

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JOBS



NEIGHBORHOOD WORKFORCE PIPELINES



Making Connections: an initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation



People need good jobs to support themselves and their families—that's clear. And American businesses need trained workers ready to go. Connecting the dots between job seekers and good jobs ought to be simple. But the truth is, good jobs often go vacant, and men and women looking for work remain cut off from job opportunities that offer the chance to get ahead. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Making Connections* initiative* is taking a new approach to connecting the dots between people living in some of America's toughest neighborhoods and family-wage jobs. We call it the NEIGHBORHOOD WORKFORCE PIPELINE. The gap between those who are making it and those who are just barely paying the bills has widened in the past decade. *Making Connections* neighborhoods in Seattle/White Center, San Antonio, and Louisville offer three examples of successful NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINES that are helping families buck that trend. Local residents, community organizations, employers, workforce agencies, community colleges, and elected officials are coming together to close the gap by connecting families to jobs that offer a real future. Is a NEIGHBORHOOD WORKFORCE PIPELINE right for your neighborhood, community, or organization? Read on or visit www.aecf.org/mcguides.aspx for more ideas, lessons, and resources to help you get going.

***What is *Making Connections*? See the back cover.**





OUTREACH/RECRUITMENT

Pipeline partners recruit job seekers right in the neighborhood

ORIENTATION

Job seekers learn about job and training opportunities

WHAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE?

NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINES are grassroots community efforts that connect people living in tough low-income neighborhoods with good jobs that offer benefits and opportunities for advancement. PIPELINES bring together a range of partners and resources to do what traditional workforce training efforts have not always been able to do: prepare people for real jobs in their region. Easy to get to and anchored right in the neighborhoods where people live, NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINES begin with deep and trusted connections to families and communities and move outward from there. PIPELINE partners—residents, community organizations, employers, unions, community colleges, workforce agencies, and elected officials—share a common vision for change and join together to take an approach to workforce development that produces results. Good jobs often lie far from poor neighborhoods, miles away in the suburbs. PIPELINES connect residents to jobs by including key regional employers as partners in the effort from the get-go. These PIPELINE partners help shape training programs to meet the specific needs of businesses and prepare workers to get and keep good jobs. With both residents and employers involved in planning and execution, the NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE soon becomes known as the place to go for reliable job placements. The PIPELINE leads from a trusted neighborhood connection to a steady paycheck and a reliable, well-trained workforce. Everybody wins. Visit www.aecf.org/mcguides.aspx for more.

ASSESSMENT

Taking stock of skills, education, training, and barriers to employment



REFERRAL

to school, training, pre-apprenticeship program, or job

HOW DOES A NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE WORK?

A NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE is like having a friend on the inside. PIPELINES help people get past barriers, get a foot in the door, and get going. People working for community and neighborhood organizations (key PIPELINE partners) are uniquely positioned to tap into existing networks of families and friends. These partners provide job seekers with connections to training, education, and asset-building opportunities, along with the support and services people need to succeed on the job. People who live in low-income neighborhoods face many barriers to getting and keeping good jobs. Lack of training and educational opportunities. Isolation from the who-you-know networks that most people rely on to find jobs. Poor transportation and child care options. Race- and gender-based hiring practices (yes, still). NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINES offer a way over the barriers and help people make the **connections that matter.** Visit www.aecf.org/mcguides.aspx for more.

INDUSTRIES AND UNIONS
LARGE LOCAL BUSINESSES
SINGLE JOB OPENINGS



6-MONTH
RETENTION
Ongoing supports
and services

WHY FOCUS ON NEIGHBORHOODS?

Poverty and unemployment aren't spread evenly across cities or regions, but rather are concentrated in certain neighborhoods and communities. Poor neighborhoods are often isolated, cut off from the relatively prosperous cities that surround them. PIPELINES bridge the distance by linking residents to regional employers often far outside the boundaries of their neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are where people live, worship, and raise their kids—where some of their strongest ties and connections are. NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINES count these connections as a big plus and build on existing connections to identify job seekers, weigh family and community needs, and get the word out. Neighborhood residents play a central role in the success of PIPELINES; without their meaningful involvement, efforts to achieve lasting results are almost certain to fall short. PIPELINES **customize support services** to meet the needs of diverse job seekers, including immigrants and refugees, people who want to further their education and English-language skills, and men and women who have returned to their neighborhoods from prison. Connecting to the NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE means connecting to opportunities. Visit www.aecf.org/mcguides.aspx for more.



**1-YEAR
RETENTION**
Sticking with a job brings
career options



WHAT ABOUT FUNDING?

NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE partners need to be creative, flexible, and dogged in order to assemble the public and private funds to make it work. Public dollars offer the largest pool of resources, but private funds can fill important gaps. Each PIPELINE partner organization does what it does best: neighborhood outreach and recruitment, assessment, case management, training and education, and retention support and services. Together partners are able to do what none of them could do alone.

Strong connections between PIPELINE partners add value to what they offer, and that can translate into public and private funding they would not qualify for on their own. Partners working in close collaboration are better able to connect existing public dollars to the people they're meant to serve. Creative ways of tapping into public funding such as the underutilized Food Stamp Employment and Training program can also bolster program revenues. Flexible dollars from foundations, nonprofits, and private donors can help pay for services and case management that can't be funded with public dollars. Good solid numbers—data—are essential to making the case to funders, and have proven crucial to evaluating needs, strengthening program results, and mobilizing communities. Collaboration allows the dollars to do more and go further. Visit www.aecf.org/mcguides.aspx for more.

