ED382271), which describes how to structure a program that has the buy-in of all parties.
 - * *Food-processing industry* representatives and four Oregon community colleges developed an industry-specific curriculum including the 3Rs, ESL, Spanish for supervisors, communications, and several successful implementation models to fit different needs. **See:** "Food Processors Skills Building Project. Evaluation Report," by Eileen Casey White, 1994 (ERIC Accession Number ED379042)
- ♦ **Workplace Literacy Programs/Hotel and Food Service Industries**
"Basic Skills in the Hotel and Food Service Industries" lists 21 contacts and 9 references, with descriptions and contact information for each program, as well as prices for curricula if applicable. **Contact:** Business Council for Effective Literacy, tel: 212-512-2415 (ERIC Accession Number ED359332)
- ♦ **Workplace Literacy Programs/Multi-Industry**
Curriculum resources, primarily in health care, manufacturing, and textiles but also construction, metalworking, and waste handling, with industry, occupation, and union involvement. **See:** "Availability of Products from National Workplace Literacy Grants (1992-1993)," 1995, (ERIC Accession Number ED391095)
- ♦ **Math and Communication Skills/Manufacturing**
Curriculum developed by *Cuyahoga Community College's* Unified Technologies Center

- and three manufacturing companies. **See:** "Results-oriented Workplace Literacy Project," by Virginia Farrell, 1994, (ERIC Accession Number ED366759)
- ♦ **Establishing Training Programs for Employees**
How to Establish Basic Skills Training: seven steps to setting up training to support high performance goals, based on research and case studies. **See:** "It's Not Just Academic," by Mark Henricks in *Small Business Reports*, May 1994, p. 23
- ♦ **Programs Designed for Career Advancement**
 - * *Work in America Institute's* three-volume set, "Job-Linked Literacy: Innovative Strategies at Work," documents Job-Linked Literacy Programs (JLLPs) with reports and case studies. Volume 3, "Moving Ahead: Basic Skills for Career Advancement," focuses on JLLPs to qualify employees for promotion or professional advancement. Case studies include Associated Builders and Contractors, Alcoa/UAW, Briggs & Stratton Corp., Cape Cod Hospital, and the Consortium for Worker Education/Center for Advanced Study in Education. Also of interest are Volume 1, "Vestibule Training: Basic Skills for New Hires," and Volume 2, "Meeting the Challenge of Change: Basic Skills for a Competitive Workforce." Each volume is \$95, three-volume set, \$235. **Contact:** Work in America Institute, Inc., 700 White Plains Rd., Scarsdale, NY 10583; tel: 800-787-0707, fax: 914-472-9606
 - * *Community Colleges for International Development* and Electronic University Network entered into a joint venture to offer education and training on line through World Community College. **See:** "Worldwide Community College Links Employees to Training," *Personnel Journal*, February 1996, p. 32
- ♦ **Marketing Programs to Employees**
It is often difficult to recruit employees to *employer-supported literacy training*. For a discussion of tactics to overcome employee fears of revealing inadequacy, **see:** "Setting Up, Promoting Work Education Programs Requires Prodding," *Employment & Training Reporter*, 11/20/96, p. 260
- ♦ **Computer-Based Learning Software**
 - * *U.S. BASICS Learning System*—A programmed, basic education system developed with Ford Foundation funding for the "low end" of the basic education market of CBOs, JTPA, etc. Several hundred agencies, schools, and firms use it. **Contact:** Dennis Clune, U.S. BASICS, 505 Hampton Park Blvd., Suite D, Capitol Heights, MD 20743; tel: 301-324-3966. **Contacts using the system:** Faye Phillips, Saginaw OIC, 517-752-4158; Patricia Kelly, Oklahoma County OIC, 405-235-2651
 - * *Invest Learning*—Sells Jobs Skills Education Program, a highly sophisticated, state-of-the-art integrated basic skills system with 220 "prescriptions" for different industries. **Contact:** Lynnell Twiner, 9920 Pacific Heights Blvd., Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92121-4330; tel: 800-927-9997, ext. 5157, fax: 619-677-0586
- ♦ **Literacy Clearinghouses**
 - * *National Institute for Literacy*, 800 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20006; tel: 202-632-1500
 - * *National Clearinghouse for Literacy Education*, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037; tel: 202-429-9292, web site: www.cal.org/nclce
- ♦ **Opportunities for Minorities in Hospitality**
Inroads, Inc., in St. Louis is privately funded to support minorities through four years in college of hotel-management training. **See:** "Breaking Barriers," by Glenn Hasek, *Hotel & Motel Management*, Feb. 24, 1992, p. 21

Knowledge and Skill Development: Soft Skills

- ♦ **Teaching Basic Work Skills**
Strive, Inc.'s approach to preparing people for work dispenses with the "hard skills" that most job training programs stress and focuses on the values and behaviors of the work world. Participants learn to judge themselves through an employer's eyes. Genuinely respecting its clients, Strive insists that they live up to strict standards of maturity and responsibility. **Contact:** Lorenzo Harrison, Deputy Executive Director, 1820 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10029; tel: 212-360-1100, fax: 212-360-5634
- ♦ **Customer service training as a competitive advantage/retail**
Kmart has instituted an organization-wide program to train employees in, and reward them for, the transferable skill of customer service. **See:** "Corporate Spotlight, Kmart," *Incentive*, October 1994, p. 26
- ♦ **Workplace Skills Program/Hospitality**
Project Excel has developed instruction in skills essential for success in the San Francisco hotel industry, such as enabling workers to understand written work orders and communicate with supervisors and coworkers. The materials encourage team building and critical thinking. Several modules are available: drivers/delivery personnel (ERIC Accession Number 355839), hotel laundry (ED373599), room service (ED373607), stewarding (ED373606, ED 373608), and hotel housekeeping (ED 373610, ED373600, ED 373609). The Career Resources Development Center, San Francisco produced the modules.
- ♦ **Peer Meetings to Develop Skills**
 - * For home health aides to develop skills for resolving problems with clients and receive support, information. **Contact:** Ms. Wanda Pruitt, Partners in Care, 350 Fifth Ave., Room 437, New York, NY 10118; tel: 212-290-3000, ext. 3140
 - * "Working it Out: Support Groups for Nursing Assistants." **Contact:** Mary Ann Wilner 387 Sixth St., Brooklyn, NY 11215; tel: 718-965-1337, fax: 718-965-1332
- ♦ **Employer-Provided Training Center**
Eastman Kodak Learning Factory provides employees with basic skills, including computer, problem-solving, and communication skills, to work in manufacturing and have the opportunity to grow professionally. It is entirely computer-based and also provides access to the University of Illinois computer-learning network. **See:** "Workforce Obsolescence," by R. Bergstrom, *Production*, August 1993, p. 52
- ♦ **High Performance Skills**
Merex Corporation's skills enhancement training—To transform itself into a high-performance organization, a division of Motorola contracted with Merex to institute a program to develop employees' critical and creative thinking skills as well as team-based problem solving in order to take advantage of "the untapped resource of workforce diversity" and help workers become self-motivated learners. **See:** "Striving for Excellence: Final Report to SPD1 Motorola," available from Merex Corp., c/o Marketing Dept., 140 S. Ash Ave., Tempe, AZ 85281; tel: 602-921-7077
- ♦ **Information about Mentoring or Coaching as Workplace Learning Strategies**
The Return of the Mentor: Strategies for Workplace Learning, ed. by Brian Caldwell and Earl Cater, University of Pennsylvania, 1993, contains articles on preceptorships in hospitals, coaching on shop floors, and measuring the returns.

Knowledge/Skill Development: Technical Skills

- ♦ **Education at the Work Site**
Visiting Nurse Service of New York is developing college-level courses at the work site

- for home health aides. **Contact:** Mary Ann Wilner, 387 Sixth St., Brooklyn, NY 11215; tel: 718-965-1337, fax: 718-965-1337
- ♦ **Innovative Cross-functional Training/Finance**
Indiana Federal Bank of Valparaiso has instituted "open book management": all employees have a working understanding of key operational issues. The bank's "Indiana Federal University" uses its own employees to conduct the training instead of paying consultants. **See:** "Teaching Under Your Own Roof," *America's Community Banker*, June 1996, p. 46
- ♦ **Metalworking**
Norton Mfg. Co., to maintain its niche market in the auto industry, has developed a "humongous network" to support its skill upgrading needs, including a vocational school, a community college, and several government agencies. **See:** "Closing the Skills Gap," by Michael Barrier, *Nation's Business*, March 1996, p. 26
- ♦ **Disney Seminars in Human Resources Management**
The Society for Human Resource Management and Disney University Professional Development Programs developed a four-day seminar in human resources practices that goes behind the scenes in employee recruitment, selection, orientation, training, communication, employee care, people management, and employee support. **See:** "How to Run a Mickey Mouse Operation," by Joan Steinauer, *Incentive*, August 1996, p. 12
- ♦ **Career Ladders in Health Care: Pharmacy Technicians**
A career ladder for pharmacy technicians instituted at a 575-bed hospital reduced annual turnover from 33% to 15% and increased job satisfaction. For detailed requirements of the four levels, **see:** "Development and Benefits of a Pharmacy Technician Career Ladder," by William Strozzyk and D. Underwood, *American Journal of Hospital Pharmacy*, March 1, 1994, p. 666
- ♦ **Career Ladders in Home Care**
The Visiting Nurse Association of Washington, DC, designed a career ladder for home care that starts with home health aide. **Contact:** Marcie L. Barnette or Linda A. Maurano, VNA of Washington, DC; tel: 202-686-2160. **See:** "A Home Care Career Ladder," by Marcie Barnette and Linda Maurano, *Caring Magazine*, May 1996, p. 48
- ♦ **Apprenticeship Programs**
Step-Up Program—Apprenticeship programs often recruit from low-wage incumbent workers. Step-Up is an apprenticeship-based employment program in which participants earn wages while they learn skills on the job and in the classroom. The program targets low-income housing residents and other low-income workers and lasts a maximum of a year. Program completers enter continuing training, apprenticeship, or education programs. **Contact:** Bonita Jefferson, Bureau of Apprenticeship Training, Department of Labor, Room N4649, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20210; tel: 202-219-6345, ext. 131, fax: 202-219-5100
- ♦ **Community Colleges with Workforce Outreach Programs**
The Workforce Initiative of the League for Innovation in the Community College seeks to understand, inform, and expand the role of community colleges in workforce development. The league's 1996 publication, "Common Ground: Exemplary Community College and Corporate Partnerships," gives an overview of successful collaborations between business and community colleges for training and education that "go beyond the typical workforce training that virtually all community colleges offer." Available for \$15 from LICC, 26522 La Alameda, Suite 370, Mission Viejo, CA 92691; tel: 714-367-2884, fax: 714-367-2885
- ♦ **Template-Based Multimedia Authoring Software**
Express Train™ and other template-driven computer-based learning packages

dramatically reduce the time and programming expertise required to develop interactive computer-based training modules and facilitate sharing of workplace education modules by participating institutions. Express Train™ was developed by Princeton Center of Pennington, NJ. The California Community College system is developing a statewide workplace education application. **Contact:** Marian Thacher, Coordinator, Workplace Learning Resource Center, San Diego Community College District, 3249 Fordham St., San Diego, CA 92110; tel: 619-221-6950, fax: 619-221-6952

