

Trainee Handbook

“A guide to building and developing trainee skills”

10/9/2011

Durham Economic Resource Center



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Durham Economic Resource Center

The **Durham Economic Resource Center** (DERC) is a newly initiated community-based organization which focuses on assisting adults in poverty through technical job training, reduced price merchandise, and community outreach programs. DERC is an initiative of **End Poverty Durham**, a collaborative of faith and community-based organizations, as well as government entities. DERC is modeled after a component of the award-winning **Welfare Reform Liaison Project, Inc.** (WRLP) of Greensboro, NC. We welcome you to our program and together we hope to build a better community.

FACTS ABOUT DURHAM & POVERTY:

- Durham has one of the highest median incomes (\$48,900) in North Carolina.
- Durham has an adult poverty rate of nearly 14%.
- 20% of children in Durham live in poverty.
- Northeast Central Durham (NECD) has an unemployment rate of 15% and poverty rate of 36%, as well as harboring one of the highest crime rates and high school dropout rates in the city.
- In 2005 the youth poverty rate in the Durham metro area was 29%, surpassing both the North Carolina (23%) and National (19%) rates.

DERC hopes to bridge these gaps and support our community members in need

Our Mission: To address adult poverty in Durham County by offering low-cost merchandise for distribution through organizational memberships to non-profit agencies and faith-based organizations; to provide on-the-job training to the unemployed and those who are hard to employ; and to serve as an organizer and change agent in building and developing strategic partnerships to help address the root causes of poverty.

Our Partners: The Durham Economic Resource Center is an initiative of **End Poverty Durham**, a group of faith and community-based organizations working collaboratively to eliminate poverty in Durham by 2025. To find out more about this organization please visit www.endpovertydurham.org.

Our Programs: The following is a list of our current programs and services. For more information regarding DERC or our specific projects, please refer to our website, www.durhameconomicresourcecenter.org.

Distribution Program

DERC provides discounted products to member non-profit and faith-based organizations to alleviate basic needs among the poor, ill, and elderly by using products from the **Gifts In Kind International Program** and **Dignity U Wear**.

The goal of this program is to offer low cost merchandise to the community so that residents can use their personal resources for other basic needs.

Workforce Training & Development

A priority objective of DERC is to train the chronically unemployed and "hard to employ" using skills-based classroom training, supervised on-the-job training and support services. Our goal with this program is to develop a workforce that is prepared and ready to address the market needs of Durham County. Thus, specific components of the training program are designed based on the workforce needs of local businesses as well as the assets and challenges of our training participants.

Students are enrolled in the training program will be eligible for bi-monthly stipends that increase as the student's progress through various modules. Lastly, training is provided at no cost to participants who meet eligibility requirements.

Community Resource & Action

Durham Economic Resource Center builds and develops strategic partnerships among Faith Based Organizations (FBO's), Community Based Organizations (CBO's), local businesses, public and private organizations, as well as the community to help address the root causes of poverty. DERC promotes strategies that are both community-based as well as need-based (for specific populations such as former felons).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kenneth R. Hammond, President

T. Melvin Williams, Secretary

Micheline R. Malson, Treasurer

Jacqueline E. Brown, CEO

Teretha Bell, Member

Annie Jones Clement, Member

Anita Daniels, Member

Anita Earls, Member

Michael Palmer, Member

Priscilla Nunn, Member

Rob Wheeler, Member

STAFF

[Jacqueline E. Brown](#)

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

[Fred Stopplekamp](#)

Distribution Center Manager/Training Coordinator

[Andrew Doll](#)

Staff Accountant

[Carol Bailey](#)

Accounting

[NCBA Intern](#)

Administrative Assistant

[YO: Durham Intern](#)

Clerical Assistant

PROGRAM INFORMATION

There are three requirements all participants must have:

1. High School Diploma or GED Certification
2. Durham County residency
3. Sponsor agent or agency (The DERC Training Coordinator will provide information on sponsorship)

The training program consists of three eight week modules. The first module has the following four classes:

1. Employability/Business Etiquette
2. Personal Development
3. Money Smart
4. Basic Computing

The second module has three classes that provide the following:

1. Leadership Development/Communication for the Workplace
2. Orientation to Careers - Traditional and Green
3. Warehouse Training and Distribution

The third module consists of either an academic goal-centered class that is taken through a third-party (i.e. Durham Technical Community College, Milestones Culinary Institute etc.); an internship in a career-related field; or volunteer in a career-related field as well as expanded hours spent in on-the job training in the warehouse.

