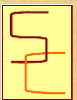# Connect to Work

From Homelessness to Employment

Purposes of the Study

- Identify successful practices to move persons from homelessness to work

- Forge local relationships between housing/service providers and employment/training providers

- Promulgate promising practices

Three Phases

1. Research

2. Relationship Building

3. Develop a Guide and Disseminate It

The C2W Structure

Advisory Council:

- Nicole Amling, Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness
- Betsy Benito, CSH
- Mary Sue Cox, Illinois Department of Human Services
- David Harrison, Madison County CoC
- Dorothy McBride, Tri-County Opportunities Council, Rock Falls
- Steve Simmons, Chicago Jobs Council
- Darsonya Switzer, Macon County CoC
- Chris Warland, Heartland Alliance
- Joel Williams, Lake County CoC

Funding:
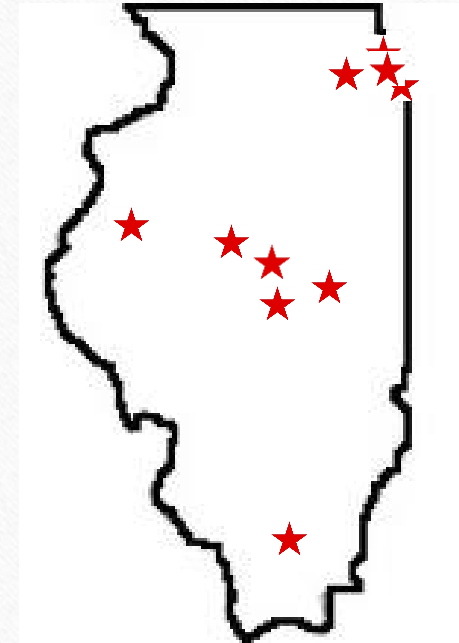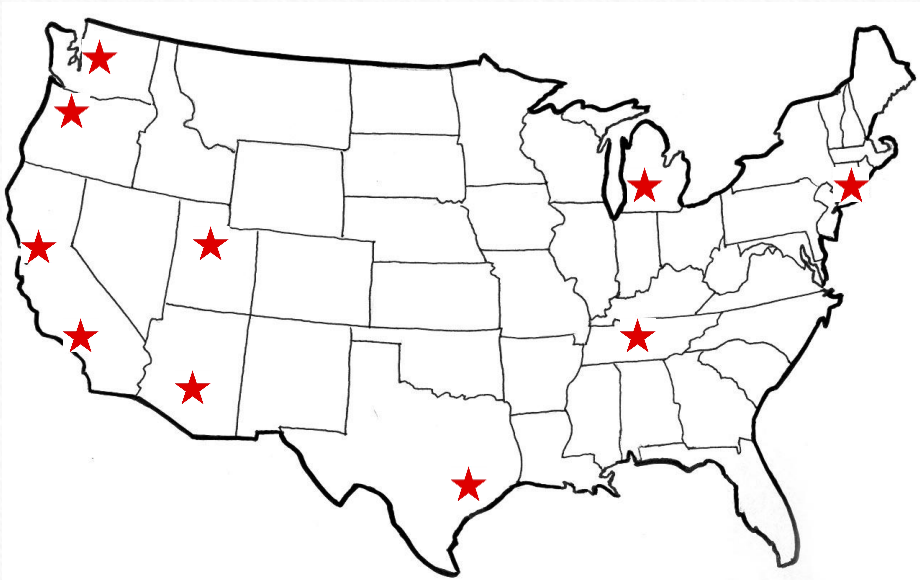**Butler Family Fund Grant to SHPA**

Staff Work:

- Lore Baker, SHPA Executive Director
- Fred Spannaus, Lead Consultant
- Robyn McCoy, Workforce Consultant

PHASE #1: RESEARCH

- Identified 24 model programs; conducted 16 interviews

- Observation & Advisory Council input

- Isolated 80+ Promising or Evidence-Based Practices

Two Basic Approaches:

1. **Persons with severely limiting disabilities**

- Goal is not economic

- Work is therapeutic

- Fast attachment with supports

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

IPS (INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT & SUPPORT)

2. **Persons who can support themselves through work**

- Goal is economic

- Work is means to an end

- Step-by-step process

- More deliberate screening, training and placement assistance

Six Common Elements

Every High-Outcome Project Had a Majority of These Six Elements:

- Right Scaling

- Motivated Participants

- One-on-One Interactions

- Open-Ended Commitments

- Collaboration

- Long-Term Employer Partnerships

1. Right Scaling

- Fit within size and capacity of the organization

- Start small

- Don't overestimate how much time, money and energy can be invested

2. Motivated Participants

- People who want to work, work out better

- Screening for motivation

- Conversation shifts when desire to work is expressed

- Use evidence-based approaches:
  - Motivational interviewing
  - Harm reduction
  - Stages of change

