

**John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development**

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

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*September 11th Fund  
Employment Assistance Program*

Performance Outcomes

Prepared by:

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July 2005

## Preface and Acknowledgements

The research presented in this report, *September 11th Fund Employment Assistance Program: Performance Outcomes*, was produced under a grant from the September 11th Fund to the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

The principal authors of this report are Ronnie Kauder, Kathy Krepcio, Scott Reynolds, and Bonny Fraser. Neil Ridley also provided support and comment, and Robb C. Sewell edited and Christine VanCleaf designed and managed production of the report.

Questions concerning the data in this report should be addressed to Bonny Fraser at (732) 932-6900 ext. 246 or e-mail at [bonnyf@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:bonnyf@rci.rutgers.edu).

## Data Collection

Safe Horizon maintained the September 11th Fund's Ongoing Recovery Programs database. The final total number of individuals determined eligible for the Ongoing Recovery Programs was 15,149. The final Employment Assistance Program (EAP) enrollment number was 11,393. The Heldrich Center maintained the EAP database. Percentages contained in this report are based on all data in entered fields. All transactions in the EAP database were entered directly by employees of the designated EAP service providers between September 2002 and September 2004. If errors were found in any fields, or fields left blank, the information was considered unknown.

## Other Heldrich Center Reports on the Employment Assistance Program

This publication is one in a series of reports issued by the Heldrich Center on the September 11th Fund's Employment Assistance Program. The EAP began on September 16, 2002 and officially ended services on September 30, 2004. Each report profiles a different aspect of the EAP. The current report series includes:

- *September 11th Fund Employment Assistance Program: Focus Group Report*, August 2003
- *Aftershock: Serving 9/11 Displaced Workers*, September 2004
- *Demographic Profile of Participants Enrolled in the September 11th Fund's Employment Assistance Program*, October 2004
- *Service Activity Report for Participants Enrolled in the September 11th Fund's Employment Assistance Program*, February 2005
- *Trying to Become the Person I Was Before: The 9/11 Employment Assistance Program*, May 2005

All reports are available at [www.heldrich.rutgers.edu](http://www.heldrich.rutgers.edu).

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# Introduction

Following the terrorist attacks of September 2001, thousands of people in the New York metropolitan area lost jobs and earnings. Several public and privately funded programs responded to the employment needs of those most directly affected. The largest effort was the September 11th Fund's Employment Assistance Program (EAP), which assisted 11,393 people at a cost of \$78 million.

The September 11th Fund, a creation of the New York Community Trust and the United Way of New York City, was established to meet a wide range of needs of affected victims, families, and communities. The enormity of the attacks drew a tremendous volume of donations from people across the globe. The Fund collected \$534 million from more than two million donors, and assisted more than 100,000 people with diverse needs.

Working with the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, the September 11th Fund created the Employment Assistance Program to enable eligible dislocated workers to connect with employment services, career counselors, job placement opportunities, education, training, and other resources. The EAP provided a range of employment assistance primarily to individuals who lived or worked in lower Manhattan and who remained unemployed or underemployed a year following the attacks.

The purpose of this report is to describe both the expected and actual performance outcomes from the Employment Assistance Program.

## The September 11th Fund's Employment Assistance Program

The Employment Assistance Program began in the fall of 2002, a year after the attacks. Initial response to the immediate massive job losses was undertaken by the U.S. Department of Labor, which awarded a \$25 million National Emergency Grant to the State of New York to help dislocated workers in the area.

At the same time the federal grant was in operation, discussions began about the need to offer additional employment services as new evidence was emerging about the continuing need for job assistance and income support. In response to this need, the September 11th Fund's Board of Directors approved a plan in spring 2002 to provide employment assistance to displaced and underemployed workers whose loss of employment was a direct result of the 9/11 attacks.

The decision was made to offer a flexible menu of employment-related services through nonprofit organizations and local public One-Stop Career Centers that were experienced in providing such services. Some of these organizations had been active under the U.S. Department of Labor's National Emergency Grant. Within New York City, the Fund's selected EAP service providers were:

- Chinatown Manpower Project;
- Chinese American Planning Council;
- Consortium for Worker Education;
- Federation Employment and Guidance Service (F·E·G·S);
- Seedco, including eight of its affiliated nonprofit agencies in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan;<sup>1</sup> and
- Wildcat Service Corporation.

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Family Life (Sunset Park, Brooklyn), Citizens Advice Bureau (South Bronx), EarnFair LLC (Lower Manhattan), Pius XII Youth and Family Services (Riverdale, Bronx), Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (Cypress Hills, Brooklyn), Saint Nicholas Neighborhood Preservation Corporation (Williamsburg, Brooklyn), Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (Washington Heights, Manhattan), and Henry Street Settlement (Lower East Side, Manhattan).

