WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT 
AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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Financial Opportunity Centers

- Based on Center for Working Families Model
- Neighborhood-focused solutions
- Bundled services
  - Access to public benefits
  - In-depth financial coaching
  - Linkages to workforce development services and programs
  - Services provided or coordinated through a single source
Lessons Learned

- **Changing Philosophy**
  - Must be economic development, not social service focused

- **Understand the role of an intermediary**
  - Depends on goals
  - Can be passive (only funding) or active
  - Convener and/or facilitator

- **Define the geography early and clearly**
  - Can impact funding decisions
Know the Audience

- What are the demographics?
  - Income
  - Education
  - Language
  - Labor market data
- Are there employment centers or corridors?
  - Where will people work, how will they get there?
Lessons Learned

Employer Engagement is critical

- It’s not about job development anymore
- Identify growth sectors, existing initiatives
- Dual customer approach
- Are there opportunities for job creation and entrepreneurship?
Lessons Learned

Partnerships and Collaboration
- Who are the other key players in the community?
- Overcome turf and trust issues
- Avoid the NIH syndrome
- What resources are available?
- Mind the gap!
- Define individual roles. Hit the sweet spot
- Develop a shared vision
What about the public workforce system?
- The Workforce system can be hard to navigate
- The Workforce Investments Boards can provide data and resources
Lessons Learned

- Build Staff Capacity
  - For many workforce development is an unknown world
  - Build capacity across organizations in the community
Links

- http://nfwsolutions.org
- http://www.lisc.org/section/ourwork/national/family/foc
- http://www.lisc.org/section/ourwork/sc
- http://liveunited.org/
- http://www.seedco.org/
Questions?

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