

social innovation fund

Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC • Center for Economic Opportunity

Learning Network Kick-Off

May 5-6, 2011

The Mayor's Fund, the Center for Economic Opportunity and MDRC would like to thank all partners and supporters. To date these include the Corporation for National and Community Service, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Open Society Foundations, The Rockefeller Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Catholic Charities of San Antonio, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Ford Foundation, Fund for Our Economic Future, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Robin Hood Foundation, Tiger Foundation, Tulsa Community Foundation, United Way of Greater Kansas City, and United Way of San Antonio & Bexar County.

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Mission of the Social Innovation Fund Learning Network

The Mayor's Fund **SIF Learning Network** provides opportunities for providers, funders, and other partners to collaborate on program design, offers a venue for organizations and researchers to share best practices, and engages a range of stakeholders, including policymakers and other national experts.

The goals of the Learning Network are:

- To convene program providers to share challenges and experiences, input that will continue to re-shape program design to make programs more effective and easier to replicate;
- To share best practices with the broader social service community, so that promising approaches, successful techniques, and evidence can be accessible and available to inform ongoing anti-poverty programming;
- To engage stakeholders, including national experts and policy makers, to best prepare for broader program replication and/or sustainability; and
- To connect local government partners committed to innovation, encouraging localities to invest in experimentation and evidence-building to identify successful initiatives.

The **Learning Network** will continue to develop with input from key partners, including providers, funders and city partners. The Mayor's Fund, CEO and MDRC will also engage with the Knowledge Network, the collaboration of SIF intermediaries supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

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Social Innovation Fund Overview

A Unique Opportunity

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, in collaboration with the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), MDRC, and eight cities, was awarded the federal Social Innovation Fund (SIF). The SIF provides a unique opportunity for cities to work together to expand and test innovative anti-poverty programs piloted by CEO. Through this \$90 million project, the eight partner cities plan to further refine and test program models, building a multi-site body of evidence in support of promising, cost-effective interventions.

- **Social Innovation Fund (SIF).** Established by the 2009 Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the Social Innovation Fund is a new public-private investment vehicle designed to identify effective solutions to critical social challenges, and support the replication and expansion of these programs by non-profit organizations. Managed by the Corporation for National and Community Service, approximately \$50 million was awarded to 11 intermediary organizations nationwide in 2010, to be matched 1:3 by private funds.
- **National Funders.** Leading support for this new initiative is provided by Bloomberg Philanthropies and Open Society Foundations. The SIF Learning Network is supported in part by The Rockefeller Foundation.

Innovative Pilots

This SIF award not only recognizes the strength of CEO's pilots, but also demonstrates that government can successfully innovate and develop new program models. The SIF has awarded the partner cities a grant of \$5.7 million for year one.

- **Jobs-Plus.** The place-based Jobs-Plus program addresses entrenched poverty amongst public housing residents by saturating developments with job and career support, community building, and rent incentives. In previous experimental pilots, residents' earnings continued to rise for three years after the program ended, greatly outpacing the income of a comparison group.
- **Family Rewards.** Built on the success of programs in more than 20 countries worldwide, Family Rewards is a conditional cash transfer program that provides rewards to families for achieving milestones that lead to better health, education, and employment outcomes, and improve human capital. Building on preliminary results from a New York demonstration, the SIF-supported program will focus on the most promising incentives.
- **SaveUSA.** First piloted by the City's Office of Financial Empowerment as \$aveNYC, this initiative offers a matched savings account to low-income tax filers. Although nearly half of \$aveNYC participants reported no history of savings, 80% saved for at least one year to receive the match and 75% continue to save today.
- **Young Adult Program.** An education-conditioned internship program designed to improve the long-term economic opportunities of young adults who are out of school, out of work, and who lack a high school diploma or GED. Multiple CEO programs have successfully reengaged young adults by offering short-term paid internships as a hook for returning to school or work.
- **WorkAdvance.** CEO has built upon national best practices to create new workforce programs that employ sector-focused and skills-building strategies. The result has been programs that work better than any other government program in New York State. The cities will combine the best practices from these programs to create a single, cost-effective, and easy to replicate workforce intervention.

Building a National Body of Evidence

By testing and evaluating programs in multiple locations, and using randomized controlled trials where appropriate, the partners can better determine which initiatives will succeed nationwide.

- **Evaluation of Programs.** MDRC, a non-profit education and social research organization, will advise in the design of these second-generation pilots and act as the lead evaluator for all programs.
- **Partner Cities.** Partners include Cleveland, OH; Kansas City, MO; Memphis, TN; Newark, NJ; New York City; San Antonio, TX; Tulsa, OK; and Youngstown, OH.



About the Social Innovation Fund Team

The New York City **Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO)** represents a fundamentally different approach to combating poverty. Created by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2006 with a mission to reduce the number of New Yorkers living in poverty, the Center works collaboratively with leading experts, city agencies and more than one hundred non-profits to design, implement, and advocate for a range of new anti-poverty programs, policy proposals, and research projects that represent nationwide best practices and cutting-edge ideas. The Center is committed to monitoring and evaluating all of its projects to determine which are successful. CEO works with nationally-recognized, independent evaluation firms, as well as a small in-house evaluation team, to measure program impacts and to provide objective evidence to inform decisions of whether to continue, replicate, or eliminate programs. CEO initiatives represent new ideas, best practices, and expansions of successful program models. Since 2006, more than 40 initiatives have been launched in partnership with City agencies. One of CEO's partners is the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs' **Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE)**. It is the first local government initiative in the nation with a mission to educate, empower, and protect New Yorkers with low incomes so they can build assets and make the most of their financial resources.

