

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

REDUCING POVERTY IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

A COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. RIVLIN: Good morning. I'm delighted to see so many people here. I am Alice Rivlin from the Brookings Institution, and I am simply going to welcome you to Brookings. I will come back in a minute and do something a little bit more elaborate. But my first duty is to introduce Mike Schwartz who will give you the official welcome. Mike is the Senior Director of Community Relations of Freddie Mac and we are grateful to Freddie Mac, the Community Foundation, and the Casey Foundation for supporting this project. Mike?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Thank you, Dr. Rivlin. I want to thank Kathy Wellesley with the Community Foundation. Is someone with Casey here? I'm sorry, and your name?

SPEAKER: (inaudible)

MR. SCHWARTZ: Bob for your support, but also for bringing Freddie Mac to the table here. And I want to welcome you, wish you a good morning. I have not read this report. I am looking forward to reading it; I'm looking forward to the panel discussion on it.

I just want to make a couple of points. First, Freddie Mac, I think a lot of people are familiar with our cousin, but a lot of people are not necessarily familiar with Freddie Mac. People always say what is the difference between Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, and I am sure a lot of people in here probably think they know that answer and many of you probably do know the answer, but what's important I think is not so much what we do as a business, but what we do in the

community and what both of us do and what Freddie Mac as currently the largest philanthropic giver in the Washington, D.C., area are committed to is the community in this area and to addressing issues like poverty and looking at a variety of factors that come together including housing which I know is a part of this report and I will be interested in reading about.

I just want to make a final point and that is that Freddie Mac has almost 5,000 employees living and working in the Washington, D.C. area, and as I indicated, has a major philanthropic commitment in the area. What we are also committed to is working with all of you to the extent that we can to address all the issues, not around affordable housing. So we are interested in learning if you are working on projects, we are interested in supporting where we can.

With that I will introduce someone who in this audience — is there anyone who does not know Dr. Rivlin? Seriously. So with that, thank you, good morning, and let's have a good conversation.

MS. RIVLIN: Thank you, Mike. We are grateful to Freddie Mac, the Community Foundation, and the Annie Casey Foundation not only for monetary support of this project, but for their encouragement, and above all, their patience since finishing this paper took longer than we anticipated and they hung in there and waited. I think that the timing actually, and this is not an excuse for taking longer than it should have, the timing actually turned out to be very good, a new administration, new leadership in the council, this is the moment to be talking about how do we change the situation in the District.

Some of you may think of the Brookings Institution as some ivory tower place up here on Massachusetts Avenue that worries about war and peace and international relations and things like that, and we do. But we also spend a good deal of attention on local issues, and some of us work very hard on local issues and work closely with the city government and with the nonprofits and other organizations that make this city work in an effort to help Washington become a city that we can all be proud of, and we like to fill this auditorium with people who really care about the city, and we have today. This as I look out on this audience is a wonderful group of people who have been working very hard for a very long time to make this a better city.

If I started to acknowledge all of the important people in the audience, I would not get down the list, so I am going forego that but note that we do not actually have any council members today, and the reason for that is that Mayor Fenty is presenting his budget to the council, so we are missing a couple of people who might have been here, especially from the administration, Deputy Mayor Neil Albert, but also from the council, Chairman Gray, Council Member Schwartz, and Council Member Barry and others who have evidenced a considerable interest in this report. Several of them have sent staff people and we are looking forward to working with the administration and with all of you and with the council as we move forward.

The last few years have seen a lot of progress in Washington: a fiscal turnaround, new housing and retail, and revitalization of neighborhoods reaching into many long-neglected places. But those of us who look closely at the

city know that we still have a very long way to go. We are still a city of extremes of income and racial division. We have a high poverty rate, we have much affluence, but we have a weak middle class. We lost population over several decades. Primarily we lost middle-income families with children, black and white. The population has now stabilized and begun to grow again, but the legacy of those years of decline is still with us, the extremes of income, the weak middle, and the visible divide between the blacker, less-affluent part of the city on the East, and the whiter, more comfortable part of the city on the West. And although development has occurred on the Eastern side of the city and many plans have been discussed, the revitalization has moved far more rapidly and more visibly in the city's Western half.

Low-income residents often feel left out, left behind, and even perhaps more important, disadvantaged by the progress itself, by the rising rents, by the rising prices. Development has not been good for everybody, and it has not generated yet enough employment, enough training opportunities, for the current low-income, less-skilled resident.

The focus of the study that we want to talk to you about today is very simple. It is how Washington can grow its middle class from within. Several years ago a colleague and I wrote a paper about the benefits to the city of growing the population by 100,000 people which many of you may remember, and subsequently a Brookings team worked with the city's Office of Planning to show how revitalizing neighborhoods all over the city and creating new mixed-income communities along the Anacostia and at McMillan Reservoir and all those

other places could accommodate a larger population and grow the middle class and draw the city together. That 100,000 number was picked up by Mayor Tony Williams and became an official goal, but unfortunately it was widely misinterpreted. Many people heard the phrase "grow the population by 100,000" as though it meant attract 100,000 new people from outside the city who do not live here now. That was a misinterpretation, but it does not matter. The result was that several groups in the city got together and said what we need to do is help the low-income people who live here now move into the middle class. Irene Lee of the Casey Foundation challenged us to do serious work on that question, what could Washington actually do to reduce the low-income population quite quickly by opening up realistic opportunities for people to get better jobs and move into the middle class? And that is what we are talking about today.

It took a good deal of analytical work, some of it here by Martha Ross and Brooke DeRenzis, some of it by our colleagues at the Urban Institute, it took help from the foundations that I have mentioned, but here we are. And I am very optimistic that this is the right moment to be talking about this subject in part because we have a new, energetic mayor and administration that is focused on workforce development, in part because we have new leadership in the council who wants to make a difference, in part because we have no leadership at the Workforce Investment Council, Barbara Lang the new Chair, and we have worked very closely with in part because other things are happening in the city. There is the newly launched Academy of Construction and Design at Cardozo, the Mayor's Task Force on Adult Literacy, and, importantly, that there are many job

providers and other stakeholders in the city organizing themselves to develop a stronger voice and create a system that works better.

So this is the context in which I hope we can listen to what Martha and her colleagues have to say this morning and then move forward on numerous fronts to grow the middle class in the city from within and to make this a less-divided, more-inclusive community. Thank you. Now Martha is going to give you the substance of this report.

MS. ROSS: Thank you. I would like to also continue the thanks and acknowledge my coworker and coauthor Brookter Enthsis who this paper would not have happened without her good diligent input and research skills. And you will also be hearing from Marge Turner from the Urban Institute, and I would like to Peter Tatian Beata Bijaj of her team who were very good partners in helping us develop the housing-related recommendations which you will hear about in a bit. And thank you again also to all of the organizations who we presented early drafts to starting summer who gave us very good feedback, constructive criticism, ideas to think about, why aren't you looking at this, why aren't you looking at that, and it made this paper much better.

As Alice mentioned, we hope this report will spur more discussion and action, and that is only going to happen if we all pool together. Brook and I talked to a lot of people while we developed this report, but we did not talk to everyone just because of time and logistics, but if we are going to move forward, if we are going to pull together, we do need to have a broad,

inclusive discussion and we very much hope that this event is only the beginning. So I am glad that you are all here.

We set ourselves a big task with this paper, how to reduce poverty and rebuild the middle class from within. You can approach this in a number of ways. We chose to focus on adults and to focus primarily on employment. You can also look at Head Start programs and reforming the K through 12 system as necessary in order to do this. We wanted an approach that was relatively short-term which brings you do adults and which brings you pretty quickly to employment, especially since most federal antipoverty programs now have a strong employment focus.

But, importantly, focusing on adults does also affect children and families since low-income adults are often parents, and there is good evidence that when they are involved in employment and training programs with adequate support, their families benefit, their children's academic performance improves and their lives stabilize.

I would like to start off by defining a term that you are going to hear a fair amount today, the term workforce development. It is a big term and it covers a lot of ground. It includes adult literacy, English as a second language, preparation to take the GED class for a high school equivalency degree, work readiness classes that focus on soft skills like punctuality, getting along with coworkers, how relationships at work are different from relationships in your personal life, career and technical education in the high schools and at the postsecondary level which is usually in community colleges, apprenticeship

programs whether union or nonunion, pre-apprenticeship programs, and short-term occupational skills training programs like installing telecommunications equipment or preparing for a job as a cook in a restaurant or a hotel.

Work force programs also increase access to the labor market by plugging people into networks so that they have information about jobs and programs that they otherwise might not have. So primarily this is a system, primarily but not exclusively, that is a second-chance system for low-income adults who did not succeed in or complete the traditional K through 12 or postsecondary course of study.

You will see on the slides that we also set a target number of how many adults we think is possible to reach in a given time period. We want it to be concrete, and we think that with the right kinds of programs and political will, 10,500 residents can improve their skills and earnings over the next 7 years. I will be honest with you that that number is an estimate. It is based on assumptions about the current capacity of existing programs, what would be reasonable but challenging stretch goals to increase the number of either programs or slots, and our understanding of the local and regional labor market, job openings, and industry growth.

Why did we pick 7 years? Because that is the amount of time it took us to come up with a nice round number like 10,500 people. So it is a relatively modest number compared to need which you will see in a minute, but it does represent a big increase in the number of people now being served and the various types of programs who are getting placed in jobs. It is an increase as far

as we could tell because it is hard to get a baseline of how many people are in what kinds of programs and being placed in jobs. So it may be that we decide that 10,500 is not enough and we should make this number bigger if we discover that that is doable.

As Alice mentioned, although we are focused on workforce development, we also know that we have to think more broadly if we are serious about reducing poverty, so we also looked at work support in the professional lingo, things like the earned income tax credit that puts money in the hands of low-income working families, or childcare and healthcare that help make it possible for people to work and cover their costs especially in a high-cost area like this one, and Marge Turner will talk about housing.

Let me tell you some things that we did not focus on even though they are important. We did not focus on mental health, substance abuse, or delve deeply into homelessness. Obviously, these are important issues and they affect a lot of District residents and affect their ability to get and keep a job or stay in a program. But the issues are complex and to do them justice you have to look seriously at the funding streams, the service delivery systems and what existing programs are doing, what the relevant public policies are, and we thought that focusing workforce, work support, and housing was enough to keep us busy. We recognize that these other issues are critical, but we also think that it is useful and worthwhile to start somewhere even if you do not take all the problems associated with poverty at once. So we welcome more attention to these other issues that serve as barriers to people getting and keeping jobs.

