

Workforce Development Program



Our Workforce Development Program aims to address the underlying causes of un- and under-employment among women, in order to end homelessness for good. Program services include a Learning Center, career readiness workshop series, and a social enterprise, MADE by DWC.

Our Learning Center provides classes in computer skills, literacy, and math as well as academic and vocational counseling sessions, job readiness preparation, and employment placement services. We offer courses in resume building, financial literacy, computer use, and more. During open lab hours, DWC participants can use computers to search and apply for jobs, write cover letters and resumes, or work on school assignments.

Women also receive help with the small stuff that most jobseekers take for granted, like a physical address, an email account, a quiet space to take a work-related phone call, interview-ready clothing, access to laundry, and assistance with transportation.

Through support from the City and County of Los Angeles' Regional Initiative for Social Enterprise (LA:RISE), we also provide paid transitional employment at MADE by DWC, as well as final job placement and one year of support to ensure retention.

OUR 2020 IMPACT amidst COVID-19

82 women employed

1k+ job counseling sessions

436 women served

14 women enrolled in LA:RISE

SUCCESS STORY

“I was struggling within myself because I was an older unemployed woman.

Although I didn't have a college degree, I had a high school diploma, some vocational training, and over 30 years of work experience. I was tired of the temporary agencies and hearing that they moved forward with another candidate. One evening I was invited to the Downtown Women's Center for an orientation and I felt that I was given a break at that moment.

Here, I was given the opportunity to work with people who were non-judgmental. I worked alongside a woman who believed in

me and helped me everyday with words of encouragement, motivation as well as a joke or two. I was able to provide services to other women there, and I then quickly began to motivate and inspire them to try harder and let nothing stand in their way.

Twelve days before the end of my LA:RISE program, I was told about a position that I should apply for. I am very happy to say that I am now a Career Coach thanks to everyone!”

— JEANNINE, AN LA:RISE PARTICIPANT

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

In early 2020, our Workforce Development Program launched the “A Bridge Home” (ABH) Career Series, to provide mobile and in-house navigation employment services to women in Bridge Housing programs across Los Angeles County. Participants receive and are connected with employment coaching, transitional employment, resume- and cover letter-writing assistance, interview preparation, employment application assistance, and job readiness career series. In its first three months of operation, 31 women had already enrolled in the ABH Career Series!

EMPLOYER RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Our Employer Recognition Program is a unique opportunity for employers to align themselves with DWC by hiring women experiencing homelessness. Participating employers receive direct recognition on our website, on social media, at high-profile events, and even in our annual reports. All employers are also eligible for the DWC Seal of Distinction, which acknowledges employers who implement internal policies and practices that reflect their commitment to ending homelessness and hiring marginalized women.



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