

SLATE Update

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. LOUIS AGENCY ON TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT (SLATE)



Francis G. Slay, Mayor



ST. LOUIS AGENCY ON TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

SLATE

MISSOURI CAREER CENTER

DOWNTOWN • CENTRAL WEST END

Michael K. Holmes, Executive Director

www.stlworks.com

December 2013 Issue

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SLATE Update is a monthly newsletter produced by the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE), part of the City of St. Louis and funded by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). SLATE helps match area job seekers with businesses through a variety of no-cost services.

The purpose of this publication is to share the progress and outcomes of our many programs, and will be of special interest to legislators, Workforce Investment Board members, vendors, partners, educational institutions, other public agencies or anyone with an interest in workforce development.

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MISSOURI WORK ASSISTANCE HELPS NEEDY FAMILIES ATTAIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The St. Louis City's welfare transition program, performed by SLATE's Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) staff, together with Better Family Life, remains the most successful effort in the region in terms of engaging recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and moving them towards self-sufficiency, personal responsibility and work activity.

Typically, individuals enrolled in MWA also meet the WIA requirements and are dually enrolled, which gives the customers the opportunity to take advantage of a much wider range of services.

Now serving over **700** customers, SLATE's MWA has developed a strong support structure and seamless management process to ensure access to training, employment and other supportive services, which may include transportation assistance, subsidized child care referrals, resume preparation, practicing interviewing skills, obtainment of GED, on-the-job training and vocational education among others. With help from SLATE's community partner network, MWA is able to assist with barriers that prevent customers from successfully entering employment.

The process begins with a conversation with a dedicated Career Specialist, who develops an Individual Employment Plan based



on personalized career goals and a skills assessment. Depending on the results, individuals may be placed in one of the following activities: employment, community services (a skills building activity), vocational education/professional training, GED, job readiness workshops or job search.

The Career Specialist will continue providing job leads and referrals until employment is obtained. Those placed into Community Service will work on gaining skills needed in a professional environment and will receive references from every company they worked for. Many short-term Community Service positions lead to full-time employment.

For questions and requests for assistance and support, please contact the **SLATE MWA Hotline** at **(314) 657-3591** or come to our Downtown Career Center and ask to speak with MWA staff.

UNEMPLOYED TANF RECIPIENT HIRED AT THE NEW GROCERY CHAIN

Eboni Robinson came to SLATE/ Better Family Life's Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program in hopes of finding employment, but unfavorable life circumstances presented a challenge. To help her get started, *LaTonya Jackson*, Career Specialist at Better Family Life, placed Robinson into a Job Readiness Training class. Over the course of the next three and a half weeks, Robinson spent eight hours a day, five days a week, in the classroom learning life and work-readiness skills. Once training was over, Robinson experienced a renewed zeal and determination to succeed in life and worked on developing a career plan which significantly improved her chances when a job opportunity later presented itself.



Robinson was among **250** people who showed up for the Save-A-Lot food store's Job Fair conducted at SLATE in *October 2013*. With the new store scheduled to open next month, the St. Louis' neighborhood discount grocer was looking to hire for multiple positions across various departments, including janitors, cashiers, cleaning crew, stockers, and store clerks.

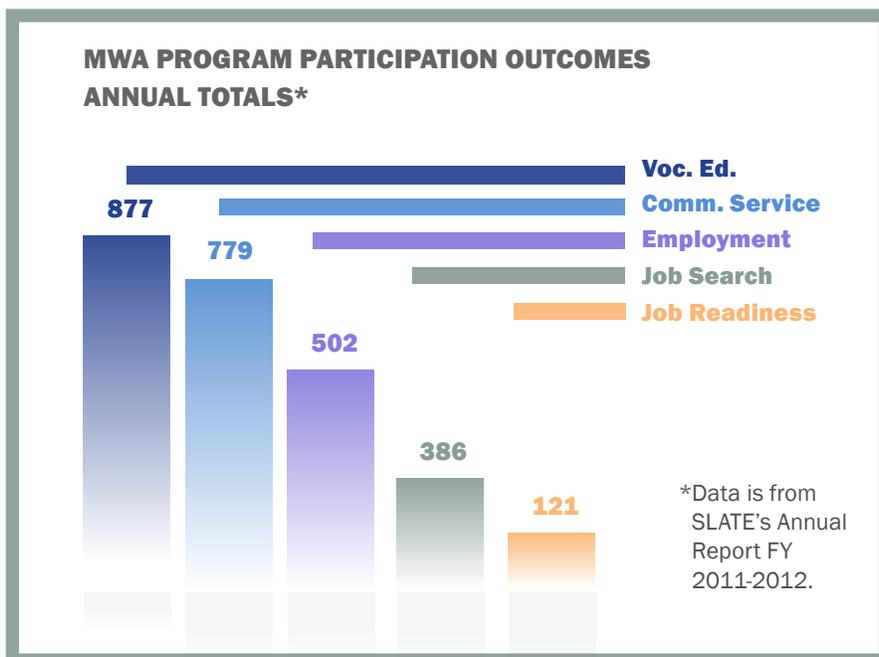
Total of **89** interviews were conducted that day, with Robinson being among the first **40** people selected for hire.

