

The Paschalville Partnership's State of the Community: 2018 Report

Transforming Library Services for Job Seekers in Southwest Philadelphia



Welcome to the Paschalville Partnership's second annual State of the Community report, highlighting the groundbreaking collaboration taking place in the Southwest Philadelphia community surrounding Paschalville Library.

It is a key part of the Free Library's strategic goals to serve job seekers. Our December 2017 *Impact Evaluation Report* showed that nearly a third of Library users report visiting the Library to look for a new job or learn new skills. We support them with computers and internet access, résumé assistance, seminars and workshops, and more.

But these services fall short of addressing far steeper barriers to employment faced by job seekers in the Paschalville community, including low educational attainment, underdeveloped job skills, interrupted work histories, and a lack of English-language proficiency. We know Southwest residents *want* to work. Recent years have seen an increase in working-age residents joining the labor force. Despite this, unemployment in this community remains stubbornly above the city average and has even increased in recent years.

This report presents how the Paschalville Partnership is working to address these steep challenges. Through Job Readiness Labs, job fairs, employment "boot camps," and more, we are supporting Southwest Philadelphia residents more effectively than ever before. We look forward to continuing this initiative to strengthen Philadelphia's workforce and improve the livelihood of its citizens.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Siobhan A. Reardon".

Siobhan A. Reardon
President and Director
Free Library of Philadelphia



Siobhan Reardon (second from left) with recent Boot Camp graduates



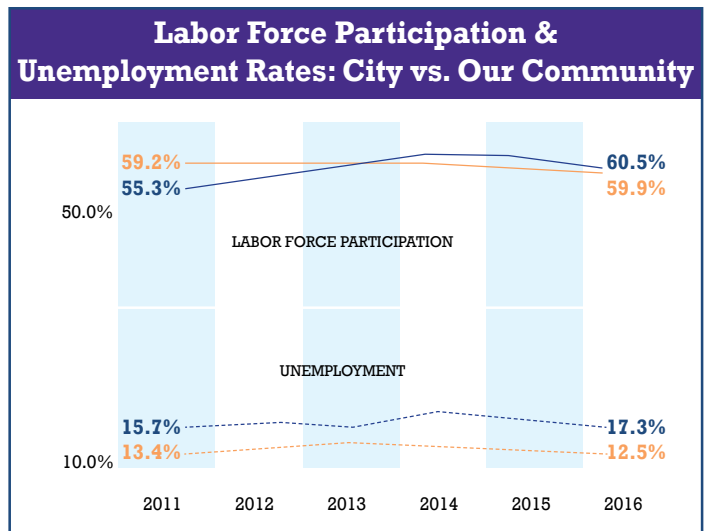
Spring Job Fair at Paschalville



Paschalville Library

The Paschalville Partnership is a collaboration of 11 organizations spearheaded by the Free Library of Philadelphia. The partnership operates in the service area of the Paschalville Library, which is located in Southwest Philadelphia at 70th and Woodland Avenue, and has developed a common agenda following the principles of collective impact. *This program is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.*

Demographics At-a-Glance		
KEY DEMOGRAPHICS	Our Community	City
Total population (2016)	28,221	1,559,938
Population growth (2012-2016)	-3.8%	2.2%
Labor force participation	60.5%	59.9%
Unemployment rate (population 16+)	17.3%	12.5%
Median household income	\$29,972	\$39,770
Poverty rate (percent of total population)	33.2%	25.9%
Foreign born (percent of total population)	21%	13%
Education attainment (population 25+ years):		
Did not graduate high school	21%	17%
High school graduate or equivalent	39%	33%
Some college, no degree	23%	23%
College graduate	17%	27%



Source: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates* (2012-2016; 2008-2012)

Note: We use the zip code 19142 to approximate our community in this report.

According to the Philadelphia Reentry Coalition, between 2012 and 2015, approximately 25,000 people released from local, state, or federal incarceration returned to the city each year.¹ A significant number return to the Paschalville community and the surrounding area. We have, therefore, identified the reentry population—which broadly includes people who have involvement in the criminal justice system, such as those who are formerly incarcerated, out on bail, in a diversion program, or in a federal or state corrections facility—as a target population for our efforts, which have included:

- hosting an annual “reentry resource fair” for the community
- helping job seekers address their criminal background and practice telling their stories at workshops facilitated by First Person Arts
- leading weekly digital literacy and résumé-writing workshops at Outley House, a local shelter operated by Self, Inc., which provides emergency and transitional housing for men



Working one-on-one with job seekers



Employers at Fall Job Fair at Paschalville

¹ Philadelphia Reentry Coalition, *Calculating a Unified Recidivism Rate for Philadelphia: A Data Snapshot of Reentry and Recidivism 2012–2015*, March 2018.

The Paschalville Partnership leverages the Library as a hub for job seekers by bringing together a broad array of community partners in support of Southwest Philadelphia residents. Since 2014, we have been hard at work implementing a common agenda of mutually reinforcing activities in support of job seekers. Here's our progress to date:

The Partnership supports Southwest Philadelphia residents in their job searches.

In the past 18 months, more than **1,700 job seekers have made more than 2,500 visits to the Job Readiness Labs (JRLs)** located at Paschalville Library and Southwest CDC.

JRL services include free computer and internet access, as well as one-on-one assistance for creating résumés, setting up email and other online accounts, conducting internet searches, and applying for jobs online.

The Partnership connects Southwest Philadelphia residents with job opportunities.

More than 600 job seekers have attended job fairs hosted in the spring and fall at Paschalville Library.

Twenty-five employers and resource organizations have participated in at least one fair.

The Partnership helps Southwest Philadelphia residents hone job-seeking skills.

More than 530 residents have participated in a partnership program.

Programming includes weekly workshops on digital literacy, quarterly employment “boot camps,” and semi-annual community resource fairs targeting the reentry population and new Americans.

The Partnership is breaking down employment barriers for Southwest Philadelphia residents.

Close to 80 community members signed up for more than 200 skills-training programs and support services provided by PA CareerLink®.

The myPLACESM campus at the Southwest CDC JRL has assessed close to 250 adults—both native and non-native English speakers—who need English-language instruction; require help with reading, math, and language skills; or want to obtain their High School Equivalency.

We doubled the number of classes for adult learners to eight in the community and trained seven new volunteers to tutor them. Thanks to this tremendous boost in service capacity in the community, **66% of assessed adult learners have gone on to enroll in a course in the community or online.**



Job seekers at Paschalville

“The Employment Boot Camp helped me because I am a very shy person. The interviewing process was very influential because I have not been employed for some time and I needed the proper tools in order to be successful.

I am very grateful for having this program in my neighborhood for people like myself who really need to get assistance and training for long-term employment and to better my financial situation and become equipped to take care of my family.”

— JW, October 2017 Boot Camp Graduate

“The Employment Boot Camp really helped me. I was surprised by the friendships I made. It gave me the ambition to find work and to take care of my daughter. I now realize it’s not where you’ve been but where you’re going. And

I found a job, just a few weeks after graduating from the Boot Camp.”

— KB, April/May 2018 Boot Camp Graduate

“I attended [the Welcome Fair for New Americans] at Paschalville Library. That was the first time I attended a fair in the United States. There were a lot of resources at the fair to help me get a better job. When I went there I found the resources I needed. I learned a lot of things from the fair. I felt everything was new and very useful for me.

I will take advantage of what I learned at the fair to find a better job.”

— KS, Center for Literacy ESL student and Welcome Fair participant

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