The programs replicated through the Social Innovation Fund will build on innovative strategies piloted by CEO and also tested in other initiatives around the country. CEO strategies include:

- **Financial Empowerment & Asset Development:** Helping low-income individuals maximize resources
- **Workforce Development:** Supporting training, job retention, & career advancement
- **Youth Education & Training:** Re-engaging adolescents who are not at work or in school
- **Poverty Research:** Research to inform changes to the Federal poverty measure
- **Conditional Cash Transfers:** Incentive-based strategies which reward individuals that meet targets

The **Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City (MF)** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization designed to aid City programs, and a grantee of the Social Innovation Fund. As the intermediary for this SIF collaboration, the Mayor's Fund will manage provider sub-grants and work with stakeholders to raise the required matching funds over five years. Established in 1994, the Mayor's Fund serves as an important vehicle for foundations, corporations and individuals to contribute to public programs and enhance the City's ability to serve its residents. The Mayor's Fund is committed to making a meaningful difference in the lives of New Yorkers with the help of private sector partners. The Mayor's Fund invests private donations in programs to support innovation and emerging needs, while evaluating their effectiveness and feasibility of future public funding. The Mayor's Fund devotes 100% of donations to programs, and does not retain an administrative fee.

In addition to the Social Innovation Fund, current projects supported by the Mayor's Fund include the Family Justice Center Initiative, serving adult victims of domestic violence and their children; MillionTreesNYC, the City's ambitious plan to plant and care for one million new trees throughout the five boroughs by 2017; and the Summer Youth Employment Program, providing paid employment and career preparation for youth.

MDRC is a nonprofit education and social policy research organization that develops and evaluates bold new ideas aimed at improving the well-being of low-income individuals and families. MDRC will assist SIF subgrantees in partner cities with implementation and will lead program evaluations. Since 1974, MDRC has earned a reputation as a trusted and

authoritative source of information about what works and what doesn't work in education and social policy. We are known for the high quality, integrity, and rigor of our research and for our commitment to building evidence and improving practice in partnership with school districts; community colleges; federal, state, and local governments; foundations; and community-based organizations. Working in fields where emotion and ideology often dominate public debates, MDRC is a source of objective and unbiased evidence about cost-effective solutions that can be replicated and expanded to scale.

MDRC is funded by government agencies and some seventy private, family, and corporate foundations. With a staff of more than 200 in New York City and in Oakland, California, MDRC is engaged in close to 80 projects in five policy areas:

- **Family Well-Being and Children's Development**
- **K-12 Education**
- **Young Adults and Postsecondary Education**
- **Low-Wage Workers and Communities**
- **Health and Barriers to Employment**

The **Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)** is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. The Social Innovation Fund (SIF), an initiative of CNCS enacted under the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, is a new way of doing business for the federal government that stands to yield greater impact on urgent national challenges. The SIF targets millions in public-private funds to expand effective community solutions to social challenges in the areas of economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development and school support. In 2010, CNCS awarded Social Innovation Fund grants to 11 organizations with strong track records of successfully identifying and growing high-performing nonprofits, including CEO and the Mayor's Fund.

Eighteen provider organizations have been selected by the Mayor's Fund and CEO to deliver the five Social Innovation Fund programs in one of eight cities. These providers represent the best in their communities, and will be the backbone of the SIF program.

The Mayor's Fund/CEO SIF program depends on the engagement of our **eight partner cities**, each of which is committed to embracing innovation and prioritizes evidence-based policies and programs. Partner cities have dedicated in-kind staff support to ensure that SIF initiatives are successful and raise the required funding match, and plan to use program evaluations to inform future policymaking and funding decisions. Partner cities include Cleveland, OH; Kansas City, MO; Memphis, TN; Newark, NJ; New York City; San Antonio, TX; Tulsa, OK; and Youngstown, OH.

The Mayor's Fund, CEO and MDRC work closely with a number of foundations and other organizations that have lent their expertise and **financial support** to the Social Innovation Fund initiative. Partners and supporters include Bloomberg Philanthropies, Open Society Foundations, The Rockefeller Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Catholic Charities of San Antonio, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Ford Foundation, Fund for Our Economic Future, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Robin Hood Foundation, Tiger Foundation, Tulsa Community Foundation, the United Way of Greater Kansas City, and the United Way of San Antonio & Bexar County.

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TO ADVANCE
NEW YORK CITY



SIF Program Models

Family Rewards

Jobs-Plus

SaveUSA

WorkAdvance

Young Adult Program



Family Rewards

Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Program

Family Rewards aims to break the cycle of poverty by providing temporary cash payments to poor families to boost their income in the short term, while building their capacity to avoid longer-term and second-generation poverty. The payments are referred to as conditional cash transfers because they are contingent upon family members making certain efforts to build human capital, particularly in the areas of education and health.

