

Community Sustainability Efforts: Selected Results

SCHENECTADY BRIDGES INITIATIVE, NEW YORK

- In 2011 trained 144 staff members from seven participating agencies in Schenectady.
- Downtown Ambassadors Program employs residents of homeless shelter as “sidewalk concierges.” Program is so successful that more businesses join and increase demand for ambassadors.
- Partner Ellis Medicine pilots successful, appointment-free dental program for Head Start students.
- Tech Valley Nonprofit Business Council Executive Leadership Award—2011
- Chamber of Schenectady County Good News Award—2011
- Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation Susan Rosenthal Volunteerism Award—2010
- Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation Building Block Award—2008

ELLIS MEDICINE, NEW YORK

- Ellis Medicine is the nonprofit owner of the single remaining acute-care hospital in Schenectady County, with *de facto* responsibility for the health and wellness of all the county’s 150,000 people.
- The nationally recognized “County Health Rankings” project funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation shows Schenectady’s steady progression of improved health outcomes over the three years (2010–12) that the rankings have been published.
- Percentage of uninsured patients treated in the emergency department declined from 20% to 18%, indicating that more patients are enrolling in Medicaid.
- 25% increase in patient volume at the Ellis primary care clinics between 2009 and 2011.

GETTING AHEAD/BRIDGES INITIATIVE, IOWA

- Completed seven Getting Ahead groups with 174 graduates since 2008 with a completion rate of about 70%.
- Unemployment amongst participants dropped from 51% to 25% one year after Getting Ahead graduation.
- Full-time employment nearly doubled one year after graduation.
- Homelessness dropped from 21% to 7% one year after graduation.

COLUMBIANA COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT, OHIO

- Implemented nine policy changes, one of which saved the county more than \$65,000 in jail fees in 2008 and more than \$43,000 in jail fees in 2009 by providing house arrest ankle monitors to indigent defendants.
- Proceeds from bondable cases have increased 28%, and failure-to-appear warrants have substantially decreased.

GETTING AHEAD, COLORADO

- 165 Getting Ahead graduates.
- Unemployment dropped from 60% to 42% by program completion.
- All employed individuals were able to increase their hours worked at their jobs.
- Participants were asked, "In the last month, how many days did you feel down or discouraged?" At pre-test, 33% of investigators said they felt down or discouraged five or more times per month. At post-test the percentage decreased to 19%.

WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WASHINGTON

- Increased retention by 23% for participants in Investigations into Economic Class in America.

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY NURSING PROGRAM, OHIO

- aha! Process worked with Kent State University to train 90 LPN students in the Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World program.
- 90% of respondents found the overall concept of the hidden rules of economic class enlightening.
- 92% thought the information on hidden rules would be helpful in solving problems on the job.
- 91% reported that the information on formal register and language was very valuable for resolving issues on the job.
- 90% of respondents reported increasing knowledge about personal resources.
- 91% of respondents reported that they would use this new concept of personal resources to grow resources in their work and family lives.

GETTING AHEAD INITIATIVE, AUSTRALIA

- The Maryborough Neighborhood Renewal Team in Australia won the \$5,000 Joan Kirner Social Justice Award for their Getting Ahead project.
- Ten months since the introduction of the project, seven of the 15 participants are employed, and the remaining eight are in accredited education or training.

CAREER PATHWAYS AT YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY, OHIO

- In only two and a half years, more than 300 people participated in 15 Getting Ahead groups.
- 81% completion rate.
- Full-time employment increased from 31% to 76%.
- 58% pursued postsecondary endeavors.

MENOMINEE NATION GETTING AHEAD INITIATIVE, WISCONSIN

- Approximately 70 people registered for Getting Ahead, and 51 investigators graduated from the six groups, for a completion rate of 75% in 3-year period.
- Thirty-eight women and 12 men, aged 16 to 81, attended the classes.
- Childcare provided for more than 40 children, 39 families were provided with transportation.
- Three people became co-facilitators after finishing the program.
- Of 18 graduates surveyed:
 - Six have full-time jobs.
 - Seven have part-time jobs.
 - Eight are in college.
 - Two completed GEDs.

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY, INDIANA

- With partner agencies, has graduated more than 400 people from Getting Ahead.
- Has presented Bridges Out of Poverty workshops to more than 3,000 people.
- Attendance at monthly networking meetings averaged 82 people per meeting in 2011, with 32 speakers covering 11 community topics, including healthcare, banking and community resources, leadership, and financial predators.
- Started in 2009, SJC Bridges' financial management class has served more than 100 Getting Ahead graduates on their road to self-sufficiency.
- 25 mentors from 15 institutions also receive training to increase their effectiveness.
- The Future Story Project developed 13 core employers, and after the project's first year, nine graduates were employed with the employer partners, three of them for more than a year. Another eight were on deck, and three were completing the GED requirement.
- In the second year, 20 graduates were employed, 12 of whom stayed employed.
- The project garnered national attention and played a crucial role in the Michiana SHRM receiving the 2010 SHRM Pinnacle Award.
- Cathy Lenoir, a Getting Ahead graduate who became an AmeriCorps member, won the prestigious Indiana Governor's Service Award in 2011.

GETTING AHEAD INITIATIVE, INDIANA

- In May 2006 the program had a completion rate of 57%; by July 2007 the program completion rate was 87%.
- In the first quarter, 36% of the group showed movement toward achieving additional education; in the second quarter, 69% of the group had moved toward meeting their goals.
- In the area of employment, 23% had improved their situation in the first quarter. By the end of the second quarter, 63% of the group had moved toward full-time, self-sufficient employment.
- Quarter 1 clients showed a 13% change in establishing access to friends, family, and community services, and by the end of Quarter 2, the group's overall change was 84%.

CINCINNATI WORKS, OHIO

- Cincinnati Works, since 1996, has spent \$9 million helping 4,000 people find work. Last year those people earned \$75 million in wages in Cincinnati.
- Two years into an economy of record job losses and fewer job openings, Cincinnati Works had an 85% retention rate (versus 20–25% for government-funded programs).
- Dave Phillips, co-founder: “The recession is making it tougher for our members to get employed. We are proud of the results we are getting—500 placements in a year when it’s hard to get jobs.”

For more information, visit www.BridgesOutOfPoverty.com or www.GettingAheadnetwork.com

Or

www.ahaprocess.com/fromvisiontoaction