



**City of Albany
State of New York
DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND WORKFORCE SERVICES
175 Central Avenue
Albany, New York 12206**

Gerald D. Jennings
Mayor

Faye C. Andrews
Commissioner

Salvatore P. Villa
Deputy Commissioner

To: Mayor Jennings

From: Faye Andrews

Re: Department Accomplishments

Date: 12/16/09

Since the Department of Youth and Workforce Services was created, it has administered a myriad of youth and adult services to the entire City of Albany. Programs such as the Albany Service Corps, Albany School Success, Albany Youthbuild, The Albany Green Team, and WIA youth services have provided job training, GED education opportunities, counseling/case management services, and mentoring/tutoring opportunities to thousands of youth who live in the City of Albany. The department continues to assist with building communities and strengthening families in the same fashion that was designed at its inception.

In 2009, the Department served close to 2,500 youth and saw more than 10,000 customers walk through the doors at Career Central offices.

Below is a summary of the programs that we administered this year and the accomplishments made by each.

Career Central –

The City's Career Central Office at 175 Central Avenue works in collaboration and partnership with the County of Albany and the NYS Department of Labor to provide a full continuum of services to the unemployed, underemployed and those in career transition. With the City's unemployment rate reaching 8.7% in October, Career Central has been busier than ever this year



- In 2009 Career Central exceeded its performance standards set by the State of New York, including a retention rate of over 80% as part of the Capital Region Workforce Investment Partnership.
- Due to an additional allocation of Federal Stimulus funds, Career Central has been able to provide tuition assistance to a record number of participants this year. To date, 325 adults and dislocated workers have been able to enroll in occupational training programs such as CDL classes, CNA courses, welding school, and a host of other educational opportunities that will provide opportunities to further their employment.
- **Metrix learning** - A new program occurring at The Dept. of Youth and Workforce Services/Career Central in 2008. The Metrix Learning System provides an internet based learning management system/portal that provides Objective assessment/testing of an individual's occupational skills; access to Technology Base Learning (TBL) courses to remediate skill deficiencies; and monitoring/tracking of all activities by a case manager. Since January, 500 unemployed or underemployed residents have been enrolled in the Metrix system.

We are currently waiting to hear about funding for a new grant that we applied for from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance that will assist us with providing job training opportunities to non custodial parents. This program will help these parents to support their children and families by providing counseling, case management and job placement.

Summer Youth Employment (SYEP)

The Summer Youth Employment Program is designed to provide any young person, age 14-18, with a summer work experience. This summer, the SYEP served close to 1600 youth from the City of Albany. Because of federal stimulus funds that were earmarked for summer employment, we were able to add some components to the program that helped to prepare youth eligible for the program with transportation, incentives and job readiness training. There were 170 youth between the ages of 14 and 18 enrolled in the ARRA summer youth employment program. All were offered job readiness training by program staff, and of the 170 youth enrolled, 168 received a certificate of employability. All 168 of these youth had over 95% attendance at their worksite, and received an additional incentive of \$150 at the end of the summer for successfully completing the Certificate of Employability program. In addition, 75 youth between the ages of 19 and 24 were employed by the stimulus program and were provided employment opportunities at worksites that were in line with their future career plans.



Truancy Abatement

The City of Albany's Truancy Abatement Program serves all school-aged youth who attend school in the City of Albany. The program is overseen by the Department of Youth and Workforce Services and has as its goal reduced truancy, reduced juvenile crime and increased parental responsibility. During 2009 the program provided home visits and truancy abatement services to over 500 youth who have been chronically truant from school. Other program highlights for the year include:

- Continued to work Judge Maney and Albany County Juvenile Drug Court. Many of the youth served in this program are also being served by the Truancy Abatement Program.
- Continued to work with Samaritan Shelter to provide aftercare services to those youth who are discharged from the shelter and are to returning to the Albany City School District.
- Advising the Albany City School District Community *Think Tank Team* in researching alternative education for K-12 grade students.
- The Truancy Abatement Program is working with the Albany City School leadership on devising an alternative education plan for suspended elementary and middle school students.
- The Truancy Abatement Program is collaborating with the Albany City School District A Plus initiative to provide services to Albany High School students.