As one of the evidence-based programs being replicated through the national Social Innovation Fund (SIF), *Family Rewards* presents a unique opportunity for funders to join with a collaborative consisting of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), and MDRC. This collaborative, which has received a SIF grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, looks forward to working with other national and local partners to identify the required match for federal SIF funding, adapt the *Family Rewards* model to local conditions, and join in the “learning community” that is being developed as part of the larger national SIF effort.

Implementation Sites & Program Providers

New York City

- Seedco, with BronxWorks and Children’s Aid Society

Memphis, TN

- Seedco, with Porter Leath and Urban Strategies Memphis HOPE

BACKGROUND

The original *Family Rewards* program was launched in New York City in September 2007 as a special research demonstration project inspired by evidence from a pioneering CCT program in Mexico and a growing number of such programs around the world. Initial findings show that participating families earned \$3,000 on average during each of the first two program years, and that the program produced a number of positive impacts across a range of education, health, and workforce measures, and some success in reducing current poverty and material hardship. This suggests that the model, with some strengthening, has the potential to be an important poverty-fighting tool. In the SIF initiative, participating cities will test a common program model that builds on the initial New York City experience, while accommodating local variation in the characteristics of the low-income population, the local social service environment, and the local income-support and benefit systems.

FAMILY REWARDS REPLICATION DESIGN

The *Family Rewards* replication will be similar to the original pilot in that it will offer cash incentives to families for activities and outcomes in three key domains:

- **Children’s education**, with incentives tied to superior attendance in school, grades, and sustained high achievement or improved performance on standardized tests;
- **Family preventive health care**, with incentives for regular medical and dental checkups for each family member; and

- **Parental employment and education**, with incentives for parents to sustain full-time work and pass the GED test.

In contrast to the original model, the replication will have be simpler and offer fewer incentives, making it easier for families to understand. It will also offer more timely payments and provide families with more proactive staff support and guidance. For example, to enhance the effects of the financial incentives, a personal Family Action Plan (FAP) will be developed for each family to help guide their efforts to achieve the types of outcomes that the program rewards. Each family’s progress toward these goals will then be reviewed, and family members will be referred to other service agencies that can offer assistance as needed. Families struggling to achieve the outcomes that earn reward payments will get help from staff to try to improve their achievement. A small “resource fund” will also be made available to families to help them invest in the services and materials that might help them achieve those goals.

The *Family Rewards* program requires operating agencies to: both implement technical systems for verifying and paying claims in a timely and accurate way, and provide direct customer service, including recruitment, orientation, and ongoing support.

TARGET POPULATION AND EVALUATION PLANS

The new *Family Rewards* pilots will enroll low-income families who are TANF recipients or recipients of food stamps (now the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP). The incentive payments will supplement and not replace (or affect) TANF, SNAP, other benefit payments, or the Earned Income Tax Credit. Incentive payments will continue for three years, even if the parent has left public assistance during that time.

Participating cities’ programs will be evaluated using a random assignment research design, which is widely recognized as the most reliable way to determine program impact. In each city, twice the number of actual enrollees will be recruited for the study, with half assigned at random to the *Family Rewards* program and half assigned to a control group that does not enroll in this special program. All families who enroll in *Family Rewards* will remain eligible for three years, unless they move out of the city.

MDRC will use program data to understand patterns of participation and reward receipt. MDRC will also collect administrative records (such as Unemployment Insurance wage records and TANF, SNAP, and Department of Education data) and survey data to determine the program’s effects on a wide variety of outcomes, including income, poverty rates, and material hardship; children’s educational achievement; families’ health care behaviors and health outcomes; and parents’ employment, earnings, training, and occupational skills development. The analysis will cover a five-year period, providing evidence on the program’s implementation and effects while the incentives are available to families (years 1 through 3), as well as any effects after the offer of the incentives ends (years 4 and 5).



Jobs-Plus

Transforming Public Housing Developments into High-Employment Communities

Jobs-Plus provides a platform to help residents of public housing developments enhance their skills and work histories, so that these residents can increase their short- and long-term earnings. A distinctive feature of the *Jobs-Plus* model is its goal to operate at “saturation” levels meaning that services and work incentives are targeted to all working-age residents in the development, rather than focusing on a subset of eligible individuals.

As one of the evidence-based programs being replicated through the national Social Innovation Fund (SIF), *Jobs-Plus* presents a unique opportunity for funders to join with a collaborative consisting of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), and MDRC. This collaborative, which has received a SIF grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, looks forward to working with other national and local partners to identify the required match for federal SIF funding, adapt the *Jobs-Plus* model to local conditions, and join in the “learning community” that is being developed as part of the larger national SIF effort.