- ♦ **Career Ladders in Administrative Support**
Low morale and retention rates among file clerks, secretaries, and data coordinators at *St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis* led administrators to develop a career advancement system including new job classifications, titles, and compensation rates and clear criteria for advancement. **See:** "Building a Career Ladder for Administrative Support," by Cindy Stackhouse and Kristen Shingleton, *HR Focus*, April 1992, p. 22
- ♦ **Marketing Programs to Employees**
An interview discusses employee resistance to training and how to deal with it. **See:** "Forum Corp. Chairman Sees Time When Training, Work Will Coincide," *Boston Business Journal*, November 22-28, 1996, p. 25
- ♦ **Modern Manufacturing Video Conference Series**
The National Technological University operates this distance learning project. It consists of monthly or semi-monthly live satellite seminars, designed for small to mid-sized companies, on such topics as production and shop-floor management, new technologies, and world class manufacturing. There are about 100 down-link sites, and the university is interested in expanding. **Contact:** Blaine Howerton, Director, Extension Partnership Project, NTU, 700 Centre Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80526; tel: 970-495-6400, fax: 970-484-0668
- ♦ **Quality Learning Series**
Seminars delivered through satellite by the *U.S. Chamber of Commerce* cover such topics as teams, continuous improvement, and workplace violence. The Chamber averages about 150 down-link sites per seminar. The costs are very reasonable. **Contact:** Gabrielle Fardwell, Associate Director of QLS, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H St. NW, Washington, DC 20062-2000; tel: 202-463-5566, fax 800-952-6009

Knowledge/Skill Development: Credentials

- ♦ **State Trade Associations—Health Care**
There is a national trade association of long-term nursing care facilities and a state-level organization in each state. Many have developed training programs and other supports for nurse aides/assistants. **Contacts:** Arlene Miles, Colorado Health Care Association, 225 E. 16th Ave., #1100, Denver, CO 80203; tel: 303-861-8228, fax: 303-839-8068; Joseph Donchess, Louisiana Nursing Home Association, 7844 Office Park Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70809; tel: 504-927-5642, fax: 504-927-5250; Adele Wilzack, Health Care Association of Maryland, 10010 Junction Dr., #116N, Annapolis, MD 20701; tel: 410-792-4390, fax: 410-792-4617; Earl Carlson, Missouri Health Care Association, 236 Metro Dr., Jefferson City, MO 65109; tel: 573-893-2060, fax: 573-893-5248; Gerald Reilly, Washington Health Care Association, 2120 State St. NE, #102, Olympia, WA; tel: 360-352-3304, fax: 360-754-2412; Thomas Moore, Wisconsin Health Care Association, 121 S. Pinckney St., #500, Madison, WI 53703; tel: 608-257-0125, fax: 608-257-0025
- ♦ **Certification Guidelines**
The National Skills Standards Board is planning nine demonstrations of basic core and specialty skills standards in practice through local, sector-based voluntary partnerships leading to basic skills certificates. Open to approach by Casey sites. **Contact:** Sally

Conway, NSSB, 1441 L St. NW, Suite 9000, Washington, DC 20005-3512; tel: 202-254-8628, fax: 202-254-8646

- ♦ **Alternative to the GED**
 - * *National External Diploma Program of the American Council on Education:* Provides experience/skill-based credits toward full high school diplomas (not GEDs) for working adults through local business/education partnerships in 13 states. **Contact:** Theresa Watts, EDP Coordinator, ACE, 1 DuPont Circle NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036-1193; tel: 202-939-9475, fax: 202-775-8578
 - * *The Diploma Plus program* provides young people who lack a high school diploma with an alternative to traditional GED preparation and certification (and the poor earnings track record of matriculants). Diploma Plus helps participants enter promising careers by adding a strong postsecondary component and a large dose of work-based learning integrated with classroom instruction, while supporting students with life skills instruction and strong case management. **Contact:** Ephraim Weisstein, Corporation for Business, Work and Learning, 101 Summer St., Boston, MA 02110; tel: 617-292-5100, fax 617-292-5105
- ♦ **Developing Credentials for Lower-skill Employees in Hospitals**
Worker Education Project, Local 285, Service Employees International Union—The WEP is establishing upward ladders for low-skill workers in hospitals (e.g., in dietary, housekeeping). Generally, hospitals have not defined the skill sets and credentials needed to move into entry-level white-collar jobs. The WEP works with hospitals to target particular jobs, analyze the skills needed, and develop appropriate training and credentials. Among other priorities, WEP works with hospitals to identify emerging skill needs (related to health care restructuring, technological developments, etc.) and develop training programs for employees. **Contact:** Harneen Chemow, Worker Education Project, Local 285, 30 Winter St., 9th floor, Boston, MA 02108; tel: 617-426-0410, fax: 617-426-7116
- ♦ **Information About State Vocational Training Programs/Long-term Health Care**
For the names of state vocational education supervisors who have information about state vocational training programs in long term care, **contact:** Dr. Janice Sandiford, Vice President of Health Occupations Education, American Vocational Association, 1410 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314; tel: 1-800-826-9972, fax: 703-683-7424

Financial Support/Information: Information and Assistance in Claiming Tax Benefits and other Public, Employer, and Union Sources of Financial Support

Financial Support for Attending School While Working

- * *Project LINC, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Ladders in Nursing Careers* for entry-level and mid-level health care workers—Participants receive tuition, guidance, and support and retain jobs and health benefits while in degree programs. Participants pay back employers through specified number of months of work after graduation. **Contact:** Peggy McNally, Project LINC, 700 New Hampshire Ave., Washington, DC 20037; tel: 202-338-8913
- * *Union Training/Tuition Reimbursement Funds*, e.g. UAW and auto companies—An example is the Newark, Delaware, Chrysler plant, which provides tuition funds to employees through the Tuition Assistance Program. Also, UAW Local 1183 has a training center that provides a variety of services, including computer training, distance learning, and vocational training. **Contacts:** Local 1183 Training Center, tel: 302-738-3308; Chrysler Tuition Assistance Program, tel: 800-241-1416
- * *State Unemployment Insurance Tax Supplements/Diversion for training incumbent workers*—See especially ETP in CA. **Contact:** Jim Van Erden, National Alliance of Business, 202-289-2989

- ♦ **Advice for Employers on Tuition Assistance Programs**
Council for Adult and Experiential Learning—Nonprofit consultant to companies, unions, etc. on education and training needs and programs serving 100,000 workers. Also a leader in advising on tuition assistance programs. **Contact:** Pamela Tate, President, 243 South Wabash, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60604; tel: 312-922-5909, fax: 312-922-1769

Services Targeted to Employers

Intermediaries That Provide a Range of Services

- ♦ **Manufacturing Extension Partnerships** (*National Institute of Standards, Department of Commerce*)—Model of general employer intermediary that could be adapted to Casey population: 78 centers with 300 staffed field offices, mainly doing brokering and technical assistance, linking firms together and to providers for upgrading skills of incumbent workers. **Contacts:** Mark Troppe, national office, 301-975-4724; Joe Holden, Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center, 215-464-8550. (DVIRC is setting up a "teaching factory" like Focus Hope in Detroit.)
- ♦ **King of Prussia Mall Retail Skills Center**—A unique, mall-based, one-stop retail-career center serving mall retailers and the community with programmed basic education plus retail skills training and mentored job placements in mall stores, all leading to industry credentials under national retail skill standards. **Contact:** Kathy Mannes, National Retail Federation, Liberty Place, 325 7th St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004; tel: 202-783-7971, fax: 202-737-2849

Organizing: For Hiring

- ♦ **Worker Ownership**
Cooperative Home Care Associates—A worker-owned home care agency. About 95% of new entrants are receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. Graduates receive dual certificates as home health aides and personal care aides. **Contact:** Peggy Powell, Executive Administrator, Cooperative Home Care Associates, 349 East 149th St., Bronx, NY 10451; tel: 718-993-7104, ext. 200
- ♦ **Innovative Models**
Delivering home health care using paraprofessionals. **Contact:** Mary Ann Wilner, 387 Sixth St., Brooklyn, New York 11215; tel: 718-965-1337, fax: 718-965-1332
- ♦ **Temp-to-Perm**
The *Milwaukee Careers Cooperative* is a nonprofit that develops temp-to-perm placements for low-income clients. It offers job-readiness training, post-employment support, community support, and transportation to and from jobs where public transportation is unavailable. **Contact:** Sig Tomkalski, Milwaukee Careers Cooperative, 2040 West Wisconsin Ave., Bockl Building, Suite 10, Milwaukee, WI 53233; tel: 414-937-8260, fax: 414-937-8266
- ♦ **Temping as a Transition**
Chrysalis is a non-profit community-based organization dedicated to helping homeless and other disadvantaged individuals become self-supporting by creating and locating employment opportunities. To meet the varying needs of clients, Chrysalis has developed three basic program tracks: StreetWorks (a street-cleaning business), Labor Connection (a temporary help services division) and the Permanent Employment Program. Clients progress from one program to the next. Labor Connection is the intermediate step for clients who have a foundation of work habits and skills but need recent work experience before they are ready for full-time jobs. Chrysalis contracts with businesses that need temporary help and fills these positions with its clients. **Contact:** Dave McDonough, Associate Director, Chrysalis, 516 South Main St., Los Angeles, CA 90013; tel: 213-895-7525, fax 213-895-7272
- ♦ **Employer Consortia**
Dusseldorp Skill Centers—Operating in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, these centers provide work experience, training, and job-search support for low-

wage, low-skill workers, particularly welfare recipients. Most centers are in shopping malls. U.S. Contact: Barbara Dunn, TRAC/USA, Landmark Mall, Suite D11, 5801 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22304; tel: 703-941-7206, fax: 703-941-2829

