



## SUPPORTING WORK PROJECT BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF PILOT PROJECTS

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1. Center for Economic Progress (Chicago, IL) .....	2
2. Ceridian (multi-state) .....	4
3. Community Action Project (Tulsa, OK) .....	5
4. Family Resource Center @ Gorham (Gorham, NH) .....	6
5. FEI Behavioral Health and Seedco (New York, NY and Milwaukee, WI) .....	8
6. Goodwill Industries of San Antonio (San Antonio, TX) .....	9
7. Human Services Coalition (Miami, FL) .....	11
8. SF Works (San Francisco, CA) .....	13
9. Step Up Savannah (Savannah, GA) .....	14
10. United Way of Central Iowa (Des Moines, IA) .....	15
11. United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona (Tucson, AZ) .....	17

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## Center for Economic Progress

[www.centerforprogress.org](http://www.centerforprogress.org)

### Project Overview

Through the Chicago Supports Workers initiative, the Center for Economic Progress (the Center) will assist workers at some of Chicago's largest employers of low- and moderate-income employees claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) through free tax preparation and access to Illinois' All Kids health insurance coverage through RealBenefits screening. The Center is a national leader in promoting the EITC through free tax preparation and financial education and operates the largest statewide community tax preparation program. In addition to greater access to the EITC and other income-enhancing tax credits, Chicago Supports Workers capitalizes on the recent launch of All Kids and increases access to health insurance. Illinois is the first state in the nation to ensure that every child, regardless of medical condition or income, has access to affordable health insurance through the All Kids health insurance program. By promoting financial education, EITC and other tax credits, and health insurance, the Center will strengthen both the financial and physical health of Chicago's low-income employees and their families.

### Description of the community

The Chicago Supports Workers initiative targets low-income workers throughout the City of Chicago. As Illinois' economy continues to shift from a reliance on manufacturing jobs to those in the services sector, the majority of the state's employment growth will come from lower paying jobs with fewer benefits. As the largest city in Illinois, Chicago's large number of workers is particularly susceptible to changes in the economy and the employment environment. The education and health services and the leisure and hospitality industries are the second and third fastest growing sectors in Chicago's economy, respectively, but pay on average 29% less than the jobs in manufacturing they replaced. As Chicagoans' wages fail to keep up with the City's rising cost-of-living and employer-provided health insurance becomes even scarcer for low-wage workers, work supports, like the EITC and All Kids, play an increasingly important role boosting incomes and providing a safety net for the most vulnerable families.

### Key collaborators

The Center for Economic Progress is the lead organization and the City of Chicago, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, and RealBenefits are key project collaborators.

### Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators

Although the Center has not determined the companies through which it will offer services through the Chicago Supports Workers initiative, industries of possible business collaborators include education, food service and grocery, hotel and hospitality, and retail.

The Center is working with the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce to finalize business collaborators. The Center has already identified a number of potential collaborating employers which employ a significant number of low- and moderate-wage workers; have chief operating officers who serve on the Board of Directors of the Chamber; and has worked with the Chamber in the past to promote initiatives that support their workforce.

### What public benefits will the project provide to employees?

- Federal and State Earned Income Tax Credit
- Illinois' All Kids Health Insurance
- Additional benefit screening for Food Stamps and TANF, where appropriate

**Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?**

The Center expects to screen a minimum of 100 employees for the All Kids health insurance program and another 400 employees will receive free tax preparation assistance, claiming the EITC and other tax credits including the Child Tax Credit and the Savers' Credit. Additionally, 200 employees will participate in financial education workshops.

