



*Rural Communities Initiative
Implementing Strategies for Employer Engagement Workshop
January 28th-29th, 2010
Louisville, Kentucky*



CONTENT SPECIALIST BIOGRAPHIES

Shellie Baker is the Ready to Work Coordinator at Gateway Community and Technical College. In 1999, Ms. Baker started working for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services as a case worker. She gradually worked her way to case manager over the KTAP population. Ms. Baker then had the opportunity to join Gateway Community and Technical College in October of 2006 as the Ready to Work Coordinator. She works mostly with single parents receiving Kentucky Temporary Assistance and assist them achieve their educational goals.

Ms. Baker received a Bachelor's degree in Mental Health and Human Services from Northern Kentucky University in 2004.

Tori Conley, of Arbor Education and Training, has worked within the TANF programs of the states of Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin for the past 12 years for Arbor E& T/ Rescare, Inc. While working in various states, she has developed a comprehensive understanding of the Federal Welfare, Employment, Workforce Investment Act and One Stop Regulations. During the past nine years, Ms. Conley has served as the Program Manager for the Ohio Works First (TANF) Program in Greater Cincinnati, OH and as the Project Director of the EF (TANF) program in Douglas and Sarpy Counties in Nebraska. In these positions, she has implemented case management programs that assist in leading participants to self-sufficiency while meeting or exceeding all state and federally mandated All Family participation rates.

Ms. Conley has provided technical assistance on case management and participation rate strategies in various states including California, Hawaii, Indiana, and Arizona. She is aware of the need for community based approaches and partnering with employers to make the TANF program successful. Ms. Conley attended the University of Nebraska and Bellevue University.

Ray Fleming Dinneen, Psy. D., is the Founder and Executive Director of CLIMB Wyoming, a non-profit organization that trains and places low-income single mothers in higher paying careers. She developed the CLIMB program in Laramie County, Wyoming in 1986 to meet the job and life skills needs of low-income single mothers. In 2004, she expanded the CLIMB program to six additional sites across Wyoming which now serves families in 12+ counties. The CLIMB program has received both local and national acclaim for successfully moving families out of poverty. Over 1,000 women have graduated from the program to date, consistently doubling their wage income.

Dr. Fleming Dinneen has been a longtime advocate of Wyoming families. She currently serves on the Governor's appointed Wyoming Workforce Development Council and on the Board of the Wyoming Children's Society. She has also served on the planning committee for the Governor's initiative to bring the Family and Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard to Wyoming and the United Way of Laramie County's Women's Leadership Council. In 2004,



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Dr. Fleming Dinneen was honored with the Athena Award by the Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce which recognizes individuals who have made a significant impact assisting women in reaching their potential. She also was named as the 2008 “Atta Girl” Award winner from the Equipoise Fund.

Linda T. Johnson is the Assistant Commissioner of Career Development Services for the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL). In this role, Ms. Johnson is responsible for developing and directing the Department's workforce strategies to provide all Georgians with the opportunity to succeed in the career path of their choice. It involves promoting easy access to a wide array of services offered through the Department and other Workforce partners across the state. Ms. Johnson has specific responsibility for WIA-funded activities, the Jobs for Georgia Graduates (JGG) school-to-work program, GoodWorks, Georgia's Transitional Jobs Service Strategy, and other special initiatives. Ms. Johnson's role is to promote enhanced integration of services across the Department of Labor by working closely with other divisions including Field Services, Employment Services, Rehabilitation Services, and Unemployment Insurance.

A native of Savannah, Ms. Johnson graduated from Armstrong Atlantic State University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Work and from the University of Georgia with a Masters Degree in Social Work Administration. Prior to joining the Labor team, she worked with the Department of Family and Children Services in Georgia for over twenty years in various capacities including County Director positions in Peach, Richmond, and Sumter counties. Ms. Johnson also has prior experience in the educational arena as a part-time social work instructor at Fort Valley State College and as an elementary school teacher in Savannah.

Ms. Johnson serves on the Executive Committee of the National Governor's Association (NGA) State Workforce Liaisons, a member of the Board of Directors of the Atlanta Urban League, the National Transitional Jobs Network Steering Committee, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., and formerly served as president of the Georgia County Welfare Association (GCWA) representing DFCS employees from 2001 - 2003.

