

## **2010 HOMELESS EMPLOYMENT REPORT: Findings and Recommendations**

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

Inspired by the Homeless Employment Survey conducted at the 2009 Sacramento Homeless Connect, and the success on achieving implementation of several of the recommendations, the Homeless Employment Committee of Sacramento Steps Forward conducted a second annual survey at the 2010 Homeless Connect held on May 22, 2010. We collected 185 surveys.

### **The goals of the 2010 survey are four-fold:**

1. *Educate policymakers and the public regarding stereotypes of homeless people, i.e., the high percentage that want to work either full or part time, the job skills they possess and the barriers they face to employment;*
2. *Help craft recommendations to nonprofit and government agencies to make employment services more readily available to homeless people;*
3. *Use the results and recommendations to help shape employment and income recommendations to the next iteration of the “10 Year Plan to End Homelessness,” including the local implementation of the new federal HEARTH Act;*
4. *Ensure that homeless consumers are full participants in the creation of homeless employment services and opportunities.*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report covers the results of 185 homeless men and women respondents that were a sample of the approximately 800 homeless people attending the Homeless Connect event.

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4. *Ensure that homeless consumers are full participants in the creation of homeless employment services and opportunities.*

### **Top 10 findings include:**

1. **Demographics:** 67.4% were between the ages of 21-50 with 28.8% over the age of 50; 51.7% were people of color with the largest percentage being African-American [35.6%]; 47.3% male and 52.7% female;
2. **Economic reasons for homelessness:** 71.0% stated several economic reasons why they were homeless – 36.8% had insufficient income and 34.0% had lost their job;
3. **Length of homelessness:** 33.0% were homeless for more than two years while 32.0% were homeless for six months or less. We identified both gender and ethnic differences, with women and Caucasians more likely to be newer to homelessness and men and people of color more likely to be homeless for two years or longer;
4. **High unemployment/high desire to work:** 88.0% were not currently working, and almost 50% [47.0%] had been unemployed for 2 years or longer. However, 88.0% wanted to work either full or part time. We found a significantly higher percentage of women working [16.7%] compared to men [6.9%]. We also found gender, ethnic, age and employment status differences as it relates to wanting to work;

5. **Accommodations:** 38.0% needed accommodations for their disabilities in order to work either full or part time. In addition, we found people of color somewhat less likely to need accommodations for the workplace than Caucasians [33.5% to 39.5% respectively]. Over 50% of those unemployed for two years or longer needed accommodations;
6. **Barriers to work:** Almost half, or 48.3% cited either a disability [19.2%] or health issue [29.1%] as significant barriers to work; over 40% stated they could not find work or had given up looking; while one third [30.8%] stated lack of transportation was a barrier to finding work; over one quarter [26.8%] cited a combination of lack of training and education as barriers to work; 32.0% indicated that being homeless was a major barrier; 19.2% indicated lack of appropriate clothing and/or appearance was a barrier;
7. **Job Skills:** 34.0% of those surveyed had a license or certificate for their job skill. As in 2009, the 2010 survey confirms a skilled labor force among the homeless population. 65.4% identified “people skills” as their significant job skill; 58.0% identified skills in the service industry; nearly 40% [37.4%] had computer skills; 33.5% in hospitality; 32.4% in retail; 31.0% in sales; one quarter [25.7%] in construction; 29.0% of the homeless respondents had job skills in the warehouse sector;
8. **Education and Training:** 81.3% stated they wanted to go back to school to receive additional training, with almost 80% [79.3%] wanting to attend a four-year college, community college, or technical school [5.8%, 46.0% and 27.5% respectively]. We also found gender, age and employment status differences, with both women and younger homeless people wanting to receive additional education and training, while the longer the length of unemployment, the less likely the respondent was to want to receive education and training;
9. **Agencies that were helpful/NOT helpful:** Homeless service agencies were the most helpful [40.0%]; 42.0% stated that the welfare office [Department of Human Assistance (DHA)] was helpful, divided between General Assistance [27.7%] and CalWORKs [14.6%], and followed by One-Stop Career Centers [30.6%]. The Employment Development Department, Veterans Administration and Social Security Administration were the least helpful [6.5%, 2.7% and 2.7% respectively]. [Note: we did not ask respondents a specific question about their veteran’s status];
10. **Reasons for lack of help:** Several barriers to receiving employment assistance were noted: a combination of bureaucratic barriers, including long waiting lists, red tape and lack of agency follow-up accounted for 35.0%; 26.7% stated the agency was unaware of services available to homeless people; 20.0% identified their disability as a barrier to help; while about 18.3% stated lack of transportation was a major barrier to employment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

**Preamble to recommendations:** The Employment Committee feels strongly that the overarching guiding principles to ending and preventing homelessness rests on four pillars: [1] safe, decent and affordable homes; [2] access to affordable health care, including mental health and substance abuse services; [3] access to educational opportunities; and [4] a living wage with full benefits.

The Homeless Employment Committee identified Tier 1 recommendations, where we would either take the lead or where we would partner [P with organizations, as well as Tier 2 recommendations for work already in progress:

- ❖ **Tier 1:** *Top priority recommendations for 2010-2011*
- ❖ **Tier 2:** *Recommendations that we have begun working on and are achieving progress on in 2010*

### Tier 1:

1. **Homeless Employment Summit;** including ensuring integration of Homeless Prevention & Rapid Rehousing funds with other funds [such as Community Services Block grant funds] and the new HEARTH legislation; forming partnerships with local businesses as well as education facilities.
2. **Create the Homeless Services Liaison Interagency Council:** Interagency Council or all City and County Homeless Services, as well as homeless consumers and advocates *with at least 3 seats on the Policy Board.*
3. **Fostering Partnerships:** A number of recommendations can be moved forward by continuing to foster partnerships and collaborations with lead agency members of the Homeless Employment Committee. Key partners include Paratransit, Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, Sacramento Housing Alliance, Faith & Homeless Families, WEAVE, Resources for Independent Living, Women's Empowerment, Lutheran Social Services, Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center, Coalition on Regional Equity and SETA. Partnership recommendations include:
  - **Peer to Peer Homeless Outreach and Mentoring Teams**
  - **Semi-Annual Homeless Career Day**
  - **Return to Work trainings for long-time unemployed**
  - **Fully address disability barriers to employment**
  - **Expand transportation opportunities**
  - **Expand child care facilities for homeless care givers**
  - **Expand domestic violence services**
  - **Explore replicating San Francisco's Supportive Housing Employment Collaborative**

**Tier 2:**

4. **Implement Mobile Employment Services Van**
5. **Implement Sacramento Community Voicemail Project**
6. **WOTC [Work Opportunity Tax Credit] Outreach & Education Campaign**
7. **Expand access to affordable health care for homeless people:** Link to the recommendations of the Policy Board's Services Committee;

**Additional recommendations:**

8. **Expand the current Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness to include homeless youth, individuals and families with employment and income recommendations to be consistent with the HEARTH Act**
9. **Additional education and training opportunities to homeless people, including:**
  - partnering with key high growth industries to create employment opportunities;
  - create a *Homeless Apprenticeship Program* working with the trade unions;
  - create a *Homeless – Community College Partnership*;
10. **Launch an education and public relations campaign:** Addressing stereotypes of homeless people and employment issues.

