



SkillWorksSM
PARTNERS FOR A PRODUCTIVE WORKFORCE

SEEING OPPORTUNITIES. CREATING SOLUTIONS.

WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS

Building Services Career Path

In order to build career advancement opportunities for low-skill building custodians, the Voice and Future Fund, the nonprofit arm of Service Employees International Union Local 615, partners with building management companies, including Acme Building Services, American Cleaning Company, AM-PM, Centennial One, One Source, and Unicco, as well as Harvard and MIT, the janitors union, a number of community-based organizations, and the Massachusetts Worker Education Roundtable. The fund was formed after a 2003 strike that pit the union representing the men and women who clean Boston's office buildings against the companies that manage services to many of those buildings.

Labor and management are committed to improving English language skills among a large immigrant workforce and to provide them with more advanced training in facilities maintenance and skilled trades, leading to career pathways for full-time employment with benefits. In addition, the Building Services Career Path reconnects foreign-trained workers to their fields and younger workers to education. This innovative partnership brings training providers to the workplace at times that accommodate the working schedules of building custodians, while engaging employers in reshaping their promotional systems to help part-time, entry-level workers progress.

Skill Works engages in three key strategies:

Workforce Partnerships

Industry-sector or occupationally-based workforce intermediaries are the operational approach to achieving the SkillWorks goals.

Public Policy Advocacy

SkillWorks seeks to institutionalize better ways for low-income individuals to enter and succeed in the workforce.

Capacity Building

SkillWorks provides capacity building assistance to help workforce partnerships become more effective at providing workforce training and education services.

GRANTEES

January 2006

Health Care and Research Training Institute

The Boston Health Care and Research Training Institute is a partnership of eleven health care employers, one union, three community colleges and training agencies, ten community organizations, and the Boston Private Industry Council. Led by the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation and Fenway Community Development Corporation, it improves employment opportunities and career paths for Boston residents, leading to jobs paying family-supporting wages.

With SkillWorks funding, the institute is solidifying a career ladders project in the health care and research sector, with a focus on Boston's Longwood Medical and Academic Area. The effort will result in a model of workforce development services in the health care and research field, one that is agile and responsive to the changing needs of employers, employees, and community residents.

HCRTI has two connected focuses: building an employment pipeline from the neighborhood into health care and research jobs; and providing multiple levels of training, education, and support to front-line workers interested in advancing into areas of skill shortages for the participating employers. The project benefits employers, residents, and workers. For employers, it provides a well-qualified and trained workforce and a better bottom line. And this neighborhood-employer collaboration has created an employment pipeline for residents by simplifying the recruiting and hiring processes for participating health care employers.

For more information: www.jpndc.org/jobs/healthcare.html.

Hotel Career Center

The Hotel Career Center, a partnership between the International Institute of Boston and the Hilton Hotel Corporation, Boston's largest hotel property management firm, is helping low-income recent immigrants move toward economic self-sufficiency, while at the same time helping the company train and retain high-performing employees. HCC provides job-specific language and skills training to program participants and places them in positions with growth potential at partner hotels.

The Hotel Career Center was established in 1998, to provide pre-employment training and placement for over 30 Boston-area

hotels. With SkillWorks funding, HCC has expanded to also serve entry-level hotel employees who do not have the English or other skills needed to participate in Hilton's in-house staff development programs. HCC helps these workers improve their language and computer skills so that they can perform better in their current jobs, increase their ability to participate in Hilton's career development training and to be promoted, and earn higher wages. HCC also provides career coaching to help participants develop short-term and long-term career goals. By providing these training opportunities through the partnership, the Hilton Hotel Corporation develops a better workforce, can better promote from within, and benefits from higher worker loyalty.

Partners in Automotive Career Education

Partners in Automotive Career Education (PACE), a partnership of four automotive repair firms with three community-based organizations and two schools, is building new career training capacity in automotive technology for low-income Boston residents. The Asian American Civic Association, La Alianza Hispana, and Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts are collaborating with Madison Park Vocational Technical High School and Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology as educational partners; the Massachusetts Automobile Dealers Association, Sullivan Tire, Village Automotive Group, and Bridgestone Firestone are their industry partners.

PACE helps employers analyze their staff skill development needs by training new employees and current entry-level workers in automotive skills and English language and math skills customized to the automotive industry. The partnership targets immigrants and African Americans, improving their access to an industry that pays good wages, presents low barriers to entry-level work, and offers many opportunities for career advancement. SkillWorks funding enables PACE to address the needs of an industry held back by a severe shortage of skilled employees, while providing Boston workers with new avenues for advancement to family-supporting incomes.

Partners in Career and Workforce Development

Partners in Career and Workforce Development (PCWD), led by Partners HealthCare, addresses labor shortages in nursing and other technical health care occupations by providing opportunities for low-income Boston residents to begin a career in this industry. PCWD builds on Partners' teaching mission to create a range of learning opportunities for entry-level and incumbent employees who are capable and motivated to advance in health care. It brings Partners' diverse pre-employment and career development efforts under one umbrella, making them more accessible to entry-level workers and their supervisors. Through SkillWorks, Partners is also developing hybrid courses, offered at community colleges, that integrate academic skill development with science prerequisites, and it is helping foreign-educated employees master professional-level English. In addition, career coaching helps participants understand and take advantage of career advancement opportunities and other supports available to them during the long process of completing postsecondary training that leads to better jobs.

Partners HealthCare works with its two founding hospitals, Massachusetts General Hospital and Brigham and Women's

Hospital, as well as Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, Whittier Street Health Center, and WorkSource Partners for career coaching. Transition to Work provides pre-employment training to community residents. Jewish Vocational Service has been involved in curriculum development. PCWD is also working with the MGH Institute of Health Professions to develop curricula to train clinicians as educators as a strategy to address the shortage of health care faculty in community colleges.

For more information: <http://www.partners.org/pcwd>.

CAPACITY BUILDING

SkillWorks' Capacity Building component has had two phases. The first phase provided six community-based organizations with financial, managerial, and technical service resources to: strengthen their organizational structures and systems, reach higher levels of workforce development services; and improve outcomes for their constituents. The grantees were Asian American Civic Association, Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation, La Alianza Hispana, Oficina Hispana, Project Place, Vietnamese American Civic Association. As a result of these first-phase investments, four organizations successfully competed to join Workforce Partnerships.

The second phase of Capacity Building focuses on helping the Workforce Partnerships achieve their two goals: providing career advancement resources to low-income job seekers and workers; and building career ladders for low-skilled workers with employers in specified industries. Activities include cross-site networking, technical assistance consulting, and training workshops on topics that help the partnerships and their service providers reach scale and sustain themselves for the long term.

PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY

Workforce Solutions Group

The Workforce Solutions Group is developing a common advocacy agenda for the SkillWorks initiative and raising the visibility of workforce development as a contributor to the economic well-being of workers, employers, and the Commonwealth. The goal is to make workforce development resources more easily accessible to workers and employers.

The Workforce Solutions Group, which is a partnership led by The Women's Union (fiscal agent), the Massachusetts Workforce Board Association, the Organizing Leadership and Training Center, and the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, engages in four major activities:

- **Statewide organizing of workers, employers and other stakeholders:** Regional forums organized around specific legislative opportunities and conduct ongoing outreach to constituent organizations.
- **Legislative advocacy:** Meetings with legislators, attendance at legislative hearings with supporters, and support for existing legislative priorities that further the SkillWorks goals.
- **Research:** Analysis of the workforce development system to identify promising state policy strategies and gaps in meeting the labor market needs of workers and employers.
- **Marketing:** Messaging forums and strategy, focus groups, statewide press conference.