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ABSTRACT

This document contains the results of a study of the responsiveness of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) to the training and employment needs of homeless people. The first part contains recommendations to the president, the Congress, and the employment and training community on policies and practices concerning the homeless and employment issues. The second part is the report on which the recommendations are based. It includes information for policymakers and the job training community about the homeless: who they are, what caused them to be homeless, the training and employment issues that need to be considered when dealing with them; assessments of how and the extent to which JTPA is serving homeless individuals; examples of programs where Private Industry Councils (PICs) have developed and implemented innovative approaches or programs to include the homeless in their JTPA programs; and seven case studies of local JTPA initiatives where the PICs are undertaking special efforts to ensure services to this group. The study that resulted in part 2 of the document included interviews with 55 professionals who administer local JTPA programs in urban areas to determine the level and type of services they are offering to homeless individuals. The case studies attempt to identify what works and does not work by examining factors such as community support and involvement, PIC and private sector roles, types of services provided, levels of interagency and public/private coordination, outcome measures, and funding examples. The case studies are about San Diego, California; San Mateo County, California; Louisville, Kentucky; New York City, New York; Toledo, Ohio; Nashville, Tennessee; and Seattle-King County, Washington. (CML)

SPECIAL REPORT

National Commission For Employment Policy

Members of the National Commission for Employment Policy

MR. JOHN C. GARTLAND, CHAIRMAN

Director-Washington Affairs, Amway Corporation
214 Massachusetts Ave., N.E., Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 547-5005

MR. DONALD W. JONES

Huiston, Jones, & Associates
2060 E. Sunshine
Springfield, MO 65804
(417) 887-1858

MR. JOHN O. KOEHLER

President
Koehler International Consultants, Ltd.
112 Prospect Street
Stamford, CT 06901
(203) 357-0147

HON. J. MICHAEL LEVESQUE

Mayor, West Warwick
51 Cedar Drive
West Warwick, RI 02893
(401) 822-9219

MR. FRANK MCDONALD

President
McDonald Interprises
425 Rimrock Road
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
(805) 497-7863

MR. JERRY NAYLOR

Director
University Annual Fund
California Lutheran University
60 West Olsen Road
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360-2787
(805) 492-2411

MR. A. WAYNE ROBERTS

President
Lake Champlain
Chamber of Commerce
209 Battery Street
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 863-3489

DR. JAMES WINCHESTER

Winchester and Associates
131 Parway Drive
Pass Christian, MS 39571
(601) 452-8867

Helping the Homeless be Choosers: The Role of JTPA in Improving Job Prospects

SPECIAL REPORT NO. 28

March 1990

National Commission for Employment Policy
1522 K Street, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20005

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT POLICY
1522 K Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005

Chairman

March 1, 1990

To the President and the Congress of The United States:

On behalf of the National Commission for Employment Policy, I am pleased to submit this report of findings and recommendations on ways of re-integrating homeless Americans into the mainstream of society through the use of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

It is clear that the stereotypic image of the homeless as tramps or hobos who travel the country in search of work or adventure, or as skid row bums or "bag ladies" who are either alcoholic or "crazy," are no longer appropriate depictions of many of the homeless in the '80s. America's homeless are as diverse as its population in general. They are young and old, drug free and drug addicted, physically and mentally advantaged and disadvantaged, educated and illiterate, working and unemployed, white and minority. Homelessness can be the fate of any one living from paycheck to paycheck, regardless of income, age, or physical and emotional health. There is only one thing the homeless have in common -- they are without homes.

The Commission embarked upon this study with the belief that the problem of homelessness requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted solution. It is not merely enough to provide housing. The Commission believes the most critical issues surrounding homelessness is "access to job training and placement in jobs that pay adequate living wages," such as is offered in programs available through the JTPA. Moreover, the Commission believes that because the size of the homeless population is growing, the need for employment and training assistance for these people will increase.

These beliefs were not only continued, but strengthened, as we delved into this issue. While some areas of the country are fully utilizing the JTPA to re-integrate homeless individuals, there are still others doing very little specifically for the homeless. We believe that the dissemination of this report throughout the JTPA system, as well as the implementation of our recommendations, can increase the responsiveness of JTPA to the training needs of homeless Americans.

The recommendations which follow are both policy- and programmatically-oriented; many have implications for other groups that are experiencing particularly difficult problems finding and keeping a job. Refinement and clarification of various rules and regulations that govern JTPA program operation will serve to improve JTPA's accessibility to the homeless. Programmatic recommendations will assist the JTPA community in the development and operation of programs responsive to the needs of homeless individuals.

The Commission is optimistic that JTPA can play a critical role in addressing the needs of homeless Americans. It can help people acquire some degree of economic stability and independence so that they can have a home -- JTPA can help the homeless become "choosers" rather than "beggars."

JOHN C. GARTLAND
Chairman

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In Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas I met heads of families who had been, only a year or two before, owners of farms, employees of petroleum firms, shopkeepers who supplied the farmers and the oil workers. They had lost their farms, their jobs, their stores. Bankers in Oklahoma City spoke about the rising number of foreclosures. "Oil and agriculture – those are everything for people here. Both are dying. Where will these people go after their farms are boarded and their restaurants and barbershops and hardware stores have been shut down?"

The answers were seen in Phoenix and Los Angeles, where the shelters overflowed and people slept in huge encampments on the edges of the seamy areas of town. In one city homeless families lived in caves. (Jonathan Kozol, Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America, Ballantine Books, 1988, p. 7.)

INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in 1973 under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, the National Commission for Employment Policy has conducted research on the employment and training needs of specific groups which have traditionally had difficulties in the labor market -- older workers, American Indians, Hispanics, minority youth, etc. In each of these studies, it was the Commission's goal to inform the job training community and policymakers about the special needs and issues facing each of these groups, determine how and the extent to which the job training system was meeting those needs, and provide policy recommendations to the President and the Congress.

The Commission continued its long-standing commitment to undertake research on special target groups within American society in its 1988 and 1989 agendas. The Commission believes that if we, as a Nation, are to achieve our goal of preparing every member of the nation's workforce for productive employment, we must work to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity and the skills to obtain employment.

In recognition of the recent and continued growth in the number of homeless Americans, particularly with respect to the dramatic rise in the number of homeless families, and the urgent need for many members of this group to receive job training and employment assistance in order to be able to participate in today's labor force, the Commission has devoted considerable resources this year to analyzing homelessness and employment issues. No one who reads the newspaper, watches television, or lives in or has visited a metropolitan area would disagree with the statement that homelessness has emerged as one of the most visible social problems of the '80s. In fact, President Bush, in his Inaugural Address January 1989, cited homelessness first among the domestic issues that need to be examined and dealt with.

This report contains two major parts. The first part, Findings and Recommendations, provides Commission-endorsed recommendations to the President, the Congress, and the employment and training community on policies and practices concerning the homeless and employment issues. This section contains both

* The National Commission for Employment Policy was originally designated in the authorizing legislation as the National Commission for Manpower Policy. It was later renamed the National Commission for Employment Policy in the 1978 amendments to the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act.

policy-oriented as well as programmatically-oriented recommendations that are based on the other major part of this report.

Part II, entitled Staff Report, consists of three sections. The first section provides information to policymakers and the job training community about a group of people whom they have not historically served: the "new" homeless -- those men, women, and children living under bridges, in parks, on top of heating grates, in cars packed with household goods and in crowded shelters. Just who are these unfortunate people? What caused them to become homeless? What are the employment and training issues that need to be considered when dealing with this population? Section I of the Staff Report, *Discussion of the Issue*, provides some information on, if not answers to, such questions.

Section II of the Staff Report, *Study Results: Level and Types of JTPA Services Provided to the Homeless*, assesses how and the extent to which the nation's largest civilian employment and training program, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), is serving homeless individuals. To accomplish this, Commission researchers held discussions with local managing agencies for JTPA, i.e., service delivery area (SDA) administrators. At the completion of the project, Commission staff had spoken with 55 SDA administrators, primarily from large urban areas throughout the country. Although it has been well documented that both suburban and rural areas throughout the nation are also experiencing a rise in the number of homeless people, there is little doubt that the majority of homeless individuals are concentrated in large cities; consequently, the Commission decided to focus on these areas. Care was taken to include urban SDAs from different regions of the country in the sample. Section II consists of the results of this analysis.

The third section of the Staff Report, *Case Studies*, provides employment and training professionals with examples of programs where Private Industry Councils (PICs) have developed and implemented innovative approaches or programs to include the homeless in their JTPA programs. Section III contains seven studies of local JTPA initiatives where the PICs are undertaking special efforts to ensure services to this group. The main objectives of these case studies are to identify what works, and what does not work, in a selection of local job training programs for the homeless and to promote replication and adaptation of the practices that work among other local programs. Factors such as community support and involvement, private industry council and private sector role, type of services provided, levels of interagency and public/private coordination, outcome measures, and funding mechanisms are examined and included in each of the case studies.

Helping the Homeless be Choosers: The Role of JTPA in Improving Job Prospects

PART I.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The prevention of homelessness has played a secondary role to emergency responses in the development of policy at all levels -- federal, state, and local -- and in all areas -- housing, mental health, employment, etc. -- of government. One of the dangers of this short-sighted approach is that people often have become homeless before they receive subsidized housing, employment service, social services, and other types of assistance. Once homeless, the kinds of services an individual needs are usually more intensive and costly than those that prevent homelessness. Preventing homelessness is both a humane and cost-effective aspect of comprehensive homeless initiatives. Hence, it is imperative that policymakers and administrators at all levels and in all areas of government work together to ensure cost-effective and efficient assistance to poor Americans before they become homeless.

The major purpose of this report is to provide recommendations to the President, the Congress and the employment and training community on policies and practices concerning the homeless and employment issues. These recommendations are based on a general examination of homelessness; the results of telephone conversations with 55 urban service delivery area (SDA) administrators of Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs; and the general conclusions derived from seven case studies of local JTPA homeless programs serving homeless Americans.

What is clear from an overall analysis of these three data sources is that although there is national concern about the homeless, little progress has been made in terms of addressing their long-term employment needs -- at the national, state, or local level. The National Commission for Employment Policy strongly encourages policy-makers enact and job training administrators implement the following recommendations by taking action to help alleviate the growth of homelessness among Americans as well as to respond more effectively and quickly to the employment and training needs of individuals once they do become homeless.

The National Commission for Employment Policy strongly believes that declaring war on homelessness requires addressing the many needs of the homeless population -- job training and the procurement of a job with a wage that will enable them to afford adequate housing, clothing, and food -- being among the most important for them. Because this report primarily examines issues related to the policies and programs of the JTPA, the nation's major employment and training program for the economically disadvantaged, most of the recommendations deal with the JTPA system. In fact, many of the recommendations are taken directly from suggestions made by SDA administrators and program operators. Also, recognizing that federal (U.S. Department of Labor), state, and local (SDA) policies and practices have significant influence on who is served in

JTPA programs, and the level and type of service provided them, it is necessary to review the findings from all three perspectives. This part contains both policy-oriented as well as programmatically-oriented Commission recommendations.

Furthermore, the results presented here have implications that extend beyond the participation of the homeless in JTPA. To the extent that the homeless have characteristics, needs, and attitudes that are reflective of many other "hard-to-serve" groups, the adoption of the recommendations outlined here will have a positive impact on the type and level of service accorded them.

POLICY-ORIENTED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participate in JTPA programs, a homeless individual must document, at a minimum, that he/she is a citizen or legal resident of the U.S. (e.g., driver's license, birth certificate, green card, etc.) and, in many states, prove that he/she meets the income-based criteria.

Currently, there is some uncertainty as to whether homeless individuals are automatically eligible for JTPA, or whether they have to meet the same income eligibility criteria as do other JTPA participants. While the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, the most comprehensive piece of legislation for this group, amended JTPA to make the homeless automatically eligible for the program, the Act also included language that stated the homeless had to meet the income-based eligibility criteria of specific programs if they were to be enrolled in such programs. This has raised questions about homeless applicants' need to meet income eligibility criteria to participate in JTPA. The U.S. Department of Labor, the federal agency responsible for overseeing JTPA, has ruled that the states themselves have the latitude to determine whether eligibility would be automatic or based on income verification. Hence, to date, states have the flexibility to waive income eligibility requirements for the homeless or require they meet the same income criteria as other JTPA clients.

Proof of identity is often difficult for this group, and, in those states where homeless applicants are not automatically eligible for JTPA, proof of income is a particularly difficult task: very few have the necessary "paperwork" (e.g., pay stubs, tax returns, W-2 forms, etc.) to document their income.

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The Commission believes the income-based criteria are a particularly unnecessary requirement for homeless people and simply create one more "barrier" to getting them into the program; thus, the Commission recommends that the Congress clarify the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act to make it clear that homeless individuals are automatically eligible for JTPA and do not have to meet JTPA income-based eligibility requirements. This should be done either through amending JTPA or amending the McKinney Act. In the

meantime, the U.S. Department of Labor should communicate to the JTPA system that homeless individuals as defined by the McKinney Act may be automatically eligible for the program and do not have to meet income-based eligibility requirements.

Supportive Services

The availability of supportive services is clearly of importance to most individuals eligible for JTPA. For homeless clients, however, the type and level of support services required are often more substantial and extensive than those required by other hard-to-serve JTPA clients. In addition to those services required by the "typical" JTPA client such as assistance with transportation and day-care costs, homeless participants often require different and/or more intensive support services not traditionally provided by the JTPA system, e.g., housing, drug and alcohol therapy, mental and physical health assistance, clothing, etc. All administrators who worked with the homeless felt the provision of adequate support services in a variety of areas was essential to homeless clients' success.

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PICs should work with and develop linkages with other agencies and systems, including drug, alcohol, and general health treatment facilities, to ensure that homeless individuals have access to the supportive services which are so essential to the homeless individual's long-term success.

Furthermore, because most homeless individuals' need for immediate money -- they simply cannot afford to pursue a training program without a needs-based payment -- and, in many cases, their lack of interest in pursuing training that does not provide some type of payment, the enrollment of homeless individuals in JTPA training programs other than on-the-job (OJT) training is unrealistic. Senate amendments to JTPA (S.543) introduced in July 1988, proposed that job search, job search skills training, job clubs, and work experience not be allowed as "stand-alone" activities unless the participant's assessment and service strategy indicates that additional services are not warranted and the activities are not available through the employment service or other public agencies. Because of the homeless individuals' need for immediate income, their lack of interest in undertaking longer-term training, their lack of a home base from which to make and receive telephone calls to employers, and their need for close monitoring and significant support from program staff during their job search, the Commission feels it would be inadvisable to disallow job search activities as a "stand-alone" activity for the homeless.

The overwhelming majority of programs targeted specifically for homeless individuals offer job search activities of one form or another as the "core" of the program. The fact that many homeless people need extensive training to become self-sufficient requires that JTPA offer a wide range of supportive services as well as offer needs-based payments for those requiring and willing to commit to longer-term training.

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Thus, as indicated in the Commission's recently published study on Hispanics, the Commission is in agreement with legislative proposals which allow for the increase in the proportion of JTPA funds that may be expended on support services from the current stipulation of "no more than 15%" to "no more than 20%."[1]

Although the Commission recognizes that the implementation of this amendment would mean fewer funds would be available for training, the Commission believes that the findings cited in this report clearly indicate that if we are to assist the homeless -- one of the fastest growing and truly disadvantaged segments of contemporary society -- this change must be made.

Those job training programs which have been most successful in establishing linkages with local agencies which can meet their clients' needs for supportive services have generally found that the current 15 percent limitation, while onerous, is not impossible to work with.

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Therefore, along with supporting raising the limitation from 15 to 20 percent, the U.S. Department of Labor should work through the Interagency Council on the Homeless, an umbrella group for federal agencies, to identify and develop incentives to encourage linkages between JTPA programs and other programs offering the supportive services needed by JTPA's homeless clients. Currently, the linking and coordinating falls disproportionately on JTPA programs.

Performance-Standards System

The performance-standards system, a key element of the outcome-oriented JTPA strategy, appears for several reasons to offer no inducement for increasing the level and type of services provided to homeless individuals in many SDAs. First, although intended to "hold SDAs harmless" with respect to client mix through the use of regression-based adjustment models (which permit SDAs to adjust their performance standards to take into account the provision of services to various types of hard-to-serve clients, e.g., drop outs, welfare recipients, etc.), the models actually discourage service to some groups, including the homeless. Because "homelessness" is not a "characteristic" included in the models, no adjustment is permitted for homeless clients for SDAs using the DOL model. Therefore, SDAs which use the models are wary of serving homeless people since the models do not "hold them harmless" for their decision to serve this particular population.[2]

Second, this situation is exacerbated by PICs' lack of history in dealing with the homeless: since the job training system has not historically served homeless Americans, it has no data and no experience which allow SDAs to determine the impact of serving this group. Most job training administrators and PIC members believe that targeting homeless people for their programs will be particularly expensive and difficult, both because meeting the diverse needs of the

homeless is objectively challenging and because the JTPA system has little experience or expertise in dealing with this group. Therefore, they are concerned that providing services to this group will negatively affect their ability to meet their performance goals. In fact, program experience has showed that, thus far, the homeless are such a small percentage of the total JTPA participants that programs targeting homeless people tend to be too small to adversely affect the SDA's ability to meet their performance. (This could change, of course, if homelessness continues to increase, causing the percentage of JTPA clients who are homeless to increase as well.)

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The Commission recommends that the U.S. Department of Labor require that the characteristic "homeless" be added to the JTPA Annual Status Report (JASR) in recognition of the fact that client groups for which adjustments can be made are restricted to those groups on which there are historical data.

Although the Commission fully realizes that it is unrealistic to expect PICs to serve sufficient numbers of homeless for the inclusion of this "characteristic" to provide the U.S. Department of Labor with enough data to have an impact on the adjustment models, reporting of such data is an important signal to state and local agencies that the homeless are an important target group. Furthermore, as noted in an earlier Commission report on the effects of performance standards on who is served in JTPA, the presence of a client characteristic in the JASR, regardless of whether the characteristic is included in the adjustment model, appears to encourage PICs to increase service to this group; thus, homelessness should be added as a "characteristic" on which data are collected.

States play a very important role in the performance-standards system. Specifically, they have the choice of whether to use the federal adjustment model (i.e., the current regression model which holds SDAs harmless for including certain "hard-to-serve" groups in their programs), allow for adjustments beyond the model (e.g., to hold SDAs "harmless" for serving individuals with characteristics not included in the regression model), and/or include supplementary performance standards in addition to those required by the U.S. Department of Labor (e.g., post-program information). Such decisions may significantly affect the level and type of service to homeless individuals. For example, if states do not make adjustments for those SDAs serving large numbers of homeless clients, or if they impose additional post-program standards (e.g., wage at 6-month follow-up), SDAs may feel they are unable to serve a large percentage of homeless people and meet their performance goals.

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At a minimum, states should examine their performance-standards policies to ensure that they allow for making adjustments for the inclusion of homeless individuals in their programs, and that the inclusion of additional performance standards beyond those required by the federal government, and state policies for serving the hard to serve do not penalize those PICs serving homeless clients.

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Moreover, as further inducement for providing services to the homeless population, states should consider making it a policy to automatically do an adjustment for SDAs that enroll a certain percentage of homeless people in their programs.

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Further, the U.S. Department of Labor should continue to encourage, through both the maintenance of a technical assistance guide and the provision of training sessions, the establishment of state policies for making adjustments for client characteristics not included in the model.

Incentive Policies

The JTPA legislation requires states hold back 6 percent of their JTPA funds to be distributed to SDAs as incentive grants for good performance (i.e., for programs exceeding performance standards); for serving hard-to-serve individuals; and for technical assistance. The receipt of incentive monies, in particular, is seen as being very important to SDAs because it implies an active and well-managed program. Also, such monies are viewed by some SDAs as "bonuses" with which they can fund special efforts, such as programs for the homeless. In cases where such special programs are not required to meet performance standards, such funds were seen as being particularly important to SDAs with respect to serving the homeless. (States have the discretion to omit programs funded with incentive grants from performance standards.) In some local programs, 6 percent monies are combined with other non-JTPA money to fund homeless programs.

As noted in the Commission's report on the effects of performance standards, states having policies that emphasize services to the hard to serve such as by setting aside a pool of funds at the state level or requiring SDAs to use some 6 percent funds for the hard to serve, tended to increase the percentage of various hard-to-serve groups.[3] States should be encouraged to look at the 6 percent monies as a way to fund experimental programs for the hard to serve, including the homeless, and exempt such programs from performance standards to allow PICs maximum flexibility in experimenting with strategies to meet the needs of these groups.

JTPA gives the states wide latitude in determining how to divide the funds between incentive awards and the provision of technical assistance, and in establishing criteria for SDAs to qualify for incentives (e.g., the number of standards that must be exceeded to qualify; the "weighting" of some standards more than others; etc.). SDA administrators' concern with meeting the award criteria -- especially with respect to the cost standards -- was given as one of the reasons for limiting service to the homeless population. The SDA administrators' belief that it may cost more to serve a homeless client than a "typical" participant, particularly with respect to supportive services, was often provided as an explanation for minimal outreach activities to, and program activities for, this group.

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States should review their incentive award policies to ensure they encourage providing service to the hard to serve, including the homeless.

In particular, states should examine the role that cost standards play in their incentive award criteria. As noted in other Commission reports, "the federal cost standards have the most unintended effects and are the least comparably measured of all the Federal performance measures."[4] The heavy weighting of the cost standards had a particularly negative effect on the level of service to various hard-to-serve groups.

Also, JTPA legislation requires states to distribute their incentive grants among SDAs which exceed those standards in an equitable proportion based on the degree by which the SDAs exceed their performance standards. Thus, the Act explicitly requires incentive funds be based on "exceeding," not just "meeting," performance standards. In an earlier Commission study, it was determined that states placing a strong emphasis on exceeding performance standards in their incentive policies tended to reduce service to several hard-to-serve groups.

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As recommended in other Commission studies, NCEP recommends that Congress clarify its intent for promoting service to the hard to serve by changing JTPA to provide for incentive awards based on "meeting" rather than "exceeding" performance standards.[5]

Relationship with Shelter System and the Local Housing Situation

Programs need to coordinate effectively with local shelters, transitional housing facilities, and the local housing authority. However, coordination alone is inadequate: without affordable housing available, job training programs for the homeless are operating in a vacuum; if people can not find housing once they are employed, job retention is an unlikely outcome.

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PIC members and job training staff need to get actively involved in expanding the affordable housing stock locally, both on behalf of their homeless clients and to limit the number who will become homeless in the future.

McKinney Grant Money

The goal of the McKinney Act's Job Training Demonstration Program for the Homeless Grants is to provide information and direction for the future of job training programs for the homeless, with an emphasis on national policy, program content, and system's development. In most cases, recipients were notified of selection only one day before the grant "year" began running; they needed the first few months to hire staff and get their systems up and running, and were only able to serve clients during the latter portion of the grant year. It is questionable how much can be learned from such a short demonstration project.

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The Stewart B. McKinney Act should utilize the same funding strategy for their Job Training Demonstration Program as is working so well for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project Grants, that is, retaining the same grantees for more than one year. This extension will give the grantees more time for fully developing their strategies which, in turn, will provide the Department of Labor with the knowledge it needs to best influence national policy in support of effective program development. Alternatively, all McKinney-funded employment programs should have at least a two-year funding cycle.

OPERATIONALLY-ORIENTED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Coordination

It is clear that a system of flexible integrated services for the homeless needs to be developed to effectively help homeless individuals obtain jobs. The multiple, interrelated problems of homeless individuals require a comprehensive systemic response. In short, employment and training services depend directly on providing a variety of support services to homeless individuals including housing, food, drug and alcohol therapy, hygiene services, clothing, health care, child care, and transportation. Employment and training services must be part of an overall system to help the homeless -- the JTPA system has neither the resources nor the capacity to provide most homeless individuals with the many supportive services they require to succeed.

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It is imperative the PIC members and their staff be knowledgeable about and fully utilize the resources and services that are available through other agencies and groups that may benefit homeless clients.

For the JTPA community, this often means working and developing relationships with entities -- churches, shelters, second-hand clothing stores, etc. -- which they have not historically cultivated.

One of the most effective mechanisms for PICs to learn about the various resources available to and efforts undertaken on behalf of the homeless is through local task forces and/or coalitions to address the needs of the homeless. Program data indicate that PICs which are represented on local task forces/coalitions tend to believe that their JTPA program is an integral part of the network of social services that is available to assist homeless individuals in their community. Also, through coalition participation, staff are better able to link up with shelters and emergency services systems -- systems which are essential to allow the SDA to concentrate on employment yet access the resources necessary to assist homeless clients in dealing with other issues as well.

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PICs should make a concerted effort to determine if there is a task force or coalition on homelessness in their community and if so, inquire about serving as a member on it.

Further, in most communities in which there is a task force or coalition on homelessness, the emphasis is on meeting the immediate needs through the temporary shelter system rather than on supporting longer-term solutions such as job training. While PICs need to be tied into the local shelter system as a source of referrals as well as a source of shelter for their homeless clients, it is worthwhile to focus local attention on homeless people's need for eventual economic self-sufficiency through employment.

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PICs should work toward the establishment of a task force or coalition committee on employment or, alternatively, a separate task force on employment strategies for the homeless.

Other Sources Of Funding: McKinney Grant Money And Dislocated Worker Funds

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, the most comprehensive piece of legislation for this group, provides for one-year grants administered by the Department of Labor through a competitive application process for job demonstration programs. PICs as well as other private and public nonprofit entities may apply for money under this grant process. In those SDAs which applied for and received these funds, such monies were seen as being critical to the SDA's ability to offer special services and activities for this population. About half of the SDAs did not apply for Department of Labor McKinney grant funds. Reasons for not applying for these special funds included inadequate response time provided by the Department of Labor and lack of knowledge about the availability of the money.

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The U.S. Department of Labor should increase the time frame in which applicants have to apply for such funds as well as take measures to increase the awareness of the availability of such funds in the JTPA community. Also, there needs to be clearer guidance and better technical assistance from the Department of Labor and the states for the McKinney grantees; neither have been provided in either a timely fashion or adequate amount. Changing the McKinney funding cycle to that of the JTPA system would also facilitate improved planning and coordination.

The Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance Act (EDWAA) became law August 1988, as a comprehensive new dislocated worker training program to replace Title III of JTPA. Although substate areas for this new program conform largely to the existing JTPA service delivery system, governors are not required to designate all existing JTPA-Title II SDAs. Entities eligible for designation as substate grantees include: PICs, SDA grant recipients or administrative entities, private nonprofit organiza-

tions, units of local government, local offices of state agencies, and other agencies such as community colleges and vocational schools. Furthermore, programs funded with EDWAA monies have more flexibility than those funded with JTPA Title II funds. In particular, there are no income-based eligibility requirements for program participants; the law allows for the provision of needs-related payments to program participants under certain conditions; and, up to 25 percent of expended funds may be used for needs-related and support services.

