

## Literacy Network

City of Madison CDBG Office  
Room 280 Madison Municipal Building  
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Madison WI 53703

### Proposal for **EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS**

By Literacy Network  
1118 S Park Street  
Madison, WI 53715  
608-244-3911  
Executive Director Jeff Burkhardt

#### **Program Operation**

Most new jobs will require education or training beyond high school, and only 27 percent of all new jobs will be low skilled. Most jobs now require basic literacy in reading, writing, speaking and technology.

Our current Community Literacy program is a one-to-one tutoring program for adult learners and volunteer tutors. Learners sign up for two hours per week to work with a tutor at the Literacy Network office (Monday or Wednesday evenings 6:00-8:00pm or Saturdays mornings 9:00-11:00am), or at one of several offsite locations including Boys and Girls Club (Tuesdays 6:00-8:00pm), Glendale Elementary School (Tuesdays 5:30-7:30pm), and the Lussier Community Education Center (Mondays 9:00-11:00am). Literacy Network provides childcare for this program. This is a great way for new learners to get involved with Literacy Network programming without having to wait for an assigned personal one-to-one tutor. This program has demonstrated success in motivating learners to build their skills through regular contact with a trained community volunteer. Community Literacy helps participants become more an integral part of the Madison community by matching them with community volunteers. Most of our program participants have a low income, and many have unstable housing situations.

Reading, writing and language skills are essential to job development. Basic skills must be addressed before sustainable employment can become a reality for those with low income and low skills. In the most cases, there is a direct correlation between low literacy, low educational attainment, and low income.

Community Literacy is a perfect low-cost program which can be easily modified to provide employable skills mentoring by matching community volunteers and program participants. This program, called the Community Learning and Work Project, will employ one staff member, two interns, and at least 40 community volunteers. This program will build on the many success we have had in helping adult learners improve their reading, writing and language skills. Over the course of a year, at least 80 program participants will be served at the Catholic Multicultural Center, and one other community center to be determined by needs and space availability.

The program coordinator will be responsible for hiring interns and volunteers, case management and tracking of program participants, collaboration with other agencies to ensure good information sharing about program participants, and recruiting businesses to visit the program

## Literacy Network

and provide tours to program participants. Recruitment for the position will begin immediately upon notification of the grant.

The program coordinator will begin by addressing the factors necessary to have success in both literacy and employment readiness. The coordinator will first assess current programs and the community environment to define the population to be served, determine available resources to avoid possible duplication, and begin building a referral network for the comprehensive services clients will need.

Many low income and low skill individuals face problems so overwhelming that they usually cannot focus on literacy as an isolated goal. Therefore, literacy must be one component of a comprehensive strategy that provides support services and employment training as well--all of which are necessary to break the cycles of poverty and illiteracy.

Using our extensive network of community agencies, Literacy Network will conduct community-based recruitment using a wide variety of strategies that stress the messages that training can lead to a better job and economic future and that a parent's literacy improvement can help children's achievements.

Assessment for program placement will include a review of employment history and will be sensitive to past educational experiences and test anxiety. Clients will be assisted in setting realistic short- and long-term goals upon program entry.

The program design will be learner-centered, personalized and will reinforce self-concept and positive perception of possibilities. Mentoring and literacy education will be the main goals of the program coordinator in training community volunteers. Supportive services such as childcare and transportation will also be provided by the program or through referral to another agency.

Program components will include goal setting, job-related reading and communication skill development, development of computer skills, job search methods, and good career decision making.

Program impact will be measured through individualized career portfolio development which will include documentation of a participant's progress in employment related reading, writing and communication skills.

### **Program Outcomes**

All program participants will have the goal of creating a portfolio which contains a resume, sample job application, cover letters and examples of work done in the class. Participants will complete the program with a complete set of documented examples of their employable skills, and will be provided with connections to employers in the Madison area.

Program participants will work with community mentors on interviewing skills and job search techniques.

## Literacy Network

### **Strategy for identifying program participants**

We will work with our extensive network of community partners, and hope to build additional connections to identify potential participants. Existing partner include:

- Dane County Job Center
- Madison Metropolitan School District
- Goodman Community Center
- Catholic Multicultural Center
- Lussier Family Education Center
- Boys and Girls Club of Dane County
- United Asian Services of Wisconsin
- Centro Hispano

Potential additional partners include Porchlight and Joining Forces for Families of Dane County.

### **Qualifications of Agency and Staff**

Executive Director Jeff Burkhart has extensive employment program development experience. As the director of occupational skills and adult basic education at the Dane County Job Center, he coordinated training options for more than 800 W2 and FSET program participants annually, working with case managers, employers and program partners. Program participants learned about career opportunities in health care, manufacturing and finance. In 2000-2004, hundreds of applicants were employed, and several found long-term careers in their chosen fields. More than 15 individual employment programs were developed at that time, including a comprehensive career portfolio project.

One of the unique strengths of the Literacy Network programming is that we tailor learning plans to the individual and help learners better understand American culture. We have the flexibility to design lesson plans for learners and tutors to work on specific areas of language comprehension, such as workplace English for particular specialized reports or vocabulary that is commonly used on the job.

### **Budget and tasks**

The costs for annual program are listed below:

Program Coordinator salary:	\$33,000
Assessment and Evaluation:	\$2,000
Fringe:	\$1,800
Intern stipend:	\$1,800
Materials:	\$5,000
Space Rental:	\$3,000

Tasks performed and shared by staff and intern

## Literacy Network

- Hiring student interns to oversee community literacy programming
- Making lesson plans for tutors
- Making reminder phone calls to students
- Keeping track of schedules for more than 100 students and tutors
- Maintaining flexibility to speak with walk-ins or phone calls from potential students
- Recruiting students and tutors for new and existing sites
- Keeping track of updated information on all students
- Contacting potential tutors
- Provide tutor training (group) several times a year and on-going tutor support
- Check in with tutors and learners frequently to make sure the program and matches are going well

E. References. Include a list of organizations, including points of contact (name, address, e-mail and telephone number), which can be used as references for work performed in the area of service required. Selected organizations may be contacted to determine the quality of work performed and personnel assigned to the project. The results of the references will be provided to the evaluation team and used in scoring the written proposals.

Catholic Multicultural Center  
Andrew Russell ([arussell@straphael.org](mailto:arussell@straphael.org))  
Administrator  
1862 Beld Street  
Madison, WI 53713  
Country/Region      United States of America

Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin  
Pat Schramm ([pschramm@wdbscw.org](mailto:pschramm@wdbscw.org))  
Executive Director  
3513 Anderson Street, Suite 104  
Madison, WI 53704

Dane County Job Center  
Liz Green ([green.liz@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:green.liz@co.dane.wi.us))  
Administrator  
1819 Aberg Ave  
Madison, WI 53704