

THE SAN FRANCISCO FOUNDATION

The Community Foundation of the Bay Area

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MULTIMILLION DOLLAR NATIONAL FUND AWARDS LOCAL GROUP

\$450,000 given to Bay Area Workforce to support employers and workers

SAN FRANCISCO – (Thursday, August 23, 2007) The Bay Area Workforce Collaborative (BAWFC), a public-private partnership, including 14 foundations and the State of California Employment Development Department, has been awarded a major grant from the newly launched National Fund for Workforce Solutions. The fund is a new initiative devoted to creating opportunities for lower-wage workers and meeting employers' critical needs for skilled employees.

BAWFC is one of four regional partnerships selected for the initial round of grants from the Fund. The \$450,000 grant will support the collaborative to continue its efforts to expand the local career-ladder workforce over three years. BAWFC, created in 2004, aims to provide employers with qualified workers and to prepare low-wage workers to move into jobs that pay a family-supporting wage. BAWFC will raise four times the grant amount – or \$1.8 million – from local sources, over the three-year term of the grant.

In its first four years, BAWFC has trained more than 1,000 workers in the healthcare and biotechnology sectors. “We are honored to be selected by the National Fund for Workforce Solutions,” said Sandra R. Hernández, M.D., CEO of The San Francisco Foundation, a part of BAWFC. “Our collaborative has created an impressive ladder to meaningful, well-paying jobs for hundreds of Bay Area workers. These national resources both support our continuing efforts and highlight our best practices for the nation.”

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions was created by the Annie E. Casey,

Ford, and Hitachi Foundations, the U.S. Labor Department and other key supporters. It is committed to raising \$50 million to strengthen and expand effective workforce initiatives around the country. Leaders of the Fund will actively seek additional investments from foundations, businesses, and the public sector.

The Fund expects to work with local initiatives such as BAWFC to place at least 50,000 people in jobs, leverage more than \$200 million in local funding, and provide services to at least 1,000 employers to help them recruit, train, and move employees into family-supporting jobs. It also aims to expand resources and improve the efficiency of workforce development systems in more than 30 regions across the country.

Along with the Bay Area Workforce Collaborative, the Fund has made grants to three other new sites, including:

- * The Partnership for New Communities (Chicago)
- * San Diego Workforce Funders Collaborative
- * Los Angeles Workforce Funder Collaborative
- * The Greater Washington (D.C.) Workforce Development Collaborative

These cities now join the sites that were part of the pilot phase, including Baltimore, Boston, New York City, San Francisco, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island.

The local groups supported by the Fund have received financial support from both the private and public sectors and crafted workforce efforts that meet the needs of both workers and employers in job sectors hit hard by employee skill shortages. In doing so, these new workforce initiatives are creating opportunities for workers to move into jobs and careers that provide family-supporting wages and benefits.

These high-quality workforce partnerships are critically needed because the nation faces a shortage of well-prepared workers. During the next 20 years, the American workforce is expected to grow by only half of its earlier pace, and the nation will see no growth in the number of native-born workers in their prime working years. In particular, the number of workers with two-year degrees and skill certificates will fall far short of the economy's needs, while the number of graduates of four-year colleges is expected to remain stagnant. Such a shortage of needed workers will constrain the nation's economic growth.

Please visit www.sff.org for more information about the Bay Area Workforce Collaborative.

Launched in 2004, the Bay Area Workforce Funding Collaborative (BAWFC) is a public/private partnership of 14 philanthropic foundations and the State of

California Employment Development Department (EDD) designed to increase the economic security of low-income Bay Area residents while meeting the workforce needs of key industry sectors in the region. BAWFC invests in efforts that promote the development and sustainability of **career ladder initiatives** that lead from entry level positions to progressively more skilled occupations in the healthcare and life sciences fields. The BAWFC funds three types of programs:

- * **Workforce Partnership Grants:** to support training and job placement for low income and disadvantaged adults and transition age youth ages 18–24 in the healthcare and life sciences sector.

- * **Innovation Grants:** to support research, planning, and pilot projects in workforce sectors.

- * **Policy Grants:** to support system change and increases in resources for sector workforce initiatives.

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