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In those cases where a SDA/PIC has not been designated as a substate area for the EDWAA program, such SDAs/PICs should apply to be designated as such. Further, EDWAA funds should be used to serve homeless clients in those cases where the individual meets the definition of being a dislocated worker; such would allow that PIC to provide more support services than can be made available to them under Title II programs, and allow for the provision of needs-based payments.

Recruitment Efforts

Interview data indicate that the majority of SDAs undertake very modest efforts to recruit homeless adults and youths into their regular Title II JTPA programs. Reasons provided for this lack of effort included a lack of knowledge about this population on the part of the SDA staff as well as that of the PICs. Because those involved in operating and overseeing the JTPA system have not historically served this population and there is very little "objective" information about them -- almost all the knowledge the JTPA community has about the homeless is the result of newspaper and magazine articles and television movies about a particular homeless individual/family or from seeing such individuals on the street -- there is little knowledge or understanding concerning the employment needs of the homeless. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that because no advocates for the homeless serve on PICs, the needs of this group are given a far lower priority than those groups which have traditionally been served by the system and have an "advocate" serving on the PIC.

◆

To remedy this lack of information about the homeless in an SDA's area, the homeless should be included as a topic for discussion at State Job Training Coordinating Council (SJTCC) and PIC meetings. Furthermore, governors and local elected officials should make every effort to assure that the membership of the SJTCC and the PIC, respectively, includes individuals who are knowledgeable about the labor market problems of the homeless population and who are willing to play active roles in the work of the councils. Such can be accomplished either by adding another member who is knowledgeable about this population to the councils or by requesting that a member already sitting on the council become informed about the homeless and employment issues.

Components Of A Successful Program

Case study data clearly indicate that for homeless participants to be successful in JTPA programs, the following components must be an integral part of the program.

◆

CAREFUL SCREENING OF PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

Because of the particularly high incidence of drug and alcohol dependency, and physical and mental health problems among those in this population, program staff must recognize that not all homeless individuals are candidates for JTPA services. In programs where there were not adequate screening for clients, the program's success rate was extremely low. Generally, for homeless clients to be successful, they must demonstrate stability, a willingness to work, and be alcohol and drug free.

◆

DOCUMENTATION

Surprisingly, many homeless people have appropriate documentation, or have access to such documentation with staff assistance. However, staff may need to take the initiative including tracking down clients' records from earlier in their lives, contacting other states, accessing military records, and helping them to obtain social security cards and drivers' licenses. Programs need to be flexible, accepting clients' notarized statements.

◆

ADEQUATE HOUSING DURING PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

The most immediate need of the homeless is to find a stable living environment during program participation. Homeless JTPA clients find it difficult -- if not impossible -- to participate in a training activity when they have no idea where they will be living one week into the future. An orderly environment which meets the basic needs of food, shelter, and personal hygiene so that the individual can concentrate on job search and classroom expectations is essential to program success. Examples of strategies for providing stable housing include: awarding contracts to shelter operators, negotiating longer periods of residence for the clients with shelters than is usually allowed; developing agreements with proprietors of motels, single room occupancy hotels, and other low-cost housing establishments; and working with social service and housing agencies to find temporary or transitional housing for homeless individuals.

◆

COMMITTED PROGRAM STAFF KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE HOMELESS

Most of those involved in operating job training programs for the homeless felt that staff experienced in dealing with this particular population was extremely important. Staff must be accustomed to working in high stress situations and have a realistic understanding of the

needs of the homeless. Also, it is useful for at least one staff member to have experience in drug or alcohol counseling, so that the staff member can not only share expertise about dealing with this problem but can also help co-workers recognize the typical con games and denial of the substance-dependent personality.

In addition, because of the high potential for staff burnout, successful programs pay particular attention to fostering team spirit and camaraderie among the staff, and giving staff members appropriate outlets for feelings of discouragement, anger, and despair. This can be done through such mechanisms as weekly staff meetings, staff retreats outside the program office, and inviting other individuals who work with homeless people to share their experiences and knowledge with program staff.

◆

A CASE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

A case management system that encompasses a holistic approach -- one that includes considerable individual monitoring, counseling, and personal support -- is essential to the client's ability to stay with the program and cope with personal problems. Furthermore, a client's ability to stay in a job training program appears to be extremely dependent on the case manager's ability to coordinate a network of community resources and advocate for the client (e.g., shelter, medical services, etc.). Most homeless participants need a myriad of support services -- many of which are often "outside" the traditional JTPA support system.

◆

DRUG AND ALCOHOL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

As noted earlier, many homeless clients have drug and alcohol problems. These need to be uncovered by intake staff and acknowledged before the start of the program and continually monitored. Rehabilitation services must be easily available to the clients and long-term involvement in some type of treatment program must be part of an addicted individual's job training plan.

Program experience thus far is mixed as to whether drug and alcohol counseling and therapy should be integrated into JTPA programs for the homeless, or simply well linked with them.

◆

EXPECTATION OF SET-BACKS AND FAILINGS

Program design as well as staff training should acknowledge the likelihood that clients who have made progress against drugs and alcohol may relapse, that clients who have found jobs may lose them, and that clients who have left the shelter system may return. Often, the individual's wish to begin earning money as soon as possible will result in that person's moving into unsubsidized, unsheltered employment too fast, without the necessary attitudinal preparation or work ethic, let alone job skills. The program needs to be flexible enough to anticipate that individuals may experience one or more initial failures and to permit such individuals to come back if they wish to try again.

◆

CLOSE FOLLOW-UP AFTER PROGRAM COMPLETION

Programs where staff conduct regular follow-up with both employers and clients have a much higher retention rate than those which do not. Frequent contact with both parties allows the program staff to deal with any issue before they become major problems.

ENDNOTES

1. National Commission for Employment Policy. Training Hispanics: Implications for the JTPA System. National Commission for Employment Policy, Washington, D.C. January 1990.

2. An earlier report published by the Commission, JTPA Performance Standards: Effects on Clients, Services, and Costs (SRI International and Berkeley Planning Associates, September 1988), shows the positive correlation between holding SDAs harmless for serving a particular group and the level of service given that group. For example, the study found that in those SDAs in states where the DOL adjustment model was used, significantly more welfare recipients and high school drop outs (two groups for which adjustments were made) were served than in those SDAs in states where the model was not used.

3. SRI, pp. 44-50

4. SRI and the National Commission for Employment Policy.

5. SRI, p. 213. National Commission for Employment Policy, p. 10.

Helping the Homeless be Choosers: The Role of JTPA in Improving Job Prospects

PART II.

STAFF REPORT

Elaine M. Brady, Associate Director, directed all phases of the research and analysis of the data. Ms. Brady and Frances R. Rothstein, special consultant on the project, were the authors of this report.

PREFACE

In the summer of 1988, the National Commission for Employment Policy voted to investigate the employment problems of the homeless in America. The study was conducted over an 18 month period and included conversations with more than 100 individuals involved with job training programs and other types of assistance to the homeless. For many homeless individuals, the acquisition of a job is a critical step toward the acquisition of housing.

That National Commission is pleased to present this staff report on an issue which is of great national importance. We firmly believe that the information contained in this report will assist the President, the Congress, and job training practitioners, who are on the "front lines" in the quest to alleviate the plight of the homeless.

Much of this report is based upon the input of the many JTPA administrators who spent countless hours talking to Commission staff about job training efforts for the homeless in their communities. Equally important were the individuals who participated in the case study portion of this study; such participation often required furnishing written information as well as conversing at length about their respective programs. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all these individuals who so generously gave of their time and their expertise.

Elaine M. Brady of the Commission staff had primary responsibility for the overall project. She designed the project's overall approach, undertook required research, and was the author of this report. Frances R. Rothstein, under contract to the Commission, developed the case studies and was the author of them.

Barbara C. McQuown
Director

I. DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUE

HOMELESSNESS: A PROBLEM GROWN OUT OF CONTROL

Although homelessness has existed since colonial times, never before has it affected so many Americans as it does today. Articles such as "The Homeless at the Heart of Poverty and Policy" which appeared in the New York Times in January, 1989, "Homeless Lured to Exploitive Jobs," (Washington Times, May 16, 1989) and "Homeless Kids: Forgotten Faces," (Newsweek, January 6, 1986) a compelling article about the plight of homeless adolescents, are all too common. There are few, if any, newspapers and news magazines which have not devoted considerable pages to detailing information about this growing segment of American society. And some of the leading actors and actresses (e.g., Lucille Ball, Martin Sheen) have written about and starred in television movies and special news features highlighting the homeless.

In addition to what Americans learn about the homeless through television and news articles, the majority of people now see homeless people in their communities. In January 1989, the New York Times and CBS teamed together to undertake a telephone news poll of over 1,50[illegible] Americans nationwide to gather baseline data on the American perception of various issues of the homeless problem. Results of this survey showed that just over half (51%) of the interviewees stated that they personally saw homeless people daily (as opposed to 36% who saw them in their communities three years ago).

It is extremely diff[illegible]t to arrive at an accurate count of the [illegible]ber of homeless people -- their mobi[illegible], lack of attachment to social institutions, and desire to remain anonymous made an accurate census impossible. In a 1984 report, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimated that there were between 250,000 and 350,000 people homeless in the U.S. These figures were said to be much too low according to surveys undertaken by other organizations and were sharply criticized by many groups that work with the homeless. A report issued in June 1988 by the National Alliance to End Homelessness estimated that 735,000 Americans were homeless on any given night in 1988; and the Community for Creative Non-Violence, an advocacy group located in Washington, D.C., estimates that there are 2.2 million Americans homeless at any one time. In a report recently issued by the Urban Institute, the number of homeless people in the U.S. is estimated to be close to 600,000.[1]

Although there is much disagreement about the number of individuals who are homeless, there is general agreement on two things: the number of homeless persons is growing rapidly, and the characteristics of the homeless are as diverse as

those of the American population at large. It is clear that the stereotypic image of the homeless as tramps or hobos who travel the country in search of work and adventure, or as skid row bums and "bag ladies" who are either alcoholics or "crazy," are no longer appropriate depictions of many of the homeless in the '80s. As one author writes, the homeless are "a heterogeneous population comprised of many subgroups, including runaway children, immigrants, migrants, so-called bag ladies, displaced families, a certain number of unemployed, battered women, minorities, the elderly, and an over-representation of persons with serious alcohol, drug abuse, and mental disorders."[2] In short, the only thing the homeless population often have in common with other homeless individuals is their lack of a home.

Current data on the homeless indicate that families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population. While before the advent of the 1980s, almost all the homeless were single men and women, this is certainly not the case today. For example, the 1983 HUD study reported that, on a national basis, 21 percent of the shelter residents were members of family groups. And, in late 1986, the U.S. Conference of Mayors estimated that families made up more than one-quarter (28%) of all homeless people in the 25 cities which were included in the organization's annual survey of hunger, homelessness, and poverty in America. Other surveys show that families may make up an even greater percentage of the "new" homeless in some areas. Most of these families are headed by women with two or three children under the age of five years.

MANY MORE AMERICANS IN JEOPARDY OF BECOMING HOMELESS

In addition to the number of Americans who are currently homeless, there are many more who may be called the "near homeless" or the "housing vulnerable." These individuals and families, unable to find affordable housing, are often living with friends and relatives and are one step away from living on the streets or in shelters. One report just released from the American Institute of Affordable Housing suggests that there are an additional 4 to 14 million American families who are currently living on the edge of homelessness; they are doubled and tripled up with friends and family members -- in apartments and homes that are often overcrowded and deteriorating; they are one paycheck, one domestic argument away from being homeless. The existence of such a large pool of near-homeless indicates that a national economic downturn would also be accompanied by a large increase in homelessness.[3]

WHO ARE THE HOMELESS?

There is no correct or right answer to this question. Although most social scientists and policymakers would agree that someone who lives on the street or proceeds from shelter to shelter in search of lodging is homeless, beyond this, there is limited agreement as to who should be considered homeless. For example, in-

dividuals falling in the following categories may be considered "homeless" by some definitions but not by others:

- individuals living in single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels;
- individuals living in halfway houses and long-term shelters; and
- individuals living in extremely overcrowded conditions.

And a host of questions as to who should be counted among the homeless revolves around the question of choice. For example, a person who has sufficient funds to live in adequate housing and chooses not to, or an individual who has the option of living in an atmosphere of fear or extreme stress but prefers to "reside" in the streets, is that individual homeless?

For purposes of this paper, the definition used by HUD will be used. In a Report to the Secretary of HUD on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters, issued in May, 1984, a person was considered homeless if his/her nighttime residence was 1) in a public or private shelter (armories, schools, church basements, and hotels, apartments and boarding houses if a voucher had been provided by a public or private agency); or 2) in a public or private space not generally utilized as a shelter (e.g., parks, bus and railroad terminals, airports, cars, abandoned buildings).

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOMELESS VARY SUBSTANTIALLY AMONG THIS GROUP

Unlike most segments of American society (e.g., blacks, Indians, etc.) there is no national data source that provides information about the demographic or economic characteristics of the homeless population. Although several attempts in the early 1980s were made to gather empirical data on the size and profile of the homeless population on a national level, these studies have generally been criticized as being exclusionary (e.g., only including individuals residing in selected shelters or transitionary housing; only including large metropolitan areas; etc.).[4] Since 1984, no systematic, empirical study has been undertaken to gather information about the homeless. As noted earlier, there will be some attempt to obtain socio-economic data on the homeless in the 1990 Census. Therefore, at present, the majority of information about the specifics of this group is generally the result of local (city, county, or state) surveys or information gathering procedures.

From many of these city/county/state surveys, researchers have determined that the demographics of the homeless vary from community to community and tend to reflect the composition of the general area. Therefore, there are often major differences in the characteristics of the homeless from one area of the country and another.

Several organizations, however, have compiled statistics on the population from a nation-wide, rather than a local or state sample, of homeless individuals. One of the most recent set of numbers on the demographics of the homeless, compiled from a national survey, is detailed in a report published in 1989 by the Urban Institute. In a national sample of 1704 homeless individuals using soup kitchens and shelters in 20 U.S. cities:

- Most of the homeless are male (81%).
- A slight majority of the homeless are non-white (54%).
- About half of the homeless are between 31 and 50 years of age.
- Almost half (48%) have not graduated from high school. One-fifth of them have some post-high-school education with 6% of the total having graduated from college. On the other end of the spectrum, 9% of the homeless interviewees had less than an eighth grade education.
- Seventy-seven percent are unattached adults; 15% are children; and 8% are adults in families to which children belong. Parent/children households account for 10% of the homeless; the overwhelming majority (80%) of which are headed by women.
- Although most qualify for food stamps, only 18% were receiving food stamps at the time of interview.
- Two-thirds of all homeless have been in at least one of the following four types of institutions: mental hospital, detoxification or chemical dependency center, county jail, state or federal prison. Nearly one-fifth have been institutionalized in three or all four types of institutions.

Although the overwhelming majority of homeless individuals interviewed in the Urban Study report were unemployed, some of them have a strong recent attachment to the labor force – 5.6% of them were working at a steady job in which they had been employed for more than three months. And another 25% of them had worked for pay at some time over the last thirty days. And more than half of the interviewees (55%) indicated that they had looked for work at some time during the last month.[5]

Other national data on the characteristics of the homeless are provided by a 26-city survey of mayors performed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors in the summer of 1988. The study concluded that, on average, the composition of the cities' homeless was "49% single men, 14% single women, 33% families with children, and 4% unaccompanied youth." An average of 35% of the homeless in the responding cities were believed to be substance abusers, 23% were thought to be severely mentally ill, and 22% were said to be employed, either in full or part-time jobs.[6]

Although many of the data gathered from these two national surveys do not agree in terms of particular demographic information, the implication of these data are the same: although the immediate

plight of the homeless may be to find adequate housing, the problems of the homeless extend to many other areas -- particularly as they relate to mental and physical health, education, job training, and employment. A long-term change in their circumstances requires more than just "housing, housing, housing," the solution proposed by Robert Hayes of the National Coalition for the Homeless. In short, homelessness is just not a housing problem, but often rather the result of a myriad of problems or inadequacies to cope and work in today's society and economy.

MANY FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE HOUSING CRISES AND HOMELESSNESS

There are many factors which have exacerbated homelessness among Americans -- particularly for those individuals and families who have lived on the brink of poverty for many years. In addition to long-term unemployment, the decrease in jobs for low-skilled workers, and the substantial rise in the cost of living that took place in the '70s and '80s, other factors include:

Lack of Affordable Housing. The supply of low income housing has not kept pace with demand. Numerous studies show that the supply of low-income housing has actually declined considerably over the last ten years while the need for low-income housing has increased dramatically.[7] This lack of affordable housing is evident when data on the percentage of income a poor household pays for housing are examined. Under standards determined by HUD, a low income household should pay no more than 30% of its income for housing if it is to be considered affordable. Yet, 1985 data showed that almost 80% of all poor renter households, and two-thirds of all poor homeowners paid at least 35% of their income on housing, or more than the amount considered affordable under the federal standards.[8] Furthermore, nearly half of all poor renter households, and almost one-third of all poor homeowners paid at least 70% of their income for housing. Many of these Americans are at extreme risk of becoming homeless because of the high percentage of their income that goes to housing costs.

Increase in the Number of Households with Incomes Below the Poverty Line and Decreases in the Number of Low-Income Renter Units. Between 1978 and 1985, the number of poor households grew by about one-quarter -- from 10.5 million in 1978 to 13.3 million in 1985.[9] While the number of poor households has increased dramatically, the amount of low-income housing available has declined. For example, in 1970, there were 9.7 million units renting for 30%of a poor households income; in 1985, there were only 7.9 million of such units available. The growing number of poor households fighting for a decreasing number of low-cost units has contributed to homelessness among the poor.[10]

Abolishment of jobs. According to data provided by the AFL-CIO, nearly two million jobs in steel, textile and other industries have been abolished since 1980. Many workers employed in these industries lacked the skills to obtain jobs in

other sectors and found themselves unable to compete in the job market; others found themselves unemployed because of overall poor economic opportunities in the local area. This situation was exacerbated by the low wage scale paid for many of the jobs developed during this same period. For example, almost half of all new jobs created from 1980 to 1985 pay poverty-level wages.[11]

Divorce, especially no fault divorce, in the case of women with children. It has been well documented that many women and their children often experience a substantial drop in their standard of living after a divorce. This is particularly true in the case of a "no fault" divorce where the woman is required to sell the family home in order to meet the divorce settlement which requires the wife to give 50% of the joint holdings to the husband. (Prior to "no fault" divorce, the house was likely to be awarded to the wife and children.) Through the drop in living standard and/or the forced sale of the family home and the equal division of the proceeds, for the women and children, especially for a family who was "living on the margin" before the divorce, the breakup of the family may be the first step on the road to homelessness.[12]

Spouse and child abuse and domestic violence. Psychological and physical abuse often force women and their children to move out of the family home, thereby exacerbating homelessness among women and their children. For example, one study concluded that 40% of the women in a particular shelter were battered wives and that two-thirds of them had experienced some type of family upheaval.[13]

The policies and laws calling for deinstitutionalizing a large number of individuals who were in the care of mental health hospitals in the last several decades. Between 1955 and 1980, the number of people housed in state mental facilities dropped by 75%.[14] A significant number of these individuals were released from mental health facilities without adequate provision for out-patient treatment and support to assist them in finding housing and employment. For those who cannot live with families or friends, and those who are not mentally able to make contact with community facilities and services, deinstitutionalization often means homelessness. This situation for the psychiatrically impaired has been further exacerbated by the tightening of criteria for admission to state mental institutions -- individuals who at one time may have been able to receive inpatient treatment for mental illness are now often left with only their own resources.

The phenomenon of "gentrification." The wholesale demolition of low-cost and low-rent housing units, especially in urban areas, has often led to a decrease in affordable housing in a given area. As growth occurs and cities change, particular areas of the city are often targeted for development. The outcome of the resulting redevelopment is often the demolition of boarding homes, older housing, and dilapidated single room occupancy hotels which commonly housed those with minimal income.

Decreased federal support in federal housing programs. Two of the most important sources for low-income housing assistance for which most homeless would be eligible -- HUD programs (concentrates on metropolitan areas) and

Farmers' Home Administration of the U.S, Department of Agriculture (focuses on rural areas) -- have been substantially reduced during the last decade. With respect to HUD's subsidized housing programs, appropriations have been reduced from a high of $32.2 billion in fiscal year 1977 to slightly less than $10 billion in fiscal year 1988; after adjusting for inflation, this constitutes a decline of more than 80%. And lending authority for the Farmers' Home Administration program fell from $3.7 billion in 1978 to $2.1 billion in 1988 -- a decline of 70% after adjusting for inflation.[15]

THE HOMELESS AND EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING: MANY OF THEM ARE CAPABLE AND WANT AND NEED IT

> "The homeless in America do not need shelters. What the homeless need first are homes, and then support services like health and mental health care and vocational training and sensible public policies to get them out of the cycles of destitution and to a track moving toward independence. ... They need vocational training for meaningful, practical employment possibilities. Finally, they need publicly-funded employment opportunities to get them started toward improved self-respect and independence.[16]

This perspective was shared by many of the volunteers and individuals who work in entities that provide food and/or lodging services (soup kitchens, shelters without meals, and shelters with meals) to homeless individuals and/or families, according to on-site interviews with 281 providers in 20 U.S. cities. Data contained in the Urban Institute's study indicated that: "Twenty-three percent of providers saw their mission as 'rehabilitating' clients, offering services to break the cycle of homelessness by providing clients with skills to make the transition into the mainstream of society."[17] The fact that many of the homeless want to work is verified in the information collected in this study -- over half (55%) of the homeless individuals interviewed had looked for a job during the last month.

The correlation between employment-related factors and homelessness is verified by much of the data obtained over the last decade. For example, during the past five years, the United States Conference of Mayors, through its task force on Hunger and Homelessness, has surveyed some of the largest cities to obtain information on a number of issues dealing with hunger and homelessness. Some of the issues consistently focused on were the causes of hunger and homelessness. Unemployment and other employment-related problems were consistently mentioned as two of the primary causes of homelessness in each of the cities each year. Specifically, 18 of the 21 cities which participated in the 1987 survey cite employment and employment-related issues as major factors; 19 of the 29 cities cited likewise in a study undertaken earlier that year; and 17 of the 25 cities blamed employment and employment-related issues for homelessness in a study undertaken in December, 1986. (Lack of housing affordable to low-income people, mental illness, and

lack of services needed by mentally ill persons were also consistently thought to be primary reasons for homelessness.)

The particularly high correlation between homelessness and unemployment was corroborated in the Urban Institute report. According to information collected in the study, the overwhelming majority had been homeless for a significantly shorter period than had been without a steady job. Put differently -- most individuals had been unemployed for a substantial period of time before they became homeless. Specifically, the average number of months a person had been homeless was slightly more than three years (39 months) with the median being less than 1 year (10 months); the average number of months an individual had been without steady work was four years (48 months) with the mean being 21 months.[18] Sixty percent of these individuals had held their last steady job for more than one year with over half of them having been employed in their last job for more than 4 years.[19] These findings would indicate that many of the homeless have indeed worked and only became homeless after they were unemployed for a significant period of time.

Most all the research on employment status show that between 5 and 10 percent of this population are employed in full-time jobs while another 10 to 20 percent work part-time or episodically. Many individuals who work with the homeless believe that many more homeless are working in some capacity than they will readily admit. For the most part, these homeless workers perform unskilled labor and hold jobs which lack job security, advancement opportunities, and benefits such as health care and sick pay. Many of these workers are homeless because their incomes have not kept pace with the tremendous increase in housing costs. As stated by one individual operating a shelter: "Twenty years ago an individual making minimum wage could afford a tenement apartment in an urban setting and still afford to give his family the basic necessities. Nowadays, a worker making twice the minimum wage would have difficulty affording that same tenement apartment and having enough left over to put food on the table."

In fact, the increase in the number of homeless people in some areas may be attributed to their search for employment or better employment opportunities. For example, as noted in one local report on the homeless, The Report and Recommendations of the Homeless Funding Coordination Task Force of the Maricopa, Arizona Association of Governments in October 1987:

> The employment opportunities in the Maricopa County area are excellent. Our unemployment rate is consistently lower than the national rate. People come here looking for jobs. According to the MAG Regional Development Summary of 1987, the major types of jobs are in the areas of computers, semiconductors and electronics, defense and aerospace, tourism/-retirement/recreation and construction. Most of these jobs require special skills. Many of those seeking jobs are not trained in the skills required by our region's employers. Many individuals take minimum wage jobs which do not generate adequate resources for rent, food, utilities, and transportation. Forty percent (40%) of the homeless surveyed by the Phoenix South Community Mental Health Center came to

> Arizona in search of a job. Because they cannot find jobs for which they are qualified, many become homeless.

In order to declare war on homelessness, it is necessary to address the many needs of the homeless population, job training and procurement of a job being among the most important for many of these individuals. As one shelter administrator stated: "It isn't enough to give the homeless temporary shelter and food; those necessities only meet their basic needs for the moment. Somehow we have to ensure they get job training, if that's what is needed, and job placement in order to ensure they can afford adequate housing and food for the long run." There are two major pieces of legislation -- the Job Training Partnership Act and the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act -- which may be used to provide job training and employment assistance to homeless individuals.

THE JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT

The Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 (JTPA), the nation's major employment and training program for the economically disadvantaged, marshals federal resources to help economically-disadvantaged and long-term unemployed people receive training and get jobs. JTPA provides remedial education, training and employment assistance to low-income youth and adults, dislocated workers, and others -- such as Native Americans, migrant and seasonal farm workers, veterans, and older workers -- who face significant employment barriers. The goal of this Act is to move the jobless into permanent, unsubsidized, self-sustaining employment. Like the Comprehensive Employment and Training System (CETA) which it replaced, JTPA works primarily through a locally based program delivery system, i.e., SDAs. Because most homeless people are extremely poor, almost all of them are eligible to receive job training assistance through JTPA. In fact, the McKinney Act (passed in 1987) facilitates greater use of JTPA monies to serve the homeless.

There are five titles, or major sections, to the legislation. Title II, the major component of the program, authorizes funding and sets out requirements for training services to be provided at the local level for disadvantaged youth and adults. The number of homeless individuals served by Title II JTPA programs nationwide is unknown because federal reporting requirements do not require that information be collected on the population. However, as discussed later, it is fair to say that, until recently, JTPA programs did not target homeless people for training or job assistance. In fact, outreach and intake procedures tended to keep homeless people out of the program.