**What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

- Number of employers who actively participate in the collaboration.
- Number of employees screened for family health insurance.
- Eligible families that receive assistance completing benefit applications.
- Percentage of eligible families that successfully receive health insurance through the All Kids program.
- Number of employees who take part in financial and tax education workshops.
- Percentage of workshop participants who indicate the information provided in the workshops benefited them through enhanced awareness and improved access to income supports.
- Number of eligible employees of participating employers in the Chicago Supports Workers initiative that receives free tax preparation assistance.
- Value of tax refunds generated, including the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit.
- Extent to which participating employers express a willingness to continue and expand the project in order to reach more eligible employees and to share their experiences with peers.

**How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

Funder Input Convenings will help generate funding interest for future work in the field of employer supports. The Center found from its evaluation of the Financial Empowerment Project (the precursor to the Chicago Supports Workers initiative) that foundations have tremendous interest in the same questions of mutual employee-employer benefits from providing supporting services at a place of employment. Through two "focus group" style meetings with foundations – one at the beginning of the project, to gain input on the evaluation methods, and one at the very end, when the Center reports its progress and next steps, greater awareness and foundation support of the project will be generated.

The Center will also promote the Chicago Supports Workers initiative through the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce e-newsletter and membership mailings. The initiative will also be publicized through at least on mayoral press conference.

**Contact**

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## Ceridian

[www.ceridian.com](http://www.ceridian.com)

### Project Overview

Public Benefits Outreach will be offered in conjunction with Ceridian's existing LifeWorks employee assistance (EAP) and work-life program. Public Benefits Outreach will offer "high-touch" support to help low-wage workers access the public benefits for which they are eligible.

Public Benefits Outreach will be differentiated from the existing LifeWorks program in two key aspects.

- Where the LifeWorks program relies exclusively on awareness-building communications to encourage calls and e-mails from participants and visits to LifeWorks Online (an "inbound call" model), Public Benefits Outreach will also use an outbound calling model to reach a higher percentage of the targeted low-wage population.
- Where the LifeWorks program works with customers until the presenting issues are resolved, the Public Benefits Outreach program will extend that case coordination to include quarterly follow-ups for a period of a year, to make sure that the solutions put in place are still working and that no additional issues have come up that require help or referrals to additional public benefits.

### Description of the community

Public Benefits Outreach will ultimately be a nationwide service for low-wage workers. During the 18 month pilot phase, we will be targeting selected states including: CA, FL, IN, LA, MN, NY, WI.

### Key collaborators

Ceridian's LifeWorks Services is the lead organization with partnerships with our clients. In addition, Families and Work Institute will provide technical assistance with data evaluation and reporting.

### Targeted industries and sectors

During the pilot phase, the hotel, retail, property management and service industries are being targeted for participation.

### What public benefits will the project provide to employees?

The pilot is intending to connect participants with whichever public benefits they are eligible to participate in. Each participant will receive customized consultations and support in accessing available benefits.

### Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?

During the pilot phase, we anticipate serving 1,000 employees with the Public Benefits Outreach program.

### What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)

Turnover and absenteeism data will be compared prior to the launch of the program and at the conclusion of the program to measure the impact of the program for the employer. In addition, the dollar amount that each participant accesses will be tracked.

### **How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

A customized communication plan will be developed for each client participating in the program. Fliers, posters, wallet cards, home mailings, payroll stuffers, informational emails, and presentations to local managers and employees are all possible ways to communicate the new service.

### **Contacts**

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## **Community Action Project of Tulsa County, Inc.**

[www.captc.org](http://www.captc.org)

### **Project Overview**

Community Action Project of Tulsa County (CAP) will conduct an 18-month project to improve access to and utilization of work support programs among low-wage employees (earning \$30,000 or less) in partnership with approximately five employers in the Tulsa area.

### **Description of the community**

Over 30% of all Tulsa-area households earn less than \$25,000 per year. Income data from the 2005 American Community Survey shows that approximately 43% of total households in Tulsa County would qualify for various work supports based on income eligibility and categorical guidelines.

