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JVS LOS ANGELES REPORTS FROM THE FRONTLINES OF THE JOB MARKET

Agency Makes Sense of Unemployment Figures, Finds Solutions

(LOS ANGELES) Is the job market schizophrenic? Only a few weeks ago, the news proclaimed unemployment figures had dropped. Yet just a few days ago, it was predicted that we haven't seen the worst yet. And Los Angeles County's unemployment rate is 11.9%, the highest since World War II. JVS Los Angeles, which has been helping people with career and job issues since the Great Depression, is on the frontlines of the real employment picture, with real solutions.

With more than 18 locations across Southern California, including two WorkSource Centers, JVS has seen a 50% increase in clients coming in for help across the board. Part of this is due to the "new unemployed," which encompasses white collar professionals who have had fairly stable careers, and with little idea of how to cope with the new job market.

"We are definitely seeing professionals, architects, financial executives, higher level managers, and career changers. Many of them are single adults, without any sort of safety net. We're able to help direct their job search, and many people who come to us are finding jobs within 3-6 months, as opposed to the national average of around 18 months," said Angie Cooper, Director of JVS' Marina Del Rey WorkSource Center.

Thanks to help from the Recovery and Reinvestment Act, JVS has received funding for not only its two WorkSource Centers, but for new sector initiatives targeting workers in industries specifically affected by the economic downturn.

Angie added, "However, we can't stress enough that people cannot wait until their benefits run out before coming to us or any other agency for help. Don't expect this to be an easy process anymore."

JVS has also seen an increase in older workers, which once meant people in their fifties and sixties, but now includes clients in their seventies. JVS has implemented programs especially for this demographic, including Maturability™, a series of workshops for those 50+ designed to help people reconfigure their skills to the new workplace. The agency has also found success with several training programs that partner with businesses to train people for careers in growth industries, including banking, healthcare and green construction. JVS' Sub-Prime and Mortgage program, funded by a National Emergency Grant, has placed a number of dislocated workers in new arenas.

In July alone, the WorkSource Centers saw more than 3,900 people. These clients can also account for the drop in unemployment rates, as their benefits expire, or they give up the job search.

“Most haven’t looked for jobs for years and are unprepared for the new methods — online job boards, resumes that get scanned for keywords by computers, and new skills required for new fields,” said JVS’ Director of Career and Business Services Jay Soloway. “What people need to realize today is that the days of a long-time career at one place are over. There are jobs out there, but they may not be your first pick. That doesn’t mean you can’t accept a position and keep looking. Or even consider a new career.”

The first and oldest non-profit dedicated exclusively to career services, JVS has helped hundreds of thousands of people overcome barriers to employment. A non-profit, non-sectarian organization, JVS works with city, state and county agencies to ensure everyone has access to the help they need, including career professionals, at-risk students, people with disabilities and newly arrived immigrants. Last year, JVS assisted more than 25,000 through 18 different locations across Southern California.

For more information visit www.jvsla.org and join us on Facebook at **JVS Los Angeles**. For the latest job tips, hints, and what’s happening with the market today, follow **JobManJay** on Twitter @JVSlosangeles.

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