On Long Island and in New Jersey, the September 11th Fund contracted with several government-run One-Stop Career Centers. F-E-G-S also provided services at its office on Long Island.

## Participant Profile

Those in need of EAP services tended to be individuals who were still experiencing economic or emotional distress a year after the attacks. Individuals who enrolled in the EAP were the people most vulnerable and most desperate in the labor market at that time. This included:

- Garment workers in Chinatown. According to Dolfman and Wasser,<sup>2</sup> employment in apparel manufacturing decreased by 31% during the first year after the attacks. Those jobs that remained in the industry tended to be highly skilled and technical positions (i.e., fashion designer) in midtown Manhattan. Many lower-level production jobs (e.g., sewing machine operators) were lost.
- Service industry workers, specifically those supporting the tourism/hospitality sector, which was in severe distress for some time after the attacks.
- Undocumented workers, who would find it much more difficult to secure employment in a post-9/11 environment. Because of their status, these workers did not qualify for unemployment benefits or for the services offered through the U.S. Department of Labor’s National Emergency Grant. Many undocumented workers were in severe financial straits.
- Immigrants, many with very limited English skills. This was true for the Mandarin-speaking seamstress in Chinatown, the Spanish-speaking hotel porter or dishwasher in lower Manhattan, the French-speaking African street vendor in Battery Park, and many others.

- Older workers—people over the age of 45, but averaging between the ages of 40 and 55.
- Lower-skilled workers in lower-wage jobs—jobs that require minimal education or training. Some of these lower-skilled jobs were specific to a particular industry (i.e., garment manufacturing).
- Contractual and freelance workers, small business owners, artists/graphic designers, and skilled technical workers, many of whom had been working on a contractual or freelance basis, and many did not qualify for unemployment benefits. Their prospects were affected by the severe economic contraction following 9/11.
- Highly paid skilled professionals who were still feeling traumatized and/or had severe emotional issues (anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress) that interfered with their ability to resume their work lives.
- People with assorted mental health issues in all types of occupations.

Table 1 displays the demographic and employment characteristics of the EAP participants. More than one-third of the participants were underemployed (as opposed to unemployed) when they entered the program.

There were three major and distinct participant groups served through the program (see Figure 1):

- **Chinese speakers.** Most of the individuals who participated in the EAP (7,334, or almost 65% of the total) reported that Chinese, Mandarin, Cantonese, or Fujianese was their primary language. Most were or had been garment workers in Chinatown. This population tended to be female (85%) and between the ages of 36 and 62 (85%). Almost all of the Chinese speakers—96%—reported earning less than \$20,000 per year prior to 9/11.

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<sup>2</sup> Michael L. Dolfman and Solidelle F. Wasser, “9/11 and the New York City Economy: A Borough-by-Borough Analysis,” *Monthly Labor Review* (June 2004): 3-33.

*Table 1. Demographic Distribution of EAP Population*

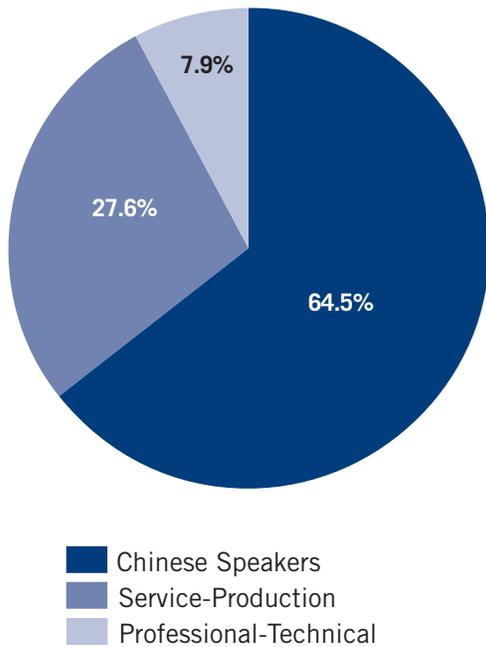
Gender		Family Size	
Male	28%	1	20.3%
Female	72%	2	25.3%
Age		3	18.8%
25-under	2%	4	23.7%
26-35	12%	5	8.2%
36-49	44%	6	2.4%
50-62	36%	7 or more	1.3%
63-up	6%	Education	
Language		College Plus	5.7%
Chinese	65%	Some College	6.5%
English	22%	High School	13.5%
Spanish	7%	Less than High School	74.3%
French	2%	Family Income	
Other	4%	Under \$20k	91.5%
Residence		\$20k to \$45k	8.0%
Manhattan	38.4%	\$45k to \$75k	0.4%
Brooklyn	35.5%	\$75k to \$110k	0.1%
Queens	15.3%	\$110k to \$150k	0.0%
Bronx	4.8%	\$150k and up	0.0%
New Jersey	2.8%	Employment Status on Entry	
Other New York State	1.7%	Employed	1%
Staten Island	1.3%	Underemployed	35%
Non-New York/New Jersey	0.2%	Unemployed	64%
Pre-9/11 Income			
Under \$20k	77.3%		
\$20k to \$45k	17.1%		
\$45k to \$75k	3.6%		
\$75k to \$110k	1.3%		
\$110k to \$150k	0.5%		
\$150k and up	0.3%		