### **Key collaborators**

CAP, Nets to Ladders, Oklahoma Department of Health and Human Services, Tulsa Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

### **Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators**

The targeted industries are: Banking, Restaurant, Convenience Store industries and public sector (City and public schools)

Business collaborators are: Bank of Oklahoma, Mazzio's Inc., QuikTrip Corporation, Tulsa Public Schools, and the City of Tulsa

### **What public benefits will the project provide to employees?**

- Medicaid
- Food stamps
- EITC
- LIHEAP
- OHLAP

- SCHIP
- child care assistance
- Plus more than 30 additional locally administered programs

**Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?**

In concert with employer partners, we expect to enroll at a minimum 2,050 employees.

**What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

Employers -increased retention and employee loyalty, reduced absenteeism, and enhanced public image.

Employee - increased disposable income and financial stability, access to reliable childcare arrangements, and access to healthcare.

**How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

CAP will work with each employer partner to disseminate information and promote the project to their employees, and will regularly communicate with employer partners to track and evaluate results. We will also engage the consulting services of a marketing firm to help craft compelling messages and marketing materials.

**Contact**

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## Family Resource Center @ Gorham

[www.frcberlin-gorham.org](http://www.frcberlin-gorham.org)

**Project Overview**

The Family Resource Center @ Gorham will use the relationships developed through our workforce development program, our community/family support programs and the VITA/ Financial Literacy program to engage employers in offering work supports on-site to their low wage workers. Our project is designed to work with smaller employers in a rural and economically challenged region of Northern N.H. We plan to create a strategy that could be used by other Family Resource Centers and human service organizations to build relationships with employers and create a "service" that these organizations could provide to the business community.

**Description of the community**

The Resource Center will be working with employers in Coos County, N.H. With a total population of 33,111, a population density of 19 people/ square mile and a median family income 30% lower than the State average, Coos is the largest, poorest and least populated county in N.H. The communities in rural N.H., and indeed all of rural New England, are transitioning from an economy based on the land, the forests and manufacturing (farming, paper mills, furniture plants) to one based on recreation, tourism and a service economy so the number of people working in low wage jobs with no benefits is increasing.

### **Key collaborators**

The Family Resource Center is the lead organization for this project. Key collaborators include: Isaacson Structural Steel, NH Division of Family Assistance and the Carsey Institute at the University of NH.

### **Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators**

We will be working with small industries, Hotels/recreation and Homecare

Business collaborators include: Isaacson Structural Steel, P.J.Noyes, Mount Washington Hotel, Town and Country Motor Inn, Appalachian Mountain Club, Androscoggin Valley Homecare, Morrison Nursing Home, Super Wal Mart

### **What public benefits will the project provide to employees?**

- EITC
- S-CHIP
- Childcare Scholarship
- Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Housing Assistance
- Fuel Assistance

### **Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?**

We anticipate working with over 1000 low wage workers throughout the different businesses and we plan to enroll at least 750 in publicly funded work support programs.

### **What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

- % of participating employers who identify improved recruitment and retention
- % of employees who report improved financial stability
- Level of Increase in community awareness regarding the role and availability of publicly funded work supports
- Total dollar equivalent of dollars provided through work supports for the community
- Increase in numbers of other social and family service organizations that connect work supports to low wage workers through employers

### **Contact**

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## FEI Behavioral Health and Seedco

[www.feinet.com](http://www.feinet.com)

[www.seedco.org](http://www.seedco.org)

### Project Overview

FEI and Seedco are looking to join their two programs to provide a corporate supported “Workforce Resource” program which seeks to benefit both employees and companies.

This pilot program will test the feasibility of developing a sustainable, service delivery model that involves increasing low-wage employee access to financial work supports through an EAP/Work-Life delivery model. This project will integrate Seedco’s *EarnBenefits*® program with FEI’s current “high-touch” EAP and Work-Life services.

This pilot program will work with organizations in Milwaukee, WI and New York, NY.

