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Expanding Opportunities



News from the Oakland Private Industry Council
in partnership with the Oakland Workforce Investment Board

Gay Plair Cobb

Chief Executive Officer

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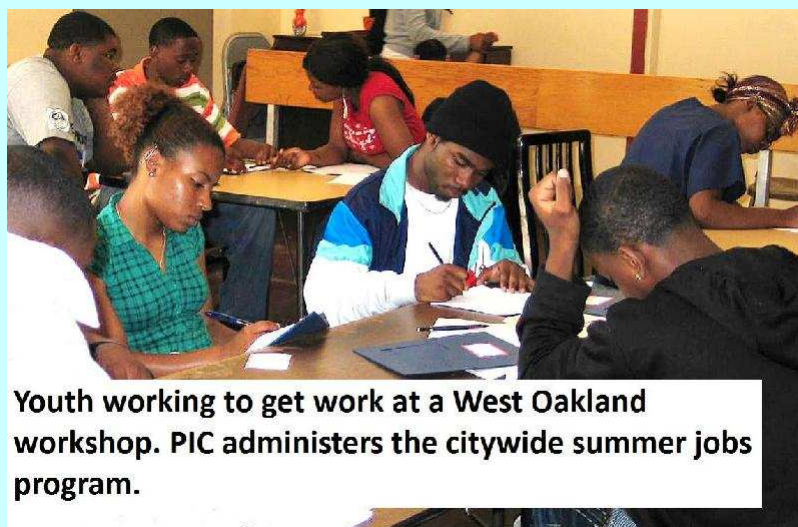
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Spread the Word



Youth working to get work at a West Oakland workshop. PIC administers the citywide summer jobs program.

Stimulus Funds at Work: Youth Get Ready for Summer Jobs

Young people filled every available seat at a recent job preparation workshop at the community center at West Oakland's Lowell Park.

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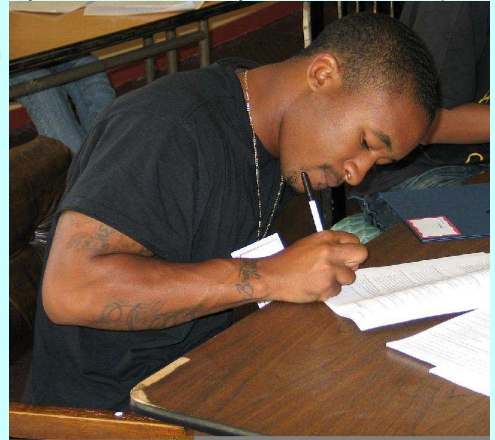
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**PIC administers
summer jobs
programs**



The session was the first of three mandatory workshops for youth hoping to snag summer employment. The series of workshops, which repeat for several weeks, are sponsored by the Scotlan Center, one of 13 Oakland-based organizations awarded contracts to prepare youth for employment and to send them out to work or train for a six-week period.

Just as instructor Camille Cyrus had warned, that initial workshop was tedious, with rules to go over and paperwork to complete. However, not one young person complained. Cell phones were off and the youth were attentive. An observer could see they were serious about getting jobs.



As directed, the youth took turns reading the rules out loud. Cyrus reminded the group, dressed as they had been advised - nothing fancy, but appropriate for the workplace - that participation was a key element for success in the workshop.

The more outgoing encouraged the more reticent to read. "The resume and interviewing workshops will be more challenging," Cyrus promised.

At the end of the three workshop sessions - assuming the youth complete all three and follow the rules - it is expected that 198 young people, age 14 to 24, will end up with a summer job through Scotlan.

This year, Oakland has two summer jobs initiatives and will offer youth across the city about 1,700 jobs. There are different criteria for each of the programs. The Mayor's Summer Jobs Program, in existence since 1968, serves those Richard de Jauregui, Scotlan executive director, calls the "working poor." They come from families struggling to make ends meet, but are not considered at poverty level.

"They make too much money to get assistance," de Jauregui said, "But they still need help."

The second program is funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. California is getting \$158 million for its the summer youth jobs program. Funds are funneled through the Employment Development Department to local Workforce Investment Boards. In Oakland, the program is administered through a partnership between the mayor's office and PIC.

Better known as stimulus funds, this money targets below poverty level youth with special needs such as those who are homeless, parenting, or who have been incarcerated. The designation of poverty varies by family size. A family of four must earn less than roughly \$27,000 a year to be considered below poverty level.

The YMCA and Highland Hospital are among the employers who have stepped forward to employ the youths. Hiring the young people for the six week program costs the employer nothing. The program pays each young person \$8 per hour up to 160 hours.



Other nonprofits - awarded contracts through competitive bidding - that conduct workshops and send the youth to work or training include the Oakland Green

Civic Program (Peralta Foundation), the Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation, the Lao Family Community Development Center, Youth Radio, The American Indian Child Resource Center, Cycles of Change, Leadership Excellence, Civicorps Schools, Youth Employment Partnership, Inc., Youth Uprising, East Oakland Boxing Association and McCullum Youth Court

PIC and CRSPN Produce Resource Guide for Formerly Incarcerated

You often hear about the revolving door. People are jailed, freed on probation or parole, then go right back inside.



Pooja Bhakta

With unemployment in Oakland at 16 percent, rents around \$1,000 for a one-bedroom apartment, and the cost of food skyrocketing, it's a challenge for people to survive.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation says that more than 50 percent of formerly incarcerated persons imprisoned for felonies, return to prison within two years.

Now there's a new tool to help people navigate re-entry into the community after incarceration - the

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