Source: Safe Horizon database

■ **Service and production workers.** Almost 28% of the EAP participants were non-Chinese-speaking service and production workers. Most of these workers had previously worked in non-professional occupations and earned less than \$45,000 per year. This population was evenly split between men and women and was distributed among all age groups, with the largest concentration (45%) between the ages of 36 and 49. Many were immigrants and a number were undocumented workers.

■ **Professional and technical workers.** Nearly 8% of the EAP participants were non-Chinese-speaking professional and technical workers who had worked in professional or technical occupations or earned more than \$45,000 per year; some had earned very high salaries. This population was more male than female (57% vs. 43%) and half were between 36 and 49 years old.

Figure 1. EAP Population by Major Participant Group



Source: Safe Horizon database

## Performance Measures and Goals

The initial grant agreements between the September 11th Fund and the EAP service providers included four primary performance measures; two additional measures were added later. The measures chosen were similar to those generally in use in nationally funded employment and training programs, and reflected the goals of the program and the expectations of the September 11th Fund. The four primary performance measures were:

- **Completion rate.** The proportion of individuals who received training or education services that completed the program, resulting in enhanced English as a Second Language, Basic Education, GED, or occupational skills. The performance expectation was that 75% of those who opted for education or training would complete the courses they chose to attend.
- **Employment rate.** The proportion of individuals eligible for job placement that were employed at program completion. Employment was defined as

receipt of any wage and/or income, whether part time or full time. Individuals who were employed at the time of enrollment in the program and those who were undocumented were not included in this measure. Later, the decision was made to also exclude from this measure individuals who were not seeking work. The performance goal initially ranged between 50% and 60%, depending on the service provider. Later, the performance goal was set at 50% for all service providers.

- **Wage recovery.** The proportion of those who obtained employment that paid at least 70% of their pre-9/11 hourly pay rate. The performance expectation was that 75% of those who were employed by the end of the program would be receiving at least 70% of their pre-9/11 compensation.
- **Retention in employment.** The proportion of individuals who obtained employment that remained employed 90 days following initial entry into employment. The performance goal was 65% for all providers.

Approximately six months into the program's operation, it was evident that a majority of the program's participants possessed very limited English language skills. This group was comprised predominantly of middle-aged, Chinese-speaking women who had worked as seamstresses in garment factories in Chinatown. At that time, all New York City-based EAP service providers began to either offer English language classes themselves or refer participants to education and training providers with this capacity. In addition to English as a Second Language classes, many participants attended occupational training programs that combined English language training with occupational training. In response to this program development, an additional measure was added:

- **Literacy and language gains.** The proportion of individuals who received English as a Second Language, Basic Education, or GED training that experienced literacy gains, as measured through an appropriate literacy assessment instrument, used for both pre- and post-testing. The performance goal was 80% for all providers.

It also became clear that a significant minority of the individuals who enrolled in the program were underemployed. Some of the EAP service providers suggested that a performance measure be added to capture employment outcomes for this group. As a result, a sixth measure was added:

- **Earnings increase.** The proportion of individuals who were underemployed at entry and were seeking additional hours or higher pay rates that experienced an increase in earnings at program exit. The performance goal for this measure was set at 50%.

In addition to these formal performance measures, the September 11th Fund was committed to reaching out to and enrolling as many people in the affected population as possible. The Fund conducted extensive outreach to attract hard-to-reach populations, including non-English-speaking immigrants and undocumented workers. On a weekly basis, the Fund kept track of the number of people who had attended orientation sessions at Safe Horizon and who had been found eligible for Ongoing Recovery Programs versus the number who had enrolled in the EAP.

The September 11th Fund was also mindful of the per-participant cost of the program, and was continually trying to benchmark its costs with those of other publicly funded employment and training programs.

## Performance Outcomes

This section reviews the actual performance of the program against the performance goals set. It examines overall performance on each measure. In some cases, performance by EAP service provider and major population group is examined.