Implementation Sites & Program Providers

New York City

- **BronxWorks**

San Antonio, TX

- **San Antonio Housing Authority**

THE JOBS-PLUS PROGRAM MODEL

Jobs-Plus offerings are tailored to residents’ individual needs, and draw from a menu of on-site and referral services. Rigorous research shows that, when all three components of the model described below are implemented properly, *Jobs-Plus* provides a large and sustained boost to residents’ earnings. These positive earnings effects were observed for housing developments in very different cities and for diverse racial and ethnic groups. Set forth below is a more detailed description of the SIF *Jobs-Plus* elements, which providers in each participating city are urged to adapt to local conditions:

- **Employment-related services and activities to help residents secure and retain employment.** These services include activities such as help with job searches (facilitated by the program’s job development efforts), coaching to help residents adjust to the world of work, vocational training (usually short-term), General Educational Development (GED) and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, subsidized supported work positions to help especially hard-to-employ residents make a transition to the world of work, and a range of support services such as child care arrangements. Some services are conveniently provided on site in a job center located within the housing development, while others are provided in the community.
- **Financial incentives to increase residents’ awareness of public housing rent rules that help “make work pay.”** When public housing residents increase their earnings, they can be subject to rent increases because the rent is calculated as a percentage of income. However, *Jobs-Plus* sites will offer working residents rent-based incentives, such as a flat rent (one that does not rise as the household’s income rises), and help them take full advantage of current HUD rules that, for some residents and for a limited time, allow increased earnings to be disregarded in calculating rent levels.

- **Community support for work.** In order to promote the “saturation” goal of *Jobs-Plus*, the program staff will recruit, train, and supervise a small cadre of residents to encourage their neighbors to use *Jobs-Plus* services and incentives and, more generally, to convey neighbor-to-neighbor, through resident social networks information about work and other opportunities that can improve their employment situations. The fundamental purpose is to send the message in public housing that “work pays,” that “employment goals are attainable,” and that assistance in attaining them is readily available, thereby creating a social environment in which an emphasis on work is pervasive.

COLLABORATION AS CRUCIAL TO EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS

A nonprofit organization or state or local government can provide the *Jobs-Plus* program in each city. Depending on the city, the providers may work with a single public housing development site or with a “cluster” of different development sites.

Whichever approach is adopted, the comprehensive nature of the *Jobs-Plus* model requires that the provider work in cooperation with key city agencies, especially the local housing authority. At minimum, *Jobs-Plus* staff must collaborate with the housing authority to create a process for offering rent incentives to participants and to share certain information for outreach and evaluation purposes. In addition to the housing authority, other important local partners would typically include welfare and workforce development agencies, educational institutions, transportation providers, and social service agencies.

EVALUATION

While the *Jobs-Plus* model has been proven to be effective through a rigorous, seven-year evaluation, the SIF implementation research will examine questions related to *Jobs-Plus* replication, including how providers adapt the model in new cities and in economic, service, and policy environments that differ from those in the original demonstration. Using management and information systems developed by the *Jobs-Plus* providers, the MDRC evaluators will examine residents’ participation in services, use of rent incentives, and achievement of employment-related outcomes. The evaluators will also estimate the cost of operating the new *Jobs-Plus* Programs.

If feasible, the evaluators will also conduct a limited impact analysis to confirm the effects of the *Jobs-Plus* replication by comparing the employment and earnings trajectories of residents in targeted buildings with those in comparable developments. Note that as a saturation initiative, the effectiveness of *Jobs-Plus* is measured by the economic trajectories of the entire working-age population of the development.



SaveUSA

Promoting Savings by Low-Income Families

To help address concern about low-income families' limited savings, the *SaveUSA* program offers eligible individuals a 50 percent match if they deposit a portion of their tax refund into a "SaveUSA Account" and maintain the initial deposit for approximately one year. The decision by *SaveUSA* participants to save a portion of their refund, combined with limited access to the account and a significant match, is expected to start the participants on a pathway to longer-term savings and greater financial stability.

As one of the evidence-based programs being replicated through the national Social Innovation Fund (SIF), *SaveUSA* presents a unique opportunity for funders to join with a collaborative consisting of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), and MDRC. This collaborative, which has received a SIF grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, looks forward to working with other national and local partners to identify the required match for federal SIF funding, adapting the *SaveUSA* model to local conditions, and joining the "learning community" that is being developed as part of the larger national SIF effort.

Implementation Sites & Program Providers

New York City

- Food Bank for New York City

Newark, NJ

- Newark Now

San Antonio, TX

- United Way of San Antonio & Bexar County

Tulsa, OK

- Community Action Project of Tulsa

IMPLEMENTING THE SAVEUSA MODEL

SaveUSA will be offered during the 2011-13 tax seasons to low-income tax filers at Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites who receive at least a \$200 tax refund from their federal, state, and/or city tax returns. Participants will receive a 50 percent match, up to \$500, if they deposit at least \$200 of their tax refund into a "SaveUSA Account" and maintain the initial deposit for approximately one year. Providers selected to operate *SaveUSA* will work with financial institutions that will hold the accounts and create systems to facilitate account opening at *SaveUSA* VITA sites.

SaveUSA builds on early promising findings from a similar program - \$aveNYC - implemented in New York City by the Department of Consumer Affairs Office of Financial Empowerment. \$aveNYC attracted 2,200 savers in its three years of operation, 23 percent of whom did not have a bank account, and 40 percent of whom reported having no savings or history of saving when they entered the program. Participants in 2008 and 2009 accumulated more than half a million dollars in savings, in some of New York's poorest communities. The majority of participants (80 percent) saved for at least one year and received the match funds, and 70 percent continued to save even after receiving the match.