**Timeframe & Progress Update:** These recommendations, as well as progress in meeting these goals, are summarized in the *Recommendations Section*. Short-term, mid-term and long-term objectives are summarized in *Table 31*.

## **METHODOLOGY:**

The Homeless Employment Committee administered the same survey that was used at Homeless Connect in 2009. We administered the survey at the 2010 Homeless Connect event on May 22, 2010. Prior to administering the survey, we trained ten survey takers in the administration of the survey to ensure reliability.

The survey was completed by 185 homeless men and women responding to the survey questions administered by our survey team. The respondents were a sample of the approximately 800 homeless people attending the Homeless Connect event.

The data was entered in SPSS [Statistical Package for Social Sciences] in the month of August. We ran simple frequencies and followed by cross tabulations to examine whether or not there were any differences between respondents in four areas: gender, ethnicity, age and finally, employment status.

*Limitations:* The Homeless Employment Committee relied upon an “Intercept Survey” approach, meaning only those who were present at the 2010 Homeless Connect event were surveyed. Additional limitations include the use of a “self-report” approach, meaning survey responses cannot be evaluated for accuracy. The results of the survey provide a “snapshot” of the experiences and views of the homeless respondents, which when combined and compared to the 2009 survey results give us a somewhat larger “snap shot” of the employment issues facing homeless men and women. Finally, we can not say that in the comparison of the 2009 survey results and the 2010 survey results that it was an unduplicated set of responses. Nevertheless the likelihood that out of nearly 1,600 homeless people, we interviewed the same person twice is extremely low.

## **RESULTS:**

### 1. **Demographics:** [See Table 1 below]

- ✓ **Age:** 66.4% of the survey respondents were between the ages of 21 and 50 years old, with about a third [32.1%] being between 41-50 years old. In addition, almost 30% [29.9%] were over the age of 50, with 3.8% over the age of 60.
- ✓ **Ethnicity:** Over half [51.7%] of the respondents were people of color, with over one third being African-American, with Native-Americans [6.1%] over represented in the homeless population. Nearly 40% [38.9%] identified themselves as Caucasian.
- ✓ **Gender:** Almost 50% [47.3%] were male, with just over half [52.7%] being female.

**Table 1: Comparison of demographics, 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Age</b>	21-50: 69.0% 41-50: 37.0% 50+: 30.0% 60+: 5.0%	21-50: 66.4% 41-50: 32.1% 50+: 29.9% 60+: 3.8%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<i>Overall: People of Color: 58.3%</i> African-American: 25.0% Native American: 5.6% Caucasian: 42.0%	<i>Overall: People of Color 51.7%</i> African American: 35.6% Native American: 6.1% Caucasian: 38.9%
<b>Gender</b>	Male: 58.3% Female: 40.0% Transgender: 0.7%	Male: 47.3% Female: 52.7% Transgender: 0.0%

**Discussion:** The sample sizes between the two surveys were nearly identical: 182 in 2009 and 185 in 2010. In addition, the demographic profile of the homeless respondents was extremely similar: a fairly even sample of men and women, overwhelmingly between the ages of 21-50 and over half being people of color.

### 2. **Reason homeless?**

The top five reasons that respondents identified of why they are homeless are [See Table 2 below]:

- ✓ Insufficient income [36.8%]
- ✓ Lost their job [34.0%]

- ✓ Other [24.7%: These answers ranged from being kicked out by parent; incarceration; divorce; housing burning down and death of a loved one.]
- ✓ Eviction [16.5%]
- ✓ Disability [16.5%]

Note that taken together [“insufficient income” and “lost their job”], 71.0% of the respondents identified economic reasons as why they became homeless.

Additional significant reasons were substance abuse [15.4%]; domestic violence [14.3%] and health issues [7.7%].

**Table 2: Comparison of reasons for being homeless, 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Insufficient income</b>	38.9%	36.8%
<b>Lost job</b>	31.1%	34.0%
<b>Other: [include kicked out by parent, incarceration, divorce, house burned down, death of a loved one]</b>	29.4%	24.7%
<b>Disability</b>	26.1%	16.5%
<b>Substance abuse</b>	20.0%	15.4%
<b>Eviction</b>	14.4%	16.5%
<b>Health issues</b>	12.8%	8.0%
<b>Foreclosure</b>	6.1%	3.0%
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	0.5%	14.3%
<b>Overall economic reasons</b>	<b>70.0%</b>	<b>71.0%</b>

**Discussion:** As in 2009, insufficient income and a lost job were the two major reasons that respondents identified as why they became homeless in 2010. In other words, nearly identical to 2009, in 2010 71.0% identified economic reasons for their homelessness.

**Additional similarities:** About the same percentage identified substance abuse, evictions and health issues as reasons for their homelessness.

**Important differences:** Significantly less respondents in 2010 identified being disabled [16.5% compared to 26.1% in 2009] as a major reason for homelessness. A smaller percentage identified foreclosure [3.0% compared to 6.1% in 2009] hopefully signaling a lessening of the foreclosure crisis in our community. However, dramatically more respondents [14.3%] identified domestic violence in 2010, compared to 0.5% in 2009. This could be due to several reasons: [1] more female surveyors, so female respondents could have felt more comfortable identifying domestic violence as an issue; [2] about 12% more female respondents in the 2010 sample.

The percentage of 2010 respondents indicating that domestic violence was a cause of their homelessness, 14.3%, corresponds to national averages from the National Alliance to End Homelessness, which estimates that approximately 13% of homeless



families report domestic violence and abuse as the reason for leaving their home. Additionally, it should be noted that national results collected by the National Coalition for the Homeless show that 63.0% of homeless women have experienced domestic violence in their lifetimes.

### 3. Length of homelessness?

One third of the respondents were homeless over two years, with one-third [32.0%] being homeless for six months or less. [See Table 3 below]:

**Table 3: Comparison of length of homelessness: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

Length of homelessness	2009	2010
6 months or less	29.5%	32.0%
2 years +	40.0%	33.0%

**Discussion:** The trend of having over one third of the homeless respondents recently homeless with over one third being homeless for 2 years and over continued from 2009 to 2010. This suggests that our community does not have nearly enough affordable housing, thus people are remaining homeless for years.

#### Gender differences:

36.0% of women, compared to 28.1% of men, were homeless for 6 months or less. [See Table 4 below]. Over half [52.9%] of women were homeless for a year or less, compared to 44.0% of men, while nearly three quarters [73.1%] of women were homeless for 2 years or less, compared to 57.1% of men. Finally, only about one quarter of women [25.8%] were homeless for 2 years or more compared to 40.2% of the men.