Organizing: For Providing Education, Training, and Other Employee Services

- ♦ **Consortium for Supplier Training**—Seven world-class manufacturers have set up "Supplier Training Centers" around the United States offering high-end training for high-quality performance, open to all companies. Consortium model could be adapted to low-end employers. Contact: Texas Instruments, tel: 800-882-6638
- ♦ **Skills for Industrial Modernization Demonstration Program**—DOL/DOC-funded project to upgrade skills in small manufacturing firms via Learning Coalitions of education and training providers, business groups, unions, and community-based organizations. Lead: Great Lakes Manufacturing Technology Center (a NIST MEP). Contact: Mark Troppe, NIST; tel: 301-975-4724
- ♦ **National Workforce Assistance Collaborative**—DOL funding to the National Alliance of Business set up NWAC to provide information on education and training consortia and networks. Contact: Steve Mitchell, Executive Director, NWAC, 1201 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005; tel: 202-289-1303
- ♦ **Garment Industry Development Corporation**—Consortium upgrading skills of low-wage workers. Contact: GIDC, 275 7th Ave., 5th Floor, New York, New York 10001; tel: 212-366-6160, fax: 212-366-6162, web site: www.gidc.org

Organizing: Into Union-Employer Consortia and Networks

- ♦ "1199C Training and Upgrading Fund"—This joint labor/management training and upgrading program in Philadelphia provides skills upgrading for hospital employees, including basic education and training for career advancement. Contact: Jim Ryan, tel: 215-735-5555
- ♦ **Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership**—35 metalworking firms and unions are focusing on high skills training, enabling incumbent workers and firms to reach high-performance status. Contact: Rhandi Berth, 4065 North Richards St., Milwaukee, WI 53212; tel: 414-963-7516, fax: 414-962-3246
- ♦ **Seattle Worker Center**—Retraining, education, upgrading. Contact: Rich Feldman, tel: 206-461-8408
- ♦ **San Francisco Hotel Labor/Management Partnership**—Hotel/union network training low-wage employees with 10+ languages in ESL and upgrading skills. Contact: Mike Casey, President, Hotel/Restaurant Employees' Union, San Francisco, tel: 415-864-8770, ext. 731
- ♦ Washington, D.C., PIC and Local 25, a hotel/restaurant union, provide training for low-wage workers. Contact: John Boardman, Secretary Treasurer, Local 25, tel: 202-737-2225
- ♦ **Career Ladders**
Upgrading and Career Ladder Program of the AFL-CIO—This research report describes the UCLP, a system of structured, work-based learning integrating on-the-job training with related theoretical instruction; includes extensive documentation. See: "Upgrading America's Workforce through Participation and Structured Work-based Learning," by Daniel Marshall, 1990. (ERIC Accession Number ED349435)

Technical Assistance and Advice: Employee Assistance

- ♦ **Mentoring and Support in the Fast-Food Industry**

* **Stuart Ray's Burger King franchises** support career development of employees through (1) establishing relationships with local firms (primarily in manufacturing) that have job openings with better pay and benefits and (2) referring employees who have demonstrated basic reliability, etc. Contact: Stuart Ray, Burger King, 720 Three Mile NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544; tel: 616-784-4000 x3004, fax: 616-784-4437

* **LeRoy Walker's 10 McDonald's** have provided biweekly voluntary mentoring and coaching seminars for 12 years to encourage employees to do well in school. These sessions and the care and attention paid to employees build loyalty, morale, and confidence. McDonald's tracks the employees through college and into life, and former employees attend the annual holiday party to share their experiences. Prior employees now work in banking, politics, the armed services, and a variety of other professions. The premise is that while many McDonald's jobs are low-skill, the work teaches skills and discipline that help a person advance to new opportunities. Contact: LeRoy Walker, McDonald's, 2310 Highway 80 West, Suite 3260, Jackson, MI 39204; tel: 601-352-1742

Technical Assistance and Advice: Training Supervisors and Mentors

- ♦ **WorkPlus Supervisor/Mentor Development Packets and Workforce Development Guidebook**—Public/Private Ventures developed training curricula and work-based learning initiatives for supervisors and mentors that combine youth development and ways of improving the productivity and responsibility of young workers. Now being field tested in 15 sites. Contact: Carol Clymer, P/PV, One Commerce Square, 2005 Market St., Suite 900, Philadelphia, PA 19103; tel: 215-557-4400, fax: 215-557-4469
- ♦ **One-to-One's National Mentoring Corps**—A national mentoring partnership and technical assistance organization, mainly concerned with adult-to-youth mentoring but including workplace mentoring. Contact: One-to-One, 2801 M St. NW, Washington, DC 20007; tel: 202-338-3844, fax: 202-338-1642
- ♦ **Mentoring: A Synthesis of P/PV's Research: 1988-1995**—A summary report, mainly on research on community-based mentoring of adults to youth. Contact: P/PV, One Commerce Sq., 2005 Market St., Suite 900, Philadelphia, PA 19103; tel: 215-557-4400, fax: 215-557-4469

Technical Assistance and Advice: Internal Literacy and Training Needs

- ♦ **Marketing Education/Training to Employers**
* This literacy program developed for Walt Disney by the Society for Human Resources Development advises: call it computer training, not literacy training, to get employer buy-in. See: Joan Steinauer, "How to Run a Mickey Mouse Operation," *Incentive*, August 1996, p. 12
- * **Council for Adult and Experiential Learning**—Nonprofit consultant to companies, unions, and others on education and training needs and programs serving 100,000 workers. Also a leader in advising on tuition assistance programs. Contact: Pamela Tate, President, 243 South Wabash, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60604; tel: 312-922-5909, fax: 312-922-1769
- * **Corporation for a Skilled Workforce**—Nonprofit consultant to states, communities, firms, and schools on strategies and systems to produce highly skilled workforces. Contact: Larry Good, President, 2890 Carpenter Rd., Suite 1600, Ann Arbor, MI 48108; tel: 313-971-6060, fax: 313-971-6688
- * **CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System)**—A system of competency-based, work-based basic education starting with job/task analysis; usable by any organization. Contact: Jane Egúez, Terri Bergman, 8910 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., San Diego, CA 92123; tel: 619-292-2900 x325, fax: 619-292-2910

Technical Assistance and Advice: Job Design, Team Structures, Career Ladders

- ♦ **Innovative Cross-functional Approach/Finance**
Indiana Federal Bank of Valparaiso has instituted "open book management": all employees have a working understanding of key operational issues. The bank's "Indiana Federal University" uses its own employees to conduct the training instead of paying consultants. See: "Teaching Under Your Own Roof," *America's Community Banker*, June 1996, p. 46
- ♦ **Job Rotation**
Research at *Eli Lilly* proves that job rotation is an effective tool for helping employees acquire the skills employers need to become competitive. See: "Study Clarifies Job Rotation Benefits," by Michael Campion and Lisa Cheraskin, *Personnel Journal*, November 1996, p. 31
- ♦ **Job Design**
The Association for Quality and Participation is a professional association of practitioners, consultants, and academics who specialize in job design, team structures, and other workforce techniques of high-performance organizations. Available from AQP are publications, conferences, and listings of consultants. Contact: AQP, 801 B West 8th St., Suite 501, Cincinnati, OH 45203-1607; tel: 800-733-3310, fax: 513-381-0070

Technical Assistance and Advice: General Human Resource Practices and Services

- ♦ *Genesis Health Ventures* has a career ladder program for nursing assistants for all its Eastern facilities. It includes wage increases, mentors, tutors, and support groups. Contact: Ms. Kim Carr, Director of Staff Development, Genesis Health Ventures, 148 West State St., Kennett Square, PA 19348; tel: 800-444-6353. For additional information, see: "Career Ladder: Tool for Recruitment, Retention and Recognition," by Carolyn McDonald, *The Journal of Long-term Health Care Administration*, Winter 1991-1992, p. 6
- ♦ "Job Family Role Strain . . . Lower-Wage Service Employees," by Jennifer Swanberg, suggesting that flexible scheduling can improve retention rates. Contact: Tory Haskell, Families and Work Institute, 330 Seventh Ave., NY, NY 10001; tel: 212-465-2044
- ♦ *The Society for Human Resource Management*, the professional association of personnel and human resource professionals, offers a range of publications, conferences, and advice on state-of-the-art human resource practices. Contact: SHRM, 606 North Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314-1997; tel: 703-548-3440, fax: 703-836-0367

V.
**Closing Observations:
Jobs Initiative Reactions and Priorities**

Jobs for the Future presented the conceptual framework of this report, along with examples of innovative practices, to Jobs Initiative site directors at a meeting on March 7, 1997. Also participating in the day-long session at the Casey Foundation were practitioners and researchers experienced in efforts to improve the retention and advancement of low-wage workers in the retail, hospitality, health, construction, manufacturing, and other service industries.³ The meeting provided an opportunity for Foundation and Jobs Initiative staff to review and respond to the direction and findings of the project at its mid-point. This guided subsequent activities, including the preparation of this final report and case studies.

The diverse perspectives around the table stimulated wide-ranging and practical discussions of strategies that Jobs Initiative sites might explore. There was much support for the draft report's basic framework—and for a need to be more systematic and clearer in defining and describing "retention and advancement" strategies.⁴

While recognizing that all such frameworks simplify reality to highlight certain relationships and leverage points, most site directors thought the model and attached table of relevant programs, projects, resources, and other sources of information particularly useful in:

- Emphasizing the primacy of three distinct sets of actors—individuals, employers, and education and training and other service providers;
- Identifying commonalities and conflicts in the priorities and goals of each type of actor;
- Grouping innovative retention and advancement approaches according to the needs they primarily address—of employers for qualified, productive, stable employees; of individuals for skills, information, and supports; or of service providers working in a fragmented system; and

³ See Appendix C for a list of attendees.

⁴ Since March, the Denver Jobs Initiative site has adapted the framework for its own public presentations. Several other sites have found the effort to distinguish among types of strategies an important starting point.

- Stressing the range of roles that intermediaries can and must play in bringing the players together, aggregating their interests, and anchoring a new upgrading or advancement system.

Jobs Initiative site staff raised two important concerns in reaction to the framework.

1. In practice, strategies to improve retention and advancement cannot be separated easily into those targeted to firms and those targeted to individuals.