New York City's program operating experience suggests that clear procedures, staff training, and intensive and effective marketing will be key to the successful implementation of *SaveUSA*. As a result, *SaveUSA* providers will be expected to require staff and volunteers to complete intensive training prior to the start of the 2011 tax season. Training will cover all aspects of *SaveUSA*, including: strategies for marketing the *SaveUSA* Account and overcoming barriers to recruitment (e.g., hesitancy about using banks, products seeming to be "too good to be true," and concerns about sharing information with government agencies); how to respond to anticipated questions from filers; detailed protocols on the account-opening process; and consciousness-raising exercises on the value of asset building in low-income communities.

CEO, the Office of Financial Empowerment, and MDRC provide technical assistance and support to sites to develop marketing and publicity strategies to attract potential savers. Assistance is also be provided in the training of staff and volunteers to maximize filer participation and the opening of accounts.

EVALUATION

In all participating cities, the evaluation will look at the percentage of eligible individuals who accept the offer of the match, the amounts the individuals save in the specialized accounts, and their patterns of saving over a 3-year period.

In two of the cities, the effectiveness of *SaveUSA* will be determined using a random assignment research design. In these cities, individuals visiting the VITA sites who are eligible for a refund of \$200 or more and express an interest in savings will be assigned at random to either a program group that is offered the *SaveUSA* match, or a control group that is not offered the special match but is informed about various other savings options normally offered at VITA sites. Over a 4-year period, program effectiveness will be measured in these two cities by comparing the *SaveUSA* group with the control group on outcomes such as the likelihood of having a bank account, paying college tuition, or repaying student loans; and general savings, debt, assets, and overall financial stability.



WorkAdvance

A Sector-Focused Advancement Initiative for Low-Wage Adults

WorkAdvance seeks to boost the earnings of unemployed and low-wage working adults by helping them prepare for and enter quality jobs in selected sectors with opportunities for career growth. Once placed, participants are provided further assistance to guide them on a path of career advancement.

Implementation Sites & Program Providers

As one of the evidence-based programs being replicated through the national Social Innovation Fund (SIF), *WorkAdvance* presents a unique opportunity for funders to join with a collaborative consisting of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), and MDRC. This collaborative, which has received a SIF grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, looks forward to working with other national and local partners to assist this low-income population, to identify the required match for federal SIF funding, to adapt the *WorkAdvance* model to local conditions, and to join in the “learning community” that is being developed as part of the larger national SIF effort.

New York City

- Per Scholas
- St. Nicks Alliance

Cleveland and Youngstown, OH

- Towards Employment, with Burdman Group

Tulsa, OK

- Madison Strategies Group

BACKGROUND

Past evaluations have provided solid evidence on what works to help low-income individuals become employed. However, these studies have also found that many people who found jobs were not better off financially, in part because these jobs were unstable, low-paying, and provided few advancement opportunities. More recent evaluations, using randomized control trials of retention and advancement programs as well as sector-based initiatives, have yielded evidence of strategies that may be effective in improving job stability and increasing earnings. The proposed *WorkAdvance* program model extracts a variety of features from the most successful of these programs and combines them in ways that theory and evidence suggest will produce a more effective approach for job placement and advancement.

THE WORKADVANCE MODEL

Using industry sectors (such as healthcare) as the frame, each program will be grounded in a targeted sector for which the program provider has in-depth knowledge of and strong relationships with employers. More than just a job placement program, the goal of *WorkAdvance* is to prepare, train, place, and sustain unemployed and low-wage workers in quality jobs with benefits such as health insurance, as well as established career tracks. A focus on career advancement is instilled in all services of the program.

The program model is designed to meet the individual needs of workers by providing the following five core service components; while each of these elements will be offered, providers will adapt and tailor the services to the local labor market, individual needs, and the selected sector:

- **Sector-focused pre-employment services.** Participants will receive an orientation customized to the targeted sector, including information on industry trends, occupational opportunities, career ladders, the work environment, and employer expectations. Following the orientation, each individual will meet with a career coach to assess the participant's interest in these job opportunities and to create an individualized career plan (ICP); the plan will outline the services and skills that the participant needs in order to meet his or her goals. Participants will receive job readiness preparation (soft skills, resume assistance, etc) tailored to the sector.
- **Occupational skills training.** Industry-specific skills training, generally of less than a year in duration, is offered free of charge. Participants who complete training will receive an industry-recognized training credential or certification. Providers are expected to offer training at times and locations that are convenient for participants. The program will ensure participants are being trained for in-demand skills that employers are currently seeking for employment.
- **Job development and placement in targeted occupations.** It is expected that employers will be at the center of any successful program and that program staff will have deep knowledge of the targeted industry sector, the occupations, the skill needs, and the career ladders, as well as have extensive experience working closely with individual employers. Program staff are expected to be continuously involved in job development efforts – identifying employers and their current and future labor force needs and beginning to identify and screen potential job slots for those completing their training or already having the necessary credentials. Qualified program participants are placed with employers that have appropriate job openings in the targeted occupations with career opportunities. A key service to businesses is pre-screening of candidates for these job slots.
- **Post-placement services.** WorkAdvance participants receive post-placement services from the provider to promote job retention, career advancement, assist with re-employment, and troubleshoot issues that may arise with employers. Engagement with participants and employers focuses on steps that can be taken to assist the employee to advance within the industry (such as additional industry-provided training or an employer's tuition reimbursement program to further educational goals). Assistance is provided for up to a year post-placement.
- **Financial assistance.** To help pay for employment-related expenses and to help individuals address potential barriers to employment, each provider sets aside a small flexible pool of funding to be used at its discretion for expenses such as uniforms, books, industry certification exams, or tools. Similarly, funding might be used to assist individuals with travel costs associated with attending training, or getting to work prior to receiving a first pay check.

