

TEEI

Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative

Transgender Job Fair IV: Corporate America shows up in greater numbers

March 26, 2008
Summary Report

"At Bank of America we are committed to diversity in our workforce including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. I am very proud that Bank of America is represented at the Transgender Job Fair sponsored by the San Francisco LGBT Center. We acknowledge that every form of diversity strengthens our workforce and the Transgender Job Fair gives us direct access to a diverse highly skilled community. As an LGBT Bank of America employee myself I am particularly proud that I am able to represent Bank of America at this event."

Frank Burgoyne, Corporate Recruiter, Bank of
America

"It was very profound experience for me to converse with employers that were both truly comfortable conversing with me and making an effort to help me."

- Transgender

Job Fair IV Attendee

Overview:

The San Francisco Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Community Center (The LGBT Center), Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), San Francisco Transgender Empowerment Advocacy and Mentorship (SFTEAM), and The Transgender Law Center (TLC), announced a first-of-its-kind program to reduce chronic unemployment and underemployment within the transgender community in April of 2007. This year, The Transgender Job Fair has been co-coordinated by TEEI (Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative), the 4th annual Transgender Job Fair was held on Wednesday, March 26th, 2008. The

Transgender Job Fair IV included a Pre Job Fair Workshop, a One-on-one Technical Assistance Workshop, Training for Employers by the Transgender Law Center, and a Post Job Fair Workshop open to Transgender Community Members.

Employers were carefully selected to participate in the Transgender Job Fair this year. All employers were requested to undergo training before or after the job fair provided by the Transgender Law Center. The training gives employers tools to decrease workplace bias towards transgender community members. Employers participating with TEEI and Transgender Job Fairs are provided free technical assistance from TLC after the job fair and on a continuing basis.

"There has been an amazing shift in the Transgender Job Fair in terms of employers over the last 4 years." Said JoAnne Keatley, Co-Chair, SFTEAM. "It is clear that the employers coming this year have an interest in the inclusion of Trans people as employees. They are coming about to realize the economic sense of hiring within the trans community and are also interested in contributing to the success of the TEEI program and it's efforts. Even the Fortune 500 companies are stepping up to address the need to hire and supply adequate benefits for transgender employees."

"The March 26th Transgender Job Fair is one of the highlights of the first year of the Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative," said Rebecca Rolfe, The Center's Executive Director. "It has been only 8 months since TEEI has started serving clients, and we've already validated many of our assumptions about the project. For example, a survey of TEEI clients indicated that 72% of program participants have had trouble finding a job; 20% of participants say that they had been looking for a year or more; and 75% of TEEI clients were seeking employment solely through TEEI, which indicates that we are reaching community members that would not or could not otherwise access services like this."

Abby Snay, Executive Director of JVS has said that regarding TEEI, the need for employment assistance in the transgender community and the support of friendly employers: "The employment crisis in the transgender community is acute. Transgender job seekers face significant barriers to finding and keeping a job. TEEI works one-on-one with transgender job seekers, helping them navigate the job search process and supporting them as new employees. TEEI also works closely with supportive employers to create workplaces where transgender employees can thrive."

This report provides a summary of our findings from pre-job fair surveys, on-line registration forms, post job fair surveys which were completed by job seekers and employers attending the event, along with an overview the Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative Program. For further information about The TEEI Program contact Clair Farley, Transgender Economic Dev. Coordinator, @ 415-865-5632 or email clairf@sfcenter.org and Sean Krainert, Employment Specialist @ 415-782-6268 or skrainert@jvs.org.

Thanks are due to the many dedicated volunteers, TEEI staff, The Center, Transgender Law Center, SFTEAM, participating employers and transgender job seekers who made this event a success.

Job Fair Highlights:

Employers were screened for their sensitivity about the transgender communities. The atmosphere was very friendly and positive. All employers provided clear information on the types of job opportunities they offered and their application processes.