**Table 4: Gender and length of homelessness:**

Length of homelessness	Male	Female
< 3 months	17.1%	19.1%
3 – 6 months	11.0%	16.9%
6 – 12 months	15.9%	16.9%
1 -2 years	13.4%	20.2%
2+ years	40.2%	25.8%

**Discussion:** In general, then, women tend to be homeless for a shorter period than men, notably two years or less. However, a considerably greater percentage of men tend to be homeless for two years or longer. This might be because overall there are a larger number of men than women in the homeless population. In addition women, especially with children, tend to be a more sympathetic population than single homeless men, who are perceived to be able to deal with being on the streets better than women. Women (and men) with children are also eligible for a greater number of services.

**Ethnic Differences:** Caucasian homeless people tend to be more recently homeless, with nearly one quarter [24.2%] homeless 3 months or less, compared to only 13.7% of people of color. Forty-six percent of people of color, compared to 39.9% of Caucasians were homeless less than a year, while 64.6% of people of color compared to 55.1% of Caucasians were homeless for two years or less. A slightly greater percentage of people of color were homeless for two years or longer [34.3%], compared to Caucasians [31.8%] [See Table 5 below].

**Table 5: Ethnicity and length of homelessness:**

Length of Homelessness	People of Color	Caucasian
< 3 months	13.7%	24.2%
3 – 6 months	14.7%	13.6%
6 – 12 months	17.6%	12.1%
1 -2 years	18.6%	15.2%
2+ years	34.3%	31.8%

**Discussion:** Caucasian homeless people tend to be newer to homelessness than people of color. A greater percentage of people of color tend to be homeless for both a year or less and two years or less than Caucasian homeless people, while a slightly greater percentage of people of color are homeless for two years or longer.

**Age differences:** Of those under 24 years old, 75.0% are homeless for less than one year, compared to 62.5% between 25-35 years old; 42.7% between 36-49 years old; 43.4%; between 50-59 and 33.4% over sixty years old. [See Table 6 below].

**Table 6: Age and length of homelessness:**

Length of homelessness	Age:				
	0-24	25-35	36-49	50-59	60+
< 3 months	41.7%	25.0%	7.4%	22.6%	16.7%
3 – 6 months	25.0%	25.0%	14.7%	5.7%	0.0%
6 – 12 months	8.3%	12.5%	20.6%	15.1%	16.7%
1 - 2 years	16.7%	18.8%	14.7%	17.0%	33.3%
2+ years	8.3%	18.8%	39.7%	37.7%	33.3%

**Discussion:** The broad trend is that the younger the homeless person is the shorter length of time they have been homeless. Conversely, the older the person is, the longer their length of homelessness. This becomes especially dramatic for those who are homeless longer than one year, with 37.6% of those being between 25-35; 54.4% between 36-49, the same percentage between 50-59; and a jump to 66.6% for those

over the age of 60. This trend makes sense given that younger homeless people have more opportunities to work and thus can end their homelessness, while seniors have less employment options. Additionally, shelters are less equipped in the gerontological needs of aging homeless seniors, including memory impairment, and mobility issues.

#### 4. Currently working and do you want to work?

Almost 90% [88%] were not currently working; however 12.0% were working. Of these 12.0%, almost 20% [17.3%] were working full-time, nearly 70% [69.6%] were working part time and almost 20% [19.8%] were working in day labor jobs. [See Table 7 below]:

Significantly, nearly the same percentage, **88.0% indicated they wanted to work**, with nearly 70% [69.5%] wanting to work full-time and almost 20% [19.8%] wanting to work part-time.

*Needing accommodations:* Nearly 40% [38.0%] stated that in order to work either full or part-time they would need accommodations at the work place to facilitate their employment. This reflects the considerable reality that there is a large portion of homeless people who are disabled.

**Table 7: Comparison of working and want to work; needing accommodations, 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

	2009	2010
<b>Currently not working</b>	91.7%	88.0%
<b>Working</b>	Overall: 8.3% Full time: 44.4% Part time: 44.4% Day Labor: 11.1%	Overall: 12.0% Full time: 17.3% Part time: 69.6% Day labor: 13.0%
<b>Want to work</b>	Overall: 87.4% Full time: 79.9% Part time: 20.0%	Overall: 88.0% Full time: 69.5% Part time: 19.8%
<b>Need accommodations</b>	Need accommodations: 70.0% Do not need: 33.3%	Need accommodations: 38.0% Do not need: 62.0%

**Discussion:** For both 2009 and 2010, the results continue to challenge the erroneous stereotype that homeless people are lazy and don't want to work. For both years, roughly 90% of the respondents did not currently work, but 90% of the respondents replied they do want to work. On average about 10% of the respondents work either full or part time, however, the 2010 survey saw a sharp decline in those working full time and a corresponding increase in those working part time. Presumably this change is due to a continued lagging economy.

**Gender Differences:** A greater number of women, 16.7%, work compared to only 6.9% of men. [See Table 8 below]. However, nearly the same percentage want to work,

88.3% for women compared to 88.1% of men. Finally, approximately the same percentage of men and women need accommodations in order to work [36.8% and 34.5% respectively].

**Table 8: Gender-- working, want to work and need accommodations:**

	Male	Female
<b>Currently not working:</b>	93.1%	83.3%
<b>Working</b>	6.9%	16.7%
<b>Want to work</b>	88.1%	88.3%
<b>Need accommodations</b>	36.8%	34.5%

**Discussion:** Discussion of these employment issues is in Section 7 below.

**Ethnic Differences: Accommodations:**

One third of people of color stated they needed accommodations to work, while nearly 40% [39.3%] of Caucasians identified they needed accommodations [See Table 9 below]:

**Table 9: Ethnicity and accommodations:**

	People of Color	Caucasian
<b>Need accommodations</b>	33.3%	39.3%

**Discussion:** Discussion of these employment issues is in Section 7 below.

**Age differences:** On average, 95% of homeless people less than 35 want to work, 87.0% of those between 36 -49 want to work and 85.4% over 50 years old want to work. [See Table 10 below]:

**Table 10: Age and wanting to work:**

	0 – 24	25-35	36 – 49	50 -59	60+
<b>Want to work</b>	100%	91.4%	87.0%	85.2%	85.7%

**Discussion:** Discussion of these employment issues is in Section 7 below.

**Employment Status and accommodations:** Over half [53.2%] of those who were unemployed for over two years stated they needed accommodations to work [See Table 11 below]:

**Table 11: Employment status and accommodations:**

Employment status	Yes:	No:
	Need Accommodations	Don't need accommodations
Employed	12.8%	12.7%
Unemployed: 2 -24 months	34.0%	41.8%
Unemployed: over 2 years	53.2%	45.6%

**Employment status and want to work:** Over 20% [21.2%] of those unemployed longer than two years stated that they did not want to work [See Table 12 below]:

**Table 12: Employment status and wanting to work:**

Employment status	Yes: want to work	No: Don't want to work
Employed	100%	0.0%
Unemployed: 2 -24 months	94.5%	5.5%
Unemployed: over 2 years	78.8%	21.2%

## 5. How long unemployed?

Almost 50% [47%] were unemployed for two years or longer, with nearly one-quarter [23%] homeless for a year or less. [See Table 13 below]

**Table 13: Length of unemployment: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

Length of unemployment	2009	2010
Year or less	24.1%	23.0%
2 years +	57.3%	47.0%

**Discussion:** For both 2009 and 2010, the length of unemployment [2+ years] coincided with the length of many respondents' homelessness. In addition, for both surveys, nearly one-quarter were unemployed for a year or less, potentially reflecting the continued downturn in the economy and increasing unemployment rate regionally.