Eboni Robinson is now working at Save-A-Lot's new location on Jefferson Avenue. She is doing wonderfully and is on track to be promoted after her 90 days of probation.

Story submitted by LaTonya R. Jackson, Better Family Life, Inc.

SLATE'S HANDLING OF JOB FAIRS APPEALS BROADLY TO JOB SEEKERS AND BUSINESS EMPLOYERS

As the holiday season approaches, SLATE has been hard at work conducting numerous highly successful job fairs for local employers. Since October, a total of **6** job fairs had taken place at SLATE for businesses such as *Save-A-Lot, Ballpark Village, Fields Foods, Securitas Security services, Love's* and others. Below is a pictorial overview of two of the most talked-about events—*Fields Foods* and *Ballpark Village Executives*.



Fields Foods Completes Hiring Team of Foodies

A job fair, facilitated by SLATE on behalf of *Fields Foods*, wrapped up the hiring process for this new grocery store with an opening date of January 4. Close to **240** people attended each of the two events, on *November 6* and *December 4*. SLATE's Business Development Manager *Bonnie Forker* said that at times, SLATE's screening area was standing room only. While the results are being tallied, *Fields Foods* representatives expressed their gratitude and recognized SLATE staff for well-attended and well-organized events.

A total of **120** positions were available at *Fields Foods* across all departments. SLATE staff pre-screened each and every person and recommended qualified candidates for a subsequent interview with *Fields Foods* representatives handling a specific department - Meat/Produce, Customer Service/Front End, Kitchen, Grocery/Frozen & Dairy, and Bakery/Deli.



Photos, above: SLATE's Welcome area on the day of a *Fields Foods* Job Fair, *November 6, 2013*. Left: *Fields Foods* representative interviews potential candidate. Bottom: SLATE's *Gino Austin* (right) completes pre-screening of a candidate for *Ballpark Village*, *November 13*.

Only 18 were screened out of the interview process during the second phase, *Forker* said.

Ballpark Village Executive Hiring Event Leaves Customers Happy: Customer Testimonial (edited for length)



"I want you to know that my first experience with SLATE was very positive. Every person I met was caring and genuinely interested in helping people. I was greeted with a big smile from the receptionist. When I went to through the enrollment process and test, your folks were on top of it, helpful, knowledgeable and working hard; obviously very committed to what they are doing. My interviewer, *Bonnie*, was empathetic and made me feel comfortable... I overheard one of the gentleman say: "Well, I'm here for the duration." At that time, it looked like it might be 10:00 pm before it was over. That meant a lot to me - the fact that you all were willing to stay there as long as it took. Keep up the good work!"

~Don B.

SLATE TO START OPEN CALL SESSIONS FOR BALLPARK VILLAGE JOBS

When: January 21; February 4, 18; March 4, 2014.

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Where: SLATE MCC - Downtown, 1st Floor Conference Room.

The Open Call Sessions will assist hiring managers of Ballpark Village's businesses to identify qualified candidates. SLATE will assist potential candidates through the screening process. Participants will be able to complete an application, submit their résumés, and network with potential employers. Applicants will not be hired during these sessions, but those selected by hiring managers will be invited back for an interview at a later date.

Applicants must pre-register for one of the Sessions through SLATE's Skills team. Open space for each session is **500** people. Those not registered on the day of the event will be able to register for the next available session.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting Stacey Fowler at sfowler@stlworks.com.

CONSTRUCTION INFO SESSIONS HIGHLIGHT LOCAL UNIONS AND TRADES TRAINING

SLATE's ongoing series of Construction Trades Information Sessions continues to draw hundreds of diverse individuals with an interest in such fields as plumbing, painting, carpentry and electrical work. Although participants don't directly apply at the Info Sessions, they gain valuable insights into the best ways to enter a particular trade. SLATE Executive Director *Michael K. Holmes* was recently quoted as saying that customers who attend "will know what they need to do to apply. Once they get that information, if they want SLATE to help them apply or to do the paperwork, they can come here Monday through Friday and we can help them."



Photos (clockwise):
Laborers' Union Info Session, *September 2013*; Painters' Union Info Session, *November 2013*; Jim Watry, Ballpark Village Hiring Manager, with a candidate, Marcia Ginger; Ballpark Village Executive Job Fair, *November 13*.



"I overheard [an interviewer] say 'I'm here for the duration.'...That meant a lot to me."

~JOB FAIR ATTENDEE