In addition to Title II programs, many homeless may be eligible to participate in initiatives funded from two other titles, or sections of JTPA legislation: those historically offered under Title III, the state administered dislocated worker training initiative, recently replaced by the Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Act of 1988; and select Title IV initiatives, special programs funded and administered by the federal government. Under Title IV, there are two major

federally administered efforts geared at getting the homeless back in the economic mainstream: Jobs for Homeless Veterans and a special initiative conducted under the Jobs Corps.[20]

In addition to the various programs funded through JTPA titles, the Act requires the governor to allocate, or set-aside a percentage of JTPA funds for specific purposes. These state-controlled monies may also be used to provide job training to the homeless.

THE STEWART B. MCKINNEY HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

The McKinney Act, which became law in July 1987, is the most comprehensive piece of legislation for this group and includes nearly 20 provisions to meet the needs of the homeless -- it provides for emergency shelter, food, health care, mental health care, housing, education, job training, and other community services. Over 15 federal agencies are involved in administering various aspects of the McKinney Act. This Act, probably more than any other piece of federal legislation, recognized the need to pull together the resources of a variety of government agencies. While some of the programs funded by McKinney are direct entitlement programs, others require national competition. And while some programs require the direct involvement of local governments and others require state participation, others allow for non-profit agencies to apply for nationally competitive grants.

The initial authorization for the McKinney Act was for two years and expired on September 30, 1988. On November 7, 1988, former President Reagan signed the Omnibus McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-628), which reauthorizes the Act for another two years. For fiscal year 1988, it was authorized at $616 million; however, slightly more than half, $363 million, was appropriated. For fiscal year 1989, $378 million was appropriated for McKinney programs. President Bush went on record stating that he was in full support of funding the Act at its authorization level. (The McKinney Act authorizes $634 million in fiscal 1989 and $656 million in fiscal 1990. Congress, however, appropriated $378 million for the program for fiscal year 1989 in earlier appropriation bills.[21])

Two provisions of the McKinney Act directly deal with the issue of employment. First, the Job Training for the Homeless Demonstration Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, involves a competitive grant application process under which the Secretary of Labor awards grants for job training demonstration programs. These grants, which fund the first comprehensive nationwide federal program specifically designed to help the homeless find and retain jobs, are available to state and local public agencies, private nonprofits, and private businesses. These grants may be used for basic skills instruction, remedial education, basic literacy instruction, job counseling, and job search activities. As stated by former Secretary of Labor Ann McLaughlin, "Some of the homeless find themselves in desperate straits because of their need for

more marketable skills in a very complex economy. These [one year grants authorized under McKinney] grants will directly address that need by providing remedial education, skills training, work experience, job development, and follow-up services, thus helping the homeless to get back into the economic mainstream."

Congress appropriated $9.4 million for fiscal 1989 for the program, $1.9 million of which is setaside for the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project. For fiscal year 1988, $9.6 million was appropriated, $7.6 million of which was awarded to 33 public and private groups to operate employment and training projects.[22]

Secondly, the McKinney Act amended the Job Training Partnership Act, in two ways: it added the homeless to the definition of who are eligible for JTPA programs, in Section 4(8) of the Act; and it changed the requirement for proof of residency under Section 141 (E) of JTPA to permit services to individuals who cannot prove that they reside within a service delivery area if its job training plan permits services to homeless individuals.[23]

Currently, there is some uncertainty as to whether homeless individuals are automatically eligible for JTPA, or whether they have to meet the same income eligibility criteria as do other JTPA participants. While the McKinney Act amended JTPA to make the homeless automatically eligible for the program, the Act also included language that stated the homeless had to meet the income eligibility criteria of specific programs if they were to be enrolled in such programs. This has raised questions about the homeless applicants' need to meet income eligibility criteria to participate in JTPA. To date, states have the flexibility to waive income eligibility requirements for the homeless or require that they meet the same income limitations as other JTPA clients.[24]

ENDNOTES

1. The Census Bureau anticipates gathering an accurate account of the number and characteristics of the homeless in the 1990 Census. In an attempt to gather this information, the Census Bureau is signing up as workers people who have had experience working with the homeless. It is hoped that these workers will be locating the "hidden homeless," those who seem to disappear at night, as well as those who stay in well-known shelters as well as churches, community buildings, etc.

2. Irene Shifren Levine, "Homelessness: Its Implications for Mental Health Policy and Practice," Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal 8, July 1984, p.3.

3. Schwartz, David C. and Glascock, John H. Combating Homelessness. American Affordable Housing Institute, Rutgers University, New York, August, 1989.

4. The HUD study, A Report to the Secretary on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters, which published in May 1984, is generally considered to be the primary source of data on the homeless at the national level. This study relied primarily on interviewing local knowledgeable people in a random sample of 60 metropolitan areas. In addition to undertaking more than 500 telephone interviews with various public and private representatives, interviews were completed with 184 shelter managers selected randomly in the 60 metropolitan areas.

5. Information obtained by telephone from the Urban Institute.

6. U.S. Conference of Mayors, The Continuing Growth of Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty in America's Cities: 1987, December 1987, p.2.

7. Bureau of the Census of the U.S. Department of Commerce, American Housing Survey, 1985. National Association of Homebuilders, Low and Moderate Income Housing: Problems, Programs, and Prospects, 1986.

8. Some 44 and 31 percent of all poor renter households and poor homeowners, respectively, paid at least 60 percent of their income for housing costs in 1978. By 1985, 55 percent of all poor renter households and 38 percent of all poor homeowners paid 60 percent of their income for housing costs. (Paul Leonard, Cushing Dolbeare, and Edward Lazere, A Place to Call Home: The Crises in Housing for the Poor, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Low Income Housing Information Service, Washington, D.C., April 1989, pp. 5-6.)

9. Ibid., p. 15.

10. Ibid. p. xiv.

11. Kozol, p. 13.

12. The "no fault" divorce is currently available in 48 states. The implementation of this law has negatively impacted the economic well being of women and children in many cases. For example, Lenore Weitzman, in her book entitled The Divorce Revolution noted that in a sample of 3,000 divorce cases, women and children experienced a 73% drop in their standard of living while the men realized a 42% increase in theirs.

13. Neal Karlen et. al., "Homeless Kids:Forgotten Faces," Newsweek, Jan. 6, 1986, p. 20.

14. Howard H. Goldman and Joseph P. Morrissey, "The Alchemy of Mental Health Policy: Homelessness and the Fourth Cycle of Reform," American Journal of Public Health, 75, 1985, pp. 727-731.

15. Ibid., p. 28.

16. Carol T. Mowbray, "Homeless in America: Myths and Realities," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 55, 1985, p. 48.

17. Urban Institute, Feeding the Homeless: Does the Prepared Meals Provision Help?, Vol. I, p. 62.

18. Ibid., Supporting Table 8M, p. 27.

19. Ibid.,Supporting Table 28, p. 47.

20. Jobs for Homeless Veterans program was established as a one-year pilot in the winter of 1986 to meet the objective of assisting homeless veterans to gain access to the wide array of services available to them and to help those who are -- or can become -- job ready to obtain employment. The primary feature of the Job for Homeless Veterans program was an outreach component staffed by veterans who themselves had been homeless. These outreach workers served as a liaison between the homeless veterans and the "system" so that the needed services could be obtained. The outreach workers directed veterans through the maze of entitlement and available services. This outreach activity often took place in the shelters, soup kitchens, on the streets, and in other places where the homeless congregate.

Fourteen JOBS programs were funded between November, 1986 and June, 1988. Each project was provided between $25,000 and $30,000 in JTPA funds. All funds were spent on the salaries and fringe benefits of the outreach workers. These funds were matched by contributions from other sources.

Job Corps provides a wide range of education, training, and support services for severely disadvantaged youth aged 16 - 21. On September 6, 1988, the Secretary of Labor announced the creation of a Shelter Corps, a pilot project of the Department Of Labor and New York City Human Resources Administration to provide job training and educational instruction to NY's homeless shelters residents. Fifty youth and young adults currently living in shelter will receive a range of education, training, and support services.

21. Then President-elect Bush went on record stating that he was in full support of funding the Act at its authorization level. (The McKinney Act authorizes $634 million in fiscal 1989 and $656 million in fiscal 1990. Congress, however, appropriated only $378 million for the program for fiscal year 1989 in earlier appropriation bills.

22. There was a total of 174 applicants for the 1989 Job Training Demonstration Program grants.

23. In Training and Employment Information Notice No. 21-87, the Department of Labor defined the homeless as those individuals without a fixed or regular nighttime residence and/or whose nighttime residence is a publicly or privately operated shelter designed for the purpose of temporary shelter.

24. The attorneys at the Department of Labor, the federal agency responsible for overseeing JTPA, after having been asked to make a decision on the correct procedure, stated that the states would have the latitude to determine whether eligibility would be automatic or based on income verification. National Association of Counties, JTPA Update, Vol. 18-89, p. 6.

II. STUDY RESULTS: LEVEL AND TYPE OF JTPA SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE HOMELESS

As noted in the Introduction, in recognition of the spiraling growth of homelessness among various sectors of American society and of the fact that addressing homelessness often requires more than simply finding adequate and affordable housing, the National Commission for Employment Policy undertook the task of speaking with 55 professionals who administer local JTPA programs in urban areas to determine the level and type of services they are offering to homeless individuals in their SDAs. Information was sought with respect to both JTPA-funded programs and those funded through the Department of Labor McKinney grants. Addressing homelessness requires careful consideration of many issues; the provision of employment and training services being fundamental to helping homeless individuals and families become self-sufficient.

JTPA ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTION OF THE PROBLEM: PAST AND PRESENT

Before asking JTPA administrators as to their current procedures and programs to serve the homeless, they were asked about the type and level of service which was provided to this group during JTPA's early years of operations. Although homelessness has been a domestic issue for the last ten years, it is safe to say that public concern with homelessness did not really escalate until the last several years. As one SDA administrator stated: "Although we've always had a certain number of people who were homeless, we really didn't consider this group a 'problem' until the last two years of so. Now we can rarely leave our office without seeing some poor homeless person."

Based on the discussions with the SDA professional staff of 55 urban SDAs, it would be accurate to say that local JTPA programs generally did not consider homeless individuals a group for whom they should be providing services during the initial years of JTPA's operation. According to most of these administrators, the SDA's lack of concern about offering services to this group was less a matter of conscious design, and more an issue of not even thinking about the homeless as a group who needed job training services. For example, an administrator of one of the largest SDAs in the country responded that "we just never thought about trying to get the homeless into our programs until the last two years" when asked the question of why the SDA had not offered services to this group during JTPA's first five years of operation. In essence, many administrators indicated

that the major reason for not including the homeless in their job training efforts was just that they "did not think about it."

According to JTPA administrators, other factors influencing the lack of JTPA services to this group included:

- Lack of a history of serving this group. The homeless have not traditionally been a target group for job training services. In fact several SDA administrators admitted that their lack of knowledge about this group, or misunderstanding about homeless people, negatively impacted upon the SDA's ability to include homeless individuals in its programs. Several of the respondents indicated that they used to believe that most homeless people had severe mental, alcohol, or drug problems and, were for the most part, incapable of receiving training or finding and maintaining employment. In short, the homeless was often a group with whom the SDA staff did not feel "comfortable with."

- Timing of the program's implementation. The program's implementation coincided with the 1982-83 recession, thereby creating a large pool of eligible people who were relatively easy to find and serve.

- Lack of money for support services. JTPA's emphasis on spending most funds for training, backed up by specific limits on the portion of local funds that can be used for supportive services and trainee allowances, made it more difficult to serve some of the most "hard-to-serve" individuals, such as the homeless, particularly if they were not receiving any other type of support.

- Emphasis on performance. Local programs are required to achieve minimum performance goals if they were to continue to receive funds. Given the SDA's inexperience with dealing with a performance oriented system and concern that it might not be able to meet its performance goals, some SDA administrators admitted to shying away from serving a group who they believed would be particularly difficult to serve.

- Requirements for eligibility. Before the passage of the McKinney Act, applicants generally had to show that they were economically disadvantaged as well as prove that they resided within the SDA boundaries. Because many homeless lacked the documentation to "prove" that they were economically disadvantaged and have no address, they were not considered "eligible" for the program.

Although many of the job training professionals may have been unaware of the severity of homelessness in American society in the past and the need to include the homeless in job training efforts, this is certainly not the case now. When each of the administrators was asked whether there were homeless individuals in their community and, if so, whether this group was growing, all 55 respondents stated that there were indeed home-

less persons in their area and that the number was growing considerably. And all survey respondents stated that the local JTPA program should be providing special outreach, recruitment training and placement efforts for the homeless. When each administrator was asked whether the private industry council (PIC), a committee made up of public and private sector volunteers charged with overseeing local program policies and operations, would support, at least in theory, the provision of local job training services to the homeless, each respondent responded affirmatively.

JTPA'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE HOMELESS COMMUNITY NETWORK

Task Force/Coalition Participation

Many communities have formed task forces and/or coalitions to address homelessness in their respective areas. These task forces/coalitions can be permanent (set up to address a whole range of local homeless issues) or short-lived (set up to accomplish one particular purpose) and are often established at the request of the governor or local chief elected official. Typically, members of local (e.g., city, county) task forces/coalitions include the chief elected official, or his designee, and representatives from social service agencies, well-known shelters or groups involved in providing meals and shelters to homeless individuals, and the business community. Generally, there are 10 to 40 members on a task force/coalition; meetings are generally held monthly.

In some areas there are both task forces and coalitions. In these cases, the task force is often more concerned with examining public policies and procedures to ensure that they allow for cost effective and efficient use of resources, while a coalition's primary emphasis if often more operationally oriented.

SDA administrators were asked if any task forces or coalition of government agencies and service providers dealing with the homeless in their local area had been formed. Approximately one-third (17) of the respondents said "no," to the best of their knowledge no such working committee had been formed in their locality. (Several of these administrators admitted, however, that such a task force/coalition may in fact be in existence, but they were not aware of it.) Four of the JTPA administrators (7%) said that a homeless task force/coalition was just in the early stages of being formed in their area and that membership in the committee had not yet been established.

The respondents from the remaining 34 (62%) service delivery areas all indicated that some type of task force/coalition for the homeless had been formed in their area. In 15 of these jurisdictions (25% of the total number of SDAs included; 44% of those known to have a task force/coalition) staff of the SDA served as a member of the task force/coalition. In another four SDAs, a staffperson from the SDA generally attended the task force/coalition meetings and although was not a formal member of the committee, the JTPA representative closely followed, and in

some instances, even worked with members of the task force/coalition on specific issues.

In several instances, SDA administrators noted that although the JTPA administrative entity was not formally a member of the task force/coalition, one of its major contractors served on it. In these cases, the administrators felt that the interests of both the task force/coalition and the JTPA administrative entity were served as well as if a representative of the SDA formally sat on the committee.

Participation in the Homeless "Network"

SDA administrators were asked if they considered their JTPA program an integral part of the network of social services that is available to assist homeless individuals in their community. Approximately two-thirds (34 SDAs, or 62%) of the respondents did not feel as though their job training program was considered to be a primary resource for many of the agencies, shelters, and community-based organizations dealing with this group. The most commonly noted reasons provided for this perceived lack of involvement with agencies and service providers who assist the homeless include: a lack of history of working with these organizations (e.g., "we've just never hooked up with them"); a lack of understanding among the various entities about how they can coordinate; the perception on the part of the SDA staff that their services and activities are not appropriate for many of the homeless (e.g., "the homeless need a lot more support and services than we can provide"); and the PIC's desire to focus on other hard-to-serve groups.

Twenty-one administrators (38%) believed that their local job training program was pretty well or fully integrated into the network of services often provided to homeless individuals -- the SDA staff was knowledgeable about the services provided by other entities and had established a good working relationship with them (and vice versa). Twelve of the 15 SDAs who were members of task forces or coalitions believed that they were one of the "movers and shakers" in the homeless service delivery system.

IMPACT OF MCKINNEY ACT ON JTPA PROGRAMS

As noted earlier in this paper, two provisions of the McKinney Act directly deal with the issue of employment: the one-year grants administered by the Department of Labor through a competitive application process for job demonstration programs and the amendments it provided to the JTPA (i.e., adding the homeless to the definition of who are eligible for JTPA programs, changing the requirement for proof of residency.

According to information provided by the SDA administrators, a little more than half (31, or 56%) of the local JTPA programs included in the surveys applied for McKinney money through the DOL grant process. (Several of these SDAs did not make application themselves but rather were "players" in applica-

tions submitted by other entities.) Twelve of these SDAs were successful in obtaining McKinney funds for the July 1988 - June 1989 program year. When the interviewees were queried about the importance of these monies to the SDA -- whether they would have operated a special program for the homeless without such additional funds -- all responded negatively. In all instances, this money was seen as being critical to the SDA's ability to offer special services and activities for this population. Not only was the additional money itself seen as being important, but the flexibility with which it could be spent (as compared to JTPA funds) was viewed as being crucial to the program's operation.[1]

When SDA administrators who indicated that they had not applied for Department of Labor McKinney grant money were asked why they had not put in an application, the responses generally fell into one of three categories: lack of a staff person to write the proposal (e.g., planner had recently resigned and had not been replaced, staff were already working overtime on other SDA priorities, etc.); response time was inadequate for SDA to put together a proposal ("By the time we heard about the application process, we didn't have time to put together a good project."); and lack of knowledge about the availability of McKinney grant money. While several of the individuals who were unaware of the grant money did learn about it, but not in time to submit an application, three of the respondents said they had never heard of the money at all.

When SDA administrators were asked whether the change in eligibility determination for homeless applicants made it easier to serve them, the interviewees were fairly well divided -- about half of them replied affirmatively -- the McKinney Act made it easier to serve them -- while the other half said "no" -- "we always found a way to include a homeless person when we felt they should be in one of the JTPA programs."

LEVEL OF SERVICE PROVIDED TO HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

Recruitment Efforts

Despite SDA and PIC willingness to include homeless people in programs, eight of the administrators, when asked if they actively recruited homeless people into their regular Title II programs, responded negatively. As one of these administrators said: "When we serve a homeless individual, it's because that person happened to walk into our office and ask to be served. We don't go out looking for the homeless." And in four of the SDAs, respondents indicated that they did not seek out the homeless because they were generally not eligible to participate in JTPA because of the residency requirement. (Although three of these administrators had "heard of" the McKinney Act, they did not know that it eliminated the residency requirement for homeless applicants. The fourth individual stated that the state had not yet implemented the change in eligibility and the SDA would not act upon it until it had formal notification from the state.)

And over half of the respondents (30, or 54%) admitted that they undertook very modest efforts to recruit homeless youths and adults for its Title IIA and IIB programs. In most of these SDAs, the "special effort" consisted of providing shelters, community-based organizations, and other public and private organizations concerned with the homeless with information about the services and programs offered by the SDA. Generally what this "effort" translated into was providing brochures and written material about JTPA programs to staff of entities involved with serving the homeless.

More extensive efforts to recruit the homeless in regular JTPA activities were undertaken by 17 SDAs. In slightly less than half of these SDAs (7), staff had actually met with shelter staff, or staff of major entities serving the homeless, at least once to ensure that those working with the homeless on an everyday basis fully understood what the local JTPA program had to offer; 6 of the JTPA administrators indicated that SDA staff met with shelter staff, etc. on a periodic basis (generally once every two or three months). Furthermore, in a small number of these SDAs (4), SDA staff actually delivered presentations to shelter residents on a regular basis to ensure that they had first-hand information about the JTPA program.

Three of the SDAs increased the number of homeless individuals in their programs by building in financial incentives with their contractors. For example, one SDA requires that two percent of the participants recruited by a contractor be homeless people; and another SDA does not require the contractor to undertake follow-up on homeless clients but rather undertakes that task itself. And a third SDA lowers its performance expectations with respect to homeless clients that the contractor accepts into its program.

The very modest effort made by the majority of SDAs to attract homeless people into their programs is not surprising given the fairly low level of priority for service accorded this group. When the administrators were asked whether the homeless were determined to be a target group in their latest plan, almost three-quarters (39, or 71%) responded negatively. (In three instances, SDA administrators said that homeless individuals had been a target group in prior years.) The four most commonly provided reasons for the SDA's not viewing the homeless as a target group included: "we have a lot of other groups that we feel need to be focused on first"; "the state has told us what our priorities should be"; "the homeless need a lot more services than we can offer"; and "the PIC has never really discussed making the homeless an important group for the SDA."

This lack of effort to actively seek out homeless individuals may, in some cases, be attributed in part to a desire on the part of the community to keep homeless people from moving into its area. Several of the SDA administrators stated that their public officials did not want to do more to aid the homeless as a result of fears that a reputation for operating good programs for homeless individuals would attract more members of this group. Findings from various recent studies actually indicate the opposite -- the vast majority of homeless people have lived for more than one year in the

city in which they are sheltered. It has also been documented that when an area does attract transients, it is generally not by virtue of its entitlement programs and human resource facilities, but rather because of the low unemployment rate and possibility of employment. Generally when a homeless individual comes to an area and is unsuccessful in finding a job, he/she tends not to stay long and soon moves to another area in search of employment.[2]

Also, the respondents' belief that many homeless individuals required many more extensive services than did the "typical" JTPA participant may have influenced the SDA's level of commitment to actively recruit this population. Administrators were very clear in their belief that not all homeless people were good candidates for employment programs -- all respondents felt that not all homeless possess the ability to successfully participate in a training program. As one individual stated: "Careful screening of the applicants is crucial if the program, and the participants, are to succeed. Many of the homeless are not ready for employment related services."

Although the JTPA administrators used different terminology to classify the various types of homeless individuals, when discussing the homeless they tended to put them into one of three broad categories: street people -- mentally ill adults and those with substance (alcohol or drug) abuse problems; situationally homeless -- those whose homelessness has resulted from a change in their circumstances such as a long period of unemployment, domestic violence, release from the military or urban renewal; runaway/throwaway youth -- those youth between the ages of 14 and 25 who were not living in a stable environment.

Generally, SDA respondents did not consider those who may be referred to as "street people" ready to participate in a JTPA program. The SDAs' and PICs' perception of what percentage of homeless individual could be categorized as "street people" rather than as "situationally homeless" or "runaway/throwaway youth" may have influenced the level of recruitment among the homeless for the JTPA program.[3]

Programmatic Efforts

SDA administrators were asked if they offered any services or programs targeted on the homeless population. Two-thirds of the respondents (35, or 64%) responded negatively; all these administrators indicated that although the SDA would certainly enroll homeless people in its programs, it did not offer any "special" or additional supportive services (e.g., clothing allowance, housing arrangement) or activities (e.g., workshop on personal hygiene) for this group. In short, no differentiation was made in the services offered by these SDAs between homeless participants and those who had a more stable living environment.

Most of these administrators did not keep data on the number of homeless clients served in regular JTPA activities -- 30 of the 35 SDAs indicated that no information was kept on the number of homeless served. Several of these respondents, however, indicated that they intended to keep such data in the future because of

new state reporting requirements. Generally, administrators "guessed" that the percentage of homeless clients served through regular JTPA programs was somewhere between one and three percent.

Of the 20 administrators who indicated that the SDA did indeed provide special services or programs for homeless clients, about half (11) indicated that such activity was targeted to one segment of the homeless population (e.g., runaway youth, homeless veterans, homeless families, etc.). Furthermore, in nine of these SDAs, the JTPA entity was providing two or more "special programs" to different segments of the homeless population. Funding for these programs came from a variety of sources: JTPA IIA, Title III, 6% set-aside, and McKinney, as well as other state and local resources.

Regardless of whether the SDA was targeting a particular segment of the homeless population, many of the respondents noted that they were targeting services to the "new" homeless -- those individuals and families who had been living in shelters, in cars, etc. for a relatively short period of time. Many of these respondents noted that early intervention to provide assistance was essential if the JTPA program was to serve the homeless in a cost-effective and successful manner. To quote one individual: "After a person has been living without a home more than a month, they often start to take on many of the attributes of the chronically mentally ill. It takes a lot more money to serve them at this point and we tend to have less of a chance for success."

Because homeless individuals generally require assistance in areas not usually needed by other JTPA clients, all administrators offering special programs for the homeless felt that a case management approach -- one where a counselor/case worker worked closely with the individual -- was necessary if the participant was to succeed. Additional services, not typically needed by other JTPA participants, often undertaken by the counselor/case worker often included:

- Negotiating a longer period of residence for the client with a shelter than that which is usually allowed. Almost all shelters have a set period of time (e.g., seven nights, two weeks, one month, etc.) after which "residents" must leave. Furthermore, many shelters require that "residents" not be in the shelter between certain hours of the day (often 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.). The case manager/counselor would be responsible for negotiating an agreement between the "resident" and shelter staff to ensure that the JTPA participant has a place to stay during training. These agreements often included extending the shelter stay for the first few weeks of employment to allow the participant to save some money for housing costs.

- Developing agreements with proprietors of motels, single room occupancy hotels, and other low-cost housing establishments to ensure a stable living arrangement while the client is in training and during the initial period of employment. Various monetary arrangements were made to compensate

owners of the housing establishments (e.g., housing costs were absorbed by another agency; the client agreed to commit a portion of his paycheck, once employed, to the owner; subsidized housing was located and made available to the client for an established period of time; the procurement of a shelter by the SDA to be used by clients while in training; etc.).

- Working with other social service agencies to find temporary or transitional housing for the individual while he/she was in training.

- Finding the resources to provide assistance with respect to health and personal hygiene issues. Many homeless, especially those who have been homeless for some period, have not had the financial resources or living arrangements to ensure good health and a tidy and clean appearance. Further, the vast majority of homeless clients do not have clothing suitable for training and the initial weeks of employment. The resources of other social service agencies often must be tapped for such necessary "support services."

- Ensuring that the individual is not a substance abuser. Next to securing a stable living environment, ensuring that the client is free of alcohol and drugs was noted by many respondents to being an area that required substantial case worker intervention. Most administrators stated that individuals had to be free of alcohol and drug use before entering and during participation in the JTPA program; what this often meant was that the case worker/counselor was required to closely monitor the individual to ensure compliance with this criteria.

Although the level of case management differed substantially among the programs -- from one where the client met with the case manager on a daily basis to one where case manager/client meetings generally took place once or twice per month -- many respondents indicated that the assignment of a case manager/counselor to a homeless client was essential to the individual's success. As one JTPA administrator said: "The case manager is the "glue" around which the system is built. The case manager is the liaison between the job training system and other support services -- he is the advocate for the client in a system where a variety of resources have to be tapped and a lot of rules often bent." In essence, the focus on case management provides the flexibility needed to serve the homeless and customize services for each individual.

The vast majority of homeless individuals searching for job assistance are more interested in short-term immediate jobs rather than lengthy training designed to acquire full-time unsubsidized employment. Because of this, almost all the administrators who offer special programs for the homeless indicate that the majority of training occurs through an on-the-job training (OJT) position. In some of the SDAs, the OJT is preceded or coupled with classroom skills training or workshops in areas such as basic hygiene, life and coping skills, and finding housing.