We knew we wanted to focus on employment. The next question is, what is the scale of the problem, how many low-income residents are there in the city that could benefit from workforce development systems? Researchers have identified a set of skills and criteria that is necessary to get into a hold a job in the middle class, read and use math at the ninth-grade level or higher, hold a high school diploma or GED, complete 2 years of postsecondary education or its equivalent in a career and technical education program, work in groups with coworkers from different backgrounds, communicate effectively, and use personal computers to do simple tasks like word processing. So the question is, how many District residents are there that have these skills and how many are there that do not, and there is no data set that will tell you this.

So we turned to the best available which was the American Community Survey done in 2005, it is microdata, that means it is individual-level data. It is the same questions as used in the long form from the decennial census, but it is more recent which is better. It provides information on 1 percent of the individuals in the District, so it is a small sample, and because of that you will see that we give estimates and a range in order to allow for sampling error.

Since our focus by definition is on low-income District residents, we had to decide how we define low income. The poverty line is the obvious place to start, but that has been criticized a million different ways both methodologically and also that it just does not actually reflect what it costs to get by. So we looked at different measures and nothing was perfect. We decided on using a figure of twice the federal poverty line as the threshold of low income. It

is in line with what other researchers are doing, and in fact, a lot of public programs in the District such as Medicaid or childcare use that as their measure of eligibility.

To make this more concrete, for a person living alone, twice the poverty line equals about \$20,000. For a three-person household, it is about \$31,000, for a four-person household, about \$40,000. Overall, according to that measurement, there are 180,000 residents in this city who are low income.

However, not everyone who fits in that category is suitable for or interested in workforce development, so we limited it down. We included only people ages 16 to 64, so working age adults, people without a bachelor's degree, not enrolled in the Army or armed forces, not self-employed, and not collecting SSI or retirement income. We went back and forth on SSI because people with disabilities often can work and they do want to work, so the fact that we included them is not meant as a global assertion about what is the capacity of people with disabilities, it is just a reflection of what we could do with a fairly limited dataset. Based on the criteria that I just outlined, there are about 51,000 to 61,000 residents in this city who we think would benefit from or be interested in workforce development programs.

So we wanted to find out more about this group of people. The smallest level of geography in the American Community Survey is called a PUMA, a very user-friendly term, public use microdata area. Because the sample size is relatively small, you cannot go down to the census tract level, so you just have these five PUMAs. Almost half of this group of people that we identified

lives east of the Anacostia River which is very much in line with the broader geographical and income trends in the city. A negligible portion too small to measure with statistical confidence lives west of Rock Creek Park. About half of the people in our population are single adults without custodial children, and they are not always living alone. They are often living with sisters, brothers, or parents or other family members, and about half of these single adults are women. About a third are single parents, and the vast majority of those adults are women. Then about 20 percent are married.

It is overwhelmingly African American, more than three-quarters of the population, about 15 percent is Latino, and it is also overwhelmingly native born. Immigrants make up less than 25 percent. The level of limited English proficiency is not huge. We defined it as people speaking English less than very well for those who speak a language other than English, and it is only about 15 percent.

By definition, the group does not have high levels of education since we cut off people with a bachelor's degree, but it is still pretty low. About a third do not have a high school degree, almost have a high school degree but no further, and about 20 percent have some college or have completed an associate's degree. Although some, about a quarter, works steadily, about full-time, full-year, for the remainder, unemployment or underemployment are serious problems. Then for the quarter who are working steadily, the fact that they remain low income is also a problem which raises the issue of the quality of the job, the wages, and what can we do about advancement.

Then we wanted to look at the data in a slightly different way to get a different look at who is in the group. Again we have that quarter who is working steadily. About 10 percent are disconnected youth ages 16 to 24 who are not enrolled in school and are not working the equivalent of a full-time job. So they may be working somewhat, but they have not shown that they are on the employment trajectory that they need to be if they are going to have steady earnings.

About 20 percent have not worked in 5 years. That is what we called the discouraged-from-work category. So this group is really very seriously disconnected from the labor market. The remainder, the 44 percent, includes a mix of people who did not work in the previous year, and people who worked sporadically.

What we took from this is that this is a diverse group of people and there is no one-size-fits-all strategy. So for some people, a career pathway strategy is appropriate to help them advance, for other people you probably need to look at short-term subsidized jobs with supportive services to even get them on that first rung of the employment ladder.

We also wanted to look at how the labor market is responsive to or not responsive to our target population. We know that this is a high-skilled labor market and it is an office-based economy. In 2000, 54 percent of all jobs in the District were held by people with a bachelor's degree or more, compared to 28 percent nationally, so we skew high on education. Then you look at figures like unemployment rates where people without a high school degree have an

unemployment rate five times higher than people with a bachelor's degree, so there is not as much demand for lower-skilled workers even in periods of economic growth. There could be a number of factors at work here. One is competition with the suburban counterparts of our less-skilled District workers especially in industries like healthcare, hospitality, and construction. There is limited access to the suburban labor market either because of transportation problems, social networks, or unfamiliarity with that part of the region or leaving the neighborhood. Competition with more skilled workers for less skilled jobs. In some areas it is probably easier for someone without a college degree to get an administrative position than it is here because here you have lots of recent college grads who are taking those jobs and crowding out lower-skilled people. And racial discrimination is probably also a factor.

We also wanted to look at the quality of the jobs that less-skilled workers could get so we focused on occupational categories that provide the largest share of jobs for less-skilled District workers, office and administrative support, building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, construction, and preparation. We defined less skilled as jobs filled by workers with a high school degree or less.

Construction and administrative support jobs offer the highest-paying opportunities but are probably the least accessible to our most disadvantaged residents due to skills requirements and other factors, but these are the jobs that are going to pay the wages that we need them to pay. The jobs that are most accessible based on skill requirements are the least likely to pay the

wages to lift people out of poverty, so we need an agenda focused both on career pathways and providing adequate support to workers who are in low-wage jobs whether they are on career pathway or whether they want to stay in that job. And look at the quality of the jobs—what can we do to raise these wages, how can we make some incremental skills and responsibility increases and have pay raises accordingly? We need to do a lot in order to meet the needs of the group of people that I have just described.

The fragmented services, I would say we actually come by that problem honestly because it is a pretty straight reflection of what is happening at the federal level. The federal programs for education and training come from multiple federal agencies, they each have their own eligibility criteria and performance requirements or you face sanctions. The result, however, is that no one looks at the local scene with the labor market and residents to say what is most appropriate for the people we want to serve given our set of conditions and our current capacity in our institutions. Unless there is a strong and sustained push from the top to do that against the inertia of what the federal siloed programs are having you do, you end with this silo-driven strategy which is what we have, and it is a problem.

We do have highly regarded individual programs. There are a number of representatives of these programs in the audience. We talked about some of them in our paper. Others we did not include in our paper, but there are obviously more than who we profile. But we do not have a system of programs. We do not have systematic connections to help people from one type of program

whether it is adult literacy or a transitional jobs program to the next level, whether it is further education or employment. We just do not have the connections that we need between programs and with employers. And we are not strategically targeting the industries and the employers in the region as we should be doing. We need to look at which industries and occupations offer decent wages and advancement opportunities for people with less than a 4-year degree and target our resources and train our people accordingly.

When I tell you what industries we recommend that we focus on, none of you are going to be surprised, and the Department of Employment Services has funded good labor market research, but that has not yet been translated into program, policy, and practice which is a problem. I do not know that the answer is to start a bunch of new programs, it is probably not the complete answer, but we do not have enough capacity whether you are looking at programs or slots or types of programs and people that they serve.

We did not do a scientific survey of all of the workforce and education providers in the city, but we did talk to a lot of people and we have a good idea of where the gaps are. One is we do not have a strong career and technical education program in the public schools. We used to have a much stronger one, it is coming back, it appears to be, and we need to support that. We do not have strong enough community college offerings with either certificate programs or 2-year degrees. In other areas round the country, community colleges have emerged as critical partners and anchors of this system.

We have a set of local conditions that make this difficult. We have one public institution of higher education, the University of the District of Columbia. It is an urban land grant institution and it serves as a state university and a state community college which is a lot to do. Most other educational institutions do not have to focus on those dual missions. They have historically focused on a more traditional academic approach which is also very common among community colleges, but it is not meeting the needs of our residents. They have done more in the past year or so, opening up community programs in Wards 7 and 8 and probably in other parts of the city.

And we do not have the kind of information we need on the quality of programs both publicly operated and operated by nonprofit or educational institutions. I do not say this in the spirit of we need to find out who is not doing their job and punish them, but if you do not know what is happening, you cannot make program improvements and you cannot make sure that you are targeting your resources accordingly. We need to send people to training programs that consistently provide people with employer and industry relevant skills and that provide them with the soft skills that they need to succeed and keep and advance on the job, and we need to have better performance data to allow us to make those judgments.

So we need this to be a major priority for the city moving forward. The city, including the Mayor and the City Council, need to commit to the goal of investing in the human capital of our city in upgrading the skills, earnings, and access to the labor market of our low-income, less-skilled residents. There are a

number of organizational moves and changes that need to happen to support that priority. The first one is strengthen the capacity of the Workforce Investment Council. We have a number of WIC members here in the audience, and you will be hearing from Barbara Lang, the Chair, later on. This is the body that is mandated by the federal government to guide workforce development policy and they are the vehicle that we need to engage. By law they are mandated to have half or more of their membership be made up of the private sector. This is a group of organizations and employers that we have not connected with well in the past and we need to do a better job of that.

The WIC was in fact charged with developing a workforce development strategy in last year's Budget Support Act and they have gotten started on that and we need to help them do it and make sure they develop the right kind of strategies. Often workforce programs focus only on the Department of Employment Services. We do need to have a major focus on the one-stops and on the referrals to training, but we cannot only look at them. It is only once piece of the picture. We have to look at adult education, other kinds of training programs, postsecondary programs. As I mentioned before, we have to get a sense of what the quality is, what the connections are between programs, what their strategies are, are they aligned with the strategic plan that the WIC is going to lay out for the city.

