PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE

The Potential Use of Mentoring Programs to Alleviate Structural Unemployment

Fulfillment of the Master's Research
for the completion of the
Master's of Science in Urban & Regional Planning
Fall Semester, 1995

LaTina R. Denson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Potential Use of Mentoring Programs to Alleviate Structural Unemployment

INTRODUCTION

Structural unemployment is a term often used to describe the "mismatch" between labor and skills. According to William McCarthy of the National League of Cities, structural unemployment is "joblessness, often long in duration, which emanates largely from deficiencies in workers' skills, disparities between workers' skills and in-demand skills, and insufficiency of jobs and discrimination.

All to often urban and rural communities find themselves faced with the problem of structural unemployment. The growing population of those suffering from unemployment are youth, particularly disadvantaged youth. These youth may view unemployment as the inability to obtain jobs due to deficiencies in basic skills, lack of experience and the inexperience on knowing how to find a job. These barriers often lead to poor job opportunities and low earnings.

Historically, solutions to unemployment problems have focused on education and job training. These programs have been administered through various entities at the federal and local levels for example JTPA programs and Junior Achievement. One

1

focus of these programs are geared toward educating and training youth to equip them with work ethics and skills that will be valuable in getting and keeping a job.

Non-traditional or overlooked avenues that address job training and education are often found in the form of mentoring programs, in particular youth mentoring programs. Mentoring programs have been used as vehicles for community members to actively engage in the betterment of their youth. Community development consist of the social, economical, political, and physical development of communities. With a growing number of programs, the increase in attention at the local level, and becoming a part of political agendas, mentoring has become a pertinent component of community development.

Traditionally mentoring has occurred naturally, but as community empowerment and participation have increased at the local level, planned mentoring programs have become more popular. This can be attributed to community members wanting to lend helping hands in determining the fate of their community. Empowerment and participation are tools which residents are using to gain control and make decisions about their surrounding neighborhoods.

For the purpose of this paper, mentoring will be defined as:

a supportive relationship between a youth or young adult and someone more senior in age and experience, who offers support, guidance, and concrete assistance as the younger partner goes through a difficult period, enters a new area of experience, takes on an important task, or corrects an earlier problem. Mentoring programs look to empower and improve citizen participation for citizens to involve themselves in the development of communities. The majority of mentoring programs have focused on social and economical development of disadvantaged youth.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the rebuilding of communities through the art and practice of mentoring. More specifically, I will focus on the problem of structural unemployment and how mentoring programs have been used as one of the tools to help alleviate the problem at the local level.

Section two presents a review of the history of economic development, unemployment, and structural unemployment as they relate to communities and the labor force. Section three of the paper provides information on why and how mentoring programs have focused on training and education, particularly training and educating disadvantaged youth. Section four describes the characteristics of two case studies of mentoring programs whose

3

activities address the educational and skills problem of
structural unemployment.

Economic Development

Any discussion of mentoring and how it relates to structural
unemployment must begin with an attempt to describe economic
development and its implications to community development.
Economic development is a process involving the formation of new
institutions, the development of alternative industries, the
improvement of the capacity of existing employers, the
identification of new markets, the transfer of knowledge, and the
nurturing of new firms and enterprises (Blakely, 1994).

Employment is one of the critical issues faced within
today's communities along with other concerns such as housing,
environment, health, poverty, transportation and other human
needs. Employment is so important because it is seen as a tool
in providing basic living needs to residents.

Economic development is important to insure job creation,
job retention, reduction of poverty, retention of wealth, and
economic stability. These elements are necessary for the

continued growth and stability of economic activities in communities. Some economic development practices include: business retention; business ventures; entrepreneurialism; education, training, and placement; labor-based development; and, community organizing/planning (Bingham and Mier, 1993).

Education, training, and placement as a strategy invests in human capital of neighborhoods and attempts to connect people with jobs, This strategy addresses the mismatch in regard to skills and geography of neighborhood residents and the labor market. Its initiatives provide basic skills, employment training, transportation, job readiness, antidiscrimination efforts, job linkages, and ongoing on-the-job supports (Bingham and Mier, 1993).