(Several administrators noted that one of the major impediments with placing a homeless individual in an OJT slot was their inability to produce a social security card -- one of the federally mandated criteria for obtaining an OJT position. Since it generally takes about six weeks to receive a card once application is made, these individuals were often put in a classroom training slot until receipt of the social security card.)

Several of the respondents stated that their SDAs had some difficulty in getting service providers to bid on contracts for the homeless. The primary reason for this difficulty is that most of the traditional JTPA service providers are interested in providing training only. Providing training to homeless clients often means also providing other direct services -- something many contractors are not interested in undertaking.

Other respondents, however, indicated that they had no more difficulty finding contractors to serve homeless clients than they did for regular JTPA programs. Some attributed this lack of difficulty to the fact that their homeless participants were really not much different from the majority of their regular JTPA clients; others said that since the unemployment rate in their area was particularly low, contractors were used to dealing with hard-to-serve individuals.

FUTURE LEVEL OF COMMITMENT TO HOMELESS POPULATION

Almost all the respondents did not predict a significant change in the type or level of service in their local JTPA programs to the homeless population. The primary reason pointed out by most administrators revolved around money: the level of SDA funding and the many target groups among which the SDA must allocate its funds; the "inflexibility" of JTPA funds (e.g., "we can't spend money for housing, counseling, etc."); and the perceived high cost associated with serving homeless clients. As one of the respondents stated, "a range of services is necessary to assist homeless individuals and families to become self sufficient. These services include housing options, health and behavioral health, day care assistance, as well as employment and training and support services. To meet all these needs, you not only need adequate funding but funding without strings -- money you can utilize to purchase a variety of services for the client."

Performance standards -- the seven nationally mandated performance measures against which the local program's success is determined -- were also viewed as being a significant problem to increasing the level of service to the homeless by some interviewees.[4] About one-third (17,or 31%) of the SDA administrators said that their concern with achieving their performance goals influenced the aggressiveness with which they pursued including homeless people in their program. The performance measures with which most of

these interviewees were especially concerned about were the cost goals -- the "cost per entered employment" measure for adults (total federal expenditures for adults divided by the number of adults who got a job at the end of the program); and "cost per positive termination" measure for youth (total federal expenditures for youth divided by the number of youth who achieve the goals outlined for them at the beginning of the program).

SDA administrators' apprehension with not merely meeting but exceeding their standards generally reflect their concern about two issues: the public's image of the program "success" (e.g., "it's great PR -- especially with the business community"); and the SDAs' desire to receive the maximum amount of state (6%) incentive grants for programs exceeding performance standards. Several SDA administrators stated that such funds are often used to develop and fund programs for hard-to-serve clients, including the homeless.

The PIC's level of commitment to serving this group was also noted as being a factor in increasing services to the homeless. Specifically, SDA administrators were queried as to whether the PIC had discussed the homeless at any of its meetings, and if so, the outcome of the discussion. Administrators of only 10 (18%) of the 55 SDAs spoken with could recall that the issue of homelessness had been included in the discussion at any of the PIC meetings. And generally, when the subject of the homeless came up in the meetings, it was usually as a topic not discussed in depth or in a particularly serious fashion. As one of the administrators stated: "We talked about the homeless in one of our meetings for about five minutes -- but that's about it. The PIC has just never really thought about this group." In areas where the SDA considers the homeless a target group and have consciously tried to recruit and serve them, it is usually at the prodding of SDA staff rather than at the initiation of the PIC.

ENDNOTES

1. JTPA's limitation on the amount of funds that can be used for support services was seen as being a major impediment in serving the homeless.

2. (Homelessness, Health and Human Needs, Committee on Health Care for Homeless People, Institute of Medicine, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C. 1988 p.7)

3. It is the author's opinion that interviewees administering programs in areas of high unemployment tended to view the homeless as individuals whose homelessness resulted more from economic circumstances rather than from an inability to overcome other personal problems. As such, these administrators tended to view the homeless as being different from their "regular" JTPA clients only in the fact that they were homeless; interviewees from areas of low unemployment often saw the homeless as having more problems, especially substance abuse, than their typical JTPA clients. This is not to say that there was more of an effort to recruit or serve homeless people in areas of high unemployment compared with those of low unemployment -- only that the homeless were viewed differently.

4. JTPA is designed to be a performance based program; performance standards are the tools which assure the job training program is a productive investment in human capital. To assure the goals of JTPA are achieved, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) selected seven performance measures, established a national standard for each measure, and designed a national adjustment methodology for adapting the national standards to local conditions. States must set standards for local SDAs using either the DOL methodology or their own adjustment methodology established within parameters set by DOL. Further, SDAs may seek further adjustments to the state-established measures if local conditions warrant (e.g., a particularly high unemployment rate, providing service to a high percentage of "hard-to-serve" individual, etc.). States must also determine whether the local standards have been met, provide technical assistance to help SDAs meet their goals, reward performance, and impose sanctions when standards are not met for two years. SDAs must formulate policies and operate programs that will meet or exceed their performance measures.

CASE STUDIES

This section is comprised of seven case studies where JTPA service delivery areas have developed innovative approaches and programs to serving the homeless in their jurisdiction. The case studies are based on information obtained through telephone contacts with SDA staff and that of other entities involved in the program. The SDAs were selected from those identified through the Commission's contact with 55 JTPA administrators of urban programs as well as from recommendations from other entities such as the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Alliance of Business. Care was taken to include programs that operated in both large and medium urban areas, utilized different funding sources, and undertook different strategies for serving the homeless.

As noted in the Introduction, the main objectives of these case studies are to identify what works, and what does not work, and to promote replication and adaptation of the practices that work among other local programs. Factors such as community support and involvement, private industry council and private sector role, type of services provided, levels of interagency and public/private coordination, outcome measures, and funding mechanisms are examined and included in each of the case studies.

COMPREHENSIVE HOMELESS VETERANS PROGRAM

San Diego, California

BACKGROUND

San Diego is known as a Navy town. With 20 percent of the U.S. Navy stationed there, a large civilian labor force attached to the Navy, and many Navy retirees, San Diego enjoys a climate of support for veterans' services. That community support, combined with a push from top political leadership, generated what may be the nation's most comprehensive and longstanding homeless veterans employment project. With the 2,500 homeless veterans who are on the streets of San Diego making up an estimated 44 percent of San Diego's homeless population, services designed especially for homeless veterans are critical.

San Diego's veterans' employment programs trace their roots to the tremendous outpouring of support for the Iran hostages once they returned in early 1981, according to Vietnam Veterans of San Diego's Executive Director, Robert Van Keuren. Many Vietnam veterans, who remembered their own less celebrated return from combat, felt they deserved support similar to that the nation was offering the former hostages.

Former Mayor Pete Wilson (now a U.S. Senator) agreed, and offered his help to the president of Vietnam Veterans of San Diego (VVSD). As the economy was then in a recession, VVSD identified the need for a massive, comprehensive employment program. That led to meetings between VVSD, the Mayor's staff, and the staff of the local government employment agency, the Private Industry Council/Regional Employment and Training Consortium (PIC/RETC). PIC/RETC agreed to hire a VVSD-selected staff member to serve as veterans' liaison, and created a "mini-GI bill" -- a voucher training program to link veterans with training opportunities both within PIC/RETC programs and through other resources. In its first year (1983), that program placed 120 of the 128 veterans enrolled. In the second year, with the veterans employment budget up to $ 00,000, career planning and employability enhancement were added. The program continued to grow.

San Diego's homeless veterans services have not evolved in a vacuum. San Diego has a Regional Task Force on the Homeless with a strong interest in employment. That task force's visibility had created a receptivity toward the support of programs for the homeless. The task force began as the Mayor's Task Force on the Downtown Homeless and

evolved into a regional task force with city, county, and United Way funding. Although it started off with a shelter orientation, an employment committee was formed and prepared a regional employment and training services plan for homeless people, a major achievement which the task force issued in June 1989.

Today, Vietnam Veterans of San Diego, the PIC/RETC contractor for the homeless veterans program, provides an effective variety of employment-related services that follow the general principles advocated by the Task Force's regional service plan. Stanley C. Schroeder, PIC/RETC's Assistant Chief executive, described those principles as: careful assessment of need, a system geared to the diverse needs of the homeless population, and well-coordinated services, with "case management as the glue to integrate support services and employment and training services to meet individual needs." At this point, Schroeder feels that "Vietnam Veterans of San Diego has moved as far as anyone in the country in serving veterans."

ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

Vietnam Veterans of San Diego, with PIC/RETC support, operates two related programs -- Dust Off and the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project -- that offer homeless veterans the comprehensive assistance they need to move into the labor force.

Outreach

Vietnam Veterans of San Diego has found it necessary to develop innovative outreach and recruitment strategies in order to locate and build trust with the homeless veterans population. The "Stand Down" initiative is probably the most effective of these. (Stand Down is a term from the Vietnam War which means a transition from a state of intense readiness and combat alertness to an opportunity to relax, regroup, and resupply.) Stand Down is an annual three-day event in which veterans receive emergency food, clothing, and temporary shelter as well as legal and medical assistance, help with acquiring personal identification, and an introduction to training and employment services.

The second Stand Down, held in San Diego's Balboa Park in the summer of 1989, attracted over 500 homeless veterans. VVSD's Van Keuren characterized the typical Stand Down attendee as "homeless for six to 12 months, in his late 30s to early 40s, a high school graduate with perhaps some college, unemployed for at least six months, and likely to have a substance abuse problem." Stand Down also attracts a few women veterans, World War II veterans, and recently separated veterans between 22 and 26 -- all of whom have different needs. Eighty-five percent of the Stand Down participants wanted job training, but many had serious barriers that had to be addressed first. "We're not trying to find job-ready vets," Van Keuren explained, "because if we do we're missing our target population."

Stand Down offers the homeless veterans tent housing, three meals a day contributed and served by veterans organizations, and an opportunity for fun and socializing as well as access to critical services. One of the most creative of those services is an on-site courtroom. Because many homeless veterans have citations for minor offenses such as loitering or urinating in public which have turned into arrest warrants because they failed to show up in court, the project arranges for a judge to review cases on site to "clean the slate." Although the veterans are promised they will not be sent to jail, they may be sentenced to community service, depending on the offense.

One by-product of Stand Down is that it increases interagency networking. VVSD assembles representatives from all the relevant social service agencies so that participants can obtain medical services, VA benefits, identification cards, and whatever else they need. The three-day event gives participating agencies an opportunity to become familiar with each other's services and restrictions, and gives VVSD an opportunity to help those agencies tailor their services to the specific needs of the homeless veterans.

Throughout the year, VVSD recruits homeless veterans through an extensive network of service providers, including all the alcohol recovery program staffs in the county. VVSD also generates referrals through its participation in many community boards, such as the Emergency Resource Group, a network of service providers. The San Diego County Veterans Council's 30 member organizations accept articles about VVSD's program for their newsletters.

To supplement referrals to the program, outreach workers seek potential participants in parks and shelters. For the many who have substance abuse problems, the outreach worker recommends a detoxification program -- either the three-day or the seven-day program run by Volunteers of America, the local affiliate of a national human services organization. To encourage participation, the outreach worker may give veterans bus tickets, ride with them to the program, or ask police to escort them. Then, the outreach worker begins seeking transitional housing for participating veterans through the shelter network, or tries to get them into VVSD's alcohol recovery program or into one of VVSD's Triple Threat support groups, which are modeled on Alcoholics Anonymous' 12-step approach but deal with drugs and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as well as alcohol.

The outreach worker may send veterans to the Veterans Administration-funded veterans outreach center for one of the twice-a-week orientations which inform veterans of all the benefits and services for which they may qualify. VVSD's philosophy is reflected in its outreach strategies: A person may enter the continuum of care at any level, depending upon need.

Assessment

The Regional Task Force on the Homeless advocates a multi-faceted assessment of work readiness that includes considerations such as shelter, food, personal hygiene and medical needs, transportation, and legal barriers, as well

as the need for remedial or vocational training. Once Stand Down or another outreach technique have broken the cycle of homelessness and introduced homeless veterans to the continuum of care available to them, project staff and volunteers begin the assessment process by interviewing the veterans to determine which program is most appropriate. VVSD makes that decision with input from the veterans outreach center.

Once a veteran is in an employment program, vocational assessment begins. For Dust Off, VVSD's most comprehensive program, there is group and individual self-assessment, determination of reading and basic skills competencies based on observation or testing, and the COPSystem test of skills, interests, and values. Assessment is similar although less comprehensive for participants in the larger Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP).

Eligibility Determination

Since personal identification is often a problem for homeless people, VVSD arranged for the Department of Veterans Affairs to issue special picture identification cards on-site at Stand Down; these enable the homeless veterans to obtain VA and other benefits.

"Between Stand Downs," adds VVSD executive director Robert Van Keuren, "we've created a multi-service center, in which we co-located Dust Off and the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project" as well as other services. California's Employment Development Department (EDD) outstations someone there three days a week to determine eligibility for the various programs; the EDD staffer also has on-site access to a computerized listing of jobs and on-the-job training (OJT) slots and can make immediate referrals for work-ready veterans. The California Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) also comes on-site two days a week to identify veterans who have disabilities which may entitle them to DVR services. "We have it all in one place," Van Keuren pointed out. "This helps build the veterans' self-esteem by demonstrating that they're important enough to deserve all these services."

Virtually any homeless veteran is eligible for the McKinney-funded Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project, while the smaller Dust Off program, funded by JTPA Title IVC, enrolls only Vietnam-era veterans who served "in country," and currently targets minorities and those with service-related disabilities. While EDD has to verify eligibility for Dust Off, Van Keuren emphasized that only VVSD determines an individual's appropriateness for that program.

PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The "Dust Off" program, named for the military term meaning a helicopter rescue for wounded men, rescues Vietnam veterans who have been wounded by circumstances (not all of whom are homeless). Funded through JTPA Title IVC, Dust Off provides up to 50 homeless veterans a year with a structured environment that is a striking contrast with the months or years of isolation many have experienced. Dust Off houses up to 18

men at a time as a self-governing unit under one roof, restoring the team spirit and mutual dependency they experienced in the military. They receive food, clothing, and the counseling and training they need to prepare themselves to look for a job. Participants spend their days in training or actively job-hunting. Evenings are devoted to group discussions with a clinical psychologist, substance abuse treatment meetings, rap sessions at the veterans outreach center, or house meetings. Dust Off is an open-entry, open-exit program that can last up to six months.

Dust Off's success led to the VVSD's larger Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP), which PIC/RETC funds through a demonstration grant from Section 738 of the McKinney Act. HVRP utilizes the lessons learned through the Stand Down experience, offering services ranging from stabilization of basic needs to skills training and job search assistance. "We try to address every possible problem that could prevent vets from keeping their jobs, whether it's substance abuse, a need for counseling, or simple life skills that most people take for granted," said project director Dan Danner. "The inability to handle a paycheck, pay bills on time, and deal with household budgeting can cause the kinds of problems and stress that can cause a veteran to lose a job."

Each of the VVSD's initiatives relies on veterans themselves. "Vets helping vets is the key principle, and veterans organizations are the key to the program's success," in the view of Marge Gilbert, Director of Training for PIC/RETC.

Training

Homeless veterans in Dust Off and HVRP have two training options: VVSD may refer them to any PIC/RETC skills training, or they may be placed in an OJT position. "We have a network of OJT providers within the PIC/RETC system, but we won't let people go out on an OJT for a skill they already have, unless it's an upgrade," Van Keuren said. Dust Off may also refer participants to a school-based training program, continuing the case management and support services, with the school then taking the lead on job placement. Those who have work skills are placed in jobs only after VVSD has helped them alleviate their personal barriers.

PIC/RETC training programs in which VVSD has placed clients include tile setting, hotel/motel training, machine shop training, and composite part fabrication (state-of-the-art plastics). Depending on eligibility, PIC/RETC funds homeless veterans' skills training through JTPA Title IIA or the Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance Act (EDWAA); there is no money for training in HVRP, and the McKinney funds are used primarily for support services.

Dust Off offers veterans a unique independent living skills component. The program serves as an off-campus site for San Diego Community College, in which an instructor teaches an 18-hour course in life skills such as nutrition, shopping, cooking, and money management. Participants who complete the course receive a certificate. The certificate gives them two important benefits: They can join the San Diego Community College

credit union, and San Diego Gas and Electric honors the certificate by waiving normal utility hook-up charges when the veterans move into housing on their own.

Job Development

Van Keuren considers the EDD on-site job bank to be VVSD's most effective job development tool. Job developers for the VVSD homeless veterans programs have also had some success targeting businesses owned by veterans. Training contractors to whose programs VVSD clients have been referred also have some responsibility for job development.

Initially, the local job service offices of California's Employment Development Department were unable to refer those VVSD clients who lacked a picture identification card. However, VVSD's special arrangement with the Department of Veterans Affairs provides vets with the papers necessary to use EDD's job development resources.

One problem is that the defense industry, which is a mainstay of the San Diego economy, requires security clearances for many positions, and a substantial percentage of the homeless veterans coming through the VVSD programs have security problems that prevent them from obtaining the necessary clearances.

Placement

VVSD has placed clients in a wide range of positions, from custodial work to cable installer, from auto mechanic to construction worker. Dust Off helped one veteran find a $25-an-hour job as a senior programmer/analyst for a mortgage company. Two trainees have been hired to serve as instructors in the training programs in which they participated, and VVSD has hired several clients as outreach workers.

VVSD's guideline on wage at placement is that the average wage at placement for their participants must at least equal that of the local JTPA program as a whole.

"Direct placements probably account for 50 to 60 percent of our placements, with OJT making up the rest," Van Keuren estimated. He is trying this year to increase the number of OJT placements because of rumblings that "if you can get someone a direct placement, they didn't need the program," a belief he feels is wrong because it doesn't take into account the other employment barriers with which VVSD helps veterans. He would prefer to use the OJT dollars to provide support services to improve retention.

Retention

"It's never been a matter of finding a vet a job," Van Keuren believes. "It's the vet's ability to have the support system he needs to be able to keep that job. Veterans can keep using Triple Threat and our other support groups once they're working, although those services are not as extensive as I would like because we haven't got sufficient staffing."

Van Keuren is hoping that PIC/RETC will permit HVRP to "look at whether they're still working somewhere after 13 weeks, rather than whether they're still working at the same job. There needs to be some flexibility on retention figures."

Support Services

VVSD makes every effort to refer veterans to any services for which they are eligible. VVSD itself offers a range of support services tailored to the special needs of the homeless veteran population. For example, VVSD runs a 46-bed alcohol recovery program called Landing Zone, funded with $180,000 a year in county funds supplemented by $95,000 a year in client fees, food stamps, and fundraisers. Landing Zone participants must agree in writing to commit at least 90 days to the alcohol recovery program. Staff evaluate participants on an ongoing basis and determine when it is appropriate for them to begin seeking employment. VVSD also runs support groups, and arranges for VA staff to be outstationed one or two days a week to provide Post Traumatic Stress Disorder counseling.

Many of the homeless veterans have a variety of legal problems, such as being in arrears on child support payments or having other financial difficulties. The San Diego Bar Association runs an on-site legal clinic on a "pro bono" basis.

Housing

"The big piece that's missing is affordable housing," Van Keuren said. "There are not enough shelter beds, not enough transitional housing units -- and a complete lack of affordable housing. There's little we can do." The small Dust Off program has its own housing, but HVRP has no built-in sheltering component. Yet, "we have to provide stabilization or we're setting that vet up for failure," according to Van Keuren. "We work with shelter providers, build up a rapport, try to get them to extend the 30-day limit for people in HVRP. Our two key words are case management." VVSD staff have taken a shelter screening and referral training course that St. Vincent de Paul offers its own shelter staff -- a course which authorizes trained VVSD staff to refer clients to that agency's shelters.

VVSD owns a few transitional units, but "we educate people that if they don't leave the program with $1500 to $2000 in their pocket to get into housing, they're going to have a tough time." As part of the program's exit activities, VVSD offers "reality counseling" about the nature of the local housing market. Also, participants have to begin thinking about housing during the job search assistance activities. "We get them to start looking at housing near the jobs they want" to get a sense of the market, Van Keuren explained. The San Diego Realtors Association has helped VVSD develop an understanding of the neighborhoods in which they are likely to find affordable housing, and some realtors offer reduced fees to VVSD clients. VVSD encourages participants to share housing, both because of high housing costs and to help each other maintain sobriety. Subsidized housing is not an option: As elsewhere, the Section 8 waiting list is long, and Section 8 priority goes to families.

PIC ROLE

Among the mem' ship of the San Diego PIC are some strong advocates for homeless job training programs in general. PIC business members in particular think it's good for the community to take people off the streets and get

them jobs, perhaps reflecting downtown business owners' concerns about a growing homeless population near their businesses. The PIC is a member of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, and PIC/RETC staff were instrumental in drafting the Task Force's regional employment and training services plan for homeless people.

Another thing that has provided a context for funding targeted programs in general and generated PIC support for homeless job training programs in particular is PIC/RETC's five-year strategic planning process, according to Assistant Chief Executive Schroeder. "That process got a number of PIC members involved, and helped them understand the Workforce 2000 issues. As a result, our PIC members are well plugged into demographic and economic issues."

While Vietnam Veterans of San Diego initiated the homeless veterans training project, PIC/RETC staff have helped Van Keuren write proposals and obtain funding. The PIC serves as the fiscal agent and subcontracts to VVSD, and the PIC/RETC staff also does compliance monitoring and provides technical assistance workshops as well as on-site staff assistance. The PIC was represented on the community planning group for the Stand Down project, and PIC/RETC staff volunteered during that project.

"This PIC has increased its involvement and concern in the past few years," VVSD's Van Keuren said. "PIC/RETC funds programs for many types of homeless people. The PIC's EDD representative and the chief executive of San Diego County have been particularly supportive." The PIC featured VVSD's homeless veterans in its bimonthly PIC/RETC Report, a hand-out VVSD uses to promote its programs.

STAFFING

Finding and keeping good staff for the homeless employment programs was "pretty rough in the beginning," Van Keuren remembered, "but staffing has been stable in the last six months. The up-side of hiring formerly homeless veterans is that they know what it's like to be homeless; the down-side is that if they're too close to that experience they have all the attendant problems and have to be treated not only as employees but also as clients."

VVSD's budget limits staff to very low salaries and no health benefits, according to Van Keuren, so "we have to do some creative things with staff training and benefits. We have a clinical psychologist [a consultant] who trains them and also counsels them on their own personal issues. We're flexible about time off. We have a staff retreat out and away from the office, and hold a 'staff Stand Down' for R and R [rest and relaxation]."

VVSD relies on out-stationed staff from state and local government agencies to supplement its own paid and volunteer staff, and also uses student interns. VVSD's clinical psychologist trains the interns, who are generally counseling or social work students from San Diego State University or National University. Some of the interns are able to work at night, which is usually when the clients need to talk about their problems.

Dust Off, the small residential program, has an employment and training specialist, a house manager, a cook and a relief cook, and other staff necessary to maintain the residence. One of the two VVSD staff members serves as a case manager for each Dust Off enrollee, and enrollees also see the psychologist once a week and go to a "Vietnam debriefing rap group" the psychologist runs. The HVRP program's less extensive case management system is staffed by two outreach workers, an employment and training specialist, and a program manager.

FUNDING

Vietnam Veterans of San Diego has a budget of over $700,000 to assist veterans (including homeless veterans) in the San Diego area. The total cost of the JTPA Title IVC program (Dust Off) was $216,722 between August 1, 1988, and July 31, 1989. Dust Off served 100 participants, 32 of whom were homeless. "The lion's share of the money went to assist the homeless veterans because they received room and board, bus passes, and other expensive services that the others did not need," according to Richard Stork, PIC/RETC program representative.

PIC/RETC's McKinney homeless veterans grant totaled $125,000, of which VVSD received $117,500 to support the Homeless Veterans Reintegration project between August 1, 1988 and July 31, 1989. PIC/RETC expects that its current McKinney grant of $126,000, from which VVSD received $118,400, will maintain HVRP at its current level until March 31, 1990.

"We have aggressively sought JTPA Title IVC funds and McKinney veterans funds, both nationally and at the state level," PIC/RETC's Schroeder said. "We've also added local money. We've chosen not to fund [specialized services for homeless people] with our basic grant, but have sought other money for those purposes."

VVSD augments its capacity to do outreach and referral for drug, alcohol, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder with $50,000 a year from the California Department of Veterans Affairs. The Landing Zone alcoholic recovery program has $180,000 a year in county funds supplemented by $95,000 a year in fees and contributions.

VVSD runs various fundraising activities to supplement public funds for its employment programs. A chili cook-off, a bowling tournament, and a children's variety show are some of the organization's fundraising strategies. Income from those events is supplemented by donations from the Veterans of Foreign Wars and other interested groups. "Pride Ride," a 200-mile motorcycle run co-sponsored by a local Harley-Davidson shop, is in its sixth year; individuals pledge a specific amount for each mile "their" rider completes, yielding $5-8,000 annually.

RESULTS

For the period from August 1, 1988, to July 31, 1989, the JTPA Title IVC-funded Dust Off project enrolled 32 homeless participants, two of whom dropped out of the program. The remaining 30 all be-

came employed, either after classroom training or an OJT position, or through direct placement. The average hourly wage at placement for those 30 veterans was $8.25. Of the 10 men who participated in classroom training prior to employment, four went through hotel front desk training, one took machinist classes, two studied plastic fabricated parts, and three took security guard training. Ten others were placed in OJT slots. The remaining 10 were direct placements in a variety of positions.

During the same time period, the McKinney-funded Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project served 489 clients in some way. There were 241 referrals to supportive services such as detoxification programs run by the Salvation Army and other agencies, 200 referrals to employment and training services, 73 direct placements, and 10 "assisted placements" into unsubsidized employment. (A single client may be counted in more than one of the foregoing categories.) The average wage at placement was $6.10. Of the 83 people placed, 46 retained those jobs for at least 13 weeks. The cost per unsubsidized placement was $1,483.

VVSD's Van Keuren explained HVRP's lower success rate as compared to Dust Off by pointing out that "by the time they get to Dust Off they've already shown some interest" in becoming stable and working. "One of the difficulties [with the performance data] is that the whole thing is placement-driven," Van Keuren said. "What's in the vet's best interest if he's eligible for 36 months of vocational rehabilitation services? Should he get long-term training, or immediate job placement? Our referrals to the VA count as negative placement. That's wrong -- we need to use long-range solutions for these long-term problems."

