



United Way of King County

# JOBS CONNECT

Helping people move off the streets. It's working

DECEMBER 2019



After being homeless for six weeks, Tamara had found housing, but needed an income in order to qualify. She was hired on the spot through Jobs Connect by Amazon.

## TYPES OF ASSISTANCE:

- Transportation
- Access to certification needed for employment (e.g., food handler card)
- Appropriate work clothing
- Showers and laundry facilities
- Storage of personal items while individuals are on the job
- Connections to housing services to assist clients in finding stable housing

## We know what it takes to fight our community's homelessness crisis: **Income and housing.**

### AN INCOME SOLUTION:

Three years ago, an event at one of Seattle's stadiums required more than 100 jobs be filled—and that goal could not be met. That gap sparked an idea: Could United Way connect people who are homeless to these one-day job opportunities, then leverage that connection to help them progress into longer-term employment?

The answer is yes. It's why we now have Jobs Connect.

### HOW IT WORKS

Sure, our community has long had day labor organizations and job training programs—but they weren't focusing on people who were homeless. We partnered with agencies who have shown results in both areas to create the following:

**Street-team of outreach workers.** We're proactive—meeting clients where they're at. Outreach workers with proven success connecting with people who are living on the streets work daily, and around the county, to recruit people to fill immediate employment needs.

**Eliminated barriers to employment.** We provide people a place to store their belongings during the day, transportation to and from the job and help them access documents like food handler permits or ID cards. We've introduced a peer-to-peer component, creating space for people with shared backgrounds (i.e. moved from incarceration into homelessness and have a record) to learn from and encourage each other.

**Wide range of training programs.** The day labor opportunities are just the beginning. They help us connect with people and provide immediate gratification of a paycheck that day. We're connecting clients to a variety of long-term employment: barista training, full culinary programs and apprenticeship programs for sheet metal fabrication and machinist.

## FROM PILOT PHASE TO SCALE

The program has been thriving since the pilot in spring 2016. From one outreach and job training provider connecting 163 people to jobs, we're now working with ten providers—and last year, 1,573 people found jobs.



Jobs Connect now offers a full range of opportunities—from part-time jobs at the likes of Casa Latina and The Millionair Club to job training at Fare Start and YouthCare to placement services into long-term jobs at Neighborhood House and Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle. Already, in the first quarter of this fiscal year, we've connected 300 people to employment.

We also help employers understand the challenges of this population so that both parties are successful. Once participants have a secure income, we're often able to connect them to flexible funds for housing through our Streets to Home program.

## WHY UNITED WAY?



We piloted the program, did some fine-tuning and have taken it to scale.



We sought out agencies with proven track records around employment, who were evaluating job training. Our funding gave them the space to specifically target people who were homeless and measure actual job placement.



We bring our partners together on a regular basis to share best practices, discuss what's working and what's not.

In order to meet the goal of connecting 1,200 people to jobs, **we need your support.**

People struggling with homelessness are highly motivated and excited for the opportunity to work. They also have unique challenges that are sometimes foreign to employers. We help employers understand:

- How requiring an address on an application is a barrier
- Transportation challenges for people who are homeless
- Unique challenges of people who are newly housed



## OUR PARTNERS CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JOBS:

- Cares of Washington
- Casa Latina
- FareStart
- Interaction Transition
- Millionair Club Charity
- Neighborhood House
- Trac Associates
- Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
- YouthCare
- YWCA of King and Snohomish Counties