### Lead organizations and the key collaborators

FEI Behavioral Health: For nearly 30 years FEI Behavioral Health, the first national Employee Assistance Program (EAP) network, has delivered a comprehensive suite of services to help address personal and workplace challenges in order to support a healthy, productive and successful workforce. FEI works with over 150 companies/organizations, including such entities as Xerox, Prudential Financial, Mayo Clinic, American Hospital Association, U.S. Department of Justice and the American Cancer Society. FEI provides services to over 2 million covered lives. Leveraging innovative technology, a call center staffed by professional Master’s level counselors, and an expansive national network of local specialized service providers, FEI helps employees and employers resolve a range of issues including emotional/psychological problems, work-life balance, family concerns and legal and financial difficulties which, if unaddressed can lead to poor employee retention, productivity, and more serious personal and employer consequences.

Seedco: Founded in 1986, Seedco is a national community development intermediary that designs and operates innovative program models in the areas of workforce development, asset building, economic development and community finance. One of Seedco’s signature programs is *EarnBenefits*®. Through marketing and education, benefits eligibility screenings and application assistance, and benefits management services, the *EarnBenefits*® program connects low-wage workers to a wide range of income-enhancing benefits that have a proven impact on long-term job retention and asset accumulation. *EarnBenefits*® uses a web-based system that has a powerful database function to perform customized client eligibility screenings and completion of application forms for 25 different government and private work supports including earned income tax credits, food stamps, childcare subsidies, and free checking and savings accounts. *EarnBenefits*® currently has operations in four States and to date has provided services to over 17,000 individuals, helping them to access over \$10.6 million dollars in benefits. Seedco is a member of the Alliance for Children and Families.

### Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators

Targeted industries: Health care, hospitality, retail, social services/ non-profit

### What public benefits will the project provide to employees?

- Earned Income Tax Credit and other tax related credits.
- Free tax preparation
- Food stamps

- Medicaid and State Health Insurance Programs
- Low Income Heating, Energy and Weatherization Assistance, (HEAP, WAP, Keep Wisconsin Warm Fund)
- Housing and childcare subsidies

**Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?**

This pilot will target a minimum of 825 employees

**What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

- Number of employees reached through outreach efforts
- Demographic information for all employees assessed for services
- Number of individuals screened for work supports including their eligibility determination by work support and number and type of work supports received
- Employee pre and post-service assessments of impact on productivity, absenteeism, etc.
- Employer pre and post- service assessments of impact on productivity, absenteeism, etc.

**How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

- Consumer marketing products (co-branded web sites)
- Targeted outreach events (program kick-off events, benefits fair)
- Information “push” campaigns (Manager/ supervisor meetings, etc.)

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## **Goodwill Industries of San Antonio**

[www.goodwillsa.org](http://www.goodwillsa.org)

### **Project Overview**

The Supporting Work Project will allow Goodwill Industries, the City of San Antonio, Food Bank, Alamo Work Source, United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County, local businesses and community-based organizations to solidify current efforts and focus on individuals currently employed and eligible to receive the identified supportive services.

### **Description of the community**

The City of San Antonio is a rapidly growing, ethnically, socially and economically diverse community that is ranked seventh in the United States. Despite its current period of significant economic development, San Antonio unfortunately ranks as one of the nation’s poorest cities with more than 20% of all individuals living in poverty; almost 30% of all families with a female head of household earn incomes below the poverty level.

### **Key collaborators**

- City of San Antonio
- Food Bank
- Alamo Work Source
- United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County

### **Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators**

Business collaborators include: West Telemarketing, Valero Energy Corporation, the H-E-B Grocery chain, McDonald's Restaurants, The City of San Antonio and Goodwill Industries of San Antonio

### **What public benefits will the project provide to employees?**

- Food Stamps program
- CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program)
- Housing assistance
- Utility assistance
- Child care assistance (CCDS and Headstart)
- Transportation assistance
- Individual development account (homeownership and vehicle purchase)
- Federal Earned Income Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Other tax credits available through the community's existing VITA program

### **Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?**

10,000

### **What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

Access and enrollment in supports

### **How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

Through engagement of area employers and events such as on-site Benefit Fairs, written communication and partnering organization programs. In addition, Goodwill is marketing this opportunity their in-store shoppers so that potential participants are recruited and requested to visit any of their nine Job Help Centers.