One site director noted that the two "clients" are very much intertwined. The most effective strategies for helping individuals advance must involve employers, who control access to jobs, opportunities for advancement, training and development resources, etc. Thus, successful strategies will be those where the interest is joint; if employers do not see that a strategy is in their interest, they will not support it. This has staffing implications for intermediaries attempting to provide services to individuals. The intermediary needs the capacity to reach and advise employers as well as to counsel employees—yet these two capacities are not often found in the same individuals.

2. The categorization covered career-related and skill-related strategies extensively but did not pay enough attention to the kinds of supports that individuals need to stay with a job.

Several Jobs Initiative site staff asked for more information on post-placement supports that help people respond to difficult domestic or other non-work situations that frequently derail them from employment. Although education and training deficiencies may limit retention and advancement, chaotic home and family lives are far more often the first barrier to address if individuals are to develop stable work histories and improve their likelihood of advancing. Similarly, strategies to strengthen skills and knowledge must incorporate ways to build self-confidence and self-esteem.

Technical Assistance Priorities

Throughout the meeting, a number of other themes emerged as critically important to Jobs Initiative sites—and as high priorities for technical assistance as sites move toward implementing strategic plans. The most frequently mentioned issues were:

- The "if you build it, they will come" fallacy;

- The importance of information on local labor markets and career pathways;
- Tapping self-interest;
- Intermediaries and the power of collective action and supports;
- Training for supervisors;
- Tools that work; and
- Implementation is what matters.

The "if you build it, they will come" fallacy

Several sites noted that their partners had trouble attracting targeted individuals to programs or services. The same challenge was identified in home health care and other low-wage health occupations by Mary Ann Wilner, a consultant to various retention and advancement efforts. Motivation is not automatic, whether to enter a program that might be challenging or to take a new position that could require a significant time commitment, new skills, and a new daily routine.

Several participants noted that just marketing the available opportunities is not enough to reach the target population. Often, case management and counseling are needed to overcome fears of racism, personal inadequacy, or even success. Significant attention must be given to helping members of the Jobs Initiative target population feel that life doesn't just happen to them; rather, they can influence, steer, and manage it. One participant recommended using focus groups made up of members of the target population to improve design and delivery.

The importance of information on local labor markets and career pathways

A second theme related to individual advancement was the importance of knowledge of the local labor market and recognized pathways to opportunity in particular industries and industry clusters. Several participants emphasized the need for clearer pictures, in each community, of how individuals can "navigate" the labor market from current low-wage jobs to better opportunities within and outside a given industry. Kathy Mannes of the National Retail Federation described some of that association's efforts to use skill standards as a way to help map possible career pathways. Jobs Initiative sites expressed interest in developing clearer descriptions of entry and exit points within an industry or across industries to positions that have longer and better-developed career ladders. More systematic knowledge of

such entry and exit points and the skills or experience required to move laterally or vertically would help sites and their partners guide individuals from thinking about a job to thinking about and planning a career. Stuart Ray's efforts to help qualified young Burger King employees in Grand Rapids make connections with local manufacturers appears to be an exciting example of how this might work in practice.

Tapping self-interest

Jobs Initiative site leaders were adamant that strategies will take hold and be sustainable only if they create value for participating employers. The site leaders were quite interested in materials that demonstrate an employer's return on investment (ROI) for services or programs. The presentation of Marriott's Associate Resource Line (see Appendix A) sparked considerable interest precisely because of its evidence of a clear ROI calculation.

Site directors wanted "ammunition" they could take to employers as part of outreach and marketing: evidence of lower turnover, greater productivity, improved supervisory skills, and a bottom-line calculation of the order of magnitude of cost savings or quality improvements.⁵ Several expressed a requirement to work with and understand the needs of firms that had chosen to take the "high road" to modernization and productivity, those that emphasize worker skill, empowerment, and partnerships, rather than the low road of profitability based on de-skilling, disinvestment in the workforce, and greater emphasis on contingent work relations.

Intermediaries and the power of collective action and supports

Some of the most innovative and promising retention and advancement strategies aggregate the interests of many individuals or many firms that share a similar set of needs and goals. Possible activities included joint training, peer support, stronger bargaining with education or training providers, shared financial risk, and portable credentials for skills and experience. Each approach raises critical questions about appropriate and effective institutional bases for organizing such efforts, which has strong implications regarding the role of intermediary organizations.

Strategies targeting *individuals*, for example, might stress the power of peer learning and support groups to help overcome fears, increase motivation, and transfer knowledge in settings conducive to risk-taking. Peer learning in unionized manufacturing settings is an important part of the Wisconsin

⁵ Site directors have since been provided with an interesting paper on ROI estimates prepared by Twin Cities Rise! in Minneapolis.

Regional Training Partnership's success. In home health care and long-term care occupations, peer support groups have been effective learning and confidence-building mechanisms.

For *firms*, promising strategies include trade associations, federally funded Manufacturing Technology Partnerships, and other ways to aggregate the interests of firms and reduce their risks and costs. The Cleveland Advanced Manufacturing Program reported on its teaching factories and skill upgrading efforts, and the Denver Jobs Initiative site has developed a useful connection with the local MTP.

Overall, then, sites are particularly interested in understanding the roles that *intermediaries* can play and how such services can be paid for and supported. Site directors noted that more specific information on intermediary organizations and the practical aspects of their structures and activities would be helpful. Examples range from Jobs Initiative lead organizations themselves to temporary staffing firms, consortia of firms in an industry, community economic development partnerships, etc. Steve Herzenberg of the Keystone Research Center distinguished between three ways of organizing intermediaries: by sector (e.g., manufacturing, hospitality); by community (e.g., citywide, region); and by occupation (e.g., office workers effort in Toronto). He noted that the third is the least common but may be a form of worker organization well-suited to today's labor market realities.

Unions are another type of intermediary. In some Jobs Initiative cities, they are a strong presence in manufacturing, health care, and construction. In these locations, sites seek to learn about models for aggregating worker interests and developing partnerships with firms to improve communication and linkages between individuals and the firms that can and do employ them.

Training for supervisors

A number of site representatives—as well as other participants—focused on the power of good supervisory training for participating firms. Employers frequently promote people to front-line supervisory positions from entry-level work, but rarely do they give these new supervisors adequate training in interpersonal skills, motivational strategies, and other ways to help those who report to them. In health care, Mary Ann Wilner reported on an innovative effort in New York City to provide such training to supervisors in long-term care facilities.

Tools that work

Site directors are frustrated with their lack of good "tools." By this, they mean materials their partners could use or adapt to strengthen employability skills,

basic skills, or task-specific job skills. Among the tools they need are: competency-based skill development curricula, materials that employers can easily use to train supervisors in mentoring and other skills, easily adaptable "soft skill" or SCANS skills training materials, appropriate assessments for the low-end of the labor market, on-the-job or work-based training materials, and easy-to-use ROI methodologies for employers. The sites asked for better knowledge about existing written, performance-based, and computer-assisted tools. They also called for the creation of new materials and tools.

Implementation is what matters

Site directors participated in the meeting with an extremely practical orientation. They want information they could *use*, specific knowledge that would help them make things happen—at an affordable price and sustainable scale. This drives their interest in the contacts provided by Jobs for the Future to other programs and sources of expertise, their emphasis on finding or developing effective materials and tools, and their continual return to issues of cost, benefits, and marketing strategies.

Jobs Initiative site directors also appreciated guidance on how particular programs are structured, services delivered, relationships staffed and nurtured, and effectiveness assessed. Future technical assistance to the sites should continue to focus on these basic and critically important implementation concerns.

Work in Progress

These themes reflect the priorities of the Jobs Initiative sites as of last spring. In effect, they also present a road map for the Initiative on technical assistance needs and priorities that the sites are most interested in as they move toward implementing strategic plans.

As a result of this reconnaissance project, the Casey Foundation would do well to assess plans for technical assistance against the sites' clear demand for help on:

- Post-placement support strategies and ways to implement them;
- Confidence-building, soft skills, and strategies to motivate individual participation in Jobs Initiative efforts and services;
- Return-on-investment calculations and other effective ways to bring local employers and intermediary institutions to the table around specific services and activities methods;

- Easy-to-use and easy-to-adapt tools and other materials to lessen attempts to "reinvent the wheel";
- Better information on career pathways in different industries or across them and the prerequisites to advancement along those pathways; and
- More detailed and useful information on different models for organizing, staffing, and financing intermediary organizations that can help inform, advise, and broker relationships among employers, workers, and service providers.

Jobs for the Future hopes that this initial effort to organize thinking and knowledge about job advancement and retention strategies will help Jobs Initiative sites right away—and that it will spark discussion and debate on fruitful next steps in defining, identifying, and assessing strategies for helping low-wage workers advance.

Appendix A Case Study: The Associate Resource Line

Marriott International's Associate Resource Line assists managers and low-wage workers with personal and family issues that may interfere with job performance, job retention, and career advancement.

By Basil J. Whiting

After Jobs for the Future presented its draft report, the Casey Foundation asked for certain follow-up activities, among them this brief case study of a particularly impressive approach to providing social and other services to a low wage workforce—Marriott International's Associate Resource Line.

Marriott International, Inc., is one of the world's largest hospitality companies with over 1,000 properties, \$10 billion in annual sales, and 225,000 employees, worldwide. While hotels are the company's largest and most visible operations, it also provides, among other things, institutional and other food services, educational services, senior services, and home repair and cleaning services.¹

Generally regarded as one of the best managed hospitality companies, Marriott has a reputation for high quality customer service that it fervently develops and promotes as its competitive advantage. To rely on customer service as a distinctive marketing edge requires a workforce that cares about customer service. This is difficult in a service-based industry like hospitality, where profit margins are thin and competitive pressures keep wages low. In 1996, 81 percent of Marriott's U.S.-based 200,000 employees were hourly wage employees earning a mean of \$8.50 per hour. Their average age was 33, and 54 percent were women. Compared to its competitors, Marriott pays well, and it offers better benefits than other hospitality industry firms (and than many other service sector industries). It also promotes heavily from within the company to its better paying upper-career-ladder jobs.

Nonetheless, Marriott estimates that half its hourly workforce earns less than the poverty level. Yet raising wages substantially is not an option for the company. A recent business school study estimated that dividing all of Marriott's profits among its hourly workforce would add only 47 cents to the

¹ Portions of this report draw on "Donna Klein and Marriott International," a case study of the Business Enterprise Trust, Nr. 9-996-058, available from the trust at 204 Junipero Serra Blvd., Stanford, CA 94305; tel: 415-321-5100; or Harvard Business School Publishing, Customer Service Department, 60 Harvard Way, Boston, MA 02163; tel: 800-545-7685.

average wage rate—and plunge Marriott's stock price and render it unable to raise debt or equity capital.

