

A Brief Review of the Education and Employment Needs of IIF Families – March 19, 2012

Introduction

This report provides information about the education and employment needs of 94 IIF families.

Data sources include:

- ◆ The IIF Assessment data for 94 families;
- ◆ Evaluator interviews with the Navigator and YWCA Employment staff;
- ◆ Initial IIF Employment Life Domain Ratings by the Navigator;
- ◆ YWCA employment data; and
- ◆ Evaluator interviews with 28 families referred for employment

Education and Employment Needs

Education

Initial IIF assessment data documenting the highest level of education for 94 IIF families reveal that:

- ◆ 2% had only an elementary school education (4th-6th grade);
- ◆ 2% had only a middle school education (6th-8th grade) education;
- ◆ 20% had attended some high school but not graduated or earned a GED;
- ◆ 19% had earned a GED and not pursued advanced training or education;
- ◆ 14% had earned a high school diploma and not pursued advanced training or education:
- ◆ 40% had earned a high school degree or GED and pursued some next step training or education but had not earned certificates or degrees; and
- ◆ 3% had earned an AA, BA degree or advanced degree.

Employment

Employment data revealed that: 19 (20%) were working when they entered the program – of these, 13 (13%) were in permanent jobs, 5(5%) in temporary jobs and 2(2%) in seasonal jobs.

Navigator assessments of the employment needs of 88 participants resulted in 91% of the participants receiving Level 1 or Level 2 ratings, underscoring that they were “in crisis” or “at risk”. A breakdown of the number/percent of individuals receiving different employment ratings are presented below:

Level 1: Unemployed with no prospects or skills- seeking employment – 69(78%)

Level 2: Temporary or part-time employment with no benefits – 11(13%)

Level 3: Has permanent stable employment for as many hours as desired with no benefits – 6(7%)

Level 4: Full-time, adequate pay, limited benefits - 1(1%)

Level 5: Permanent, stable, sustaining employment and are receiving full benefits (retirement, supplemental benefits) -1(1%)

Current School or Training Enrollment

IIF assessment data suggests that 26(28%) were engaged in school or training when they enrolled in the program. Further review revealed that this data was higher than the actual number which was closer to 18% because some individuals were not actively pursuing their GED or college courses, even though they reported that they were a GED student. This suggests that the assessment tool needs to be revised and/or include prompts to get more accurate information.

Interest in Enrolling in School or Training

The number of people reporting *an interest in* enrolling in school or training was likely significantly higher than the actual number of people who were *ready to pursue* school or training. The data showed that:

- ◆ A high number of people 70 (75%) said they were *interested in* going to school or training.
- ◆ 29(41%) of the above 70 individuals noted that certain circumstances would interfere with their near term engagement in school or training. These circumstances, in order of frequency include:
 - adult health problems (pregnancy ; asthma, migraines, back problems, seizure disorder, short term memory loss, allergies, upcoming surgery; chronic bronchitis, COPD); (10)
 - adult mental health issues (severe depression, anxiety, PTSD, Bipolar Disorder agoraphobia); (9)
 - the need to care for children with special needs or medical needs (autism, multiple sclerosis); (6) and;
 - lack of childcare. (4)

(It should be noted that these types of issues would likely apply equally to their ability to obtain and retain employment).

In addition, three individuals were still engaged in therapy or intensive out-patient activities making it difficult for them to pursue school or training. Another individual was waiting to hear about the disposition of a Labor & Industry claim and did not want to start working if s/he could receive benefits. One woman faced health issues that caused her to stay at home, but said she might be interested in taking on-line classes. Three people who were homebound due to personal or other family member health barriers indicated that they might be interested in working if they could find jobs they could do from their homes. A handful was moving to different housing and hesitant to initiate education or employment activities until they were settled in their new homes.

IIF Families Need Access to Different Approaches to Employment

The education and employment data and input from families during interviews with the IIF evaluator suggest that in regard to education and employment there are at least three main groups of families:

- ◆ The first group includes individuals who need extensive support and/or time to get re-engaged in the labor force, and are ready to engage in structured volunteer work, basic skill education classes, supported employment, social enterprise or other short term work experience opportunities. This group includes people who need extensive educational supports as well as people who may be engaged in many other services (support groups, treatment groups, etc.) or have legal or family problems they need to resolve before pursuing competitive employment. This group also included people who are homebound because they or other members of their family have health problems, but are interested in engaged in home based on- line learning or work. This group needs resources for persons who are mentally ill and disabled that include strong connections with current WorkSource partners, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Developmental Disabilities, and Department of Corrections.
- ◆ The second group includes families who are ready for WIA or other intensive WorkSource services and likely candidates for engaging in volunteer opportunities, internships, on-job-training, or other part-time or full-time employment while receiving services. The people in this group need help negotiating these resources and would be good candidates for enrollment into a WorkSource program offering intensive and training services.
- ◆ The third group includes WorkSource core and self-services clients. This group is able to use self-help resources and to negotiate their job search efforts independently.

IIF Training & Employment System Building Efforts

In the pilot phase of IIF about 45% of the families fell into the first group above, the second group comprised about 35%, and the third group 20%.

Additional resources to address the needs of persons in the first group need to be more fully integrated into the IIF Employment system, underscoring the benefits of engaging social enterprise and supported employment providers. As a result, the WCDSC has worked with HopeWorks to develop a list of these providers and is organizing a convening including these providers and IIF system partners to learn more about these resources. One of the emerging system reforms occurring as a result of IIF is the addition and strengthening of resources available to persons who fall into the first group described above. A draft list of Social Enterprise and Supported Employment providers is included at the end of this report.