Economic development activities are essential to stability and vitality of development occurring in communities at the local level. The lack of viable and stable economic development activities has led to the decrease in employment opportunities. Along with employment, the quality of life has also decreased in inner city communities. The incapability of providing basic needs of employment have led communities to seek solutions to their problem of unemployment. These employment problems faced

by communities can be classified into two categories:

employability problems and opportunity problems (McCarthy, 1985).

Employability problems consist of barriers or deficiencies

which prevents the finding of a job or inhibits keeping a job.

Four types of barriers are identified as generally being

responsible for such problems: (1) Basic Educational

Deficiencies; (2) Lack of Basic Job Skills; (3) Mismatch of

Skills and In-demand Jobs; and, (4) Miscellaneous Barriers, such

as teenage pregnancy (McCarthy, 1985).

Basic educational deficiencies are being discovered as a

major inhibitor of employment. More often it is being noted that

the U.S. educational system is failing to provide quality

education. Complaints heard from employers and higher education

have been focused employee deficiencies in basic reading,

writing, and math skills. The lack of basic educational skills

are distancing potential workers from entering the job market.

Lack of basic job skills has been a major concern of

potential employers and a problem for unskilled workers. The

inability of finding skilled workers in communities has often led

to the disinvestment of certain areas. As a result, unskilled

workers are continuously having problems in obtaining skills and

6

experience to meet the prerequisites of the in-demand job opportunities.

Mismatch of skills and in-demand jobs is similar to the problem of lacking basic skills. Mismatch of skills refers to the necessary skills to obtain the in-demand jobs regardless of past experiences. This usually dislocates workers who have previously held jobs in the job market, but now lack the skills of jobs that are currently in demand.

Miscellaneous barriers to employability problems can include a host of barriers that are not necessarily skills related such as teenage parenthood, language difficulties, behavioral problems, and various forms of handicaps (McCarthy, 1985).

These barriers are often found in certain segments of the population such as rural and inner cities or as barriers to the youth in our communities. The challenge is to create policies and programs to eliminate such barriers.

Opportunity problems are different in nature from employability problems. Opportunity problems result chiefly form factors extrinsic to workers and their characteristics. Opportunity problems are those that are caused by changes and fluctuations within the economy which produce problems for some

individuals (McCarthy, 1985). Opportunity problems which affect the numbers and types of employment opportunities can be divided into four sub-categories: (1) Insufficient Number of Jobs; (2) Occupational/Industry Decline; (3) Disparities in Labor Force Skills and Job Market Demand; and, (4) Discrimination in the Workplace (McCarthy, 1985).

Insufficient number of jobs appears to be one of the most dramatic problem faced in rural and inner city communities. Disinvestment in communities by potential employers and traditional economic development practitioners i.e. bankers has led to the decline in economic activity. Thus, businesses are locating in the outer peripheries of urban areas.

Occupational/Industry decline refers to the decline of the U.S. manufacturing economy. Critical declines in certain industries continue to shrink the U.S. labor market by millions of jobs. Other major contributors to the decline are the increase in exportation of production by American companies and importation of foreign-made goods (McCarthy, 1985).

Disparities in labor force skills and job market demand creates problems for workers and economic growth. This opportunity problem is two-fold: (1) the incongruence of many

workers

the ove

today's

demands

manufac

widenin

overall

employa

    Di

opportu

conscio

locatio

dispro

and ol

urban

Struct

    I

econom

have

the l

workers' skills and current demands for skilled labor; and, (2)
the overall shortage of skilled labor (McCarthy, 1985). In
today's economy, the gap between worker's skills and current
demands is increasing. With the economy shifting from the
manufacturing to the service industry not only is the gap
widening between current skills and demands, but there is also an
overall shortage of skilled labor due to some of the
employability problems previously discussed.

Discrimination in the workplace is the most insidious of
opportunity problems. Discrimination is practiced both
consciously and in a de facto sense through hiring patterns,
locational decisions and compensation practices. Its practice
disproportionately affects the poor, women, minorities, younger
and older workers and the handicapped, many of whom reside in
urban areas (McCarthy, 1985).

Structural Unemployment

Disparities in workers' skills and job opportunities impedes
economic development and job creation. As a result, communities
have sought to create solutions to this problem. Most often at
the local level, the most attacked form of unemployment is

structural unemployment. Structural unemployment may occur due to the lack of skills of potential workers or geographical changes of employment opportunities. For the purpose of this analysis, geographical changes of employment opportunities will not be addressed.