EVALUATION

The impact of the program will be rigorously measured through a random assignment research design. In this evaluation design – which is widely considered to be the most reliable approach – eligible individuals are assigned through a lottery-like process to either a program group that is offered *WorkAdvance* services, or to a control group that is not eligible for *WorkAdvance* services but remains eligible for other services in the community. In order to create these research groups, program operators will need to recruit more potential individuals applying to their program than the number they have resources to serve as part of *WorkAdvance*. The SIF *WorkAdvance* team has extensive experience in implementing random assignment designs and will work closely with each provider to minimize the burden on program operations.



Young Adult Program Linking Education to Internships

The *Young Adult Program* helps unemployed 18- to 24-year-olds who are currently out of school and lack a high school degree or GED to re-engage in productive activities through a combination of educational opportunities, paid internships, and case management as a pathway to long-term economic self-sufficiency.

As one of the evidence-based programs being replicated through the national Social Innovation Fund (SIF), the *Young Adult Program* presents a unique opportunity for funders to join with a collaborative consisting of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), and MDRC. This collaborative, which has received a SIF grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, looks forward to working with national and local funders to identify the required match for federal SIF funding, adapting the *Young Adult Program* model to local conditions, and joining in the “learning community” that is being developed as part of the larger national SIF effort.

Implementation Sites & Program Providers

New York City

- FEGS Health & Human Services
- Henry Street Settlement
- Kingsborough Community College

Newark, NJ

- Rutgers University

Kansas City, MO

- Full Employment Council
- Catholic Charities of Kansas City – St. Joseph

THE PROGRAM MODEL

Building on the promising experience of New York City’s Young Adult Internship Program, as well as lessons from evaluations of other youth programming, the SIF *Young Adult Program* is anchored in a paid internship of up to 18 weeks, with entry into and continuation of the internship conditioned on participants’ consistent engagement in an appropriate educational activity (or, in selected cases, occupational skills training that leads to a nationally recognized credential). Equally important, a clear plan, outlined at the start of the program, will be established to place the participants in secondary or post-secondary education and unsubsidized employment upon completion of the program. Strong case management and other supports are provided for a full twelve months in order to ensure a smooth transition to post-program placements. Set forth below is a more detailed description of the SIF *Young Adult Program* elements, which providers in each participating city are urged to adapt to local conditions:

- **Case Management** (*12 months*): A case manager will be assigned to work with each participant from the beginning of the program through a smooth transition to unsubsidized employment and/or further education. The case manager will conduct an initial assessment to determine the participant’s job readiness/interests, appropriate educational placement, and needed social supports. An individualized plan will then be developed for each participant with benchmarks that will be monitored (and adjusted as appropriate) throughout the program. The case manager will meet regularly with the participant and coordinate referrals and other staff engagement.
- **Pre-Internship Phase** (*The first 3-6 weeks of the program*): Participants will receive career-readiness and job-readiness preparation (e.g., help with resume writing, interview skills, and “soft” workplace skills). Participants will begin the education component in approximately the third week, and consistent attendance in the education

component (described below) will be required as a condition of being placed into a paid internship. In addition, a short-term group project will allow participants to work as a team in a structured manner that benefits the community, while also providing an opportunity to reinforce participants' soft skills and further assess their employment interests and internship potential and needs.

- **Education** (*Begins in approximately the 3rd week of the program*): Participants will engage in educational programming (primarily basic literacy and math instruction, pre-GED, or GED) for approximately 15 hours a week. Educational programming will be paired with group projects and then with paid internships until the end of the sixth month of the program. The educational component will, to the extent possible, both complement the internship (e.g., with contextualized learning) and be a pathway to the next stage of the participants' employment and educational development (e.g., GED, higher education, or training). The educational component will have an appropriate curriculum and class size, quality instruction (including individualized or small-group instruction where feasible), and regular progress assessments. Finally, providers will offer incentives for educational gains and/or milestones in order to reinforce the value of education and sustain educational engagement.
- **Paid Internships** (*Begins in approximately the 6th week; continues for up to 18 weeks*): Participants will typically engage in paid internships (at the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour) for approximately 10-15 hours a week for approximately 18 weeks, although some participants may transition into unsubsidized employment earlier.

