



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Abt Associates and FCM Awarded Department of Labor Contract** *FCM to provide technical assistance to 16 sites to meet the needs of businesses*

The U.S. Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration (DOL-ETA) is engineering a strategic shift in the design, implementation and operation of its key workforce development initiatives. The Presidents High Growth Job Training Initiative is a strategic effort to meet high growth industries workforce needs by preparing workers for new and increasing job opportunities in rapidly expanding or transforming industries. Traditionally, program initiatives have been primarily shaped by the education and training needs of job seekers and incumbent workers (i.e., the supply side). While this remains a core focus, the DOL-ETAs overriding mission is to pursue these efforts within a more demand driven context of employers workforce development and hiring needs. The net result, ideally, is a more productive alignment of supply (needs of job seekers and incumbent workers) with demand (needs of businesses/ employers).

Preparing youth for this demand driven market is the goal of the DOL-ETAs Division of Youth Services. Their High Growth Youth Offender Initiative (HGYOI) is a special project to provide opportunities for at-risk court-involved youth to successful transition into working in high growth industries. The HGYOI aims to serve the neediest out-of-school and at-risk youth through the workforce investment system by improving alternative education services and meeting the demands of businesses, especially in high growth industries and occupations. The foundation of these initiatives is partnerships that include the public workforce investment system, business and industry, community-based agencies, education, training providers, and the juvenile justice community to help youth offenders enter careers in high growth industries.

In April 2005, the DOL-ETA solicited funding applications for the HGYOI, and selected 16 Grantees from among 168 applicants who applied through a competitive procurement process. The grantees were selected to prepare youth offenders for successful entry into the workforce, specifically economic sectors identified as high growth

industries. Each grantee was awarded a two-year grant between \$851,000 and \$1,000,000, with a total of \$15.6 million distributed.

During the first year of the award, the 16 grantees focused on stabilizing their service delivery structure by assembling resources and planning services with their partner organizations. Each grantee focused on the youth customer and provided occupational training, on-the-job training, apprenticeship opportunities, internships and other work-based learning to help former offenders gain the skills for which high growth industries have strong demand. During year two, the grantees will now be expected to adopt a dual focus by expanding their attention to a second customer, businesses/ employers, and proactively supporting the DOL-ETAs demand driven emphasis, by developing and maintaining connections to high growth industries

Full Capacity Marketing, Inc. and Abt Associates, Inc. have been awarded a contract by the DOL-ETA to provide technical assistance for the 16 grantees to help them 1) understand how to better communicate with business/employers; 2) create value propositions for their agency; and 3) build internal capacity to better outreach effectively to this market. President/CEO Celina Shands Gradijan said, "We are delighted to be working with Abt Associates, Inc. on this exciting initiative. Helping the business community understand the value of these types of workforce programs is critical in building a pipeline of talent that directly impacts our nation's economic well being."

FCM and Abt are scheduled to complete the project on June 30, 2007 with a full report of findings launched to the public in July 2007.

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