Our recommendations focus on a couple of key programmatic kinds of changes. We should have sector-specific programs in construction, hospitality, healthcare, and administrative and computer support. I told you that

no one would be surprised by these, but these are based on our research the industries that are stable or growing and that offer the most opportunities for people with less than a 4-year degree. This is not to say that these are the only ones. There are some other smaller employer bases that we can target programs to. For instance, you will be hearing from someone who runs a program focused on automotive training that has the right kinds of connections with employers that we think needs to happen. We need to make sure that career academies are implemented in the public schools as the Office of Career and Technical Education has proposed. We need more robust community college programs. We need a lot more programs and options for people with low basic skills whether it is programs that integrate basic skills with occupation skills training and work readiness skills for people at the lower end of the low basic skills continuum, or for people at the higher end who are in GED programs, help them prepare for further education so that they are ready to succeed in an apprenticeship in a postsecondary institution.

And for people who are likely to have real problems on their own in the private labor market, we recommend short-term transitional jobs programs, subsidized employment, coupled with supportive services to help them get used to the working world. There are two groups of people that we identified as really meeting that are Ex-Offenders and Disconnected Youth.

I will skip over the question of how we pay for it, although it is obviously very important. I will talk very briefly about it. This sounds very flip, we can use our existing funds more effectively, but it is the first thing you should

look to do. We looked to best-practices programs that focused on the recommendations that I just mentioned to see how much they cost and we based our assumptions on that, \$92 million over 7 years, so it's about \$8,000 per participant. That is actually not a shock to our budget considering how much has been put into the Way to Work legislation recently, about \$20 million per year.

We do have a good program in terms of work support, but we can make some targeted improvements. One of them I would like to emphasize is we should look more into partial forgiveness of child support orders. Large arrearages can serve as a huge disincentive to work for people with back pay orders. Obviously, noncustodial parents do need to make financial contributions to the children, but we also need to make sure that the policy is responsive to their employment and earnings capabilities. The agency responsible for this did a trial amnesty program a couple of years ago and we recommend continuing that with an earned forgiveness approach.

Imagine that this is formatted correctly. We think this is a smart investment in our city and we are not in the situation of other cities that are losing jobs and losing people. We have a strong economy locally and regionally that we can hook our programs onto. We need to manage economic growth, not decline, and do it in a way that benefits our low-income, less-skilled residents. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. ROSS: Could the panelists come up, please? The next speaker is Marge Turner from the Urban Institute who is going to tell you all of our ideas about housing.

MS. TURNER: Thanks, Martha. Good morning. I am going to just talk a little bit about why affordable housing matters in this workforce development context and how housing policies can help support the kind of ambitious workforce development initiatives that Martha has outlined. I want to acknowledge as Martha did that the housing component of this report was done by Peter Tatian and Beata Bijaj of the Urban Institute's Metropolitan Housing and Community Center.

Why do we need to worry about housing in this context? Monthly rent or mortgage payments are typically the biggest expenditure in family budgets and many low-income families have great difficulty finding housing they can reasonably afford. This is especially true in hot markets like the District and our region as a whole. In fact, three-quarters of D.C. households who have incomes below \$35,000 currently pay more than 30 percent of that income for housing. That is considered unaffordable by national standards, and this kind of housing unaffordability is not just a source of hardship for families. There is good reason to think that it really stands in the way of a family's effort to work steadily and continuously or to build the skills necessary to take advantage of career ladders, career advancement opportunities.

Specifically, high housing costs clearly contribute to residential instability. Families who are paying these kinds of unaffordable cost burdens

typically have to move a lot. They may be evicted, they even experience periods of homelessness. This kind of mobility is very disruptive. It makes it more difficult to be a reliable worker, keep a job, or stay in a job training program, not to mention it challenges it creates for kids and their educational progress.

And high housing costs may make it impossible for a family to make the kind of investment that can improve employment success, working a little bit less in order to take advantage of a training or an educational opportunity, but also it may make it impossible to afford reliable childcare, a car, or a professional wardrobe. So paying unaffordable housing costs stands in the way of career stability and career advancement for people at the bottom of the labor market.

In addition, as families start to build skills and earn more income making this transition toward the middle class that is being hoped for, if they cannot find affordable housing that meets their expanded resources, meets their preferences, within the city, some may move to other parts of the region leaving the city again with very low-income and very high-income households but few families in the middle to make this a really diverse and healthy community.

The report that you have explores several potential career ladders in the sectors that Martha highlighted and then looks at what is the housing affordability picture for people trying to make progress through those career ladders. The sad fact is that the District's current housing market offers very few opportunities for people who are at the bottom of these career ladders. Almost no homeownership opportunities are affordable at these incomes; in fact, almost no

homeownership opportunities in the city are affordable even when you get all the way up to 200 percent of poverty. So I am going to focus mostly on rental options.

Just to illustrate, full-time workers at the bottom of the healthcare career ladder can only afford about one of every five rental units in the District. As you begin to move up these career ladders, naturally, your options expand a bit. You have more income and you can afford a larger share of what is available in the market. For example, in the healthcare career ladder, moving up to the nursing aide level makes about a third of the city's rental units affordable, to a health information technician, 60 percent of the units are affordable, and for a licensed practical nurse, three-quarters of the rental units in the city are affordable. But when we look at vacancy rates for these units and competition from other renters in the same income range, we find that the affordable options are especially scarce and hard to come by for two groups, the groups at the very bottom of the career ladders, and the groups nearing the top of those career ladders.

Just to illustrate again with the healthcare profession, at the very bottom of the healthcare career ladder, it looks as if 20 percent of the rental market is affordable, but the vacancy rate for those units is very low. It was about 4.2 percent in 2005 which below the city average and below what most housing market economists think is necessary for a healthy amount of turnover and availability. In addition to a low vacancy rate, there are actually 50 percent more households in that income range than there are housing units that are affordable.

So you can afford 20 percent of the units, but you are in competition with half again as many households as housing units with a very low vacancy rate.

What happens as you move up the career ladder? In the next couple of rungs of this career ladder, things loosen up a little bit, but when you get to the licensed practical nurse stage as you are transitioning into really a moderate middle-income level, it looks as if you are a whole lot better off, 76 percent of the rental units in the city are now affordable for you, but the vacancy rate in this part of the stock is even lower, it is only 3 percent, a very low vacancy rate for rental units. Here there is at least one other household in the same income range competing for the available units, so, again, it gets very tight up here just when people are earning enough money to have more housing options available to them.

So expanding affordable rental housing in the District both by producing more units and by supplementing what families can afford to pay is a really essential component of a meaningful workforce strategy. At the bottom of the career ladders, affordable housing can provide greater stability for families and serve as an essential support for work, especially a stable platform from which people can pursue a personal workforce development strategy. At the top of these career ladders, more affordable rental housing can encourage and enable families who want to stay in the District as they transition into the middle class as they move to better housing units.

What should we be doing on the housing side of this strategy? The District is really way ahead of most other cities nationwide. Because of the work

of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy Task Force which Alice Rivlin co-chaired, this city has a really meaningful, comprehensive strategy for addressing its affordable housing needs and implementing that strategy, implementing the recommendations, would go a long way toward tackling these challenges.

In particular, several of the recommendations of the report focus on the affordable rental side including just producing more housing units overall, taking the heat out of the housing market by producing more units, subsidizing a substantial share of the new units so that they serve a mix of income levels and so that the affordable housing is not all east of the river but that there is affordable housing mixed into healthy communities all over the city. Preserving the existing stock of affordable housing, not allowing the affordable stock to disappear through expiring subsidy contracts or just through conversions and rent escalation. Developing more units that have supportive services for the people with special needs. And of necessity, providing more local funding for affordable rental housing especially through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Work is underway on all of those recommendations. I think it is really valuable to see these as part of a meaningful workforce development strategy as well as part of a compassionate housing strategy for the city.

In addition to those broad recommendations, the report highlights two very targeted initiatives that explicitly focus on the intersection of housing and employment. The first of these is to target very intensive, high-quality employment services and incentives to selected public housing development.

This recommendation builds on a demonstration called the Jobs-Plus

Demonstration that was launched by HUD in the late-1990s in response to the very high unemployment and underemployment rates in public housing at that time. The concept was federal housing policy has made this terrible mistake of concentrating too many very poor, vulnerable households in place, let's see if we can in a way take advantage of that mistake, saturate some of those developments with very high-quality services and turn them around so that they are places that encourage and support work instead of places that undermine family well-being.

The Jobs-Plus Demonstration delivered on-site at scales that met all the residents who wanted to apply, not waiting lists, not that's nice, we only have three more slots, really at scale, high-quality training placement and retention services. Also changes in the rent rules for the public housing so as to encourage and support work. And an overall community support for work, so an overall use of residents and community-based organizations to convey the message this is a community that works and where everybody is going to get help working. That demonstration where it was effectively implemented which is no mean feat found very significant, statistically significant impact on both employment and earnings for a very vulnerable population compared to comparable households in controlled development, similar development that did not get these services.

This model could be implemented in the District in the new community sites where distressed public and assisted housing is being demolished and replaced with high-quality, deeply subsidized housing in conjunction with larger community revitalization investment. I think it could also be implemented

in some of the conventional public housing developments that are not being revitalized right away where large numbers of very low-income households currently live.

It is important to note though that this is not just a nice little package of work supports delivered to a public housing project. This is really delivering high-quality, high-volume employment support to a very need population often in a very challenging environment. So for this to have an impact, it has to be done right and at scale.

The second recommendation that is highlighted in this report focuses on the challenge for families of finding the affordable housing that does exist in the city, and as the task force's recommendations are implemented, there is going to be more affordable housing developed under more different programs with more different rules and more different entry points. So it is tough for low-income households to find what is available and figure out how to apply for it, how to qualify for it, how to take advantage of the opportunities that are growing.

This recommendation which could really advance the city's well-being on a number of fronts is to establish a city-funded housing choice resource center with the mission of promoting housing choice for low- and moderate-income families citywide. It would begin with a registry of affordable housing units across all federal and local subsidy programs. It would also identify accessible units and units that are linked to supportive services. It would provide information and assistance on how to apply and how to qualify. And it could provide information about neighborhood conditions and opportunities around the

different housing opportunities so families can really make informed choices possibly in neighborhoods that are unfamiliar to them.

A really sort of fully developed version of this could also provide hands-on help for those who need it in searching for appropriate affordable housing linking to existing housing counseling agencies and existing fair housing enforcement efforts. In the context of today's conversation, this kind of housing choice resource center could work hand in hand with a workforce development initiative so that families who are progressing up a career ladder all along the way can see what are my housing options, how could I be achieving affordable, suitable housing in a neighborhood that makes sense for me.

