

## Outreach Community Services

### Proposal to DuPage County – PY2024 Community Services Block Grant Funds

Submitted July 1, 2024

#### **Program Summary**

Outreach Community Services (OCS) operates a comprehensive Employment Opportunity Center for local economically disadvantaged young adults. Eligible participants are young adults, and vulnerable adults ages 18-29, who lack necessary job skills to successfully enter the job market and those looking to develop their skill level to advance in the workforce. The overall objective of this program is to create stability and increase life options through job and life skills training, academic support (for GED completion and job certification), work experience and support with case management assistance across several life domains.

Services for participants include Job Skills development, Academic Assistance for GED completion, and preparation for job certifications, life skill development, and direct work experience and coaching at our Job Training Centers. The second stage of the program includes employment internships at community job sites through our corporate and business partners. The final stage includes employment search and follow up services for 12- 30 additional weeks. Throughout the entire program, case management services are used to support participants in practical needs such as securing and maintaining housing, obtaining stable transportation, and utilizing mental health services to gain the emotional stability needed to become self-sufficient.

#### **CSBG Funding Utilization in PY2025**

In PY25, CSBG funds will be used to support the OCS Employment Opportunity Program by meeting these goals:

1. Increase the probability that eligible participants who have significant barriers to employment will increase the necessary employment skills and secure employment.
2. Decrease the significant barriers participants bring into the program that deter them from life stability and from obtaining permanent employment through case management and support services offered.

#### **Client Needs**

The program applicants range from young adults with very low academic achievement and no job skills or experience, to moderately skilled adults with basic job skills but no significant work experience or certification to secure sufficient work opportunities that will allow them to live independently or support their family. Program applicants face several barriers to workforce success, such as lack of an understanding of public benefits, transportation, homelessness, health needs and emotional health issues, in addition to low academic achievement and the need for greater life skills development.

#### **Impact Last Year**

Over the last year, OCS has served a total of 21 participants. Of those participants, 12 exited the program and 9 participants carried over into PY24. Of the 12 participants who exited the program, 7 (58%) completed the program successfully. Of those 7 that completed the program, the following outcomes have been achieved:

- 92% Gained job skills
- 100% secured employment while enrolled in OEC
- 83% Secured and maintained employed for at least 90 days while in OEC
- 58% Secured employment after exiting OEC
- 100% Improved their financial position

**Need for Funds**

OCS now has four significant referral sources (DuPage County Probation, Naomi's House, Teen Parent Connection, and the Outreach neighborhood resources centers throughout DuPage County) who are utilizing the comprehensive services we provide. OCS is the only employment training program in DuPage County providing comprehensive services to address the needs of the most vulnerable young adults who need additional time and services to successfully meet the goals of permanent employment and stability of basic needs. Whether they are homeless, lacking transportation, need assistance securing childcare, or have physical or emotional health issues, the Employment Opportunity Center, with CSBG funds can provide the comprehensive case management services along with the work experience needed for young adult residents of DuPage County. Therefore, OCS is requesting \$115,000 in PY2025 to serve 22 participants.

**PY2025 Goals and Outcomes:**

<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
Job Readiness Training <i>PY25: Will Serve 22</i>	Unemployed youth will obtain employment to gain skills to have adequate income to live
Life Skills – Academic <i>PY25: Will Serve 2</i>	Individuals will obtain a high school diploma and/or obtain an equivalency certificate or diploma to improve current or future employment options
Basic Needs – Mental Health <i>PY25: Will Serve 10</i>	Individuals referred to mental health services and attend at least 6 sessions; therapist reports the participant has gained at least one new emotional coping skill and/or has increased in functioning
Basic Needs – Housing <i>PY25: Will Serve 22</i>	Individuals will obtain housing and/or maintain adequate housing for at least 180 days
Transportation Services <i>PY25: Will Serve 10</i>	Individuals will receive transportation services to work toward gaining a drivers license or save money to gain transportation of their own
Financial Capability Skills Training <i>PY25: Will Serve 8</i>	Individuals will establish a budget and maintain the budget to meet basic needs for at least 180 days.