**Gender Differences:** Homeless women tend to be unemployed for a shorter period of time, especially for two years or less [43.6% compared to 51.6% for men]. [See Table 14 below].

**Table 14: Gender and length of unemployment:**

Length unemployment	Male	Female
<b>3 – 6 months</b>	14.5%	11.5%
<b>6 – 12 months</b>	8.1%	11.5%
<b>1 – 2 years</b>	17.7%	17.9%
<b>2+ years</b>	51.6%	43.6%

**Ethnic Differences:** About 15% of homeless people of color are unemployed for 3 - 6 months, compared to 10.7% of Caucasians [See Table 15 below]. In addition, 27.9% of people of color, compared to 16.1% of Caucasians were unemployed for a year or less. Overall, 43.5% of people of color were unemployed for two years or less compared to 37.5% of Caucasians. However, significantly, 21.5% of Caucasians were unemployed between one and two years compared to only 15.7% of people of color.

**Table 15: Ethnicity and length of unemployment:**

Length unemployment	People of Color	Caucasian
<b>3 – 6 months</b>	14.5%	10.7%
<b>6 – 12 months</b>	13.4%	5.4%
<b>1 – 2 years</b>	15.7%	21.4%
<b>2+ years</b>	43.4%	51.8%

**Discussion:** Discussion of ethnic differences in employment is below in Section 7.

**Age Differences:** Younger homeless people generally had higher rates of recent unemployment: a third under 24 years old were unemployed for 3 – 6 months, and it decreased as the homeless population got older [19.2% for 25-35; 10.3% for 36-49; 9.3% for 50-59 and 0.0% for 60 years plus]. [See Table 16 below]. However, the converse was generally true: the older you are, the longer your period of unemployment over one year, although this was high for all age groups [0 – 24: 55.5%; 25-35; 50.0%; 36-49: 70.7%; 50 – 59: 69.7% and 60+: 50.0%].

**Table 16: Age and length of unemployment:**

Length of unemployment	Age:				
	0-24	25-35	36-49	50-59	60+
<b>3 – 6 months</b>	33.3%	19.2%	10.3%	9.3%	0.0%
<b>6 – 12 months</b>	0.0%	19.2%	6.9%	9.3%	25.0%

<b>1 - 2 years</b>	11.1%	11.5%	20.7%	20.9%	0.0%
<b>2+ years</b>	44.4%	38.5%	50.0%	48.8%	50.0%

**Discussion:** Discussion of age differences in employment is below in Section 7.

## 6. Barriers to working?

Respondents identified a wide range of barriers to securing employment. The most significant reasons included: *[See Table 17 below]:*

- ✓ Over 40% stated they couldn't find work or gave up looking [37.9% and 3.9% respectively];
- ✓ About one third [32.4%] stated that the most significant barrier to working was being homeless;
- ✓ Almost one third [30.8%] stated that lack of transportation was a significant barrier to finding work.
- ✓ 29.1% identified health issues as a barrier to work;
- ✓ Over one quarter [26.3%] stated some combination of lack of training [10.5%]; educational level or lack of education [11.0% and 5.5% respectively] and lack of work experience [9.3%];
- ✓ Almost 20% [19.8%] stated that either lack of appropriate clothing or concern about appearance [10.5% and 9.3% respectively] were barriers to work;
- ✓ Almost 20% [19.2%] stated that their disability prevented them from working;

Additional barriers, but fewer responses, included lack of education or educational level [16.5%]; lack of training [10.5%]; perception of not being able to work while receiving SSI/SSD rules [10.5%]; lack of identification or documentation [8.8%]; lack of child care [7.7%]; convictions [5.5%]; age [too old; too young: 4.0%] lack of tools [3.3%].

**Table 17: Barriers to work, 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

<b>Barriers to work:</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Could not find work</b>	44.5%	37.9%
<b>Being homeless</b>	42.0%	32.4%
<b>Disability</b>	37.6%	19.2%
<b>Health issues</b>	37.3%	29.1%
<b>Lack of transportation</b>	28.1%	30.8%
<b>Lack of appropriate clothing</b>	23.6%	10.4%
<b>Lack of identification</b>	16.0%	8.8%
<b>Gave up looking</b>	14.7%	3.9%
<b>Concern about appearance</b>	14.0%	9.3%
<b>Lack of education</b>	13.5%	11.0%
<b>Lack of training</b>	12.6%	10.5%
<b>Convictions</b>	11.9%	5.5%
<b>Lack of tools</b>	11.8%	3.3%

<b>SSI rules or perception</b>	11.8%	6.0%
<b>Lack of education</b>	8.4%	11.0%
<b>Lack of childcare *</b>	-	7.7%
<b>Age [too old/young]</b>	6.2%	4.0%

\* This question was not asked in 2009. We added it in 2010 to get a better gauge on issues potentially facing homeless women. Thank you to *Women's Empowerment* for adding this question.

**Discussion:** Several key reasons homeless people identified as barriers in 2010 were also those identified in the 2009 survey, including being homeless, health issues, lack of transportation and a combination of lack of education and lack of training.

There were differences between the responses in 2010 compared to 2009, including far fewer respondents in 2010 identifying a disability, lack of appropriate clothing, gave up looking, convictions and lack of tools as barriers to employment.

Finally, although a small percentage overall [7.7%], almost 15% of female respondents [14 out of 97] identified *lack of child care* as a major barrier to finding employment. As noted, this was a new question that was added in the 2010 survey.

#### 7. License or certificate:

Importantly, **34.0% either had a license or certificate for their particular job skill.** [See Table 18 below]:

**Table 18: Job license/certificate, 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

	2009	2010
<b>License/certificate</b>	40.0%	34.0%

**Discussion:** On average, 37% of the homeless respondents in 2009 and 2010 had a license or certificate, indicating a high percentage of the homeless are a skilled, trained workforce, contrary to stereotypes of homeless people.

**Gender differences:** Significantly more men, 41.5% compared to 28.0% of women [See Table 19 below] have a license or certificate for their job skill.

