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SWWDC to Fund New Work-Preparation Programs for Youth
Homeless and at-risk youth to receive employment and job training services

Vancouver, Wash. (June 17, 2014) – The Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC) will provide \$85,000 to two Clark County non-profits to help young adults ages 16-21 obtain skills, education and vocational training to help them get jobs.

Beginning July 1, under contract to SWWDC, Innovative Services NW and Partners in Careers will provide services to low-income youth who are homeless, have dropped out of high school or are recent high school graduates or GED recipients and are not attending college or post-secondary training.

“It is no secret young adults are struggling to find employment that will lead them to self-sufficiency,” said Chelsea Jackson, SWWDC Youth Initiatives Manager. “In addition, many companies are having difficulty finding the trained workers they need,” she continued.

“SWWDC’s goal is to help bridge this gap and build a strong youth workforce pipeline. Investing in programs like Youth Impact and YouthFirst are critical; and we’re thrilled to work with our new partners,” said Jackson.

Innovative Services NW will receive \$45,000 to expand its Transitions Youth Impact Program to serve homeless youth ages 16-21. Participants will have access to training, paid internships, job coaching and intensive long-term case management. Training and internships will focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and other high-demand industries.

Partners in Careers will use \$40,000 to provide 16-21 year olds, who have dropped out of school, with employment and/or post-secondary education services, intensive case management, employment readiness trainings, career exposure and a three-month work experience in a high-growth, high-demand sector such as manufacturing, healthcare, software or IT. Students will have opportunities to interact with local employers through mock interviews, job shadows and group tours.

“These new programs will help some of our most needy young people acquire skills to help them get a job and become self-sufficient,” said John Vanderkin SWWDC Board Chair. “With labor shortages projected in STEM industries, we need to be sure our incoming workforce is ready to work.”

The Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), a nonprofit organization founded in 2002, provides funding and connects businesses and individuals with free training and employment-related resources through its partnerships with WorkSource, Educational Service District 112, Goodwill Longview, colleges, Innovative Services NW and PIC to create a skilled and adaptive workforce for a thriving economy in Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. It helps residents develop skills that meet their employment needs and helps businesses get the right workers at the right time. SWWDC is led by a diverse board of representatives from business, labor, education, community-based organizations and government agencies. For more information, visit www.swwdc.org.

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