The Paschallville Partnership's
State of the Community

2017 Report

Transforming Library Services for Job Seekers

Welcome to the Paschalville Partnership's State of the Community report, which highlights the incredible collaboration taking place in the Southwest Philadelphia community surrounding Paschalville Library.

The Free Library is proud to be leading a coalition of 11 organizations to raise employment levels in Southwest Philadelphia. Together, we hope to transform library services for job seekers by expanding literacy and ESL courses, job-skills training, computer-skills training and access, and more.

The Paschalville Partnership, a collaboration begun in September 2013, is fueled by a three-year National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). This report, presenting our successes thus far and program goals, marks the end of the first full year of the initiative's implementation. We look forward to continuing this work to strengthen Philadelphia's workforce and improve the livelihood of our citizens.

Warmly,

Siobhan A. Reardon
President and Director
Free Library of Philadelphia

The Paschalville Partnership, a collaboration of 11 organizations spearheaded by the Free Library of Philadelphia, is working to transform services for job seekers in Southwest Philadelphia. The partnership operates in the service area of the Paschalville Library, located in Southwest Philadelphia, and has developed a common agenda following the principles of collective impact.

Here's the good news— people in our community want to work. In recent years, more working-age residents have joined the labor force by seeking employment opportunities. Indeed, our labor-force participation rate now exceeds that of the city overall. On the other hand, many of our residents are not connecting with employment opportunities. The unemployment rate of our community stubbornly tracks a few percentage points above the city.

The research tells us that significant barriers to employment faced by many of our community's job seekers underlie this disconnect. Low education attainment, underdeveloped job skills, interrupted work histories, and a lack of English-language proficiency are some of the factors that stand in the way of job seekers. Moreover, the city has deemed this area a "service desert," where the needs of the residents far outstrip the availability of services.

This fact was felt everyday by Paschalville Library staff members, who were encountering residents with barriers to employment well beyond the typical job seeker. With this in mind, the Free Library convened a group of community organizations and City agencies three years ago to take a close look at the Southwest Philadelphia area. After a year of brainstorming and planning, our group emerged with a common agenda affirmed by 11 organizations. Thus was the Paschalville Partnership born.
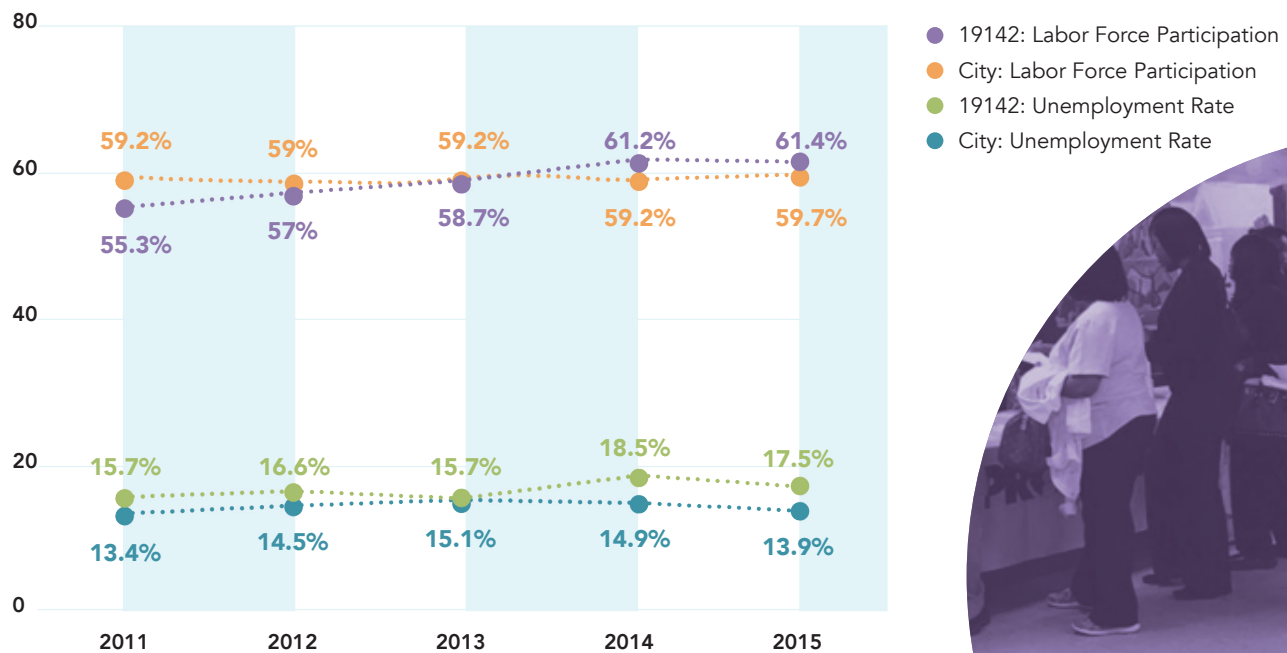
GOALS

In three years, we aim to see a net increase of 500 adults joining the community's labor force and a net increase of 250 community residents who are employed.