**Table 19: Gender and job license/certificate:**

	Male	Female
<b>License/certificate</b>	41.5%	28.0%

**Ethnic differences:** A greater percentage of people of color, 38.5%, have a license or certificate for their job skill, than Caucasian homeless people [27.5%]. [See Table 20 below]:



**Table 20: Ethnicity and job license/certificate:**

	People of Color	Caucasian
<b>License/certificate</b>	38.5%	27.5%

**Age differences:** Seventy-eight percent of those under 50 years old have a license/certificate while 92.3% over 50 years old have a license/certificate [See Table 21 below]. However, data from respondents under 50 years old varies greatly, with 16.7% under 25 with a license; 21.9% between 25-35 with a license; and 40.0% between 36-49 years old with a license/certificate.

**Table 21: Age and job license/certificate:**

	0-24	25-35	36-49	50-59	60+
<b>License/certificate</b>	16.7%	21.9%	40.0%	35.2%	57.1%

**Employment Issues Discussion:** Overall, there are several important differences in gender as it relates to employment issues in three areas:

- ✓ More homeless women are working than men;
- ✓ The length of unemployment for women is shorter than men;
- ✓ Far fewer homeless women have a license or certificate than men.

In addition, there are important ethnic differences as it relates to employment issues:

- ✓ People of color tend to be unemployed at a higher rate for a year or less, however, are unemployed at a lower percentage for both 1-2 years and 2 years or longer than their homeless Caucasian counterparts. Although for both ethnic groups, unemployment remains very high;
- ✓ People of color are more likely to have a license or certificate for their job skills than Caucasian homeless people.

There are also age differences as it relates to employment issues:

- ✓ The overall trend is that the older you are, the greater your length of unemployment [one year or more]. This could be reinforced by society generally hiring younger workers and discriminating against older workers, especially over the age of 55. Longer stretches of unemployment could also correlate with the length of homelessness, i.e., as shown in Section 3, the trend is that the older you are, the longer your length of time being homeless;
- ✓ While the desire to work is high across all age groups, it does decline somewhat with age [100% for those under 24 to 85% for those 60+ years old];

- ✓ Younger homeless people are less likely to have a license or certificate for their job skill than older homeless people.

Finally, there are some important differences in employment status as it relates to wanting to look for work and needing accommodations if they worked:

- ✓ The longer the person is unemployed, especially two years or longer, the less likely the desire to want to work;
- ✓ Over half of those who were unemployed two years or longer stated they would need accommodations in order to work, suggesting that a disability issues are a major factor for those unemployed for two years or longer.

## 8. Job skills:

As the following results indicate, homeless men and women possess a wide range of job skills: [See Table 22 below]:

- ✓ 65.4% identified “people skills” as their significant job skill;
- ✓ 58.0% identified skills in the service industry;
- ✓ nearly 40% [37.4%] had computer skills;
- ✓ 33.5% in hospitality; 32.4% in retail; 31.0% in sales;
- ✓ 29.0% of the homeless respondents had job skills in the warehouse sector;
- ✓ One quarter [25.7%] had skills in construction.

**Table 22: Job skills: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

Job skills:	2009	2010
People skills	41.0%	65.4%
Warehouse	41.1%	29.0%
Labor skills	41.1%	29.0%
Computer	33.5%	37.4%
Hospitality	32.8%	33.5%
Construction	32.2%	25.7%
Retail	29.1%	32.4%
Service	27.4%	58.1%
Office	26.1%	32.4%
Sales	26.1%	31.3%
Repair	22.8%	21.8%
Healthcare	20.0%	23.5%

**Discussion:** As in 2009, the 2010 results identify a skilled labor force among homeless people, with generally similar results between the two surveys in the kinds of skills homeless people possess. A significant difference in the 2010 results shows a significantly higher percentage of people possessing “people skills,” and related skills in the service industry and a lower percentage in the 2010 results in manual labor skills such as warehouse, labor and construction.

## 9. Top employment sector choices:

These job skills also correlate with the employment sector choices that respondents stated they would like to work, including [See Table 23 below]:

- ✓ About one-quarter indicated they wanted to work either in the construction sector [26.1%]; warehouse or the food service industry [both with 24.2%];

Additional significant responses included the sales sector [15.4%]; manufacturing sector [14.2%]; information technology [10.7%]; tourism [10.0%]; and landscaping [10.0%].

**Table 23: Comparison of top employment sector choices: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

Employment sector:	2009	2010
Construction	26.1%	24.9%
Warehouse	24.2%	23.1%
Food service industry	24.2%	21.3%
Human service	19.0%	24.3%
Administrative/clerical	16.6%	21.3%
Customer service	15.7%	39.0%
Installation/repair	15.0%	15.4%

**Discussion:** Again, the 2010 results for the kinds of jobs people identified they wanted was in fairly direct relationship to the skills they felt they possessed. Specifically, 2010 shows a higher percentage of desired work in “people skilled” areas, such as customer service, administrative/clerical and human service, and a corresponding decrease in interest in construction and warehouse jobs.

## 10. Education and training:

**81.3% stated they would like to go back to school to receive additional training.**  
[See Table 24 below]:

79.3% wanted to attend a four-year college, community college, or technical school [5.8%, 46.0% and 27.5% respectively].

Significantly, over one-third [34.1%] stated they would like to receive their GED or receive vocational rehabilitation training [18.8% and 15.3% respectively]. Finally, nearly one-third responded they would like to receive continuing education, adult education or take courses on-line [11.7%, 10.2% and 8.0% respectively].

**Table 24: Comparison of education and training: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

	2009	2010
<b>Overall: want to go back to School/receive training</b>	81.3%	84.0%
<b>Community college</b>	35.8%	46.0%
<b>Four year college</b>	27.7%	5.8%
<b>Technical school</b>	22.6%	27.5%
<b>GED</b>	18.8%	21.0%
<b>Vocational rehabilitation Training</b>	15.3%	12.5%
<b>Continuing education</b>	11.7%	15.5%
<b>Adult education</b>	10.2%	-
<b>On-line courses</b>	8.0%	-

**Discussion:** The 2010 surveys confirm the overwhelming result found in 2009: homeless people overwhelming not only want to work, but they want to improve their job skills by returning to school or receive training so they may be more competitive in the workplace. Surprisingly, far less [5.8%] wanted to return to a four year college compared to the 2009 results [27.7%]. In addition, compared to 2009, there was much less interest by the 2010 respondents in either adult education or on-line courses [7.4% and 1.1% respectively].

**Gender differences:** A slightly higher percentage of women, 86.2%, compared to 82.1% of men, want to return to school or receive training to improve their job skills [See Table 25 below]:

**Table 25: Gender comparison of education and training:**

	Gender:	
	Male	Female
<b>School/receive training</b>	82.1%	86.2%

**Age differences:** On average, over 95% under 35 years old want additional schooling or training, and this desire decreases with age [36-49: 83.8%; 50 – 59: 80.8% and 60+ years of age: 50.0%.] [See Table 26 below]:

**Table 26: Age comparisons of education and training:**

	Age:				
	0-24	25-35	36-49	50-59	60+
<b>School/training</b>	100%	90.9%	83.8%	80.8%	50.0%

**Discussion:** As expected, younger homeless people are much more enthusiastic about wanting to increase their education and training opportunities and this declines in direct proportion to age.