Historically, structural unemployment has occurred in communities that were once vibrant because of manufacturing, but as a result of manufacturing plants moving to suburban and overseas locations, the change of the economy moving toward the service industry, shifts from one manufacturing sector to another, and technological changes, these communities are suffering from economical strains.

Structural unemployment hinders workers from obtaining means of economic self-sufficiency. In 1986, there were about four million workers structurally unemployed. Ten to fifteen million manufacturing jobs will be eliminated as a result of foreign competition. The composition of new entrants into the work force, and the demand for highly skilled workers have the nation on a track towards a situation in which productivity and economic growth will be limited by human capital constraints (National Alliance of Business, 1986).

In order to overcome deficiencies or barriers of
employability problems and their influences on structural
unemployment, the examination of available human resources is
pertinent to understand why and how individuals suffer from
employability deficiencies, and to identify the next steps for
communities to address and attempt to solve these problems.

Human Resources

Whether or not jobs will exist largely depends on whether or
not investment in human resources will occur to produce qualified
workers to fill the jobs.

In 1987, the U.S. Department of Labor issued *Workforce 2000*,
which documented an emerging crisis in the American Workplace.
That report warned the nation that demographic trends,
technological change, and increased international competition
could weaken our economic position in the next century. As
predicted in *Workforce 2000*, there is an increase in demand for
highly skilled workers which has already created shortages of
skilled workers or have caused low-skill workers to have
difficulty finding employment.

The disparities continuously found between labor demand and

the current work force has led to the importance and necessity of investing in human resources in order for local economies to survive. Before examining the role of human resources in economic development, vitality and sustainability, it is important to understand the meaning of human resources.

The concept of human capital has several meanings. Three themes that can be found in each definition are: knowledge, skills, and production. Some definitions include:

... the combination of innate talent, knowledge, skill, and experience that makes each human a valuable contributor to economic production (Perelman, 1984.)

... the sum total of the knowledge, skills and aptitudes of the people, inhabiting the country...it includes the initiative, resourcefulness, capacity for sustained work, right values, interests and attitudes, and other human qualities conducive to higher output and accelerated economic growth (Mehta, 1976).

... involves a process of investment that enhances human

labor productivity by means of advances in knowledge and its applications. It specifically involves investment expenditures on education, training, health, nutrition, and related factors that increase the productivity of the labor force (Asefa and Huang, 1994).

Knowledge is an important factor of economic growth. As defined in the Webster dictionary, *knowledge is the fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association.* This is exactly what workers strive for and employers seek in their employees.

As previously discussed, one of the major constraints in employment or economic growth is the lack of skills that workers possess. The development of human resources is essential to the development of skills. Investing in human resources is often seen as not as important as developing physical capital, but without adequately trained workers, economies will continue to suffer locally and globally. Having the necessary skills or tools that can be applied to current labor demands will ultimately help workers increase productivity and position local economies to create jobs and sustain growth.

Increase in productivity can be considered the major goal of most corporations competing in today's market. Productivity is the "bottom line" and is one of the most important aspects in today's economy. Human resources can be seen as a catalyst to create or produce increases in productivity. When workers are equipped with the knowledge and necessary skills to adequately perform their jobs, this will enable local and U.S. economies to compete in globally. Increases in human capital have traditionally translated into rising productivity and growth in earnings (Denison 1985; Jorgenson, 1988).

Studies have shown that human capital has made a significant contribution to the economic growth of industrial nations such as the United States. Human resources are the driving forces which keeps economies thriving, although investments in human resources have decreased over time. As a result, workers or potential workers have had a need for more training and education.

One of the most well-documented facts of labor economics is that education and training, or human capital investments, have high payoff in terms of income and productivity (Denison, 1985). With this in mind there should be special emphasis in job training and education to insure that labor economies are

equipped to continue to receive payoffs of income and
productivity. Instead the number of deficiencies in education and
basic skills are increasing and putting economies in danger.