Each *Making Connections* site has come up with a **NEIGHBORHOOD WORKFORCE PIPELINE** that works for the community and that reflects local strengths, realities, and needs. Here are three examples of successful efforts that have shown good results. They offer ideas and lessons for others thinking about building a **NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE**.

REAL LIFE



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Sea-Tac Airport is a short bus ride from the *Making Connections* neighborhood of White Center, near Seattle, but it might as well be a thousand miles away. While new construction and security procedures have opened up new jobs at the airport, residents of White Center's refugee and immigrant communities have had trouble tapping into those opportunities. Enter Airport Jobs. With support from Seattle/White Center *Making Connections*, Airport Jobs is working with community organizations in White Center to recruit, screen, and refer job seekers to a training program to prepare for the airport's application process. The community-based recruiters are familiar to White Center residents and provide a handy, neighborly entry point into the **NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE** and the robust regional economy beyond. New employees with limited English skills find support from an airport-based case manager, who also helps new hires resolve on-the-job issues. Follow-up during the first year helps ensure good job retention. Wages start out at around \$8.50 an hour. To support other **PIPELINE** efforts, the *Making Connections* team has tapped into the under-utilized Food Stamp Employment and Training program. A pilot program brought together community partners eager to generate additional revenue, collaborate with other agencies, and expand training programs with FSET dollars.



LESSONS

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



The Westside Education and Training Center is no ordinary college. Housed in the heart of one of San Antonio's toughest neighborhoods, WETC grew out of a grassroots effort among residents, advocates, community groups, elected officials, and educators to transform a closed-down school into a positive institution that would act as a NEIGHBORHOOD WORKFORCE PIPELINE to good jobs in the regional economy. Even though the region is enjoying an economic boom, unemployment in the West Side neighborhood runs about 11 percent, nearly double the county rate. A staggering 55 percent of households scrape by on less than \$20,000 a year. When WETC opened its doors in 2006, administrators expected less than 400 students. More than 1,300 enrolled the first year. Alamo Community College District anchors WETC, offering classes and critical support services, and linking graduates and trainees to jobs in manufacturing, health care, utilities, and financial services. Community organizations and neighborhood associations have deep and genuine roots in the community and are critical to making the NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE work. They steer job seekers to opportunities at WETC, help them over barriers, and offer support and services to help them reach their goals.



“Making Connections Works has proven to be a valuable community partnership for Norton Healthcare. Through the Network we have hired nearly 100 employees. Their rate of retention has been better than average and that is critical in health care, a profession that often experiences workforce shortages. It’s a **win-win situation for us.”**

Russell F. Cox, Executive
Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, Norton Healthcare

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

People in Louisville simply call it the Network and 2,200 of them—including the mayor—count themselves as members. The Network is a group of friends, neighbors, and community partners who are working together in new ways to expand opportunities and improve life in Louisville’s poorest neighborhoods, where unemployment runs three times the metro average. Norton Healthcare is the third largest employer in Kentucky. Though Norton’s flagship hospital sits on the border of a *Making Connections* neighborhood, residents found it difficult to get a foot in the door. The Network worked in partnership with Norton to build a PIPELINE for workers that would function like a friend on the inside, pointing the way. Together they developed a package of training and supports that promote job success and retention. Norton gained trained, reliable workers and stronger connections with the community; residents now enjoy a new source of jobs, income, and pride. The Network’s PIPELINE partners also cultivated solid working relationships with other employers and unions in the region, including UPS and a state construction training program, and have steered more than 300 men and women to jobs that offer a decent wage and a new start. Eighty-four percent of the jobs include health benefits. All together, NEIGHBORHOOD PIPELINE jobs have yielded more than \$1.5 million in new income for families in *Making Connections* neighborhoods in the first two years of the effort.



CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JOBS: NEIGHBORHOOD WORKFORCE PIPELINES is one of four online guides designed to offer insights, emerging lessons, and promising strategies from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Making Connections* initiative. The guides are jointly published by the Casey Foundation and the Center for the Study of Social Policy. The Center manages technical assistance as part of the Casey Foundation's Technical Assistance Resource Center (TARC). TARC makes technical assistance available to *Making Connections* sites to assure that site leaders have access to the best possible ideas, expertise, evidence-based practice, and peer learning.

For detailed information about NEIGHBORHOOD WORKFORCE PIPELINES and how to get started, visit www.aecf.org/mcguides.aspx.

You may also want to take a look at the other three online guides at www.aecf.org/mcguides.aspx:

- Starting Early, Starting Right: Children Healthy and Prepared to Succeed in School
- Building Family Wealth: Earn It, Keep It, Grow It
- Sustaining Neighborhood Change: The Power of Resident Leadership, Social Networks, and Community Mobilization

WHAT IS MAKING CONNECTIONS?

Making Connections, an initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, works to improve the lives and prospects of families and children living in some of America's toughest neighborhoods. Common sense tells us that children do better when their families are strong and that families do better when they live in communities that help them succeed.

Making Connections works to increase family income and assets; ensure that young children have what they need to do well in school; and promote strong resident leadership, civic participation, social networks, and community mobilization. It is our belief that improvements in all of these areas—income, education, and community connections—can add up to a better life for families in some of America's most distressed communities. *Making Connections* was launched in 1999 in ten sites around the country to put our ideas to work.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private charitable organization dedicated to helping build better futures for disadvantaged children in the United States. Its mission is to foster public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that meet the needs of vulnerable children and families.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation
701 St. Paul Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202
410.547.6600 phone 410.547.6624 fax www.aecf.org

Center for the Study of Social Policy
1575 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 500 Washington, DC 20005
202.371.1565 phone 202.371.1472 fax www.cssp.org

Making CONNECTIONS