
PARTNERSHIPS FOR OPENING DOORS

A summit on integrating employment and housing strategies to prevent and end homelessness

Community Profile

PHOENIX/MARICOPA COUNTY

The Continuum of Care (CoC) has implemented the first phase of our regional Coordinated Intake and Assessment System as required by HUD. People experiencing homelessness are identified through various outreach efforts in the community and referred to the access points either for singles or families. Individuals generally access emergency shelter first and then are assessed for the appropriate housing interventions. The community also has street outreach teams and monthly Project Connect events that identify individuals and families experiencing homelessness. A common assessment tool, the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) Vulnerability Index (VI) SPDAT and Family VI-SPDAT is used to assess the needs of the individual or family and match them to the most appropriate intervention, including diversion. Once in shelter and housing programs, the provider's case management plan focuses on employment to meet the HEARTH Act goals. This may include workforce training programs, assistance with resume development, childcare so parents can interview, as well as skill development and linkage to employment opportunities. Formerly chronically homeless individuals placed into permanent supportive housing address employment needs at their individualized pace through the Housing First model of case management.

Through various regional collaborations among workforce development program partners, community and faith-based organizations there is the opportunity to strengthen outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness to enhance employment opportunities while maximizing continuum of care services. The employment approach recommended is a hybrid model of currently used practices job readiness workshops, developing stronger employer relationships through Sector Strategies to understand their workforce needs, utilizing the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (IBEST) model to increase training and education attainments and developing on-job-training agreements (OJT) as strategy for work experience and entrance for gainful employment.

COLLABORATION

The leadership team that represents our community includes the following organizations.

1. City of Phoenix – Community and Economic Development Department: this Department provides resources and services to identify, assess and develop the talent pipeline to needs of employers and brings the systems resources for local workforce development programs.
2. Arizona Department of Economic Security – the State Workforce Agency - provides oversight of the State Workforce Labor Exchange system, Arizona Job Connection, and supports employment initiatives in the community.
3. Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Employment and Rehabilitative Services – they provide state administration of public workforce development programs.
4. Maricopa Association of Governments is the lead agency for the Regional Continuum of Care to End Homelessness.
5. UMOM New Day Centers (UMOM) is a Continuum of Care funded provider of shelter and housing for individuals and families and is the coordinated intake and assessment center pilot

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for the regions' Family Homeless Hub, with in-depth community knowledge of the most vulnerable population and employment programs.

6. Valley of the Sun United Way is a member of the Continuum of Care Board, community partner in Dedicating Opportunities to End Homelessness Initiative with HUD, and lead convener of the permanent supportive housing initiative for chronically homeless in Maricopa County.

Through this opportunity the Greater Metro Phoenix region is poised to connect existing workforce development collaborations (Maricopa Human Capital Collaboration, Phoenix Workforce Connection (PWC)/ Maricopa Workforce Connections (MWC) Access Points) to Continuum of Care agencies serving individuals and families experiencing lack of permanent housing. The city of Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board has formal agreements with over 25 plus community and faith based organizations convening around workforce development to develop, increase and access a pipeline of skilled, trained and qualified available workforce to meet the needs of business and industry.

As the existing workforce development partners link services and resources to Continuum of Care agencies serving those in shelters and permanent supportive housing programs, collaboration partners will contribute their expertise and leverage staff and proven and effective practices and share resources to help individuals obtain training and employment to provide resources to end homelessness and remain in permanent housing.

As the realigned collaboration of partners around homelessness and employment moves forward, existing resources and funding will be utilized until other funding strategies can be researched, discussed and fully vetted among the partners and stakeholders.

INNOVATION

At this juncture the opportunity is to connect workforce development programs and organizations to the CoC to create a focused and strategic approach to maximize shared goals and outcomes of the respective programs. Completing this application process has revealed a gap in knowledge regarding programs and service delivery models – workforce programs not necessarily having all the information and knowledge about the CoC and all the work that is happening; CoC/homeless sector feeling disconnected to the workforce programs. Although what has been revealed and discussed may not register as precisely innovative, it is clearly an opportunity for programs to think strategically and create a road map for collaboration and increase impact to the region. Just given this assignment, the city has begun to have cross-department meetings – workforce development and human services. Our community has not had strong intersections between the workforce system and the shelter and housing system. After the Summit, we will build a strong connective collaboration with the goals of: identifying highly vulnerable population with limited education and connecting them with employment, particularly by identifying industries that are more forgiving and understanding in working with harder to serve populations. We will set goals, create metrics and a measurement system with a clearly defined target population.

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FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

As of the time of this application, WIA funding for adult, dislocated workers and youth are accessible by the individuals regardless of their sub-population category. There is a focus on youth at-risk. City of Phoenix Workforce Connection (PWC) staff and service providers complete screening and assessment to determine the interest and needs of individuals accessing services. Our community service provider's parent organization offers a myriad of services beyond workforce development that are leveraged to better serve individuals accessing WIA resources. For Program Year (PY) 2014 agencies were allotted the following:

Adult Program Agencies	Award	Service Level
Friendly House	\$500,000	325
Arizona Women's Education and Employment	\$300,000	140
TOTAL	\$800,000	465