It is a real pleasure to be able to talk about the ways in which housing goes beyond shelter and really can be a supplement and a complement to an effective workforce strategy for the District. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. RIVLIN: I am going to suggest that as Walter Smith brings his panel up that we recognize that there are some chairs in the front which somehow were marked reserved, but they are not reserved anymore. So if you are standing in the back, please come down and find a seat near the front.

MS. ROSS: We have a very good panel focused on strengthening workforce development programs. Moderating this panel will be Walter Smith. He is currently Director of D.C. Appleaseed which focuses on a number of public policy issues important to the District. Previously he was at Hogan & Hartson,

and before that at the Corporation Counsel of the District of Columbia. He will be moderating.

We have two representatives of two employers or industries. We have Liz DeBarros from the Hotel Association of Washington, D.C., and Brett McMahon of Miller and Long Concrete Construction. Brett is a member of the Workforce Investment Council and President of the Hotel Association; Emily Durso is a member of the Workforce Investment Council. And we have three service providers, Joseph McCoy, Dean of Academic and Student Affairs for the Excel Institute which focuses on automotive training for youth and adults in at-risk situations, we have the Rev. Stephen E. Tucker who is the founding and senior pastor of the New Commandment Baptist Church and the co-founder and president of Jobs Partnership Greater Washington which is a faith-based effort to place disadvantaged residents into employment, and last but not least, Allison Kokkoros who is principal of Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School which provides ESL, citizenship, computer literacy, and workforce-focused programs for students from around the world. Thank you.

MR. SMITH: Good morning, everyone. I am Walter Smith from D.C. Appleseed, and although Martha said this is my panel, it is not. Martha and her people not only assembled this tremendous report that you heard her summarize this morning, but she also knows all of these people very well. She talked to these and many other people in order to do the work that she presented to you this morning. And I've got the impossible task of trying to let each of them

talk to you for only 3-3/4 minutes or some such thing. I am sure that each of us in the room could learn a lot if we had an hour or so to talk to each one of them.

But what Martha has done is assemble for you a group of people who are actually living these issues that this report is about. These are people who are working at this every day on the ground in the real world and understand the difficulty of providing workforce development programs and increasing job opportunity for low-income residents and also the affordable housing component.

I am just going to ask each of them a couple of questions so you can hear a little bit about what each of them is doing right now. In theory, after that we are going to let you ask some of them questions so we will get a dialogue going.

MS. ROSS: I forgot to introduce one of our distinguished panel members, Bob Giloth, Director of the Family Economic Success Program at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and we are very, very fortunate to have him. Thank you.

MR. SMITH: And since she left out Bob before, let's start with him so he can talk to you first. I actually think it is probably a good idea to start with Bob because Bob brings a national perspective to these issues. He has seen what other jurisdictions are doing to try to address some of these issues, so, Bob, let me start with you and let me just ask you, given what Brookings has assembled here, the story they are telling about the situation in the District, I wonder if you would just take a minute to compare what we face in the District right now with what you have seen in other jurisdictions. And I wish you would also, given your

perspective, mention some of the other promising strategies that have been used in other jurisdictions to address issues like ours. So take it away.

MR. GILOTH: Thanks. I was hoping I could be the mystery guest, but I lost that. First, this is a terrific report, and I am ready to share it with lots of folks around the country. I think what is unique about it is that it captures the best practices in a cautionary way that we have at the moment, it links together job quality, educational and training, work supports. I think that the housing and employment piece is very unusual but very important and increasingly important across the country.

A couple of weeks ago I was in San Francisco talking to a colleague who now runs their Workforce Development Program and we might be under the illusion that they it all together. What she was saying was they need to redesign their workforce board because it was not employment-focused enough. They had 17 different funding streams with different outcomes and strategies, and they need to link to housing kind of issues. That kind of told me that the kinds of issues you're addressing are ones that whether it is in Des Moines or Milwaukee or New Orleans, there are lots of workforce folks who are trying to reinvent themselves and I think that this report can be useful and that your progress can be useful.

I think just a few things that stand out as important, and I think you have captured these, is really having a group that buys into the strategy at the top level is kind of key. You see mayors across the country coming out and really spending some of their political capital to say this is the set of outcomes and goals

we want to follow-up on. Similarly, getting common outcomes among these different funding streams so that they are actually working toward that poverty-reduction goal seems simple but it is very difficult in fact and it takes a level of leadership at many levels of government.

Creating links to the business community in economic development is absolutely key. You have got to marshal those economic forces to do this, not simply the government forces. Many cities are doing that through community benefits agreement, through sector-based programs and so on.

A couple of other pieces, one is, and I did not see as much of this, increasingly you see workforce efforts trying to be regional, not trying to link everybody together, but to be on the same page and I think it is important as you move forward that you need to look at the regional economy. D.C. is part of that. You can be of use to the regional job demand.

Finally, a few weeks ago I was at a closing panel of the National Association of Workforce Boards and it was on alternative funding sources. Every workforce board in the country is facing this issue of declining Workforce Investment Act dollars and the best of the boards are looking at many different funding sources, and some of them are mentioned in the report. They are looking about how to use food stamp employment and training dollars, they're looking at bond financing, community benefits agreements, integrating with TANF, setting up funder collaboratives with local philanthropy. There are many different sources. And even reaching into the business community to set up scholarship funds so that there is more certificate-based training.

Let me stop there, but I think your report is valuable across the country. As soon as I heard Mark on NPR this morning, I quickly figured out I could Email it, so I sent it out across the country. I think it will be of tremendous use.

MR. SMITH: I wish you would talk about one of the other issues that Martha's report looked at that she mentioned this morning which is community colleges. Would you just say a bit about the role that community colleges have played in other jurisdictions in addressing workforce development issues?

MR. GILOTH: I think one of the things a lot of us have learned over the last 10 years in doing workforce, maybe longer, is community colleges are the key center of gravity of work and you really need to build one, have one, enhance it, and that is true for a number of reasons. One is I think we realize that postsecondary education, 2-year degree certificates, are really the payoff. That is what folks are moving toward on that career ladder. Those are the things where the evidence is stronger and that they make a difference for incomes.

Community colleges are also often the site of adult education and this is our other learning that you are working on is that we need to integrate more clearly adult education and literacy with technical training and moving up. In the best of places, community colleges do that as well. They also are well thought of by the business community. If you do public opinion research with the business community about who has credibility in the workforce world, it is often community colleges. Lastly, they are a source of financing, student aid, a variety

of sources to make this work. Across the country you will see increasingly community colleges being the group, along with other public and private workforce efforts, to really improve the systems and outcomes.

MR. SMITH: As you can probably tell, what Martha has done is assembled people from column A, column B, and column C on this panel. Bob represents the national policy expertise. The others bring you the employer viewpoint or the service provider or the educational viewpoint. Let me ask one of our employer folks a question, Brett McMahon from Miller and Long who I am sure many of you know who works in the construction area that Martha said was so important in addressing these issues.

Let me ask you a broad question, Brett, and you talk about your experience. One of the things Martha mentioned as the heart of the problem here in addressing these issues is what she called the lack of systematic connections among the various players, that you need to get together to address these issues, that is, the role of government, the role of training organizations, the role of service providers, the role of employers, all working together. Tell us what you think is the best way to put all of those players together to help us address these issues. Give three examples.

MR. MCMAHON: That would be quite a feat, but I think this report is a good step in the right direction. I think that the Workforce Investment Council is actually intended to be sort of that piece of the funnel. It has become apparent to us over time both with the Cardozo Construction Academy effort and most recently I have been co-chairing a reentry program for the ex-offender

population which not surprisingly corresponds quite well to that 10,500 number, although it is a 5-year track as opposed to 7, and realizing with the help of Will and some of the other folks from — and a bunch of other organizations how disconnected so many of the service providers, the funding sources, whether they be governmental, whether they be philanthropic, whether they be federal or state which is a unique situation here in the District of Columbia, that we all do not know each other.

I was at a video conference which our company participates in for the folks soon to be released from Rivers in North Carolina and met all kinds of folks who we invited to our next work group. It is sort of tipping point I think we are hitting here where there is a lot of people of like mind. There is as a good friend of mine likes to say plenty of problems to go around here, but it is something that is absolutely critical. If we are recognizing the issue now, I am greatly worried about 10 years from now because I have not seen a lot of folks that we have employed of late with a whole lot of the soft skills and basic educational attainment that has not increased in the last several years, it has not likely to be solved in 10 years, so the problem is going to get more and more acute. But that alphabet soup, that stove-piping everybody talks about, the WIC is designed to serve as the body that sort of collects all that information and gets it out and we all are trying to do the same thing. This report that was so exciting to read, that is sort of what the WIC is designed to do and that is what it ought to do. So our perspective is this is a great step in that direction.

MR. SMITH: Brett, you've talked about the academy at Cardozo. Will you fill in more about that? I know that Miller and Long working with the Jobs Coalition and others helped to start that. Tell me how that came about, why you get involved, and how it is working so far.

MR. MCMAHON: First off, it is by no means (inaudible) effort, that we have several partners. The Construction Trades Foundation includes the Donohoe who is also a 100-plus year company here in the District, M.C. Dean Electric, they are over in Chantilly but they offices here in Virginia, Reverend Tucker here is from the Jobs Coalition who was integral, Segal Construction , Lewis Dryfuss Properties , Hoffman , United Bank, and others are all on the foundation board. It was an effort that basically copied what seemed to be a fairly successful program going out in Montgomery County with the Edison School out there and it basically was trying to answer the need that we feel we have. One of the founders of our company said that if you have the ability to defend and grow your industry, you have the duty to do so as well. And the vocational now known as career and technical education has rapidly disappeared from the District of Columbia schools and this is sort of our effort to start this process. Unfortunately, it took a lot longer than we hoped, but we wanted to do it in a public school setting just to kind of force it back into the public schools, and hopefully we have helped change the debate a little bit.

MR. SMITH: Let's talk about another school that was started to try to address the issue. Liz, why don't you talk a bit about the Hospitality Charter School that you and others helped start some time ago in the District and

tell us what role you see for that school in helping prepare District residents for jobs in the hospitality industry?

MS. DEBARROS: Before I get started, I do want to thank Martha and Dr. Rivlin for inviting us to be a part of this panel. We do appreciate it.

In the 1990s, the hotel industry wanted to have a hospitality hotel program in the school system. At the time, the school system was unwilling or uninterested in having our hospitality program. I think the words vocational education was against college education, so I think they were not really receptive to that. So my boss, Emily Durso, who has been in the hotel education as the president for a long time came up with the idea of starting a charter school for hospitality, and this school still exists today, so that was part of the reason.