A Family Employment & Training Assessment May Need to be Designed to Assess Family Employment Needs and Assets

Family interviews conducted by the IIF Evaluator suggest that in addition to the more traditional education and employment data, family education and employment plans need to include information about how the following elements might specifically impinge upon a family member's ability to participate effectively in employment and training.

- ◆ Child health, behavior or education concerns;
- ◆ Family need for and schedule for accessing specialized resources (health, mental health, family counseling, etc.);
- ◆ Mandatory involvement of family in court related issues, work or treatment;
- ◆ Criminal justice issues that may interfere with and individual's ability to pursue certain types of training or get work;
- ◆ Family access to bus routes and reliable transportation;
- ◆ The degree and nature of support of other family members;
- ◆ Changes in family housing status, subsidies or income;
- ◆ The timing and status of family unemployment and disability claims; and
- ◆ Changes in family composition.

Partners are laying the groundwork for an IIF system in which the education and employment portions of the plan would be updated and shared electronically by the Housing Resource Specialist, the Navigator, and Education/Employment providers. Changes in income would be continually entered, as this information acts as a flag for connecting families to immediate work and/or to longer term education and training resources. The system partners would be united in their support of the family pathway to employment efforts which may need to include immediate access to employment in low wage jobs so that the family will be eligible for housing, followed by longer term training or

education. Partners would also be aware of other effective practice work underway and would connect with system partners such as Building Changes, United Way, and others dedicated to increasing the income and assets of homeless persons.

Cross System Strategies to Support Education and Employment Efforts Could be Beneficial

Currently the engagement of families in education and employment opportunities is largely voluntary. To increase family engagement, other systems referring to IIF, such as TANF and the DCFS Family Unification Program, may want to require IIF involvement in their education and employment plans for families. The Housing Resource Specialist may also want to make certain types of flex fund supports contingent upon family engagement and progress in IIF education and employment activities. In response to this typography, WDCSC staff has developed the attached preliminary IIF employment services flow chart for discussion and development.

Supported Employment and Social Enterprise Providers

Organization	Location	Target Population	Website	Industry	Employment Type	Social Enterprise
Bridgeways	Everett	People who are mentally ill	http://www.bridgeways.org/	Manufacturing	In-house structured work environment	Bridgeways Enterprises
Cares of Washington	Seattle, serving SnoCo	People with disabilities or who are low income	http://www.caresofwa.org/snohomish_county.htm	---	Individual placement	---
Diversified Industrial Services	Everett, Mukilteo	People with disabilities	http://www.godiversified.com/	Manufacturing, recycling center	In-house structured work environment	Diversified
Everett Gospel Mission	Everett	People who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness	http://www.egmission.org/home	--	Individual placement	--
Goodwill	South Everett, Marysville	People with disabilities	http://www.seattlegoodwill.org/	Retail, customer service	Individual placement	Goodwill Outlet Stores
Habitat for Humanity	TBD	TBD	http://www.habitatsnohomish.org/	Construction	Individual placement	In development
HopeWorks	Everett	People who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness	---	Construction	Individual placement	GroundWorks
Northwest Center	Puget Sound, serving SnoCo	People with disabilities	http://www.nwcenter.org/	Business services, manufacturing	Individual placement	13 businesses, full list on website
Pioneer Human Services	Puget Sound, serving SnoCo	People who are chemically dependent, mentally ill, ex-offenders, or experiencing homelessness	http://www.pioneerhumanservices.org/	Construction, food services, manufacturing, pest detection	Individual placement	Pioneer Construction Services, Pioneer Food Buying Service, Pioneer Industries, Pioneer Pest Detection
Provail	Seattle, serving SnoCo	People with disabilities	http://www.provail.org/	---	Individual placement	---
Puget Sound Personnel, Inc	Bellevue, serving SnoCo	People with disabilities	http://www.pspwork.com/Home.asp	---	Individual placement	---
Service Alternatives	Statewide, serving SnoCo	People with disabilities	http://www.servalt.com/index.html	---	Individual placement, Community Jobs	---
Sherwood Community Services	Lake Stevens	People with disabilities	http://www.sherwoodcs.org/	Manufacturing, industrial kitchen services, computer cleaning	In-house structured work environment, individual placement	It's All Good For Pets
Skills, Inc	Arlington	People with disabilities, high school students with special needs	http://www.skillsinc.com/index.html	Manufacturing	In-house structured work environment, individual placement	Aerospace Internship Program

Organization	Location	Target Population	Website	Industry	Employment Type	Social Enterprise
Special Care Agency	Carnation, serving SnoCo	People with disabilities	http://www.specialcareagency.com/index.php	---	Individual placement	---
Village Community Services	Arlington	People with disabilities	http://www.villagecommunitysvcs.org/	Agriculture, food services	TBD	In development
TRAC Associates	Everett	People with disabilities, veterans with disabilities, people with special needs, people who are low-income or have limited English proficiency	http://www.tracassoc.com/	--	Individual placement, Community Jobs	--
Washington Vocational Services	Mountlake Terrace, serving SnoCo	People with disabilities	http://www.wvs.org/about.php	Food services	Individual placement	Auntie Anne's
Work Force Development Center	Mukilteo	Vulnerable youth	www.wfdcenter.org/	Manufacturing	In-house structured work environment	Work Force Development Center
Work Opportunities	Lynnwood	People with disabilities	http://www.workopportunities.org/	Manufacturing	In-house structured work environment, individual placement	Work Opportunities

To be added upon further exploration and information:

Catholic Community Services Western Washington, Volunteers of America Western Washington, YWCA, Housing Hope, Refugee Forum

Basic Food, Employment, and Training Program - Jan Strand

Employment Services Flow Chart