**Employment status and Education and training:** Overall, whether employed or unemployed, homeless people wanted to receive additional training or schooling to improve their job skills [See Table 27 below]:

**Table 27: Employment status and education and training**

Employment status	Yes: education and training	No: education and training
Employed	88.2%	11.8%
Unemployed: 2 -24 months	86.8%	13.2%
Unemployed: over 2 years	79.7%	20.3%

**Discussion:** The results for employment status and education and training are very similar to employment status and looking for work. In other words, the longer the homeless person is unemployed, the less likely to want to receive education and training. While the percentage of unemployed over two years is still relatively high, there are 20.0% that might be perceived as basically given up hope, in this case, that further education and training is desired.

**11. What agencies [government and/or nonprofit] have been most/least helpful?**

*Most helpful:* [See Table 28A below] Homeless respondents indicated that overall nonprofit homeless programs [40.0%] were more helpful than any single government agency.

Overall, 42.3% reported that the welfare office [Department of Human Assistance (DHA)] was helpful, divided between General Assistance [27.7%] and CalWORKs [14.6%]. Additionally, almost one third [30.6%] indicated that that the One-Stop Career Centers were helpful.

*Least helpful:* [See Table 28B below] The Employment Development Department [EDD] and the various programs of the Veterans Administration were *least often identified as helpful* [6.5% and 2.7% respectively]. [Note: we did not ask a specific question about their veteran’s status]. The Social Security Administration dropped from being helpful in 2009 to not helpful in 2010.

**Table 28A: Comparison of what agencies have been helpful: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

<b>Agencies</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Nonprofit homeless programs</b>	22.4%	40.0%
<b>Department of Human Assistance: General Assistance</b>	18.8%	27.7%
<b>Social Security Administration</b>	18.0%	2.7%
<b>One Stop Centers</b>	17.3%	30.6%
<b>Department of Human Assistance: CalWORKS</b>	14.3%	14.6%

**Discussion:** Again, it is not surprising that nonprofit homeless programs are identified as the most helpful agency in 2010, as it was in 2009, since their mission is to be of assistance. It is equally not surprising to see the Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance [DHA- both General Assistance and CalWorks] be identified as helpful, since help generally equates to cash aid. There was a significant increase in 2010 of those that perceived the One Stop Career Centers to be helpful [up to 30.6% from 17.3% in 2009]. This could be due to the infusion of American Recovery & Reinvestment Act [2009] funding to expand the help that the One Stop Career Centers could provide in 2010.

**Table 28B: Comparison of agencies least helpful: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

<b>Agencies:</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Employment Development Department [EDD]</b>	14.5%	6.5%
<b>Veterans Administration [VA]</b>	10.3%	2.7%
<b>Social Security Administration</b>	18.0%	2.7%

**Discussion:** For two years in a row the Employment Development Department and Veterans Administration were *least likely to be perceived as helpful* by homeless respondents. Finally, as noted above, the Social Security Administration dropped from being helpful to least helpful in the 2010 survey.

## 12. How have these agencies been helpful?

Of the nonprofit and government agencies that were helpful, [See Table 28 below] over half [52.0%] of the respondents received help with resume writing. Interview skills were received by 39.8% of respondents. Almost one-third [30.0%] received the benefit for which they applied, and the same percentage of respondents received computer skills. Nearly one third [32.8%] received a combination of help enrolling in job training and enrolling in school [20.4% and 12.4% respectively]. Nearly one quarter [24.8%] located employment. In addition, nearly one third received assistance with transportation, the provision of an address to receive mail, or assistance receiving email or voicemail [20.4% and 12.4% respectively].

A smaller percentage of respondents received on-the-job support [8.9%].

**Table 29: Comparison of how agencies have been helpful: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

Reasons why helpful:	2009	2010
Resume writing	37.7%	52.0%
Received benefit for which they applied	29.9%	30.0%
Transportation assistance	27.3%	20.4%
Mail/email/voicemail	27.3%	12.4%
Located employment	27.3%	24.8%
Interview skills	26.0%	39.8%
Helped enroll in school	22.1%	12.4%
Help enrolling in job training	19.5%	20.4%
Computer training	16.9%	30.0%
On-the-job support	15.6%	8.9%

**Discussion:** For the most part, the results in terms of the kinds of help provided were consistent between 2009 and 2010, with some significant exceptions. In 2010, respondents received more help with resume writing and computer training compared to 2009, and less help with receiving mail, email and voicemail as well as help enrolling in school and on the job support.

## 13. Why have they not been helpful?

About one-third stated they were denied services because they were homeless [31.6%] or they were unaware of services available to homeless consumers [30.6%]. [See Table 30 below]:

In addition, over one-quarter [27.6%] did not have transportation to the agency to receive assistance.

Significant responses of why they did not receive assistance included:

- ✓ Bureaucratic reasons: 35.1% identified a combination of red tape [13.3%]; turned away from agency [10%]; long waiting lists [6.7%] and lack of follow-up from the agency [5.0%] as reasons why did not receive help;
- ✓ 26.7% stated the agency was unaware that there was a service available to homeless consumers;
- ✓ 20.0% identified being disabled as a reason they did not receive assistance;
- ✓ 18.3% identified lack of transportation as a barrier;
- ✓ 5.0% identified lack of child care.

**Table 30: Comparison of how agencies have NOT been helpful/did not receive assistance: 2009 & 2010 survey results:**

<b>Reasons <u>Not</u> Helpful:</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010 *</b>
<b>Denied service because homeless</b>	31.6%	2.0%
<b>Agency unaware of service available to homeless consumers</b>	30.6%	26.7%
<b>Lacked transportation to get to agency for assistance</b>	27.6%	18.3%
<b>Disabled</b>	18.6%	20.0%
<b>Criminal background</b>	17.5%	5.0%
<b>Long waiting list</b>	15.3%	6.7%
<b>Too much “red tape”</b>	14.3%	13.3%
<b>Turned away from agency</b>	14.3%	10.0%
<b>No follow-up from agency</b>	11.2%	5.0%
<b>Lack of computer skills</b>	10.2%	8.3%
<b>Lack of childcare **</b>	-	5.0%

\* Only 60 respondents, out of 185, completed this section of the survey, so the results are not comparable.

\*\* This question was not asked in 2009. We added it in 2010 to get a better gauge on issues potentially facing homeless women. Thanks to *Women’s Empowerment* for adding this question.

