

About EarnFair



A network of community-based organizations provides robust assistance for low-wage jobseekers.

“If it wasn’t for the *EarnFair* Alliance, GMHC wouldn’t be able to offer the array of workforce services that we do. It works because of both the technical support and the fiscal support. They make us look good.”

– Jeff Rindler, Director of Volunteers, Work and Wellness, Gay Men’s Health Crisis

Finding a job can be difficult in today’s market, especially if you have little or no work history, are dealing with personal problems or are without much education. *EarnFair* helps these hard-to-employ jobseekers join the mainstream labor market and achieve economic self-sufficiency. Established in 2000, the program works through a network of 16 community-based organizations and the Upper Manhattan Career Center, in neighborhoods throughout New York, bringing locally based, culturally attuned workforce assistance to those who need it most.

EarnFair’s success is built on two key factors. The aid given to clients goes beyond traditional workforce devel-

opment, which focuses on quick placement into an entry-level position. And the network itself is supported with technical, managerial and financial assistance by Seedco, allowing relatively small local agencies to provide comprehensive employment and work support services.

Workforce development and beyond

EarnFair offers a full array of comprehensive workforce development services to disadvantaged workers: intake and assessment, case management, hard and soft skill training, and programs for job readiness, placement and retention. The program is also aligned with Seedco’s *EarnBenefits* program,

which uses customized software and intense client support to connect low-wage workers to a range of income-enhancing benefits such as childcare, health insurance and savings-account options.

Seedco and the members of the alliance closely track how long clients remain employed and how they’re performing at their job. Those who have trouble are given more aid; those who do well are offered opportunities to advance up the career ladder. *EarnFair’s* success has included very high retention rates, and that’s due in large part to the continuing attention caseworkers

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Members of the EarnFair Alliance

- Catholic Charities Community Service
- Center for Family Life
- Chinese-American Planning Council
- Citizens Advice Bureau (Bronx Works)
- Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation
- East Harlem Council for Community Improvement
- Gay Men's Health Crisis
- Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement
- Henry Street Settlement
- Highbridge Community Life Center
- Mount Hope Housing Company
- National Puerto Rican Forum
- Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation
- Phipps Community Development Corporation
- St. Nicholas Neighborhood Preservation Corp
- South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation

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provide, even after a client is placed in a job.

Supporting partners to succeed

Each of the 16 local *EarnFair* partners works from a common program design that also allows for modifications for the specific populations each member serves. All members are multi-service organizations—housing groups, child-care centers, mental health agencies, AIDS awareness groups, community

development corporations. Some had provided workforce development assistance prior to joining the alliance, but most had not and saw the program as an opportunity to offer another important service to clients.

Local, relatively small groups such as these would not be able to take on the large-scale, performance-based contracts that are increasingly standard in the workforce development field. Seedco assumes the risk associated with these contracts by applying for and managing a diverse funding stream of federal, state and local grants and contracts.

As the managing agent for the alliance, Seedco also provides the members with intensive technical assistance, training, centralized information technology and help with outcome-based management. Seedco staff give recommendations for client intake procedures, provide monthly feedback on benchmarks and deliverables, sponsor regular interagency meetings, and help streamline paperwork. The result is stronger CBOs.

Bigger and better

EarnFair is growing. Pressed for further expansion by New York City's Human Resources Administration, the coalition voted to bring more than a dozen new organizations into the fold, setting a goal of 30 members by 2009. The new HRA grant also allows many alliance members to provide more resources to specific populations, such as formerly incarcerated individuals, workers with limited English proficiency or young fathers who don't have

custody of their children.

At the same time, we're deepening our connections to employers and building on our understanding of how to help workers create a career. Members of the *EarnFair* Alliance have always benefited from Seedco's relationship with local firms from our economic development program, the Neighborhood Economies Initiative. Now, we're streamlining the integration between Alliance members and employers, forming an employer advisory council and creating labor market analysis.

Proven Performance

All programs at Seedco are carefully monitored and evaluated to find out what's working and what needs work. In the *EarnFair* program, many of our benchmarks are among the best in New York City.

- To date, Alliance members, in concert with the Workforce1 Career Center, have placed over 14,000 workers in new jobs.
- The average starting hourly wage over the course of the program has been \$8.70. In the last quarter measured, that has risen to \$10.28.
- The network's six-month job retention rate is 51 percent, and the welfare six-month recidivism rate is 28 percent. The NYC average is 34 percent.

For More Information

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To learn more about *EarnFair* or Seedco, please visit www.seedco.org.



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