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Skyline College and United Way of the Bay Area Launch the San Mateo County SparkPoint Center



SPARKPOINT CENTERS
ARE ONE-STOP COMMUNITY
RESOURCE CENTERS THAT
HELP FAMILIES ACHIEVE
LASTING FINANCIAL STABILITY

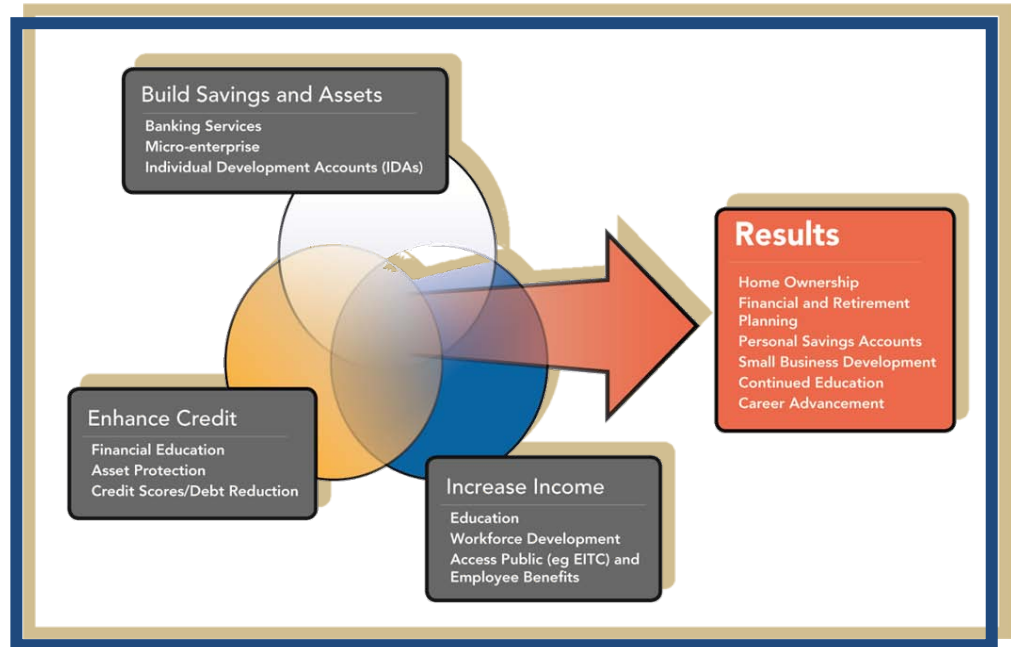
PHOTO COURTESY OF UNITED WAY OF THE BAY AREA

SparkPoint Centers

The model for United Way of the Bay Area's SparkPoint Centers is based in part on the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Center for Working Families. Components include bundled and co-located services in three areas:

- 1) income building and support including education
- 2) financial literacy & coaching
- 3) asset building.

See graphic at the right produced by United Way of the Bay Area.



"Each SparkPoint Center brings together several nonprofit and government partners to offer integrated, complementary services in one convenient location," wrote United Way's CEO Anne Wilson and VP Lorne Needle in a San Francisco Chronicle article on November 15, 2009. "Instead of providing just a one-time handout, SparkPoint commits to working with families for multiple years, creating financial plans that incorporate a full range of services, including credit counseling and financial coaching, resume building and career development as well as access to higher education and savings accounts."

Skyline Strategic Planning

Consistent with Skyline's strategic plan, the vision for establishing a center to serve working families was introduced in the fall of 2007 by Skyline's Vice President of Instruction, Regina Stanback-Stroud.

"This [Center for Working Families] presents an opportunity for us to shift our perspective and think of our vision in a different way—one that might lead to far-reaching changes in both instruction and student services. If we deconstruct our vision statement and highlight not only the notion of inspiring learners to achieve intellectual and social fulfillment (which is quite common in an institution of higher education), but to accomplish economic and personal fulfillment as well, then we can appreciate the need to re-think and broaden the ways in which we serve the community to include poverty reduction and enhancing overall personal and community economic sustainability."

Regina Stanback-Stroud, Ed.D.

"Strengthening Student Services" Grant Awarded to Skyline College

Through the San Francisco Foundation, the Bay Area Workforce Funding Collaborative awarded a grant to Skyline College in May 2009 to establish a one-stop center where students can access multiple services related to employment and career development, work supports, public benefits, financial literacy, and asset building. This 33 month project supports the planning and launch of the SparkPoint Center at Skyline.

According to the San Francisco Foundation website, the BAWFC is a partnership of 13 philanthropic foundations, the California Employment Development Department, and the Economic and Workforce Development Division of the California Community Colleges System. Foundations include: The California Endowment, East Bay Community Foundation, Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, Grove Foundation, Kaiser Permanente Northern California, Living Cities, National Fund for Workforce Solutions, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Walter & Elise Haas Fund, Walter S. Johnson Foundation, Y & H Soda Foundation. Together these partners leverage public and private resources to support high-quality job training programs and improve workforce development practices in the Bay Area and throughout California.

For more information, visit the
San Francisco Foundation website at:

<http://www.sff.org/programs/community-development/bawfc#current-grants>.