The other reason was we were building a new convention center and in that convention center we had a commitment to the Shaw residents to educate District residents. We didn't want to just displace people, but also give to the community. And we also knew at the time there were going to be new jobs and we wanted to make sure that we filled those jobs with District residents.

As far as what role we see as the high school in terms of preparing District residents, first and foremost is to educate District residents. We want to make sure that you have the basic skills that are given in high school, and then we want to train and expose D.C. residents to the industry. In ninth grade the students in the school right now have hospitality classes, they do mock interviews, people from the industry go out and actually help them resume preparation and

things like that. And in the later years we have them go out of the school and into the hotels to work in the hotels and to visit the hotels and actually feel the hotels.

MR. SMITH: Martha said that we've got gaps in the system here, that there is not an organized systematic approach that once you have training like that available to making sure that once the students get the training they in fact get the jobs. Tell us as a general matter from your viewpoint in the organization industry what are the gaps you see right now in the system that is in place here in the District.

MS. DEBARROS: In terms of the school system, the school itself is actually very successful in terms of graduation rate and actually placement in the industry. We are a very small school so we have very intensive courses and also our community in terms of the hotels into the schools. What we do see as a lack though is comprehensively in terms of our city's needs. We also have a program, one with D.C. Central Kitchen and the Department of Employment Services and we actually get District residents into programs. What we find is after they are in the program and they get the hospitality training, we have difficulty actually getting them to come to work once they are hired and in our hotels. So they will come and they will do a training and they do well and they will pass the classes, but they just for reasons of lack of support systems, they are not able to continue work, so that is what we are seeing as a major —

MR. SMITH: Let's talk about another training program that is in place here in the District now. Joseph McCoy who is Dean of Academic and Student Affairs at the Excel Institute runs an automotive training program, many

of you may know about that, for youth and adults in at-risk situations. I wish you would tell us about the composition of your student body as part of this training program and how you incorporate other training other than just the automotive occupational training, the other kinds of things Martha was talking about, academic, literacy, work readiness skills, how you integrate that with the occupational training.

MR. MCCOY: First I also would like to thank Martha and Dr. Rivlin for inviting us.

Students at the Excel Institute come from all over D.C., primarily from Wards 5, 6, 7 and 8. Thirty percent of our student body comes from P.G. County as well or Virginia. The average age of our student is 24. Seventy percent is African American. Ninety-five male. We are trying to work on increasing our female population. And I would say 30 percent are Hispanic.

When Excel started it focused primarily on technical skills training, but we found in working with our students that as the report indicated and other reports indicate, in order for our students to succeed and to be successful in the job market, we have to have a holistic program. So we had to address basic skills and we had to address the applied skills, we had to address the work-readiness skills, in order for them to be successful and address the multiple barriers that they bring into the training program.

MR. SMITH: Tell us about relationships that you have developed with government agencies or other service providers to help make your program successful.

MR. MCCOY: We can't do it all on our own. We developed a really strong relationship with the Department of Employment Services especially through their One Stop to provide additional wraparound services or support services such as transportation, and such as additional career counseling. We partner with another agency called the Family Health and Education Institute who provides very intensive life skills, employability skills training, and within that we found out that a lot of our students, which as Martha alluded to, trying to address some of the mental-health issues as well as the barriers such as housing, such as transportation, such as childcare and things like that.

We partner with Carlos Rosario, we partner with the Academy of Hope, and we joined the D.C. Learning Network to address the basic skills challenges that our students have. The list can go on, but we find that for us even though we have these partnerships, because we found when we put additional challenges to partner outside the institute that that created an additional barrier. So a lot of it we have to bring in-house to support our students.

MR. SMITH: Allison, since he mentioned Carlos Rosario, let us talk to you for a minute. Most of you probably know about the public charter school (inaudible) arrive at education and training programs for adults including English as a second language, GED, computer literacy, and workforce programs. You have picked out a couple of workforce programs in particular. Tell us about your student and your workforce programs, and tell us why you chose the particular occupational area that you did to focus on.

MS. KOKKOROS: Absolutely. To describe our student body, we have a very highly diverse student community that we work with. We currently have 1,200 students enrolled at the school between our morning, afternoon, and afternoon programs, and Saturday programs now. Our students come from 46 different countries and speak 19 different languages. The majority of them do come from the Hispanic community. All of our students comprise the working poor. We find that they are not only working, but they are working two and three jobs and are still in the low-income category struggling to survive and support their families. And also very many of our students are undereducated. They have come from countries where maybe they had 1 or 2 years of education and they are now here in this system in Washington, D.C., working to survive to support their families and they have a huge uphill battle to climb, and so we offer the English language services and a wraparound supportive services to make sure that they acquire the skills that they need to integrate into American society and to achieve the goals that they have.

So for the workforce programs that we offer, we wanted to be sure not just to select any training program, but to make sure that what we offered best met the needs and the demands of the employers in the Washington region and also provided the best fit for the students in the community that we are working with. So we conducted a comprehensive sectoral analysis to identify what are the projected areas of growth in the Washington region over the next 10, the next 15 years, and the once we identified where the projected areas of growth were, we looked at what sectors and what niches within each sector would be the best fit for

our students, but just the best fit, that they would also provide upward mobility for our students and gainful family supporting employment.

That sectoral research actually was very instrumental and very helpful. We identified areas of continued high growth in the hospitality industry which validated with our culinary arts training which we had had in the past when we were part of the D.C. school system. We also identified that the computer support industry is a rapidly growing niche. It was very interesting because we were doing some of our research shortly after the dot-com bust and that was a little surprising to us to see that there were computer positions that were projected to still be in high demand and high growth and then we realized computer support specialist positions are needed across all industries. You have to have someone support your technology in a school setting, in a hospital setting, in all settings in all industries. So we decided to go with computer support specialist training because it met the criteria that we had. Once you become an entry-level computer support specialist, there are a multitude of steps that you can take to increase your skills and have higher and higher pay.

Then we also learned that there is increasing need for medical professionals, particularly those that are bilingual. We do not yet have a program, but we are in the process of developing a bilingual certified nurse aide training program that we hope to implement and start up next year.

MR. SMITH: I understand that your workforce programs are not being funded through the Charter School per Pupil Allotment, and that just

happened last year. Tell us how you made the decision to do that and what the benefits have been from that.

MS. KOKKOROS: Absolutely. We have been structured as two different nonprofit entities. We already had a charter school providing basic English as a second language training, citizenship training, and we also had a privately funded 501(c)(3) called our Carlos Rosario Career Center. Our vision was to grow that career center so that ultimately it would be larger even than our charter school and we worked and struggled to do that, doubled the budget from \$500,000 to \$1.2 million, but it was a struggle. It is not easy to find funding to support workforce development and adult education, and doubled the budget to \$1.2 million with the help of local foundations, with the help of the State Education Agency for Adult Education (inaudible) but still we were struggling. And with the bar that we had set in terms of the quality services and the wraparound services that we were providing, it was not enough and we were really killing our staff.

So we made the decision last summer to apply for a charter authority to merge the two entities and bring our career and workforce development training under the umbrella of our charter school. Thank goodness, the D.C. Public Charter School Board did approve our amendment application at the end of the summer. So now I would say that we are probably 97 percent charter school. Our workforce programs are now paid for through our per-pupil allotment. What means for the school is that we are not killing ourselves in trying to raise the funds to survive as an organization, just the day-to-day operating

funding thank God is there through our per-pupil allotment which is based on our enrollment count which now allows us to be more free to fundraise for scholarships for our students to help them to go to college, and also to work on the long-term sustainability of our organization. So it is really a blessing and a benefit. We love working with the D.C. Public Charter School Board.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Allison. Reverend Tucker who I am sure all of you know is President of the Jobs Partnership of Greater Washington which is an organization that brings churches and businesses together to provide work readiness training and mentors with the hope of placing a lot of students in jobs. It seems to me that your program is one where relationship building is maybe one of the most crucial, that is, putting different pieces, different players, different groups, and different individuals together to help make the program work. Tell us about the program and whether I am right in thinking you are engaged in a lot of relationship building.

REV. TUCKER: Our program is based on prayer and relationships. There is a saying that is circulating the country that goes something like this, don't sweat the small stuff because it's all small stuff, and that is the most inaccurate statement that I have ever heard, because when we look at what distracts us, defeats us, and discourages us, most of the time it is the small stuff. It's leaving your keys at home or your glasses or some little small thing that just totally destroys your effort, your day, and when we look at relationships as it pertains to workforce development, we miss what is the real critical piece and that is the small stuff.

We can create programs and we can fund programs and we can train people how to actually do physical work and do jobs on computers, actually do construction jobs, but there is a little key element that we miss out on and that is the element of faith and the element of education and the element of spirituality as it pertains to being successful. When you mentioned that you trained people for jobs and then for some reason they do not show up, it is probably because of some small stuff, some things that are at home that have been unsolved, some issues with family members, some things that have haunted them from their past, and we have to get to the bottom of these things because these are the things that make for defeat on jobs. There is a saying that there's a straw that broke the camel's back, and these are the things that are breaking the backs of those who are already in poverty and the huge number of people who are entering into the new door of poverty.

Brett mentioned the construction industry and the Jobs Partnership has been working in that construction industry and with the construction industry because many of our brothers who are incarcerated and coming out of incarceration have those kinds of skills, they have the basis of those kinds of skills, they have the background for those kinds of skills, but it is still the small stuff and the soft skills and the relationship problems that causes them to be defeated on those jobs.

Those organizations, not just Jobs Partnership, but there are tons of organizations that you mentioned where there is a disconnect that are on the ground floor every day trying to help those who are really on the bottom. That's

where the poverty is. When we talk about expanding the middle class, we really have to try to get this class into the working poor class. There is a class below the working poor that we need to address. Jobs Partnership is a 10-year program or organization and we have been attempting to bring all of the faith communities together with business to train them and to mentor, and 50 percent of our curriculum which is called Keys and Steps to Personal and Professional Steps, 50 percent of that time which is 6 weeks, 50 percent of that time is spent on issues of faith, issues of integrity, issues of respect, issues of mentoring, issues of partnership, issues of prayer. We kind of throw God's name out there kind of recklessly sometimes when we go oh thank God and God this and God that, but really, if we really believe in God we ought to understand that there is an impact that he has on our spiritual well-being and our thinking. And just because people are poor does not mean they do not have any spirituality.

