

TO: Youth Council

DATE: 2/09/05

FROM: WIB Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: Out-of-School Youth Program Quarterly Report

PROPOSED MOTION(S): Information Only

DISCUSSION: Out-of-School Youth Report, October/November/December 2004 is attached.

ATTACHMENT(S): Out-of-School Youth Quarterly Report will be available at the meeting.

To: **Dave Davis**
Employment & Training Analyst, Department of Workforce Investment

From: **Rebecca Lincoln**
Career Educator, EMPOWER Program, Merced County Office of Education

Re: Merced County Youth Council Quarterly Report- EMPOWER Program

Date: January 31, 2005 for the quarter ending December 31, 2004

A. Overall status of the program:

The overall status of the program continues to show growth and improvement. Fifty nine participants were enrolled during the months of October, November, and December 2004. WIA-Client Action reports on goals, activities, exits and follow-ups show significant improvement that resulted in a December soft exit report with no participants listed.

B. Past Quarter Highlights:

1) EMPOWER Workshops:

- a) EMPOWER Orientation: Conducted on the second Friday in the months of October, November, and December; approximately 35 participants attended each session;
- b) EMPOWER Workshop I: Conducted on the third Friday of October, November and December; approximately 20 participants attend each session;
- c) EMPOWER Workshop II-Job Readiness was conducted in the months of October, November and December. Participants completed an ROP employability portfolio and practiced interviewing techniques.

2) EMPOWER ZONE: The second EMPOWER Zone was held on October 27, 2004. Twenty-four EMPOWER participants were judged on the successful completion of a job application, an employability portfolio, and on their individual and panel interviewing skills. Fifteen professionals from public, private and community based organizations interviewed and scored each participant on a scale of 0-100. The event concluded with a recognition ceremony.

3) Bldg K-Computer Lab: EMPOWER participants use the computer lab daily to work on résumés, portfolios, and conduct job search. Sue Tyler, adult school teacher, was contracted to be available for six hours per week in the computer lab to assist EMPOWER participants with PLATO, an educational software program designed to increase math and reading skills. Sign in sheets are used to track the number of participants using the computer lab daily.

4) Career Industry Days: These ROP sponsored events provide youth with detailed information and exploration of specific career pathways. Career Industry Days include tours of local businesses, guest speaker presentations, and hands-on activities related to various careers within a pathway. This quarter, the following three Career Industry Days were held at the Merced County Fair Grounds:

- a) Careers in Arts and Communications was held on Thursday, Oct 21, 2004
- b) Careers in Industrial Technology was held on Wednesday, November 3, 2004
- c) Careers in Agriculture was held on Thursday, December 2, 2004

Empower advisors and their participants attended. The advisors were encouraged to invite those participants whose career goals or technical training aligned with these pathways.

- 5) **WIA Goals Training** was provided for EMPOWER Advisors and support staff October 19, 2004. Mary Cavazos, a representative from our partner EDD, provided the training.
- 6) **PLATO Training** for EMPOWER Advisors and support staff was held December 15, 2004 (Beginning session) and December 16, 2004 (Intermediate session).
- 7) **Beginning SCANS I Training** for new EMPOWER Advisors was held on October 8, 2004. This session provided an overview of the SCANS competencies. Advisors learned how to integrate the competencies into existing coursework and how to motivate students to learn using the SCANS model.
- 8) **BE SAFE: Gang Awareness and Sexual Harassment Training** for EMPOWER staff was held on November 1, 2004.
- 9) **“30 Ways to Shine,”** a training on strategies intended to assist new employees to be successful, was provided for new YOP staff members on November 17, 2004.
- 10) **Advanced SCANS II Training** was held for EMPOWER Advisors on December 10, 2004. This training builds upon the teaching strategies introduced in SCANS I training and includes Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences.
- 11) **Juvenile Hall Project:** Staff and administrators from EMPOWER, Juvenile Hall, Merced County Probation, and Valley Community School met on November 23, 2004 at Juvenile Hall to develop a referral process. A tour of the facility was conducted.
- 12) **Quarterly EMPOWER Partner meeting** was held on October 1, 2004. Attendees included representatives from Merced College, Merced Adult School, and EMPOWER staff.
- 13) **EMPOWER Focus Group** meeting was conducted on December 6, 2004. Program participants discussed, evaluated, and provided feedback on Workshop II.
- 14) **Opportunity Club:** The Opportunity Club is a newly developed activity to provide monthly sessions on current job, education, community, and leadership opportunities, as well as information regarding life skills for EMPOWER and YOP youth in Merced County. Sessions are conducted in Bldg K at the MCOE campus. All participants are invited and encouraged to attend. This quarter’s schedule was as follows:

- October 25, 2004: Multiple-Intelligences – How are you smart? A discussion was facilitated by Rebecca Lincoln and Joanna Grimes from the EMPOWER Program.
- November 22, 2004: College or Career-Technical Training? Part 1. Dr. Ben Duran, President of Merced College, led a discussion with participants regarding the benefits of pursuing a community college education.
- December 13, 2004: College or Career-Technical Training? Part 2. Holly Newlon, Coordinator of Adult ROP Programs, led a discussion with participants regarding the benefits of career-technical training.