**Discussion:** Again, because the number of respondents is only one third of the total number of respondents [60 out of 185], the findings for this section are not comparable to those in 2009. Despite that, however, they are generally instructive. Homeless people, over the course of two surveys, still face significant barriers to receiving assistance, including the fact that they are homeless, agencies lack information about services for homeless people, lack of transportation, issues around disabilities, criminal background and lack of child care.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS: Prioritized order:**

**Preamble to recommendations:** The Employment Committee feels strongly that the overarching guiding principles to ending and preventing homelessness rests on four pillars: [1] safe, decent and affordable homes; [2] access to affordable health care, including mental health and substance abuse services; [3] access to education and training opportunities; and [4] a living wage with full benefits.

**Progress Updates:** *In 2009 the Homeless Employment Committee, based on the 2009 survey identified four top priorities for 2009 – 2010: 1. Homeless Employment Summit; 2. Expand job education and training opportunities; 3. Mobile Employment Services Van and 4. Sacramento Community Voicemail Project. Based on the 2010 findings, several new recommendations were added to this report. As part of the recommendations, a progress report was added to the four recommendations above.*

**The Homeless Employment Committee identified Tier 1 recommendations, where we would either take the lead or where we would partner [P] with organizations, as well as Tier 2 recommendations for work already in progress:**

- ❖ **Tier 1:** *Top priority recommendations for 2010-2011*
- ❖ **Tier 2:** *Recommendations that we have begun working on and are achieving progress on in 2010.*

### **Tier 1 recommendations:**

1. **Homeless Employment Summit:** The Policy Board, in partnership with the Interagency Council and Chamber of Commerce, needs to convene a *Homeless Employment Summit* whose purposes include addressing the economic reasons why people become homeless [i.e. Lack of a living wage, job loss, evictions and foreclosures]. In addition, the *Summit* would advocate to remove barriers of government agencies to employment of homeless people with the goal of creating full access for homeless people to receive these services, as well as to work to create living wage jobs for homeless and low-income people. These include, but are not limited to :
  - Ensuring that if there is another round of the federal stimulus funding, including the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing [HPRP] funds, and Community Service and Community Development Block grant [CSBG and CDBG] funds are coordinated to guarantee that the housing systems and the employment systems in our community are working together for the same goal: to end and prevent homelessness. This recommendation also needs to be coordinated with the implementation of the HEARTH Act as mentioned above, since the HEARTH Act incorporates the framework of the HPRP funds.

**Progress update:** *The Homeless Employment Committee has had several initial conversations with the Homeless Liaison, Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson's office about hosting a Homeless Employment Summit in early 2011.*

The Homeless Employment Committee felt strongly that if we host a successful *Homeless Employment Summit*, the event would be the avenue to move forward many of the items identified in the Education and Training Opportunities recommendations below.

2. **Create the Homeless Services Liaison Interagency Council:** It is clear from both the 2009 and 2010 surveys that a significant barrier to employment for homeless people is that either agencies do not know they can serve homeless people, or homeless people do not know of the services and resources available to them. To help mitigate this, we recommend as a formal structure reporting to the Policy Board, a *Homeless Services Liaison Interagency Council*. Each city and county human service agency assigns a homeless liaison to serve on this council so that the entire human service delivery system is aware of homeless services available, and can take the next step and design how to more effectively integrate the delivery of those services. This council would also consist of homeless consumers and advocates and have three seats on the Policy Board.
3. **Fostering Partnerships:** Nine of the recommendations of this report come under the auspices of fostering partnerships and collaborations with organizations working on those issues already in the community. These include the following recommendations:
  - **Peer to Peer Homeless Outreach/Mentoring Team-** [A Peer-to-Peer model, *hiring a team of five homeless consumers* to educate other homeless individuals about employment services] **as part of the Mobile Employment Services Van.**

Partners include Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, Resources for Independent Living and Paratransit.

- **Begin a Semi-Annual Homeless Career Day to match homeless people with public and private employers;**

**Progress Update:** *Homeless Employment Committee partners hosted a Homeless Job Resource Fair at the 2010 Homeless Connect event, which was attended by more than 150 homeless people. Current plans are to hold this fair yearly as well as work with direct service providers to integrate them into ongoing, existing job fairs in the community.*

Partners include Lutheran Social Services, Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center, St. Vincent DePaul, Girl Yes You Can!, Women's Empowerment, and Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center.

- **Create “Return to Work” orientations and trainings for the long term unemployed:**

Partners include Lutheran Social Services, Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center, St. Vincent DePaul, Girl Yes You Can!, Women's Empowerment, and Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center.

- **Work with disability advocates and employers to fully address the disability barriers to employing homeless people:**

- ✓ The work should be focused on the need for creating accommodations at the workplace, which nearly 40% of respondents indicated they needed to work either full or part time.
- ✓ In addition, expand the purview of the Sacramento County Disability Advisory Commission to include issues facing homeless people. Education is needed for homeless people regarding SSI and SSDI rules and employment services. As this survey indicates, homeless people do not know if they can or cannot work if they receive SSI or SSDI, while about one-third were not informed of the various employment services in the community.
- ✓ Leverage California State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation [DOR] funding: This department provides Vocational Rehabilitation Services to Californians with disabilities who want to work, including people paroled from state prisons. The services include employment counseling training and education, mobility and transportation aids, job search and placement assistance. However, Sacramento County does not do a good job of fully leveraging these state resources for the disabled community, including homeless people, who want to work.
- ✓ Publicize the Job Accommodation Network to homeless consumers and providers.

Lead partner is Resources for Independent Living.

- **Expand transportation opportunities:** Clearly, lack of transportation is a major barrier for homeless people to seek, secure and retain employment. We recommend either free or deeply subsidized light rail or bus vouchers for homeless people who use this transportation for employment purposes.

Lead partner is the Coalition for Regional Equity [C.O.R.E.]

- **Expand Child Care:** The lack of child care is a significant barrier to homeless parents, mostly women, in seeking and retaining employment. We recommend the expansion of child care opportunities for homeless women [disproportionately] and men with children, so that they can locate work and/or return to school for additional education and training. Specifically, we recommend that Sacramento County work with Women's Empowerment to locate and fund a licensed child care facility for homeless parents.

**Progress Update:** *Faith & Homeless Families in partnership with Women's Empowerment are exploring partnering to create a licensed child care center that would provide child care services to homeless women with children to allow them to go back to school as well as seek and keep employment.*

Lead partners are Faith & Homeless Families and Women's Empowerment.

- **Expand Domestic Violence services:** Again, given that domestic violence is a major issue for homeless women, either as a cause of their homelessness, or a barrier to seeking employment, we recommend expanding domestic violence services, including counseling for homeless women.

Lead partner is W.E.A.V.E.

