

NVFS Training Futures End-of-Year Report to Capital One July, 2005

Summary of Grant: In Spring of 2004, Capital One awarded a \$15,000 grant to Northern Virginia Family Service's Training Futures (TF) office skills training program to enable Training Futures to continue achieving superior community outcomes at its two Northern Virginia sites. Training Futures delivers a 22-week office skills training program that connects low-income family breadwinners with new, career-track administrative jobs. The period of this grant was July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005.

FY 2005 Training Futures Results

The chart below outlines achievements during the grant period of the original results or outcomes that were projected in the proposal.

Projected Results	Actual Results
Graduation: Graduate 85-90% of enrolled TF trainees, for a total of 120 graduates	Training Futures graduated 86% (89 of 104 enrolled trainees) in 3 cycles of the 22-week program.
Employment: Assist 85-90% of TF graduates in securing new office administration jobs	In the first two graduating cycles, 79% of graduating trainees (45 of 57) secured office employment within 6 months of graduation. An additional 3 graduates secured office employment after the 6-month period, raising the overall employment outcome to 84%. Of the 32 graduates in the May 2005 cycle, 23 (72%) have secured new jobs as of July, with 4 more months of job search to go.
Wage Gains: Employed graduates will earn 25% more income for their families	Prior to TF, employed trainees in the first 2 graduating cycles reported average hourly wages of \$8.98. Average hourly wages in new jobs after TF were \$12.12, for an average wage gain of 35%.
Continued Professional Development: Register 50 TF graduates in evening NVCC courses to accelerate their career development	NVCC delivered 4 classes at TF sites during the 2004-2005 academic year. Approximately 40 TF graduates registered for these classes. Additionally, an unknown number of TF graduates registered for NVCC classes at one of its 5 campuses.

Analysis of Results

Training Futures' overall number of trainees served fell below the original target due to cancellation of the Fall 2004 cycle at TF's Springfield site. This cycle was canceled in order to transition TF's Springfield site into a health care administrative training program. Staff focused efforts on interviews with 15 health care employers regarding staffing needs, generating new resources to support this conversion to health care administrative training, and developing a new curriculum in partnership with NVCC's Medical Campus in Springfield. The inaugural cycle of TF's new health care administrative program will begin in August 2005.

Training Futures is able to achieve national-pace-setting graduation rates because of the rich support system that surrounds its trainees. TF trainers quickly facilitate an intentional support community among each cycle of trainees, who help each other in numerous ways. Each trainer is responsible for supporting, supervising and mentoring 10 trainees, supplemented by many volunteers willing to provide individual coaching and mentoring. Additionally, trainees undergoing emotional and family stresses have on-site access to a trained counselor to help them navigate the many emotional and family crises that can erupt during the 22-week program.

Although employment outcomes during the 6-month measurement period fell somewhat below TF's target range of 85%, this outcome of 79% still ranks TF as one of the top-performing programs in the country. Several trainees had special circumstances that delayed their job search, such as lengthy trips back to their home countries, health emergencies, which contributed to lower employment outcomes.

Summary of Capital One Volunteer Activity at Training Futures

Last year, Training Futures' Tysons Corner site and Capital One began to establish new volunteering relationships. Capital One financial literacy trainers volunteered to come three times during Cycle T7 (November 2004-May 2005). Initially, two Capital One trainers came over for the first installment on Personal Finances on January 19, 2005. Ben Grosz and a colleague also came April 20 during TF's "Getting and Keeping a Job" to talk more about savings and investments. Kim Young volunteered on March 8 to speak about Administrative Assistant job Requirements.

In Cycle T8 (started May 31, 2005), Capital One's Ben Grosz came to deliver personal finance on June 29. He plans to return soon to deliver sessions on credit and savings & investments. Ben has taken over from Tom Baldwin as the point of contact for financial literacy training at TF.

Training Futures invited several guests of Capital One to attend the graduation event on May 5th, 2005. Unfortunately, no one was able to attend on that date. The graduation story of this event on the following page illustrates the uplifting nature of this event, and how Capital One's investment in Training Futures genuinely helps to transform lives of working poor families in Northern Virginia.

HIGHER GROUND

Survival Question #1: If you're in a rural wilderness, when the rains come and floodwaters begin to rise around you, where do you go? – You quickly seek out higher ground, right?

Fortunately, you're probably thinking, we don't have to worry about that here in Northern Virginia, right?

Wrong.

"I never thought that the rainy season in my life would start one month [after arriving in Northern Virginia]," began Maria Virginia Rodriguez's Training Futures (TF) graduation speech. "Why did I come? Because of the love of my daughter. I wanted her to have the opportunities that I had...But, I became homeless together with my special daughter. The ground was my floor and the sky was my roof. No money. No food. And no friends."

TF graduate Natria Nolan also shared the story of her rainy season at this May 5, 2005 graduation event. *"I was a stay-at-home mother with two children, frustrated and stuck. It seemed that no one would hire me."*

Survival Question #2: If you're in a suburban wilderness like Northern Virginia, and your rainy season threatens to drown you, where do you go?

For Maria, Natria, and other graduates, the higher ground that they sought led them to NVFS Training Futures, a 22-week office skills training program that connects low-income adult breadwinners with employers who need motivated, tech-savvy administrative staff. *"I held onto Training Futures as my only lifesaver,"* said Maria.

"It's not what I expected," is how Natria characterized her TF experience. *"I thought it was just skills training, but it was so much more. At the moment that I realized that we were all like family at TF, I knew I had made the right decision."*

Looking around the room at the 130 attendees at the Gannett/USA Today headquarters, Training Futures sure looks like an awfully big family. Pointing out all of the essential roles played by the entire TF extended family of funders, volunteers, employers, staff, and other supporters, TF site coordinator Marla Burton declared *"it takes all of us to make Training Futures work...With 16 nationalities in this graduating class, Training Futures is on the cutting edge of preparing our region for rapidly-increasing diversity."*

After witnessing the dynamic presence of Maria Rodriguez speaking at the podium, it's hard to believe that this is the same woman who found herself and her daughter homeless and alone during her "rainy season" one year ago. *"Though my circumstances pointed me to be a failed person, I decided to be successful, and that TF would be my rainbow."* Then, speaking for all 32 TF graduates, Maria thrust her arm out and held one finger high above her head, her voice resounding with confident resolve and a smile on her lips: *"We need only one opportunity, and I know that the companies that hire us will never regret it."* Recruiters, Maria hints, can also seek out the higher ground at Training Futures, a suburban oasis where business needs, community needs, and neighbors' needs all intersect.

For Maria and many other family breadwinners at TF, this arduous journey through the rainy season, to the higher ground at Training Futures, and now on to a successful future and a dynamic symbol of Northern Virginia's new and diverse workforce, all began with the love of a special daughter.

Perhaps it takes a child to raise a village, instead of the other way around.