**EAP Performance Measures**

Completion Rate  
Employment Rate  
Wage Recovery Rate  
Retention in Employment  
Language and Literacy Gains  
Earnings Increase

## Completion Rate

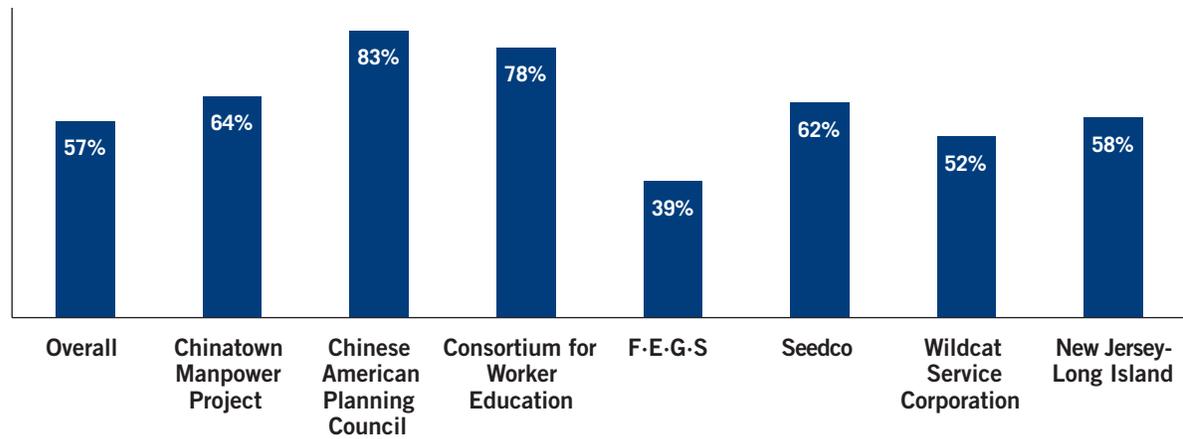
This measure applied to the 9,684 individuals (85% of program participants) who attended education or occupational training programs. Based on a review of a sample of actual records, it is estimated that 92% completed the education or training programs they attended. This is well above the performance goal of 75%. Virtually all who attended education or training classes qualified for the needs-based training allowance offered through the program. For most of the program's duration, this allowance was set at \$300 per week for training attendance of at least 25 hours per week for a maximum of 13 weeks. Most participants attended education and training programs that were 13 weeks in duration and had at least the minimum number of hours required. The allowance served as a powerful incentive to participants to attend and complete education and training, and the overwhelming majority did so.

## Employment Rate

This measure was calculated only for those who were unemployed at the time of eligibility determination and who were considered in the labor force at the time they left the program. Individuals who were undocumented or not seeking work were not included in the measure.

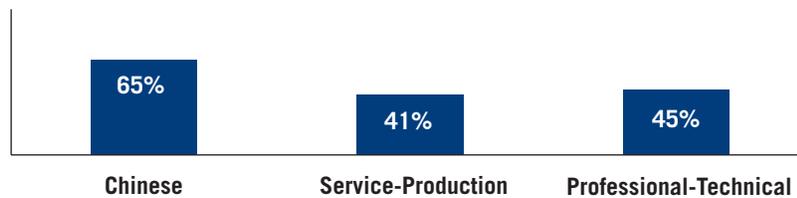
Figures 2 and 3 display the employment rate overall, as well as by EAP service provider and major population group. The program-wide performance on the employment rate was 57%, exceeding the 50% goal for the program. This ranged from a low of 39% to a high of 83% for the different EAP service providers. Chinese speakers were the most likely to find reemployment (65%), while both the professional/technical (45%) and the service/production (41%) groups lagged behind.

Figure 2. Reemployment Rate Overall and by Service Provider



Source: EAP database

Figure 3. Reemployment Rate by Major Participant Group



Source: Safe Horizons database

Differences in performance among EAP service providers on this measure were affected by several factors:

- **Availability of employment information.** While many participants provided details about their employment situations after program completion, many others did not. Although EAP service providers made multiple attempts to obtain this information, program guidelines did not require participants to provide such information and many chose not to. It is likely that data on employed participants is understated. Chinese-speaking participants and individuals who attended occupational training were more likely to report their employment situations.
- **Population group served.** The EAP service providers that served primarily the Chinese population — Chinatown Manpower Project, Chinese American Planning Council, and Consortium for Worker Education — tended to have higher placement rates. Most of the Chinese-speaking participants who reported employment information returned to their previous industry (garment manufacturing) and occupation (seamstress).