LESSONS LEARNED

Both PIC/RETC and VVSD staff have strong opinions about the best ways to meet homeless veterans' employment needs. VVSD's Van Keuren strongly supports the need for a multiplicity of services, preferably in one place. "Having the multi-resource center makes case management so much easier," he explained. "Everyone's there." The challenge for communities working only with JTPA Title IIA and EDWAA funds, as Van Keuren sees it, is "to link up with other community resources. For example, you can do detoxification with state, federal, and local detox funds, but then you have to work closely with the detox provider on referral, support, and case management. You need to bring the whole community into the process, get them to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem. We need to let EDD count the same people we count, for example. That creates a win-win situation."

Housing continues to be a challenge, as does inadequate funding to meet the needs of the population. Van Keuren recommends refining outcomes so that returning to school or completing a substance abuse program can be counted as positive placements, since each of those outcomes is a major step forward. Moreover, he sees a need for "hard money" with which to purchase training from PIC/RETC training contractors, rather than just referring clients to them. "There's no special priority for VVSD

people, and many of them don't profile out as completers, which makes providers who are on performance contracts reluctant to take them. I'd like to be able to offer them new money to take our people."

Finally, Van Keuren has learned there is one more track to his three-track system of training, OJT, or direct placement. "Some people bail out. Not everyone succeeds. We never kick anyone out, but sometimes they decide they're ready to stop trying. We may have to cycle some people back through the program again and again before it works for them."

Schroeder of the PIC/RETC staff suggested the need for a work center (i.e., a sheltered workshop) that would allow homeless veterans to learn a range of tasks while they earn some money and improve their work habits. "We could use that as a transition into OJT or private sector jobs," he said. "We need to invest in skills – in literacy, in brush-up skills -- to make people more employable, and more promotable once they have a job. The challenge is how to provide that in a quick and effective way. We also need to make it easier for homeless people to go to school, perhaps offering learning opportunities on a part-time basis using interactive video with a tutor."

Schroeder acknowledges that some of the homeless programs have problems meeting performance standards. "We use Title IIA [to train homeless veterans] if that's all we have, but we try to use more flexible money such as the [JTPA] six percent incentive funds if we can. We're very sensitive to meeting our performance standards, but a few homeless programs won't hurt us."

FUTURE PLANS

VVSD's plans for the future include expanding its services through increased funding. The organization is applying for $750,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds to purchase a transitional housing facility, hoping to alleviate some of the housing difficulties of the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project enrolles. On a larger scale, Van Keuren suggests the need for a national public policy commitment to increasing affordable housing. Stand Down, VVSD's high-visibility annual outreach project, has no outside funding at all. VVSD pays all the costs related to it, supplemented by numerous volunteer workers. Van Keuren hopes to find funds to conduct follow-up on Stand Down participants and to produce a technical assistance manual to aid other locations in mounting similar programs.

This case study was written based on a review of program documents and interviews with: Marge Gilbert, Director of Training, PIC/RETC; Stanley C. Schroeder, Assistant Chief Executive, PIC/RETC; Richard Stork, Program Representative, PIC/RETC; and Robert Van Keuren, Executive Director, Vietnam Veterans of San Diego.

HOMELESS EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

San Mateo County, California

The San Mateo County Private Industry Council's efforts to help homeless adults enter the work force illustrate one SDA's response to a crisis situation. While the program suffered from a lack of time for advance planning and an unexpectedly high incidence of crack cocaine use among participants that affected job retention, it is noteworthy because of the Council's willingness to take risks with program design and funding innovation. The mistakes made and the lessons learned in this program provided the SDA with useful guidance for its future job training projects for homeless adults.

BACKGROUND

In response to authorization from California's Governor Dukmejian that local governments could use state armories as temporary homeless shelters during the winter months, the armory in the City of San Mateo served as the county's only shelter for homeless individuals during the winter of 1988-89. Although there were three armories in the County, money was only available to operate a shelter in one of the armories. A task force comprised of numerous agencies was involved in the operation of the armory shelter. Among them were the County's Department of Community Services (which includes the Employment and Training Division and is also responsible for libraries, veterans services, aging services, and a host of community-based programs), Samaritan House (a community service agency which provides non-housing services such as food and a medical clinic for homeless and other needy people), the County Health Department, the Salvation Army, the County Office of Emergency Services, the Community Volunteer Service, and others.

The shelter staff and the task force agencies were surprised at the percentage of shelter residents who were employed. "Nobody anticipated that half the people would need wake-up calls, and this impressed the PIC," according to the shelter coordinator, who was subsequently hired to direct the homeless job training project. "Once we saw the desire to work among the residents, the PIC got involved, but by the time the way had been cleared, it was two days before the shelter was to close" at the end of March.

The SDA director explained why the PIC got involved, despite inadequate planning time: "Not only were these people about to lose the roof over their heads, but their primary link with any kind of social institution was about to be taken away." In this desperate atmosphere, JTPA staff worked to select some of the residents for JTPA assistance; after a hasty assessment to determine which of

the 130 people who had been sleeping in the armory would be the most likely to benefit from job training services, the staff selected 54 individuals and developed a project to serve their needs. Generally, chronically mentally ill individuals and those addicted to drugs and/or alcohol, although not specifically exempted from program participation, were largely screened out by virtue of the rule prohibiting use of these substances.

The basic and most immediate need facing the 54 homeless JTPA recruits was housing. With one of the highest priced housing markets in the nation, a two-year waiting list for federally subsidized Section 8 housing, and a majority of landlords refusing to accept Section 8 certificates, it was nearly impossible for low-income people to find housing in the County. The San Mateo PIC's project was based on the premise that finding a job while living on the streets was unlikely, whereas finding housing without an income was impossible. The PIC's solution was an innovative use of Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance Act (EDWAA) funds for both housing stabilization and employment-related services.

ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

Outreach

Because all 54 enrollees were selected from among the 130 people who were using the armory as a shelter at the end of the winter, all program recruitment was done through the shelter. Attracted by the County's reputation for having a particularly low unemployment rate (2.2 percent), many of the individuals using the shelter had come to the area from outside the County in the hopes of getting a job; however, because of the extremely high cost of housing, these individuals were unable to secure temporary lodging, thereby, relying on the armory as a shelter to meet their housing needs. Since no families were permitted to stay in this armory and the overwhelming majority were single men, most of the JTPA recruits were single men; only 10 women were in the program.

Some shelter residents had to be referred to other programs. "There are certain people who aren't appropriate for job training because of mental, emotional, or drug problems," explained PIC member Shirley Hort, who had chaired the PIC when this program began. "When there was a demonstrated eagerness and an independent willingness to participate, we told them to call us. That was the first test. If they called, if they got there, that indicated commitment."

Assessment

SDA project staff (former armory staff who had been hired specifically for this project by the SDA) screened applicants largely by observation and one-on-one interviews. Individuals were selected based on factors such as how they handled themselves during the interview, their social skills, their apparent intelligence and motivation, reasons for their homelessness, and length of time they had been homeless. Although substance abusers were not specifically exempted from the project, staff expected that people addicted to drugs or alcohol

would be screened out by virtue of the program's rule prohibiting use of those substances while in the program. Clients were asked to complete the SDA's standard JTPA application forms and to write down their recent job history, but no formal assessment instruments were used.

Eligibility Determination

The majority of the homeless participants met the "long-term unemployed" definition for EDWAA eligibility; others were eligible because they had recently been laid off. In total, 50 homeless could be served through EDWAA with the remaining 4 clients being served with JTPA Title IIA funds.

Providing adequate documentation to verify eligibility was not a problem for any of the shelter residents because of the tenacity of program staff. For example, they contacted other states for documentation on clients who were new to California, verified military records, and contacted client's previous employers. Staff even rented a car for a day and scheduled back-to-back driving examinations so clients could use drivers' licenses as a form of identification.

To document income, project staff asked participants to write down the current circumstances of their lives (e.g., their sole source of food was scavenging and soup kitchens; they had resided in the shelter for one month; etc.) and then to self-certify the statements. Project staff verified the homeless individuals' statements by checking with shelter staff and visiting soup kitchens during mealtimes to observe who ate there.

In order to stay in the program, the JTPA homeless enrollees had to agree to three basic rules: 1) no unauthorized people in the motel rooms; 2) the sale or use of alcohol or drugs was prohibited; and 3) enrollees had to prove they were actively looking for work by submitting a list of their job-hunting activities each day. Also, once employed, participants were expected to find housing and leave the motel within two weeks. While there was no written contract between the enrollee and the project staff, the rules were made very clear to the participants at the onset of their participation -- immediate expulsion was the penalty for breaking them. (In order to ensure that the participants were following the agreed-upon rules, project staff often visited the motel rooms unannounced and at unusual times; 19 of the original 54 clients were expelled from the program as a result of this monitoring.)

PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Training

In the employment phase of the project, each of the clients received an initial overview of all the services available through the PIC. These participants were encouraged to think about a wide range of employment possibilities in which they might be interested rather than focusing on just those jobs they had done in the past. Clients attended five different seminars in the evenings, in space the project rented from Samaritan House. The seminars covered: filling out applications, preparing resumes, job-hunting, goal-setting and budgeting, and seeking a per-

manent residence. Volunteers who had worked at the armory shelter delivered the seminars, which they designed specifically for this population. The volunteers used their experiences at the winter shelter to tailor the seminar content to meet the homeless clients' needs. The job-hunting seminar, for example, was known as "guerrilla employment," reflecting the marginal existence the clients had been living as well as the fact that they were expected to make cold calls, ferreting out potential on-the-job training slots.

Job Development

Clients learned that their sole responsibility was to find a job. They were expected to spend their days job hunting, and had to complete a form each day specifying what they had done toward that end. Two of the motel rooms were used as project offices. Breakfast was served there from 5 to 7 a.m., and the offices were staffed from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Clients were expected to spend their days calling prospective employers to identify employment opportunities and going out on interviews. The project offices had two outgoing phone lines, on which clients made cold calls and responded to job listings, and one incoming line on which employers could call back. Staff posted incoming calls from employers on a message board.

Because everyone in the project needed income from a full-time job in order to find permanent housing, no skills training was available to this group. Rather, the project offered job clubs and job search training, with an emphasis on identifying and obtaining on-the-job training positions.

Support Services

To meet the clients' immediate need for housing, the program director negotiated a volume discount with a local motel. The program was able to rent 25 rooms for an average of $30 per night, with from two to four clients sharing a room. This was all done by verbal agreement, based on the project director's prior working relationship with that motel.

The program also provided clients with a new set of clothes, grooming aids, alarm clocks, and other items necessary for their job hunt. To the extent possible, clients acquired clothing through the Samaritan House second-hand clothing bank. To supplement those basic needs and to help normalize the formerly homeless people's lives, the project staff organized them into teams for recreational activities such as weekend softball games and other sports tournaments.

"We discovered that we had to deal with these people as a whole, said PIC member Hort. Job training wasn't enough. Some were transient, some were merely displaced and had no housing, no clothing. We had already begun working with organizations that dealt with housing, and individual PIC members knew volunteer board members of agencies working with the homeless. We felt we could be a catalyst with other agencies."

High-risk projects such as this one "just would not happen if it weren't for the PIC," in PIC/SDA Director Walter

Martone's view. "The PIC provided the overall policy guidance that encourages the staff to pursue programs for homeless people. PIC members set the tone to be creative and adventuresome; they pinpoint the types of clients they want us to go after. One of the issues they talk about is how to expand rather than restrict the types of clients appropriate for the program."

PIC ROLE

The San Mateo County PIC is strongly oriented toward solving problems and is willing to do whatever is necessary to get results. Although positive outcomes are important, PIC director Martone emphasized that "our PIC doesn't let performance standards run our program. We take risks." This philosophy had paid off in the past: the SDA has received the maximum possible incentive award from the state each year.

The PIC provided two types of guidance related to this project. First, the PIC had repeatedly emphasized the need to assist to hard-to-serve populations and challenged the SDA staff to develop innovative ways to do that; and second, the PIC kept staff focused on job placement throughout all phases of the program, resulting in an attempt to screen out those who were chronically mentally ill or who for other reasons did not appear ready to benefit from job training services.

"We felt this was the hard-to-serve population," said PIC Member Hort. "We recognized that many had difficulties such as drug or alcohol abuse. We recognized that we wouldn't get high percentage performance. But we felt we had to give it a chance. I have not heard one member of the Council indicate anything but enthusiastic support for the program. We were willing to take a lower rate of success with this program. We felt we were offering something no-one else could."

STAFFING

Because the armory shelter was closing for the season just as the homeless job training project was getting underway, the SDA was able to hire armory shelter staff to work with the job training project. The PIC hired three armory staff: the armory shelter coordinator as project director, and the armory shelter site manager and assistant site manager as counselors. (The assistant site manager had been homeless himself. The shelter had hired him when he resided there and he had worked his way up to assistant site manager so the homeless clients could relate to him as a role model.)

Staffing the project with people who were knowledgeable about the homeless population was valuable for three reasons. One, they had no illusions about the homeless population and were accustomed to the setbacks often associated with that group; hence, they were less easily discouraged than staff lacking experience with the homeless would have been. Two, they had observed the selected homeless participants when they were living in the shelter and knew their individual strengths and weaknesses. Three, as shelter coordinator, the homeless job training project

director had raised funds to help pay for the shelter's operations and consequently had the homeless clients' respect.

Knowing they had strong PIC backing helped strengthen the staff's ability to cope with challenging circumstances. "The PIC did a wonderful job," according to Project Director Perry Schuckman. "They were willing to put out the money when no-one else was."

FUNDING

SDA staff le[illegible] through a U.S. Department [illegible]'s speech delivered in a confere[illegible]ortly before the armory was to close for the spring, that changes were expected to be made in the Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance program that would raise the 15 percent limitation on supportive services. "We took a gamble," the PIC Director said, based on the expected changed in the EDWAA regulations. With PIC backing, the SDA put together a comprehensive program with EDWAA funds. A few of the enrollees who could not qualify as EDWAA-eligible were enrolled in Title IIA.

Total EDWAA funding for the project was approximately $130,000; these monies were supplemented by $10,000 in Title IIA funds. Cost per participant was approximately $2,500 with the bulk of the money covering supportive service costs including housing. The project operated for three months (from April 1 to June 30).

RESULTS

The 35 enrollees who were not expelled from the program found OJT positions or jobs within six to eight weeks of the program's start-up. Twenty of the 35 were placed in jobs (half of these had been OJT workers who completed the OJT position and were hired; the other half were direct placements). The average hourly wage at placement was $7.90 per hour. Five of the clients landed construction work; others became sales clerks, painters, nurses, janitors, and machinists. Twenty of the 35 were able to move into apartments within a few weeks after having got a job or OJT position. In order to deal with the high cost of housing, most of these participants shared apartments with other program terminees. The PIC used EDWAA funds to pay most of the first and last month's rent as required prior to move-in (this averaged $700 per client), and the project held a furniture drive, soliciting used furniture donations to help furnish the apartments. Four participants moved in with family members. Some of the participants never took the initiative to work with project staff to find housing; they had lost their jobs prior to or immediately after the last day of the project, and staff have no information on them.

Although finding a job was not a large problem for this group, keeping the job for more than a short period proved to be more difficult. Only nine of the 20 who found jobs were still employed after 30 days, and seven [illegible]hese were still working after 90 days. (One more has yet to reach the 30-day point after completing his OJT.) Despite the fairly high average wage at placement of $7.90 per hour, the

majority of the clients left their jobs within weeks after obtaining them. "The number one problem," according to Project Director Schuckman, "was crack cocaine. Crack use is very difficult to detect," he explained, "and even though clients may have made it through the program with little or no drug use, the minute they got their paychecks, they got high and then couldn't get back into the swing of working." The Director estimated that up to three-quarters of the clients were crack addicts, although staff saw few signs of its use during the program. "It's like tobacco addiction -- no money, no cigarettes," he said. "By the time they came into the program, they had lived so long without crack that they could go without it. But once they had a paycheck, it went for crack."

LESSONS LEARNED

The San Mateo SDA homeless project was designed in a hurry in response to a crisis situation -- the imminent closing of the armory shelter. At the onset of the project, SDA staff anticipated paying for motel housing for about three weeks. In reality, because it took the project a few weeks to get going and it took the clients longer to find jobs and housing than originally anticipated, the SDA usually ended up paying the client's housing costs for two months or longer. This substantially increased the program's costs. Furthermore, because of the extremely tight time frame to get the participants into the program -- the armory was scheduled to close two days after the program started -- client screening was minimal. The Project Director felt this was a major flaw in the program. As verified by the extremely poor retention rate, many of the clients were not ready for employment assistance; rather, many of them needed detoxification and drug assistance first, although project staff were unable to recognize that need. "In the future, we will have to offer more support services afterward, and maintain contact longer with both participant and employer," PIC Member Hort recommended. "We felt that if we had done more follow up afterwards for longer, it would have improved retention." The Project Director agreed that more careful initial screening of the clients and the provision of drug and alcohol counseling through the program is essential when working with homeless participants.

FUTURE DIRECTION

Despite the many difficulties the SDA experienced with this program -- especially the high rate of drug use and the consequent low job retention rate -- the PIC is joining the County Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services in submitting a proposal for EDWAA funding to provide employment services to homeless individuals. The Director expects that the partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation will improve retention rates. Staff from that agency are accustomed to keeping in close touch with workers once they are placed, troubleshooting on an intensive basis and monitoring the individual's personal life if necessary.

Through the partnership, program staff may be better able to intervene early, preventing recovering addicts from lapsing back into crack or getting them into a detoxification program should they use their first paycheck for a drug binge. Fu-

ture plans call for more intense applicant screening and assessment, with the SDA assessing skill levels and Vocational Rehabilitation assessing personal characteristics.

Perhaps most important, the program has a more effective plan for handling participants' housing needs. Over the short term, staff will work with shelter residents during the winter, while they have a place to stay, rather than having to pay their housing costs; they will also be coordinating with a new 41-bed shelter. For long-term arrangements, staff will try to negotiate agreements for participants to receive preferential housing assistance treatment through Section 8 or other programs. Rather than spend funds on housing, the SDA would prefer to be able to offer participants long-term work experience.

The SDA's efforts should be strengthened by the county's newly-formed, 50-agency Hunger and Homeless Action Coalition. The PIC has been invited to attend meetings, but has declined to become a formal member out of conflict-of-interest concern, should the Coalition seek to be a PIC service provider in the future. Also, the Coalition is specifically shelter-oriented, while the PIC is primarily concerned with employment.

This case study was written based on a review of program documents and interviews with: Walter Martone, PIC/SDA Director; Shirley Hort, PIC member and former PIC chair; and Perry Schuckman, former Homeless Project Director and current Samaritan House staff member.

THE "GREAT" PROGRAM

Louisville, Kentucky

BACKGROUND

The City of Louisville has a long track record of being concerned about and providing services to homeless individuals. In 1985, then-mayor Harvey Sloane set up a task force on homelessness to study the extent of the problem, survey the local homeless population, and recommend specific responses in problem areas ranging from hunger and health care to housing and counseling needs. The task force included public agencies, voluntary organizations, religious institutions, the Chamber of Commerce, the United Way, and other providers of services to the homeless and leaders in the social service network. The PIC was not a member, nor was employment designated as one of the seven task force subcommittees. Nonetheless, the task force pinpointed employment counseling and job training and placement services as critical components in helping the growing numbers of homeless people in the City regain their ability to live self-sufficient lives.

Under the subsequent mayor, Jerry Abramson, the task force became affiliated with the National Coalition for the Homeless. Mayor Abramson took a particular interest in the task force's recommendation that "a job training program [be established] which would enable homeless individuals, who are capable, to learn employable skills and find employment." In response to the task force recommendation, the growing political support, and the concern about the homeless expressed by leaders of the City's several seminaries and the community at large, the Louisville PIC joined the growing local war against homelessness by giving Volunteers of America of Kentucky a grant to operate a six-month pilot project to respond to the employment and training needs of homeless adults. Under that grant, Volunteers of America (VOA), the local affiliate of a national human services organization, developed the GREAT program (Graduated Reentry Employment and Training): the PIC has continued to fund VOA th[illegible] JTPA IIA to continue the prograr[illegible]

Louisville's commitment to solving its homeless problem is demonstrated by the range of local programs assisting that population. In addition to the JTPA-funded GREAT program, Louisville has one of nine national demonstration grants from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism to serve homeless individuals. That program was initially patterned after GREAT, and staff from GREAT provide its employment component. There is also Project WORTH (Work Opportunity Readiness for the Homeless), funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Homeless Job

Training Demonstration Program. Unrelated to the GREAT program, Project WORTH serves a less job-ready population than does the GREAT program, with more of an emphasis on basic skills remediation, GED preparation, and long-term vocational preparation.

ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

Missions, shelters, and other local agencies working with the homeless refer all of GREAT's clients to the program. When Program Director Ursela Myers started the GREAT program, she met with those agencies to convince them to join a referral network for the program. Over time, GREAT staff have built up a strong camaraderie with staff from the referral network agencies, providing the agencies' staffs with a clear understanding of what GREAT has to offer and the types of homeless people who are likely to benefit from its services. Referral network agency staffs identify appropriate clients based on motivation, stability, and work history and refer to GREAT those who are judged likely to succeed. Most of those referred are anxious to participate in GREAT because of its good reputation in the homeless community.

Once an applicant comes through the referral network, program staff screen the applicant carefully. Applicants must meet JTPA eligibility requirements and be homeless or in jeopardy of losing their home. They must also demonstrate stability, a willingness to work, and an active maintenance of sobriety. The ideal applicant also has at least one marketable skill upon which the program can build; staff identify applicants' skills through interviews and job history. As time permits, project staff conduct background checks of the applicants, calling shelter staff, former employers, and other references. (In the early days of the program, applicants had to have been sober for 90 days; currently, there is more flexibility, in part because of the large numbers of potential participants who have experienced drinking problems.)

The GREAT client recruiter attributed the program's careful screening of applicants to the fact that VOA operates this program under a performance-based contract; i.e., the amount of money the VOA receives is directly dependent on the participants' outcomes, so it is incumbent upon staff to accept into the program only those who are likely to do well in it. The program's placement orientation and the need to meet JTPA performance standards forces GREAT to be selective about which applicants it accepts.

GREAT uses a task-oriented assessment process, focusing on whether the individual shows up at the intake office on time, follows directions in filling out the application, and completes the hour-long interview. Staff also make background checks to former employers and other references as time permits. GREAT uses little formal testing because of the extremely low frustration level of most homeless people. As GREAT's Director explained, "They just can't cope with a battery of tests and interviews." However, in response to the proposed JTPA amendment requiring that remedial education be provided to applicants who lack minimum basic skills, GREAT staff

has recently begun using the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) to identify the basic skill levels of its applicants. Although there is a wide range of skill attainments, most clients cluster around the seventh grade level.

The program has experienced no problems with documenting eligibility of applicants, in part because of the flexibility of the Kentucky Department for Employment Services, with which the PIC contracts for eligibility determination. Most GREAT clients have no difficulty providing the acceptable documentation, which may include: a drivers license, or some other document with the client's date of birth and social security number; a notarized statement of income; and verification of residence from the referring mission or shelter.

PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The GREAT program originated as a result of an unsolicited proposal from Volunteers of America. The program began in January 1986 as a six-month pilot project to provide 30 homeless people with job training services, and has grown since then. It is based on a three-week training session followed by job search activities.

The project's case management system is a holistic approach that includes considerable individual monitoring, counseling, and personal support. Each counselor/job developer has a case load of no more than 20 clients.

Employment Services

GREAT is a short-term, intensive, placement-oriented program, structured to meet the homeless individuals' need for immediate results. Although the program was initially geared only to homeless individuals, it was expanded after three years of operation to include recovering alcoholics and substance abusers as well as ex-offenders. All three types of clients are mixed together in the various program activities.

Each participant attends a three-week employability skills training program for four to six hours a day. This is a combination of work readiness training and basic skills remediation, with participants spending part of each day on work readiness and part on remediation as needed. The three-week training session provides a transition period from the unstructured life of a homeless person to the structure of a job.

The employability skills training curriculum emphasizes job preparation, job search, and job retention and life skills. The job preparation component is similar to that provided to other JTPA clients and includes issues such as vocational exploration and skills inventorying, career goal-setting, job applications and resume writing, and interviewing techniques. The job search segment is also standard and includes techniques such as identifying the hidden job market, interviewing for information, and applying for jobs through letters and phone calls.

The job retention and life skills component is specifically tailored to meet the needs of its homeless participants. In ad-

dition to the topics usually covered in this type of segment (e.g., employer and co-worker expectations, employee responsibilities and rights, child care, etc.), trainers include issues of particular concern to GREAT's participants (e.g., housing and budgeting, health management, positive visualization and imagery, body language and communication, stress management, and the impact of a job on family and social life).

The remediation component is new, added in response to the proposed JTPA amendments.

During this three-week training session, staff observe participants to further assess their strengths and weaknesses in order to individualize the program services as they move into the next phase of the program. Each person who completes the employability training session receives a certificate at a graduation ceremony -- an occasion designed to boost the participants' self-esteem and motivation.

Job Development

Program staff closely monitor clients' job development activities through daily meetings between the client and the job developer. Participants also attend weekly group job club meetings during which they swap job leads, vent their frustrations, and receive support and encouragement from program staff and from their peers.

GREAT tries to place all its clients in on-the-job training (OJT) slots, which generally last four to eight weeks, or in direct placements. The program promises a $50 completion bonus to clients who complete their OJT.

GREAT staff develop on-the-job training positions by writing to area employers promoting the financial advantages employers derive; they also promote the cost benefits available through the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit Program (TJTC). Staff enclose short descriptions of the experiences and skills of specific candidates. The letters do not mention that the job candidates are homeless; rather, they note that the clients have experienced a period of unemployment. GREAT also promotes the fact that it will work closely with each participant to help ensure job retention and uses this free "employee assistance program" as an additional marketing tool.

When working with employers new to the program, GREAT staff take extra care to ensure that the first client they send is among the most job-ready. "Then," the Director says, "after the employer is comfortable with the program, we can slip in one of the more challenging individuals with multiple problems." Now that the program has a track record of several years, program staff report that satisfied employers are calling back for repeat placements.

Retention

In all cases, GREAT staff work directly with the client's supervisor by placing the client in the training slot. They maintain personal contact with employers through weekly phone calls or visits throughout the OJT period and the first 30 days of work. "We have to take the in-

itiative," Myers said, "because the employer may get too busy. We want to check on people before a problem arises. My job developers are on the road a lot!"

Support Services

On the participant's first day in the GREAT program, each one is assigned to a job developer/counselor. This individual is not only responsible for overseeing the participant's placement activities, but is also responsible for counseling the participant and serving as the participant's individual advocate. Clients meet with their counselors on a daily basis during the three-week training session, which is generally long enough to enable the job developer/counselors to help clients deal with the various problems often associated with homelessness (e.g., medical needs, housing issues, transportation, etc.). The staff encourage the participants to be as independent as possible, and only go with them when they have to appear in court, go to a local clinic for medical attention, or meet with a social service agency if they feel their presence is necessary. "We only deal with these other issues as they impact on getting and keeping a job," Myers explained.