How, then, to build caring for customer service into such a workforce, which directly and indirectly provides the bulk of Marriott's services to its customers?

Marriott's primary strategy has been to adopt the most advanced human resource management practices extant. For instance, the company terms most hourly workers "associates," offers broad job training and other learning opportunities, and uses advanced forms of team structures. It also trains supervisors and managers in effective human relations practices and provides job-sharing, compressed workweeks, work-at-home, leave for childbirth, and extensive benefits, including child care, elder care, and health insurance.

Established in 1990, the Work-Life Programs Department has consolidated and further developed most of these efforts. The department operates on "the philosophy of providing Marriott employees the environment they need to pursue a career while balancing the demands of their personal lives." Psychologist and senior manager Donna Klein directs the department.

Most of the elements in Marriott's array of human resource practices are rare in the hospitality industry and seldom so well-developed outside it. One result is that Marriott does indeed enjoy a reputation for excellent customer service. Another is a low employee turnover rate: only 45 percent per year in its lodging operations, compared to an industry average of 100 percent. Turnover is expensive—each new hire costs Marriott about \$1,100—and it is difficult to provide good customer service with a workforce that is churning from rapid turnover.

Another result is that *Working Mother* magazine has ranked Marriott among the top 100 companies for working mothers for six years in a row. Marriott has also received numerous other "quality of life" awards, including a citation as a "best company for minorities."

The Origins of the Associate Resource Line

In 1993, Klein examined the effectiveness of Marriott's Work-Life programs and was concerned to find that they were not adequately meeting employee needs. These unmet needs were still detracting from job performance and customer service. Interviews, surveys, and focus groups with both hourly associates and managers indicated that:

- While managers seemed pleased with the array of available services, hourly associates made microscopic use of many of the support services—especially child care. Traditional child care and other referrals were not working, largely because hourly personnel deemed providers too expensive. As a result, associates were "bartering" for custodial and other low-cost child care arrangements that were of correspondingly low quality.
- The cluster of services was far too limited. Many associates were beset by "many more complex, acute, and urgent life issues than we had known or suspected"—car and transportation issues, language and immigration issues, abusive spouses, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, school problems of children, financial and legal problems, evictions and other housing issues, and on and on. Moreover, these problems did not arise singly; people tended to have two or more at the same time. "We needed something far more holistic," Klein says.
- These problems resulted in absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover among associates. In addition, worry and concern about such issues diluted associates' ability to provide effective customer service when they were on the job. Moreover, managers and direct line supervisors reported that they were "diverting up to 50 percent of their time to 'social work' helping associates with such problems," rather than spending it on their other managerial duties.

Klein determined to "redirect Work-Life programs to focus on the needs of hourly associates." This effort included broadening child care options for associates and reducing its costs. Among other things, Marriott has provided subsidized child care at its headquarters, led a consortium of employers in building a new 250-child early learning facility in Atlanta, and established a nationwide network of child care providers who would offer discounts to the firm's employees.

However, Klein's main concern was to devise an effective response to the myriad personal and social issues afflicting many associates—something that would reduce the burden on harried local managers and supervisors, who were often doing their best but were ill-equipped to deal with such an array of issues. The response had to come from people professionally prepared to deal with such problems, and it had to be both effective and cost-effective.

Klein arrived at the notion of a "hot line." It would be staffed by professional social workers who would counsel associates, search out the resources to address their needs, connect the two, and follow up to ensure satisfaction. It would not only be a hot line but a high quality one.

To develop this idea, Klein engaged The Partnership Group (TPG), a Philadelphia-area firm that specializes in hot-line referral services for General Motors, Atlantic Bell, and other Fortune 1000 corporations with far-flung regional, nationwide, and world-wide operations.² In the main, TPG gives the employees of these firms carefully researched yet straightforward referrals for child care, elder care, and substance-abuse services. Such referrals come generally as part of negotiated benefits for unionized workers, managerial benefit packages, or employee assistance programs ("EAPs"—a term and program normally limited to substance-abuse services). TPG had developed genuine expertise at running that kind of national hot-line: it was responsive to individual manager or employee needs and could find high quality local child care, elder care, and substance-abuse services virtually anywhere in the nation.

Yet this set of services was much narrower and more specialized than Klein had in mind. At that point, neither TPG nor its competitors had done anything as comprehensive as Marriott envisioned—let alone for such a low-wage population. But with Marriott as a client, TPG was willing to break new ground.

Implementation and Operations

In 1994, Marriott and TPG designed a telephone-based hot-line counseling and referral service—the Associate Resource Line. They began piloting the ARL in Florida because of the large number of Marriott properties there and the representative nature of that state's hourly Marriott workforce. A year later, they expanded the test to Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, and Texas. After these two rounds of piloting and experimentation, Marriott and TPG took the program nationwide in 1996.

Such implementation does not happen all at once; Marriott properties must pay for the program and gear up for its implementation. Now in the midst of its second year of national expansion, the ARL served 67,000 employees as of mid 1997, with coverage of 90,000 expected by December. Besides growing in absolute numbers, coverage is broadening from its initial base in lodging to include some of Marriott's institutional food service and other operations.

² In December, 1996, The Partnership Group merged with two other referral services into Ceridian Performance Partners, a service of the Minneapolis-based Ceridian Corporation. TPG maintains its separate identity, functioning as a Ceridian subsidiary. To explore the possibility of mounting a service, contact Linda Sterthous, Vice President, Development, The Partnership Group, Inc., 1400 Union Meeting Road, Suite 102, Blue Bell, PA 19422-1920; tel. 215-542-6773; fax 215-283-4814; e-mail: linda_sterthous@tpginc.com; <http://www.tpglifebalance.com>.

TPG expects the usage rate by the end of 1997 to average 7 percent of covered employees calling at least once a year.

At present, the Marriott Associate Resource Line is available:

- Via an 800 number to all covered Marriott managers and hourly employees, who may call an unlimited number of times;
- 24 hours per day, 365 days per year: employees can call while on- or off-duty, either of which could be at any time because Marriott operates around the clock;
- At all times in English from TPG's headquarters in Pennsylvania and in Spanish from TPG's Florida office, with translators for 150 more languages on tap within a few hours.

Marriott International broadly promotes the ARL to both hourly and salaried employees but with an emphasis on the former. Both categories might call in response to posters, flyers in pay envelopes, general employee benefit packets or manuals, or recommendations by fellow employees or by supervisors.

Hourly employees can seek assistance for any personal problems that trouble them or a family member. Managers can use the ARL to meet their own service needs. They can also get advice on how to help a subordinate; some problems are still effectively handled locally by workers and supervisors together. The service is confidential: local managers do not know that an employee has used it unless the employee involved tells supervisors or managers voluntarily.

Masters-degree social workers or their equivalent respond to calls. TPG has four full-time counselors and one researcher on staff dedicated to the Marriott ARL at the Pennsylvania headquarters, plus supervisors and back-up personnel there and in Florida. The dedicated staff is deployed from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Eastern time, with back-ups in the case of absences or from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.

The service utilizes a "case manager" approach: the counselor receiving the initial call usually remains the caller's contact until the case is resolved satisfactorily. TPG has found the approach important and effective in this era of multiple referrals, especially for low-income workers, who too often find themselves shuttled from agency to agency and provider to provider. One TPG counselor said, "It's very important that they have this kind of personal interaction and personal relationship and personal contact—and that it be from one individual whom they can rely on over time."

The Marriott facility utilizing the ARL pays for service on the basis of a per-capita fee for each covered employee. Marriott did not disclose this fee, but published reports indicate that Marriott will spend \$2 million this year on the ARL, counting Klein's overhead for administering it.³

Marriott employees call the ARL's 800 number either on their own initiative or at the suggestion of a peer, a supervisor, or some other manager. The call may be from home or from a Marriott facility phone made available for that purpose. This latter option is often necessary because low-wage workers may not have a phone, and the ARL needs to be able to call back, perhaps a number of times. In addition, Klein reports that 20 percent of mailings to employees' home addresses routinely are returned because the employee has moved.

A counselor/case manager at TPG receives the call, interviews the employee, executes an intake form of basic information, then discusses the "presenting problem" while probing for possible underlying or concurrent issues. According to Klein, the majority of calls have at least a "dual diagnosis" and some have multiple problems.

When the situation seems clear enough to proceed, the client and counselor agree on a tentative "treatment plan," and the counselor engages the researcher on the TPG Marriott team to find services for the client that are appropriate for, geographically close enough to, and affordable by the client. This typically takes several calls by the researcher, drawing on an extensive TPG data base and the researcher's personal experiences. Some referrals may be to services offered by Marriott itself—and some at or through the client's very place of employment—indicating that employees often don't know what is in their benefit package or that management may not have communicated this information effectively.

During this research process, the researcher tries to talk to the provider who would deal with the client's problem. This helps ensure that the service is appropriate, and it identifies a specific contact for the client. The researcher conveys one or more such referrals back to the counselor, who then conveys, usually by telephone, the referrals to the client. In addition, the counselor may send the client any of TPG's several hundred issue or problem advisory

³ TPG's vice president for development reports that the firm can make various kinds of financial arrangements, depending on a client firm and its needs. Per-capita fees range from \$10 to \$18 per year, varying with the nature of the service and the degree of usage. Low-income populations with more complex problems and higher rates of usage than Marriott's could cost at the higher end of this range or even above it.

briefing sheets, its dozens of "tips on tape," or its other reference and instructional materials on common issues and problems.

It becomes the client's responsibility to follow up on referral information. It is also the client's responsibility to pay for the services recommended and used, although TPG says it frequently finds free or publicly subsidized services. The ARL counselors keep in touch with the client to determine how things are going and whether the client feels that his or her problems are being addressed in a satisfactory manner.

When the client and the counselor agree that the matter is satisfactorily resolved, the case is closed. Within 30 days after that, a TPG Quality Assurance Team follows up with the client to check on satisfaction with the service and its impact on the individual's work.

The ARL is clearly not a simple, mechanical referral service, a social services equivalent of the new cyber-responses of telephone companies to a directory service call. A TPG counselor said, "You can't really get to know enough to give a caller help unless you get really personal with them." He said that counselors "get involved" and "spend a lot of time" with clients, and the counselor team was professionally proud of that. TPG supervisory personnel said that a typical case may involve four or five calls back and forth and take two hours or more of interaction, not counting research.