3. One-on-One Interactions

- High dosage of individual time

- Individual practice

- Limited use of classroom and online delivery of knowledge

4. Open-Ended Commitment

- No ending date

- Indeterminate length of enrollment

- Everyone stays in the program until they get adequate employment

- Report every day for skill building, job search, and/or volunteer duties

5. Interorganizational Collaboration

- Great programs never go it alone

- Great leaders who collaborate naturally

  - Active in local networks

  - Respected by peers

- Focus on outcomes, <u>not</u> ownership or credit
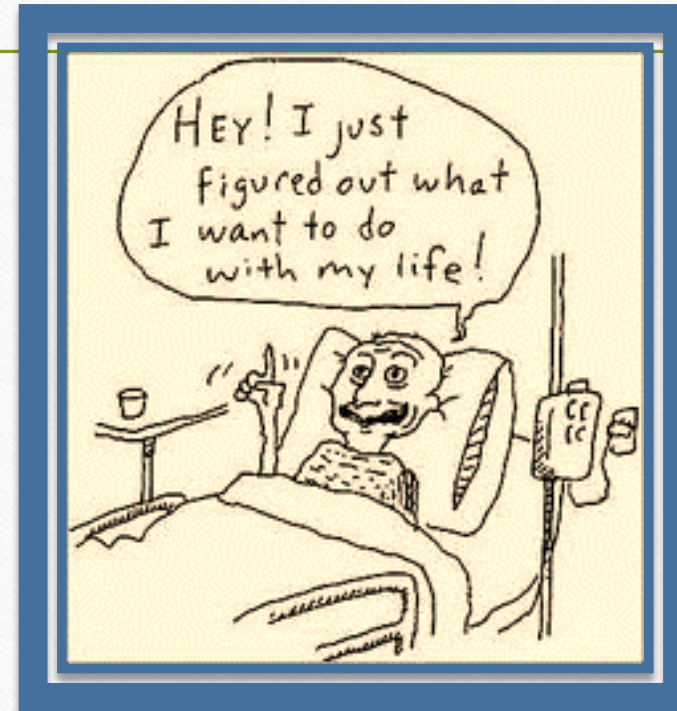
6. Long-Term Employer Partnerships

- Treat employers as full partners

- Involve employers in planning and design

- Solve employers' problems – never ask for favors or charity

- Respect business needs

Other Learnings

- People need purpose
  - "I work at…"
  - "I am a student at…"
  - "I volunteer at…"

Other Learnings (cont'd)

- Focus on strengths
  - Organizationally <u>and</u> individually
- Distinct roles
  - Case manager (advocacy and service coordination)
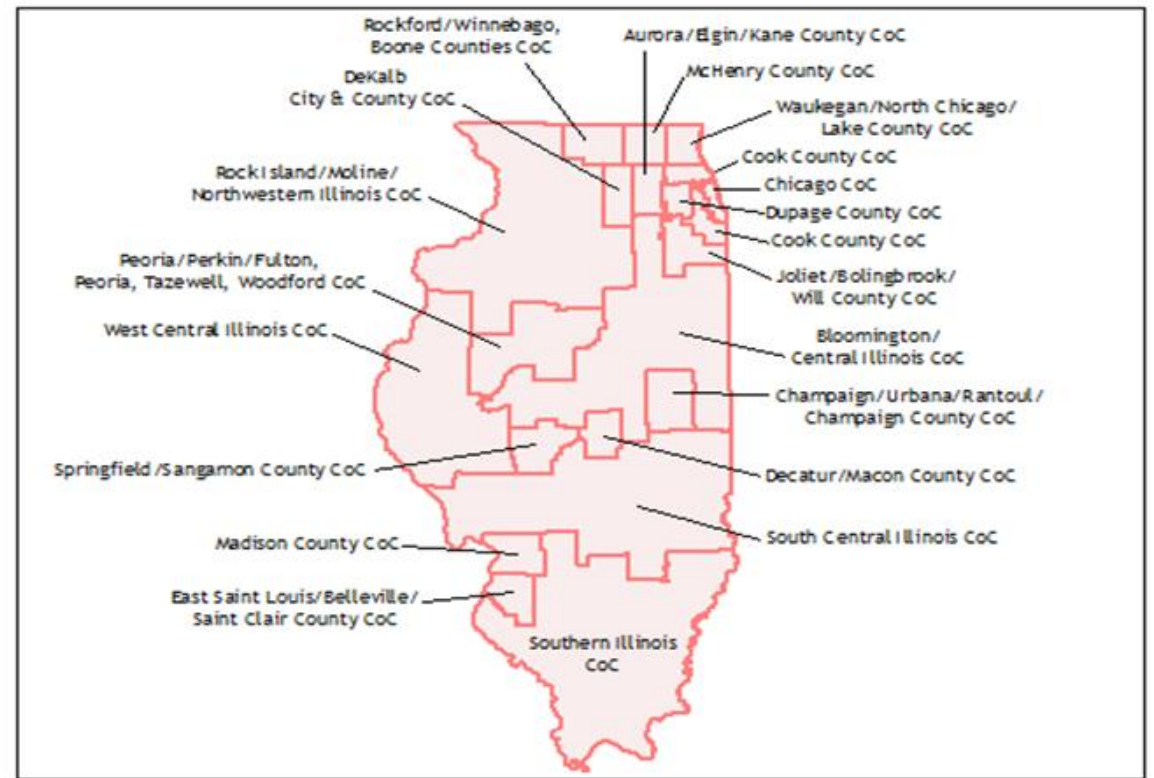 - Employment specialist (job and career issues)

