



TLGB Job Fair

October 14, 2009

Post Event Report

Putting the “T” First

“Thank you. A fear I had no longer exists.”

- Job Fair participant

Overview:

The San Francisco Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Community Center (The Center) is pleased to announce the results of TLGB Job Fair, which took place on October 14, 2009. The TLGB Job Fair provided a hands-on approach for all job seekers, whether they are affected by discrimination based on gender expression or facing hurdles because of sexual orientation.

This report provides a brief summary of the results of Job Fair number 20 of our series to date. The statistics and quotations presented in the summary are taken from information collected through online registration forms, which were completed by all of the job seekers who attended the job fair, and from online surveys, which were filled out by almost half of the job seekers who attended the fair. Additionally, the employers who participated in the job fair completed surveys regarding their impressions of the event.

For further information about The Center’s Economic Development Programs contact Ken Stram, Economic Development Director, @ 415-865-5515 or David Bach, Workforce Development Specialist, @ 415-865-5534. Thanks are due to the many dedicated volunteers and Center staff who made this event a success.

Job Fair Highlights:

Overall 237 job seekers attended 20 employers participated in the event including:

- Bank of America
- Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)
- California Pacific Medical Center
- CBS Interactive
- Comcast Cable
- Equity Residential
- GAP Inc.
- UCSF Medical / UCSF Campus
- Wells Fargo
- Lyon-Martin Health Clinic
- Federal Reserve Bank SF
- Kaiser Permanente
- McKesson Corp.
- MJM Management Group
- Pacific Gas & Electric
- SF Police Department
- SF Public Utilities Commission
- U.S. Census

Job Fairs @ The Center:

LGBT job fairs bring job applicants and employers together in a safe environment, establishing a direct link and dialogue between LGBT job seekers and LGBT-friendly employers. And, because they are conducted here at The Center, the program assures that job seekers feel welcome and that their fears of discrimination are alleviated.

“I work for a very large corporation that prefers to remain blind to the fact that a large percentage of their employees are gay and lesbian. It is good just to see that not only do many companies recognize LGBT people, but actually pursue them as potential employees.”

- Job Seeker Participant

Because they lack explicit workplace protections, lesbians, gays, and bisexuals must leave their identities at the door and do their best to conform to fit in. The effects are significant: female same-sex couples bring home 18-20% less income than married couples, and gay men make 4% to 7% less than their average heterosexual counterparts.

The employers who attend Job Fairs at The Center recognize that workplace strategies addressing discrimination against LGBT employees can enhance corporate reputation, increase job satisfaction, and boost competitiveness. They are also savvy enough to know that they receive good will as a result of their participation. For example, 62.3% of job seekers said “more likely” when asked whether they would feel more likely to do business in the future with the companies participating in the job fair, and 78.1% of job seekers said they would be more likely to seek employment opportunities on an ongoing basis with the companies participating in the event.

A Job Fair Success Story:

Putting the “T” First:

The October 14th Job Fair was the twentieth job fair held by The Center since the inception of the program in February 2004, and the second-ever “TLGB” Job Fair.

Although the primary reason for holding job fairs at The Center was to create a comfortable, non-threatening environment for job seekers and employers to meet, transgender¹ community members were not showing up for the “LGBT” job fairs despite the fact that transgender people experience significant levels of unemployment or underemployment because of gender identity based discrimination and bias.

In *Trans Realities*, a 2002 report that co-released by the Transgender Law Center (TLC) and the National Center for Lesbian Rights, documented that nearly 50% of the transgender people surveyed had experienced discrimination in employment. This discrimination leads to crushing outcomes, including low annual incomes (64% of respondents report earning less than \$25,000 a year); disproportionate lack of health insurance (43% of respondents are uninsured); and, high rates of instability in housing (19% lack secure housing).

More recently, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* and the TLC conducted the “Good Jobs NOW!” survey to fill gaps in the understanding of the economic situation of San Francisco’s transgender communities. Data from this survey indicated: nearly 60% of respondents earn under \$15,300

¹ Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth, including transsexuals, cross-dressers, and other gender-variant people.

annually and only 8% earn over \$45,900; 40% do not have a bank account of any kind; only 25% are working full-time, 16% are working part-time, and nearly 9% have no source of income; and over 57% percent report experiencing employment discrimination, but only a little over 12% have filed an administrative or civil complaint as a result.

Both California and San Francisco have strong employment non-discrimination laws and regulations that support safer and more effective integration of transgender people into the workplace. However, additional, coordinated efforts are vital to making these laws real in the lives of transgender employees and job seekers.

For these compelling reasons, we moved the “T” to the front for this event to create a more welcoming event for transgender community members and also to recognize that a conventional focus on providing services often results in putting community members into silos.

The Unanticipated Results of Putting the “T” First:

The TLGB Job Fair represented the coming together of The Center’s Workforce Development Program with the Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative (TEEI), the first-ever coordinated program focused on improving the economic wellbeing of the transgender and gender non-conforming community.

The TLGB job fair was our most successful job fair to date in terms of numbers and job seekers, job seeker satisfaction, job seeker diversity, and employer satisfaction. We believe this job fair was so successful *because* of its truly collaborative and integrative nature.

“The Center’s TLGB Job Fair reflects a true collaboration that features some of the City’s most significant employment service providers backed up by a team of experts in transgender workplace rights,” said Rhonda Simmons, Director of Workforce, San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development. “Additionally, they’ve successfully engaged some of the Bay Area’s largest private sector employers. This is the model of how workplace development needs to happen for diverse communities.”