GREAT receives bus tickets from the PIC to enable participants to get to and from the training session and to and from the job site until they get their first paycheck. Child care assistance is available through the local Department of Employment Services office upon referral from GREAT, and may continue for up to six months after the participant is placed in a job. In addition, the Kentucky Department for Employment Services provides participants with an eyeglasses voucher if necessary and a $70 clothing voucher to purchase interview outfits; the local JTPA office has arranged for K-Mart, Value City, and one optometrist to honor the vouchers. The State also provides emergency dental care.

The costly support services which homeless clients require have been handled through the SDA's performance-based contract with VOA, which eliminates the need for VOA to operate within JTPA's requirement that only 15 percent limit of Title IIA funds be spent on support services.

Housing

GREAT Director Myers considers temporary housing stability critical in order for the client to have "an orderly home environment which meets the basic needs of food, shelter, and personal hygiene, and allows each individual to concentrate on job search and classroom expectations." Once a client is accepted into the GREAT program, staff negotiate with the referral agency to stabilize the individual's housing situation. When the referral entity is a shelter, the shelter will usually extend the client's stay throughout the course of the training. In other cases, GREAT staff usually move the client into one of three shelters operated by the Volunteers of America. (VOA operates a 15-bed single room occupancy facility for single women, a 30-bed transitional shelter for single men, and a 20-room family shelter.) Furthermore, VOA operates 19 transitional apartments in two buildings on opposite ends of the

City, and has 50 beds for alcohol and drug treatment through two separate treatment programs.

PIC ROLE

GREAT is billed as a partnership between the Louisville/Jefferson County Private Industry Council, Volunteers of America, and area employers, and receives political backing from each. County Judge Executive Sloane (the former mayor) and current Mayor Abramson are strong advocates of the GREAT program; given that those two men appoint all PIC members, their support can be influential with the PIC.

The local business community is rapidly being educated to the realities of the future labor supply, according to Vince Giegerich, PIC Administrator for Planning and Evaluation. Business support for this program as one way to fully utilize formerly unproductive segments of the citizenry is important to PIC members.

Although the PIC continues to fund the GREAT program, homeless individuals were not specified for service in the SDA's plan, other than being one of many target groups in that plan. The PIC has never issued an RFP specifically for service to homeless people. While the PIC-funded GREAT program is represented on the local Coalition for the Homeless, the PIC is not a member. The Coalition is reputedly an effective one, but its focus is on social services and housing rather than on jobs, which limits its relevance to both the GREAT program and the PIC. However, this year the Coalition is establishing several committees to study the employment needs of the homeless in greater detail.

STAFFING

GREAT's homeless program employs five staff: a director who has responsibility for several other programs as well; an employment skills training instructor; two job developers, each of whom has up to 20 clients at a time, with six new ones each month; and a recruiter who works with the referral network, does the assessment, administers the TABE, and maintains liaison with the Department of Employment Services.

Staff burnout has not been a problem, due in part to the Director's 13 years of involvement with the homeless population. Based on her own experiences, she is able to prepare her staff for the fact that there will be failures. She also structures ways for staff to serve as a support system for each other, such as going to lunch together frequently to vent their frustrations.

The staff members are quite different in their backgrounds, and the Director claims that there is no ideal background that prepares one for work with the homeless. She cautions, however, that "typical social workers would likely fail unless they were given special preparation and orientation to this type of work."

FUNDING

The PIC awarded VOA $60,000 in JTPA Six Percent incentive funds for the pilot phase of the GREAT project, from January through June 1986. Thereafter, GREAT received JTPA Title IIA funds -- $250,000 in Program Year 1987, and $240,000 in Program Year 1988 and in Program Year 1989. In Program Year 1987 (the most recent figures available), GREAT enrolled 146 clients and placed 108, for a 72 percent placement rate at a cost of $2,222 per placement.

PIC staffer Giegerich noted that VOA's chief executive officer made a strong case with the mayor and the PIC to get the initial unsolicited proposal for GREAT funded. Because of a concern that the proposed job training program for homeless people would adversely affect their performance standards, the PIC funded the program at first out of its Six Percent Incentive Funds. (There are no performance standards attached to programs operated with six percent monies; one of the purposes of these monies is to encourage experimental programs for particular hard-to-serve groups.) Once GREAT had proven it could meet its performance goals, the PIC switched its funding to Title IIA. After four years, GREAT has a strong track record of meeting its numbers and serving employers' staffing needs well, which strengthens its position in the community.

RESULTS

Because more than four times as many men as women have participated in GREAT, there has been emphasis on finding training in the more traditional male occupations. Of the 107 placements from July 1988 to May 1989, 33 were in construction work and entry-level skilled trades; 20 in food service/hospital industry; 16 in manufacturing or mechanical work; 9 in stocking, warehousing, or shipping; 9 in maintenance or cleaning; 6 in clerical work; 6 in sales; 3 drivers; and 5 in miscellaneous areas.

In Program Year 1988, GREAT enrolled 130 clients and placed 118, for a 91 percent placement rate; 108 were still employed after 30 days (an 83 percent retention rate). The average wage at placement was $4.67 per hour, and the average wage at the 30-day follow-up point was $4.78.

(The above statistics include all participants in the GREAT program -- ex-offenders and chemical dependents as well as homeless people. However, many of the ex-offenders and substance abusers in the program are homeless. The preponderance of men reflects the ratio of men to women in the homeless and ex-offender population as a whole.)

The area's transition from manufacturing to the service industry results in many employers requesting minimum wage workers, but GREAT tries not to place clients at the minimum wage. Large employers such as Ford and GE tend to get OJT placements from the PIC because the PIC is able to write OJT contracts in volume; GREAT, as a relatively small program, generally places only one person at a time.

Careful initial screening and intensive monitoring during the first few weeks on the job result in a high retention rate for

program participants. In its first six months of operation, GREAT placed 18 of its 30 enrollees in full-time positions, 15 of whom reached the 30-day retention point. Four of those initial placements have been employed consistently since they completed the program.

The Director attributes the high retention rate to several factors. First, staff try to build a strong relationship with clients, and encourage them to come back whenever they need help. Perhaps equally important, GREAT pays $75 to any clients who are still on the job after 30 days.

LESSONS LEARNED

Director Myers has identified three reasons for GREAT's success. First, it has been running long enough that the staff has been able to refine and improve it. Second, the staff has developed into a cohesive team that works well together. Third, selection screens out all applicants but those "who are ready to tackle the job market and who want to make the transition from chaos to normalcy."

This is very clearly a results-oriented program. The terms of the PIC's performance contract contribute to this orientation, leading staff to select clients very carefully, and then do whatever is necessary to get them to training or to work, including pulling clients out of bed or trying to sober them up. Negative terminations are not tolerated.

In its early years, GREAT used co-op placements as well as OJTs. These two-week placements were unpaid training positions developed for clients with poor work histories and low skill levels. The co-op training gave the participant an opportunity to enter the world of work and upgrade his skills while giving the employer the chance to try out a potential employee with no up-front commitment or cost. At the PIC's urging, GREAT has discontinued the co-op placements; PIC members viewed the co-op placements as inappropriate because they felt that employers were being provided with free labor.

Finally, the carefully maintained referral network is essential to the selection of appropriate clients, both in terms of eligibility and in terms of their readiness to benefit from job-related services.

This case study was written based on a review of program documents and on interviews with: GREAT Program Director Ursela Myers, GREAT Recruiter and former Job Developer Jack Custer, PIC Administrator for Planning and Evaluation Vince Giegerich, PIC Staff Member Jack Meisburg, and Coalition for the Homeless Director Sue Speed.

THE LEXINGTON AVENUE WOMEN'S SHELTER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

New York, New York

BACKGROUND

Perhaps more than in any other American city, the homeless in New York have been chronicled by the press. Welfare hotels, single-room occupancy facilities, Bowery bums, and bag ladies -- all have found their way onto newspaper front pages and television screens. The size and complexity of New York's shelter system, coupled with the City's tendency to attract a high proportion of severely troubled individuals with multiple problems, makes homelessness in New York a particularly challenging issue. In response to a growing understanding that shelter alone did not move homeless people toward eventual self-sufficiency, and spurred by a mayoral directive, the New York City Department of Employment initiated its Homeless Shelter Employment Program in April, 1986, with programs currently underway to serve single men, single women, and families

One of those programs is run through the Lexington Avenue Women's Shelter, a 185-bed shelter in a large armory. This program builds on the City's experiences with two pilot employment programs which have now been institutionalized -- one in the Harlem Men's Shelter which began in April 1986, and a replication of the Harlem program which has been running in the Sumner Armory Men's Shelter in Brooklyn since May 1987. Having proven its ability to administer programs for homeless men, the Department of Employment (DOE) sought to provide similar opportunities for the homeless women in the City's shelter system. "We presented the concept to all the borough presidents, the Board of Estimate, and other political leaders, and everyone was excited, because we had the precedent of the men's program," explained Mary Quigley, Assistant Commissioner of DOE's Office of Demonstration Programs. "We got the concurrence of the whole City.

While based on the two homeless men's employment programs, the design for the homeless women's program had to accommodate several differences between the male and female homeless population. First, women in the City's shelter system are younger than the men. They were almost twice as likely to have a history of psychiatric problems; and third, they were three times as likely to lack any employment experience. In the words of Anna Stern, who directs the Lexington Avenue employment program, "homeless single women are the single most fragile segment of the adult homeless population, excluding those who are

mentally ill." The City's RFP for the program suggested a design that included more careful assessment, a greater emphasis on training rather than job search and placement, and more intensive attention to work habits and employer expectations. In fact, these elements proved extremely difficult to incorporate into the Lexington Avenue Shelter employment program, for reasons ranging from the characteristics of the homeless women to the lack of drug treatment options.

Despite its difficulties, the demonstration program at the Lexington Avenue Women's Shelter is contributing to the knowledge base about employment program design for homeless women in a major urban setting, and is making some progress in meeting the needs of an extremely challenging population.

ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS), a very large firm running a variety of employment-related programs, is New York City's contractor for the Lexington Avenue Women's shelter Employment program. FEGS has been involved with DOE and its programs for the homeless since 1986, including the men's employment programs on which the women's program is based. At the Lexington Avenue shelter, FEGS is in its third year of refining a demonstration project for homeless women, on a contract running through June 30, 1990. The long-term goal for the project, according to Anna Stern, FEGS Vice President for employment services, is to develop a program that builds upon strong services within the shelter itself.

Outreach

By definition, the Lexington Avenue shelter is a shelter for employable women, and the City's contract with FEGS specifies that the program will serve only residents of that shelter. Therefore, formal outreach occurs only in the shelter, where residents find a flyer about the employment program on their beds and are encouraged to participate.

There are two ways in which women can come into the Lexington Avenue shelter. Newly homeless women in New York City's shelter system are sent to a special assessment shelter, where they undergo an assessment process that may take up to 21 days. If they are determined to be employable, they are sent to the Lexington Avenue shelter. Homeless women may also be referred from other shelters.

"Getting the system to work so that the right clients come to Lexington is the first priority," according to Stern. To accomplish that, FEGS staff made on-site presentations to staffs of other women's shelters and talked to shelter residents about the program, but "nobody wanted to come." Outreach efforts were hampered by several factors. In the past, the Lexington Avenue shelter has had a reputation for lesbianism and violence, which has deterred potential referrals. Also, staff at other shelters have had little incentive to refer their "good" (e.g., employable) clients to Lexington Avenue, as those are the very clients who

help stabilize the shelters in which they reside. Recent changes have improved conditions at the Lexington Avenue shelter. The challenge now is to change perceptions within the shelter network and on the streets, letting people know that the shelter is cleaner and more secure.

Another issue that inhibits outreach and recruitment is the relatively small number of homeless women in the City's shelter system. The 25 shelters for men have over 10,000 beds, while there are only seven shelters for women with a total of 1,000 to 1,300 residents on any given night. One of the questions facing the FEGS program is whether there is an adequate number of homeless women to drive an employment program, given that many of the women in the shelter system are not employable because of mental illness or other factors. Other challenges include determining and implementing the right mix of referral incentives and shelter conditions that will result in residents who want and can utilize employment services, and providing a shelter environment that will encourage the women to stay long enough to benefit from program services. "Once they're there," Stern has found, "the environmental dynamics become vital."

By virtue of the fact that a woman has been assigned to the Lexington Avenue shelter, she is considered to be employable, but she needs to choose to participate in the FEGS program. To inform the residents about the program, FEGS staff run regularly scheduled orientation sessions, at which they always serve refreshments since the food motivates the women to attend.

Eligibility Determination

The Department of Employment's policy is that any Lexington Avenue Shelter resident is considered automatically eligible for JTPA services. Generally, the FEGS staff are not involved in documenting clients' identity, as the City's Human Resources Administration (HRA) has usually verified their identity upon enrollment into the shelter.

However, FEGS staff do help clients obtain the documentation required in order to work, and "one of the first things we do is get them the papers they need," Stern said. For example, FEGS has money in its contract to cover the costs of obtaining clients' birth certificates, and to pay the fee for a "non-drivers' license" (a picture identification card). FEGS staff also help them get social security cards.

Assessment

Initially, clients are assessed through a counseling interview. Input from the shelter staff supplements those first impressions. FEGS uses a two-page form, which is the most that clients will sit through. The form briefly covers issues such as work history, residential history, family structure, education, criminal record, and medical history, including mental health and substance abuse. "When we started in 1986, crack wasn't even on our intake forms," Stern recalled. All intake forms ask clients which drugs they use and how often they drink.

FEGS tries to screen clients for drug and alcohol problems, but confidentiality restrictions hamper these efforts. There are limitations on the types of information shelter staff and employment program staff may share. Consequently, FEGS often finds out about a client's alcohol or drug problem only after she has been placed in a job and lost it. Efforts are underway to improve the client information system.

FEGS also administers the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) to all program participants. "The JTPA requirement for a reading and math test isn't a good first task for a homeless client, but we have to do that," Stern explained. Grade levels for reading have averaged 8.8, with math at 6.1. ontrary to initial expectations, the fact that they have to take a test does not seem to be causing clients to opt out of the program.

The main FEGS service delivery facility in Manhattan has the capacity to conduct extensive vocational assessments. In the first year of the program, staff designed a three-day assessment for the Lexington Avenue women, but found that the women would not travel the "10 or 12 blocks" from the shelter to the FEGS facility. There was no room to incorporate the three-day assessment into the on-site program at the shelter, and clients who "want a job yesterday" were unwilling to devote the necessary time to the assessment. Consequently, FEGS has had to incorporate a segment in which the women discuss the skills they have and the kinds of jobs they want as a part of th roup orientation conducted in the sh er.

Enrollment

From June 1, 1988, through June 30, 1989, the Lexington Avenue Women's shelter employment program enrolled 488 homeless women. Of those, 47 percent were between 22 and 30 years old, 39 percent were between 31 and 40, 13 percent were over 41, and only a few were between 17 and 21. (This age distribution does not reflect the age distribution of women in the New York City shelter system, who are likely to be under 21 or over 60; rather, it reflects careful assessment and referral aimed at determining employability.)

Most of the 488 women were black, with 41 Hispanics, 46 whites, one American Indian, and one Asian/Pacific Islander. None were veterans, and 95 percent had dependent children.

While 227 women (nearly half of the 488 homeless women enrolled in the program) were school dropouts, another 185 had earned their high school diplomas or GED, 24 had some education beyond high school, and 52 had completed some type of college or postsecondary education.

Despite what seem to be serious educational deficits, over two-thirds of the 488 women assessed themselves as having no employment barriers. Only 69 acknowledged substance abuse problems, only 32 claimed to have mental or physical problems, and 40 admitted to being ex-offenders. However, despite a reluctance to admit to drug addiction, 70 percent reported that they were "recreational

crack users" -- a phrase more likely than "drug problems" to elicit a positive response.

PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The Lexington Avenue Women's Shelter employment program is still in the pilot phase, and consequently program design continues to be changed and refined. Perhaps the most important change is that the employment program was somewhat isolated from ongoing shelter operations at the beginning, but "now we're beginning to function as part of a comprehensive case management system," according to Stern. Weekly conferences have been instituted between the FEGS staff and the director and staff of social services at the shelter, which has improved communication and aided the case management process. Confidentiality continues to be a problem inhibiting information-sharing between the two staffs, and interagency systems are "inordinately difficult."

Training

Sixty-one percent of the 488 women enrolled during the period from June 1, 1988 to June 30, 1989, participated in some type of training -- small-group prevocational training and counseling, a one-week typing skills or word processing brush-up course, or a two-to-three day cashiering course. (The shelter's training room has two cash registers -- both the standard NCR and the type used in fast food restaurants -- as well as a computer.) The other women went directly into job placement activities. "No one will participate in the program long enough to learn new skills, except cashiering, so we concentrate on skills brush-up," Stern said.

Those who do participate in on-site training, Stern suggested, "like our tender loving care. The pre-vocational training room is more cheerful than the rest of the shelter -- it's freshly painted with a blue ceiling and yellow walls, well lit, with symphonic music in the background. They can get new clothing there. We have a make-up corner, and a videotape for job interviews. It has a transitional atmosphere, and we don't tolerate bizarre behavior there" which adds to its attractiveness.

FEGS tries to motivate women to attend orientations and workshops by offering cake, coffee, fruit, and soda. There is also an incentive system, in which women who attend workshops, complete training, or begin working receive gifts such as make-up, combs, umbrellas, and watches, purchased with contract funds. The incentive system is an effort to encourage perseverance. From July 1 to early October, 1989, for example, 47 out of the women enrolled in the program were referred to pre-vocational workshops. Seventeen went to one workshop, 13 to two, 10 to three, and only two attended four workshops or more. "We need to create a dynamic within the shelter that reinforces work," Stern explained.

Although FEGS staff can refer the Lexington Avenue women to any JTPA program in the city, occupational skills training is a hard sell to homeless women. Despite the low skill levels and lack of work experience of many shelter

residents, training is not an attractive option for them because they want a job and a wage immediately. In the first year, for example, FEGS put a heavy emphasis on training for hotel work and cleaning positions, but eliminated it because of lack of interest.

In addition to the women's impatience with training programs, concern about performance standards limits training contractors' willingness to accept Lexington Avenue referrals. "This is where the interplay between hard to serve and performance standards starts to be a problem," Stern explained, because training contractors jeopardize their fees if those enrolled fail to complete the course and stay on a job. "Our contract is a placement contract," Stern said, with no requirement to provide training.

FEGS has found that on-the-job training (OJT) is not a useful tool for this population. "Most OJT in New York is with small employers, and not much training goes on, and the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) gives employers the same financial advantages," Stern said.

The Human Resources Administration is planning to begin a work experience program in which women can earn $12.50 a week for working part-time in the shelter, and it may enable women to get paid for attending FEGS workshops. Stern hopes this strategy will provide an incentive to attend program services and "give us a little breathing space to try to work with people."

Job Development

Because FEGS operates so many employment and training programs, the agency has its own centralized job bank, and job bank staff fax job orders to the Lexington Avenue staff. There is also a part-time job developer just for the homeless women's program, who tries to identify jobs that pay at least $5 per hour and uses TJTC as an employer incentive. Staff do not flag the fact that the clients are homeless, and the employment program's phones are answered "FEGS" rather than "Lexington Avenue Women's Shelter."

FEGS has found that they can find jobs for the homeless women, but only within a very narrow spectrum of positions. Most of the women lack the social skills needed for the traditionally female occupations which they can get without intensive training, and most have serious drug or alcohol problems which inhibit retention.

One approach which has worked well for a limited number of women from Lexington Avenue is the Vera Institute of Justice's Neighborhood Works Program. That program hires homeless workers to renovate gutted and abandoned apartment buildings for use as rent-subsidized apartments for homeless people. Vera Institute pays the workers by the day, which meets their interest in immediate cash. "It's a therapeutic program," Assistant Commissioner Quigley said. "First they work three days a week and go to [substance abuse] treatment two days, then they earn the right to work four days, and then five days. Then with the agreement of their treatment supervisor

they can move into a full-time job." Seven women from Lexington Avenue worked in that program in Program Year 1988-89.

Placement

Before any participant leaves for a job interview, she must report to the employment counselor who checks that she is properly dressed and has money for food and transportation. That counselor follows up afterwards with both the participant and the potential employer.

FEGS has placed Lexington Avenue residents in a variety of positions, most of which are unskilled or low-skilled jobs. Examples include light manufacturing, security jobs, home attendants, cashier, clerical worker, and fast food worker. A few who could be bonded have become messengers, and a few found licensed practical nurse positions.

Those who become employed receive a letter of congratulations from the FEGS staff. They also gain important privileges in the shelter. Shelter staff try to assign working women to small separate rooms, and they are entitled to a larger personal storage locker than unemployed residents.

Retention

Retention has been a major problem. Through its work with a variety of homeless populations, FEGS has found that most homeless people are unable to retain a job over the long term. Staff are also concerned about the long-term implications on job development prospects of placing people who are unprepared to retain their jobs. "The biggest problem is that we have burned out many of our employers," Stern said.

In a new strategy to improve retention, women who attend post-placement workshops receive grooming items or clothing. There are also incentive gifts for women who return to work after receiving her first paycheck, and after 30 and 45 days. Women who work 45 days are also invited to speak to current participants and to serve as role models. In an effort to track retention, women placed through the program who moved out of the shelter are offered $10 to return after 90 days for a follow-up interview, regardless of their employment status, so that FEGS staff can find out what they are doing. (In its first year, the program only tracked those women still living in the shelter.)

Retention rates seem to be on the decline, which has prompted FEGS to reexamine its program design assumptions. Although JTPA is placement-driven, FEGS's flexible HRA funds enable the program to make multiple, sequential placements. "Nobody quits smoking cigarettes the first time," Stern observed. "How can we expect homeless women, many of whom have never been in the labor market in a meaningful way, to succeed on the first placement?" Clients' impatience to begin earning money makes it difficult to work with them on retention issues prior to placement, so FEGS now tries to work on retention through post-placement counseling or after the client has lost her first job.

Support Services

Probably the two most critical support service needs for Lexington Avenue women are housing and drug/alcohol treatment. Many stay in the shelter for long periods of time, even while working. (HRA's stated 90-day post-placement limit is rarely enforced; generally, the Lexington Avenue women who do find jobs don't earn enough to afford housing, and expelling them from the shelter would be a disincentive to continue working.) Others sleep "wherever they are," using the shelter as a base; still others are thought to be working as prostitutes at night.

Drug and alcohol treatment is virtually unavailable. Stern has a background in drug treatment, but "treating crack is exceptionally difficult. There are no treatment slots to refer them to, and these women aren't interested in going into a two-year program." There are no detoxification services at Lexington Avenue, although there has been discussion of providing Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous on-site. HRA has tried educating the women through a substance abuse fair, but HRA is faced with the same lack of treatment slots that frustrates the FEGS staff.

FEGS is caught in a bind: They can refer clients elsewhere for services, but the women are more likely to utilize those services provided on site. However, the problem with on-site services, Stern said, is that they create dependency problems.

Through its grant, FEGS provides carfare and money for breakfast and lunch for women looking for a job; this assistance continues until a participant receives her first paycheck. FEGS makes bulk purchases of new clothing suitable for job interviews, which results in very low per-client costs ($10 for shoes, $20-30 for suits from New York's garment district, underwear and $5 handbags from outlets on the Lower East Side). These purchases are supplemented by some donated clothing.

PIC ROLE AND COALITION INVOLVEMENT

The PIC provides overall policy guidance for all New York City employment and training programs, but Mayor Koch spurred the initial conceptualization of providing employment services for homeless men. "We'd always talked about expanding to women," DOE Assistant Commissioner Quigley remembered. "We went over all our plans with the PIC, and they were excited. Their only criterion was that the participants had to want to work."

While the PIC is not formally represented on local coalitions, FEGS participates in two coalitions that help strengthen the program. One of these is run by the Women's City Club, a prestigious volunteer organization involved with advocacy and policy development on a variety of civic issues. That coalition is oriented toward homeless single women, and includes relevant service providers from the entire City, which makes it an especially good network.

While not employment-focused, that coalition advocates smaller shelters, which FEGS staff think would foster more effective employment services. The other coalition is much less active, but is strictly employment-oriented. Started by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and now housed at the New York Community Trust, this coalition has tried a variety of job training and employment models for homeless people and "reached consensus that none of the models tried thus far were effective," Stern said, and that new approaches are necessary.

STAFFING

The FEGS staff working in the Lexington Avenue employment program includes people with experience in urban poverty programs, drug and alcohol counseling, the foster care system, and HRA's program for the mentally ill homeless. FEGS experienced some staff turnover early in the program, but now the staff has stabilized. FEGS Vice President Stern attributes that stability to the fact that most of the staff have worked in shelters or refugee camps with working conditions similar to those at Lexington Avenue.

Stern recommended hiring creative people with some type of counseling or social service background and training them in employment and job placement strategies, rather than relying primarily on experienced job training professionals who "tend not to be very psychologically oriented." Even focusing on people experienced with poverty programs, FEGS has found it extremely difficult to recruit staff to work in a shelter because of the working conditions.

DOE Assistant Commissioner Quigley attributes much of the program's success to the work history of Anna Stern and her staff. "Everyone she hires has had well beyond the call of duty in traumatic cases," Quigley said, adding that "you need a believer to run it for you -- not a dreamer."

FUNDING

FEGS has a contract with the Department of Employment for $300,000. Half the money is from JTPA Title IIA funds and the other half from the City's Human Resources Administration. The HRA money has no restrictions, and that is the way FEGS has been able to fund its support services. [Each of the City's employment demonstration programs is a collaborative effort, with non-JTPA funds used for support services.]

DOE's preference is to use performance contracting, with payment upon enrollment, placement, 30-day retention, and wage level; however, this year's FEGS contract is a line-item contract. The City has found it difficult to find contractors to bid on its homeless employment RFPs, and because of retention difficulties, FEGS requested a line-item contract as a condition of continuing the program. DOE Assistant Commissioner Quigley feels that traditional JTPA contractors are reluctant to bid on RFPs for homeless employment programs because they are interested in providing training, yet training is often the last type of service homeless clients want. FEGS' Stern suggests

that performance contracts make it difficult for a contractor to assist the hardest-to-serve clients because of the costs involved and the likelihood that placement and retention figures will be low despite creative strategies and hard work.