TRAINING COURSES

Employability Skills (Durham Technical Community College Partnership)

This course provides employability skills training for unemployed and underemployed adults. The curriculum addresses: 1) individual assessment to determine transferable skills; 2) goal-setting; 3) development of positive self-concept; 4) development of soft skills; 5) development of basic communication skills; 6) problem solving skills; 7) customer relations; 8) and Call Center Customer Service. This is an eight week course that meets two times a week for three hours per class. (Module 1 Course)

Personal Development (Durham Technical Community College Partnership)

This course uses the wit and humor of Dr. Spencer Johnson's *Who Moved My Cheese?* and the main concepts in the book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey to help students confront issues dealing with change. This course focuses on adapting to change and developing a more positive self attitude as trainees progress from dependence to independence and ultimately to the highest form of maturity, interdependence. This is an eight week course that meets two times a week for three hours per class. (Module 1 Course)

Introduction to Computers (Durham Technical Community College Partnership)

This course introduces students to computer basics including keyboarding and Microsoft Windows features. It also uses Word to produce documents required in the Employability Class such as resumes, cover and thank you letters. Students are introduced to Excel and PowerPoint. This is an eight week course that meets two times a week for three hours per class. (Module 1 Course)

Money Smart (Durham Technical Community College Partnership)

This course is designed to teach basic money management concepts such as budgeting, banking, assets and liabilities, debt reduction, credit management. Students are also taught how to spot predatory lending and given tips for becoming financially self-sufficient in preparation for home ownership. This is an eight week course that meets two times a week for three hours per class. (Module 1 Course)

Warehouse Technician Training (Based on a curriculum designed by Welfare Reform Liaison Project, [WRLP] Inc.)

Students are introduced to the following warehousing functions: check in and check out; pricing; stocking/re-stocking; inventory management; quality control; customer service; in-bound/out-bound logistics; and OSHA regulations for the warehouse. Students are given the skills necessary to become Warehouse Specialist. "Hands-on" training is provided in the area of effective communication including understanding verbal and nonverbal messages. Students also review basic math and parts of speech to improve their communication skills and overall effectiveness in the warehouse. This is an eight week course that meets at the distribution center for six hours twice a week with an hour break for lunch. (Module 2 Course)

Communication for the Workplace (Durham Technical Community College Partnership)

This course is designed to strengthen the student's communication skills and provide techniques that lead to a more effective and productive worker. Students learn how to advocate for themselves and others resulting in more positive outcomes. Students also learn how to communicate professionally through Word documents and e-mail messages. This is an eight week course that is combined with Leadership Development and meets in a classroom setting two times a week for three hours per class. (Module 2 Course)

Leadership Development (Durham Technical Community College Partnership)

This course for current, new, or aspiring supervisors will teach participants the concepts of leadership, how to improve morale, boost performance, handle conflicts, communicate clearly, make decisions and develop team spirit for greater productivity. Students learn how to identify their leadership style as well as identify and emulate styles in leaders that they most admire. This is an eight week course that is combined with Communication for the Workplace and meets in a classroom setting two times a week for three hours per class. (Module 2 Course)

Simulated Job Training (Based on a curriculum designed by WRLP, Inc.)

This course is a halfway point between the classroom and the workforce to provide "hands-on" training in a warehouse setting. Students will have the opportunity to apply the training and skills developed in the areas of shipping and receiving, processing, stocking shelves, order fulfillment and inbound/outbound logistics while being provided the opportunity to put into practice the soft and customer service skills as well as the leadership and communication skills acquired in the classroom during the employability and leadership classes respectively. This is an eight week session that meets at the distribution center. Students make their own work schedule and are required to spend between 14 and 20 hours in the distribution center. The distribution center is open Monday to Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday's from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Module 3 Course)

Academic Upgrade Standard Track (Primarily Durham Technical Community College Partnership)