About TEEI:

TEEI includes four agencies that collaborate to link employees with employers, provide support for job seekers and newly placed employees, offer peer mentorship and provide technical assistance for employers to create truly safe and diverse workplaces. TEEI partners include:

- **The San Francisco LGBT Community Center (The Center):** Formed in 1993, The Center 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. Visit www.sfcenter.org for further information.
- **San Francisco Transgender Empowerment Advocacy Mentorship (SF TEAM):** SFTEAM is an all-volunteer project sponsored by The Center that focuses on bringing together disparate parts of the transgender community to engage in community empowerment and mentoring. Visit <http://sfteam.org/> to learn more about SFTEAM.\
- **Jewish Vocational Services (JVS):** Founded in 1973, JVS 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. Visit <http://www.jvs.org/> to learn more about JVS.

- **The Transgender Law Center (TLC):** 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. Visit <http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/> to learn more about TLC.

These agencies worked hard behind the scenes to ensure the success of the event. For more information about TEEI please visit www.TEEISF.org.

Thank You!

Nearly 5,000 job seekers have attended The Center's job fairs since the program's inception just a little over 5 years ago. The Job Fairs have become one of The Center's signature programs – illustrative of our mission to serve as a nexus for the LGBT community by connecting community members with good jobs. So far as we know, we are still the only LGBT Center holding large, well-publicized job fairs for the LGBT community and the only venue offering this opportunity for employers to have authentic interactions with LGBT job seekers. It makes us proud to know that we can count on so many bay area employers to participate in the job fairs and to support The Center's overall economic development program.

Another reason for the success of this particular job fair was the participation of dedicated volunteers.

To all of the employers who have participated in The Center's job fairs, thank you for your support! And thank you for your input as we continue to grow the program and react to your hiring objectives and the community's economic empowerment needs.

Job Seeker Testimonials

Back in 1995, I was discriminated against at a market research company in downtown San Francisco. I kept a paper trail and gathered witness and thanks to the Human Rights Commission I fought them and won. Larry Brinkin worked for HRC SF and he is my hero!

I'd really interested in being notified of any up coming pre-Center Job Fair seminars. Thank you, davidyoungallen@sbcgobal.net.

Thank you, Thank you!

The atmosphere and the people were very nice and attentive. It was a good first experience attending a job fair. I have gotten two good leads on positions, and I thank you for coordinating this event!

The LGBT Center's Job Fair was great resource for individuals seeking employment with organizations/companies that appear to be LGBT-friendly and supportive. This event is another example of how the Center continues to successfully bridge employers with prospective, skilled employees representing the LGBT communities. Please keep up the great work and continue to expand on the diversity of employers! Thank you!!

"I just want to thank you for putting out this event. It is a wonderful idea and I would imagine very helpful for most people.

Thanks TEEI- this job fair really makes a difference for me personally and for transgender people in general.

I appreciate the chance to practice speaking with recruiters and get my feet wet in the job hunt very much.

Employer Testimonials:

I appreciate all the hospitality shown by the staff and volunteers of the LGBT Center. It was a wonderful fair. I also enjoyed the presentation by Kistin the lawyer at the beginning of the fair. Very informative and I think a message that deserves to be disseminated widely.

I always look forward to the job fair at the LGBT Center

Strong administrative presence, a job well done

Great training prior to event start I learned a lot about the Transgender Community.

Survey Highlights:

We gathered on-line feedback from nearly half (120) of the job seekers who attended the Job Fair and all of the employers. Here are a few of the results:

Employers:

- 100% of the employers said they met qualified candidates.
- 33% of the employers rated the job fair “excellent.”
- 66.7% of the employers rated the job fair “good.”
- 90.5% of the employers expect to be contacting candidates they met at the job fair.
- 85.7% of the employers reported that the event was “very valuable” regarding their diversity recruitment efforts.

Job Seekers:

- 31% of the job seekers rated the job fair “excellent.”
- 45.1% of the job seekers rated the job fair “good.”
- 28.3% of the job seekers said Job Fair 8.4 helped “greatly” with their job seeking efforts.
- 70.2% of the job seekers said the job fair offered an opportunity for employment leads.

Job seeker concerns:

Job seekers reported that they would like to see more employers representing creative fields, non profits, the technology industry, and part-time positions. Job seekers think it would be valuable for employers to provide information in multiple languages. Job seekers asked to see job opportunities for “active seniors who still want to work,” and they would like to see more women-owned businesses and more diversity represented. Finally, job seekers expressed an interest in skilled labor-type job opportunities.

Job seekers are also concerned the employers directing the job seeker to their website, to apply for the job/position. Many of the job seekers have already applied on line. Most job seekers want to be able to get some one on one time with the employer, present their resumes, to get some insight on what there job/position consist of.

Employer concerns:

Job seeker attendance was higher in quality compared to your other job fairs.

Workforce Development @ The Center

Job fairs represent only one piece of the workforce development puzzle. The Center offers a seamless approach that combines intensive one-on-one counseling services such as resume review, job search coaching, and interviewing skills with workshops, seminars, and job fairs. We are the only community center in the nation with a publicly supported Economic Development Department, and it is our mission to provide a community model to community centers worldwide.

The Workforce Development Program training curriculum includes:

- Free, walk-in, one-on-one job placement services;
- Interview skills, job search, and resume writing workshops;
- A weekly hands-on, Internet job search clinic;
- Access to current job leads and job openings on an ongoing basis;
- Job Fairs;
- Caseworker/Case management
- Transgender Job Fairs;
- Employer training services.

We work hard to improve the quality of the job fairs and to ensure that there is greater variety of employers and diversity of talented job seekers. Please contact Workforce Development Specialist David Bach at 865-5534 if you have any suggestions for improving future job fairs.

Mark your calendars!
Job Fair 2010- will take place on Wednesday,
February 17, 2010 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

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