

From: **Rebecca Lincoln**: Career Educator, Merced County Office of Education  
Re: **Merced County Youth Council Quarterly Report**- Empower Program  
Date: **December 2007** (July/ Aug/ September)

**A. Overall status of the program:**

There are presently 143 active participants in EMPOWER at the end of the first quarter; this past quarter the program had one new enrollment and twenty-four exits. 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:** Staff updated and restructured the EMPOWER Workshops over the summer. The EMPOWER Workshops were provided to youth only in the month of September this quarter. The following is an accounting of workshops offered and number attended:
  - a) **EMPOWER Orientation:** Conducted on Friday September 7<sup>th</sup> with an attendance of forty-two youth;
  - b) **EMPOWER Workshop I: ‘Gettin’ Ready for the Job’** conducted on Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup> had eighteen youth in attendance;
  - c) **EMPOWER Workshop II: ‘The Real Game California’** was conducted on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> with an average attendance of eighteen participants per session;
  - d) **EMPOWER Workshop III: ‘Gettin’ a Job’** was conducted on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> with an average attendance of eighteen participants per session.
  
- 2) **Bldg K-Computer Lab:** EMPOWER participants use the computer lab daily to work on résumés, 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 are used to track the number of participants using the computer lab daily.
  
- 3) **Quarterly EMPOWER Partners meeting** was not held this past quarter. EDD has representation at the EMPOWER monthly staff meetings. Merced College provides updated information to staff on a quarterly basis

**4) EMPOWER Success Story:**



Luis Araujo entered the Empower Program on June 19, 2007, a nineteen year old high school graduate who had attended college for a short time, and had very little work experience. Luis has dealt with on-going issues and challenges, but he never loses sight of his goal to become an Attorney.

As soon as Luis joined the Empower Program, he voiced some concerns to his advisor regarding his financial aid. A few phone calls to Financial Aid office were made and all the issues holding him back were cleared up. Luis is now attending Merced College taking 15 units.

Luis also had some challenges with the Justice System; he needed a fingerprint clearance to start his Empower Work Experience. Luis and his advisor spent hours on phone calls, sending emails, and even sent letters to the local Superior Court. All the time and attention to these problems helped to successfully clear all court related issues and Luis could now receive his fingerprint clearance. Luis was placed at a worksite here at MCOE's Media Center; assisting staff, stocking shelves, and learning computer programs. Luis now walks around the MCOE campus wearing a BIG smile on his face, and shows his gratitude to everyone connected to this program and his worksite. Luis says after working hard picking crops in the fields and in janitorial cleaning; he never believed he would have such a great job!

Luis is presently completing his application for CSU; he plans to transfer from Merced College to attend classes in the spring.

**C. Past Quarter Deficiencies:** none

**D. Past Quarter recruiting and marketing efforts:**

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

**E. Next quarter challenges:**

**G. Technical assistance needed:** Training on WIA Common Measures

**H. Number of clients receiving social services and examples of services received.**

Numerous referrals have been made to agencies to assist with food, clothing, housing and transportation.