

SUCCESS STORIES

Family Self-Sufficiency Program Graduates



When Eladio joined the FSS program, he had ample work experience as an auto mechanic; however, he did not have the necessary certificates in order for his business to grow. He enrolled at Montgomery Adult School and through hard work and dedication, he obtained certificates in Fuel Injection, Air Conditioning, and Master Auto Mechanics. Eladio said, “These classes have enabled me to work on all makes and models of cars, including new cars.” Eladio states that halfway through the process he felt so excited and eager to continue to learn that he is currently taking classes in Balancing and Alignment. When asked how the FSS program helped him achieve his goals, Eladio said: “I had no idea how to write a business plan, but with the help of the Small Business Development Center at Southwestern College, I was able to put together an impressive plan, which was essential for my business.” Now he and his wife plan on buying a home with the escrow money they received from FSS.

Inside This Issue...

- ***CAREER PLANNING p. 2***
- ***HEALTH SERVICES p. 3***
- ***FINANCIAL FITNESS p. 4 & 5***
- ***HOMEOWNERSHIP p. 6***
- ***FAMILY RESOURCES p. 6 & 7***
- ***FSS NEWS & NOTES p. 8***

Job Fair

Meet with top employers from San Diego
at the San Diego Job Fair

Tuesday, March 18, 2008
11:00 AM to 2:00 PM
Holiday Inn San Diego—On The Bay
1355 Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92101

619.232.3861

Attention prospective or current business owners!

The Business Resource Center offers the following services free of charge:

- **Access to Business Software.** Design business cards, work on presentations using Microsoft Office XP, Business Plan Pro, CalData and more.
- **High-Speed, Wireless Internet.** Perform business-related research using the 10 computers available for use.
- **Entrepreneur Library Series.** Essentials for starting almost any type of business such as import/export, wholesale, e-businesses, child care, cleaning services, and more.
- **Publications in English and Spanish.** Important information on various business topics: business planning, financing, franchising information, marketing, corporate structure, etc.



For information call the Business Resource Center at 619.482.6391,
or visit its website at www.sbditc.org



The CNA program is 255 hours and is taught over a 12 week period.

We offer four classes per year.

Tuition is free and subsidized by the San Diego Community College District ROP program. There is an estimated \$300 cost for materials including textbooks, scrubs and other related costs.

All classes are offered in our newly renovated facility in Golden Hill conveniently located on the bus line. The CNA classes are taught by highly qualified instructors with more than 120 years combined nursing experience.

The next Certified Nurse Assistant Class begins:

March 10 - May 30

Application period begins January 7, 2008



*Please note, you must be a legal resident of the United States, possess a GED or high school diploma and have no criminal background in order to apply.

Contact Golden Care Academy today to reserve your place:

Phone: 619.232.0557

info@goldencareacademy.org

2469 Broadway, San Diego, CA 92102

Golden Care Academy is a certified 501 (C)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to providing high quality health careers training at an affordable price to San Diego County residents.

San Diego County Dental Society presents

Free dental sealants and fluoride varnish

For children (1-18 years old) with *no dental resources*
(A parent or guardian must accompany each child)



Join us for:
Free School Entry Dental Exams
Community Resources and Information
Prizes, Prizes, Prizes

Saturday, February 2, 2008
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Southwestern College
Dental Hygiene Program Clinic
880 National City Blvd
National City, CA 91950

CALL TODAY for an appointment
619.692.8858

Children with appointments will be given priority

*(Dental sealants are a special coating painted on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth.
Fluoride varnish is a special fluoride coating painted on all teeth.)

Mobile Medical Clinic (MMC)

Are you or a family member:

Need a check up?

Not feeling well today?

Not able to get health insurance?

Not able to pay for a doctor's appointment?

If the answer is yes to any of these questions, come see the Mobile Medical Clinic (MMC)
and receive medical services.



The MMC brings the following services to you:

Sick Visits

Check ups

Immunizations

Physicals

Family Planning

To find out when the Mobile Medical Clinic will be in your neighborhood, call 619.515.2357.

Predatory Lending– Beware!!!



Everyday, payday loan stores, rent to own centers, and tax refund-anticipation lenders are taking millions of dollars from people, often pushing them over the edge to financial ruin and bankruptcy. Here is a list of different types of predatory loans and how they impact you.

TAX REFUND ANTICIPATION LOANS (“RAL’s”)

Marketed as “Instant Tax Refund” or “Fast Tax Refund”. This type of loan was first offered by professional tax preparers and are now offered by car dealers and furniture retailers. Loan fees seem small but equate to annual interest rates in excess of 100%.