*Table 2. Percentage of Participants Reported as Out of the Labor Force*

Service Provider	Unemployed at Enrollment	Not in Labor Force	Percent of Total Caseload
Chinatown Manpower Project	1,337	279	21%
Chinese American Planning Council	884	482	54%
Consortium for Worker Education	628	309	49%
F.E.G.S	1,630	249	15%
Seedco	1,017	391	38%
Wildcat Service Corporation	826	25	3%
New Jersey	53	7	13%
Long Island	11	1	9%
Total	6,385	1,743	27%

Source: EAP database

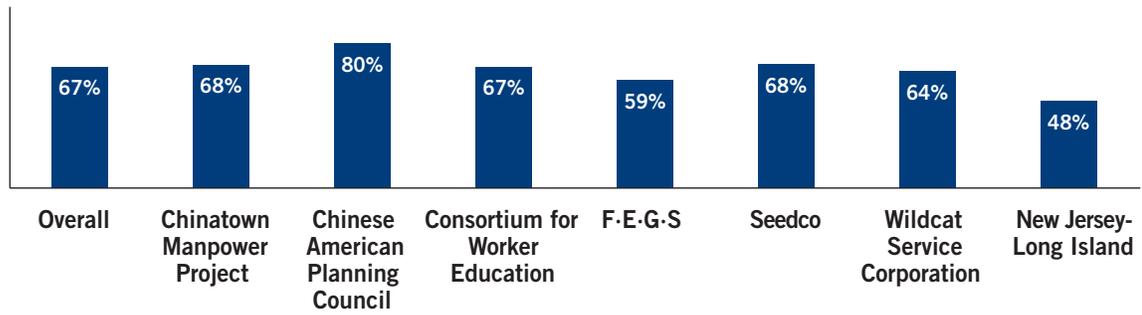
■ **The proportion of the unemployed population served by each provider that was reported to be out of the labor force.** (See Table 2.) Those **excluded** from the employment rate calculation included:

- Individuals who were too ill to work;
- Full-time students;
- Retired individuals. A number of people, especially older Chinese former garment workers, chose to retire and did not seek work after the program; and
- Undocumented individuals who were not legally allowed to work in the United States.

### Wage Recovery Rate

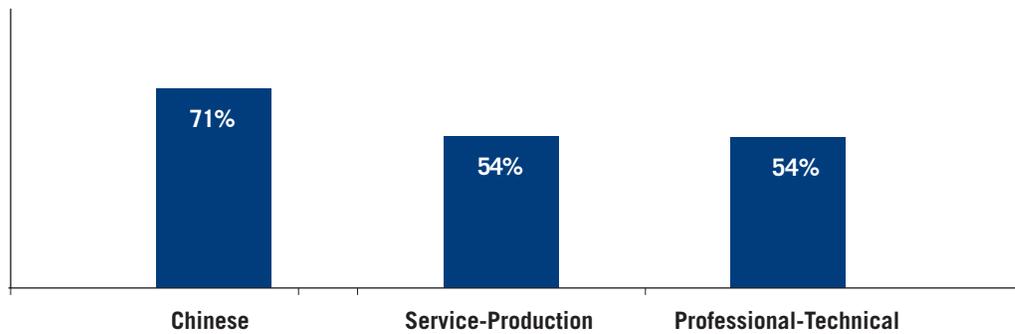
Figures 4 and 5 present information on the wage recovery rate. This measure was calculated only for those who reported employment, and only where wage information was available. Overall, 67% of the participants included in this measure recovered at least 70% of their pre-9/11 earnings, below the goal of 75%. The variation in this measure from one service provider to another is minimal. Among the three population groups, Chinese speakers were more likely to recover at least 70% of their wages. Part of this can be explained because Chinese speakers earned less on average than non-Chinese speakers prior to

Figure 4. Wage Recovery Compared to 70% of Pre-9/11 Salary by Service Provider



Source: Safe Horizon and EAP database

Figure 5. Wage Recovery (at 70% level) Rates by Major Participant Group



Source: Safe Horizon and EAP database

September 11th. In the post-9/11 labor market, it appears that it was difficult for many people to recover their previous earnings. This measure may also suffer from the underreporting of post-program information by program participants.

provider, this ranged from a low of 47% to a high of 84%. Employment retention was more common among Chinese speakers (73%). Variations in performance among service providers on this measure were affected by the service providers' success in connecting with participants to collect retention information.

