

To: **Alfredo Mendoza:** Staff Services Analyst, Department of Workforce Investment
From: **Rebecca Lincoln:** Career Educator
Re: **Merced County Youth Council Quarterly Report:** EMPOWER Program
Date: **September 2008:** 4th quarter report for April, May & June '08

A. Overall Status of the Program:

Fifteen new participants were enrolled and **eleven** exited from the EMPOWER Program in the fourth quarter. This brings the total to 161 active EMPOWER participants and 98 participants in Phase II (follow-up). The Empower advisors continue to track the number of participants enrolled in structured program activities to ensure that the majority of youth are receiving intensive services, as opposed to case management services. The status on WIA-Client action reports for goals, activities, exits, and follow-ups (phase II) remain up to date.

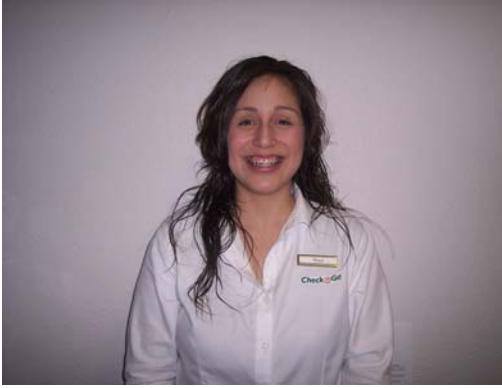
B. Past Quarter Highlights:

- 1) **EMPOWER Workshops:** are provided on an every other month basis. The following is an accounting of workshops offered and number attended:
 - a. **EMPOWER Orientation:** held on Friday on May 8th with 40 youth in attendance;
 - b. **EMPOWER Workshop I:** '*Gettin' Ready for the Job*' held on Friday, May 18th had twenty-four in attendance;
 - c. **EMPOWER Workshop II:** '*The Real Game California*' was conducted in three sessions on May 19, 21, & 23 with an average of 20 in attendance per session;
 - d. **EMPOWER Workshop III:** '*Gettin' a Job*' was conducted in three sessions on May 27, 26 and 30 with an average attendance of 15 per session.

- 2) **Bldg K-Computer Lab:** EMPOWER participants use the computer lab daily to work on resumes, portfolios, and conduct job search. *PLATO* is educational software designed to increase math and reading skills, it is also available to the participants in the computer lab. Sign-in sheets track the number of participants using the computer on a daily basis.

- 3) **ROP Marketing Working Professional Curriculum** revisions and updates were approved by a local advisory committee meeting on April 24, 2008. The EMPOWER staff presented a new YOP/ EMPOWER Business Brochure to be used with our business and community partners, a Labor Market Survey report, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) updates; as well as a 4-step lesson plan on Financial Literacy.

4. EMPOWER Success Story:

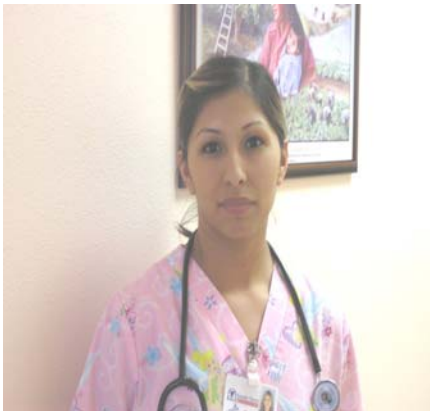


Rosa Maria Jimenez, a 21 year old EMPOWER participant, enrolled in the Empower program on April 4, 2006. Rosa remembers being a high school graduate without a plan. Rosa heard about the EMPOWER program at the Los Banos WorkNet and was invited to an EMPOWER orientation workshop. Rosa attended the orientation; she decided that the Empower program

was just what she was looking for to help meet her goals. Rosa met with the EMPOWER advisor to discuss interests and career choices. She was interested in working in an office environment, but had no office experience. She was placed at Valley Community School as her work experience site. There she gained the office skills and experience that enabled her to be placed at Merced County Office of Education with Mae Pierini in a temporary position; she now had a total of six months experience in an office setting.

Rosa applied for a customer service representative position with 'Check- N- Go', when her work experience was complete. Rosa then was offered a part-time position which eventually turned into full time; within two months Rosa was promoted to manager.

5. EMPOWER Success Story:



Yesenia Machuca enrolled into Empower in November 2005; she had a two-year old child and no work experience or skills. She worked with her advisor on setting her career goals that included some exploration and job shadowing. This led Yesenia to make a decision to enroll into the Medical Assistant Program offered through Merced College. She worked very hard and completed the Medical Assistant program in November 2006.

After completing the program, Yesenia took a break and had her second baby. In March 2008, Yesenia contacted her advisor, Toulou Moua and asked if she can be put on work experience. Toulou placed her at Le Grand Golden Valley Health Center for work experience and training. Yesenia was a quick learner and her outgoing personality was a great fit for the staff in Le Grand. After she completed her 192 hours of training, she was offered a full-time position as a Medical Assistant in June 2008. Yesenia is currently working between the Le Grand and the Planada Golden Valley Health Centers.

C. Past Quarter Deficiencies: none

D. Past Quarter Recruiting and Marketing efforts:

Recruiting efforts for EMPOWER are limited. The contract specified that as participants exit, new participants will be enrolled in the following quarter after exits, upon availability of funds.

E. Next Quarter Challenges: none

F. Technical assistance needed: WIA Common Measures Training is scheduled on August 20, on the Merced County Office of Education campus.

G. Number of clients receiving social services and examples of services received.

Numerous referrals were made to agencies to assist with food, clothing, housing, college books, and transportation.

The EMPOWER Advisors and Employment & Training Specialist from The Human Services Agency (H.S.A) are communicating and collaborating to provide support services to ensure success for each participant enrolled in both programs, EMPOWER and Welfare-to-Work.