

Impact on Individual and Community: Moraine Valley Community College

Impact on Individual

Through our efforts to promote employment in middle-skills occupations, the WBF 2.0 Project has connected with participants that may not typically enroll in MVCC workforce grant programs. We targeted high-performing GED/ESL students because these participants were identified as a group that would benefit from supportive services and early interventions offered by the WBF 2.0 Project. We piloted healthcare programs for GED/ESL students and awarded WBF 2.0 scholarships for enrollment in college-credit healthcare classes. GED/ESL students face many barriers to completion and careful consideration was exercised when awarding WBF 2.0 scholarship awards. Participants selected to receive the WBF 2.0 scholarship awards were recommended by faculty, interviewed by the Dean of Learning Enrichment and College Readiness, and attended an information session facilitated by the WBF 2.0 Project Manager.

Sixty percent of GED/ESL students completing medical records terminology passed with a grade of B or better. Students who received a D or did not pass the course were contacted for an opportunity to retake the class or work on other goals with the WBF 2.0 Project Manager. One student, Silvana, decided to focus on securing employment. Silvana came to the United States in 2008. She cared for her two young children and after they began school, she enrolled in ESL classes at MVCC. During her participation in the medical records class, Silvana struggled with the language and terminology, and, sadly, earned a D. When she met with the WBF 2.0 Project Manager, Silvana expressed disappointment and frustration over her performance, but she also displayed a determination to secure employment in the United States. Silvana met with the college's Job Resource Center staff and WBF 2.0 Project Manager for employment assistance. After a month of job searching, Silvana secured employment as a caregiver for an elderly patient. She has remained in contact with the WBF 2.0 Project Manager and she enjoys her job.

The WBF 2.0 Project is helping people live better by providing education, training, and employment assistance to low-income and low-skilled participants. This has been successfully demonstrated by the increase in placement test scores, credentials received, and jobs secured. To date, nearly 300 participants received job-readiness training, 258 students were awarded certificates/degrees in middle-skills occupations, and 119 WBF 2.0 Project participants secured employment.

Impact on Community

The WBF 2.0 Project positively impacted the community by hosting a resource fair with nearly 40 community-based organizations in attendance. WBF 2.0 Project participants, students, staff, faculty, and community residents received information regarding childcare, credit counseling, emergency assistance, food pantries, foreclosure prevention, governmental programs, healthcare, homebuyer education, down payment assistance, legal resources, mental health providers, senior services, tenant rights, volunteer opportunities, and energy efficiency programs from utility companies.

This event was promoted on campus and throughout the community in newspapers, online ads, and on television. The WBF 2.0 Project received positive feedback from the event. Surveys were distributed to community partners and some of the comments were:

It seemed to be marketed well. I came into contact with a wide variety of people.

Great job-great idea. There are many people needing the services presented. You invited a wide scope of services, many whom I've never seen at other fairs. You must have done a lot of advertising because I had a great crowd at my table from beginning to end.

It was a good opportunity to network with other resources in our area.

Vendors and attendees received a guide with contact information, brief descriptions, and web links for area providers. This guide, developed by the WBF 2.0 Project, will be available on the college's website. Several attendees asked if the event will be held more than once a year and one student stated:

I thank you for having the resource fair. I did not know about all of the services Worth Township offered to residents. Another is where I had my blood pressure checked and I thought it would be high but I found out it was normal. When it came to getting rebates on insulating in my home, I was informed at the Com Ed table about many varieties of rebates available.