

NYU Wagner Capstone Executive Summary

May 2007

The Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty is a comprehensive social service and advocacy agency that coordinates the efforts of 25 Jewish Community Councils (JCCs) located throughout New York City. In September 2006, Met Council commissioned Team Etgar to look deeper into the issue of Jewish near poverty in New York City raised in the 2005 Jewish Near Poverty report. The report indicated 4 priority areas for this population: housing, healthcare, counseling, and employment services. After conducting extensive site visits at pre-selected JCCs, and analyzing the data in light of the 200 report, the Team decided to focus on its efforts on career services among the Haredi and Jewish immigrant working age population in Flatbush, Queens, Williamsburg, Bensonhurst, and Boro Park.

The team engaged in a multi-faceted research process to: a) paint a demographic picture of these 5 communities, using US census data and data from the UJA Federation of NY population study; b) provide information on the current careers services at each of the 5 JCCs through key informant interviews with the executive directors and workforce development professionals; and c) identify, through internet research, other location, national, and international nonprofit organizations that are successfully implementing career services programs. The Team then analyzed the data, and other background research on career services, in order to make recommendations to Met Council on how they can strengthen the career services pillar of the organization's service provision.

While these system-wide recommendations were informed by the data from these 5 communities, they are designed to be applied throughout the JCC network. In order to implement these recommendations, Met Council career services must first find funding sources to permit a community-based approach. The five recommendations include: 1) Expand the comprehensive centralized data collection system to the JCC network; 2) Met Council to establish relationships with job training vendors; 3) Met Council to send job developers into the field; 4) Met Council to create a system-wide job bank; and 5) Use of physical space as an advantage.

The Team recognizes that implementing these recommendations require the investment of financial resources. The data in this report has validated the need for the career services in alleviating near poverty in Haredi and Jewish immigrant communities in New York City. Hence, there is support for the need to raise further additional government and private resources in advancing this service area.