


County Orange
Department of Social Services

Submitted By Sharron Hinton

Title Human Services Manager

Address 
113 Mayo Street
Hillsborough, NC 27278
United States

Phone Number (919) 245-2840

Email shinton@orangecountync.gov

Project Title DSS Employment Center

Category Innovations in Services to Customers
(Please select one)

Project Description and Summary

What did you do?

Describe your program or project. What did you do? What is the history behind the program/project? What did you hope to accomplish? What was your timeline? Your budget? How did you identify your objectives? How well did you use available resources?

Our county department of social services has become increasingly focused on employment activities for all clients or persons accessing the agency. By increasing wages for families, DSS hopes to increase their ability to meet more of their own needs, thus requiring fewer public services. In efforts to increase employment opportunities and develop educational career pathways, DSS opened its employment and training center.

DSS has also incorporated a client-run café as another training opportunity. Many Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act participants have been able to take advantage of work experience opportunities at this café and learned more about food service and business.

The center has also integrated the county's Veterans Services, assisting veterans and dependents in obtaining, retaining, or reinstating compensation, pension, medical, education, training, loan, insurance, burial, and other applicable benefits and services.

Project Success and Impact

What was the outcome?

Was your program/project a success? What was the impact? How did you measure the impact? How widespread is the impact of your program/project? How were you able to overcome obstacles and challenges? Did your program/project meet your established objectives?

The center encompasses a collaboration of various partnerships as a result; the innovations have taken on a fever pitch with new programs, opportunities, and partners being added monthly. FNS Employment and Training has been able to offer customers educational opportunities that previously were only available on the college campus. Human Resource Development Classes, Navigation Series, and GED courses are provided on site by the local community college, offering great convenience and success to our customers. The success of these programs led us to partner with Dress for Success, a local nonprofit, by hosting ongoing workshops teaching the basics of dressing for job search, interviews, and appropriate work place attire. All of these programs have met with success and have led to employment of our customers.

The center has become a "hot spot" for local companies to hold hiring events and information sessions for potential employees. FNS E&T will host a company's hiring event providing the marketing, staffing, and potential employees to be interviewed. FNS E&T along with the other service providers at the center are aggressively pursuing this very successful recruiting method to the benefit of our business partners and customers.

These types of innovations can easily be scaled and duplicated by other counties according to their space and staffing. The costs of these innovations have been minimal to the county. The partners do not charge DSS for their services while DSS offer them the space and customer base at no charge, this arrangement has led to great synergy and ever increasing opportunities for innovations.