15) Los Banos WorkNet Graduation: Three EMPOWER participants, Jason Cook, Antonio Silveria and Erich Tholen, earned their GED and received a diploma at a graduation ceremony held at the Los Banos WorkNet on November 10, 2004.

16) Coat Drive: EMPOWER Advisors and YOP Mentors organized a coat drive to provide coats for 23 children ages 5-12 attending Bellevue Elementary School in Atwater. Flyers were developed and distributed throughout the community. In early November, The Merced Sun-Star featured an article about the coat drive, resulting in 70 new and used coats being donated. Twenty-three of the new coats were delivered to Bellevue Elementary School, and the overstock was given to children in nearby schools.

17) Community Service Project: Marines Toys for Tots and Merced County Boys & Girls Club On Dec 20th, twenty- three EMPOWER participants volunteered their time to wrap a total of 210 gifts at the Science & Technology Building @ Castle and returned on Dec. 21st to help distribute the gifts to members of the Merced County Boys & Girls Club. Media coverage was provided by Don Thomas with Mid-Valley publications, and an article was printed in the Merced County Times on December 23, 2004.

18) Success Story:

Lorena Rios is an EMPOWER participant who was recently hired at Save Mart after completing Workshop II. In the workshop, she learned how to dress for success and received in-depth interview practice, including with her peers and in a panel setting with professionals. During her interview she was able to use her Employability Skills Portfolio (master application, resume, cover letter, references, and letter of recommendation), which was completed during the workshop which Lorena thinks made a big impact on her interviewers. Lorena was selected for the Save Mart position from a field of seven other applicants.

19) CWA Youth Conference: ALL YOUTH. .ONE SYSTEM: CONNECTED is the theme of this years CWA Conference held on January 25th- 27th 2005 in Orange County, CA. EMPOWER staff will be presenting at this year's conference, sharing the EMPOWER Orientation model and SAGE Assessment. Presenters include representatives from the EMPOWER program, EDD, Merced WorkNet, and Marissa Enciso, an EMPOWER participant.

20) Working Professional Curriculum update: EMPOWER staff are in the process of revising the ROP Working Professional course outline, which is the framework for all

EMPOWER workshops, work experience activities, and the locally approved youth credential. An Advisory Committee Meeting for community review and approval of the course outline is scheduled for March 24, 2005.

C. Past Quarter Deficiencies

Staff spent considerable time on JCG exits in order to meet 3rd quarter credential rate.

D. Past Quarter recruiting and marketing efforts:

- 1) Holly Newlon, Empower Coordinator gave a presentation on October 4, 2004 to the Merced County Office of Education Board of Trustees;
- 2) Empower staff dispersed brochures at the Merced Job Fair held on October 6, 2004;
- 3) Empower staff distributed brochures at the "Lights On!" event held at the Merced Mall on October 14, 2004, interested youth were invited to the October Empower orientation;
- 4) Empower staff provided a presentation and distributed materials at Valley Community School Healthy Start committee meeting on October 26, 2004;
- 5) Empower staff gave a presentation on November 18, 2004 at the Family Resource Council;
- 6) Empower Staff distributed fliers and brochures at the Hmong New Year celebration on December 17, 2004 held at the Merced County Fairgrounds;
- 7) Ongoing outreach was conducted in the communities of Atwater, Planada, and Le Grand.

F. Number enrolled & number of participants in each program component: December 2004

Total number of active participants: 244

Total number of participants in follow-up: 146

Enrollment in program components:

Adult Basic Education, GED, HS diploma	28
Career Technical Training	46
Workshop II	16
Work Experience	13
Unsubsidized Employment	56

G. Number of hard/soft exits:

Hard Exits: 15

Soft Exits: 00

H. Next quarter challenges: Preparation for the annual monitor's review.

I. Technical assistance needed: Trainings will be provided for EMPOWER staff as follows:

- a) Feb. 23, 2005; 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Youth Performance Management
- b) Mar. 23, 2005; 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Youth Exit Strategies

J. Number of clients receiving social services and examples of services received:

Sao Lee, an EMPOWER participant currently enrolled in the ROP Office Technologies in a Medical Environment program, is participating in an internship at Mercy Hospital specializing in EKG. In December 2004, Sao had pink eye and was removed from site because of the highly contagious infection. Sao had no medical coverage. Through EMPOWER funds the participant was able to seek attention and had the costs covered. He has since returned to continue his internship at Mercy Hospital.