Community Colleges Offer Exciting Synergies as SparkPoint Center Hosts

Centers for Working Families and SparkPoint Centers are operated primarily by community based organizations. Skyline will be among the first community colleges in the United States to host a center based on this model. Additional centers are located at Central New Mexico Community College, St. Louis Community College, and Des Moines Area Community College.

With funding from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a working team from Skyline recently visited their counterparts at Des Moines Area Community College for an exchange of effective practices. Skyline received great technical assistance from the Des Moines' team led by Vice President Mary Chapman.



A key concept of the Des Moines' operation is a reconceptualization of services that fully integrates their center, called SuccessNet, into the existing service delivery structure of their college. Even more than a physical location, SuccessNet permeates the functions of the college as an enhanced service delivery strategy.

Because of their multifaceted mission and their centrality in regional economies, community colleges offer an exciting opportunity to trigger synergies within their networks of resources and supports for students and other members of their communities.

SparkPoint Centers intentionally fine tune these networks to create stronger aligned webs of support for those served by them. These enhanced networks increase families' chances for economic and social mobility by connecting them to a tipping point of resources that makes self-sufficiency viable.

San Francisco Chronicle Showcases SparkPoint Centers

The *Insight Section* of the November 15, 2009 San Francisco Chronicle was titled "Retooling the Economy." One of the articles, "Tough Times Spark Creative Spirit in Bay Area Charities," featured an existing United Way of the Bay Area SparkPoint Center at American Canyon in Napa County.

In addition to the SparkPoint American Canyon Center, a SparkPoint Center is operating in Oakland. Five additional counties are slated to launch centers in the coming months. The SparkPoint Center for San Mateo County will be hosted at Skyline College starting January 2010.

To see the story visit the following website: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/11/15/INSS1AGKE1.DTL>

Becoming a SparkPoint Center connects Skyline to the network of resources and opportunities within the regional SparkPoint network. Because of Skyline's innovative planning to date, the college brings great resources to this partnership. Several programmatic efforts have been either newly aligned or created to function within the SparkPoint Center's network of services.

Planning for the SparkPoint Center includes facilities planning to house the new center and network with existing Skyline programs including:

The Center for Workforce Development
The English Language Institute
Beyond Economic Self Sufficiency Tools Program (B.E.S.S.T.)
Career Center
Financial Aid

The Center for Workforce Development (CWD) facilitates the delivery of workforce development programs and services designed to meet local labor market needs and to support entry or advancement in the workplace. The CWD collaborates with Skyline College departments and programs, business and industry, community based organizations, and governmental agencies to connect individuals, agencies or organizations to effective career programs that provide college credit while preparing for upwardly mobile careers.

Continued on next page . . .

The CWD is managing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects in partnership with the San Mateo County Workforce Investment Board. The CWD partners with Las Positas College through an Industry Driven Regional Collaborative to launch a new accredited Surgical Technology Program and manages career and technical education collaboratives with area high schools and San Mateo County Regional Occupational Program.

The English Language Institute began in 2009 with Career and Technical Education Collaborative funding to enhance the CTE pipeline. Key components of the ELI are: dedicated ESL counseling and unique student education plans; translation of key information and concepts regarding college (into Spanish, Chinese, Burmese, Arabic, and more coming); the goal of creating video orientations dubbed in multiple languages; one-on-one assistance with filling out applications and making appointments with counselors; access to workshops and information sessions based on identified interests.

Beyond Economic Self Sufficiency Tools Program BESST is a food stamp education and training program in partnership with the San Mateo County Human Services Agency Food Stamp Program. For every dollar in funding (FTES) generated by Skyline serving a BESST student, the federal food stamp program will provide Skyline with an additional .50 in unrestricted revenue. This funding enables Skyline to support BESST students with food assistance, book vouchers, transportation assistance and counseling to achieve successful career and technical educational goals.

The Career Center will offer SparkPoint Participants the following Integrated Services: Career Counseling, Career Assessments and Interpretation such as MBTI: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Strong Interest Inventory, job search assistance and <http://skylinejobs.com>. The Career Center is exploring a partnership with Jewish Vocational Services to establish job development services for SparkPoint participants.

Financial Aid Office is working to connect SparkPoint participants to resources and enhance existing services through connections to partners providing financial literacy and coaching and asset building.

VITA - Skyline is working with the United Way's Earn It! Keep It! Save It! program to launch a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Center for the upcoming tax season. The VITA center will provide San Mateo County filers free tax preparation services that help low-wage workers claim all their credits and deductions returning hundreds of dollars in refunds to them.



Skyline
COLLEGE
ACHIEVE



Skyline College serves Northern San Mateo County which neighbors San Francisco, California. Under the leadership of **Skyline's President, Victoria P. Morrow, Ph.D.**, the College is proud of its diversity and its "Students First" philosophy. Characterized by high transfer rates, extensive learning communities, and innovation in career preparation programs, the college sits atop a Golden Gate National Recreation Area bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The service area includes a vibrant multicultural and multilingual community, as well as world class businesses and industries. Skyline is one of the 110 colleges in the California Community College system, now serving 2.9 million students.

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