RESULTS

From June 1, 1988, through June 30, 1989, 117 of the 488 women in the Lexington Avenue Women's Shelter employment program had entered the work force, with an average wage at placement of $4.74 and a cost per placement of $2,564. [Included in the cost per placement figure are a few clients who were referred to job-related education.] This 24 percent placement rate was somewhat lower than the program's 33 percent goal; Assistant Commissioner Quigley suggested that low rates of shelter occupancy in the warmer months may contribute to the disparity between performance and goal. While these numbers count toward New York City's performance standards, the homeless women's employment program is so small that it is unlikely to affect them.

During the period from July through September, 1989, in which new program strategies have been implemented, 17 people have been placed at an average wage of $5.38. Each of those was referred to a post-placement workshop, aimed at improving retention. Seven attended one of those workshops, and two attended a second one.

LESSONS LEARNED

Stern's view is that the homeless women in the Lexington Avenue shelter are "an extremely damaged population. Many are victims of abuse, have drug and alcohol problems, and see themselves as failures because they were unable to keep their families together." While many say that they voluntarily gave up their children to relatives or the foster care system to spare them the experience of being homeless, in reality there was little choice involved. For that reason, Stern would recommend a greater effort toward getting the women back with their families as well as trying to stabilize them as working individuals.

Also needed are more direct linkages with housing, as well as an increased supply of affordable housing, to give the women more options once they find work. In the meantime, smaller shelters would be more conducive to employment programs than large ones such as the 185-bed Lexington Avenue facility.

Everyone involved in the program agrees that more attention needs to be paid to crack, and to cross-addiction problems. In Quigley's words: "Crack is our biggest issue. That doesn't mean we give up. But it's going to take longer, and cost more money." Moreover, the population changes so rapidly that program design needs to be continually adjusted. Not only are the homeless women younger and saddled with more problems each year, but even the drugs keep changing. "Two years ago we hadn't started asking about crack,"

recalled Stern, "while now they're talking about crank [a new street drug reputed to be even more destructive than crack]."

In a broader sense, Stern thinks a new model is required -- one that is built upon the concept of multiple placements as well as comprehensive case management. Such a model could be based on the rehabilitation community's supported work model -- "the need is habilitation, not rehabilitation."

For the few women willing to work in construction, the Vera Institute program holds some promise because of the immediate gratification of payment by the day, but Stern has also been thinking about building a model on recycling. "The homeless in New York do three things to earn money," Stern observed. "They collect returnable bottles and cans, they sell used clothing, and they sell used books and magazines. Maybe we can draw from their subculture to create a viable model. Perhaps recycling would give them a way to get used to the notion of coming to work, yet allow them the space to come irregularly. Once they begin coming every day, we could build in workshops and have this as a period when they get used to working."

This case study was written based on a review of program documents and interviews with: Mary Quigley, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Demonstration Programs, New York City Department of Employment; and Anna Stern, Vice President for Employment Services, Federation Employment and Guidance Service.

OPERATION REACH

Toledo, Ohio

BACKGROUND

Several high-profile state and local studies over the past five years identified the magnitude and needs of Toledo's homeless population, and helped raise homelessness as an issue for local programs. Local news articles detailed the problem, highlighting families living in the streets or in their cars and entire neighborhoods filled with uninhabitable, boarded-up houses that weren't being rehabilitated. The Private Industry Council had just hired a planner with expertise in mental health and homelessness, and the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES) had already identified homeless veterans as a target group; the PIC planner and the OBES staff were encouraging the PIC to target homeless people. When the opportunity arose to apply for a McKinney grant, the PIC drew on its experience with other special populations and, with strong support from OBES, proposed a job training project tailored for homeless men and women.

PIC staff had learned, through past work with Indochinese refugees and Hispanic populations in particular, that the most effective way to meet the specialized needs of any hard-to-serve group is to set up a special program, with dedicated staff, designed to meet those special needs. Recognizing that many homeless people are reluctant to work within systems, the PIC proposed an approach that used the system which was already in place for them -- the shelter and emergency housing system. Based on what PIC staff learned from interviewing each of the area's eight shelter directors, the PIC won a McKinney grant to implement Operation REACH, a comprehensive service system combining specialized services with referrals to existing PIC programs. Project elements include: training for shelter staff, in-shelter outreach, pre-employment counseling, referral to appropriate services in the employment and training, education, housing, and social services systems.

ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

The PIC contracts with the shelters to refer homeless people to the program. They refer street people as well as shelter residents. If homeless people inquire about the program directly rather than through the shelter referral system, the PIC refers them to a shelter, where they are assigned a case manager who may then refer them to the PIC program. Shelter staff refer people they feel are ready for work (or "semi-ready," as Project Coordinator Donna Mitchell suggested). OBES manager Jim O'Shea added that "OBES folded its veterans program in with the PIC, working hand in hand"

once the McKinney program started, which was another source of recruits. Clients must be willing to remain in the Toledo area, be willing and able to work, have a positive attitude toward training, not be dangerous to themselves or to others, and be in the process of rehabilitation if they are alcohol or drug dependent.

Eligibility Determination

The Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES) determines eligibility and registers homeless clients either at shelters or at the PIC intake offices. Initially, Operation REACH staff sat with the clients during the OBES registration process. When they saw that OBES was not registering homeless applicants who had inadequate documentation (proof of age, proof of income for the last six months, and proof of residence), the PIC staff negotiated alternative approaches. Both project coordinators became notaries, so they could prepare statements, based on client interviews and calls to employers, that are acceptable to OBES. To document age for clients born in Lucas County, where Toledo is located, the coordinators send clients to the Department of Vital Statistics for "a slip of paper with their birth date" which is available free; the coordinators convinced OBES to accept that, rather than requiring a birth certificate for which there is a charge. For clients born elsewhere, the coordinators write for documentation. For proof of residence, OBES accepts a form from the shelter.

Assessment

The main initial assessment takes place in a one-on-one "warming up session," according to the project coordinators, in which the goals are to determine whether clients are willing to make a commitment to the program and to begin building a sense of trust. Non-job-ready clients then take the Career Decision-Making test, which, project coordinators say, "identifies skills and interests but also builds their self-esteem because they see they have skills and interests." Operation REACH is also working with the Toledo Public Schools to incorporate formal skills testing into the program, and the PIC will soon begin testing reading and math levels for all PIC clients. Currently, project staff identify skill deficits during the pre-employment training course and then refer those who need GED preparation or basic skills remediation to the public school system, which has a state grant which can cover academic training for Operation REACH clients. If staff suspect problems such as a learning disability, they send that person to the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation testing.

Determining and dealing with substance abuse continues to be a problem. In order to be eligible for Operation REACH, Project Coordinator Mitchell said, "they have to be showing us the effort -- attending meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous -- or going into a rehabilitation center. This is one of the biggest barriers still -- you can't be guaranteed that people will follow

through. We keep them in the program, but just focus on recovery first rather than employment."

PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Pre-Employment Training

Most participants, except those who are immediately referred to other programs or services, attend an eight-day pre-employment training course, conducted in the shelters by Operation REACH staff. They begin by asking participants to write down their reasons for being in the program and their future goals. "This process helps everyone find out they're not alone with their problems, leads to comradeship, and lets them share any experiences about past drug or alcohol abuse," explained Project Coordinator Geoff Humphrys. Pre-employment training for Operation REACH is longer than for other JTPA programs, running three or four hours per day over eight days. "We get to know them and their objectives," Mitchell explained. "We set up lifelong plans, step-by-step, for all of them."

The pre-employment training course includes a career decision-making process in which participants identify their transferable, adaptable, and job-related skills. There is also telephone contact with employers. "They interview companies they think they're interested in for information about the company to build their confidence about talking with employers and make follow-up calls inquiring about a company's hiring process," Mitchell added. "They get a lot of insight into the company, and it helps build their self-esteem."

In most sessions of the pre-employment training course, 60 to 70 percent of the clients complete the eight-day commitment. However, Mitchell and Humphrys reported that a recent class reached 100 percent retention.

Job Development

The PIC job development unit does job development for Operation REACH. "Our clients are just like everybody else's," according to Mitchell and Humphrys. "We receive the same job orders all the other interviewers receive. Then we screen our clients to see if anyone's eligible." OBES also provides job referrals for PIC clients to supplement the PIC's job development unit. "There's usually a lag between pre-employment training and employment, while clients are looking for work. We take the place of a job club," the coordinators said. Job search activities take place at the PIC's offices rather than on-site in the shelters. "It makes them feel better," Mitchell suggested. "People here treat them nicely. They're welcome here, and it boosts their self-esteem to have someplace to go other than the shelter."

Support Services

The McKinney grant's flexibility enables Operation REACH to provide a wide range of support services. Clients who need transportation assistance can obtain bus tokens from the PIC, and the program will pay for taxi service on a short-

term basis if necessary. Operation REACH has even chartered a bus to transport groups of clients for short-term work. "We've been lucky so far" on child care, according to the project coordinators, using Title XX child care funds for clients eligible for Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) and supplementing Title XX with McKinney funds for several weeks of babysitting services for clients who are not ADC-eligible. The project coordinators assess participants' clothing needs during early contacts with them, and accompany them to purchase clothing and any tools they may need on the job. They purchase the clothing in stores rather than thrift shops as a way to enhance clients' self-esteem. Two community credit counseling organizations provide budgeting guidance for program clients, either at no charge or for a nominal $1.00 fee which the PIC pays. Thus far, the program provides these services "for as long as they need them," according to Mitchell. "We assess things -- some people need you for a week, some for a month. We never really terminate anyone. They can come in for help whenever they need it."

Eighty percent of the program's clients access some type of benefit (e.g., Supplemental Security Income, General Relief, Aid to Dependent Children, food stamps).

Housing

The extensive relationship with the shelter and emergency housing network's case management staff enables project staff to handle most short-term housing needs; although most shelters have 30-day limits, they usually extend that for PIC clients.

Project staff sometimes assist clients in obtaining permanent housing. They have discussed the program with several realtors who have agreed to help locate appropriate units. Operation REACH clients are eligible for a voucher for the first month's rent from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and the client is responsible for paying the security deposit; project staff set up the necessary appointment with DHHS and help their clients save money toward the deposit once they are working. Staff from some of the shelters also help Operation REACH clients find housing.

Once clients begin work, many find it depressing to continue living in a shelter. "We help them count down the days," Mitchell said, "and usually within three weeks we can get them out of there."

PIC ROLE

The PIC's planning committee reviewed the McKinney application, but the project was largely staff-driven. OBES manager O'Shea, who is a PIC member, felt that "our program's momentum and proven success made the PIC feel comfortable. There were no negatives." As well, the PIC had already been involved with homeless veterans through OBES. O'Shea explained that "Hunt-Wesson had agreed to hire homeless people en masse if we could solve the logistical problems. We entered into a cooperative agreement with the PIC, and they provided transportation to and from the work site" on a temporary basis.

The PIC is also represented, through it's staff, on the Homeless Shelters Directors Association.

STAFFING

The Operation REACH project coordinators have extensive experience with populations with barriers, ranging from the mentally retarded and physically handicapped to disadvantaged and unmotivated inner city students. They are enthusiastic about their work, and report no serious discouragement, which they attributed to "great supervisors," experience with hard-to-serve groups, and the team approach they use. They are stationed within the PIC's job development unit, so they are not operating on their own but have a built-in support system of other PIC staff. Also, at the end of the pre-employment training, the participants have a chance to evaluate Humphrys and Mitchell, who say that their "favorable reviews help avoid burnout."

"Staff is the key to this program," according to PIC Director Jim Beshalske. "We looked for people with a business background, especially in sales, so that they had had exposure to the private sector and could sell the program. We also looked for some experience working with people with employment barriers, and an understanding of this client group."

Operation REACH is dependent upon shelter staff cooperation for referrals, program space, and other services. Humphrys and Mitchell spend about half their time in the area's five shelters and three transitional housing developments, working directly with clients and coordinating with shelter case managers. Their on-site presence helps Humphrys and Mitchell advocate for their clients, such as, for example, when they request that the shelters extend the maximum length of stay for clients who are enrolled in training or in job-related education.

Early in the project, Operation REACH brought the eight directors and their case management staff together for in-service training on labor market conditions, existing job training services, and housing options. This session also provided an opportunity to exchange ideas on case management strategies for the homeless, and acquainted shelter staff with the PIC's expectations. Project staff followed up the initial in-service training with one-on-one orientation with shelter staff on-site at the shelters, and with group sessions every six months. In one of these, Operation REACH brought in a client and his employer to talk about how well the program had worked; this was "a good boost for the shelter staff" because it helped them understand the project's real-life results. "Our clients act like they love the program," Mitchell said, "which helps keep the shelter staff working with us. Our clients are our biggest sellers. Now, one client tells another one about the program."

Case managers at the shelters and transitional housing developments supplement Operation REACH's staff capability, but support varies at the different shelters. The largest shelter has an extensive case management system, with five case managers. However, they have a very heavy client load, with more than 100 clients per worker. Two shelters have no case management services, so clients from those shelters are referred to

the largest one. The others have case managers on site. In addition to screening homeless people for referral to Operation REACH, the case managers work with issues such as permanent housing, medical needs, and welfare eligibility by networking with community agencies.

FUNDING

The Toledo Area PIC, in conjunction with the eight emergency and transitional shelters, received $250,000 in McKinney job training demonstration funds. A portion of those funds were used to contract with the shelters for services on a per-client basis. Initially, the PIC paid the shelters $100 per referral, once the individual referred had completed the eight-day pre-employment training course or had worked for five days; in the spring of 1989, the PIC raised the per-client fee to $200. The payments to the shelters covered recruitment as well as the cost of staff time for shelter staff to coordinate with PIC staff, telephone costs connected with the program, and office space for program activities. The shelters also provided coffee, rolls, and bus tokens to the PIC clients, and some shelters prepared lunches during the workshop.

The PIC only spent about half its grant, for several reasons. They were notified of the grant award on September 30, 1988, and the national demonstration program was to begin the next day. It took the PIC several months to get the staff, services, and curriculum in place, which meant that shelters did not begin referring clients and providing other services until mid-January.

The PIC had planned to spend part of its grant on OJT contracts, but because of the delay in program start-up, OJT contracts were not on-line until later than planned.

RESULTS

Although staff expected that on-the-job training (OJT) would be a predominant part of the program, less than one-fifth of the homeless clients have used this service. "OJT isn't a vital part of whether the employer will hire them," Mitchell explained. "We just placed three people at wages of $7.00, $9.00, and $17.00 per hour -- the $7.00 job was the only OJT. The others were direct placements." OJT positions have included "telephone salesperson, cook, maintenance worker, truck driver -- a variety of jobs that are no different from our direct placements."

Most clients have found work in the service industry, because that is the growth sector in Toledo. Average starting wage is $5.50 per hour.

From December 1, 1988, through August 30, 1989, Operation REACH served 141 clients -- 112 men and 29 women. Of those, 112 received some type of service from the program, while the remaining 29 clients were referred to more appropriate programs or services. Operation REACH provided pre-employment training and employment services for 94 clients, of whom 89 enrolled in, and 58 completed, the pre-employment training course. The remaining 18 clients went straight into OJT or into unsubsidized work. Of the 51 people who became employed through the program

during that time period, 28 had been through the pre-employment training and 23 had not.

The initial wage at placement averaged $5.01, and for the 11 who had reached the 13 week mark by August 30, the average wage was up to $6.43. The program's 13-week retention rate is 35 percent.

To improve retention, the program has initiated an alumni group that meets once a month on Sunday afternoon. "We spend a few hours just talking, airing gripes," Mitchell said. "Those who are working help the others. Most do come." In the future, the program may make it mandatory for clients to participate in the alumni group in order for them to continue receiving any support services.

LESSONS LEARNED

Three partners made the Toledo program work: the PIC, the shelters, and the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services. Each played a critical role in Operation REACH, and the program could not have been implemented without the full cooperation of each partner. The PIC had laid the groundwork for Operation REACH prior to the availability of McKinney funds through conversations with the shelter directors and cooperative efforts with OBES. The shelters' recognition of the need for job training and OBES' commitment to homeless veterans had primed those agencies to participate actively.

Operation REACH is a very labor-intensive program. Virtually everyone interviewed for this case study pinpointed staff as the key element in running a successful program. The Toledo experience underscored the importance of committed staff who are dedicated solely to the homeless program, and able to work intensively with homeless individuals. Staff also need to work well with other agencies, particularly the shelters. PIC Director Beshalske explained the importance of interagency cooperation and referrals: "We stick to job-related issues, and let the shelters and mental health system do their work. You don't want to get into the business of providing case management for all their other needs." Coordinator Mitchell summed up her observations this way: "Most of our clients are running away from success -- we're just starting to notice that. Now, we try to hold their hands a little longer. Our clients don't want to be treated like children, so we treat them with dignity and respect. But while they want the job, they don't know how to keep it. If they're late to work, they won't go in at all! Or they ask us to call the boss and tell them they're late. They aren't used to doing things for themselves. They still want to lean on us -- we didn't know that at first. They get used to leaning on the system."

FUTURE DIRECTION

Despite uncertainty about continued McKinney funding for Operation REACH, the PIC is committed to continuing some level of job training services for homeless people. The PIC had promised the community agencies up front that, even if they lost the McKinney grant, they would leave in place an ongoing system of job training and employment for homeless people through JTPA resources.

The project coordinators recommended several program design changes: working with smaller groups, providing more intensive services, concentrating more on job development, offering cash incentives or gifts for reaching program benchmarks, and encouraging the shelters to screen more carefully, particularly for drug use. They are also moving toward offering more services at the PIC, rather than on-site at the shelters, because they have found that the clients want to get away from the shelters during the day.

This case study was written based on a review of program documents and interviews with: Jim Beshalske, PIC Director; Jim O'Shea, PIC Member and OBES Manager; Bob Sweeney, Director of Job Development Services; and Donna Mitchell and Geoff Humphrys, Project Coordinators.

BASE CAMP, INC. AND THE MAYOR'S EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING RESOURCES AGENCY

Nashville, Tennessee

BACKGROUND

Several characteristics make Nashville a likely setting for innovative strategies to serve the job training needs of homeless veterans. First, the number of homeless veterans has grown in recent years. Second, the local government has made a commitment to veterans and other homeless people, seeking diverse funds for services such as a housing counselor, a day shelter, and a variety of job training services. Third, there is a local veteran-run agency -- Base Camp -- with a track record of serving veterans' needs on a holistic basis. And fourth, the local citizenry has been responsive to Base Camp's diverse fundraising efforts, enabling public resources for homeless veterans to be supplemented with private contributions.

Base Camp, Inc., is a nonprofit agency which has been working with veterans since 1984. Using limited resources, Base Camp began by helping veterans obtain housing, jobs, medical services, and other assistance, but the agency was too small to meet the veteran population's growing needs. Consequently, the number of veterans who were living on the streets multiplied. The Mayor's Employment and Training Resources Agency (METRA), the department of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County which administers Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funds and staffs the Private Industry Council (PIC), has funded Base Camp's homeless veterans employment-related services since 1985. Base Camp has received additional support from the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs and from federal Veterans Administration programs.

Even before Base Camp began receiving JTPA funds, the agency had been referring veterans to METRA for training and job placement services, recognizing that employment services for homeless veterans was a critical element of eventual self-sufficiency. When the homeless population began to increase, there was a consensus among METRA staff and Base Camp staff that targeted services were needed, and METRA encouraged Base Camp to apply directly to METRA for funds.

Two coalitions aid Base Camp in its efforts to assist homeless veterans. VETWORK, an informal community network of agencies concerned with veterans' services, which Base Camp initiated, includes agencies such as the Tennessee

Department of veterans Affairs, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the local Employment Service, and METRA. Base Camp also participates in a local coalition for the homeless, made up of all the agencies concerned with homelessness, but VET-WORK has proven more relevant to Base Camp's work.

ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

Outreach

Initially, outreach workers for Base Camp's job training project sought homeless veterans in places where they were known to congregate: "downtown, under the bridge, in service agencies," according to Jerry Washington, Executive Director of Base camp. "We handed out leaflets and put up posters" and enlisted the help of community volunteers working with this population. Now, "the word is out on the street," he said. "Everybody knows where we are, but we keep marketing. Base Camp staff is one big propaganda and agitation team." Base Camp's outreach coordinator visits local businesses as well as social service agencies to promote the program. This community education process is as important as the outreach to homeless veterans, as it engenders both community cooperation and local financial support.

Assessment

Individuals interested in Base Camp employment services first complete a five-page Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project Data Sheet, assisted by a Base Camp staff member. Information collected ranges from military history to employment and educational background, and from current living situation to medical history (including substance abuse and psychiatric status). Based on the intake interview, the intake worker lists initial impressions of each applicant's specific problems along with referral and treatment recommendations.

Prior to accepting a homeless veteran into the program, all eight Base Camp staff members interview each applicant. Each staff member concentrates on one issue; e.g., the "paperwork person" works with the data sheet and makes sure the applicant has access to any financial benefits to which he may be entitled; the alcohol and drug counselor determines the person's degree of substance abuse and denial; there are also specialists in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, job readiness, psychological state, etc. "Then we bring it all together in a staff meeting and work as a committee of the whole," Washington said. The entire process takes two days, but "once we admit someone to the program, everybody's had a hand on them."

Because many of the homeless veterans who come to Base Camp haven't had a physical in years, each one is required to stay at the local Veterans Administration (VA) hospital overnight for a 48-hour medical screening and evaluation, which includes a battery of psychological, physical, and substance abuse tests. The VA hospital conducts the screening and evaluation at its expense. Any applicant who refuses the VA screening is denied entrance to the program.

Each applicant also takes a standard reading test used by the State of Tennessee, and the Educatior al and Industrial Testing Service's COPSystem Interest Inventory. In those few cases in which the intake worker recommends psychological testing beyond what is included in the VA screening, the Base Camp psychologist administers the necessary tests. Later, once participants begin to plan their job search, they also take one of a variety of vocational preference tests.

Eligibility Determination

Because Base Camp has both Veterans employment program funds (JTPA Title IVC, Section 441 funds administered through the State) and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project funds (from the national competitive grant program authorized by Section 738 of the McKinney Act), Base Camp can accept homeless veterans whether they are JTPA-eligible or not. JTPA IVC, for example, includes only those who are Vietnam era veterans, are recently separated from the service, or have a service-connected disability; this excludes those veterans who left the military between late 1975 and late 1985.

"We use the standard METRA eligibility forms for all the JTPA-eligible veterans," Washington explained, whether they are homeless or not. "All they need is a Statement of Separation from Service to prove they were in the military." Base Camp staff help obtain that form for homeless veterans who don't have it. For homeless veterans to be eligible for service with McKinney funds, "all we have to do is establish that they were a vet at some time and that they don't have a place to stay. We even accept some homeless veterans with jobs into the program, because they know they're going to lose the job unless they change something about the way they live." Base Camp is even able to accept veterans with "bad paper" (dishonorable discharges) through the money raised by the program's local fundraising events.

From METRA's point of view, "the biggest problem they run into with the homeless vets is that they have to show something that documents their veteran status," according to METRA Assistant Director Harry Allen. He also noted some problems documenting income for those homeless veterans served through JTPA IVC funds, particularly for those who haven't worked for several months. Generally, however, "the State Job Service Office can usually run their social security number to get income information. Usually Base Camp can satisfy the Job Service concerns." The Base Camp staff helps those applicants without a social security card to obtain one, as a part of its "one-stop shopping" approach.

Although Base Camp uses a lot of intake forms in comparison with other programs serving homeless people, the fact that a staff member is there to assist in completing the forms seems to work well. "There's no one particular datum that's the crux of the entire picture," Washington added, "but it helps us to know how much damage has been done by the time someone gets to us. We decided early on that we wouldn't cream anyone. We take them as they come through the door."

PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Base Camp's approach is a comprehensive one, including housing, support services, and training in work readiness, job search, and life skills. Virtually all skills training is done on a referral basis. Although employment is the program's goal, staff recognize that some homeless veterans have many needs which must be met before they are ready to work; likewise, most continue to need the program's support for some time after they are employed. "We try to keep them for 16 weeks," Washington said. "We want to work with them at least that long."

Training

A case manager assists each participant eligible for JTPA Title IVC services (veterans employment services, for which many of the homeless vets are eligible) to develop the required Employability Development Plan. This individualized plan outlines the services the participant needs to be able to compete in the local labor market, and includes milestones, dates, and potential service providers. Case managers also work with McKinney-funded homeless veterans to develop individual plans. "Every person is different," Washington cautioned. "Our primary purpose is to make a plan with the veteran himself on a week-to-week basis; long-range plans don't work for the people in our program. Then we move ahead from there."

Most training is conducted on a one-to-one basis. Work readiness training, for example, can run anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours, depending upon the individual's needs. It covers topics such as job search strategies, how to present oneself, and interviewing techniques. The life skills segment ranges from interpersonal skills such as conflict resolution and taking responsibility for one's actions to daily living skills such as cooking, washing clothes, budgeting, and taxes. "We try to attack everything as well as we can," Washington said, "from cooking to checkbooks to how to address a boss to how to deal with anger -- all kinds of recovery issues that help you keep a job." Mandatory group meetings every night and on Saturdays help reinforce the individual learning process. Participants are considered to have succeeded in training once they have achieved 70 percent mastery of the specified pre-employment, work maturity, and basic educational skills competencies.

Job Development

A typical participant's day could begin with a visit to the Base Camp office in the morning, job development work and interviewing for jobs that participants or Base Camp staff have identified, and reporting back to Base Camp that evening. While there is no formalization of this schedule, "case managers know whether they're doing it or not," Washington asserted. "Once they get through our door, they have a job -- perhaps to find a job, perhaps to get themselves ready for a job." Whether staff or participants are working on job development, there is no mention to employers

that these are homeless veterans. The fact that Base Camp's clients are veterans opens some doors, but their homelessness is considered irrelevant to the job hunt. Nashville Mayor Bill Boner's support for the program also helps increase the business community's willingness to hire through the program, and Base Camp board members initiate job development contacts as well.

Retention

Base camp has achieved a 67 percent retention rate through two policies. First, the program works hard to address any problem that may interfere with work prior to beginning the job search process, so that by the time clients begin interviewing they have eliminated most employment barriers. Second, Base Camp's job developers and other staff pay constant attention to participants who have begun work, and call their employers at least twice a week to identify and head off any problems. For any clients who quit or are fired, staff follow up with employers to determine why. Employers report that they appreciate the fact that the people they hire from the program continue to be monitored by Base Camp staff.

Support Services

Many of the homeless veterans with whom Base Camp has contact need intensive physical or mental health treatment or detoxification, problems which make them inappropriate or unready for employment-related services. Most of those are referred outside the program for treatment. Some who are unlikely to be able to work, for example, are referred to the VA's program for homeless veterans who are chronically ill or alcoholics. Base Camp is licensed as an outpatient alcohol and drug treatment center and can treat some clients while they are in the program. Of the 165 homeless veterans served in the 1988-1989 period, 152 had substance abuse problems.

