

CAREERS

Worker-Owned Temp Agencies Aim to Halt Slide in Benefits

By Carol Davis
Contributing Writer from ANS

As corporate downsizing creates a boom in the temporary worker industry that critics contend denies workers their rightful benefits, the concepts of worker-owned and nonprofit temp agencies are emerging as a way to build solidarity in the temporary workforce and provide such employees with access to benefits like health insurance.

The temp industry nationally has grown 15 percent in revenue every year for the last 16 years, explains Barrie Peterson, associate director of the Seton Hall University Institute on Work.

Worker-owned and nonprofit temp agencies are being seen as an alternative to provide "something better" for the worker than the commercial industry now provides, such as health insurance or training, Peterson said. "If a nonprofit is hooked up, as most

are, with a career-counseling service or an agency that helps job seekers, that means that that agency has little cost of recruitment. It's already getting talent coming in who are being assessed, and it's not a big additional step to add a placement function on that," he said.

"Look at the classified section in the newspaper," Peter said. "A nonprofit temp agency would not have to go to the expense to recruit people because it would have a regular flow of talent."

Secondly, if a nonprofit temp agency could arrange to provide health insurance and broker good training, turnover would be practically nonexistent, Peterson said. "Temp workers in that kind of environment will stay with you because there is viable health insurance and a career ladder, neither of which exist in commercial agencies," he said.

JOB MENTORING NETWORK Pairs Welfare Mothers With Professional Women

By Naomi Burko
Contributing Writer from ANS

Experience teaches that it requires more than just landing a job to keep a woman off welfare permanently, says Louise Moss, a former state caseworker who runs the Stamford Women's Mentoring Network in Connecticut.

"What most welfare mothers need is the 'know-how' that middle-class people take for granted," said Moss, who founded the network eight years ago.

For example, she said, "How do you act and dress for a job? How can an attitude you need on the street work all wrong in an office?"

Then there's managing money. "How do you budget a weekly salary when you've been used to a monthly welfare check? How can you get decent child care when you have little money? And what do you do when the babysitter doesn't show up?"

According to Moss, "It was all those reasons and more that women after woman would actually find a

job, get off welfare and then be back in my office again two or three months later."

The network meets this challenge by pairing welfare mothers with mentors - business or professional women who volunteer to work one-on-one in the program for a year.

Asked what effect new laws mandating a time limit to welfare benefits have had on a program like hers, Moss said: "They put us in a vise. The number of women seeking help has doubled, while the financial support from private donors that we count on is shrinking."

Connecticut's 21-month cutoff of welfare benefits means that "we are sending women into an economy where their skills levels don't meet workplace demands. But we just don't have the time to get them ready. At the same time, fewer and fewer government dollars are available for education and training."

"And to make matters worse, more and more of the entry-level jobs our clients can get are becoming part time with no benefits."

1999 Poverty Income Guidelines

Number In Family	Monthly Income	Yearly Income	Hourly Income
1	\$687	\$8,240	\$3.96
2	\$922	\$11,060	\$5.32
3	\$1,157	\$13,880	\$6.62
4	\$1,392	\$16,700	\$8.03
5	\$1,627	\$19,520	\$9.38
6	\$1,862	\$22,340	\$10.74
7	\$2,097	\$25,160	\$12.10
8	\$2,332	\$27,980	\$13.45

*Note: over 8 family members, add \$235 per month, or \$2,820 per year, or \$1.36 per hour per person over 8.



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Ethan Bradford

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In his first year at PCC, Ethan enjoys the mix of ages, cultures and backgrounds. "There are so many different people compared to high school," he says. "The older students take studying more seriously. It makes for an interesting experience in class."

Ethan also gives high marks to many of his professors: "My first biology teacher was awesome; he's real with you, he brings it to your level." On a scholarship himself, Ethan still appreciates PCC's low cost. "I tell my friends, for one class at the university you can take three at PCC," he says. "There's something for everybody here. It's a cool place."



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This is the tenth year that the Legacy Emanuel Healthcare Scholarship has been awarded to high school seniors who reside in North and Northeast Portland and are planning to study for a healthcare

career. The scholarship is \$1,000, renewable for up to four years, and the funds may be used for tuition, books and other fees. Information is available by calling Community Relations at 413-4630.

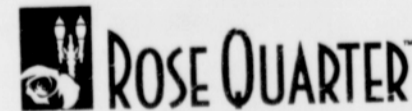
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