- This loan saves an average of 1 week between e-filed return and direct deposit of refund into taxpayer’s bank account
- Example: Refund = \$2,000 Fee = \$100 RAL saves taxpayer 10 days. Annual interest rate = 183%
- If other “fees” are factored in, annualized interest rate can increase to as much as 700%

According to one report, fees may total as much as \$900 for a typical refund of \$2,150, although this includes the tax preparation fee.

RAL’s carry very high interest rates for very safe loans—The IRS e-filing system alerts tax preparers to those most at risk of having their refund withheld. The taxpayer is at risk if the refund is withheld. The refund may be withheld for delinquent child support, student loans and other similar delinquencies. Approximately 12 million RAL’s cost taxpayers more than \$1.2 billion in fees annually. About 79% of these are paid by those with annual incomes of \$35,000 or less. RAL fees cost working parents who receive Earned Income Tax Credits \$1.57 billion annually.

PAYDAY LOANS

These are marketed as short-term bridge loans. Typically the initial term is 2 weeks—until next paycheck or:

- Typical loan amount is \$300
- Borrower gives post-dated check to lender to be held until next pay check
- Typical fee is \$15 (up to \$30)
- This is an annualized rate of 130-260%
- If borrower can’t repay (91% can’t pay the amount) there is a typical rollover fee of \$50
- \$50 every two weeks equates to an annual interest rate of 433%
- Payment of rollover fees makes repayment more difficult—this is the predatory trap, 90% of the loans go past 90-days
- When rollover fees are added, annualized interest rates average 396-780%, depending on the ultimate term
- Fees paid on loans that go past 90 days now total \$4.2 billion annually
- A typical borrower pays \$793 for a \$325 loan

RENT TO OWN CONTRACTS (“RTO”)

These loans are marketed as a risk-free way to acquire furniture and appliances. Because RTO’s are not styled as loans, APR’s are not disclosed. The average assigned APR is 100%, based upon the sales price offered by RTO stores.

When department store prices are used, the APR can increase to 200% or more.

- The total cash outlay required to purchase an item from an RTO store is 2-5 times the cash price at the department store
- Many items are not clearly marked as “new or used”
- The average RTO contract has a term of 18 months

RTO example: The total payment for a 19” color TV at a RTO store is \$746, the average cost of the same TV at a department store \$217. The difference is \$339!!!

Do you qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit?

If you are like millions of Americans, you work hard, but don't earn a high income. The federal government's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) can help you and your family. The EITC is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families. It has no effect on certain welfare benefits. In most cases, EITC payments will not be used to determine eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), food stamps, low-income housing or most Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) payments. To qualify, taxpayers must meet certain requirements and file a tax return, even if you did not earn enough money to be obligated to file a tax return. If you qualify, you could pay less federal income tax, pay no tax or receive a refund.

The Internal Revenue Service and its community partners are working to increase EITC participation among taxpayers who have low incomes and meet EITC eligibility rules. Claimants must have a valid Social Security number. In addition, one must meet certain residency and filing criteria, including following guidelines for a qualifying child. The following are income requirements for 2007:

A taxpayer's total earned income must be at least \$1 and their earned income and adjusted gross income must both be less than:

- \$37,783 (\$39,783 married filing jointly) with two or more qualifying children;
 - \$33,241 (\$35,241 married filing jointly) with one qualifying child;
 - \$12,590 (\$14,590 married filing jointly) with no qualifying children.
- Investment income cannot be more than \$2,900.

It is not necessary for families to have children when claiming the credit, but if they do claim a child for EITC qualification purposes, the qualifying child must:

- Be a son, daughter, stepchild, foster child, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, or a descendant of any of them. (An adopted child is treated as the taxpayer's child. A foster child is any child placed with the taxpayer by an authorized agency or court.)
- Be under the age of 19 or under the age of 24 and a full-time student at the end of the year. (A qualifying child may be any age if he or she is permanently and totally disabled.)
- Have lived with the taxpayer in the U.S. for more than half of the year 2007. (This includes the 50 states and the District of Columbia. It does not include U.S. Possessions such as Guam or Puerto Rico.)

Only one person may claim a qualifying child for the EITC

If you meet income requirements and need assistance in preparing your tax return, you may visit a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance location (VITA). The VITA Program offers free tax help with tax returns for people who are low- to moderate-income (generally, \$40,000 and below). Certified volunteers sponsored by various organizations receive training to help prepare basic tax returns in communities across the country. VITA sites are generally located at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations.

Most locations also offer free electronic filing. To locate the nearest VITA site, call 1.800.829.1040.

