



County Assisting Local Economic Recovery Through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Jobs Program

Social Service Agency's SCC Works Program Provides Substantial Opportunities for Job Training

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIF.—For many Santa Clara County residents, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has become a lifesaver. The Social Services Agency reports that SCC Works, a subsidized jobs program, has provided over 850 County residents with the opportunity to earn a salary, while they receive job training.

"With the local unemployment rate reaching a staggering 11.5%, the County of Santa Clara is providing jobs and services that are vital for our economic recovery," said County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors President Ken Yeager. "Programs like SCC Works provide on-the-job training that helps residents provide for their families while preparing for their future."

SCC Works was created last August from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds the County of Santa Clara received through the State of California. ARRA included \$5 Billion for the Emergency Contingency Fund for the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, (TANF) block grant program, which is known in California as CalWORKs.

"Changes in the economy during the past few years mean many job seekers will have to re-train to find work," said Supervisor Dave Cortese, Chairperson of the Board's Children, Seniors and Families Committee. "The SCC Works Program provides employers an incentive to invest in retraining future employees."

The County of Santa Clara has received \$39 million for SCC Works. Currently, approximately 450 employers are participating in this subsidized jobs program. However, unless the federal government extends funding, SCC Works is expected to end on September 30, 2010. County officials continue to advocate for an extension, so more residents can be employed.

"People want to work. They want to be able to support their families," said Will Lightbourne, Director of the County's Social Services Agency. "SCC Works is making it possible by providing incentives for employers to hire."

To qualify for SCC Works, applicants need to have at least one minor (under 18 years of age) at home, meet federal poverty guidelines, and live in Santa Clara County. The Social Services Agency offers part-time and full-time subsidized programs for all CalWORKs families, and another program for families who are not receiving CalWORKs aid, but meet federal poverty guidelines.

"SCC Works has given me a brand new direction," said Jacqueline Hairsto, a mother of three who was laid off from an executive assistant position and is currently in the program. Hairsto is now studying accounting, and was recently hired at Second Harvest Food Bank to calculate and track donations. "Working, school and taking care of my family is extremely challenging, but I am looking forward to the pay off," said Hairsto.

Prospective employees who are not currently on CalWORKs and private employers can learn about SCC Works by calling (408) 979-6371. Current CalWORKs clients and non-profit employers can call (408) 793-1214.

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Posted: February 4, 2010