Many have reported on the decline of education and basic
skills of American workers or potential workers. The Commission
on Workforce Quality and Labor Market Efficiency (1989) reported
that "vast numbers of American students cannot meet the
educational requirements of today's workplace, much less those of
the next century..." The American Society of Training Directors
(1989) concluded that the problem of "deficiencies in basic
workplace skills is a growing one...driving the nation toward a
human capital deficit...that threatens the competitiveness of
economic institutions..." According to the Office of Technology
Assessment, American Companies find that, in their operations in
Germany or Japan, workers have better reading and math skills
than American in the United States, which leads to the
disinvestment of training American workers (Bartel, 1993).

Business Week (1988) reported that "the U.S. has lost much
ground to competitors, and investing in people looks like the way
to retake it." This is exactly what non-profit or community
based organizations (CBO's) have done to improve the economic and

15

employment situations in their communities. Communities are beginning to empower its residents and take control over their neighborhoods. Combating unemployment has become a major focus to improve neighborhoods. One way for non-profits and CBO's to combat unemployment has been to invest in its youth, the future work force. Although many strategies have been planned and implemented, the tool of mentoring is also being used to improve the quality of life in disadvantaged areas.

Mentoring

Now more than ever community development initiatives such as mentoring needs to be targeted towards youth at-risk. There are 13.6 million at-risk youth between the ages of 10 and 17 in the U.S. today. This number will surge by at least an additional 3 million at-risk youth by the year 2000. Most of these at-risk youth could benefit from mentoring. In a variety of studies, high-risk youth involved in mentoring relationships have shown a 400-percent improvement in attitudes, 59 percent improvement in grades, 90 percent reduction of dropout rates, and 70-80 percent reduction in recidivism into former behaviors (DARE Mighty Things, Inc., 1994).

Mentoring has become an important activity to promote the success of today's youth. In its most inclusive and exhaustive function, mentoring fosters "the realization of the dream" for the youth that are served. Through the relationship with adult companions, mentees come to believe in their own potential for success in life. Mentors come to represent the larger realms of life: education to the young person who wants to become educated, work to the young person who wants to work (Winstone, 1986).

Wanting to work and not being able to find compatible employment opportunities have been a major concern of disadvantaged youth, thus has become a pertinent focus of mentoring programs that target at-risk youth. The basic premise that mentoring programs follow is based on the belief that in order for youth to make successful transitions from school to work, there needs to be a commitment to building relationships with others-personally, in school, on the job, and in the community. This is the niche that mentoring programs have entered in order to support communities in producing qualified workers for available opportunities. Mentoring programs create a new generation of workers, and for the mentee, this provides opportunities for self-enhancement, self-empowerment and self

reliance.

More recently mentoring has often been viewed as social intervention. Some mentoring programs intervene in order to enrich youth development or remedy their deficiencies. Other mentoring programs make efforts to open access to resources to individuals who have been denied. Mentoring programs can also be used to provide content learning and a concern for skills, behaviors, and values in combination with social and networking interventions (Flaxman, Ascher, and Harrington, 1988).

Mentoring is becoming a major activity for inner city youth. Many collaborative partnerships have formed between private, public, non-profit and community based sectors in order to create successful mentoring programs. Mentoring is being recognized as an essential tool to promote empowerment and self reliance of communities.

Local officials have acknowledged and supported mentoring initiatives as necessities for disadvantaged communities. In the summer of 1995, Mayor Dennis Archer of Detroit announced his plans to assist different sectors, particularly non-profits and CBO's, in a major mentoring initiative for the youth in the City of Detroit. The goal of the Mayor and other participants is to

reliance.

More recently mentoring has often been viewed as social intervention. Some mentoring programs intervene in order to enrich youth development or remedy their deficiencies. Other mentoring programs make efforts to open access to resources to individuals who have been denied. Mentoring programs can also be used to provide content learning and a concern for skills, behaviors, and values in combination with social and networking interventions (Flaxman, Ascher, and Harrington, 1988).

Mentoring is becoming a major activity for inner city youth. Many collaborative partnerships have formed between private, public, non-profit and community based sectors in order to create successful mentoring programs. Mentoring is being recognized as an essential tool to promote empowerment and self reliance of communities.

Local officials have acknowledged and supported mentoring initiatives as necessities for disadvantaged communities. In the summer of 1995, Mayor Dennis Archer of Detroit announced his plans to assist different sectors, particularly non-profits and CBO's, in a major mentoring initiative for the youth in the City of Detroit. The goal of the Mayor and other participants is to

eventually have a mentor for every student between the ages of 5 to 18. Although this initiative may seem far fetched or unrealistic to some, the aspiration and willingness to address such an initiative is an attitude that other officials should adapt.