As a matter of fact, many of them have more spirituality than those who have been tremendously blessed materially and for most of the people who come through our program, that is where we make the connect at because somebody in their family through their past, grand mama, great mama, somebody back through the past, had a relationship with God and we make that connection with them. We do evaluations after our program, 100 percent of our graduates, 100 percent of our graduates, 100 percent of our graduates, say that they value the spiritual training the most. Even though we do 50 percent human resource training, they value the spiritual training the most.

So the partnership to bring business together because there are spiritual people in businesses, and if we care enough about each other, then we will work together to resolve these issues.

MR. SMITH: I would like to ask them all another question, but I would go way over if I do. This will be your chance to ask a question. I am not sure of the system. It looks like we got a microphone here. So if you have a question for one of the panel members or a question you would like to address to all of them I guess, why don't you raise your hand and the young lady will bring you the microphone?

MS. DANIELS: Hello. I am Sameera Daniels.

MR. SMITH: Would you stand, please, so everyone can hear you?

MS. DANIELS: Samara Daniels, Ramsey Decision. This issue of the systematic understanding and implementation of a lot of these issues that you have addressed has been a recurrent one. I have heard it back in Boston and intermittently even at some of the think tanks here. I am wondering if you could, what do you see as a key obstacle given that this is a central theme throughout the years in different communities all across the nation? Thank you.

MR. SMITH: Does anyone want to take that?

SPEAKER: Yes. We are in the seat of the federal government. Let me give you an example — Rivers Institution when there is heating and air conditioning scholarship that is only available to folks between 18 and 25 years old and that is based on the fact that it is some kind of hybrid of some kind of grant that comes from some kind of entity. Truly it is an example of how stove-

piped this stuff becomes. Therefore, you end up with a situation where you have a certain amount of funding. If you saw the resource mapping for workforce development here in the District, it comes from five or six different federal budget agencies. We also therefore exacerbate the problem by not having a great ability to track it. But it is the fact that it all comes from various entities whether that be the Department of Education, Housing, Labor, wherever.

The reason I was so excited about this report is that in my mind where this may end up is that all that stuff kind of has to hit one little stopper first. Maybe the WIC is sort of that avenue back and forth as a way of controlling this funding. I grant that it is going to take some time to even get a handle on the numbers and the various types of research. The same issue exists with the housing that you talked about. All these various rules to this, that, and other thing, and they are specialized and they are stunning, frankly. To me that is the systemic issue, and what the Workforce Investment Council is charged with is being a balanced with is being a balanced entity that can look at this problem over a decade or more a period of time and being that sort of funnel of flow. Right now it does not exist anywhere and it has taken a lot of time in a lot of cities to get even cranked up in a lot of places. Here it is very recent.

MR. SMITH: Bob, did you want to comment on that?

MR. GILOTH: Yes, I just want to build on that. I often use the analogy that you really need this same level of enthusiasm and buy-in for workforce development that you often get for building convention centers, attracting Olympics. It is that kind of civic coming together where people are

putting political capital on the table to work together to overcome all those stovepipes. I wish those would go away, but I have a suspicion we are stuck with some number of them and the only way to get over them is to really build that kind of coalition with mayors, chambers, unions, faith-based organizing groups, together on mark. When you see that happen, you see some of those stovepipes being overcome.

REV. TUCKER: Could I add one thing?

MR. SMITH: Sure. Please.

REV. TUCKER: In addition to that, I think that the effort has to be a sustained effort. We didn't get in this position overnight and it took a while to get as bad as we are right now, and it is going to take a while for us to recover from where we are now. So those persons who make up the partnerships that we're talking about, whether it is government, business, faith community, must realize that this is a long haul and that we must be in it committed and sustained for the long haul so that if they run across two or three defeats or one or two employees that were not modeled or some kind of program that fell by the wayside, that they still need to maintain their commitment and their support or what we are doing because this is not a one-shot deal and we are in it for the long haul.

When I think about those persons who are coming out of incarceration, they are going to be coming out year after year after year because we are putting them in year after year after year, and so this has to be a long-term committed, sustained project by all players who are involved.

SPEAKER: And be in it to put ourselves out of business.

REV. TUCKER: Absolutely.

SPEAKER: It is not an industry that we are in. We are in the problem-solving business and it is not something where I honestly don't want my three sons to be spending as much time on the same problem 25 years from now. This is not an industry that we are joining. This is a problem to be solved, and it can be, but we got to understand that part of it.

MR. SMITH: I am told we have time for maybe one more question.

MS. LEVIN-EPSTEIN: This is a question for Liz, Jodie Levin-Epstein at the Center for Law and Social Policy. I want to thank you for being very candid with us about the problems that the charter school has had, and basically you were telling us that successful students sometimes do not show up for the job. I was wondering if you have had a chance to do any analysis of the reasons for why that is happening with the hospitality industry being a 24/7 operation, you could well imagine childcare, you could well imagine late-night shift issues, lack of transportation, so on and so forth. Can you fill is in on that? Thanks.

MS. DEBARROS: Sure. I do want to clarify that the students that we have in our school come to the school, they are doing well (inaudible) in terms of because we are putting a lot of efforts into that area. Where we are having issues are with the general — we set up a program with the Department of Employment Services and that program attracted District residents and we train

them, they did well, they passed all the exams, but what happened is once they came into our hotels, worked the first week or two, got a check, they were unable to continue that. I think we have not done any specific study on that to find out what the reasons were. But our director of director is here with us today and she does the day-to-day things and she could tell us, there are issues of drug abuse, there are issues of childcare, like you mentioned. There are all these reasons why people are not able to sustain our programs.

That is one of the things that I liked about the study is that we do need wraparound services to support this population because they need services that are greater than what we can provide, but collectively as a city we can certainly provide these services.

MR. SMITH: Do I take a break now? Alice will say what's next. Alice always says what's next.

MS. RIVLIN: Let me thank Walter and the entire panel. We will have a very short break and then return to focus on in 5 minutes, take not much more than that because we are running a little bit behind, we will return to talk about what do we do about this, how do we get the services working together, and we were going to focus on the WIC and we have both the chairman and vice chairman here and we will focus on the city itself. We have Kate Jesberg who we hope is going to help coordinate all of these things for the city, and we will talk about how does this really get done. Thanks.

(Recess.)

MS. RIVLIN: Quiet, please. Quiet, please. Thank you very much. There is a lot of important networking going on in this room. I can see it happening, but I want to move on to the question of how do we get all of these things coordinated because that is what we really want to think about today and how we strengthen the workforce development system.

We have just the right people I think to talk about that. We have Barbara Lang who is the Chair of the Workforce Investment Council. When she is not doing that she is leading the Chamber of Commerce. We have Josh Williams who is the Vice Chair of the Workforce Investment Council, but in his other life he is the President of the –

(Interruption)

MS. GILBERT: (in progress) — forward to the next months, year, or however long it takes to improve the system of which we're a vital part of.

MS. RIVLIN: Thank you, Susan. Kate, everybody said we need to coordinate, we need to pull it together, and we need to make it work better.

How are we doing? Well, that's a big job, and let's see here. Let's back up for a minute.

I have to agree with Mr. McMahon. I really see today as vitally important. Today is really a tipping point, and I couldn't be — I'm thrilled, like 20 years of professional work in District of Columbia government has brought us here today.

And I say that from my background in running tenants' programs and tenants' employment programs where we've placed over 13,000 people who

receive welfare, typically reading 5th or 6th grade into employment. And that's been a long haul over 10 years. And very often we did feel like, with others out here, we're and in the wilderness.

And I say that because we have now the blueprint, the roadmap, the ability to move forward, but it's going to take all of us to do that, literally every single person in this room.

And had I thought of it before, this is such a terrific group I would have said, no, we have to have a luncheon afterwards, because there's a huge amount of networking and ongoing working that we have to do. I can't tell you how many people I've seen here today that don't know other critical players in this, and we're going to have to have ongoing work to do that.

And I see two things that's really central in the short term, the next two years shall we say: One is I feel very strongly that need a place to train people, train people with certificates, train people to make up those good labor jobs, train people throughout a number of industry sectors — not just construction — and train them both in community-based settings. But we need certificates and we need two-year degrees, and that's the huge gap that we see.

Echoing what Barbara said last year, the city created almost 10,000 new jobs, but District residents lost nearly 6,000.

MS. LANG: Um-hmm.

MS. RIVLIN: And that's 'cause our jobs are here and our steal fact (?) is here. And I'm here to tell you, after putting 13,000 some welfare mothers into employment, people are desperate for employment. And a good program run by so many of you here — CDL programs, Shelton running the

Ward 5 Initiative, Connie Spinner with Adult Literacy — we can really move people up. They're desperate for this, but we have to network, we have to put the right person in the right program. There's no one-size-fits-all.

But we need a community college structure. We need something where we have certificate and degree programs where we train for particular sectors, which the WIC will be so instrumental in. And, in addition, we need to make sure that our One Stop in a task is our front door. People go to the One Stop, they're looking for a job, and that it's not a failure experience.

I was very moved by a newspaper article in December about a young man who kept going and going to the Naylor Road One Stop and finally did get a job. But it struck me in reading that article how difficult it was for him to trudge there every day and be told "we have nothing for you." And we have to make sure that we have a connection for job seekers like that such that they're directed to a program where they will have success and where we can institute quick employment and then build career ladders up.

So I notice I'm getting timed. I could talk volumes around it, but what's critical is that now we have a dialogue with all of you.

MS. KOKKOROS: Thank you. I think we should get the audience into this, because you haven't had much chance to express views or ask questions. So we're going to give you that chance right now.

Charlene. Charlene Drew Jarvis who is, as many of you know, not only a former Council member but President of Southeastern University.

DR. JARVIS: Thank you, Allison. Thank you very much today for the program and for the leadership of all of you who have spoken this

morning. I want you to know that Southeastern University, which is a YMCA-founded university 1879, had the same mission as all of us do, and that is to provide students with practical education.

We really want to be recognized as a university that sees its obligation as — sees its role in the economic development of the community, and that means human resources development in the community. And we want to be seen as part of the system that provides those certificates and those two-year programs.

We believe in constructing an educational experience as well as offering it. So, Josh, when someone from SEIC comes to us at Greater Southeast Hospital and says that they need certain skills in health, we devise a certificate program that really turned into a two-year associate degree program in some of the disciplines related to health care. And we did it because the unions came to us and asked us to construct the experience.

We constructed the property management certificate talking with the William C. Smith Company because they needed property managers, and we now have low-income women who are with the Women's Foundation in that training program.