Data for the first six months of 1997 indicate that TPG had opened 838 cases that presented 1,200 different kinds of problems or issues. TPG and Marriott formally cluster these into 350 categories for analytic purposes. In a yet broader categorization, Marriott's 1996 data indicated that:

- 44 percent are calls on child care or parenting issues;
- 9 percent relate to elder care issues;
- 27 percent concern personal crises (regarding housing, immigration, domestic abuse, custody, harassment, child abuse, or domestic crises);
- 20 percent involve counseling; and
- 13 percent of callers don't speak English.

Outcomes

At least two sets of outcomes are of interest in relation to the Associate Response Line: those for Marriott employees and those for the company.

The data readily available derive from TPG's follow-up calls after cases are resolved. These 1996 surveys indicate:

- 96 percent of callers rated the service as very helpful;
- 63 percent reported reduced stress;
- 46 percent reported better work and personal life balance;
- 97 percent would use the service again; and
- 99 percent would recommend it to others.

TPG and Marriott personnel tell many heartening, heartfelt anecdotes about ARL services solving employee problems—evictions avoided, financial problems alleviated, child and elder care found, personal relationships improved, financial stresses alleviated. However, no hard data exist on "problems solved." TPG professionals explain that it is very hard to come up with a clear, firm, and universally applicable definition of a "solution" for 1,200 often very different problems. Many of these problems are chronic, long-term, and not fully resolvable in nature. What TPG can do is give the individual someone who will listen and help them come to terms with the issue, put it into some perspective and balance, realize they are not alone, and get information and resources to call on to make some progress on the problem. Giving people a sense of control and a course of action is often a significant improvement, making the situation both better and more tolerable, even if it is not fully solvable.

Marriott personnel echo that opinion and add that survey data on ARL's workplace impacts are secondary evidence of positive outcomes for individual employees as well as primary evidence of benefits for the company. The 1996 follow-up survey indicated that:

- 23 percent of employees reported reduced absenteeism because of the ARL's assistance;
- 34 percent reported being less distracted;
- 20 percent reported reduced tardiness or need to leave work early;
- 20 percent reported improved relationships with coworkers or managers;
- 17 percent said that the service meant they did not have to quit their jobs; and

- 60 percent reported feeling better about Marriott.

Applying known costs of tardiness, absenteeism, and turnover, Marriott estimates its return on investment in the ARL is *four-to-one* in "hard money" terms. This does not count such indirect, "soft" benefits as less-distracted workers, better relationships between workers and managers and among coworkers, or workers who do a better job (42 percent in pilot project data) and can give better service to customers (44 percent in those same data). Prior to the first pilot, Klein and her associates had hoped to break even.

Hence, while an outside analyst might like Marriott to develop better hard measures of "problems solved" in at least some issue categories and think that they could, Marriott's managers say they don't need to spend money and time on this. The data they have convince them of the ARL's value. The service benefits employees, more than pays for itself, and undoubtedly contributes to customer service. Therefore, these managers conclude, expand the ARL nationwide.

When asked for her overall reflections on her experiences with the ARL, Klein answered:

Don't start with any assumptions, even if you think you have a conceptual understanding of this population. Middle-class professionals, in fact, have no real knowledge of the difficult lives these folks live, and you won't get a real understanding until you walk through these problems yourself on a one-on-one basis with someone who is dealing with them.

The main benefit of our work is that we are creating new knowledge. I don't think anyone else has gotten this deeply into the problems of this population. I have tons of data on problems, usage, resolutions. And we know a lot about local services, how well they do, what these populations need more of. And our experience raises some questions. For instance, in our 10 largest metropolitan areas, probably three-fourths of the best service providers are not agencies typically funded by corporate giving programs. How come and what does that mean? And hardly any of them are public agencies, because the waiting lines are too long and we don't want our people waiting too long because we'll lose them.

This suggests a whole new way of looking at the array and configuration of service providers in a city and may suggest that we ought to be setting up and funding different things at different levels. Once we have justified this service on a return-on-investment basis, I have no business need to spend money further mining these data or

pursuing these questions; but somebody should, maybe a foundation, and I'd be happy to cooperate in such an effort.

Using the ARL Proactively: The Earned Income Tax Credit

While continuing to roll-out the ARL nationally, Klein plans another, more proactive use: helping Marriott employees apply for the Earned Income Tax Credit. The EITC is a federal income tax credit for people earning below certain maximum amounts or who have one or more qualified children living with them. In most cases, the EITC is a net cash payment to the working poor; depending on the income level and the number of such children, the payment can range from a few dollars to over \$3,000 per year. The credit can be claimed each year at tax filing time by filing long form 1040 and appropriate schedules; it also can be claimed in advance (or, concurrent to its being earned) by applying for such payments through an employer, who will add an estimated EITC amount to the employee's paycheck. To exercise this option, the individual must have a qualifying child and earn less than \$25,078.

"We know that probably half our employees are eligible for EITC," Klein says. "Yet only a few hundred claim *advanced* EITC, which we know because they have to apply through their employer. We have no way of knowing how many apply for EITC at filing time, but I'll bet that huge numbers do not because they file the 1040-EZ if they file at all, and many have no tax liability anyway. But that means many of our employees are missing out entirely on a tax credit of hundreds or a few thousand dollars, for which they are eligible."

Likely reasons that Marriott and other low-income employees do not file is because they are unaware of the credit, they cannot deal with the complexities of the long-form 1040, or they fear that they may have past or current tax liabilities that they will have to pay (although EITC experts say the credit will probably wipe out any such liabilities). To deal with the issues of knowledge and complexity, Klein has had TPG staff trained on EITC issues. For the training, Klein and TPG use the Center for Budget Policy and Priorities, a Washington, DC, policy and advocacy group that runs a foundation-funded national campaign through nonprofits, state and local governments, unions, churches, and employers to alert low-wage earners and their employers of their possible eligibility for and how to apply for the EITC.

Klein's first goal is to help employees apply for the EITC at tax filing time in the spring, and TPG can help with that. Her second goal is to promote the use of advance EITC with Marriott so that workers can draw down the credit concurrently with their paychecks, putting additional cash in their pockets without having to wait until tax filing time. TPG can help with that, too. Attaining both goals requires cooperation by Marriott managerial and payroll

people—to educate employees to file for EITC in the first instance and to welcome and process applications for advance EITC in the second.

As a device to promote EITC throughout Marriott's ranks, Klein plans to take advantage of a provision of the law that allows individuals to file retroactively for EITC for up to three prior years.

"I can't really order managers to help employees use EITC, whether advance, current, or retroactively," she says, adding:

Besides, it's much better if they want to do this on their own. And applying for back EITC means we have to dig through our records and come up with old W2 forms and such for the prior years, which is a hassle local managers don't need. To get them to want to do this, I have to educate them, get their attention, give them an incentive. If you look at our wage and family structures, there have got to be at least 100 and probably a lot more Marriott employees with \$10,000 or so in back EITC due to them. We're going to mount a promotion—a contest or competition—among managers to find these people, and the one who generates the most EITC will get a free trip to Hawaii or something. Meanwhile, if we find that hundred or so, we'll have put \$1 million into employee pockets, and that will get everybody's attention to keep the ball rolling.

Using the ARL to help employees with clear personal and social problems has a fairly direct and measurable impact on employee attendance and performance at work; the ROI is measurable and sizable. Failing to claim the EITC has no such direct, immediate impact on employee performance, and it will be difficult, if not impossible, to measure the ROI of helping employees use the EITC. So why do it? Klein: "I really think we're beyond that question now. We market what these employees do. Anything we can do within reason to help our people will be repaid in loyalty and customer service. Our managers know that."

Implications and Opportunities for Jobs Initiative Sites

As this report notes, one major impediment to career advancement for some of the young adult workers in Casey Foundation Job Initiative sites is the host of personal and family problems that lessen their ability to hold jobs and progress to family-supporting earning levels. Similarly, such individuals are probably also often eligible for—but not claiming—the EITC. The Marriott Associate Resource Line is an apparently effective and cost-effective service directed squarely at these problems among Marriott employees, who, by and large, fit the defining characteristics of those targeted by the Jobs Initiative. Indeed, because Marriott has major facilities in every Jobs Initiative city, it is

likely that some residents of Jobs Initiative sites are Marriott employees and benefit from this service. The questions emerge:

Should the Jobs Initiative Development Intermediaries mount a similar service for non-Marriott workers within their designated Impact Communities? If so, how can they do so?

There will of necessity be some differences. Marriott undertakes the ARL as a national employer with large bases of employment in any city. For example, the Philadelphia Convention Center Marriott has 1,000 employees, 875 of whom are hourly. Indeed, all of TPG's services of this nature stem from an employer-employee relationship; the employer pays the per-capita fee as a benefit. In contrast, Jobs Initiative sites are defined geographically, and the targeted population works for an array of employers. Some of these employers may be as large as a Marriott facility, but most are probably medium-sized and small employers with limited benefit programs.

These considerations suggest that a Jobs Initiative service equivalent to the ARL would have to serve individuals from many employers. This, in turn, suggests that a Jobs Initiative agency should attempt either to sign up individual worker/residents for the service on a membership basis or to recruit employers into a consortium that would engage the service for their employees.

Drawing on her experience as the account executive for the path-breaking Marriott ARL, TPG's Beth McCarty has suggested recruiting Jobs Initiative site employers to participate in a consortium and asking them to help design the service and to define "success." Undoubtedly, most of these employers are struggling with similar and costly absenteeism, distraction on the job, and turnover. The prospect of alleviating these problems should interest them.

Smaller firms, with a tradition of limited benefits, may still be reluctant to buy immediately into an unproved service. McCarty suggests that the Jobs Initiative agency use Casey or other funding as a full subsidy for the service on a per-capita fee basis for the first year or so, until experience accumulates and clear benefits, costs, and returns on investment are demonstrated. In the second and subsequent years, the employers would be asked to pay the full, or an increasing share, of the costs of the service, with the subsidy phasing out well before the end of the Jobs Initiative time frame. Such a service could include advice on utilizing the EITC.

Who would provide such a "hot line" service to the residents of Jobs Initiative sites?

- A Jobs Initiative site agency could mount and operate it, perhaps as one of several career advancement services offered to site residents.

- Because TPG may already offer the service to Marriott employees in most or all Jobs Initiative communities, a site agency could negotiate with TPG to provide it, drawing upon the knowledge of and experience with local providers already accumulated in serving area residents.

Jobs Initiative sites may or may not want to head down the road of phone referral services. If they decide to do so, this case study should assist them in thinking through the options and potential gains from such an effort.