Students are given an opportunity to explore their career interests by taking an advanced course at Durham Technical Community College or through internships and job shadowing with area businesses. A sample of the courses that students may take include Culinary Arts, Welding Certification, A++ Certification, Introduction to CNA, Introduction to Healthcare Careers, Computers for the Workplace, and Advanced Computers. Classes/internships are scheduled independently and should not conflict with the Simulated Job Training Course. (Module 3 Course)

Academic Upgrade Standard "Green" Track (Black, Brown, Green Alliance Partnership)

Students are given an opportunity to explore their career interests by taking an advanced course with one of the "green" jobs trainers or through internships and job shadowing with area "green" businesses. Classes/internships are scheduled independently and should not conflict with the Simulated Job Training Course. (Module 3 Course)

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PACKAGE

A Financial Assistance Package (FAP) is available for all Trainees in good standing. Further information regarding this package is available during orientation.

WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Trainees will give DERC permission to release information related to attendance, participation, and overall performance in the Job Training Program to his/her sponsoring agency or organization. The form will have to be signed and dated by the trainee and witnessed by a DERC representative.

PHOTO RELEASE

DERC, its representatives and employees will be granted the right to take photographs and make both audio or visual tapes of trainees and their property in connection with any DERC related activities. We reserve the right to use photographs with or without trainees name and for any lawful purpose, including for example such purpose as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content.

GROUND S FOR DISMISSAL

Trainees may be dismissed from the DERC Job Training Program for any infractions which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- An instructor dismisses the trainee from the class and asks him/her not to return.
- Management or public safety for the facility in which classes are held no longer allows the trainee on the property (i.e. the trainee is banned from the facility).
- The trainee does not call and does not show up.
- The trainee refuses to submit to a drug screening.
- The trainee is dropped by his/her sponsor.
- The trainee is under the influence of alcohol or any substance that impairs the trainee's ability to function (and has not been prescribed by a healthcare provider).
- Too many excused absences (See the absenteeism policy for the number of excused absences).
- Unauthorized use of office phone.
- The trainee has a physical confrontation with fellow trainee(s) and/or staff.
- Use of cell phone at the Distribution Center while working or during classroom instruction.
- Stealing of any kind (from DERC, staff, or fellow trainee).

GRIEVANCE POLICY

A trainee may file a grievance regarding the program or appeal a suspension or dismissal from the program.

When to report a grievance:

Grievances should be reported within 48 hours of the occurrence.

To whom to file a grievance:

Persons with a grievance should file it with the Training Coordinator/Distribution Center Manager. The only exception to this is if the grievance is with the Training Coordinator/Distribution Center Manager.

How to report a grievance:

All grievances must be reported in writing. If the person bringing the grievance is unable to put the issue in writing, the grievance must be documented by the person who the grievance is reported. The report must include:

- the date issue is reported
- person reporting the issue
- person the issue is being reported
- an explanation of the issue/appeal request including date of the incident which resulted in action being taken against the program participant
- any suggestions on how to resolve the issue

Note: Any issues that are resolved verbally still must be documented and included in the file of the person bringing the grievance.

Review Methodology:

When a grievance is reported, it is the responsibility of the person (and/or group) who receives the grievance to do the following:

- Document - Keep the appropriate documentation
- Discuss - Discuss the issue with the person bringing the grievance and interview any other parties involved
- Deliberate – Review all the information provided
- Decide – Make a determination regarding the issue (i.e. whether to uphold the previous actions or take/recommend different action)
- Divulge – Inform the person bringing the grievance of the decision and put the decision in writing.

If the grievance is brought to the DERC Board of Directors, the above methodology will be applied.

Time Requirements:

When a grievance is reported, DERC staff will have up to three business days from the time of receiving the grievance to apply the above listed methodology. The DERC Board of Directors will have between five and seven business days after receiving the grievance to apply the above listed methodology.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the DERC to provide equal opportunity for all applicants, employees, and training participants. DERC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, age disability, or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran in accordance with applicable Federal laws. In addition, DERC complies with applicable State and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment. DERC will make reasonable accommodations for qualified disabled applicants, employees, trainees, and guests of the Distribution Center, including disabled veterans. This policy applies to all employment and training actions including recruitment, hiring, promotion, compensation, benefits and social activities.

