

## **PORCHLIGHT, INC**

### **PILOT TRANSIT FOR JOBS PROGRAM**

#### ***Background***

In 2006, The City of Madison contracted with Porchlight, Inc. to operate the pilot Transit For Jobs program. This program provides Madison Metro bus tickets homeless and low-income transit-dependent people enabling them to obtain income security. Individuals who gain employment are provided with a monthly pass to carry them until they begin receiving paychecks.

Porchlight was selected as the provider of the pilot program in part because they are part of the Homeless Services Consortium. As part of the Consortium, Porchlight has entered into Memorandum's of Understanding with six other Consortium partners for the distribution and allocation of the metro tickets. The partnerships of the Consortium enable the program to reach more people across the City of Madison than if a single provider were the only distributor of tickets.

#### ***The Current State of the Pilot Program***

The service became operational on April 3, 2006 and is currently contracted to run through March 31, 2007. Under the contract, the goal is to serve 1,800 unduplicated individuals during that period. Of those unduplicated individuals, 500 will obtain an income source and 75 will utilize the 31-day monthly pass.

Through the end of July, 2006, the pilot Transit For Jobs program has served 447 unduplicated individuals. Of those unduplicated individuals, 63 have obtained an income source and 17 have utilized the 31-day pass.

Of the 447 unduplicated individuals who have used the service thus far 65% are African American, 3% are Latino and 32% are Caucasian. Of those served 68% are male; 13% are military veterans, 9% are victims of domestic violence; 88% were homeless (39% were chronically homeless under HUD standards); and 62% have a disability.

Porchlight has entered into MOU's with the following Homeless Services Consortium:

Community Action Coalition  
Interfaith Hospitality Network  
Madison Jobs and Housing Partnership  
St. Vincent de Paul Society of Madison  
The Salvation Army  
YWCA of Madison

Porchlight and the Consortium partners report that this is a very important program for the homeless and low-income, transit dependent populations they work with. Implementation of the pilot program has been an added element to the workload of existing staff at the seven agencies. Eighty-five percent of the funding goes directly toward the purchase of the metro tickets. Porchlight has written a grant application to Dane County for funding of a half-time Employment Assistance Specialist position to operate the Transit For Jobs program and provide more employment counseling of individuals and have greater connections with employers. Currently, staff distributing the tickets are generalists attempting to help persons with a myriad of issues. The additional position would focus on working purely on employment issues. They would be utilizing the City funds as part of the match for the grant funds if awarded.

**T.J.'S SUPPORT BROKERAGE FIRM**  
**MADISON APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (MAP)**

***Background***

The MAP program began operations in 2005 after considerable grassroots effort and outreach was conducted. The mission of the MAP program is to offer skill development, resource empowerment and socialization elements that direct adults toward self-worth, education, community services, independence and a start toward re-socialization and participation in the greater society as productive contributing citizens.

The programs' curriculum was designed by Diana Shinall who is the Executive Director of T.J.'s support Brokerage Firm and who personally understands the challenges faced by many residents living in the Allied Drive neighborhood. The curriculum is certified by MATC as a non-credit course. Students enrolled in the MAP program are simultaneously enrolled in MATC.

The program uses a holistic approach that encompasses a number of support services (transportation, housing, employment, education, emotional-behavioral needs, social service and health care needs, mental health needs, legal services and other unmet needs of the individuals served) along with a shared meal and childcare if needed.

The first session of MAP was offered in 2005. Twenty students enrolled in that class and 11 of those graduated from the twelve-week program. Those that graduated consisted of 2 Caucasians and 9 African Americans and all were residents of the Allied Drive neighborhood. In early 2006, the second class had an enrollment of 18 and graduated 9 individuals. Of those 9, 1 is Caucasian, 1 is Latino and 8 are African American. Students of the program come with a variety of backgrounds. Some do not have a GED, others have high school diplomas and some have college credits. Some are unemployed and others are employed part-time. Individual goals for participating in the program range from improving their employment situation, getting more education, starting their own business, or getting off of drugs.

***Current Status of the Program***

The program will begin its third class this fall with 15 enrolled students from around the City of Madison. Of those enrolled, 3 are Caucasian and 12 are African American.

The program has received support from other institutions such as MATC as noted above; the program has a volunteer math tutor since it is the math component of the GED tests that seem to give most students the greatest challenge; students receive case management assistance through the Workforce Development Board; Amcore Bank has provided financial assistance and has created a program whereby MAP students can use a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance program to establish a checking and/or savings account even if they had difficulty with those accounts in the past. Amcore Bank

also provides savings programs for the MAP students' children. The opportunities offered from Amcore Bank have enabled many low-income individuals to leave behind the check cashing and payday lending institutions.

MAP has hired a graduate of the program as its outreach worker who will also begin taking on security work. The program has dramatically changed the life of many people who felt hopelessness before. Many have walked away from drug use and drug dealing, two are self-employed and others have gone on to further their formal education.