Shauna King-Simms is the Director of Transitions Programs at the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), where she works with policy and program development targeting economically disadvantaged and educationally under-prepared students. Prior to joining the KCTCS staff in August, 1999, Ms. King-Simms administered postsecondary education TANF contracts for the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services and served as staff for the Cabinet's task force on postsecondary education. Ms. King-Simms spent 10 years as a state level administrator of Kentucky's adult basic education and literacy initiatives and seven years as a student services administrator in a two-year



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college. She was also a regional administrator for the Job Training Partnership Act program.

Ms. King-Simms initially joined the KCTCS Chancellor's office staff to implement a statewide TANF funded initiative aimed at recruiting, transitioning, and supporting Kentucky's public assistance recipients in the Community and Technical College System. This nationally recognized effort, "Ready to Work", proved so successful that the state TANF agency requested a parallel initiative targeting the state's adult education population. This transitions model integrates campus-based targeted case management with a TANF funded work study component. Additionally, she has assisted in the design and supported implementation of innovative transitioning collaborations among KCTCS colleges and local adult education providers statewide.

More recently, Ms. King-Simms has facilitated the statewide Career Pathways initiative. All sixteen KCTCS colleges have developed and implemented at least one Career Pathway in an employment sector identified in collaboration with their local stakeholders. As part of this process, Shauna facilitated the statewide Developmental Education Pathways faculty workgroup.

Ms. King-Simms has a BA from Eastern Kentucky University and an MA from the University of Cincinnati in Organizational Behavior and Communications.

Donna Luna is the Perry County Recovery Program Manager from Linden, Tennessee. This program is responsible for facilitating the process of providing subsidized employment to close to 400 Perry County residents funded under the ARRA. Donna also serves as Career Advisor for the Workforce Essentials program, assisting TANF/Families First customers in achieving employment and self-sufficiency. Prior to this, Ms. Luna spent close to 10 years working as a Career Advisor with the South Central Tennessee Workforce Alliance assisting individuals with training/employment under the Workforce Investment Act. She has worked for the Tennessee Department of Human Services as an Eligibility Counselor and has business ownership experience as well.

Jan McKeel is the Executive Director of the South Central Tennessee Workforce Alliance, which is a nonprofit that works to develop the workforce through efforts with economic development, education, and employment. The South Central Tennessee Workforce Alliance provides oversight to the Tennessee Career Centers located in the eight South Central Tennessee counties of Giles, Hickman, Lawrence, Lewis, Marshall, Maury, Perry, and Wayne, and assists over 20,000 job seekers a year with career development and training. She has almost 20 years experience in the field of career development.



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Ms. McKeel is a graduate of the University of Kentucky with a BBA in finance. She then returned to her hometown of Murray, Kentucky where she received a Masters of Business Administration from Murray State University. She worked in the soft drink industry before returning to the college classroom as a faculty member in Illinois and Kentucky.

Ms. McKeel is married to Mickey McKeel, and they are the parents of two children, Curry and Katie, both graduates of Lambuth University (and now taxpayers – a proud achievement!). She is active with the Kiwanis of Columbia, the Maury Alliance Board of Directors, Rippavilla Plantation Board of Directors, Friends of the Maury County Library, and the Public Education Foundation of Maury County.

Paul D. Moe is the Director of the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Program, Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Board. This program helps business and education develop cooperative training projects. The Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Board awards grants to educational institutions that partner with businesses to develop new-job training or retraining for existing employees.

Mr. Moe brings a range of experience to his work on the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Program. He has directed a number of statewide programs and initiatives, such as the Governor's Commission on Poverty in Minnesota and the Minnesota Dislocated Worker Program. He has also served as an Expert Communications Consultant for the United States Department of Commerce. Mr. Moe was raised on a small farm in Northwest Minnesota. He received his undergraduate degree from Mayville State University in North Dakota and his graduate degree from North Dakota State University. He is the father of two children, Carl and Carolyn.

Judith Moon is currently the Technical Assistance Director for Arbor East, of Arbor Education and Training, providing operational support to workforce projects in the eastern half of the U.S. Before joining the private sector Ms. Moon spent over 20 years with the State of Florida and previously held the position of Program Administrator for the TANF work programs. She is responsible for curriculum development and on-site technical assistance to 46 workforce projects in the East. Ms. Moon specializes in case management, retention and quality assurance strategies developed through on-site analysis of best practices in leading workforce programs.