Mentoring can be defined in various ways. It can be defined based on the type of relationship that is being formed, what activities will occur, and what are the anticipated outcomes? Definitions of mentoring includes:

The presence of one or many caring adults, who, along with parents, provide children with support, counsel, friendship, reinforcement and constructive example (One to One, 1995).

A structured, one-to-one relationship or partnership that focuses on the needs of the mentored participant...which fosters caring and supportive relationships, encourages individuals to develop to their fullest potential, and helps an individual to develop his or her own vision for the future (The National Working Group, 1991).

A mentor is a caring individual who develops an ongoing,

education and job training skills for disadvantaged youth. The disadvantaged youth population faces multiple barriers to a successful entry into the world of work. This particularly true of the large numbers in youth who live in distressed communities. Not being able to overcome these barriers, they will continue having serious implications for employment, earnings and susceptibility to social problems.

One of the most critical factors is that deficiencies in basic education skills prevent the successful assimilation of disadvantaged youth into the labor market. Both case studies of mentoring youth initiatives incorporate some element of basic or remedial education into their program, target special needs of disadvantaged youth, and present approaches to the issues of job creation and access to jobs for youth.

Most mentoring programs for disadvantaged youth are coordinated and implemented by community based organizations. In order to show diversity, one of the case studies is a community based initiative, whereas the other case study presented is a state initiated program.

one-on-one relationship with someone in need. The mentor

encourages, listens, gives options, advocates, acts as a

role model and shares information and knowledge that he/she

has gained over time (Langston, 1995).

Mentoring can mean many things, however, two elements definitely stand out. The first element refers to people. Mentoring calls for one person interacting in some way with another person. The second element of mentoring is some sort of supportive action in the form of guidance, support, advice, counseling, etc.

As mentioned previously, mentoring programs focus on self-empowerment and self-reliance. Self-empowerment and self-fulfillment are important in community and community economic development. These two concepts are pertinent in helping communities realize and act on their fullest potential. As mentees, individuals become more aware of their value and capabilities as a person. The goal is to help individuals obtain a better self concept and also encourage self-fulfillment from the individual.

Although mentoring programs vary in activities and anticipated outcomes, many programs have focused on improving

<u>Case Studies</u>

KEEPING YOUTH IN SCHOOL
Washington, DC

According to the 1985 business subcommittee of the Education

Commission of the States, about 2.4 million youth between the

ages of 16 and 19 are unlikely to become productive adults.

Youth are disconnected from society as a result of drug abuse,

delinquency, pregnancy, unemployment and dropping out of school.

The poor, Black and Hispanic teens are disproportionately over

represented among this at risk population (U.S. Department of

Education, 1983).

Faith in the power of education to open doors to a better

future underlies much of the research directed at dropout

problems. Recent studies have identified a number of adverse

consequences of dropping out of school, such as difficulty in

finding and holding a job and earning less income (Feldstein and

Ellwood, 1982).

Youth in foster care have also been identified as those who

are at risk of dropping out of school. Recent statistics from

the New York City Human Resource Administration show that the

dependency rate for young adults discharged from foster care was twice that found in the general population as measured by receipt of public assistance. In 1984, some 16,000 adolescents were discharged from care because they had reached the age of majority, but a substantial number of the discharged youth did not have the necessary skills to achieve self-sufficiency (Westat, 1986).

Currently, there are more than 2,000 children in foster care in the District of Columbia. In spite of available subsidies, only a few foster children are placed in permanent homes through adoption (NBC, 1989). The need for a programmatic response to this situation is highlighted in the latest study by the District of Columbia Committee on Public Education (1989). The study found that the current school dropout rate in DC is over 40 percent, and many youth drop out of school while they are in junior high school.

In 1986, the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provided a three year research and demonstration grant to the Catholic University of America to develop a practice model addressing the school drop out problem among a high risk youth population in an urban community. This

project entitled "Keep in Youth in School" was housed at the National Catholic School of Social Service.

