

EGUSD
WORKABILITY &
TRANSITION SERVICES
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SPRING / SUMMER 2012

WorkAbility & Transition Services

The EGUSD WorkAbility & Transition Services Program is winding up its 30th year of providing career exploration, pre-vocational skills training and employment opportunities to students with special needs.

This year the WorkAbility program placed over 260 students in paid employment experiences throughout the Elk Grove and South Sacramento area.

Our Transition Partnership Program, for post-secondary services, assisted 30 plus seniors with college enrollment and over 50 young adults with job development and placement.

Each of the five Transition

Specialists attended, on average, at least 75 IEP meetings to provide career guidance and transition information and agency linkages.



WorkAbility & Transition Services Staff from left to right: Laurel Hochmuth, Laurie Kaminsky, Susan McEntee, Linda Vargas, Karen Marlow. **Back row:** JoAnne Smith, Jim Wirick, Jolene Hood and Sherry Clifford

Although all program staff are diligently working on the end of year requirements, there are many plans in the works for new activities and products for the 2012/13 school year that will provide better access to transition information and available services.

- WorkAbility Website
- Transition Resource Binder
- Transition Bootcamps
- Industry Tours
- Transition Trainings
- Blue Crew Volunteer Program
- Job Coach Trainings

And much much more!

Leaving the Middle School Nest by Linda Vargas

The two years a student spends in middle school go by quicker than most imagine and before you know it, it is time to transition to that sometimes uncertain (and maybe even a little scary) world called high school. Every parent wants their son or daughter to experience success in school, and that certainly does not change when they move into the ninth grade. What does change, however, is the increased expectation that students will be required to take on more responsibility re-

lated to their learning environment and success in school. Family support is critical in this process.

Assist students to set short term and long term goals for their education:

Achieving short term goals along the way helps to keep students motivated to reach the ultimate goal of graduating from high school and moving on to a rewarding career and life as an adult.

Expect students to take ownership of their learning:

Students should check their School Loop accounts on a regular basis and e-mail their teachers directly if they have questions or concerns which will not only help them become better advocates but will help to earn even greater respect from their teachers.

"I know this sounds strange, but as a kid, I was really shy. Painfully shy. The turning point was freshman year, when I was the biggest geek alive. No one, I mean no one, even talked to me."

Jim Carrey—Actor

Leaving the Middle School Nest (cont.)

Ensure that students know the importance of getting help when it is needed:

High school is more challenging than middle school and staying on top of grades may require extra assistance, but seeking that assistance will help avoid having to repeat a class.

Encourage students to become involved at their school site:

Joining a club, attending school events, playing a sport and taking elective

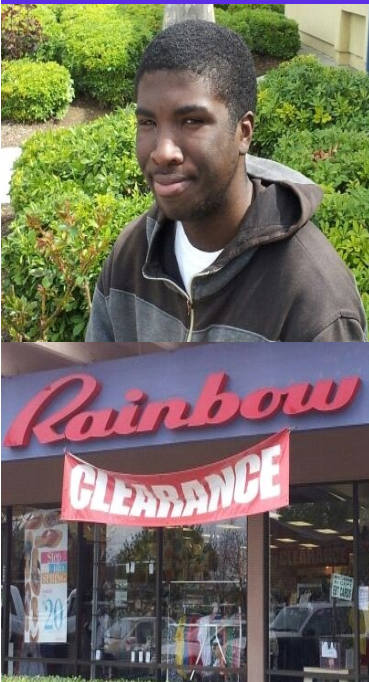
classes that students have interest in are key to helping students fit into the high school community.

Allow students to be active team members in the IEP process:

Students who are able to talk about their strengths, challenges, and the accommodations which help them in school or in the work place, will be more prepared for the increased expectations that post-secondary education and community agencies will

expect of them as young adults.

Ultimately we want to prepare our students to be successful adults. Giving students opportunities to practice self advocacy and self determination skills becomes a valuable part of their high school experience.



Somewhere...Over the Rainbow by Karen Marlow

Dante Beasley, a senior at Valley High School, is well aware of the opportunities that can come from working with the WorkAbility Program. Last year, Dante had a WorkAbility experience at one of our drug store partners and through that experience he learned valuable employability skills and customer service skills. So this school year, he wanted one more experience before graduating. Dante was placed at Rainbow, a national chain specializing in women's and children's apparel.

The store is located on Mack Road in Sacramento. Dante spent his training at Rainbow learning the store, the products, where and how to put out the new products and again, working with customers.

His hard work paid off too. Store manager, Pakiza Ali, was happy to bring him on as a Rainbow sales associate after his WorkAbility training experience. When I asked Dante how he liked his job he grinned and said he loves it. He likes his fellow workers and just knowing that he has a job.

His future plans include continuing his education and Dante said having a part time job while going to school is just what he wanted and hoped for.

WorkAbility Works!