### **Contact**

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## Human Services Coalition

[www.hscdade.org](http://www.hscdade.org)

### Project Overview

The Human Services Coalition's (HSC) *Enhancing Employer Engagement* (E3) project is an expansion of HSC's nationally recognized and widely replicated flagship program, the *Prosperity Campaign*, which links low-wage workers with public benefits through a network of community-based partner organizations ("Prosperity Centers").

The goal of E3 is to enhance the role of employers in helping their low-wage workers access work supports and other public benefits. By employing a four stage "Continuum of Engagement" strategy that starts with HSC sharing and disseminating information to local businesses and their workers, and culminates with in-house sustainability on the part of the employer.

E3 is innovative in at least three ways: 1) it represents a "win win win" for employers, workers and the local economy, 2) it is inherently designed to ultimately be self-sustaining and widely replicated, and 3) financial support after the initial 3-year startup phase will be provided by participating local businesses who recognize the value of this mutually-beneficial investment in their workforce.

### Description of the community

Miami-Dade County is home to a growing low income population with a disproportionately greater need for basic work supports than exists in most U.S. metropolitan areas. Since 2000, Miami-Dade's middle-class population has been steadily declining, while the gap between the rich and the poor widens. The City of Miami was named the "poorest large city" in the 2000 U.S. Census, and 59.6% of Miami-Dade County lives in households earning less than 200% of the Federal Poverty level. The median household income in the County was \$35,966, and the homeownership rate was only 57.8%. The population reflects a high concentration of low-wage, entry-level jobs; lack of stability (seasonal work and high worker turnover); and lack of jobs with benefits (dominance of hourly wage and part time employment).

### Key collaborators

- United Way of Miami-Dade County
- Internal Revenue Service
- Jobing.com
- Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
- Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
- Washington Mutual
- South Florida Workforce

### Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators

The initial focus is on the hospitality industry, with its disproportionately high number of low-wage, part-time and seasonal workers, many of whom are immigrants with limited English proficiency and little knowledge of work supports.

Business collaborators include: Intercontinental Hotel, Don Shula Hotel, Conrad Hilton Hotel, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Aeropost, the Heat Group (Miami Heat), Miami-Dade College, Miami-Dade School Board, among others

**What public benefits will the project provide to employees?**

E3 will promote two tiers of public benefits, depending on the participating employer: (1) Information and access to a **basic suite** of work supports, including EITC, childcare tax credit, Florida KidCare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, energy assistance (LIHEAP), basic telephone services (Lifeline and Linkup); and (2) Information and access to an **extended suite** of healthcare and asset building benefits, including financial literacy classes, credit counseling, home buyer programs, micro-loans, banking, linkage to health access programs and primary care facilities, hurricane preparedness, transit assistance, IDA/savings programs,

**Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?**

2,000

**What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

Employer Outcomes

- # of employers contacted
- # of decision-makers reached
- # of those reached who allowed access to their workforce

Employee Outcomes

- # of workers contacted (at worksite and at OEDs)
- # of interested workers who receive assistance
- # of workers who obtain benefits

Local Economy Outcomes

- # of households applying for EITC and other credits
- Dollar amount of EITC and other credits coming into Miami-Dade County
- # of people utilizing free tax assistance at VITA sites

**How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

HSC will create materials such as an enhanced employer toolkit, flyers, and posters; and will utilize strategies including direct mail, electronic information distribution and regular newsletter pieces along with radio and television spots. New partner Jobing.com will create additional marketing opportunities at quarterly Career Expos, employer luncheons, and through an e-newsletter. The United Way, a long time partner, will continue to distribute *Prosperity Matters*, highlighting PC events, projects, and exemplary employers. The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce will encourage its members to participate, provide presentation opportunities, and feature the project at networking events. New marketing partners include specialized chambers, trade associations, HR groups and placement firms.