Key Players

The project is a joint venture among two service delivery organizations, a business corporation, and an institution of higher learning. The National Catholic School of Social Service at the Catholic University of America is the lead agency of the project.

Family and Child Services of Washington, D.C., a private non-profit organization and one of the foster care providers in the District of Columbia. It is one of the distinguished social service agencies in the human service delivery system. The other service delivery organization is the D.C. Department of Human Services is a public child welfare agency. The Family and Child Services Division provides direct services as well as contracted services for foster children.

The Marriott Corporation is an innovator in the lodging and food service industry, offering a diversity of entry level positions throughout the Washington metropolitan area. Marriott

24

has a history of hiring the disadvantaged and currently leads all other U.S. employers in earned Targeted Jobs Tax Credits (TJTC). The management of its Community Employment and Training Programs has demonstrated skills in meeting the special needs of the disadvantaged youth and in working actively in community service programs.

Program Format

The employment training component of the program was the Employment Training Program. The purpose of this program is to provide incentives for youth so that they will be inspired to complete high school, to develop appropriate attitudes toward work and job skills, and to adapt themselves to the world of work. The employment program strategy encompassed a program aimed at supporting and encouraging our youth to stay in school and excel in it. The employment program achieved this by rewarding youth who stayed in school with an entry level job when they turned sixteen. The incentive program was developed for all youth rewarding them for academic efforts and expose them to new experiences.

Employment opportunities were made available to our youth

through a partnership with a collaborating agency, the Community

Employment and Training Programs of the Marriott Corporation.

Youth were given the opportunity to interview with the Marriott

Corporation for entry level positions in its restaurant division.

Once eligible youth had chosen to participate in the employment

program, a prescreening session was held either by the project

program coordinator or a Marriott representative. This person

met with one or more youth and conducted an interview workshop

and gave the youth information about their on-site interviews.

Also discussed were other employment issues such as job

expectations, the importance of communication, dealing with

authority, and opportunities for advancement and career paths in

the Marriott Corporation.

The youth then chose a desired location at which to

interview, and this placement was discussed with the youth's

primary caretaker. The program coordinator then helped the youth

to assemble all the necessary documents they needed to apply for

the job. An interview was then set up with the manager at the

desired job site and the youth was accompanied by the program

coordinator to the interview.

If all necessary documents were present, the youth were

generally able to begin working one week after the pre-screening session. Once a youth began to work, follow up contacts were made by the program coordinator to the youth, manager and primary caretaker to ensure a smooth transition into the world of work, and to clarify responsibilities and expectations of all involved.

It is the experience of the project that the active involvement of the collaborating agency, the Marriott Corporation, in the employment preparation process was extremely important. When a prescreening workshop was done by a Marriott executive it was more effective than when it was done by the Program Coordinator. It appeared that these youth were more likely to begin work, and work longer than those without contact with a Marriott executive. The difference between the groups was that youth were able to make a connection between the entry level experience they would get now, and how it would help them obtain a better job in the future. They also identified with the Marriott Corporation as a whole and could see career paths lying ahead.

Results

From 1986 to 1989, 97 foster youths participated in the project. All were Black with the exception of one Asian and two

Hispanics. 50 were female and 47 were male. Among the 97, 44 youths, 22 male and 22 female, 42 Black, 1 Asian and 1 Hispanic turned age 16 and thus became eligible to participate in the employment training program.

Nineteen (43%) of the 44 youths did not participate. Twenty five of them were given employment interviews and all were offered jobs near their homes or at their preferred sites. However, among the 25 youths, 6 did not start work after being hired. Four youths worked a month or less; 6 worked on month to six months; 3 worked six months to a years; and six worked a year or more. Those who were prevented from having successful employment training experiences had employment barriers such as: teen pregnancy; underground employment (drug selling); documentation; attitudes; and, educational and vocational skills.

At least seven of the youth who worked six months or longer have since moved to sales or to better paid restaurant jobs, and three of them graduated from high school and pursued higher education. Their experiences with Marriott were cited as invaluable in terms of understanding the world or work, developing vocational skills, and changing attitudes toward work and education.

THE YAKIMA VALLEY OIC CENTER
Yakima, Washington

Limitations on resources, service deliverers and jobs create special barriers to disadvantaged youths in small communities. Creative and effective approaches to serving the needs of youth can, on the other hand, maximize resources and generate support from many elements of the community. In some cases, a sharing of responsibilities and resources by more than one small community can yield collective benefits to youths and their communities.