DRUG SCREEN POLICY

DERC has instituted a drug screening policy to ensure that it is best preparing our trainees for the realities of securing and maintaining gainful employment. By signing the drug screening waiver, you are acknowledging that you have read and understood the policy and you will willingly submit to testing --- both scheduled and random.

If you are under the care of a healthcare professional and have been prescribed medication that would impact the results of your test, you will be given an opportunity to list on the back of waiver the medication(s) that you have been prescribed which may be an issue. Within 15 days of signing this policy, please present a note from the prescribing professional confirming that you have been prescribed this medication and the anticipated length of time you are expected to be using this medication.

Policy:

All students are required to submit to at least one planned and thereafter random drug screenings. Your first test will be given during orientation or within the first 30 days of the start date of Module 1 (or the signature's date on the waiver, whichever is most recent). After your first test, you will be tested randomly throughout Module 2 and Module 3. These tests will be administered at no cost to you unless you fail the test. Then, the cost of the test will be charged to you and deducted from your next bi-weekly stipend check. Your refusal to sign the drug screening waiver will result in an automatic dismissal from the program.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Module 1: Employability Skills, Personal Development, Financial Management and Introduction to Computers

Students will be dropped on the 4th absence

Module 2: Leadership Development, Communication for the Workplace, Warehouse Training and Distribution

Students will be dropped on the 3rd absence

Module 3: Academic Upgrade and Simulated Job Training

Students will be dropped on the 2nd absence

DOCUMENTATION THAT MUST BE PROVIDED FOR AN EXCUSED ABSENCE:

1. Doctor's note for self or child
2. Section 8 Inspection or recertification
3. Court Appearance/ Probation Officer
4. Death of an immediate family member

If you are unable to attend class you are expected to contact DERC (prior to class beginning) at 919-683-2567. (In cases of emergency, please call as soon as possible.)

For questions regarding this notice, please contact the Training Coordinator at 919-683-2567 during normal business hours.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Classroom Professionalism

- Cell phones, headsets - All cell phones must be turned off and secured out of sight. No cell phone usage as calculators. No headset usage in the classroom.
- Dress Code/ Attire - Appropriate, conservative attire. No type of head dress is allowed (except for religious practice).
 - Males- Pants must fit waist to cover underwear.
 - Females- Clothing must adequately cover all body parts (no showing of cleavage or mid sections, no miniskirts or very short pants).
- Tardiness - Late is late!! Be present at the time the class is scheduled to begin
- Guests in class - Non-registered individuals are not allowed in the classroom

Exercising Professional Courtesy

- Talking - No conversations during class without proper acknowledgement. Disruptive outbursts will not be tolerated.
- Unrelated course material - Reading of unrelated course materials (magazines, novels, newspapers, etc.) is not allowed in class.
- Sleeping - No sleeping in class. Persons caught sleeping will be asked to leave class.
- Profanity - The use of profanity of any type or non-professional, disrespectful language will not be tolerated.
- Food/ Beverages - No consumption of food is allowed in the class. Only beverages in closed containers.
- **R-E-S-P-E-C-T** - Everyone should be courteous and kind to one another.

WAREHOUSE TRAINING POLICY

1. **Cell Phones-** One warning. Trainees will receive one verbal warning. The second incidence will result in being sent home for the day and receiving no credit for the day.
 - a. IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY HAVE CALLERS CONTACT THE DISTRIBUTION CENTER (919-683-2567) OR THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE (919-682-5912, 3#)
 - b. Trainees are not allowed to use the Distribution Center phone without Mr. Stoppelkamp's permission. Use of office phone without permission will result in dismissal from the program.
2. **Profanity** – Two warnings. Trainees will receive one verbal warning. The second incident will be documented. The third incident of profanity will result in the trainee being sent home for the day and receiving no credit for the day worked. Additionally, this day will be documented as an absence.
3. **No Stealing (NO EXCEPTIONS)!** Trainees will be asked to leave the program. It is up to CEO whether trainees will be allowed to come back and restart the program with another cohort.
4. **Late policy** – If trainees are not present once time sheets are handed out in the morning, he/she is considered late. If the trainee calls before 8:45 a.m. (a voicemail message will count) informing the staff that he/she will be late, the trainee can sign in at the time he/she arrives. If the trainee does not call, he/she will receive a time sheet after the 1st hour of class and sign in at that time. If a trainee is late more than twice in a pay period, a meeting will be held with the trainee and the Training Coordinator. The sponsor will be contacted.
5. **Argument between trainees:** The closest trainee is to mediate the situation and separate the parties involved. If the altercation continues, Mr. Stoppelkamp will be called to mediate. If after Mr. Stoppelkamp gets involved and the altercation continues, the aggressor will be asked to leave for the day.
6. **Sleeping in class (If the trainee is on medication, Mr. Stoppelkamp will work with him/her.)** If the trainee is not on medication, he/she will get two warnings. Upon the third warning, the trainee will be asked to leave for the day.
7. All bags will be checked in Mr. Stoppelkamp's office.

