

SKILLS ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

by CAP Services

Region 5 • Stevens Point, Wisconsin
capservices.org



Workforce Development

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

The CAP Services Skills Enhancement Program seeks to help low-income families increase their earned income and have access to employer-paid benefits. The program provides financial assistance for tuition, books, and other training-related needs and helps cover the cost of training-related childcare and mileage for participants.

LOCAL NEED ADDRESSED

The Skills Enhancement Program was created to address two intertwined needs: First, many community members often lack the qualifications and skills needed to access sustainable, living-wage employment opportunities; and second, employers in the agency's service area lack a substantial number of qualified applicants, making it difficult to fill open positions.

ROLE OF CSBG FUNDS

When the program was first started 29 years ago, CSBG played a large part in its implementation. Since then, CSBG has become a smaller part of the overall total (26%) and is used to fund training costs for income-eligible participants.

TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT

The Skills Enhancement Program has a positive impact not just on participants, but also on their families, area employers, and the community at large. Participants gain access to in-demand skills and



qualifications, employers benefit from an increased pool of qualified job applicants, and the community at large benefits from more stable and self-sufficient families.

EVIDENCE-BASED OUTCOMES

The Skills Enhancement Program was piloted in Outagamie County in the early 1990s. Since then, the program has grown to cover all five counties in the CAP Services service area. It has also since been replicated by twelve other CAAs in Wisconsin. CAP Services has been recording the outcomes from this program since 1991, gathering measurable outcomes from each year, including the average income increase after successfully completing the program and the number of individuals who obtained a new job upon program completion.

EQUITY LENS

CAP Services collects demographic data from each program participant. In addition, the agency is working to design processes for analysis of the program's impact on different racial and ethnic groups in the community.

CUSTOMER VOICE

CAP Services collects program and agency evaluations, program completion surveys (every 6 months up to 2 years after completion), and ongoing feedback from staff. In addition, Skills Enhancement Program participants sit on the CAP Services Board of Directors as well as its advisory board. All of this feedback is used to inform improvements and changes in the program.

Contact

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