



United Way *Financial Stability Partnership™ FastFacts*

step 1: Increase Income

Workforce Development

What Is It

Successful workforce development systems aim to help individuals obtain and maintain employment, enabling them to be financially independent, while developing a stronger, more capable workforce that meets the needs of employers.

Workforce development systems provide access to tools and strategies that help individuals improve their job skills and advance their careers. Such tools and strategies include: general and industry-specific training, computer skills, remedial and continued education, job search assistance services, and employment retention services.

Why Is It Important

Workforce development makes it possible for individuals to compete in today's economy. As new jobs are created that require different skill sets, workforce development opportunities enable individuals to compete in a changing work environment. Individuals are able to use their new skills to obtain, maintain and advance their employment opportunities, potentially increase their wages, and gain access to employer benefits.

Through workforce development, employers are able to access employees that are better trained, more skilled and educated, and ready to succeed in the workplace. This reduces employee turnover and training costs, creating a more stable workplace with employees that are stronger and more crisis-resistant.

The Role of United Way

Recognizing the need to provide lasting solutions for achieving financial stability and independence, some United Ways are utilizing workforce development opportunities as an impact strategy in their financial stability work.

By working as a key convener in communities where workforce development is a critical need, United Ways are improving the coordination between organizations to create seamless systems that are flexible, integrated, comprehensive, and that meet the needs of individuals as well as employers.

The services provided through these partnerships with non-profits, community agencies and private partners include training, education, job development, job search and placement services, and additional supports, such as childcare and transportation. United Ways' involvement in convening community partners around the issue of workforce development results in a lasting solution that transforms lives and communities.

Resources

- The Ford Foundation's asset building and community development portfolio: <http://www.fordfound.org/program/economic.cfm>
- Jobs for the Future focuses on building economic opportunity through workforce development: <http://www.jff.org>
- Workforce Intermediaries: Powering Regional Economics in the New Century, a report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation: http://www.aecf.org/publications/data/workforce_int.pdf
- The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/workplace.html#2>
- The Aspen Institute's economic opportunity and workforce development resources: http://www.aspeninstitute.org/site/c.huLWJeMRKpH/b.612033/k.47E4/Economic_Opportunities_Program.htm
- The skills needed to succeed in the 21st century workplace: <http://eff.cls.utk.edu/workreadiness/default.htm>
- Solutions for America's website has resources on many components of workforce development: <http://www.solutionsforamerica.org/livingwage/workforce.html>

For More Information

For more information about United Way's Financial Stability Partnership™, and financial stability strategies, visit the Knowledge Café at <http://online.unitedway.org/café>, join the financial stability listserv or send an email to fsp@uwa.unitedway.org.