



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Uphill Battle Just Got Steeper

Low income communities such as East Palo Alto are disproportionately impacted with COVID-related unemployment with unemployment rates more than double the rest of the population. That's the finding of a recent survey by the non-profit JobTrain.

More than 1,000 JobTrain clients and recent graduates reported:

- 43% have lost their jobs
- 34% have had their work hours cut
- 61% have had someone in their household lost a job.

Their biggest challenges now?

- 1) employment
- 2) food security
- 3) housing

Some of the stories of need are heart-breaking. Monica, a graduate of JobTrain's Medical Assistant program, wrote that she's "running out of money for food and rent and falling behind on bills." And, Dan from East Palo Alto, said, "I'm worried that after next week I'll be out of a job and won't be able to meet my rent payment or buy food for my kids."

What's JobTrain doing to help?

IMMEDIATELY:

- 1. Launched a \$250,000 Crisis Relief Fund campaign to help those struggling with urgent cash shortages.** "We have set up a process so we can assess the urgency of requests from JobTrain's clients. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we'll be able to offer cash relief funds to those who need it the most." says Hayam Demian, Chief Operating Officer at JobTrain.
- 2. Set up a new Job Seeker Service---connecting our low-income students and graduates with our employer partners and others**
- 3. Redeployed staff to work to connect with other supportive services to find food and housing**
- 4. Continuing and adding computer skills and other classes online during shutdown. Demand has more than doubled for JobTrain's Digital Literacy class as those most at-risk for unemployment try to learn new skills to**

get jobs. JobTrain Director of Development and Marketing Patty Rally says, “We serve a population of people who are most vulnerable, who worked hard for years to change their lives and they made it. Now, former clients are out of work and facing another uphill battle. We’re seeing that our clients want to work hard to meet this unprecedented challenge.”

PLANNING FOR FUTURE needs after shelter-in-place ends:

Connecting with key employers JobTrain CEO Barrie Hathaway: "To prepare for rapid employment, we are retooling our "pre-COVID" offerings for training and looking at other potential jobs that present opportunities for new training programs. There will a rush to fill some jobs immediately and others later...and we want to make sure those in our low-income communities are well prepared to compete.”

TO FOLLOW UP WITH THIS STORY, WE CAN CONNECT YOU WITH OUR JOBTRAIN STAFF AND WITH SOME OF OUR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES HARD HIT BY UNEMPLOYMENT.

To help JobTrain or to learn more about what this well-regarded and established organization does, please visit www.jobtrainworks.org .

About JobTrain: Based in East Menlo Park, JobTrain (formerly known as OICW) has for more than 50 years been transforming lives and communities in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties and throughout the Bay Area. JobTrain helps people most in need reclaim their lives from poverty and unemployment by preparing them for successful, sustainable careers in high-demand and emerging fields.

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