Jackie Savage is the President of Connectinc. and is responsible for the establishment, coordination, and collaboration of and the commitment to the mission of Connectinc. She is the founder and creator of the Work Central Career Advancement Center, a program of the Connectinc. state-of-the-art telecommunication center that assists families in career advancement, job retention, and asset accumulation. Work Central has been named a “Best



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Practice” by the National Governor’s Association and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Mrs. Savage has worked in a variety of capacities with families and education for over 30 years. She has been a social studies teacher, the principal of alternative middle and high schools, and the Assistant Director at the Florida Center for Public Management at Florida State University. Since 1998, Mrs. Savage has made her home in Raleigh, North Carolina. As the Director of Training and Partnership Development with the Public School Forum of North Carolina, Mrs. Savage initiated the statewide school-business partnership network, implemented “Managing For Results” for top-level staff in eight school districts, and designed and managed “Project Wildfire,” a school district restructuring initiative.

Mrs. Savage also served as a consultant to the Governor’s Work First Business Council, and assisted in the creation of the *March To Work* Job Fairs for the purpose of hiring Work First participants that contributed to 14,000 new hires in two years. Jackie’s deep understanding of how people teach, learn, and relate to others is evident in each of her programs and initiatives. She is the author and creator of PETALS: People Exploring Teaching and Learning Styles, a tool for teachers and learners of all ages in all settings.

Mrs. Savage is married to Jim Savage, a master trainer and avid golfer. She has four children and three grandchildren, the lights of her life. A firm believer in learning for a lifetime, she is a novice piano student and an accomplished gardener and interior decorator.

Julie L. Shapiro is Senior Vice President for Workforce Development at Seedco, where for over seven years she has overseen the development, management, and growth of nationally recognized workforce development programs. These programs are implemented through networks of community-based organizations and include large-scale employment initiatives for public assistance recipients and limited English speakers as well as pilot programs in the areas of career advancement, fatherhood, and work supports. Ms. Shapiro has also been responsible for oversight of one of the country’s busiest One Stop Career Centers, in Upper Manhattan. Her work includes technical assistance projects for various stakeholders including government agencies, Workforce Investment Boards, foundations and community based organizations.

Prior to joining Seedco, Ms. Shapiro was Assistant Vice President for Welfare to Work Services at Federation Employment and Guidance Services (F.E.G.S). She has also been a Project Manager in the New York City Human Resources Administration’s Office of Policy and Program Analysis. Ms. Shapiro received her bachelor’s degree from Brown University and a Master in Public Policy degree from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government.



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Dona Swenson is the Job Developer for New Mexico's TeamWorks Program. TeamWorks seeks to assist women who are heads of single-parent households and recipients of TANF to obtain tools that allow them to overcome barriers that are impacting their entry or re-entry into the workplace. TeamWorks supports its mission to help women transition towards self-sufficiency through a variety of training and assistance programs such as professional and computer skills development, help with overcoming barriers to employment (transportation, child care, legal problems, substance abuse, proper work clothing, etc.), internships, and job search and retention assistance. The TeamWorks model also includes programs such as screening and client need assessments, retention tracking & follow-up, and on-site career and life counseling. TeamWorks also operates in tangent with other workforce development agencies and provides outreach services to at-risk women, such as recent ex-offenders, who are eligible for TANF benefits. In her position, Ms. Swenson is responsible for collaborating with local employers to develop meaningful job opportunities for TANF participants. She also provides and coordinates external educational opportunities and resources that specifically assist clients in becoming financially self-sufficient.

Melissa Young is the Associate Director of the National Transitional Jobs Network (NTJN). NTJN is a coalition of Transitional Jobs (TJ) programs, policy organizations, and sponsoring organizations existing in over 30 states. NTJN operates as a national clearinghouse for resources, tools, and expertise for building Transitional Jobs programs, and is the primary organization for gathering and disseminating best practices to improve the model nationally. NTJN is also a significant contributor to the national dialogue about employment and advancement strategies for the hard to employ.

TJ is a workforce strategy designed to overcome employment obstacles by using time-limited, wage-paying jobs and combining real work, skill development, and supportive services to transition participants successfully into the labor market.