During the intake process, Base Camp staff try to identify all the issues on which an individual may need help. They make a list of everything a client needs, call the relevant agencies for appointments, and then accompany the client to obtain any paperwork he may need (e.g., a Statement of Separation from Service, a social security card, a drivers license) and any benefits to which he may be entitled (e.g., supplemental security income for handicapped veterans, welfare for veterans with children). Base Camp staff have worked out an arrangement to handle food stamp eligibility themselves on a third-party basis: "The food stamp people know us and trust us now," Washington explained.

Although "a lot of walking goes on," Base Camp covers some transportation costs through funds in the McKinney grant and through locally-raised funds. Food stamps turned over to the program by participants eligible for them cover some of the food costs for those living in the LZ Green housing, supplemented by locally-raised funds. Base Camp purchases much of the food through the Second Harvest Food Bank, a local nonprofit agency which obtains food at low cost from grocery stores and bakeries and then sells it to programs such as Base Camp for a nominal cost. Also, once veterans are working, part of their re-

quired $3.00 daily "rent payment" goes toward food costs. Churches and other charitable organizations make their used clothing banks available to Base Camp clients; when necessary, the program purchases specialized items such as boots, tools, or heavy gloves needed on the job, and then negotiates a pay-back schedule with the client. Child care centers donate space for those few veterans who need it. In addition, METRA has a contract with Metro Social services for transportation, meal allowances, and child care, which covers some Base Camp needs.

Housing

Base Camp runs a transitional housing program called LZ Green. ("LZ" stands for Landing Zone in armed forces parlance; a "Green" means that it is safe to land.) Prior to acceptance into LZ Green, homeless veterans must sign a guest agreement, in which they pledge, among other things, to cooperate with staff and other guests, perform assigned work assignments, keep community areas clean, and forego bringing drugs, alcohol, or weapons onto the property. The penalty for failing to abide by the guest agreement is expulsion from the program. "They want someone to be real with them," Washington explained. "They expect us to set limits, to do what we say we're going to do."

The housing program includes three stages. In the first stage homeless veterans are placed in one of three houses used as shelters, with four to six people per house, or, if necessary, in a Salvation Army shelter for one or two nights until other arrangements can be made. (Initially the program rented slots from the Salvation Army shelter; currently, Base Camp receives that assistance at no cost.) While participants are in the shelters, they are fully subsidized until they find work, after which they pay $3.00 per day toward living expenses. At that time, they are also required to put half of their income into a savings account; they cannot withdraw those funds while they are in the program, but when they complete (or quit) the program they receive their savings in a lump sum.

During the spring and summer of 1989, Base Camp received Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance (EDWAA) funds which were used to subsidize the cost of utilities, food, and other living expenses for EDWAA-eligible homeless veterans living in the three houses, at a cost of $200-250 per month per eligible veteran.

Base Camp got access to two of its shelter houses through HUD residential foreclosures; the program rents them for $1.00 per year. The third is rented at low cost. Shelter residents must contribute "sweat equity" to the upkeep of the houses, assisting in necessary maintenance and renovations. Each of the houses is licensed as a halfway house, which exempts Base Camp from zoning regulations which would otherwise prohibit so many unrelated people from residing together.

In the second stage, once they are working, the veterans live in partially subsidized housing, for which Base Camp pays half the rent with money raised locally and the residents pay half from their earnings. In the third stage, participants move out on their own. Again, Base Camp helps them, using its contacts

with real estate people to identify affordable housing. "The stock of available housing for our people is pretty good," Washington said, "because the real estate people have learned to trust us."

While they are living in Base Camp housing, participants attend house governance meetings and elect officers. Business at house meetings ranges from discussing grievances to preparing grocery lists. "They supply us with food lists, and we give them responsibility lists," Washington said.

The vast majority of Base Camp participants are single men. However, the 14 families represented among the 1988-89 clientele were housed through various social service agencies and were not placed with the homeless men.

PIC ROLE

When it became clear that homelessness was a growing issue in the metropolitan area, the former METRA director formed a committee of providers to develop a general plan for serving the homeless. METRA planning division director Helen King, who represented the PIC on that committee, described the PIC's approach as one encouraging a "collaboration of services; our PIC creates a big picture of services and directs us to look at those who are most in need and to plug them into appropriate services to help them become employable. Once you have a system that can help those most in need, you can probably help everyone else as well."

To achieve its holistic service goals, the Davidson County Private Industry Council encouraged METRA staff to apply for any available funds, particularly those available through JTPA such as the Title IVC veterans training funds. Once METRA staff demonstrated that the JTPA IIA grant was already serving 100 to 200 veterans a year, with homeless veterans comprising perhaps five percent of those, PIC members approved an application for McKinney section 738 funds, the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project. "If they had any reservations, it was the impact on performance standards if we eventually enrolled Base Camp clients in IIA programs," METRA assistant director Harry Allen recalled. (In actuality, the Base Camp clients who were served through IIA had little impact on performance standards, probably in large part because of Base Camp's philosophy of addressing up front any problem that could limit employment success, and the agency's practice of long-term monitoring and support.)

Although Base Camp Executive Director Washington has met with the PIC, Base Camp's primary working relationship is with the METRA staff, whom he says are "wonderful." The new METRA director, a Vietnam veteran himself, has been quite supportive, as has Mayor Boner. The Mayor publicly endorses Base Camp's activities, which helps build credibility with the PIC as well as with the greater business community.

STAFFING

Base Camp has eight staff members, five of whom were hired through the homeless veterans funds. All but the staff attorney are veterans, and several have been homeless. Base Camp supplements its staff with some outside trainers from local agencies such as the Alcohol and Drug Council.

Base Camp has had little turnover thus far, but Executive Director Washington feels that they are understaffed for the work they get done and are constantly fighting burnout. "Since all our staff is also in recovery [along with the clients], we have to spend a good bit of time and money on ourselves," he said. "Everyone on the staff is in some form of recovery program in one way or another outside of Base Camp -- Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Adult Children of Alcoholics, or groups focusing on anger or co-dependency. We have to spend a lot of time focusing on ourselves and our own pain, and we have to give people time off." Staff often join in with LZ Green residents in maintaining the houses, as well as providing more standard services. "In general," Washington added, "it takes people who have been there. It takes a lot of dedication. None of my staff works regular work hours -- we work all the time."

FUNDING

METRA has provided Base Camp's veterans employment programs with several types of funding. From December 1, 1987 through January 31, 1989, METRA granted Base Camp $131,981 in JTPA Title IVC funds, matched by $157,997 in JTPA Title IIA funds. That was supplemented from September 1, 1988, through September 30, 1989 with $110,000 from the competitive Homeless Veterans Reintegration project funded by Section 738 of the McKinney Act. Base Camp received $153,000 in JTPA Title IVC funds for the period between February 1, 1989 through January 31, 1990, matched by $150,000 in JTPA Title IIA funds. The IVC amount will drop to $65,000 beginning February 1, 1990, with a $65,500 IIA match -- a decline caused by another agency elsewhere in the state applying for some of the IVC funds.

At one point, when the JTPA IVC funds ran out, Base Camp applied to the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs for $30,000 in interim funding. From March 1 through October 30, 1989, METRA awarded Base Camp $22,280 in EDWAA funds, which was used for transitional housing costs and residential support.

For the period from October 1, 1989 through September 30, 1990. METRA funding for Base Camp will be $261,000 -- half in McKinney Section 738 funds, half in JTPA IVC funds matched by JTPA IIA.

Base Camp uses its JTPA IVC funds primarily for counseling, work readiness, and job placement, while the IIA funds cover the costs of qualified veterans who are referred to skills training or GED preparation. The McKinney funds go toward housing expenses and some detoxification services. Generally, once veterans overcome employment barriers through the McKinney-funded services,

they are ready to move into the IVC-funded services which emphasize training and job placement.

In addition to government funds, Base Camp has what is known locally as the "spaghetti fund" -- money raised from spaghetti dinners, bake sales, "evenings of fun," and other fundraising events. Unrestricted by program regulations, the spaghetti fund helps buy clothes, tools, and other items clients need until they get on their feet, as well supplementing grant funds. The spaghetti fund is not insubstantial; Washington reported that Base Camp raised more than $20,000 locally last year.

Despite this variety of funding sources, Base Camp Director Washington would like to be able to obtain more money to serve more homeless veterans. He described the available funding as "never enough."

RESULTS

From September 1, 1988, to September 15, 1989, Base Camp had contact with 410 homeless veterans. Of those, 162 men and 3 women were admitted to the program; the others were either referred elsewhere or chose not to participate. Most of the participants had significant problems compounding their homelessness. For example, 152 of them had addiction problems. Many suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, but for only 13 was that their only problem in addition to homelessness. One hundred had experienced some type of catastrophic economic or social disaster within the past year which had led to their homeless state, while the other 65 were long-term homeless.

Base Camp served 149 of its 165 homeless clients through its JTPA Title IVC veterans training program. Only 16 of the homeless veterans (11 percent) were ineligible for those funds, and were enrolled through the Section 738 McKinney funds.

For the 165 homeless veterans served between September 1, 1988, and September 15, 1989 through Base Camp's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project, 1822 referrals were made; this averaged 11 referrals per person, and included 875 referrals to medical or social services, 441 referrals to a variety of job training and educational arrangements, and 506 job referrals. Base Camp does not provide any formal job training directly; all clients are referred out, primarily to mainstream JTPA programs and to various schools. Base Camp had two on-the-job training slots in its contract, but ended up using those slots to hire two clients as program staff, using locally raised funds to match the OJT funds.

Base Camp's homeless veteran clients have landed jobs ranging from retail sales to government, with the majority in Nashville's growing service sector. One program graduate is earning $60,000 as a marketing manager. Base Camp staff have begun making inroads in the personnel department of General Motors' new Saturn plant, and they have placed a few participants at the local Nissan plant. During the 1988-1989 time period, 128 of the 165 homeless veterans became employed, and 111 were still working after 13 weeks (a 78 percent placement

rate and a 67 percent retention rate). The average hourly wage was $7.13 -- high in part because the program encourages clients to seek jobs that pay at least $5 per hour so that they have a good chance of subsequent economic self-sufficiency

LESSONS LEARNED

METRA and the PIC have learned that it takes time before a comprehensive program for homeless veterans can be expected to show tangible results, but that those results do come. "In that kind of program," said METRA's Allen, "it's hard to see the results immediately. You can tell when they get some of them placed, but with the ones they're working with [on a long-term basis], how much real immediate benefit is there besides getting them off the streets? Overall, Base Camp's program is working well. They try to instill discipline and give the vets good work habits again."

Aller and Base Camp's Washington agreed that much of the project's success is due to its staff. The fact that they are veterans themselves and that some have experienced homelessness helps them understand their clients without coddling them. Base Camp's secret lies also in its philosophy that solving homeless veterans' housing and employment problems should be done within the context of the barriers that caused those problems, thus the emphasis on utilizing the full range of services and benefits that "the system" has to offer. Participation in coalitions such as VETWORK makes it easier for Base Camp staff to negotiate with a variety of agencies on behalf of the homeless veterans, and to accomplish program goals through community resources rather than through total reliance on politicians and bureaucrats.

Base Camp has made progress with a challenging client group because "we have a different slant than a social service agency -- we identify with those who have the problem," according to Washington. "What's more important to us than lack of housing are the social, psychological, and economic dynamics that keep people out of a house. We see homelessness as a consequence of various syndromes."

Also critical to Base Camp's effectiveness with homeless veterans is the fact that the agency has its own shelters and transitional housing facilities. Nonetheless, Washington would like access to more houses, so that Base Camp would be able to extend its LZ Green model to more homeless veterans. A short-term inpatient detoxification unit run by Base Camp would be a useful complement to the current out-patient treatment capability; Base Camp runs into resistance from many of the homeless veterans referred to residential detoxification programs, in part because the veterans would prefer and trust a facility run by other veterans.

Finally, despite the intensive marketing and public relations campaign waged tirelessly by the Base Camp board members and staff, Director Washington saw a need for additional marketing to the community, designed to overcome negative stereotypes and create a more supportive atmosphere for homeless veterans seeking to enter the work force.

This case study was written based or a review of program documents and interviews with Harry Allen, Assistant Director, Mayor's Employment and Training Resource Agency (METRA); Helen King, Supervisor of the METRA Planning Division; and Jerry Washington, Executive Director of Base Camp, Inc.

TARGET HOMELESS EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

Seattle-King County, Washington

BACKGROUND

The Seattle-King County Private Industry Council runs four different job training programs for homeless people. This diversity stems from a six-year commitment to the issue of homelessness on the part of local government and various community interests.

Late in 1983, leaders from the business community and local human services agencies raised the issue of homelessness with Mayor Royer. Service providers were seeing a dramatic increase in their homeless client populations; business people were concerned about the effect on their businesses of homeless transient males who were panhandling aggressively in the downtown business district, discouraging potential customers. In response to these two powerful voices -- the human service providers and the business community – Mayor Royer established the Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness. The Private Industry Council was represented on the executive committee of the Task Force.

Rather than limiting community response to the shelter and transitional housing system, the Mayor's Task Force recommended developing a job training element as well. The PIC helped rally broad-based support for the job training component by conducting an extensive study to determine the employability of the area's homeless population, and the cost of providing them with work-related services. This led to the formation of the Employment Strategies for the Homeless Committee. That committee's goal was "to become the business arm of the Mayor's Task Force," according to one committee member, "by utilizing private sector involvement in developing training programs and placement strategies."

The PIC began operating job training programs for the homeless within this context of strong community support. It currently runs four programs for homeless people: the TARGET Homeless Employment Project and two Street Youth Projects (operated with JTPA and other funds), and the Homeless Initiatives Pilot Project (operated with McKinney funds). This case study focuses on the TARGET program, which the PIC has operated since 1986.

ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

Outreach

The TARGET Homeless Employment Project serves homeless individuals, primarily single males. The PIC contracts program operations to TARGET (The Allied Resource Group for Employment and Training), a division of the Washington State Employment Security Department (ES) located at the Belltown Satellite Job Service Center. When the project began three years ago, TARGET staff went into local shelters to do outreach and recruitment, but the program is now so well-known in the homeless community that "it has turned into a drop-in center for single men," says Michael Dickerson, Senior Planner for the PIC. The shelter and emergency housing system continues to be very supportive of the TARGET project, and is responsible for referring 92 percent of TARGET clients. By acknowledging the existence of a well-developed network of services for the homeless and letting that system do most of the program's outreach, TARGET has avoided duplication of services and strengthened its relationships with that network.

Shelter staffs did not always feel so positive toward JTPA. At first, Dickerson remembers, "they felt that we made homeless people jump through degrading hoops, like asking for a recent pay stub." In response, the PIC promised the shelters it would not deny services to anyone, and the variety of programs it runs helps make that possible.

The TARGET staff conducts a weekly orientation for anyone who is interested, whether they have enrolled in JTPA or not. "We tell them how the program works, and try to get them to participate in the full program," explained Sue Kay, Director of the TARGET Program Operations Center. "In the meantime, they're welcome to use our facility's telephone message service, job listings, phone bank, etc. Orientation is to sell them on the program. We're different from other programs because we teach them to sell themselves, and help them determine long-term goals, rather than just settle for day labor."

Eligibility Determination

Prospective participants begin their JTPA paperwork process at the weekly orientation. "While anyone can sit through the TARGET program, they need to have JTPA eligibility in order to get the support services most of them need," Kay said. The PIC's application form has a check-off box for homeless status, and the PIC considers any homeless person to be JTPA-eligible. However, for homeless people who are working, even on a part-time or day labor basis, staff try to verify those income sources by phone. They verify other income sources as best they can, tracing any social services the client may be receiving. The TARGET program uses a modified JTPA enrollment form; rather than requesting the applicant's current address, the form requires only the most recent place of residence. For applicants who are living in the street, staff list the TARGET address as their residence. "We

build a case history through the eligibility determination process," PIC Planner Dickerson said.

Case managers are available during the application process to assist people who seem frustrated with the form. Case managers also note whether applicants have social security numbers; for those who do not, staff immediately begin the six-week process of obtaining one so the lack of a social security number will not stand in the way of a job.

There is considerable co-enrollment in PIC-operated programs; for example, staff refer many of the people who are originally enrolled in the McKinney-funded program to TARGET as well, using McKinney funds to supplement the support services available through JTPA.

Assessment

Although the PIC uses a formal skills assessment test (the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System, or CASAS), staff make sure that clients understand that their test results cannot disqualify them from program eligibility. "CASAS provides a quick snapshot of basic educational levels," Dickerson explained. "It helps us identify who needs basic education at the same time as job training. We tell them that they need a certain level of education in order to get a decent wage." Case managers supplement the CASAS results by observation, assessing things such as whether clients could read the application and how well they completed it.

The use of formal testing has revealed a wide range of education levels among TARGET clients, with approximately one-fifth being high school dropouts, around half having a high school diploma or GED, and nearly one-third having some education beyond high school.

Identifying clients who have alcohol, drug, or mental health problems is a bigger challenge than skills assessment, with mental health difficulties and alcohol abuse more prevalent than drug use among the single males who make up the TARGET population. If health, alcohol or drug problems are identified once a client is in training, the staff encourage that client to enter some type of treatment. Those who go into in-patient services for more than 90 days are terminated and re-enrolled later; for outpatients, the case manager stays in weekly contact with the substance abuse counselor and adjusts the training hours if necessary to keep the client in the TARGET program during treatment.

PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The main element of the TARGET program is a five-day job search training workshop, followed by a telemarketing job placement process. The need for immediate employment precludes most of TARGET clients from participating in longer-term training.

The one-week workshop is held every two weeks, beginning at 9 a.m. and running "until around three, or until we're all exhausted," Kay said. "We explain our philosophy – two heads are better than one and fifteen heads are better than two." The workshop covers basic job search techniques such as skills analysis,

interviewing, resume writing, telemarketing, and building self-esteem. The TARGET workshop for homeless people differs from standard job search training in that it also covers "all the survival information they need" -- hygiene, budgeting, job retention.

Kay described the workshop as "reality therapy, but we keep focused on employment. If they have to deal with something else, they do it, and then come back to another workshop. We see people reach the realization that they need to deal with their drug and alcohol addiction, they go into treatment and then come back. We do a lot of referrals -- mental health, housing, etc. Otherwise you become too embroiled in issues other than employment. What we try to instill is that these are your life decisions. If you're ready for employment, that's what we're here for. There's something about the group dynamics that seems to work." Another effective element is bringing back successful participants for testimonials.

Workshop participants return the next week, during which staff focus on trying to get everyone out to at least one interview. Participants spend time on the phone, review ES and PIC job orders (by themselves, with a counselor, or with each other), and work on resumes. "We work intensively with them that week, and then one of us picks up on the ones who don't seem to be hooking up," Kay said.

Job Development

Each member of the TARGET staff is considered a job developer as well as a counselor and workshop facilitator, but TARGET emphasizes self-directed job development. TARGET's location at the Job Service center makes it easy for clients to use the computerized job listings. The PIC's job developers also identify positions for TARGET clients. Job developers do not identify TARGET clients as homeless when meeting with employers, and only a very few of the employers who have hired TARGET clients are aware that they have hired homeless people.

Once TARGET participants begin working, staff keep in contact with them by phone. "We do follow-up with employers when we've set up the interview," Kay added, but many times clients who have arranged things themselves prefer that staff not talk with their employers. Most clients continue coming to the TARGET center at least until they get their first check, because they need the bus tickets and bag lunches the program provides.

Placement

TARGET clients have been placed in various occupations. Some attend classroom training to learn business computer skills or financial office techniques and land on-the-job training (OJT) placements paying around $8.00 per hour, but "OJT is too time-consuming for us to do it much," Kay added. "We tell them to use it as a tool [in their self-directed job search], to get in the door, especially if they haven't got recent work experience."

The PIC has a policy prohibiting the use of OJT for fast food positions, but TARGET uses OJT for service sector placements such as entry-level apartment managers, janitors, and restaurant managers. Direct placements include "everything -- bus drivers, working at Boeing, computer programming at $20 an hour, and service sector jobs." The PIC's wage-at-placement goal for adult homeless clients is $5.50 per hour; TARGET's wage at placement has averaged $5.99 over the life of the project.

Housing

The PIC has found that some people are able to participate in job training services effectively while living in shelters and others need a more stable housing situation immediately. Although the Seattle-King County shelter and transitional housing system is fairly well developed, "we deal directly with housing needs when we have to," according to Senior Planner Dickerson. TARGET staff encourage shelters to extend the length of stay beyond the usual five to 10 days for program participants. The PIC has developed linkages with many transitional housing programs, and 12 beds in a rehabilitated single-room-occupancy hotel are designated for TARGET clients. Also, the housing authorities of both Seattle and King County give homeless people priority for Section 8 housing assistance certificates, and TARGET sometimes helps clients out with $100 toward the move-in expenses of permanent housing.

Other Support Services

Because of its various funding sources, the TARGET program has considerable flexibility in the range of support services it can offer. As a back-up, those clients who need more extensive services than TARGET can provide can be jointly enrolled in the PIC's McKinney-funded program. The small percentage of McKinney funds in the TARGET program covers rental assistance payments. King County has contributed $20,000 toward child care. TARGET's case managers are linked up directly with the city and county human service departments. The PIC has also developed an extensive network for support service referrals; for example, some private hair salons have agreed to give clients free haircuts. "We try to use everyone else's money and services first," Dickerson explained.

TARGET staff are also skilled at soliciting donations. They have gotten donations of coffee and cups for the orientations, lunches for the participants, and used clothing from Weyerhauser employees through a company-sponsored "put your clothing to work" program.

PIC ROLE

PIC members support the policy of considering any homeless person to be JTPA-eligible by virtue of that person's homeless status. Senior Planner Dickerson explained, "We've written to the [U.S.] Department of Labor for clarification of its policy. The PIC has no concerns about audit problems. They are

committed to serving the hardest to serve." As early as 1987, the PIC adopted a strategy for providing service for harder-to-serve populations that specified homelessness as a barrier to employment that qualified any of its general target groups (e.g., women, minorities, youth, etc.) as harder-to-serve. The PIC also included use of JTPA's Ten Percent window of eligibility for homeless individuals in its biennial plan submitted to the State.

PIC members and staff agree on the philosophical underpinnings of the programs for homeless people: They believe there are ways to build programs around every funding source's restrictions, and they work to expand eligibility to include all who need services while combining funding sources creatively to meet clients' needs.

The PIC is willing to fight what it considers to be contradictory regulations. For example, the PIC convinced the City of Seattle to change its Community Development Block Grant contracting process to allow the PIC more flexibility in defining eligibility and placements by meeting with city officials and pointing out that both programs have similar goals and need to coordinate to achieve them.

In late 1988, the PIC established a nine-member, interagency Employment Strategies for the Homeless Steering Committee, chaired by a PIC member, which serves as the advisory committee for the TARGET project.

STAFF

In its three years of operation, the staff of the TARGET Homeless Employment Program has grown from two to five. "We've had some turnover when good people move on," Kay said. "There's been some burnout, but a lot of feeling that it's really rewarding. It's the most exciting place to work – a real shot in the arm" when clients get themselves moving again.

Kay has hired most staff from within the job training and Employment Service systems. "Most of them have worked with the ES and dealt with homelessness to some degree," she explained. "I want people who are good at workshops and placement, and who understand the clients."

A recent addition to the staff is a counselor from a local vocational/technical institute, paid with McKinney funds from the Department of Education, who helps participants improve basic skills, prepare job applications and resumes, and begin studying for their GED. A veterans coordinator, paid by the City of Seattle and McKinney funds from the Veterans Administration, works with the program, and all TARGET staff coordinate with the job service staff whose space they share.

The staff uses a "modified case management approach," according to Kay. "We keep a folder on each one so we get a sense of history, and we share information with the other agencies on what's happening with whom."

FUNDING

TARGET uses a mix of funding sources, which includes $112,679 in JTPA Six Percent incentive funds, $43,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds, $79,742 from the McKinney program, and the State makes an in-kind contribution of $16,000 which provides the program with free space at the Belltown Satellite Job Service Center and gives participants access to computerized job listings, xeroxing, and supplies. Originally established as a two-year demonstration program, the TARGET Homeless Employment Project has been using JTPA Six Percent Incentive funds. Discussions are currently underway regarding options for the use of 78 Percent funds in the homeless strategy.

RESULTS

During Program Year 1988 (July 1, 1988 to June 30, 1989), the TARGET Homeless Employment Program served 225 people "officially" (e.g., 225 people who were enrolled in JTPA and receiving full program services); Kay estimates that another 150-200 people used the TARGET facility for self-help and self-directed job search. Of the 225, 80 percent entered employment, with an average wage at placement of $6.20 per hour. A consultant who recently tracked participants at 13 weeks found that 50 percent of those she could locate were still working; others are back in school or in drug, alcohol, or mental/emotional treatment programs. "That's more than a 50 percent success rate," Kay suggests.

The PIC has experienced relatively few retention problems with any of its homeless job training programs. Dickerson attributes the fact that half the homeless clients are still employed 90 days after placement to a combination of factors: the local labor shortage makes employers willing to work more intensively to keep new employees, wages are on the rise which encourages workers to stay in their jobs, and staff conduct regular follow-up with both employers and clients.

LESSONS LEARNED

PIC and project staff suggested several ways in which the TARGET Homeless Employment Project could have been improved. In the future, for populations with multiple barriers such as homeless people, the PIC would prefer to use a contracting method that would facilitate the kinds of intensive services homeless people require. TARGET currently has a performance contract that stresses placement more than competency attainment or longer-term outcomes. In retrospect, PIC Planner Dickerson would have included the private sector earlier, enlisting businesses to help pay for industry-specific training and to pioneer pooled benefit packages for health care and child care; these are areas in which the PIC is now moving. The paperwork required by JTPA has proven burdensome to the contractors, particularly since they are already working under high-stress conditions because of the difficulty of the population they serve. And finally, the need to constantly be thinking of ways to get goods and services donated to the program has taken its toll in staff energy.

One of the strong points of the Seattle-King County PIC is its long-term involvement in task forces and coalitions dealing with homelessness. This has paid off in the TARGET program, as well as in its other job training programs for homeless people. Through coalition participation, PIC staff were better able to link up with the shelters and emergency services systems -- systems which have been essential in allowing the PIC to concentrate on employment yet access the resources necessary to assist homeless clients deal with other issues as well.

Another element that contributes to the TARGET project's success is the mixture of various federal, state, and local funding. This adds more flexibility as well as more dollars to the effort. Diversity in funding leads to stabilization of the entire human service system.

This case study was written based on a review of program documents and interviews with: Michael Dickerson, Senior Planner for the PIC; and Sue Kay, TARGET Program Operations Center Director.