



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **FCM TO DESIGN BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT PILOT FOR DEPT OF LABOR AT-RISK YOUTH INITIATIVE**

*Disadvantaged youth benefit from multi-agency approach*

In 2004, the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration [DOL-ETA] developed a new strategic vision to serve at-risk youth. This was in response to the 2003 White House Taskforce Report on Disadvantaged Youth which recommended a need to increase collaboration among federal youth agencies to better coordinate how programs serve the neediest youth.

As a result, the Shared Youth Vision (SYV) Federal Collaborative Partnership was formed to include the Department of Labor, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Justice, Education, Transportation, the U.S. Social Security Administration, and the Corporation for National and Community Service. The goal of the Partnership is to bring these agencies together to better serve youth and assist them with obtaining self sufficiency.

Over the past three years, the SYV has worked at both the state and local levels to meet the needs of the nation's most vulnerable youth. Sixteen states were selected to serve as the catalyst in the implementation of their shared youth vision including Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island and Utah. Currently, each of the states is in a different stage of the process in terms of building collaborations and creating systems and strategies to work more effectively across agencies in targeting needy youth.

In July 2007, the Department of Labor contracted with Full Capacity Marketing, Inc. (FCM) to assist one of the sixteen states with an in-depth strategic pilot program to build upon the collaborations and planning that has taken place to date. "The goal of this technical assistance process is to assist one state in accelerating their strategic goals by engaging businesses and employers more effectively," said Celina Shands Gradijan, FCM's president/CEO.

The SYV is a systems-building initiative that ultimately will support employers, by addressing worker shortages and pipeline issues. However, effective systems can be built only if businesses and employers understand the critical workforce issues and the impact in their businesses and the economy. FCM's role will be to assist partnering agencies in designing and delivering communication and outreach strategies that support teams in bringing more employers and businesses on board with the project.

“We’ve had very good results with similar projects for the DOL-ETA in helping these types of collaborations build effective business partnerships,” said Gradijan. “This critical initiative plays an important role in preparing a new workforce supply pipeline needed by businesses to fill job vacancies in the knowledge economy.”

For more information on the Department of Labor’s Shared Youth Vision, go to <http://www.doleta.gov/ryf/whitehoureport/vmo.cfm>

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