**Contact**

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## SF Works

[www.sfworks.org](http://www.sfworks.org)

### Project Overview

SF Works is partnering with 4 major healthcare employers and the 800-member Golden Gate Restaurant Association to raise awareness, streamline education and application of eligible workers for a set of community and public benefits. In year-two of the grant, this will be achieved via piloting of a web-based tool.

### Description of the community

The project targets San Francisco employees earning less than \$20/hour or \$40,000 annually

### Key collaborators

California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC); Catholic Healthcare West (CHW); Kaiser Permanente; UCSF Medical Center; Golden Gate Restaurant Association (GGRA); Human Services Agency

### Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators

Targeted industries: Health Care and Restaurant

Business collaborators: California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC); Catholic Healthcare West (CHW); Kaiser Permanente; UCSF Medical Center; Golden Gate Restaurant Association (GGRA)

### What public benefits will the project provide to employees?

- EITC
- Working Families Credit (WFC)
- health benefits
- local transportation subsidies
- discounts on public utilities

### Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?

500 healthcare workers (approximately 11% of total eligible); 100 restaurant workers

### What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)

- Numbers of employees that receive benefits education
- number of participating employers

### How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?

Inclusion in member benefits orientation materials; integration into company websites; on-site enrollments

### Contact

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## Step Up Savannah's Poverty Reduction Initiative

[www.stepupsavannah.org](http://www.stepupsavannah.org)

### Project Overview

Engage Business Employers to offer work support programs EITC, Food Stamps and PeachCare, transportation passes, pay access (direct deposit of pay checks) and financial education classes.) to their entry level workforce. Engage entry level employees to take advantage of resources available to support their income. Research other "Best Practices" to offer for future years.

The collaborative engagement of the public private partnership as manifested within the Step Up collaboration which has been in existence for two years. The successful link of economic development to poverty reduction as demonstrated by the participation of over 80 organizations participating in Step Up's Action teams of Workforce/Education, Asset building, Dependent Care, Healthcare, Transportation and Affordable Housing. Also, the heightened awareness of the community through the poverty simulations which have created a common frame of reference around the issue of poverty in Chatham County.

### Description of the community

The city of Savannah, located within Chatham County, Georgia, has five census tracts where those living in poverty exceed 50% and the poverty rate has stayed stable for over 30 years.

### Key collaborators

Our Engaging Employers Project will be assisted by Step Up Savannah's Poverty Reduction Initiative, the County Health Department, the Chamber of Commerce, DFCS and organizations within the Savannah Asset Building Coalition and the UnBanked Taskforce.

### Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators

Targeted industries include: warehousing, health care, hotels and local government. At least 25% of these industries' workforce is comprised of employees making less than \$12 an hour. Because Savannah is the third busiest port on the east coast, warehousing is in a boom period. Savannah is also a tourist town so hotels provide many jobs. The two health systems are some of our major employers as well as the local governments.

Business collaborators include: St. Joseph's Candler and Memorial University and Health Systems, The City of Savannah, Chatham County, IKEA, Target, Brasseler USA, Home Depot and the Hyatt Hotel.

### What public benefits will the project provide to employees?

- EITC and free tax preparation
- food stamp applications
- PeachCare\* (CHIP) applications
- transportation passes
- pay access (direct deposit of pay checks)
- financial education classes.

### Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?

On average, we are hoping to complete applications for at least 400 for each benefit.

**What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

Besides application numbers, we will track business' commitment to the promotion of these benefits through attendance at meetings and availability of presentations at department meetings and benefit fairs. We hope to learn Best Practices throughout the United States and highlighting these practices. We will establish our own "Sloan Award" to our most Outstanding Business who uses these practices.