Youth Program Agencies		
Arizona Call-a-Teen Youth Resources - (Serving: General Youth, Youth Offender)	\$699,426	175+69= 244
Valley of the Sun YMCA - (Serving: General Youth, Pregnant/Parenting, HS Dropouts, Youth with Disabilities)	\$750,834	58+69+69+70= 266
Valley of the Sun United Way - ASPIRE (Serving: General Youth)	\$447,174	156
Jewish Family & Children's Service - (Serving: Foster Youth)	\$194,124	88
Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development - (Serving: Homeless)	\$184,800	78
Neighborhood Ministries (Serving: Youth of Incarcerated Parents)	\$128,092	50
Arizona Call-a-Teen Youth Resources – College and Career Success Youth Council	\$40,000	15
TOTAL	\$2,444,450	897

The WIA funding allocations for the city of Phoenix Workforce Connection cover all aspects of operations for the workforce program which includes subcontracting out a portion of funds for service delivery as reflected above. PY 2014 allocations by funding stream are for the general population, including individuals experiencing homelessness:

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Adult \$3,233,526; Youth \$3,396,638; Dislocated Worker \$3,291,221; Rapid Response \$364,566 = Total \$10,285,951. The number of people identifying themselves as 'homeless' in accessing these services = 243.

CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

Within the city of Phoenix the workforce development program is part of Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD). The relationships developed through CEDD divisions and staff will help identify hiring trends, training/workforce skills needed by private, public, and nonprofit sector employers. These relationships will allow city of Phoenix and regional workforce programs to help in identifying a pipeline of skilled and qualified candidates.

Difficulties completing education and gaining employment are two of the most significant factors that cause homelessness. For example, on average, 40% of the adult residents at UMOM have not completed high school or an equivalency, and currently only 14% of adult residents are employed. Many have no marketable skills and struggle to obtain employment.

HUD has identified several research-based job preparedness strategies that are most effective for individuals experiencing homelessness and low-income adults. These include conducting job training that provides hands-on, "real world" experiences; job coaching; and assistance with resume preparation, job searches, and support once people become employed. UMOM's Homegrown Program provides all of these.

The Homegrown Program helps residents gain marketable skills to obtain employment in the restaurant, catering, hospitality and other industries. There are 2,264 restaurants, 3,100+ catering services, and hundreds of other hospitality-based businesses in Maricopa County. Thus, there is a tremendous need for trained workers. Due to transportation and child care challenges, businesses that are in close proximity to UMOM and can offer flexible hours to single parents have been identified. The workforce development team works with adult residents, to prepare them to interview with a variety of food service employers. SSP and HMSHost manage the food concessions at the airport and call UMOM directly as they add each new food location. Aramark works closely with UMOM staff providing volunteers to role play with residents, and they have hired dozens of residents, as well as provided funding to support the workforce development program. Nibblers, a local catering company, and many of the food and beverage departments within area hotels, hire residents. They also provide feedback, which is incorporated into the workforce development program.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Community Population	3.9 million (Maricopa County)
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	5,918 (Maricopa County)

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2013 CoC award	\$26,653,450 (Maricopa County)
2013 WIA formula grant allocation	\$10,344,401 (Phoenix); \$13,357,733 (Maricopa County) = Regional Total \$23,702,134
Current unemployment rate	6.4 % (June 2014)

DATA AND RESULTS

HUD required data elements are collected by homeless service providers throughout the CoC in the regional Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Annual Performance Report data is collected by the CoC for each HUD funded program and reported in the annual application to HUD. The CoC measures the percent of clients who have employment income at the time they enter the program, during the program and at the time they exit the program, as well as the change in income during the time in the program. In addition, the CoC also measures non-employment income and connection to mainstream resources and housing retention for individuals in permanent supportive housing. Housing retention demonstrates how long individuals who were formerly chronically homeless stay in permanent housing which means they are not returning to homelessness; without income from employment and/or benefits it is challenging to maintain housing. As reported in the 2013/2014 application to HUD: 22% of participants increased their income from employment from program entry to exit; 27% increased their income from sources other than employment; 22% of adults in CoC homeless assistance programs had earned income; 92% of participants in CoC funded homeless assistance programs remained housed after one year. The 2013/2014 application to HUD can be found at http://www.azmag.gov/Documents/CoC_2014-01-31_FY-2013-Continuum-of-Care-Application.pdf

Data required for WIA is collected in the state's case management system known as Arizona Job Connection. Arizona provides a Statewide Annual Report that provides performance outcomes for the state and local workforce investment as. <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/PY2012/AZWIAAnnualReport2012.pdf>

Currently Arizona Job Connection reports 191 individuals experiencing homelessness are registered or enrolled for workforce development program services.

Given the success of UMOM's Homegrown Program, the Leadership Team looks forward to identifying ways to expand similar programming across the County. Here is one success story:

Barista Training Graduate Gains Employment

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Melinda is a single mom residing at UMOM New Day Centers. She lost her job and then her apartment as a result of the lost income. She was devastated. She had never been homeless before and didn't know where to turn. After sleeping in their car for a few days, they found safety and support at the Watkins Shelter. They ended up coming to UMOM's Van Buren Campus, where Melinda was able to enroll in UMOM's barista training program while her daughter attended school. In the six week training program, Melinda learned how to make espresso drinks, she gained cashiering and customer service skills and was able to access UMOM's employment center. Upon graduation, Melinda was hired at a new restaurant and brewery in a trendy downtown location. She is happy to be earning money for her family and working at a growing restaurant. She celebrated her success this September at UMOM's quarterly success celebration, where she and other recent graduates were honored. Melinda and her family are currently working with UMOM's housing specialists to get their very own apartment very soon.

DRAFT: Not for distribution