

1200 FOUNDATION

WORKING FOR THE WORKING POOR

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2006

GRANTS AWARDED

We're delighted to announce that the 1200 Foundation has recently awarded its first two grants. The Executive Directors of both non-profit organizations gratefully accepted their \$5,000 checks at a cocktail reception held in their honor. The recipient organizations are: Bay Area Construction Sector Intervention Collaborative (BACSIC) and Opportunities for Technology Information Careers (OPTIC).

BACSIC focuses on Oakland residents traditionally excluded from high-paying construction industry jobs. BACSIC provides job training and services to program participants and works in conjunction with organized labor, the City of Oakland and the Port.

At their facility in Antioch, OPTIC provides training, employment and up to two years supportive services to women moving from poverty to long-term economic independence. Fully 90% of alumni who have been out of the program for 18 months are employed.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The 1200 Foundation's grant to OPTIC came at a critical time this spring. "We had been running very lean for a very long time, and we really needed to increase our focus on the paid internship part of our job training program," explains Alissa Friedman, Executive Director. "The stress on the system was mounting."

OPTIC job training participants are hired as paid interns after graduating from three months of classroom training, working for an enterprise OPTIC calls the DataWorks. Local businesses and organizations hire OPTIC's DataWorks to perform data entry, database creation, form design, bulk mailings, and other administrative and technical projects. "It's a great way to get the interns real work experience while generating earned income to support the program," explains Friedman.

Cuts in government funding had forced OPTIC to consolidate positions, leaving Project Manager Nathan Clark with his hands full. Enter Reina De La Rosa, a recent OPTIC alumna. With funds from the 1200 Foundation and the Antioch Area Community Fund, OPTIC was able to hire De La Rosa as DataWorks Supervisor to focus on intern management and mentoring.

Three months later, Friedman reports that the new hire has made a big difference: "With Reina on board, we're able to provide interns with better feedback and support, and we're also able to generate more business for our intern teams."

WEBSITE

The Foundation website is now up and running. Check it out at www.1200foundation.org. One of our trustees, Peg Kemper, worked closely with a web designer to bring the Foundation's message to the Internet. A donor generously underwrote half of the design fee.

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