Demographics At-a-Glance

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS	OUR COMMUNITY	CITY
Total population (2015)	28,595	1,533,574
Population growth (2011 to 2015)	-5.8%	2.6%
Labor force participation	61.4%	59.7%
Unemployment Rate	17.5%	13.9%
Median household income	$31,191	$38,253
Poverty rate (percent of total population)	32.9%	26.3%
Foreign born (percent of total population)	21%	13%
Education attainment (population 25+ years):		
Did not graduate high school	24%	18%
High school graduate or equivalent	38%	34%
Some college, no degree	22%	17%
College graduate	16%	31%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2011–2015, 2007–2011).
Note: We use the zip code 19142 to approximate our community in this report.

Legend:
- 19142: Labor Force Participation
- City: Labor Force Participation
- 19142: Unemployment Rate
- City: Unemployment Rate

Labor Force Participation:
- 2011: City 59.2%, 19142 55.3%
- 2012: City 59%, 19142 57%
- 2013: City 59.2%, 19142 58.7%
- 2014: City 59.2%, 19142 61.2%
- 2015: City 59.7%, 19142 61.4%

Unemployment Rate:
- 2011: 19142 15.7%, City 13.4%
- 2012: 19142 16.6%, City 14.5%
- 2013: 19142 15.7%, City 15.1%
- 2014: 19142 18.5%, City 14.9%
- 2015: 19142 17.5%, City 13.9%

"The Job Readiness Lab at Paschalville Library was extra helpful because everything I needed was in one place. All the tools for applying for a job are right on the computer and Niema knows how to use it all. Through the Job Readiness Lab I applied for and received employment at the U.S. Postal Service."
– Clarence Williamson

"The Employment Boot Camp was a life-changing experience for me. The techniques I learned concerning résumé writing was information I never received before. I learned a great deal that I am using and continue to work with Selia Darlene from the Job Readiness Lab at Southwest CDC."
– Daniel Barfield

The Southwest Job Readiness Labs (JRLs),

the heart of our partnership, are now operating at two community locations: Paschalville Library and Southwest CDC (Community Development Corporation). In this digital era, in which employment searches and the application process are conducted almost entirely online, computer and internet access have become essential for job seekers.

The JRLs provide these essential services for free. One-on-one assistance is available (walk-in or by appointment) for creating or updating résumés, setting up email and other online accounts, conducting internet searches, and applying for jobs online.

But the JRLs go way beyond the digital basics of conducting a job search. Through weekly workshops, bimonthly employment "boot camps," and quarterly community open houses, the JRLs help job seekers hone "soft skills" and provide networking opportunities that pave the way for job seekers in today's employment market. These more intimate group settings cover topics such as how to conduct oneself in an interview,

understanding employee expectations, workplace etiquette, and appropriate professional attire.

Our JRLs also connect job seekers with deeper services that help them overcome steep barriers to employment. For adults who have been out of work for a long time or are looking to switch career paths, we match them to skills-training programs and other supportive services offered through the PA CareerLink® system. For adults who are functioning below basic education levels or need to brush up on their skills, we now have a *my*PLACE℠ campus @ Southwest CDC, one of five campuses across Philadelphia established by the Office of Adult Education (OAE). Adult learners—both native and non-native speakers—who come to the *my*PLACE℠ campus @ Southwest CDC go through intake and assessment and then are placed into appropriate adult-education programs offered through a growing network of community-based providers supported by OAE. And for residents dealing with financial issues that impede a job search—such as debilitating debt, default payments and judgments, or poor credit ratings—we set them up with free counseling and workshops offered through the city's Financial Empowerment Center.

TARGET
Double the number of JRL visitors to 300 per month.

TARGET
Reach 100 job seekers per quarter through workshops, employment boot camps, and community open houses.

TARGET
Jumpstart partner referrals to 10 job seekers per week.

"Working on the computer has been the most benefit for me. Being able to apply for so many jobs in one place and one time is far better than what I was doing before. The staff at the Job Readiness Lab at Southwest CDC took time to help me."
– Mary Blong

"The whole dynamic of the Employment Boot Camp was beneficial. I feel like I now have a résumé that will stand out. I was especially moved by the speeches that encouraged me to go out and do the work that is necessary to improve my employment situation. I have to do the work for myself; I am my own best agent." – Jack Cottom

VISION

Southwest Philadelphia: an engaged, employed, and prosperous community

MISSION

To leverage the Free Library as a hub for job seekers by bringing together a broad array of community partners in support of Southwest Philadelphia residents.

For upcoming workshops, boot camps, open houses, job fairs, and other events, visit us at **facebook.com/swjrl**

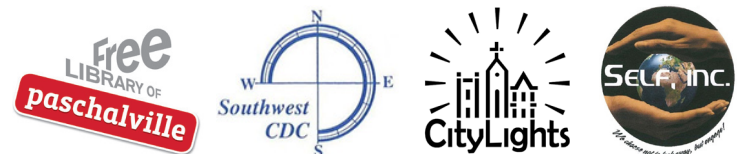INSTITUTE *of* **Museum** *and* **Library** SERVICES

This program is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The Paschalville Partnership

Backbone Support Organization

Free LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA

Community-Based Organizations

Free LIBRARY OF paschalville

Southwest CDC

CityLights

SELF, INC.

AFRICOM
COALITION OF AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN COMMUNITIES ~ PHILADELPHIA

finanta
YOUR ACCESS TO CAPITAL

City Agencies/Organizations

SHARED PROSPERITY PHILADELPHIA
Our Plan to Fight Poverty

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

PHILADELPHIA WORKS

Pennsylvania **CareerLink** ®

OFFICE OF Adult Education
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA