

# Connections

## Hudson Valley Employment Initiative

### Construction Career Awareness and Preparation Continue at HVEI

The Yonkers Employment Center (YEC) adds to the outreach and training efforts of the existing Hudson Valley Employment Initiative. The Westchester Consortium for Worker Education and Training works to build awareness of the career opportunities in the construction industry and provides pre-apprenticeship training in the trades for those entering the field.

The Consortium's 5th annual Construction Career Day, held this year at the Peekskill Armory, drew more than 600 high school students from throughout Westchester. Over 18 union representatives made trade presentations and facilitated hand-on demonstrations for the students.

The pre-apprenticeship training is a full-time intensive program lasting between 6 and 15 weeks, depending on the trade and its current training requirements. Successful participants become union members and are immediately eligible for hire as an apprentice. In addition, the Consortium provides training to upgrade the skills of journey workers, making them more employable. Last year, 173 people were trained in the various programs.

"Pre-apprenticeship training and Career Day are important for getting people into the construction industry. There has been so much emphasis on the technology sector, many have forgotten the excellent opportunities available through a profession in the trades," said Lucy Redzeposki, Managing Director of the Consortium.

### NADAP EXECUTIVE STAFF

John A. Darin, President and CEO  
Susan Zitter, Executive Vice President  
Hannah Kates, Senior Vice President  
Gary Stankowski, Vice President

### NADAP's Newest Program—the YONKERS EMPLOYMENT CENTER

We are pleased to announce that NADAP has assumed responsibility for the Yonkers Employment Center (YEC) in early 2005, thereby increasing its efforts to bring Westchester and Putnam Counties' employers together with job seekers. The Yonkers Workforce Investment Board choose NADAP to manage YEC, a One-Stop employment center, because of its more than 30 years experience preparing nontraditional populations for the workforce and meeting employers' hiring needs with qualified, motivated candidates.

The Yonkers Employment Center offers a full range of pre-apprenticeship services to prepare customers for the workplace and is one of many One-Stop Centers established nationwide under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. Education and training initiatives such as GED preparation, resume writing and job interview workshops are available to the



*Yonkers Employment Center provides a range of services at one stop.*

Yonkers community. Employment specialists assist customers to secure employment and provide comprehensive follow-up to ensure job stability for up to a year.

NADAP will work closely with a governing board of local business leaders and other community representatives to ensure that services are consistent with the needs of area employers and resident job seekers. Serving a new community means a new set of unique needs, challenges, and opportunities. NADAP staff look forward to developing collaborative solutions that will encourage economic development in Yonkers.



*Photo, Left: Consortium Director Lucy Redzeposki, second from left, with a few of the union representatives at this year's Construction Career Day, held April 8 at the Peekskill Armory.*

# Economic Independence Project

*Small Business Have Big  
Economic Impact.  
NADAP Helps Them Thrive.*

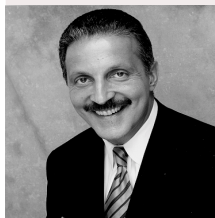
NADAP's training and employment services are most successful when they benefit both the employee and the employer's bottom line. These dual goals are the target of a new Economic Independence Project (EIP), funded by a \$20,000 grant from the J. P. Morgan Chase Foundation. EIP brings enthusiastic, reliable, and productive employees together with employers poised for growth, while helping businesses maximize their opportunities for expansion.

"NADAP bridges the gap between small businesses and workers," said Dr. Mary Ann Castle, NADAP's director of strategic initiatives. "Our pre-employment training and job-readiness services prepare participants to become productive employees. Follow-up services ensure that employees we place are contributing fully. Meanwhile, EIP's corporate volunteers offer consultation on finance and other issues."

Under EIP, employment specialists at NADAP will work with community-based organizations to recruit and screen prospective employees from non-traditional hiring pools, many of whom have been bypassed by the city's recent economic recovery. For example, the projects' partners will seek out young people who lack higher education or specialized skills but who can bring plenty of enthusiasm and energy to the workplace. Immigrants, especially recent immigrants, are also sometimes overlooked, as language or cultural barriers limit many newcomers.

Appropriate job candidates will be placed in small, independent businesses offering on-the-job training and ongoing opportunities to expand skills. As these employees become more productive, they will contribute more toward the businesses' profitability. Expansion of participating businesses will allow those employees opportunities for increased responsibilities and higher wages while creating new openings for other participants.

Two small enterprises participating in EIP are Adaptive Design Association (ADA)



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Each new initiative that we develop here at NADAP renews our respect for the complex challenges we face in bridging the gap between employers and job seekers. Programs like those highlighted in this newsletter can only work if they are carefully structured with consideration of both groups. We live in a diverse and dynamic city. Any organization seeking to build a strong and inclusive workforce must operate within the economic reality of this constantly changing marketplace. For us, this means quickly responding to its workforce needs with appropriately skilled and trained workers. To achieve this, collaborative relationships with significant input from all groups is key.

NADAP prides itself on staying informed, so that our employment-focused programs are relevant and targeted. When the Construction industry vocalized its concerns about slower recruitment rates and an aging workforce, NADAP responded by developing the Hudson Valley Employment Initiative (HVEI) in 1999. The building and construction sectors presented a new range of opportunities for our clients to build long-lasting and satisfying career. The Economic Independence Project (EIP), one of NADAP's most recent initiatives, specifically meets the needs of small businesses for expansion and the job needs of nontraditional populations.

NADAP's program have a history of positive and measurable economic impact—as more previously unemployed New Yorkers join higher income brackets and our partner-employers have access to an expanded workforce. This year at HVEI's Construction Career Day, six of the participating trade union representatives were graduates of NADAP's pre-apprenticeship program—shining examples of how one small opportunity can be turned into great success.

Effectively responding to the changing demands of the city's economy does not happen by working in isolation. The range of our collaborative relationships is evident at our annual "New York, New York" Luncheon. This event brings together our partners in business, labor, non-profit and the government sectors—people and organizations committed to improving our city. Well-maintained relationships with these partners have allowed us to serve New York for more than 30 years. With their support and collaboration, we will continue to meet the challenges ahead, as well.

Sincerely,

John A. Darin  
President & CEO

and Eric Sweet Furniture Restoration, both with fewer than five employees. ADA's mission is to allow children with disabilities to participate more fully in school, at play, and at home by creating customized, affordable, low-technology adaptive equipment. Eric Sweet, a craftsman with more than 30 years experience, repairs and refinishes antiques and fine furniture both on-site and in his workshop. (*See profiles, opposite page.*) Both businesses offer hands-on, on-the-job orientation and training, and both enterprises have expansion goals that will be furthered significantly by partnership with NADAP.

Small businesses are part of a healthy economy and support overall quality of life, thereby enhancing real estate values. They ensure that a broad range of services and amenities are available to those who

work or live nearby. Furthermore, small businesses are rooted in the community, often hiring from the surrounding area, purchasing goods and services locally, and keeping profits nearby. Because their employees, customers, and suppliers are local, small businesses are also less likely to cut and run during a temporary downturn.

"Small, independent businesses are indispensable here in New York," said Dr. Castle, "not only for all they contribute to quality of life in the city, but for entry-level jobs, living wages, and career paths they offer to residents. We've made a priority of strengthening the city's network of small businesses by training and screening employees, working to create jobs, and helping businesses grow in ways that are sustainable."

## ***Business***

### ***Profile:* Adaptive Design Association**

NADAP's services are central to the growth plans of the Adaptive Design Association (ADA). For the past two years, ADA has made custom adaptive equipment for children with disabilities. Using simple materials like high-strength cardboard and plastics, ADA creates solutions quickly and inexpensively. NADAP recently placed three interns with ADA, who will soon begin working on stools, shelving units, and other items for sale to institutions and the general public. Alex Truesdell, executive director of ADA, hopes that the income earned from selling such standardized items, which require less production time, will help support the organization's more time-consuming and costly core mission, creating individualized adaptive equipment and training others to do so.

ADA's three interns are South Asian women starting new lives after leaving abusive relationships. ADA is their first step toward self-sufficiency in a city, culture, and workforce that is largely strange and unexplored. For ADA, these three women will create some of the first items for sale to the general public, a step toward developing a self-sustaining model and expanding operations.

Ms. Truesdell sees the partnership with NADAP as a natural choice for the business she began. "Within shouting distance there are children who don't have the customized equipment they need and deserve. That's unacceptable. At the same time, there are people who need jobs. We're trying to put the two together—in a way that meets the unique needs of the children while giving people valuable on-the-job experience."

*These photos at show examples of ADA's handiwork, a feeding chair (top) and adapted tricycle (right) for Hannah.*



## ***Building*** ***New York's Future***

*Hiring challenges facing the construction industry could mean opportunities for New Yorkers entering the work force.*

The construction industry has traditionally offered a way for willing workers to achieve steady employment, better their families' financial positions, and advance in their careers. The industry still offers such opportunities. In fact, now is an ideal time for young workers to enter the industry, as many baby boomers are comfortably retiring after long, fruitful construction careers. Meanwhile, the work is growing. Over the next several years, more than a million construction jobs are expected to be created, according to the ETA. Many are concerned that construction firms will have difficulty meeting their hiring needs.

To address the impending labor shortage, the Education and Training Administration (ETA) of the U. S. Department of Labor (DOL) is driving efforts to alert job seekers of the opportunities in construction, and to prepare them to pursue those opportunities. As part of the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative, ETA funds projects to enhance the construction industry's image, recruit young people and others in non-traditional labor pools, and provide them with entry-level skills. The initiative has invested more than \$19 million in innovative partnerships between educational institutions, businesses, and workforce development organizations.

Efforts to meet workforce challenges and bring new employees into the industry are nowhere more urgently needed than in New York, where construction needs are growing and opportunities abound. Residential construction is very vigorous, as new housing construction and renovations of warehouses and other existing facilities strive to meet the region's voracious appetite for housing. The most publicly discussed construction

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## ***Business***

### ***Profile:* Eric Sweet Furniture Restoration**

Eric Sweet sees the decades of his work as a gradual process of expansion, both of his own skills as a craftsman and businessperson and of the size of his enterprise. Because of the quality of his work, his business grew through word-of-mouth and referrals. He recalls, for example, thousands of dollars of business that grew out of a single flyer he taped to a lamp post. When a column in *New York Magazine* recommended him as a craftsman who "has carved out a niche as one of Manhattan's few house-calling specialists," the orders increased significantly, and he knew he'd have to expand. In addition to taking on employees, some of the expansion possibilities Mr. Sweet is exploring with NADAP staff include Internet marketing and the creation of an apprenticeship program.

Apprenticeship training appeals to Mr. Sweet because of the lack of opportunities to learn the craft of furniture restoration. There are few programs that are affordable and accessible. "People don't usually pass this stuff on," he says. "They tend to keep their trade secrets. There are not a lot of people going into this work. It's rewarding to teach, though. As people learn, the light comes on, and they say, "Oh! I get it!"

*Eric Sweet can be reached by calling (845) 323-7059.*



**NADAP'S ANNUAL  
"NEW YORK, NEW YORK" LUNCHEON  
2005 HONOREES**



*J. B. Meyer  
Title,  
Affiliation*

Our luncheon celebrates the enduring commitment to our city that we share with our public, private, and non-profit partners. This year's recipient of the **Lewis Rudin Award** is **Jeffrey Gural, Chairman, Newmark & Company**. The award recognizes distinguished civic and business leadership exemplifying the spirit of our city and of NADAP. The 2005 **Business Recognition Award** recipient is **J. B. Meyer, President, Circle Line Harbor Cruises, LLC**. The award recognizes firms who provide opportunity for successful employment to NADAP clients.



*Jeffrey Gural  
Chairman,  
Newmark & Company  
Real Estate, Inc.*

**2004 NADAP  
Luncheon**

*Photo, left to right: guests Percy Sutton, Attorney, Chairman of the Board of City Broadcasting Corp.; Lawrence Singer, Senior Vice President, The Segal Company, and Chairman, NADAP Board of Directors; Honoree Paul T. Williams Jr., Esq., President, One Hundred Black Men, Inc., Of Counsel, Bryan Cave LLP, and Vice Chair, Toussaint Capital Partners; David Dinkins, Professor of Public Affairs, Columbia University, and Former Mayor, New York City; John Darin, President & CEO, NADAP, Inc.*



*For more information about the programs in this newsletter or other NADAP programs, please call (212) 986-1170.*

**Building  
New York's Future**

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effort, development of the planned West Side stadium, is expected to generate thousands of construction jobs. Furthermore, at the time of this writing, President Bush's budget proposal included hundreds of millions of dollars allocated for transportation infrastructure projects in New York and New Jersey.

In March, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced the formation of the Commission on Construction Opportunity to address employment needs of the growing sector. The group will work "to ensure that these solid, permanent jobs go to New Yorkers, particularly minorities, women, returning veterans and new high school graduates, who have been well prepared to succeed." More than 250,000 construction jobs are expected to be created in New York over the next 30 years.

Policy makers hoping to address a construction labor shortage should look closely at job readiness and pre-apprenticeship programs. The high-quality, intensive training afforded by such programs brings well-qualified, job-ready applicants into the work force. Pre-apprenticeship programs are also attractive to job-seekers. For example, such initiatives allow one to earn while learning, providing immediate income rather than postponing earning until the program has been completed. They are the first step in a career path offering advancement and opportunity, such as the option to work for oneself eventually. Pre-apprenticeship programs are a valuable means of introducing eager job applicants to the tasks and rewards of an industry that badly needs them.



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