

CSAC 2016 Challenge Award - Executive Summary

Sacramento County Probation Department Career Training Partnership

{Partners include: Northern California Construction Training (NCCT); Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE)}

Program Overview: The Career Training Partnership program provides vocational and educational services for clients on probation, post-release community supervision, and mandatory supervision in Sacramento County.

Challenge: The Sacramento County Probation Department has been challenged with preparing our client population for return to society and the workforce, as well as identifying “felon-friendly” employers who are willing to hire them. Additionally, our clients have expressed interest in long-term, gainful employment with potential for growth and advancement instead of more traditional, lower-wage, part-time work. The majority of our clients interviewed also expressed a desire to make serious lifestyle changes, but often lack the resources and knowledge on how to do so. A large portion of our clientele also lack stable and reliable transportation, creating another barrier to successful reentry.

Solution: In December of 2013, the Probation Department, along with NCCT and SCOE, established the Career Training Partnership program. NCCT is a non-profit, community-based organization that prepares individuals for careers in construction. The nine-month training commitment offers participants a chance to complete basic educational requirements on-site, through the partnership with SCOE, while also acquiring skills in a variety of trades including carpentry, cement work, electrical, plumbing, painting, landscaping, and forklift operation.

A separate vocational course was created at NCCT to work solely with the Probation clientele. NCCT dedicates an instructor to the program who provides construction training while SCOE provides a full-time teacher, educational resources, classroom supplies, computers and testing materials for the program.

To appropriately identify and place clients into the program, Probation developed eligibility criteria for client referrals. These criteria include, but are not limited to, a minimum age of 17 years; willingness to work towards a GED or Diploma; compliance with probation conditions; commitment to working drug and alcohol free; and physical ability to complete construction tasks. Additionally, Probation placed a Sr. Deputy Probation Officer on-site to assist in facilitating referrals and provide orientation to clients as well as monitor their progress throughout the program.

As mentioned above, a significant number of clients are also without personal transportation since they often have been without employment for extended periods of

time and are often without a valid driver's license. We have addressed this obstacle by offering public transit passes; participation in our bicycle donation program; and through a van service. The van service offers clients transportation between our three Adult Day Reporting Centers and the program worksite. With the addition of this valuable program component, clients have an increased chance of successfully reintegrating into society and the workforce.

Budget/Costs/Savings: Senate Bill 678 funding was allocated to support the creation of this program, and the department budgeted \$228,000 for the services offered. These services include the cost of the vocational instructor, full-time teacher from SCOE, and van transportation component.

As our program continues to prove successful, new components are planned. This year, a new on-site welding option will be offered, further enhancing the job readiness of our population. The partnership has remained within budget since its inception, so in order to ensure operation of this new component without adding costs we have relocated welding materials from the Sacramento County Boy's Ranch (which closed in 2010) to the NCCT training site.

Results: Working closely with 22 local labor unions, the program has a 92% job placement rate for graduates. Since the partnership's inception, Probation clients have acquired 64 job placements and have been awarded 35 GED's or diplomas.

To further support reentry programming, the Probation Department Career Training Partnership has assisted clients with reinstating their driver's licenses and repairing and insuring their vehicles in order to address employment and transportation needs.

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