Rainbow Apparel
6234 Mack Road
Sacramento, CA
95823
(916) 392-1422

Adult School Provides Alternative to College by Laurel Hochmuth

This spring, WorkAbility students from Elk Grove and Florin High Schools were treated to a personalized tour of the Charles A. Jones Career & Education Center located on Lemon Hill Avenue in Sacramento. Charles Jones offers a variety of career training programs for adults to learn job skills for employment opportunities. The students visited a number of the vocational program classrooms including Automotive Body Repair, Court

Reporting, Culinary Arts, Customer Service Relations, Heating and Air Conditioning (HVAC), and Medical Assisting. The friendly instructors answered questions about the requirements and costs of the specific programs. Students must be 18 years old to enroll in the career training programs and can begin classes throughout the year on a scheduled basis as space is available. Career Training Programs vary in cost and Financial Aid is available for those

who qualify. Students who are interested in attending any of the courses offered at the Charles Jones Career & Education Center must attend a free orientation held on Wednesday mornings at 8:15 a.m. During the orientation the potential students are given an overview of program offerings and school policies. Students are given the opportunity to discuss individual programs with instructors, visit the classrooms and ask questions specific to the program area. After

this orientation, the students are given an assessment test (basic reading, writing and math test).

For more information on all the career training programs offered at Charles A. Jones Career & Education Center, visit their website at www.caj.edu. The website provides a link to their current program catalog which contains an updated schedule of classes and individual program information and costs.

Persistence Pays Off for Job Seeker by Jim Wirick

If you had to describe Laura Barragan-Lopez in just one word, that word would have to be persistent! In spite of many setbacks and numerous rejections from would-be employers, Laura has found employment at Eco Thrift, a used household goods & clothing retailer in Sacramento.

After receiving her high school diploma from Monterey Trail High School, Laura began an earnest job search with the assistance of the EGUSD Transition Partnership Program (TPP). Staff members from the program worked with Laura to prepare for the world of work by developing her resume and teaching her how to present her skills during employment interviews. Being a shy person and having a fear of public speaking, Laura was particularly challenged when it came to opening up about herself to prospective employers. Deter-

mined to achieve her employment goals, Laura worked hard to overcome her challenges. She studied hard, completing online training modules from the Career Ready 101 curriculum. She worked one-on-one with TPP staff members in mock interviews and attended classes & workshops to improve her chances at getting a job. Most of all Laura remained persistent. She applied to countless jobs while continuously practicing her interview presentation. She received many employment interviews but was never the candidate who was offered the position. Even Eco Thrift did not hire her the first time she interviewed for a job. Undeterred, Laura kept at her job search. When another position opened up at Eco Thrift, Laura reapplied and repeatedly practiced a script for presenting her skills to an interviewer. She followed up with the employer in person and was



granted an interview. On the day of the interview, Laura dressed for success and arrived early. An hour later, she found herself accepting an offer of employment as a Customer Service Associate!

Eco Thrift has turned out to be a good fit for Laura. The company has a unique management style that promotes teamwork while encouraging independence and self-sufficiency. We say well done Laura, your hard work and persistence have paid off!

"I like working here,"
Laura says, "the
people are friendly
and I enjoy helping
the customers."

Transition to Work Program by Sherry Clifford

The Transition to Work Program (T2W) is a collaborative contract between Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) and the Department of Rehabilitation formed to help students transition from high school to the adult world. The program is designed to assist young adults between the ages of 18 and 22 become job ready and is not designed for those students that want to earn a college degree immediately after high school.

The purpose of the program is to provide employment services including vocational and/or career interest assessment, employment preparation, job development and placement, follow up and job retention skills. These elements are necessary components of being successful in a job search. An Employment Placement Specialist from EGUSD works one on one and in a group setting with the clients of the T2W program to ensure they become job ready and collaborates with Department of Rehabilitation so the client can reach their ultimate goal of becoming employed.

The program depends heavily on the support of local business partners who are willing to work with the T2W program to employ these young adults and give them the satisfaction of becoming self sufficient. The Employment



Placement Specialist works in the community to develop and maintain long term business relationships to facilitate potential job placements for the T2W clients. The T2W program can provide pre-screened, job ready candidates to local employers. By hiring a client from the T2W pro-

gram, employers can benefit by taking advantage of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) which is available to those companies that hire from within certain target groups, including people with disabilities. Employers may be able to reduce their federal tax liability as much as \$2400 per new hire. We give a heartfelt thank you to those local community partners who have interviewed and hired from within the T2W program! We would like to single out **Secret Garden Preschool** and **All Clear Pool and Spa** as our employers of the quarter! **Secret Garden Preschool** is located in Elk Grove and caters to infant through school aged children. Call Marissa at 916-509-9429 for more information. Visit **All Clear Pool and Spa** for all of your pool/spa needs. You may contact them at 916-686-7765.

If you would like to become one of our community partners or would like more information on this program, please call the Transition Partnership Program office at 916-686-7758.

Looking for a Cool Summer Job? Try



About Cool Works

The Cool Works® "home office" is located on the Yellowstone River just outside the north entrance to Yellowstone National Park. We are a small, but mighty team of five - Bill and Patty are in the Yellowstone office, Eric is in Helena, Montana, Kathi is in Patagonia, Arizona, and Kari is in Beltingham, Washington. "Cool Works" of varying sorts have touched all of our lives and we

love it when our job seekers share their stories from seasonal jobs that have changed their lives.

CoolWorks.com has been central to the summer job and seasonal job market niche for 16 years, an old-timer in web years, but we have a youthful, energetic, older and bolder spirit. We have a dedicated core of job seekers who use Cool Works to actively seek job opportunities in great places like national parks, various

resorts, ranches, camps, ski resorts, and jobs on the water. They also seek volunteer and conservation corps opportunities to help better our world.