INCENTIVE PROGRAM (TRAINEE)

The organization has constructed a "**Stars for Incentives**" program. Its function is to provide an opportunity for trainees to earn incentives in the distribution center. The program will allow trainees to track their time and be able to earn vouchers to use in the distribution center. The "Stars Program" will utilize inner facility and off campus venues to allow an array of opportunities for interested trainees. One star equals one voucher dollar. Below are a few ideas on ways "Stars" can be earned:

Perfect Attendance (2 stars):

A trainee who has not been late and has four full completed days in a work week documented while staying on task will be considered to have Perfect Attendance. For this incentive, trainees will be awarded 2 stars.

Student Referrals (2 stars):

When a trainee recommends a prospective trainee to the program, the prospective trainee must return with sponsor referral sheet completed. For this incentive, trainees will be awarded 2 stars.

For the same trainee, if his/her referral is accepted into the program, the trainee will receive 5 stars.

Memorization of DERC Mission Statement (3 stars):

The Mission Statement can be found on the DERC website (www.durhameconomicresourcecenter.org) and it must be recited to either Ms. Brown or Mr. Stoppelkamp to receive the 3 stars.

Extra Credit Volunteer Work (2 stars per hour):

Trainees who volunteer outside of the distribution center and provide documented hours (signed by an organization official) will receive 2 stars per hour. The trainee must first provide the supervisor's name of the organization they are volunteering. There is a maximum of 20 volunteer hours per week.

A Mission Moment (5 stars):

If a trainee participates in a membership drive with a representative of DERC, trainees will receive 5 stars.

The One Hitter Quitter (20 stars):

A trainee who refers a faith-based or non-profit organization to DERC and that organization becomes a member of DERC, the trainee will receive 20 stars.

POST DERC INCENTIVE PROGRAM (ALUMNUS INCENTIVE PROGRAM)

As an incentive for alumnus of the DERC Job Training Program, an alumnus' paystub will serve as a voucher entitling him/her shopping privileges at the Distribution Center. To take advantage of this privilege, alumnus must bring the paystub to DERC's Administrative Office located at 116 E. Corporation Street, Durham, NC 27701 (corner of Roxboro Street and East Corporation Street) to be copied and approved by either the Job Placement Specialist or the CEO. The paystub will be returned and the copied paystub with approval will serve as a voucher entitling the alumnus shopping privileges at the following levels:

- Paystub which is issued weekly - \$5.00
- Paystub which is issued bi-weekly - \$10.00
- Paystub which is issued monthly - \$20.00

Eligibility:

The paystub must reflect a minimum of 15 hours worked for weekly issuance; a minimum of 25 hours worked for bi-weekly issuance; and a minimum of 50 hours worked for monthly issuance. Only former DERC Job Training Program participants who successfully completed Module 1 and were not removed from the program or asked to leave prior to Module 3 graduation are eligible for this incentive. Additionally, paystubs must be less than a year old to be used for the incentive.

Vouchers can only be used to redeem merchandise that has been in the warehouse for more than two weeks.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

In case of an emergency situation, all staff and trainees should adhere to the evacuation plan at the location of the emergency.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PLAN

DERC now publicizes its closing on Durham's ABC TV station Channel 7. If the posting does not make it on television, the general rule is that when Durham Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather or natural disaster (snow, ice, hurricane, etc.), DERC will be closed.

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