**How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

We will rely on our local TV stations, newspaper, Business Journal and contacts through the Chamber's CEO Council and Newsletter to raise awareness of these work support benefits.

**Contact**

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## United Way of Central Iowa

[www.unitedwaydm.org](http://www.unitedwaydm.org)

**Project Overview**

The Supporting Work Project will be the first attempt for three large employers to offer information and enrollment opportunities on publicly funded benefits in the workplace. Key employer partners are two large hospitals and the community college. Paying close attention to these workplace-based strategies are business leaders, legislators, the department of human service, funders and human service providers. Significant work is currently underway to improve the workforce system in central Iowa. The Supporting Work Project is an integral part to that improved system – for employers as well as employees.

In addition we intend to prepare both workers and the employer for the time when employees are not longer eligible for a particular benefit and create a plan to address the loss of that support.

**Description of the community**

Greater Des Moines has a population of just under 300,000 people. It is the capitol city located in the center of the state of Iowa. Des Moines is the third largest insurance hub in the world. As a result many jobs require high levels of education and technical skill. Like many other regions of the county, employers are increasingly being confronted with a shortage of skilled workers. Projections show that Des Moines will have 60,000 more jobs than workers in the next decade. A stable and trained workforce is highly valued. Strategies are underway to reach out to new lowans, underemployed or untrained workers in response for the need to "grow" the workforce.

**Key collaborators**

Key Collaborators: ISED Ventures, Child & Family Policy Center, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Des Moines Area Community College, Iowa Health Systems, Mercy Medical Center, Making Connections/the Annie E. Casey Foundation

### **Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators**

Targeted industries: Hospitals, community college

Business collaborators: Des Moines Area Community College – Urban and Ankeny campuses; Iowa Health System; Mercy Medical Center

### **What public benefits will the project provide to employees?**

- Earned Income Tax Credit
- Child Care Tax Credit
- Child Care Subsidy
- State Funded Day Care
- hawk-i (Iowa's SCHIP)
- Food Stamp Program
- WIC

### **Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?**

1750 employees will be contacted, offered education and information on public and private benefits. We estimate that 50% of those who are not currently enrolled in more than one public benefit will apply and receive one or more additional benefit

### **What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

- Increase awareness of and support for publicly funded work supports among employers and the public at large.
- Involve employers in connecting eligible employees to work supports.
- Streamline eligibility process and application for multiple benefits
- Develop and implement a tracking system to understand the impact of this project on the employer and the employee
- Correlate benefit use with absenteeism, retention rates and other indicators
- Identify public policy issues and/ or investment opportunities
- Identify best practices that can be used to successfully replicate this effort in other businesses.

### **How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

The strong partnerships represented with on the Supporting Work Project Team are key conduits to multiple constituencies including United Ways in Iowa and across the county, the community college and health systems, the Chamber of Commerce network, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Iowa Department of Human Service, Iowa workforce and key elected officials. By sharing best practices and lessons learned we hope to expand and improve the system by which employers can play an integral part to improve individual self-sufficiency.

### **Contact**

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## United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona

[www.unitedwaytucson.org](http://www.unitedwaytucson.org)

### Project Overview

United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona (UWTSA) will use an employment sector-driven approach to test different methodologies for connecting low-wage workers with public benefits through employers. Interventions will be customized to the needs of each sector. UWTSA will use intermediaries who are familiar with the needs of each industry. The chosen intermediaries already provide services and training to these employers and have established working relationships with their audiences.

The three employment sectors are: childcare, hospitality, and healthcare. The intermediaries are Child and Family Resources (CFR) and Pima County Community Services Employment and Training (CSET). UWTSA and CFR will work together to deliver a “train the trainer” approach to childcare employers. UWTSA and CSET will employ a web-based “benefits bundler” in healthcare settings and an adult education model to connect with hospitality workers.