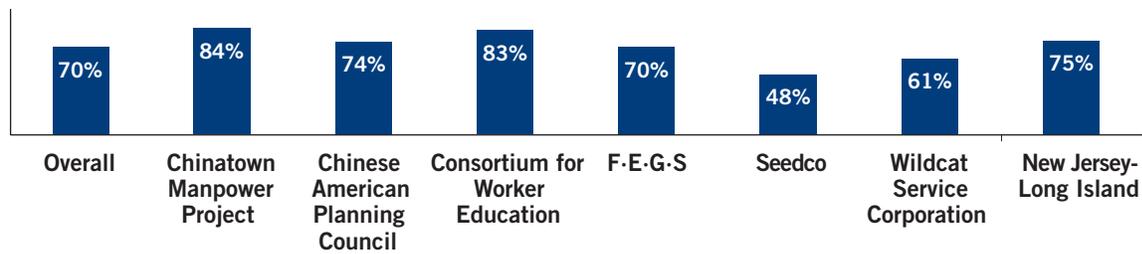
## Retention in Employment

Figures 6 and 7 present information on the retention rate. This measure was calculated only for those who reported employment. Overall, 70% of the individuals who obtained employment remained employed 90 days later, exceeding the program-wide goal of 65%. By EAP service

## Literacy and Language Gains

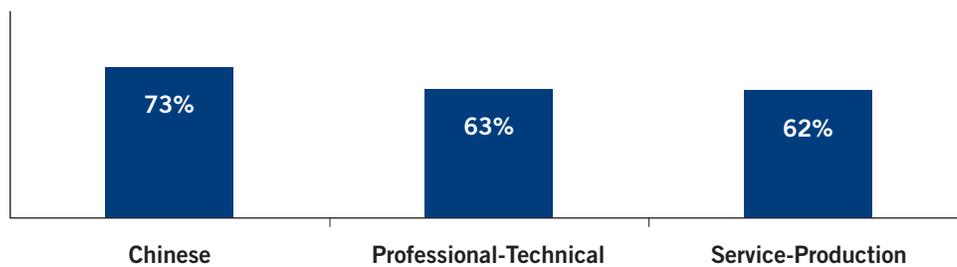
Of the more than 11,000 people who participated in the EAP, half enrolled in English as a Second Language classes. Although the vast majority were Chinese speaking, speakers of other languages also enrolled in such classes.

*Figure 6. Ninety-Day Job Retention Rate for Reemployed EAP Participants by Service Provider*



Source: EAP database

*Figure 7. Ninety-Day Job Retention Rate for Reemployed EAP Participants by Major Participant Group*



Source: Safe Horizon and EAP database

Table 3 displays literacy and language gains made program-wide and by EAP service provider. Overall, 89% of those who attended English as a Second Language classes, for whom valid scores were obtained, showed improvement between entry and exit. This is above the performance goal of 80%. Performance by service provider ranged between 75% and 98%. Most of the English as a Second Language classes were 13 weeks in duration.

The higher achievement by the Consortium for Worker Education could be related to the small class size (less than 12), variety of classes that were geared to the English

*Table 3. Language and Literacy Test Scores by Service Provider*

EAP Clients	# With Valid Scores	# Showing Improvement	% Improved English Language Skill
Chinatown Manpower Project	1,085	850	78%
Chinese American Planning Council	1,088	1,014	93%
Consortium for Worker Education	646	630	98%
F.E.G.S	386	318	82%
Seedco	76	57	75%
Wildcat Service Corporation	733	699	95%
Overall	4,014	3,568	89%

Source: EAP service providers

Note: Data as of September 2, 2004

language proficiency of students, and incorporation of computer skills and group counseling into the 13-week course. Most of the other providers conducted larger classes, usually twice as large as the Consortium for Worker Education’s classes.

## Earnings Increase

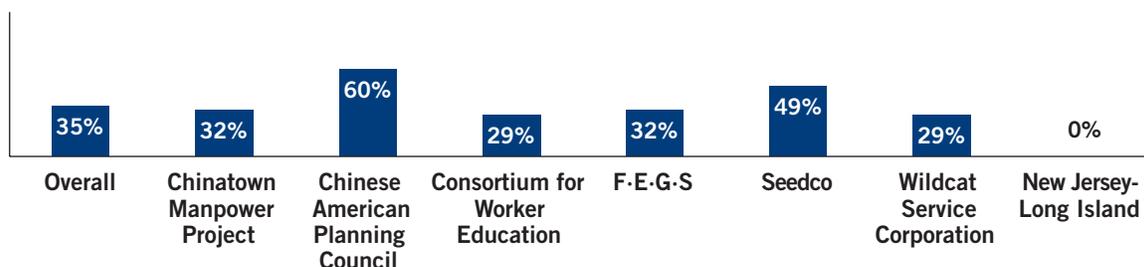
This measure was intended to address the more than one-third of EAP participants who were underemployed<sup>3</sup> at the time of eligibility determination. Many people were working less than full time, or had been forced to accept much lower salaries. This measure was designed to gauge the proportion of this group that experienced an increase in earnings by the time they left the program. Figure 8 displays the available data for this measure. Of the 4,814 underemployed individuals who entered the program, full earnings data was obtained for one-third, or 1,597 people. Of this number, 35% had increased their earnings. The goal for this measure was 50%. Performance among EAP service providers varied widely, from a low of 0% to a high of 60%. Because information on two-thirds of the underemployed participants could not be obtained, no real conclusions can be drawn. It does appear, however, that the Chinese American Planning Council devoted particular effort to helping the underemployed population upgrade earnings.