Quality internships will be scheduled to accommodate time in educational programs and will include elements such as a clear job description and expected duties, the commitment from a supervisor to provide regular feedback and professional mentorship, tasks appropriate to the field and the intern's skill, a specific project that can be completed during the internship, and a final presentation that the intern makes to the employer or program provider reflecting on the experience. To the extent possible, internships will be in high growth sectors that have substantial prospects of regular job opportunities and are of interest to participants. Weekly group sessions will be offered, to allow participants to reflect on and discuss work experiences, reinforce job readiness skills, continue career exploration, and obtain peer support.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of the SIF *Young Adult Program* will include an implementation study and analysis of participant outcomes, with particular emphasis on lessons relating to youth engagement and program participation. The evaluation will address such questions as:

- Does this program hold broad appeal to disconnected youth, who have had difficult experiences in school and in making a transition to work? What types of disconnected youth are mostly likely to enroll in the program (e.g., what are their demographic characteristics, backgrounds, and prior program experience)?
- How do the providers, in practice, link the internships and educational component, and how effectively do they implement the principle of "school-conditioned work"?
- Among program enrollees, how many actually begin internships, how many concurrently participate in internships and education activities, and how many complete the internships?
- What are the characteristics of participants who are successful in the program (i.e., complete the program and/or return to school)?
- What paths do youth take after the end of their internships – how many continue in their education activities and/or are hired into unsubsidized jobs?
- How do variations in programmatic strategies and staff practices appear to influence participants' levels engagement in the Young Adult Program, success in completing the education and internships stages, and success in making a transition to work and/or other educational opportunities upon exiting the program?



Social Innovation Fund Subgrantees

The Center for Economic Opportunity, in partnership with the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, selected the following organizations to implement the five Social Innovation Fund programs in their respective communities.

Family Rewards Subgrantees



Seedco is a national non-profit organization that advances economic opportunity for people, businesses and communities in need. Seedco has more than 30 years of experience in workforce development, family and work supports, and community finance and small business services. As the Family Rewards provider in New York City, Seedco will serve 600 families over the SIF period, in partnership with **BronxWorks** and the **Children's Aid Society**. As the provider in Memphis, Seedco will serve 600 families over the SIF period, in partnership with **Porter Leath** and **Urban Strategies Memphis**.

- Program Location: New York City and Memphis, TN
- Leadership: Barbara Gunn, President and CEO
- Website: <http://www.seedco.org/>

Jobs-Plus Subgrantees



BronxWorks helps individuals and families improve their economic and social well-being. The organization has excelled in providing employment services and offers experience working with public housing residents in Bronx communities. As a Jobs-Plus provider, BronxWorks will conduct outreach to 1,701 public housing residents and serve approximately 650 residents per year over the SIF period.

- Program Location: New York City
- Leadership: Carolyn McLaughlin, Executive Director
- Website: <http://www.bronxworks.org/>



The San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA) creates safe neighborhoods through partnerships that provide housing, education, and employment opportunities for poor families. SAHA owns and manages 6,175 public housing units at 70 properties, 6,612 affordable housing units at 44 properties and administers approximately 13,000 housing choice vouchers. As a Jobs-Plus provider SAHA will reach approximately 1,100 public housing residents through outreach and serve approximately 450 residents per year over the SIF period .

- Program Location: San Antonio, TX
- Leadership: Lourdes M. Castro Ramirez, Chief Executive Officer
- Website: <http://www.saha.org/>

SaveUSA Subgrantees



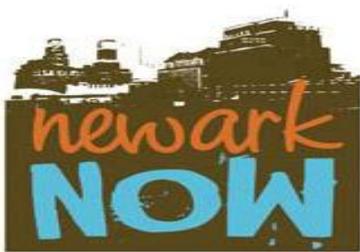
Community Action Project of Tulsa strives to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by improving the prospects of long-term economic success for very young, low-income children, their families, and the communities in which they live. CAP has several years of experience operating a VITA program, offering Individual Development Accounts, screenings for benefits, and helping clients establish bank accounts. As a SaveUSA provider, CAP will enroll approximately 1,350 individuals into the program over the SIF period.

- Program Location: Tulsa, OK
- Leadership: Steven Dow, Executive Director
- Website: <http://www.captc.org/>



Food Bank for New York City works to end hunger and increase access to affordable, nutritious food through programs as diverse as food distribution, nutrition curricula, disaster relief, and free tax preparation. Last tax season, the Food Bank and partner Ariva helped low-income New Yorkers obtain \$72 million in tax refunds. As a SaveUSA provider, the Food Bank for New York City and its partner **Ariva** will enroll approximately 1,350 individuals in the program over the SIF period.

- Program Location: New York City
- Leadership: Lucy Cabrera, President and CEO
- Website: <http://www.foodbanknyc.org/>



Newark Now partners with municipal government, residents, grassroots organizations, and the philanthropic community to enhance quality of life for Newark residents. Newark Now has more than seven years of experience providing financial education and asset building programs to Newark area residents, and operates the largest VITA program in the Newark area. As a SaveUSA provider, Newark Now will enroll approximately 1,125 individuals into the program over the SIF period.

- Program Location: Newark, NJ
- Leadership: LaVar Young, President and CEO
- Website: <http://www.newarknow.org/>



The United Way of San Antonio & Bexar County focuses on three critical areas: improving early care and education for children; strengthening families to become more financially stable; and developing individual capacity for success. It is the largest private health and human service organization in Bexar County, supporting 110 high-quality programs at 60 agencies. As a SaveUSA provider, United Way will enroll approximately 1,350 individuals in the program over the SIF period.

