



## REINVESTING FOR ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

### *LEEDing the Way for Recovery*



The road ahead may still be unclear but the economic challenges of 2009 have certainly made the dual mission of economic & employment development central to any prospects for a recovery in 2010. Your financial contribution will enable LEED Council to remain at the cutting edge of linking these two fundamental initiatives.

Our **North River Corridor Infrastructure Task Force** promotes public investments in key infrastructure projects to mitigate area traffic and improve the functionality of our corridor for business growth. As a delegate

agency of the Chicago Department of Community Development, we have advocated for public financing to match both large and smaller business investments.

Our **Computer Skills** training now includes MOS & IC<sup>3</sup> Certifications plus Advanced Workshops in conjunction with our 70-hours basic computer skills program which graduated in 2009 a total of 73 individuals for career path employment in information technology or any position that relies on computer skills. Our 132-hours **Industrial Skills** program completed its 6<sup>th</sup> year with 34 graduates.

In 2009, our Employment Development programs expanded with the addition of our new 96-hours **Energy Efficiency Training** which has already graduated 30 students with weatherization skills for whom we are actively working on job placements.



When all three programs are running simultaneously, over 50 individuals are walking through LEED Council's door on a daily basis striving to improve their skills.

In a very tough climate during 2009, LEED Council was able to place 39 of our skills graduates in jobs; 29 of them are still employed. We are pleased to share with you two of their stories:

Before enrolling in LEED Council's Industrial Skills Class, **Lavell Cole** had been employed as a maintenance worker but then due to the economic downturn was laid off. While collecting unemployment, he collected and sold metal to General Iron. With only 4 weeks of unemployment left, he enrolled in our Industrial Skills program. Upon graduation, Lavell received a job offer at Moo & Oink, a retail/wholesale meat business based in Chicago, as a Bagger and Cart Attendant responsible for entry level duties that involved returning carts from lot, packaging groceries, and custodial work.



After six months of employment, his excellent attendance and work ethic earned Lavell a promotion to “Lead Utility” with a pay increase and benefits. Now Lavell supervises up to 8 other employees. In addition, he is responsible for the set up of exterior displays of food and vegetables located outside the store under a tent. He checks and verifies inventory, and signs invoice orders provided by vendors when merchandise is delivered. He is now waiting for a Butcher position to open up.

Lavell loves working at Moo & Oink and has been able to save money from his job to purchase a buffer to work side jobs buffing floors. His career goal is to start his own janitorial company one day.

Lavell has been an active *LEEDer for Training*. Last year, he joined other graduates to advocate that the Illinois State Legislature restore the 50% cut in funding in this year's State budget to the Job Training & Economic Development (JTED) program which funds the LEED Council's Industrial Skills Training program. Lavell wrote letters to his State Representatives and Senators requesting support for the bill. He enjoys being a *LEEDer* and continues to promote the LEED Council throughout his community by referring individuals to our skill programs.

Lavell notes, “LEED Council gave me the morale boost and hope I needed when I was struggling and things in my life were at a low point. It was nice knowing that I could count on them and even now, though I graduated, I can still count on the LEED Council for support.”

**Jacqueline Thompson** proved to be “a quick learner, very outgoing, working extremely hard and mastering all subjects in LEED Council’s core computer skills curricula,” according to Danny Shields, LEED Council’s Computer Technology Center Coordinator. Her professional goal is to become a Software Developer working with web-based technologies. Jacqueline enjoys the system development life cycle of developing processes & procedures and the actual implementation of executable code. She notes that “development is like a large puzzle and maze of continuously playing Sudoku”.

Jacqueline also completed her IC<sup>3</sup> and MOS certifications at LEED Council. She completed her MCAS at New Horizons and just finished a 4-month internship at *icstars*, working with businesses, in 1000 hours of project based training, to identify solutions for optimization in core business services, which are then actually implemented within the business.

Jacqueline has been extended a full-time job offer that starts January 4, 2010 working with IBM. Her job title will be Data Migration with responsibility of converting over all SPSS contacts and documentation so that they sync with IBM’s platform.

LEED Council congratulates Jacqueline as our first career-path computer skills graduate!

With your support, we look forward to an even more productive 2010 assisting *more* businesses to grow and *more* graduates to pursue their career goals.

Be a **LEEDer** by contributing to our **Annual Finance Campaign** and enable us to keep “*LEEDing the Way for Recovery.*”

Please mail your check to: **Local Economic & Employment Development Council**

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