## Reaching Underserved Populations

Throughout the duration of the Employment Assistance Program, the September 11th Fund conducted recruitment campaigns to attract the affected population in need of service. Within the close-knit Chinese community, in Chinatown as well as among the residents of Brooklyn and Queens who had worked in Chinatown, word spread about the program, leading to a virtual deluge of people who had never participated in any type of program before. Information about the program also caught on in many segments of the community, such as among French-speaking African street vendors and Spanish-speaking

<sup>3</sup> Underemployed was defined as a reduction in earnings of at least 30% after 9/11.

Figure 8. Earnings Increase Upon Reemployment Compared to Pre-9/11 Incomes for EAP Participants Who Listed Their Pre-Program Employment Status as 'Underemployed'



Source: Safe Horizon and EAP database

service workers. After massive recruitment and word of mouth, the EAP enrolled 11,393 of the 15,149 people found eligible for the Ongoing Recovery Program, or 75%. This is a high response rate and speaks to the fact that the EAP offered the services and supports people wanted and needed at the time. The remaining 25% who were determined to be eligible by Safe Horizon never took the next step of contacting an EAP service provider.

## Benchmarking Costs

The cost per person of the EAP averaged \$6,896, which is higher than average costs in most publicly funded employment and training programs. However, half of the cost of the program was in the form of income support —job search and training stipends paid directly to individuals. Because public programs typically do not have this component, cost comparisons are difficult. It is, however, these very stipends that made the program attractive to many in the affected group.

## Reflections on EAP Performance Outcomes

The Employment Assistance Program was truly a unique effort. Other employment and training programs generally fall into the following categories:

- Government-funded (usually federal or state), with enabling legislation, regulations, and a performance history;
- Company-funded, for the benefit of employees of a particular company affected by workforce reductions;
- Labor union-funded, for the benefit of members who have lost their jobs; and
- Combinations of the above.

In contrast, the EAP was funded through private donations and was established to help people who worked in the particular geographic area most affected by the terrorist attacks. This program was unusual, if not one-of-a-kind. It differed from other types of employment and training programs in the following ways:

- The EAP recruited and accepted all who needed its help, regardless of their objective prospects or desire for full-time reemployment or earnings gain. It drew thousands of people who had never before participated in an employment and training program. Most were non-English-speaking and low skilled. The program truly enrolled those most in need.
- Enrollment in the EAP was seen by many of the eligible population as a “right.” A large number of participants saw the program as partial compensation to them as victims of the terrorist attacks.
- In keeping with the September 11th Fund’s philosophy of serving all those in need, service providers were required to accept all referrals from Safe Horizon, a victim services agency that conducted all eligibility determination for the EAP. Such a requirement is atypical for employment programs, which normally have discretion over who they enroll.
- Employment and training programs typically have a set program design that begins with an assessment phase, after which suitability for the program and motivation to seek work are considered before enrollment. In contrast, service providers had to enroll everyone and the design of the EAP evolved based on the demographics, needs, and characteristics of those enrolled in the program.
- The EAP offered generous stipends, which attracted many people to the program. Understanding that individuals affected by the terrorist attacks continued to experience severe financial distress, the September 11th Fund wanted to provide temporary income support, and did so through job search and training-related allowances.

## Getting the Incentive System Right

For any employment and training program, measures must relate to employment and earnings outcomes. Most of the measures selected by the September 11th Fund were similar to measures normally used in the workforce field.

The one measure that was experimental in nature was the earnings gain measure, which applied to individuals who were underemployed at the time they entered the program. Because this was a new measure, and applied to a population not typically enrolled in employment and training programs, the performance expectation turned out to be optimistic. In all other cases, the performance goals set for these measures were reasonable given the program participants and the labor market environment at the time, although they are low by comparison with the Workforce Investment Act. Workforce Investment Act performance goals have been criticized for being unrealistically high and having the effect of driving programs to be overly careful about who they enroll.