Results from the three training modalities will be compared in order to design program improvements and develop best practices. Since CSET also provides employment and training services to lower-wage workers, this service will be included in the package of available benefits as appropriate. UWTSA and partners will use a free on-line benefits bundler through [ArizonaSelfHelp.org](http://ArizonaSelfHelp.org). Changes and upgrades to that service are supported by grant funds. Revisions to the online forms for many public benefits will be reviewed and vetted by the Arizona Department of Economic Security. The UWTSA project is one of the few that has a focus on connecting child care employees to work supports

### Description of the community

Our project will work in the Tucson metropolitan area. Tucson has a large population of lower-wage workers, many of whom are Hispanic. In Tucson and Pima County, according to the most recent report issued by Wider Opportunities for Women, for a family of four (two working parents, a preschool age child and a school-age child) the annual income level for self-sufficiency is \$41,165, which translates to an hourly wage of \$9.75 for each full-time working adult. (*The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Arizona*, prepared by Diana Pearce with Wider Opportunities for Women for the Children’s Action Alliance, March 2002) These figures cover only the most basic needs, and do not take into account “extras” such as retirement, savings, education funds, emergency car repairs, or even a movie rental.

Approximately fifty percent of Pima County households have combined incomes below the self-sufficiency threshold. (U.S. Census Bureau’s 2005 American Community Survey) New U.S. Census figures indicate Arizona wages are lagging behind those of the national average, and Arizona’s ranking slipped to 38<sup>th</sup> in the nation from 37<sup>th</sup> last year. (Fischer, Howard “Census: Ariz. Wages not keeping pace with nation,” *Arizona Daily Star*, 12/15/2006.)

We know that many working families who are eligible for work supports are not accessing them. Currently in Arizona, of the one million residents who do not have health insurance, 39% are employed and eligible for Arizona’s Medicaid program, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), but not enrolled. Additionally, according to the Department of Economic Security (DES), there are 44,000 individuals in Pima County who are eligible for the Food Stamp Program but are not participating.

### Key collaborators

Our key collaborators are Child & Family Resources, Pima County CSET, Arizona Community Action Association, and the Department of Economic Security.

### **Targeted industries and sectors and business collaborators**

Targeted industries: Childcare, Healthcare, and Hospitality

Business collaborators: Private child care centers, Tucson Medical Center (multiple locations), and Marriot Hotels, and others

### **What public benefits will the project provide to employees?**

The package of benefits will be customized for each sector. Benefits include but are not limited to; earned income tax credits, child tax credit, food stamps, Arizona's Medicaid program, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, Individual Development Accounts, and workforce training, and more.

### **Approximately how many employees are you planning to enroll in publicly funded work supports?**

We expect to direct outreach to at least 1400 employees. It is unknown at this time how many will qualify for and enroll in publicly funded work supports but, we expect a large percentage of this number will do so.

### **What outcomes will you measure? (Please note: this is preliminary information and the indicators may be revised.)**

- Qualification for and enrollment in public benefits
- The estimated dollar value of those benefits
- Changes in workplace HR policy and programs
- Increased cooperation and connectivity among targeted employers and project partners
- Changes in absenteeism, productivity, job satisfaction, employer loyalty, turnover, training costs, profitability
- The total project's return on investment.

### **How will you raise awareness of your project and this issue?**

Locally, the project will be promoted through a press release, and the online quarterly newsletter. We will raise awareness through the United Way Board of Directors, UWTSA resource development and community development staff and through more than 40 funded impact partners. The project will be promoted in a number of venues including the United Way Public Policy Committee, the Strengthening Family Impact Council, the Family Economic Stability Workgroup, the community Network Team and others.

Nationally, we hope to have opportunities to raise awareness of the project through United Way of America, the National Community Tax Coalition, the National League of Cities and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

### **Contact**

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