-Transgender Job

Fair IV Attendee

"We participate in the Transgender Job Fair, as well as the other LGBT Fairs at The Center because it speaks to Schwab's top down values to hire a diverse workforce from the community at large. It also correlates with our firm's purpose "To make EVERYONE financially fit"

- Mark Presslar,

Charles Schwab

Overall, 120 job seekers attended, and 30 employers participated including:

- Levi Strauss
- Bank of America
- C.A. State Auto Association
- Charles Schwab
- Ritz Carlton
- Scion Staffing
- Positive Resource Center
- Macy's West
- San Francisco City and County
- San Francisco City College
- San Francisco Police Dept.

- Strategic Staffing
- Good Vibrations
- Jewish Vocational Services
- St. James Infirmary
- Municipal Transportation Agency
- WAMU
- McKesson
- Walgreens
- UCSF Medical
- UCSF Campus
- SF Airport Commission
- One Stop Career Center
- BAYAC
- SF PUC
- Artisan Creative
- Out & Equal Workplace Advocates
- PG&E
- Arriba Juntos

"This job fair gave me insight into companies that I may not have considered for job opportunities otherwise. The 'Dress for Success' service provided at this event was a valuable addition and greatly appreciated."

-Transgender Job

Fair IV Attendee

"Free food, free clothing, free makeup, free help with makeup and a good mix of possible employer. I didn't actually need the incentives, but it makes a huge difference to some people."

-Transgender Job Fair IV

Attendee

I was nice to know that the employers were trans-positive. My interactions with the employers were consistently good.

-Transgender Job Fair IV

Attendee

Survey Highlights:

We gathered on-line feedback from nearly half of the job seekers who attended the job fair and the majority of the employers. Here is what they had to say:

- 100% of the employers rated the job fair "excellent or good."
- 80% of the employers rated the overall job seeker attendance to be "excellent or good."
- 100% of the employers said they met qualified candidates.
- 76.7% of the employers rated the skill level of the job seekers to be "excellent or good."
- 76.7% of the employers said they expect to be contacting candidates.
- 96.7% of the employers said they were appropriately prepared for the event.
- 100% of the employers said they were more likely to participate in future Job Fairs
- 90% of the employers regarding diversity recruitment considered this event very valuable.
- 46.3% of the job seekers rated the job fair "excellent."
- 31.7% of the job seekers rated the job fair "good."
- 43.9% of the job seekers said the job fair helped "greatly" with their job seeking efforts.
- 82.9% of the job seekers said "yes" they felt appropriately prepared for this event.
- 65.9% of the job seekers rated the diversity of employment opportunities presented at the job fair as "excellent or good."
- 75% of the job seekers said the event offered an opportunity for possible employment leads.
- 75.9% of the job seekers said they were "more likely to do business with the companies participating."
- 75.6% of the job seekers said they were "more likely to seek employment opportunities on an ongoing basis with the companies participating."

"Having been to many job fairs in my life, this was definitely one of the better ones. Other job fairs, even when I was more conventional in my appearance and work expectations, usually feel like I was herded thru and handed a bunch of business cards with HR websites on them. Employers at the transgender job fair were willing to talk to me, offer advice, ect. I am looking for a rather specialized position, so I expected there wouldn't be tons of leads, but even so there were some really good. "

-Transgender Job Fair IV

Attendee

"Thank you for offering this as a resource for Trans people."

-Transgender Job Fair IV

Attendee

"The staff made a tremendous effort in putting the pieces together, it looked seamless and they were all very helpful."

-Transgender Job Fair IV

Attendee

History

Good Jobs Now, a 2006 survey of transgender people living in San Francisco conducted by TLC, the San Francisco Bay Guardian, and The Women's Foundation, found that only 25% of the transgender people surveyed were employed full time and 35% were unemployed altogether. Only 4% make more than the estimated median income for SF. The study also found that 73% of the transgender people surveyed are low income with as much as 65% living in poverty and 20% reported receiving some income from street economy (sex work, drugs).(2006) Until recently data on the economic health of San Francisco's Transgender Communities was limited. This report will compare the data collected from the Transgender Job Fair IV to the results of previously released studies. Reports reviewed include: *Good Jobs Now : a snapshot of the economic health of San Francisco's Transgender Communities* (2006), *Trans Realities* (2003), and post summery reports previous Transgender Job Fairs.