In Yakima Valley, Washington, a fourteen year old Opportunities Industrialization Center provides educational, skill training, job placement and other services to over 1,000 young people a year in two-county area of small communities. Through its four youth mentoring and training centers, the Yakima Valley OIC operates Educational Clinics, an Alternative High School, a Summer Youth Employment Program and a "Hire One Youth" Program targeted to private sector employers.

Declining opportunities in Yakima Valley's major industries, food processing and timber, and the problems associated with seasonal employment and unskilled and unemployed youth, inspired the creation of the Center. With the technical assistance of the National OIC and an employment and training contract for

29

$156,000, the Yakima Valley OIC became a reality.

The OIC targets populations ranging from fourteen to twenty-one years of age, the group served reflects the overall makeup of Yakima Valley's population. Slightly more than half of the participants are White, 28 percent are Hispanic, 9 percent are Black, 8 percent Native American and 1 percent Asian. Sixty percent of participants are female, 40 percent male.

An estimated 15 percent are teenage parents, 8-10 percent have had some involvement with the law, and 60 percent of Hispanic participants have limited knowledge of English. Half of all youths served are out of school and 90 percent of them are at high school ages; 5 percent have graduated and another 5 percent have GEDS. The average reading and computational levels of the group are between seventh and eighth grade.

Key Players

The OIC program have working relationships with : the JTPA Tri-Valley Service Delivery Area Consortium; the Yakima and Kittitas County School Districts; the Yakima Valley Community College; and, the Chamber of Commerce.

Program Format

The combination of education, skills training, placement, supportive services and special programs creates a truly comprehensive approach to serving Yakima Valley's youth. OIC's access to the dispersed population of the two counties is maximized and ties to local employers are significantly close. The fact that the program addresses youth as well as adult needs means fuller understanding of the area's problems and greater continuity in service delivery.

The Center tailors training programs in any number of fields, among them: computer literacy, computer programming, word processing, typing, accounting, bookkeeping, sales, cashiering, small business management and building maintenance. In addition to skills training, on-the-job training and work experience placements are developed, in part through the Center's own revenue-generating businesses, including a thrift store and two snack bars.

The many other programs offered by OIC, including Summer Youth Employment, Hire One Youth, etc., ensure flexibility in serving the specific types of needs of the area's youth population.

Results

Of the more than 1,000 youths served in by the Yakima Valley

OIC- an average of 635 participating at any one time- 62 percent

were placed in jobs. Of this group four-fifths were placed in

full time employment, the other fifth in part-time positions as

they continued their educations. Private sector placements

accounted for 47 percent of all jobs, while combined public and

nonprofit positions represented 53 percent.

CONCLUSION

Across the spectrum, more parents are not able to stay home

and spend time with their children. Neighborhoods are becoming

less cohesive and supportive, which leaves some youth to feel

alienated. Schools are becoming larger and less personal.

Teachers find it difficult to give special attention to the

development of individual students.

In order to fill the voids that youth experience at home, in

the community, and at school, mentoring programs have attempted

to provide positive relationships for youth as well as help the

individual with personal development.

Planned mentoring programs are becoming more active in the

development of today's youth, particularly in their educational and skills development. Although mentoring responds to needs of individual, these needs are in fact determined by what would help this individual live satisfactorily in society. For youths, the knowledge and skills of a more experienced person can be very important in enabling that young person to progress in a number of paths. Two important paths for today's youth are developing educational and professional skills to be active members in the community.

One of the major concerns of business is the level of education and experience of youth entering the workforce. Often times employers are having difficulty finding "qualified" individuals to fill positions due to deficiencies in education, skills or both. Youth are finding it difficult to find jobs in which they are qualified because shift from manufacturing to the service industry. This mismatch of skills and jobs available is often referred to as structural unemployment.

Structural unemployment puts stress on residents by not having ample employment opportunities available in our communities. The lack of jobs in a community leads to unstable neighborhoods with youth and adults not being able to find

employment. Often times this problem leads to residents becoming dependent on the government or other alternative activities for income. Another important factor of structural unemployment is the role of human resources. As mentioned above, employers are finding that the available human resources do not match or are not qualified for the available opportunities within an organization. The problems associated with structural unemployment promotes the need for training and education in order to match available jobs to community residents.

