

# Looking At The ISSUES

Stark  
Education  
Partnership  
inc.

March 21, 2008

## Unique Program to Prepare Drop Outs for the Financial Services Industry to Continue at CHOICES

*Many of these young people find themselves in difficult circumstances by no choice of their own. We have an obligation to help provide them with educational and employment opportunities...* – Helen Jones-Kelley, Director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

A unique pilot program at Canton's CHOICES High School to enable drop outs to earn a diploma and begin taking college credit towards a future in the financial services industry will continue thanks to a grant from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). The \$250,000 award was announced on March 6<sup>th</sup> as part of a statewide series of grants under the state's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Employment grants.

The program started in 2006 as part of the *President's High Growth Job Training Initiative*. The purpose was to test a Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) enhanced out-of-school model to connect youth to entry-level jobs in financial services at three pilot sites across the nation. Canton was one of those sites, the others were in Jacksonville, Florida, and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Stark State College of Technology, local JAG affiliate Jobs for Ohio's Graduates of Greater Canton, and the Employment Source were engaged in the delivery of services to a target group of 100 students. Financial services partners included National City Bank, Nationwide Insurance, Allstate Insurance, GE Money and Accountemps, Inc. The Stark Education Partnership served as outside evaluator. This partnership will continue with the new grant, adding the Canton City School's Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) program.

When Canton was selected in 2006, the Department of Labor was looking for ways to design a replicable national model that could offer a solution for employment of out-of-school youth and meet the workforce needs of the financial services industry. The federal grant, however, was limited to two years. Now, thanks to ODJFS, the development of that model will continue in Stark County.



## Looking At The Week

### Local, Regional and State P-16 Meetings

On Tuesday, Dr. Joe Rochford attended both the quarterly meeting of local and regional P-16s at the Ohio Board of Regents in Columbus and the meeting of the Ohio Partnership for Continued Learning (OPCL). The OPCL is the state P-16 council.

Contact  
The Partnership

Questions / Comments? E-mail [aoneill@edpartner.org](mailto:aoneill@edpartner.org) or call (330) 452-0829 • [www.edpartner.org](http://www.edpartner.org) • 400 Market Ave N, Suite B-Plaza, Canton OH 44702