Appendix B Issues in Attracting Care-Giving Paraprofessionals to Good Programs

By Judith Combes Taylor

Part of the research for designing effective job retention and advancement strategies is basic marketing: find out what the potential clients care about and want—and what they don't want.

During discussions in March, several staff members from Jobs Initiative sites reported encountering problems attracting workers or employers to their efforts. Some cases involved strategies to upgrade the skills or job levels of clients; others concerned programs to benefit employers. As one staff member summed up the problem: "We thought that, if we threw a party, the people would just come—but that isn't necessarily happening."

In response, Jobs for the Future undertook a brief inquiry into the reasons why response rates for good programs might be low and what some strategies might be that sites could build into the design and delivery of their efforts. We have used health care as the industry from which to draw lessons. Most Jobs Initiative sites have targeted this sector, which typifies the problems and promises of post-industrial America's service economy. Huge and diverse, health care embraces occupations requiring few skills and those that require half a lifetime to master. It is a major source of entry-level employment, providing 2.2 million paraprofessional jobs. It is also a dominant employer of women of color: one-fifth of employed African-American women work in health care.¹ Yet few career paths connect the low-skill occupations to the moderately skilled ones or the moderately skilled to the highly skilled. The possibility of constructing career ladders across these clusters interests both industry officials worried about labor shortages and organizations committed to helping people in low-wage jobs advance.

We focus on evidence from programs and people that train entry-level paraprofessions in health care, including non-credentialed and credentialed care providers working in hospitals, home health care agencies, long-term health care facilities, and mental health/mental retardation care facilities.² (Typical job titles are home-health aide, nurse aide, nurse assistant, certified

¹ See "The Job Gap: Where Are the Living Wages?" (Jobs for the Future, 1997).

² Many people in mental health/mental retardation consider themselves part of the field of human services, not health care. Nevertheless, the similarities among the occupations warrant their inclusion here.

nurse assistant, and mental health aide.) Learning from efforts to promote job retention and advancement in these occupations is likely to be instructive to Jobs Initiative sites for a number of reasons:

- These occupations are likely to attract people the Jobs Initiative has targeted—those with low incomes and who face significant challenges in the labor market.
- Advancement in these occupations is problematic.
- Entry-level requirements are low—usually not even a high school diploma. At the same time, certification often calls for better reading comprehension than is typically found among adults lacking a high school credential.
- The pay ranges from the minimum wage to \$7 to \$8 per hour. In other words, the maximum before-tax annual income for year-round, full-time employment—which is highly unlikely—is about \$16,500.
- Many workers can't get full-time work at one site. Frequently, they patch together jobs for different employers. (Hospital work is an exception in some locales.)
- The work is physically demanding, especially for the care of clients. It also entails some paraprofessional health care responsibilities as well as higher-level generic skills, such as problem solving. The required skill level may be rising with cost-containment initiatives that transfer certain skilled tasks from professionals to lower-cost paraprofessionals.
- In most locales each occupation is distinct, but efforts are emerging to develop unified training and certification systems that would prepare and credential people for a range of health-related occupations.

Our research draws primarily on interviews. We spoke with one employer of home health aides, representatives from fairly typical nursing homes and hospitals, and experts, both independent and based in unions or hospital-sponsored programs. The home-health employer—Cooperative Home Care Associates (CHCA), with business sites in New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia—was founded on the belief that it could provide stable, well-supported jobs and compete with other providers. While not a typical employer, CHCA has accumulated significant experience in ways to remain competitive while meeting employee needs.³ Another important source of

³ Especially helpful on CHCA were written materials or interviews with Peggy Powell, Seth

information and perspective was Local 509 of the Service Employees International Union in Boston, which represents mental health paraprofessionals.

This study asks two questions. First: *Why are participation levels low?* What barriers keep care-giving paraprofessionals from participating in innovative job retention and advancement programs? What factors that appear to inhibit participation need to be addressed by intermediaries seeking to improve participation rates? We do not try to provide a comprehensive answer: for example, we do not focus on issues of child care, transportation and other very real logistical barriers. Rather, we explore some of the informational and psychological factors that can make a real difference in the way potential participants perceive and assess programs.

We then ask about *strategies to address the barriers* identified. Our focus is on ways program designers might improve marketing, design, and delivery, with a particular focus on a few ideas for reducing employee resistance to participation.

This short presentation concentrates on the motivations and decision-making process of paraprofessionals. Because of time and resource limitations, we intentionally left out the other half of the equation—the employers who must see that efforts to help low-skill workers keep and advance in jobs and careers are serving their interests as well. In the body of this report, we emphasize, for example, the importance of Return on Investment evidence to employers. We also highlight the ways in which intermediary organizations could reduce some of the risk and the costs to employers of choosing, designing, and implementing job retention and advancement efforts. A thorough analysis of how best to understand employer needs and market services that attract them would be a core component of any successful Jobs Initiative effort.

Why are participation levels low?

Low response levels to adult education and training programs are not uncommon. From our interviewees in the health care field, we heard examples of training classes that had attracted only one or two individuals, even though the programs had been customized for care-giving paraprofessionals and held at convenient sites, with employers paying the

Evans, and Steve Dawson. Also helpful were Mary Ann Wilner, an expert in long-term health care, and Mary Jo Connelly of SEIU Local 509. Also see two papers by Dawson about CHCA: "Welfare-to-Work: An Employer's Dispatch from the Front" and "The Final Grant Report, Year III, Cooperative Home Care of Boston."

costs. And we heard how entry-level paraprofessionals frequently lack interest in promotion to supervisory levels, even when the path to promotion is relatively easy to negotiate.

Job retention and advancement strategies differ from typical job training programs in one very important respect. Pre-employment training is available to those who are looking for work and who qualify for the services. Participants self-select (or the justice system orders them to sign up). Program operators serve those who come to them. Program designers and deliverers do not have to market to a particular group of employed workers. But Jobs Initiative sites looking to introduce or expand training, education, or other services designed to increase job retention and advancement must pay much greater attention to issues of marketing. This requires a careful assessment of what the target population wants and values, how its members view their options, and how they decide about those options.

To some extent, individual judgments about participation in voluntary programs can be understood in terms of economic decision making. If I can choose to participate or not, I'll make some rough (or more refined) calculation of the costs and benefits of participation—as I see them. The caveat is important because I may inaccurately assess either the costs or the benefits. If I discount the benefits, I may decide to forego the opportunity. If the costs as I define them are high, I will be more likely to decline.

This economic framework is helpful. As we note below, there is reason to believe that care-giving paraprofessionals indeed make different calculations of costs and benefits than program designers might assume. At the same time, though, we must be careful to look beyond the economic to non-economic factors that are critically important to individuals and groups of workers—and that influence the economic calculus dramatically.

From our interviews, conversations with Jobs Initiative personnel, and written materials, we have identified several important ways in which program developers may misunderstand how care-giving paraprofessionals assess the value of career advancement initiatives:

- Front-line paraprofessionals may make assumptions about the economy and workplace dynamics that lead them to a lower valuation of skill development and career advancement strategies.
- Certain immediate concerns of paraprofessionals may be of greater value to them than job advancement and other longer-term considerations.
- Front-line paraprofessionals may, from prior experience, see little benefit and low value to educational programs in their field.

- Front-line workers might value certain non-economic aspects of their work life more than program developers fully appreciate.

Front-line paraprofessionals may make assumptions about the economy and workplace dynamics that lead to a lower valuation of skill development and career advancement strategies.

Today's economy and labor market are quite different from the ones our parents navigated. Yet, Americans vary greatly in their understanding of the changes that are underway (e.g., rising skill demands; the collapse of internal job ladders; expectations of more effort and greater flexibility from employees, with or without increased compensation).

There is some evidence that the stronger one's attachment to the labor force and the more actively involved one is in the economy, the more complete and up-to-date will be one's understanding of the economy and its new rules. A public-opinion survey conducted in Flint, Michigan, found that welfare recipients and other people with low incomes were much more likely to underestimate significantly the skill levels needed to get and retain decently paying jobs. Their assessment of the economy within which they lived looked backward to the economy that was, not forward to the economy that is coming. Care-giving paraprofessionals may have a perspective on labor markets that differs from those who are designing programs for them.

Just as front-line paraprofessionals may misread changes in the economy, they may also base assumptions about job advancement on an older, rapidly disappearing, economic structure.

One such assumption is that increases in compensation should accompany increases in job responsibility and skills. In today's workplaces, where "retooling" and upskilling are often a basic requirement of employment, this traditional relationship of job tasks and responsibilities to pay is eroding. This new reality could lead to resentment and resistance from employees when they are asked to attend programs on their own time, and perhaps at their own expense, to learn new skills for which there will be no additional pay.

Similarly, the role of supervisor has changed dramatically in many workplaces. Supervisors have less authority and status than in the past; a trend toward decision making at the team level and greater autonomy for front-line workers is common. Interviewees reported that resistance to advancement into supervisory positions is not uncommon. Some feel that such promotions mean burdensome responsibilities without significantly higher pay and status.

Certain immediate concerns of paraprofessionals may be of greater value to them than longer-term considerations, including job advancement.

Paraprofessionals in the health field may place certain short-term concerns above longer-term career advancement in their "hierarchy of needs." The results of a survey administered by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509 in Boston is instructive. The SEIU survey asked front-line paraprofessionals to identify education or training classes they *would like to take*, and it asked supervisors and managers what classes paraprofessional workers *should take*.

There was virtually no overlap between the responses of the two groups. Employers selected classes that would strengthen broad and transferable skills (for example, writing and team-building). In follow-up focus groups, employers said they wanted to improve workers' "SCANS" skills, i.e., workplace know-how and employability skills, based on an understanding of industry trends.⁴ They believed it was important for employees to become aware of industry skill standards, and they wanted to help develop career paths for their workers.

Paraprofessionals showed no interest in these generic skill training programs. Instead, they tended to select classes whose titles conveyed concrete and practical subjects (for example, filling out forms and using computers). They primarily wanted to make their work lives easier and safer. For example, front-line workers said they felt harassed by employers over paperwork and wanted to reduce the hassle, so they opted for a class in filling out forms correctly. Paraprofessionals gave priority to courses that would help them cope with burnout, blood-borne pathogens, and violence in the workplace because they felt profoundly at risk in their jobs. Employers' choices revealed little awareness of these anxieties. SEIU's Mary Jo Connelly commented that "many front-line workers are so worn out they don't have a picture that anything is possible."

Front-line paraprofessionals may, from prior experience, see little benefit and low value to educational programs in their field.