Financial Fitness Training offered by Community HousingWorks

This 6 hour workshop assists you with the following:

- Establishing S.M.A.R.T. goals with small steps to reach goal
- Creating a visual picture of your current finances
- Providing a copy of your credit report with a FICO Score
- Offering tools for improving credit score
- Creating a plan to reduce debt

After completing the workshop, you can obtain a 50% discount on the Homebuyer Education Workshop: *An 8-hour, HUD certified class for first-time home buyers (\$40 value)*

If you qualify, you may be able to take part in a match savings program. For every \$1 saved (limits apply) you can obtain \$2 to \$3, as long as it is for a specific goal such as business, vocational or higher education or purchase a home.



2008 Workshop Dates

Saturday, January 19 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. English

Saturday, February 2 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. English

Saturday, March 15 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Spanish

Place: 4305 University Ave

Conference Room 610

San Diego, CA 92105

**park in parking structure*

Cost: \$20 (\$10 HBE Graduates)

Snacks & Drinks provided

FAMILY RESOURCES

NLHA announces scholarship program for assisted housing residents

The National Leased Housing Association (NLHA) has announced the formation of the NLHA Education Fund. The Education Fund will provide scholarships to eligible individuals living in federally assisted housing or Section 8 voucher recipients following three distinctive roads to higher education. Specific criteria have been developed for each scholarship category and consideration will be afforded to all eligible candidates who apply. Application packages are available on NLHA's website at: http://www.hudnlha.com/education_fund/index.asp or by contacting the NLHA office at 202.785.8888.

Applications are due by **Feb. 15, 2008**. Awards are expected to be announced in early April.

You can afford to send your child to Harvard!

Harvard has expanded its financial aid initiative for low- and middle-income families. Beginning with the freshman class of 2006, parents in families with incomes of less than \$60,000 will no longer be expected to contribute to the cost of their children attending Harvard. In addition, Harvard will reduce the contributions of families with incomes between \$60,000 and \$80,000.



For General inquiries contact Harvard College Financial Aid Office at 617.495.1581.

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM IS PROUD TO OFFER :

FREE FINANCIAL FITNESS WORKSHOPS

Earned Income Tax Credit <i>(Saturday at CitiBank)</i>	What is Earned Income Tax Credit; the difference between a tax credit and a tax deduction; who qualifies for the Earned Income Tax Credit .	Tuesday January 8 & Saturday January 12
Loan to Own	Become familiar with the characteristics of consumer installment loans	Tuesday January 22
Predatory Lending	Identify and understand the latest predatory lending practices and how to avoid these unscrupulous practices.	Tuesday February 5
ABC's of Credit <i>(CitiBank)</i>	What is credit; types of credit users; the difference between good and bad credit; how to get and read a credit report.	Saturday February 9
Banking On it & Keeping it Safe	Learn the reasons you should keep your money safe (ie safety, convenience, cost, security), and protection laws that have been passed to protect your rights as consumers.	Tuesday February 19
Controlling Your Expenses	What is a budget; why should you have one; how to track your expenses; establishing a budget based on your needs; how to set and achieve personal financial goals.	Tuesday March 4
Pay Yourself First <i>(US Bank)</i>	Saving money is an important part of building your financial future. Learn tips on how to get started.	Saturday March 15
To Your Credit	The most important step to financial security is understanding your credit report and building a positive credit history. This course provides information on how to obtain your credit report, repair credit, and resources.	Tuesday March 18

Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. 1/12, 2/9 located at:
 CitiBank
 3910 University Ave
 San Diego, CA 92105

All Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. workshops located at:
 San Diego Housing Commission on
 1122 Broadway STE 300
 San Diego, CA 92101

Saturday at 10:30 a.m. 3/15 located at:
 US Bank
 5990 Napa St
 San Diego, CA 92110



FSS News & Notes

Extended Hours

The FSS Program has extended hours to better serve participants who have daytime commitments. Our extended hours are:

January 8 and 22, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
February 5 and 19, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
March 4 and 18, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Our Location:
 1122 Broadway, 5th Floor
 San Diego, CA 92101

Extended hours are by appointment. Please call your coordinator.

You can access underground parking from 11th Avenue. We will validate your parking!

We are unable to accommodate children at Extended Hours meetings. Please call Teresa in advance at 619.578.7469 if you need help with your childcare expenses during Extended Hours.

What Is My Next Step?

Your Service Coordinator understands that sometimes it's hard to figure out how to start and maintain your career plan. You can call your coordinator and make an appointment to discuss your career goals and support service needs.

Get help updating your career plan, planning for vocational training, and obtaining referrals for developing a business plan or buying a home.

Call your coordinator for an appointment:

Alejandra Inzunza	619.578.7465
Carol Conger-Cross	619.578.7458
Deb Furlong	619.578.7459
Megan O'Dowd	619.578.7456
Rosemary Uribe	619.578.7454

Resident Services Mission

Creating opportunities for San Diego Housing Commission program participants to enrich their quality of life and reach their personal, family and community goals.