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SWWDC to Distribute \$325,000 to Help Long-Term Unemployed Get Jobs

Vancouver, Wash. (May 15, 2014) – Dave Josephson spent his career working in commercial construction; until the jobs disappeared. He was laid off in October 2011. Out of work for nearly a year, Josephson had to learn how to job search, write a resume and highlight his transferrable skills during job interviews. With a team of counselor and trainers at WorkSource helping every step of the way, Josephson found a new career path. Today, he’s the Assistant Fleet and Facilities Manager at Fort Vancouver Regional Library District.

“I was going to change my career path; I just did not know how to get there,” said Dave Josephson. “Thank goodness I stopped in to WorkSource to get an understanding of the types of services they provide.”

WorkSource will use a \$325,000 grant from the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC) to provide services to 75 individuals who have been unemployed for 27 weeks or more. The money is part of a \$4 million Rapid Response grant distributed to the state’s 12 workforce development councils this week by the Governor’s office to help get long-term unemployed individuals back to work.

With the funds, WorkSource will provide job placement services, coaching, work-based training (on-the-job training, supported work experience, internships), and short-term intensive skills training to individuals in Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties.

On-the-job training (OJT) and supported work experience offset some of the employer’s hiring costs. For example, OJT reimburses the company for a portion of the trainee’s salary as they learn skills customized to that business. Funds will also be available for new employees to obtain certifications or other trainings the business requires for them to be hired.

“WorkSource has a vast array of services available to job seekers and has successfully helped many long-term unemployed individuals find jobs,” said John Vanderkin, SWWDC Board vice-chair and president of Employers Overload. “But many continue to need assistance and these funds will help us provide services to additional individuals.”

Individuals who have been out of work for several months sometimes face bias from employers. As President Obama mentioned during a speech in January, these individuals have significant education and experience and can greatly benefit a company.

“Dave is a wonderful asset not just to our facilities department but to the entire district,” said Nancy Tessman, FVRL executive director. “We would have been happy to connect with a future employee like Dave no matter how he found us.” She continued, “But, we’re appreciative that WorkSource was there – as it has been for a number of our employees – to support and encourage him in pursuing a position with us.”

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Businesses looking for employees can contact Darcy Hoffman at the Vancouver WorkSource office at 360-735-5038 or dhoffman@esd.wa.gov or Tina Cruz at the Kelso WorkSource office at 360-578-4254 or tcruz@esd.wa.gov for free assistance writing job descriptions, posting job openings and screening candidates.

Individuals looking for jobs should contact WorkSource in Clark County at 360-735-5000 and in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties at 360-577-2250 to learn about no-cost programs that will help them gain the necessary skills to be competitive in today's job market.

The Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), a nonprofit organization founded in 2002, is the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) for Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. SWWDC brings together funding, state agencies, local service providers, colleges and community organizations to provide employment and training services to businesses, job seekers and youth. Learn more at www.swwdc.org.

WorkSource is a partnership of state agencies, local service providers, colleges and community organizations that provide free employment and training services to job seekers and employers. WorkSource assists employers to recruit and screen for qualified applicants, provide wage reimbursement opportunities through On-the-Job Trainings, and supply cost-savings information on employment tax credits. WorkSource serves more than 1,000 jobseekers and 200 businesses each month. For more information, visit www.go2worksource.com.

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