PHASE #2: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

- Homeless System

- Public Workforce System

The "Homeless" System

- Continua of Care (20 in Illinois)
- Service providers
- Housing providers
- Driven by HUD

Map of Illinois Continuum of Care (CoC) regions:
- Rockford/Winnebago, Boone Counties CoC
- Aurora/Elgin/Kane County CoC
- DeKalb City & County CoC
- McHenry County CoC
- Waukegan/North Chicago/Lake County CoC
- Rock Island/Moline/Northwestern Illinois CoC
- Cook County CoC
- Chicago CoC
- Dupage County CoC
- Cook County CoC
- Peoria/Perkin/Fulton, Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford CoC
- Joliet/Bolingbrook/Will County CoC
- West Central Illinois CoC
- Bloomington/Central Illinois CoC
- Champaign/Urbana/Rantoul/Champaign County CoC
- Springfield/Sangamon County CoC
- Decatur/Macon County CoC
- Madison County CoC
- South Central Illinois CoC
- East Saint Louis/Belleville/Saint Clair County CoC
- Southern Illinois CoC

The Public Workforce System

- LWIAs (23 in Illinois)
- Illinois WorkNet Centers ("One-Stops")
- Driven by DOL

Illinois One-Stop Centers
Provided courtesy of the Illinois Workforce Partnership
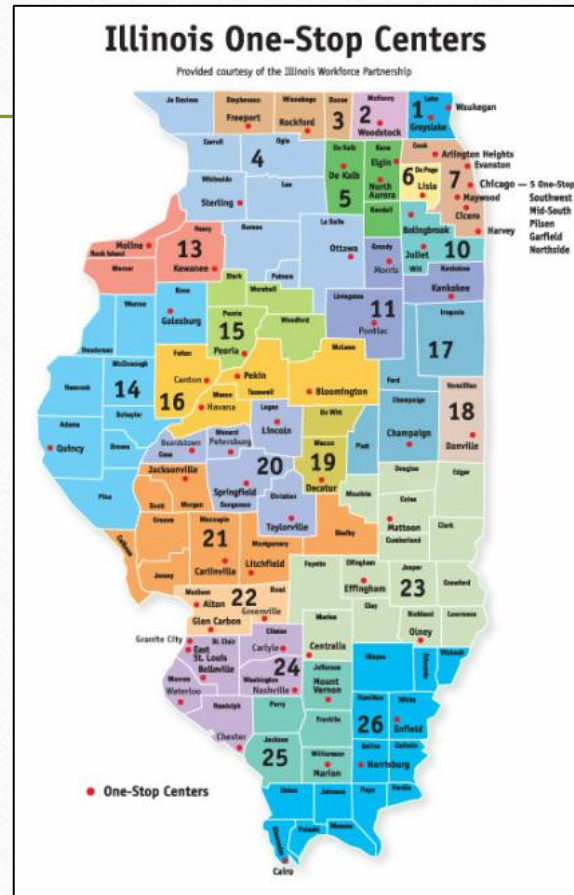
Misconceptions

- CoCs may think that WIBs should take unskilled persons, train them, and get them into well-paying jobs with benefits. And do it all now.

  - WIBs don't care about persons experiencing homelessness.

  - WIBs don't understand our financial and regulatory constraints.

- WIBs may think CoCs should get their customers into affordable, decent housing today, and solve all their other problems too. And do it right now.

  - CoCs expect us to perform miracles with high-barrier clients.

  - CoCs don't understand our financial and regulatory constraints.

What C2W Has Done

- Networking among Illinois CoC systems
  - SHPA-HAIL monthly conference calls
  - Google group
  - Update CoC Contact list
  - Liaisons for employment cases
- Networking among Illinois LWIA systems
  - Met with Illinois Workforce Partnership
  - Liaisons for homelessness cases

PHASE #3: GUIDE

Over 80 Promising or Evidence-Based Practices

Our Challenges:

- How to make it <u>real</u>, not just "Show & Tell"

- How to make it helpful for a <u>wide range</u> of practitioners

The Matrix Concept

All practices are sorted by two dimensions:

1. **Category** (Collaboration, Planning, Screening, Supportive Services, Placement, etc.)

2. **Timeframe** for Implementation:

   - Within three months

   - 3-12 months

   - One year or longer

User Process

1. Hop the link from SHPA website, or go straight to C2W site
2. Select category
3. Select timeframe

Live Demonstration

[www.ConnectToWork.org]

Questions?