Transgender people and their families face overwhelming discrimination in nearly every institution in California. The TEEI program, a multi-agency effort to provide outreach, employment, and mentoring services to transgender community members was launched in late 2007. The TEEI program was designed to combat the increasing rate of underemployment and unemployment among transgender community members. The TEEI Program brings together four different elements to enhance the economic development of transgender communities: workforce readiness, job support, mentoring and employer training and readiness. It addresses these issues by: (1) providing employment services through Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) to help transgender individuals in San Francisco find and retain stable jobs, (2) assisting with ongoing support for newly placed employees, (3) matching job seekers with peer-based practical and emotional support through community mentors, (4) providing legal and technical services through the Transgender Law Center to engage employers and HR managers through free workshops to make workplaces safer and more welcoming for

transgender employees. TEEI is a collaborative project led by The Center, San Francisco Transgender Empowerment Advocacy and Mentorship (SF TEAM), JVS, TLC.

Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) founded in 1973, is a non-sectarian non-profit organization dedicated to helping people acquire the skills and resources to find and keep meaningful employment and make progress towards self-sufficiency. JVS provides community members with job navigation and vocational services including one-on-one employment counseling, individual and group training sessions, job search and placement services, retention and career advancement support and access to computers and specific skill enhancement trainings when needed. Visit <http://www.jvs.org/> to learn more about JVS.

The San Francisco LGBT Community Center (The Center) formed in 1993, is the nexus of the LGBT community in the Bay Area, offering facilities, a central location in San Francisco and vibrant programs in HIV prevention, information and referral, arts and culture and economic development in all parts of our community. The Center's department of Workforce and Economic Development links transgender job seekers and newly placed employees with transgender community members who have successfully navigated the job market. The mentoring program builds on the transgender community's culture of mentoring and formalizes it by training mentors in conflict resolution and legal rights. Visit www.sfcenter.org for further information.

Transgender Law Center (TLC), California's first fully staffed, state-wide transgender legal organization, utilizes direct legal services, public policy advocacy, and educational opportunities to advance the rights and safety of diverse transgender communities. TLC serves as a technical assistant to TEEI by providing legal information to TEEI Collaborative partners and community members. TLC also engages San Francisco employers and Human Resource managers in free workshops, both on-site and off-site, in order to provide common sense steps that employers can take to make their workplaces safer for transgender employees. Visit <http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/> to learn more about TLC.

San Francisco Transgender Empowerment Advocacy Mentorship (SF TEAM) is an all-volunteer project, sponsored by The Center. SF TEAM was created to bring disparate parts of the transgender community together to engage in community empowerment and mentoring. SF TEAM's mission is to commemorate its community's heritage; to empower and nurture

transgender and gender-variant individuals; and to increase visibility to promote positive social change. Visit <http://sfteam.org/> to learn more about SFTEAM.

Conclusion

The Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative succeeded in increasing participation with the transgender job fair by ensuring a greater variety of employers and a growing diversity of talented transgender job seekers. Corporate America showed up in greater numbers than previous years for the Transgender Job Fair IV. The Transgender Job Fair IV featured over 30 employers, including many Fortune 500 companies. The employers were carefully selected to participate in the Transgender Job Fair this year by researching the visibility of their transgender non discrimination policy's and through phone interviews to assess their commitment for change. A few employers underwent Transgender 101 training provided by TLC prior to the job fair. Employers who did not attend the training were invited to receive free continuing technical assistance from TLC including reviewing workplace policies and employee handbooks; offering tips for respectful interactions with staff; and helping advocating for policy changes as needed.

For more information, please contact Clair Farley, TEEI Mentoring and Outreach Program Coordinator at 415.865.5632 or clairf@sfcenter.org