



Strengthening Working Families Initiative

Opportunity Quest

CareerSource North Central Florida

Our objective with the Strengthening Working Families Initiative (SWFI) grant was to provide information technology (IT)-focused education and job training, including technology-focused entrepreneurial training and on-the-job training, while partnering with networks of child care providers to meet families' child care needs.

We developed week-long introductory computer training courses for students who had little college experience. In each training, participants received three days of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and QuickBooks training at the training partner's site. Two days per week, participants went to the grantee site for a job club program of resume writing workshops, job searching skills, and interviewing skills development. These programs were offered every month, and participants could join in any week, so they did not have to wait to begin training. We also developed an "Own Your Future" entrepreneurial skills class to help participants get ready for work by improving their understanding of their employer's perspective.

We hope to continue this successful training model with disadvantaged job seekers, such as those receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits.



Information technology

Who did our program serve?



100% of participants were low income
99.7% of participants were unemployed at the start



53% of participants were high school graduates



84% of participants were women



70% of participants were African American/Black
21% of participants were White
9% of participants were Hispanic
2% of participants were American Indian
2% of participants were Asian

Building evidence



306 total participants served
248 participants received training



67% of participants who received training entered employment; nearly all these participants entered employment related to their training



67% of participants who received training earned a credential



44% of participants received supportive services (child care or transportation)



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Tammy's SWFI story

At the time of enrollment in Opportunity Quest, Tammy was an unemployed single mother. She had experienced domestic violence and was recovering from a concussion. Tammy had previously worked in human resources for a large company, a position she had attained gradually by ascending the corporate ladder without a high school diploma or GED, but she was unable to work due to her concussion.

Tammy appreciated that Opportunity Quest provided shorter-term options for training in the meantime. She completed the Microsoft Office Suite and Own Your Future classes. She spoke very highly of the Own Your Future course, especially about the instructor, who helped participants think through what they would like to do in their careers, which in Tammy's case was an interest in pursuing a career in the arts. She noted that the instructor brought his tablet to class each day for her to use to explore the idea of making art in a digital format.

Tammy enrolled in a GED program and continued it after exiting the Opportunity Quest program. She recently completed her GED and is currently working as a part-time photo and video editor. She is hoping to enroll in college soon to earn a degree in graphic design.

Case study adapted from information provided by Impaq International

Key partners

- One-stop operator to provide case management and supportive services
 - Dynamic Workforce Solutions
- Education and training partners to offer first-rate training
 - Santa Fe College, Center for Innovation and Economic Development
 - Gainesville Dev Academy
- Child care provider networks to meet families' child care needs
 - Episcopal Children Services of Bradford County
 - Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County

