

DAILY BREEZE

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FINDING WORK IS OFTEN A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

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By Robin McCarthy, Executive Director of Women At Work

A few weeks back I was discussing employment statistics with Women At Work's talented Job Developer Perla.

For those who have been to Women At Work, she is the smiling face that greets them each week at the beginning of Job Club. She often introduces a speaker who has come to talk about hiring, speakers from such companies and organizations as Vons, LAPD and Mary Kay.

Next on the agenda is the weekly Hot Jobs list, an internally generated list provided each week by Women At Work from the more than 50-plus job announcements we receive from our sources, supporters, community friends and others. Perla passes those full job descriptions along to interested individuals, working to match clients' skills with employment opportunities.

A bit later I asked Perla to write for our newsletter about a client she had worked with who had succeeded in the long job search. A few days later, I read her article. The article goes to the heart of what Women At Work is, and what we are about.

I often say to our supporters, "We meet a client where they are at. Each one is different and each a story of her own. Each has a need, and our goal is to help them meet that need."

Here is a bit of what Perla wrote:

"When I was asked to write a story about one of my clients, I thought, 'Oh that should be easy.' But as I started to think about it, I realized this is not about one person getting a job. There are many people who succeeded in their goal of landing a job by using our services. I initially wanted to write about Jim, as he was our latest success story, but then I thought about Beth and Renee. "Oh boy," I thought, "what about Jenny, who after meeting with our career counselor Mayra felt the confidence to consider a career transition?"

Jenny is now working at City of Hope and giving back to Women At Work. What about Rosemary who followed one of our leads and landed the job immediately? Guyane attended Job Club just about every week since January. One day she tells me she has an interview. We talk about it, and two weeks later I noticed she had not attended Job Club. Her cousin informed me that she landed the job!

All of these individuals are now in a position where they can pass job leads along to Women At Work. Those are the leads that I will be sharing at Job Club. What a wonderful circle!

LAPD called us and visited our center because they want to partner with us. Mary Kay does free makeovers the last Monday of the month to assist our clients with treatments that will boost their self esteem while in job search. Vons comes to Job Club the second Monday of every month to talk about the "Do's and Don'ts for Job Seekers." Dress for Success, a nonprofit, fully clothes our clients who are in "interview mode" and will give them a full week's wardrobe FREE after landing the job. We are going for the full package.

There is so much going on with Job Development. Dress for Success has asked us to participate as part of "their team" to run the L.A. Marathon in March 2012, with free training. I would love it if Women At Work becomes a part of that - that event is international! We already have one Job Club member who is interested in participating. I am sure Women At Work will fully support her if she decides to run. I am very proud to be a part of Women At Work and all the wonderful things that happen here.

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