

The Job Mentoring Program at The Remillard Family Resource Center is a comprehensive tool to help people become job ready. A client begins with an appointment with a trained volunteer to sit and evaluate their current employment status. After learning about a clients background and interests as well as challenges, the volunteer will then work with them to create a resume. Armed with a resume, the client then learns from the volunteer how to navigate the internet, set up and check an e-mail account, search for jobs online, fill out an online application, and attach and send their resume with cover letter. This is just the beginning. Clients can make appointments and sit with a mentor as many times as they like, but more importantly, they can use the computers to search for jobs as often as they want. The clients are encouraged to treat searching for employment as a full time job.

Knowledge builds dignity and self respect. Educating our clients has become a focus of the Job Mentoring Program. We now offer classes three days per week on keyboarding and internet navigation as well as a three week course on Microsoft Word. Since offering these classes, we have seen an extraordinary change in our clients. People are proud of what they are learning. They are proud of themselves for being able to learn and for the first time in a long time, they feel as though they are worthy of learning. We also partner with Palm Beach State College to research and find grants for our clients who want to go back to school. Becoming trained and certified for a profession is something many of our clients never thought possible. Single mothers, victims of lay-offs, laborers who have been injured, and others in the very diverse group that makes up the unemployed can look forward to a career change and a point in the future where they will be able to feed their families on their own.

Once a client has secured an interview the volunteers work with them to ensure as successful an interview as possible. If transportation is a problem, a 1 day bus pass is issued. The client will use our Dignity Closet to dress for the interview. The volunteers will go through some of the questions that might be asked and that the client is as comfortable as possible going through the process. The help doesn't end there. After obtaining employment, the client will then work with the volunteer to make sure they have a few weeks worth of appropriate attire as well as more permanent transportation. Our bicycle program assigns bicycles as well as a helmet and bike lock to our clients. If they are unable to use a bike, a monthly bus pass is issued.

Since moving into our new facility in January, we have an average of **20** volunteers working with **80** clients. In the first four months of 2010, **71** clients obtained employment. This is a dramatic number, especially considering many of our clients have been out of work for over a year.

When we ask our clients who have been successful in their job search which factor contributed the most, the results were overwhelmingly similar: the classes, resume and cloths were great, but the real difference was the way they felt after spending time with a volunteer. The most important part of our mission is "to instill dignity and break the cycle of dependence". The clients feel as though they are human again. They are spoken to as person who needs a little help instead of a helpless person. Our clients leave their appointments feeling strong, capable and most of all, worthy of a better life for them and their families.