Youthbuild

Albany YouthBuild has enrolled a total of 55 members for both the previous and current YouthBuild cycles. Of the 55 members enrolled, 24 members have successfully graduated from the program, and 22 are currently enrolled. These 55 youth ages 16-24 were and are being offered job training in the construction industry and GED preparation; as well as mentoring services and leadership development.

The previous cycle of members completed several project throughout the community including:

- ❖ Aiding in the successful progress of "Operation Restoration" with New Covenant Christian Fellowship Church.
- ❖ Rehabbing the basement of New Hope Community Worship Center on Central Ave. to be used for a new children and teen after school center.
- ❖ Working with Habitat for Humanity to build new homes for low-income families



Of the 24 graduated members from the previous cycle:

- ❖ 60% of the members upon graduation have obtained and maintained full time employment at various agencies and businesses throughout Albany and the Capital Region.
- ❖ 4 members have completed Personal Care Assistant (PCA) certification courses and are now employed
- ❖ 2 members are currently enrolled in a Culinary Arts Training Program
- ❖ 1 member has enrolled full time at HVCC
- ❖ 9 members obtained their GED

The 22 members currently enrolled will also get the benefit of receiving the industry recognized NCCER Certification (**National Center for Construction Education and Research**)

A new collaboration we formed this year is with Albany County Parole to successfully re-enter recently released parolees into the YouthBuild Program from the Hudson Correctional Facility Re-entry Program. We currently have 3 parolees enrolled in our program and they are 3 of the most focused and driven members that we currently have.

For this next year we would like to graduate all 22 members and see even more members obtain their GED and employment.

Gang Prevention

The Gang Prevention Program has again served over 500 youth this year, by providing recreational, educational, and social alternatives to youth at risk of joining a gang. In partnership with the Albany YMCA, the Teens Lookin' Out Program has continued to grow and provide teens with weekend alternatives to the streets. A program offered by the Gang Prevention Program that has been gaining increasing interest by schools, youth serving organizations, and parents is its CHOICES program. This program provides opportunities to at risk youth to see how the choices they make affect the rest of their lives – youth are first taken on a typical prison trip where they see first hand what the consequences can be if they choose to join gangs or become involved in other illegal activities. After that trip, the same youth are taken to visit college campuses where they can talk to students, admissions offices and financial aid personnel and see where they could be if they continue to make positive choices in their everyday lives.



WIA Youth Services

Each year, hundreds of youth come to the DYWS to receive information on services available to them within the City of Albany. Many of these youth are served either by one of the programs in the youth department or through Career Central for employment services. During 2009 40 out of school youth were enrolled in WIA youth services and were provided GED education, job readiness training, job development and enrollment in occupational training. Youth have been provided tuition assistance to attend culinary arts programs, certified nursing assistant programs, and HVCC.

Family Resource Center

Provided by Children and Family Services of the Capital Region, Inc. and funded by the United Way, the Family Resource Center continues to provide vital services to families in the City of Albany. Located at the Department of Youth and Workforce Services, the family resource center provides case management, counseling, housing, job search assistance, parenting courses, financial literacy, and other necessary services to our program participants. To date, the center has served close to 100 families on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Community Tech Center:

Through a collaborative effort with Tech Valley Communications, NY Wired for Education, The College of St. Rose and the Albany Public Libraries, the DYWS will coordinate Community Technology Centers (CTCs) throughout the City of Albany. The focus of this program is to create a framework to help Albany's citizens gain valuable digital literacy skills, access to free wireless Internet via Albany FreeNet, as well as employment and life skills to compete in the workplace.