Major components of mentoring programs have been centered around education, career development, work skills and work etiquette. The Keeping Youth in School program worked with foster care youth in education and career development through their Employment Training Program. Employment training and opportunities are assured to all project participants as soon as they reach age 16, as long as they remain in school. The youth are initially placed in entry level positions near their homes within the Marriott Corporation restaurant division. Their experience with the program and Marriott Corporation helped them understand the world of work, develop vocational skills, and change their attitudes towards work and education.

The Yakima Valley OIC Center also made efforts to help resolve the problem of structural unemployment. Although the Yakima Valley OIC Center is not a mentoring program, a major component of their workplan is mentoring youth to assist in the development of education and skills. Through their Educational Clinics, an Alternative High School, a Summer Youth Employment Program and a "Hire One Youth" Program, the OIC assisted youth in their educational and career development skills.

Mentoring relationships, except in a very few cases, probably will not last forever. In fact, structured mentoring arrangements have some sort of time constraint (a year, a semester). However, a successful mentoring relationship should afford longer benefits for the youth they serve by providing ideas, knowledge, and skills that will be useful in the future. Young people need to know how to build bridges that will serve as valuable resources for them and become empowered to set and achieve their own goals. And through mentoring programs, youth are able to gain skills and education which can be the foundation of their bridges.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Asefa, Sisay and Wei-Chiao Huang, Eds. (1994). Human Capital and Economic Development. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Bartel, Ann, P. (1994). "Workplace Training in the United States: Is it Underproduced?" Human Capital and Economic Development. Kalamzoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Bingham, Richard, D. and Robert Mier. (1993). Theories of Local Economic Development: Perspectives from Across the Disciplines. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Blakely, Edward. (1994). Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Business Week. (1988). "Human Capital," September 19.

Commission on Workforce Quality and Labor Market Efficiency. (1989). Investing in People: A Strategy to Address America's Workforce Crisis. Washington, DC.

D.C. Committee on Public Education. (1989). Our Children, Our Future: Revitalizing District of Columbia Public Education.

Dare Mighty Things, Inc. (May 18, 1994). "Success Depends on Training." Excerpt from the Worldview Training Program and Business Plan. Cambridge, Mass.

Denison, E.F. (1985). Trends in American Economic Growth. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Feldstein, M. and D.T. Ellwood. (1982). "Teenage Unemployment: What is the Problem." In R.B. Freeman and D.A. Wise (Eds.) The Youth Market Problem: Its Nature, Causes and Consequences. Chicago, Il.: University of Chicago.

Flaxman, Erwin, Carol Ascher, and Charles Harrington. (1988).
    Youth Mentoring: Programs and Practices. Urban Diversity
    Series No. 97. New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban
    Education.

Jorgenson, D.W. (1988). "Productivity and Post-War U.S. Economic
    Growth," Journal of Economic Perspectives 2,4 (Fall):23-41.

Langston, Terry. (1995). Mentoring Starter Kit. East Lansing, MI:
    Michigan Regional Mentoring Resource Center.

Lee, Sylvia. (1989). Keep Youth in School. Washington, DC.

McCarthy, William, H. (1985). Reducing Urban Unemployment: What
    Works at the Local Level. Washington, DC: National League
    of Cities.

Mehta, M.M. (1976). Human Resources Development Planning. Delhi:
    The Macmillan Company of India Limited.

National Alliance of Business. (1986). Making the Link:
    Coordinating Economic Development and Employment and
    Training. Washington, DC: National Alliance of Business
    Clearinghouse.

NBC News. (June 20, 1989). ACLU filed a class action suit on
    behalf of foster children in the District of Columbia.

U.S. Department of Education. (1983). High School Dropouts:
    Descriptive Information from High School and Beyond.
    Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Westat, Inc. (1986). Independent living services for youth in
    substitute care.

Winstone, C.L. (1986). "Personal Transformation of the Protege:
    The Mentoring Relationship in Context." In W.A. Gray & M.
    Gray (Eds.). Mentoring: Aid to Excellence in Career
    Development, Business, and the Professions. Vancouver, BC:
    International Association for Mentoring.