Most doctors and other health care *professionals* would automatically connect education and training to career advancement, perceiving a continuum that begins with general education, continues into advanced training, and leads to

⁴ SCANS stands for the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, a blue-ribbon commission which defined generic work-related skills employers expect from entry-level workers.

a successful career. They would view the overall experience as a necessary part of moving into jobs that are rewarding in multiple ways.

In contrast, *paraprofessionals* are more likely to view education and training as unpleasant and unrewarding. Many lower-skilled workers have negative associations with classroom learning. They may have performed poorly in school or failed in remedial classes in prior training programs. Furthermore, the in-service training that most care-giving paraprofessionals must attend periodically are typically poorly designed and delivered. A representative of SEIU Local 509 reported that many paraprofessionals in her union have come to hate training, which they experience as being "talked at." Quite often, their disdain for these programs is appropriate.

Front-line workers might value certain non-economic aspects of their work life more than program developers fully appreciate.

From our interviews, we identified three priorities among the care-giving paraprofessional community which might, if absent, increase resistance or, if present, encourage participation. These are non-economic concerns and values that may be more highly valued by this population than program designers appreciate. The three priorities are: a desire for respect, a professional pride in caring for people, and a high valuation on personal and professional support in times of personal or family crisis.

What can help increase participation rates?

The job retention and advancement strategies identified in the body of this report can only be effective if workers participate in them. From the perspective taken above, higher participation will be more probable if program designers and developers carefully assess—prior to offering a particular program or service—the target population's perceptions of its needs and priorities. Our analysis is not meant to ignore or underestimate the importance of support services, such as day care and transportation, or economic issues, such as the hard costs of training and the challenge for low-income workers of finding the time to participate in the context of lives that are generally quite stressed. Rather, we want to emphasize a few marketing, design, and implementation issues that may be less typically recognized as important barriers to participation in job enrichment activities.

Conduct careful market research to find out what the target group of workers cares about, wants—and fears.

If the target population is likely to have very different perceptions about the value of services being offered it than do the designers of the services,

interventions are likely to be received with resistance and limited enthusiasm.

Mary Ann Wilner, an expert in long-term health care, emphasized the importance of conducting market research with potential participants, so that programs "build in up-front customer satisfaction." The tools of public opinion and market research—focus groups, surveys, etc.—should be part of the process of program design and redesign.

Develop job retention and advancement strategies that meet workers' identified needs and respond to workers' values.

As noted above, our interviews identified three relational priorities that care-giving paraprofessionals appear to value highly: a desire for respect, a professional pride in caring for people, and a recognition that support may be needed in times of personal or family crisis. These three priorities are likely to influence the responses of front-line workers to market research on program design and implementation. They may also represent basic "attractions" around which programs might be designed.

Respect: In the SEIU survey, many respondents added a "write-in vote" when asked what courses they would like to take. The desired course: on giving and getting respect. Mary Anne Wilner noted the same concern when describing the failure of visiting nurses to acknowledge the accumulating skills and wisdom of home health aides. The aides experienced this as a lack of respect, which became a source of alienation. It is reasonable that people will crave respect deeply if their jobs call for skill and unrelenting hard work but provide limited material rewards and little esteem. *Programs that acknowledge and support this need will be more likely to capture workers' attention.*

Pleasure in caring: Equally important for paraprofessionals is the pleasure they derive from caring for people. Wilner noted this as the reason many care-giving paraprofessionals put up with low pay, poor working conditions, and few prospects for advancement. Cooperative Home Care Associates has identified this pleasure as the primary characteristic it seeks in applicants for home health aide positions. Taking pride in providing quality care is a source of self esteem and the basis of paraprofessional's demand for respect. *Programs that appreciate and take this professional pride into account will be more popular and motivating.*

CHCA is pioneering the development of incentives based on professional pride in caring, putting it at the core of its operation and the training program's methodology. "We weave in the concept in everything we do—that personal care skills are a way to demonstrate caring," reports Steve Dawson of the efforts of CHCA's Training Institute. CHCA has broadened

"competency" to "include an aide's ability to demonstrate a caring professionalism." Commendations from supervisors cite aides' professional skills in caring. In other words, CHCA has integrated a core value of both its employees and its customers into its training and management practices. *This suggests the opportunity to develop incentive systems based on the demonstration of caring professionalism.*

Recognition of the need for support: The work most home care workers or other care-givers provide is difficult, poorly paid, and held in low esteem. The people who accept it tend to lack personal and family resources that might cushion more financially secure people from the shocks of daily life: sick children, ailing relatives, failing automobiles, unforgiving landlords. *The realities of work in the care-giving paraprofessions make certain kinds of support essential for stable, long-term employment relationships.*

Cooperative Home Care Associates sites have built support into the employment structure. In Boston, for example, a full-time counselor helps workers iron out problems with the welfare department, which is becoming increasingly aggressive in cutting its rolls and expenses. *Job retention and advancement strategies that incorporate personal and professional support—setting up support groups, for example, or the provision of mentors who can train supervisors in coaching skills—may be attractive to many workers.*

A fourth, more economically driven, priority should also be noted. In focus groups conducted by Robert Lerman of the Urban Institute, low-skill workers emphasized that they "must see clear pathways between what they are learning and its applications to their careers."⁵ Many workers will be skeptical that the learning they have to do is necessary, and they must have some confidence they will succeed. According to Lerman, effective marketing would make "clear pathways" visible, identifying the ways that learning will contribute to the good of the workers (and the employer), either through the payoff of earning certificates for skills learned or signals that skill development will be rewarded.

Use effective learning methods developed for working adults.

Adults learn in quite different ways from the traditional pedagogical practices of schools for children. Three principles are especially important for effective learning for adults in the workplace:⁶

⁵ Robert Lerman, "The Future of Work and Implications for Training Policy," Keynote speech delivered at TEC National Council Learning for Life Conference, September 4, 1996.

⁶ See *Learning at Work in a Work-Based Welfare System: Opportunities and Obstacles*, by

- The content of the learning must be applicable to the trainee's work and immediately applied in the work context.

This is sometimes called "functional context learning." Consider the interest of front-line workers in blood-borne pathogens. Functional context learning would take note of the workers' interest in learning about certain diseases—derived from legitimate concerns to avoid contamination—to provide practical demonstrations of techniques for delivering professional-level care and avoiding infection, while using these opportunities as occasions to provide more abstract instruction.

Active, experiential learning would reinforce the power of the lessons—that is, the lessons would be delivered in authentic health-care settings, supplemented by classroom instruction but not relying entirely on it. Instructors would provide immediate feedback as trainees attempt to use what they learn.

- *The learning content must relate to clearly articulated competencies and associated standards. Performance-based methods, in which trainees demonstrate competence in relation to the standards, would assess the effectiveness of learning.*

Cooperative Health Care Associates has devoted significant attention to defining and describing a standard of "caring professionalism." Home health aides demonstrate competence in caring professionalism with observable actions, such as "establishing a therapeutic relationship with the patient" and "reporting back to the supervising nurse."

Unfortunately, the soft skills and discretionary effort that matter most to employers are often the competencies least easy to articulate. Many employers say they can *feel* good customer service (or initiative taking or problem solving) but can't put what that is into words.

- *Mentors—experts who model what has been learned and who advise novices—can play a critically important role in structuring and supporting learning and building confidence.*

A growing body of research documents the value of supportive counselors or mentors, whose presence and actions demonstrate respect and esteem. The need for support is especially acute for disadvantaged young adults who are entering the labor market. Mentors have two main roles. They teach new

Judith Combes Taylor (Jobs for the Future, 1997).

workers the skills and knowledge needed to perform the job and survive and thrive in the workplace, and they provide support during challenging times.

Several approaches might provide paraprofessionals with many of the benefits of mentoring:

- Train supervisors in coaching methods. Supervisors are often former entry-level workers themselves and usually responsible for training new workers. (This approach puts the supervisor in a mentor role, which is not ideal, yet it also increases the likelihood that the tutorial relationship will be fruitful.)
- Provide moral support through organized support groups or a paid counselor.
- Train entry-level workers within a unit to support one another.

Conclusion

Traditional job training programs, which have targeted low-income Americans for decades, would seem to be a potential source for models for attracting workers to strategies to improve job retention and advancement, but in practice their relevance is limited. Traditional programs, constrained by federal mandates and funding requirements, have focused exclusively on the unemployed or those trying to enter the labor market for the first time. Programs rely on voluntary participation during normal working hours. Most have had weak links with employers, and once clients obtain employment, the relationship with the program provider typically ends.

More relevant to job retention and advancement efforts are models that address the mutual needs of both *clients who are in jobs and the employers for whom they work*. Those needs and priorities are not always as apparent as they seem—for employers or target groups of workers. In the above pages, we noted some of the challenges to, and opportunities for, designing career advancement training and skill development programs that could attract a larger proportion of target workers. We have emphasized a few key considerations for Jobs Initiative planners:

- Pay careful attention to the ways in which different populations make cost/benefit calculations about participation in a given program or service. Some of these calculations are economic and some are not. Core values are not always obvious, but solid market research can "build in customer satisfaction up-front."

- Ask and answer questions that relate to improving participation early in the design process and certainly before large-scale recruitment and program delivery. Although this paper focuses only on the target worker population, the same care in understanding calculations of relative value and costs must be conducted for employers.
- Emphasize effective learning methods and pedagogy. The education system has ill-served this target population. "More of the same" will not do. Build principles of effective adult learning into design and delivery.

Appendix C
Enriching Low-Wage/Low-Skill Jobs:
Strategies For The Casey Jobs Initiative
March 7, 1997
List of Attendees

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Work and Families Institute
New York, NY

Jyathia Christo-Rodgers
Metropolitan Area Committee
New Orleans, LA

John Colborn
Philadelphia Jobs Initiative
(Delaware Valley Community
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Laura Dresser
Milwaukee Jobs Initiative
(Center On Wisconsin Strategy)
Madison, WI

Steve Herzenberg
Keystone Research Center
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Barry Johnson
Osage Initiatives
Denver, CO

Judy Kaufmann
Rich Rainaldi
Denver Jobs Initiative
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Denver, CO

Anne Keeney
Marie Kurose
Seattle Mayor's Office
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Donna Klein
Marriott International
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Kathy Mance
Kathy Mannes
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Stuart Ray
Burger King
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David Rosen
Adult Literacy Resource Institute
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Mark Troppe
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Gaithersburg, MD

Fatima Weathers
Cleveland Advanced Manufacturing
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Mary Ann Wilner and Associates
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