So we want to be seen in this space that is designed to give skills so that some of those jobs can go to District of Columbia residents. And we're eager to work with Barbara and the WIC, and the employers who would identify the needs because we can help construct the experience. That's what we do at the university level: We construct the educational experience. And we want to do it

in connection with the goals of the city and with the goals of the organizations that are represented here and that were here earlier on.

So what we really need to know is, what do you need? Let us figure out how we can help you construct that experience. And so my question really is, what do you need? I mean other than the things that we have heard this morning — and some more specificity maybe, Josh, from you — and, Barbara, because you know the business community. Of course, Kate, because you've been in the business all of these years, and, of course, the Department of Employment Services First Source Employment Agreement, you know. Lots of folks say they can't find the people for the jobs.

So who were those people who had those first source employment agreements and what do they need, because we'd like to be able to help in this.

(Applause)

MS. RIVLIN: Thank you, Charlene. Does anyone want to respond at this moment? Josh?

Or —

MR. WILLIAMS: Let me first of all commend Dr. Jarvis for the excellent work that you did with partnering with the SCIU and the District of Columbia government in setting up that program. We are proud of that program, and we really want to thank you first of all for doing that and to also say to you that — oh, and needs just doesn't stop with SCIU and that will be coming back. We're using SCIU as a model, and we expect to expand on that, depending upon the success that we see. It makes it easier for us to sell that need if we can point

to some success. So we also are dependent on you to make us look good in this partnership.

MS. RIVLIN: Thank you. Barbara?

MS. LANG: Can I just one more thing in responding to Charlene on what we need. I'm not sure that we have that completely laid out, which is what we're going to do, the strategy. I know that there are a number of industries. For instance, the bank presidents tell me that they can't find tellers. In almost every bank in the city, they need tellers. And so — and I know that Goodwill has done a lot of work in terms of a teller program. That's clearly an industry that really does need work.

Certainly, the real estate and construction community we will continue to look at that, and the hospitality community. And those are industries that are hiring big time in the city and that where we're bringing in labor from Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

So, health care — I'm sorry — and that's the one that they —

SPEAKER: Yes, we're working on that.

MS. LANG: — a big program that's at Southeastern. So, yeah.

SPEAKER: And I'd like to say that we are working on health care, but I agree with you one of the things Dr. Jarvis mentioned is the program that the city has had for many years which requires that 51 percent of new-hires and many, many project — mainly development new District residents.

And over the last few years we've had a real program with the capacity, that we've had a real problem knowing that we had the people for the jobs as the jobs came up. That is one of the things we need to work on along with

developing this work list. Development strategy is to make sure that work list development is tied into economic development.

And I know when Dr. Jarvis chaired our committee on the Council, she worked very hard with us to adjust our legislation to make that happen, where we had economic development — you know that alley closings are key in the city's economic development.

And now we need to return to those laws and those programs and work with the work force, investment council, and the development of our strategies, but to make sure that we don't forget what's happening very early on in those places where jobs are being created, and that we involve those in this group as well, everybody to work with the economic development, because — before that train really gets away from us and we again were left not being able to fill those new jobs as the city creates them.

Now.

DR. JARVIS: Thank you.

MR. KIGHT: Yes. Good morning. My name is Robert Kight. I'm Executive Director for the Office of Career and Technical Education with the District of Columbia Public Schools, and we play a state role as well as a local role, as well. And I would like to thank you for this opportunity.

But I'd like to emphasize that career and technical education is alive and well and really on its way back. And if you've seen the master education plan and the superintendent around reforming the schools, it calls for a college prep and a career preparation system. And part of our effort is understanding that career awareness doesn't start in the high school around our

career academies, but it really starts with a K through 12 career development system where we begin to educate our young people and help them understand the relationship between academic success and future employability and career opportunities. And we're smart enough to know that we can't do this alone, so as we move out in expanding and developing this system in the career academies that we know that we have to work closely with everyone here.

I would like for Ms. Lang, if you will, share what you always share with us around the 3-E's, because for me it's kind of become a mantra of really trying to help those inside of the education system understand when you speak education you're also speaking work force development as well. And that's something that's not always conveyed. Thank you.

MS. LANG: Thank you, and let me — let me just put a plug in for another one of the programs that we're working with you on.

As I go into that, and that is — I put my chamber hat on — but we are partnering with DCPS on the certificate of employability. And you might think that that ought to be the diploma, but in some cases it's not the diploma today. We're working towards that, and we're piloting this in four high schools: Bell, McKinley, Cardozo, and Woodson.

And we have a business champion that is aligned with each one of those schools. And it starts in the latter part of the 9th grade and goes through the senior high school. And at the end of that Brett McMahon of Miller & Long, who is the champion for one of these schools, will sign for all of those kids that: This

kid is work-ready. And that's a big, big deal, and so we're starting out with these four schools.

And if this goes well — we just announced it in November — then we will roll it out to other schools, we hope, within the school system. But we want to make sure that we're providing those other things that are missing: life skills, some other things that the children need if they're not going to go on to college that they are prepared for entry-level positions when they come out of high school.

So I just wanted to — you didn't mention that, and I wanted to give the school system kudos for that because I think that is also a very valuable program.

Back to your question on the 3-E's. Clearly, we think that education, employment, and economic development. And one of the challenges that we have in our city is that we don't have a work force strategy, and we really don't have an economic development strategy either.

And I know that I talked to Council Member Brown and our Deputy Mayor Neil Albert to work through that because if there's an economic development strategy for the city and not just focusing on projects, there's got to be a work force strategy that compliments it, and that's one of the things that's missing from our system today.

But if you look at education that's coordinating an operational career and technical education program very much like what is being done in DCPS — but we also have to do that for those adults that we've already failed, didn't get it, whatever — and that's the work the Connie Spinner is doing at UDE

Ed, UDC, and we're so pleased to be working with her on the 13th year program because that's so important to get folks prepared for the job.

So if you look at employment — I already talked about the BHAG (?) that we have — but you've got to make sure that we are training and preparing people for the jobs that are going to be here. So whatever, whether we talk about banking, whether we talk about real estate, let's not go train them for something that is not going to be in, you know, biotech. Well, that's lovely and wonderful, but you don't have a lot of that in the District of Columbia. Or agriculture. I mean that's just not what we do in our city. And so let's make sure that we're very focused on those industries.

And, clearly — I mentioned employment earlier — so that's how we are trying to connect. If you look at all three of the E's as a circle, they should all be connected in some way. And we really have to look at this on two tracks. We have to look at how do we work with the K through 12 — and these are really pre-K because the studies would show that that's where we have to start to get them very, very early on — and make sure that — I think it was Brett McMahon that said — "we all get put out of business with what we do, if we're doing that right in K through 12."

But we have this huge population of adults that either K through 12 failed, they dropped out, whatever the reason, and so we've got to have a dual strategy that deals with that as well. A single strategy will not solve the issues that we have in D.C.

MS. RIVLIN: Yes. Well, Connie, you've been mentioned.

MS. SPINNER: For better or for worse. Yeah, I guess I want to take it back to the discussion of systems because I think that's a critical one. I was particularly drawn to the part of the report that talked about the lack of connectedness, that we've got a lot going on that's very good and very important. We haven't connected the systems.

And I'd like for the group to talk a little bit about the value of two things that I haven't heard much about, and they're marketing in order to build the public will to stay the course on this, and evaluation. Because I'm one of those people whose work has been data-driven. And a lot of the decisions that I've made and that I've encouraged are a system of folks who deal with the dulled edge to make — have been based on what our data's told us. And if we're not willing to invest in evaluation at the front end, setting baselines collectively at the front end, I don't think we're going to get anywhere. We can have marvelous programs, but are we building systems that people can access that really make a difference across the housing and education and employment.

So if you can take a stab at that whole set of issues around system-building and connecting, it would be important for me.

MS. RIVLIN: I would like to suggest, too, Connie, I think that it's very important that we have throughout all these diverse programs a standard assessment tool, assessment systems that we know do not differ radically. Because right now — and I think it's one of the things that Barbara mentioned when she talked about career readiness certificate, and around the country that actually is something that's almost replaced the GED and the high school diploma

for many major industries because there was such an enormous variety in what people came out learning and knowing.

I mean we see it all the time in our programs at the Department of Employment Services that reading levels not correlate at all with where you ended up in high school. And, actually, last year the District in our One Stop we had about 19,000 people come in. And 70 percent of them have a high school degree or less. And there is just no correlation. So I think that's one thing. Assessment and evaluation need to be standardized. We all need to agree to one system as they come along.

And the only other thing I want to mention about marketing, I think one of the earlier panels said, "You know, if we only had the will, the same thing we did with the new Convention Center, with building downtown, even with the ball park there was that sense that this is something the city will look forward to three, four, years, and it's going to put a lot of money and effort into it.

But I think that's — I think for all of us here the issue of work force development is very important. But I wonder how much it is with the other, you know, 500,000 citizens in the District. I just don't know.

SPEAKER: Well, we're trying to make it important by putting it on the first burner. But in terms of assessment, it isn't just having a common instrument, it's the follow-up. And what we discovered when we looked for — looked across the spectrum of programs in doing this study was that nobody could really say what did they accomplish, where were the people? There's some information about people placed in jobs, but how long did they stay there, and what were they earning two years later? We don't have the data that tell us that,

and until we do we're not going to have a good way of assessing whether we're actually getting there or not.

MS. JESBERG: If I may.

MS. RIVLIN: Kate.

MS. JESBERG: I would like to say that in my conversations with Mayor Fenty and Deputy Mayor Albert and the City Administrator, they've said, well, we have this big poverty problem. And for some reason they looked at me. And I said, "But I don't want to do poverty stuff anymore. I know the answer, and it's work force development."

But I do think that from a political perspective, speaking on behalf of the deputy mayor and the mayor, that there's a real commitment to work force development for adults and as a way to address our very substantial unemployment, underemployment, and poverty problem. And I think, finally, we're seeing it through that lens. So I believe that the commitment at the top level of the city and on the Council is really here. And that's why it is such an exciting time.

MS. RIVLIN: Yes, way in the back.

MR. SHELTON: Good afternoon. I'm William Shelton. I'm the Chair of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5-B and also the coordinator of the Ward 5 Initiative. I guess my question is more of a comment, and I said it to Ms. Jesberg and also Ms. Gilbert, that I think that this is an excellent start.