## Judging the Program’s Success

In its final report, the September 11th Fund highlighted the aspects of the Employment Assistance Program that it considered great successes. They included:

- **The speed with which the program was implemented.** While similarly sized programs in the United States take years to establish and refine, the Fund’s program was created, operated, and closed within two years.<sup>4</sup>
- **The large number of people served (11,393) and the amount of money spent (\$78 million),** the largest program of its kind in the United States.<sup>5</sup>
- **The customer choice and income support provided.** Individuals chose an employment and training provider based on their primary language, work experience, skills needed, and convenience. A job search and training allowance helped those who met income requirements take advantage of the program when federal unemployment and other forms of income support ran out.<sup>6</sup>
- **The amount of service provided.** Ultimately, 2.2 million hours of occupational training and over 1 million hours of English as a Second Language classes were provided.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The September 11th Fund, *The September 11th Fund Final Report* (New York, NY, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

In many ways, the EAP fulfilled what was most important to the September 11th Fund. While there were outcome-based performance goals in EAP service providers' grant agreements, the greater emphasis was on serving a large number of people quickly and giving them access to the services they wanted and needed, including income support tied to attendance at education and training.

In keeping with this set of priorities, agreements with EAP service providers were predominantly based on service rather than outcomes. For the most part, EAP service providers were paid unit costs for each service provided to each participant.

In terms of the performance measures set for EAP service providers, actual performance in the program generally met or exceeded performance expectations. Performance goals were generally modest and realistic, and were sensitive to the population served and the economic conditions at the time.

## Options for Performance Improvement

Accepting the basic program design, it is unlikely that performance could have been very different. The program was designed to serve a very low-skilled population seeking jobs in a bad economy. The structure of the program encouraged short-term training (13 weeks), which could not materially change employability. The Fund wanted to enroll as many people in need as possible within the amount of resources available.

Several policy changes might have improved performance, including:

- Withholding partial payment from training vendors pending employment outcomes. For most of the program's duration, training schools were given the full allowable tuition payment (\$4,000) without regard to documented student employment outcomes. In the final months of the program, the Fund changed its policy and withheld 20% pending job placement. If done earlier, this would have had two positive outcomes: it would have given training schools greater incentive to pay attention to placing students into jobs and it would have increased the reporting of post-program activity.

- Creating some incentive for participants to report post-program outcomes. Some service providers recommended withholding the last job training allowance payment of \$300 pending receipt of post-program information. Another idea was to offer a job placement incentive payment to those who attended training. As the program was structured, only participants who had not received training allowances were eligible for placement and retention bonuses.
- Although the job training allowance was popular with participants, many EAP service providers believed that the allowance was too generous and attracted participants who had no intention of changing occupations or industries, or even re-entering the labor market. Once begun, this was hard to change, although the allowance system was modified toward the end of the enrollment period. EAP service providers felt that the change, which lowered the job training allowance from \$300 per week to \$100 per week (a new maximum of \$1,300), while keeping the job search, job placement, and retention payments in place (maximum of \$1,500), offered a better balance between the job search and training options.

In addition, it is possible that performance might have been improved if participants made more careful training selections or if there had been greater oversight of training vendors. EAP participants were allowed maximum customer choice and many training schools heavily recruited EAP-eligible participants into training that was of mediocre quality. Later in the program, the Fund developed a list of training schools that were not to be referred any additional participants.

Lastly, it was the perception of many participants that job search assistance by EAP service providers was only fair, or they were not aware that the service provider could help them find a job. Consequently, many lost contact with their providers. Some service providers made greater efforts than others to keep in contact with participants and assist them in their job searches.

Most EAP participants were grateful for the services and support they received, which assisted them during turbulent times. The program allowed them to be productive and to support their families.

## Conclusion

The September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City challenged both dislocated job seekers and the providers who served them. While all providers were chosen by the Fund based on their track record of providing successful employment and training services to dislocated workers, many had to adapt their operations and service delivery methods to meet the needs of the EAP participants and the program's design. This report shows that despite difficult conditions and challenges, the EAP service providers largely achieved the performance goals set by the September 11th Fund.

This was accomplished even with the rapid implementation, the hard-to-serve populations that enrolled, the lack of control over enrollments, the changing program policies that were put in place in response to program needs and problems, the lack of communication from program participants about their employment outcomes, and the difficult economic environment at the time the program was in operation. The September 11th Fund recognized that all of the EAP service providers did

their best to help people enroll in the services offered by the program. They also understood that service providers made efforts to help people find jobs in the midst of a troubled regional labor market.

What helped all providers to successfully meet the program challenges and performance goals was the atmosphere of collaboration and partnership established by the Fund at the beginning of the program. From the start, the Fund established Operations Work Groups in New York City, New Jersey, and Long Island. These were comprised of all of the EAP service providers in the area and met regularly (first weekly, then monthly) to discuss program progress, problems, and performance. It was each work group that guided the management of the program. By keeping in regular communication and acting collectively, the work group members were able to respond to program challenges and issues quickly. This structural feature provided a forum for the EAP service providers to “act like a system”—rather than as competing entities. All found that this helped them respond quickly to the challenges they faced running the program.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, *Aftershock: Serving 9/11 Displaced Workers* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2004).









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