- Program Location: San Antonio, TX
- Leadership: Howard Nolan, President and CEO
- Website: <http://www.unitedwaysatx.org/>

WorkAdvance Subgrantees



The Madison Strategies Group (MSG) creates opportunities for individuals to build stable and productive lives through education, training and professional development experiences. MSG was founded by a group of workforce development professionals to build upon outstanding business-driven service delivery practices and replicate them on a wider scale. As a WorkAdvance provider, MSG will serve 710 individuals over the SIF period.

- Program Location: Tulsa, OK
- Leadership: Dale Grant, Board Chair
- Website: <http://www.madisonstrategies.org/>



Per Scholas is a non-profit social venture that uses technology to improve the lives of people in low-income communities. Since 1995, they have connected 80,000 residents to home computers and trained 3,000 low-income adults to obtain high-wage jobs in the technology field. As a WorkAdvance provider, Per Scholas will serve an estimated 590 participants over the SIF period.

- Program Location: New York City
- Leadership: Plinio Ayala, President and CEO
- Website: <http://www.perscholas.org/>



St. Nicks Alliance is a community development corporation driven by its mission to address economic, educational, health, housing, and social needs of low-income residents in North Brooklyn. Its Workforce Development Center currently offers four programs for the unemployed and for workers seeking to advance their skills. As a WorkAdvance provider, St. Nicks will lead an environmental remediation-focused WorkAdvance program serving 455 unemployed and low-wage workers over the SIF period.

- Program Location: New York City
- Leadership: Michael F. Rochford, Executive Director
- Website: <http://www.stnicksnpc.org/>



Towards Employment

Towards Employment's mission is to empower individuals to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through employment, and has served over 100,000 low-income and disadvantaged individuals since 1976. As a WorkAdvance provider, Towards Employment, in partnership with **The Burdman Group**, will serve 1,000 participants in Northeast Ohio over the SIF period.

- Program Location: Cleveland and Youngstown, OH
- Leadership: Jill Rizika, President and CEO
- Website: <http://www.towardsemployment.org/>

Young Adult Program Subgrantees



Catholic Charities of Kansas City - St. Joseph helps all people in need rebuild their lives with compassion, dignity and hope, and has helped tens of thousands of individuals obtain food, shelter, and other services over the years. Catholic Charities runs nine youth-focused programs in Kansas City, MO. As a Young Adult Program provider, Catholic Charities will serve 125 disconnected young adults over the SIF period.

- Program Location: Kansas City, MO
- Leadership: Michael W. Halterman, CEO
- Website: <http://www.catholiccharities-kcsj.org/>



FEGS Health and Human Services System meets the needs of the community through a diverse network of high quality, cost-efficient health and human services through partnerships with government, foundations, and private businesses. FEGS' youth programs serve more than 6,000 students each year in after-school programs, high school partnerships, and programs for out-of-school young adults and youth aging out of foster care. As a Young Adult Program provider, FEGS will serve 200 disconnected young adults over the SIF period.

- Program Location: New York City
- Leadership: Gail A. Magaliff, CEO
- Website: <http://www.fegs.org/>



Full Employment Council (FEC)'s mission is to help unemployed and underemployed residents of the Greater Kansas City area obtain employment, and works in collaboration with businesses, local government, educational institutions, labor, and community-based organizations to meet these goals. As a Young Adult Program provider, FEC will serve 150 disconnected young adults over the SIF period.

- Program Location: Kansas City, MO
- Leadership: Clyde McQueen, President and CEO
- Website: <http://www.feckc.org/>



Henry Street Settlement opens doors of opportunity to enrich lives and enhance human progress for New Yorkers through social services, arts, and health care programs that reach 50,000 New Yorkers each year. Current youth programming emphasizes academic success while promoting social skills, leadership qualities, and emotional well-being. As a Young Adult Program provider, Henry Street Settlement will serve 200 young adults over the SIF period.

- Program Location: New York City
- Leadership: David Garza, Executive Director
- Website: <http://www.henrystreet.org/>



The City University of New York Kingsborough Community College's (KBCC) Center for Economic and Workforce Development (CEWD) has successfully developed and delivered workforce-training programs that provide occupational skill training, job placement assistance, case management and comprehensive services around career development and advancement, and support transition to college. As a Young Adult Program provider, KBCC will serve 200 disconnected young adults over the SIF period.

- Program Location: New York City
- Leadership: Regina Peruggi, President (KBCC);
Dr. Stuart Schulman, Executive Director (CEWD)
- Website: <http://www.kbcc.cuny.edu/>



Rutgers Transitional Education and Employment Management Gateway (T.E.E.M Gateway) supports at-risk and disconnected urban youth across New Jersey through partnerships with parole officers, Newark public schools, local government, and community partners. Comprehensive services at the Newark One-Stop Center help youth develop pathways to education and employment. As a Young Adult Program provider, Rutgers T.E.E.M Gateway and the Ye²S Center will serve 225 disconnected young adults in Newark over the SIF period.

- Program Location: Newark, NJ
- Leadership: Kenneth Karamichael, Director (T.E.E.M.Gateway Ye²S Center)
- Website: <http://www.teemgateway.rutgers.edu/>

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