But one of the things that I think we need to do is, we've got some disconnect among providers versus government versus business versus the faith-based community. We need to develop someplace, sometime, somewhere for all

of us to get together, because I do agree that work force development strategies are good. But we need everyone at the table to set this strategy.

I want to issue a challenge — also, I want to apologize, Mr. Qwame, to CSOSA — very important to be at the table. And we all need to get together at some point and have a conversation of what this looks like, because those of us on the training and employment side of it, we understand what it means to deal with all of the barriers. But we don't often hear, sometimes, what the employer's saying.

We also don't hear what challenges that the government has. So I think that getting all of us together at some point to have a discussion about this and to walk out of that discussion with some kind of a policy or decision that all of us embrace together I think is very, very important, because we're all talking the same language. But we're talking the different sides, so I think it's important that we say it all together at one point.

MS. RIVLIN: Can I just comment on that? Thank you so much for your comments. And I think that that is the role that the WIC should play and the role that I think the WIC is going to play to make sure that the service providers, the business community, labor, CSOSA and other nonprofits that play into this space all come together. And I see that coming together, quite frankly, as we start to try to frame this strategy for work force development in the city.

So excellent comment, and that is one that we will take on to move forward. Thank you.

Yes?

MS. LEWIS: My name is Iris Lewis. I'm from City Lights Public Charter School. At City Lights we target adolescence with emotional and behavioral disabilities.

One of the common themes through both of the panels has been the challenge of soft skills and the issue of mental health amongst the citizens of the District that somehow create a barrier to them being successful on the job even after they've gotten the training. And as each individual has talked about their own program, each of us are handling it in a different way.

And I guess my question would be to Ms. Lang is that, would the WIC consider developing a universal curriculum or a universal model for how the different organizations address the issue of soft skills, taking into account what businesses are facing as people come to them, as well as understanding the framework of poverty and what that means to an individual in the work force?

And so, you know, would there be an effort, or could there be considered an effort to create something that all of the different agencies in government, private, your nonprofit can use to address this?

And finally, I want to say as it relates to the adults, as an educator we often say that the children are our future. I will submit that the adults are our future, because the adults are the primary influence in the lives of our children. And it's very difficult to get a child to think differently about their life and their future when their mother, their father, their uncle, their grandmother have all led lives where they weren't employed or different things. So I would say that it has to be a parallel effort, that we can't try to push the kids along without pushing along their families.

(Applause)

MS. LANG: You're absolutely right, because they are influenced. That's who they go home to see in the evening.

Let me just address the first part of your question, and that was some common approach to this. And I think that the worker-readiness credential that Connie is rolling out, that we are piloting, perhaps is the way to get to that and that's where everybody starts. And the same thing, if we evaluate it — and, Connie, it may be that you might want to chat a little bit about that — but it's also where we're trying to go with the four schools. And if this works well, then we will have the blueprint, we think, in at least for the adolescents.

But, Connie, I will defer to her to maybe talk a moment about the worker-readiness credentials.

MS. SPINNER: Yes. Let me just say a little bit about what we've been doing. When we looked at the fact that we had a number of adults who hadn't quite gotten to the point where they were ready to go take the high school equivalency, but they needed to go to work, and they needed something that assured the employer that they could read, that they could do mathematics, that they could speak, that they could listen, and that they had good what we called situational judgment, that given a situation where they had to make a decision, they were informed enough so that they could make good judgments. What we discovered was that there was as group of WIBs — that's the equivalent of a WIC, a group of work force investment boards across the country. In fact, six of them from New York and Florida and several other states — State of Washington — who had pooled their money across the states to come together

and go to Stanford University as a lead researcher to help them design a credential and an assessment process that was web-based, that was highly responsible, and that had very good accountability around it, but that also offered portability — could go from state to state to state.

We joined that group, and we've recently worked with the WIC to begin to look at the soft launch of that instrument. We're doing it here in the District as they're doing it in the seven other states. And, ironically enough, we have now had a national funder approach us about developing the web-based curriculum to follow it, and D.C. would be one of the pilots for that. We're all crossing our fingers and toes because they are talking about a major financial commitment to do that.

And so this does offer some real promise for us, and we are partnering with the D.C. Public Schools in the four high schools to also look at this as an accompaniment to that portfolio that they're building. So —

MS. RIVLIN: The certificate of employability, so those four schools we will use that same credential.

SPEAKER: (Inaudible)

MS. SPINNER: My particular population of students with emotional disabilities are the least likely to be employed when they leave school and are the most likely to have an interface with the criminal justice system. And I'd love to have a conversation about how we can get — have some connection about this employability and the program development. I understand it's in D.C. Public Schools, but there are a significant number of adolescents who are not in D.C. Public Schools.

MR. WILLIAMS: I'll ask you, like — go ahead.

MS. RIVLIN: Yes, Josh, go ahead.

MR. WILLIAMS: Before we hit high noon, there are just some thoughts that I just kind of want to throw, even if we don't address them today and I just think bears focusing on. And that is there are so many rails in this situation here that we run the danger of really having a whole bunch of accidents because there are trains coming from different directions.

We have an immediate problem here ladies and gentlemen, that we can talk about all of these training programs like these training programs are designed really for the older years. The jobs that are out there right now — and I just take the baseball stadium as an example. That stadium is due to open April of 2008.

Now, there were certain blueprints and guidelines that were agreed to by all the parties to impose upon each other in terms of D.C. residents and who was going to have first force first jobs and stuff like that. The immediacy over there is that you can put the jobs and you can advertise the jobs. If we do not have individuals who can step into that job right now, then we are on the threshold of failure. So I say that to say that we also must impose a discipline upon ourselves in terms of our expectations.

There are what political and social pressures out there that place expectation upon the programs and upon us as providers, as union representatives, as employers, and I'm not quite sure how realistic expectation. So I would put the pen and simply say let's assess what kind of demands we are putting on ourselves.

The second point I just want to make is that we have individuals out there who we are putting into training programs and who are not, while they are going through the training program, do not have a job that can help them sustain themselves while they go through the training program. Are you with me?

So you're talking about all of these training programs, and if I don't have a job, I am not going to show up because I have got to go somewhere and get a job. And that job must also be a sustaining job. It cannot be a job that keeps us in the poverty wage; it has to be a job — and the report tells us what it is — if you're making \$31,000 a years and have a family of two, I think, we are in the poverty range.

So what do we do, and who steps up to provide good-paying jobs, decent wages while people are going through the training, so that they can go into a apprenticeship program that gives them a job while they are in training? And I have not quite heard us address that, collectively. You know, I know, oh, I see an ARC and everybody else has been struggling with that. But we have got, as a group — and this is where the government comes in because the employers and the unions will not be carrying that burden by themselves.

So the Deputy Mayor of Education, our coordinator here, I would suggest that the government has to step up and start helping all parties to provide some money to keep people going who can then retain their job while they are training.

(Applause)

MS. RIVLIN: Well, we clearly opened up a major issue here. I want to call on one more person because she's been very patient. The lady in the back. Then we will wrap it up.

MS. STREZNEWSKI: Thank you. I'm Marina Streznewski with the D.C. Jobs Council. I have a question about the One Stops. I'd be interested in perspectives from all the panel members, if we have a minute to do that.

The paper says the One Stop system appears to offer resources that are most appropriate and easily accessed by computer literate, self-directed, and assertive individuals. Unfortunately, many District residents in need of assistance do not fit that profile. If you could do one thing to change the One Stop system in the here and now, what would you do?

SPEAKER: Okay, to me?

MS. RIVLIN: Why don't I start because I — one of the things that I did was to lead the transition committee for Mayor Fenty for DOES. And one of the things we talked about was the One Stop centers. And we gave a hypothetical, J, you know, John Doe that came into One Stop. And it was a young man who didn't have a lot of skills, who had a pregnant girlfriend, who had — I mean we just kind of went through a whole bunch of things that are very real. And so when we got through this — and Norm was a part of this group — that poor young man had to go through seven District agencies to get himself satisfied.

And so one of our recommendations was to try to have a way that all of those services are within the One Stop. But I can't sit here and tell you how to do that. But I think that that was one of the things that we found that hampers the effectiveness is if you've got somebody who is not quite as motivated, but any

obstacle will just knock them off their game, any one of the things that — any one of the challenges: he didn't have a valid driver's license, he didn't —

I mean we went through the whole story. He will just pick himself up and go home because it's too hard to try to get through everything in the system. So that was one of the things that we suggested is a more integrated approach within the One Stop.

MS. GILBERT: We agree. We certainly do, and what we're trying to do is work very hard to change that. And I said we now have additional funding. There is the will, we know we have to do that.

You know, again they're having services, as Mr. Shelton said. We're working very closely with him at the One Stop on Franklin Street to make sure that we have increased relations with the community. In that community we're also working with Carver Terrace/Langston Terrace community. We've taken some of the services out, but I think that you will see within, you know — I suppose I can't put a time frame on it — six months or even shorter than that — 90 days — some changes. As I said, we're already working on that.

But I think critical again is the will of the rest of our partners. You know, again if you had an agreement with rehabilitation services agencies, with housing, with GHS, all of us working together, they have to show up. We have to have — and as I said I think that it is so important you have a memorandum of understanding, and, you know, you can put those on your Christmas tree because you have a lot of leeway; there are lots of them around. And I think it's just critical that again we join together in collaboration and working with our partners.

It doesn't have to be in a One Stop either; it can be at another location. It can be at an OIC. We talked a building. Kate talked about a building for training, be it at another site. A One Stop doesn't always have to be a place, particularly, as you mentioned. We can do our tracking from anywhere. We work with Will Parker from CSOSA. We're in a lot of different places.

So I think that it is critical. I think we are making those changes, but again it's the kind of thing where everybody has to have the will.

I saw a wonderful software — Reverend Tucker is here — that a group of the churches are working on which is that when you go into a One Stop you can achieve, you can say, "And where do you live?"

"Well, I live on, you know, Ruggs Road, Southeast."

"Well, let me see where your nearest church is." And on that software they can find the nearest church, they can say what's available, day care, other services. We need to have that kind of accessibility to what's going on and bring a lot more people into the One Step to become aware of it.

MS. RIVLIN: I think we could — thank you, Susan. I think we could go on for a long time. We promised to get everybody out and on to other commitments.

We have started something important here today. And I would like to take the risk of saying I will work with Barbara and with Josh, and with Kate and with Susan, and with others in the audience to make sure it doesn't end here; that we get back together to report and what progress has been made and what has not been made within the next six months or so.

MS. GILBERT: Thank you.

MS. RIVLIN: Thank you all very much.

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