- **Explore replicating the Supportive Housing Employment Collaborative [San Francisco]:** The Supportive Housing Employment Collaborative [SHEC] is a partnership of 7 San Francisco nonprofit organizations that provide permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless adults. In 1996, the five founding agencies--Chinatown Community Development Center, Community Housing Partnership, Conard House, Episcopal Community Services, and Mercy Housing--created the SHEC to provide an employment-training and job-placement program that is accessible to all of their tenants. Two additional supportive housing agencies, Swords to Ploughshares and Hamilton Family Center, have joined the SHEC since 2004. In 2010, SHEC's educational, vocational, on-the-job training, job placement, and job retention services are available to approximately 2,000 formerly homeless individuals living in 23 supportive housing sites across the city. In the past 10 years, the SHEC has placed approximately 700 formerly homeless people in permanent, unsubsidized employment.

The Homeless Employment Committee, in partnership with the Sacramento Housing Alliance will convene all the supportive housing organizations in Sacramento County to explore replicating the San Francisco employment model.

## **Tier 2 Recommendations:**

- 4. Fully fund and implement the Mobile Employment Service Van:** As a result of the 2009 report, the Homeless Employment Committee was donated two 14-passenger vans by the Thunder Valley Casino to use as Mobile Employment Service Vans. These vans would perform employment outreach to homeless people. In addition, the plan is to equip the vans with computers and cell phones so that homeless people can perform job searches, write resumes and follow-up on job interviews.

### ***Progress Update:***

- 1. Thunder Valley Casino donated two 14-passenger vans to use as Mobile Employment Services vans.*
- 2. Pending grant proposal in partnership with Paratransit for \$100,000 in federal Jobs Access and Reverse Commute [JARC] funding.*

- 5. Fund and fully implement the Sacramento Community Voice Mail Project:** In 2009, the Homeless Employment Committee recommended universal coverage of a mailing address, email and voicemail services for homeless people to dramatically increase their chances for employment. Since then, we urge the full funding and implementation of this overdue recommendation.

***Progress Update:*** *The Homeless Employment Committee surveyed the community and has 18 community partners ready to participate in the Sacramento Community Voice Mail project. All that is needed is a lead agency to apply to the National Community Voice Mail project to receive \$20,000 in seed funding. Potential lead partner is the Sacramento Housing Alliance.*

- 6. Outreach and Education Campaign about educating large, medium and small businesses about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit [WOTC]:** WOTC is a Federal tax credit incentive that the Congress provides to private-sector businesses for hiring individuals from twelve target groups, including homeless people.

***Progress Update:*** *Partner organizations of the Homeless Employment Committee have made initial contacts with the local Chamber of Commerce as well as Rotary Clubs to explore making presentations regarding the WOTC. Lead partner is Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center [SAEHC]*

7. **Access to free or affordable health care:** Again, as the survey indicates, a major reason why people become homeless, as well as a significant barrier to securing employment, are health issues. The County must seek federal funds to expand the local Health Care for the Homeless Program. Additionally, it must restore and expand county funding to preventative mental and physical health care to homeless people to help them overcome these barriers. This recommendation needs to be linked to the health delivery system restructuring recommendations made by the Services Committee to the Policy Board.

**Additional recommendations:**

8. **Include Employment and Income recommendations in the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, to be consistent with the HEARTH Act.** The 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness was fairly limited in scope, focused on ending homelessness for “chronically” homeless people and was void of any employment and income recommendations. We strongly urge the Policy Board and policymakers in general to expand the vision of this plan and include youth and families in the plan as well as a full range of employment and income strategies focused on ending and preventing homelessness in our community. This is especially timely with the anticipated implementation of the federal HEARTH Act in 2011.
9. **Additional education and training opportunities to homeless people:** Overwhelmingly, over 80% of respondents want to go back to school or to receive additional training to increase their education and skill level to increase their employability. Since few homeless people in the survey indicated receiving computer training, these opportunities include dramatically closing the “digital divide” between homeless and housed people to increase the competitiveness of homeless people in the job market.

Again, key elements should include:

- ✓ Expanding “On-the-Job Training” and “On-the-Job Support” for homeless people;
- ✓ Create a *Homeless Apprenticeship Program* in partnership with trade unions [primarily the construction, warehouse and food industry trades as this survey indicates] the City and County and private industry to expand job opportunities for homeless people;
- ✓ Create a *Homeless-Community College Partnership* to expand the educational and job training opportunities of homeless people;
- ✓ Partner with high growth industries in the area to create employment opportunities;

10. **Launch an education and public relations campaign** directed by the Policy Board of Sacramento Steps Forward, specifically the Advocacy Committee, to educate policymakers, city and county officials, employers and the public to help diffuse the stereotypes of homeless people. As this survey found, almost 90% of homeless people want to work; 35% have a license or certificate; the homeless population has a broad range of marketable and employable skills and over 80% want to return to school or receive additional training.

**These recommendations are summarized in Table 31 below which place each of the recommendations into “short-term [6 months or less],” “mid-term [6 months – 12 months]” and “long-term” 12 months – 18 months] implementation timeframe.**

**Table 31: Recommendation Implementation Timeframe:**

RECOMMENDATION	SHORT-TERM	MID-TERM	LONG - TERM
<b>TIER 1:</b>			
1. Homeless Employment Summit	X		
2. Homeless Services Liaison Interagency Council- with at least 3 seats on the Policy Board	X		
3. Fostering Partnerships			
▪ Peer to Peer Homeless Outreach & Mentoring	X		
▪ Semi – Annual Homeless Career Day	X		
▪ Create “Return to Work” orientations		X	
▪ Fully address disability barriers to work		X	
▪ Expand transportation options		X	
▪ Expand Child Care			X
▪ Expand Domestic Violence Services		X	
▪ Explore replicating SF’s Supportive Housing Employment Collaborative	X		
<b>TIER 2:</b>			
4. Implement Mobile Employment Services Van	X		
5. Implement Sacramento Community Voice Mail Project	X		
6. WOTC Outreach and Education Campaign	X		
7. Expand health care coverage			X
<b>ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>			
8. Include employment in 10 year plan to align with HEARTH Act	X		
9. Additional education and training opportunities, including:			
▪ Partner with high growth industries			X
▪ Create Homeless Apprenticeship Program		X	
▪ Homeless – Community College Partnership			X
10. Education and Public Relations Campaign		X	



## **CONCLUSION:**

For two consecutive years, after surveying nearly 400 homeless people in Sacramento County, the conclusion is overwhelming that 90% of homeless people do not work AND the same 90% want to work and want to receive additional education and training to be competitive in the work marketplace. In addition, a significant proportion of the homeless population is highly skilled, evidenced by nearly 40% having either a license or certificate. It is our hope that taken together, the 2009 and 2010 reports shatter the stereotypes of homeless people not wanting to work and being “lazy, crazy drug addicts and prostitutes.” As our surveys underscore, nothing could be further from the truth.

Finally, the driving purposes of these surveys are to ensure that Sacramento fully embraces the results of this survey and focuses on these asset-based results and recommendations and to ensure the full participation of homeless consumers in the design and implementation of the employment recommendations.

The goal is for Sacramento to use these results to integrate a *housing first* with an *employment and income-ready first approach* to ending and preventing homelessness.

## **2010 Homeless Employment Committee**

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