

JFSA's Employment Program 2013-2014 Report



For JFSA Employment Counselors, success means helping clients to take the right steps that will lead them to find jobs in their desired career path. Enabling community members to find sustainable, meaningful and gainful employment is one of our agency's most important areas of focus.

Employment Counsellors work with clients from a wide variety of backgrounds, with most falling into one of three groups: young Canadians, newcomers and 55+. These three have different needs and require varied approaches.

Young Canadians – In their 20s and 30s, this group is familiar with local customs and are quite proficient in English and technology. They recently completed schooling and have earned credentials, yet find it difficult to find employment in their chosen careers. A slow economic recovery has brought a decrease in job prospects for this generation. JFSA helps this demographic through resume building, development of interview skills and assistance in networking.

Newcomers – Most of newcomer clients come from Israel, South America, Mexico and Eastern Europe. These individuals often hold extensive experience in their home countries, along with impressive credentials. Language and cultural barriers, along with a lack of foreign credential recognition can make it difficult for them to find gainful employment. To address their needs, JFSA organizes group workshops on job search and interview skills, assistance in understanding Canadian-style interviews, referrals to resources, and support in finding jobs in their professions.

55+ - Over the last couple of years, we have seen an increase in the number of older individuals needing support with finding employment. Financial difficulties necessitate their need to be employed. Our case workers assist clients through networking and helping them to develop computer skills by referring them to resources for 55+, along with those that teach workplace technology.

Last year, 139 clients were served, with 103 new intakes!

Community partners that support the delivery of programs and serve as a resource for our clients include:

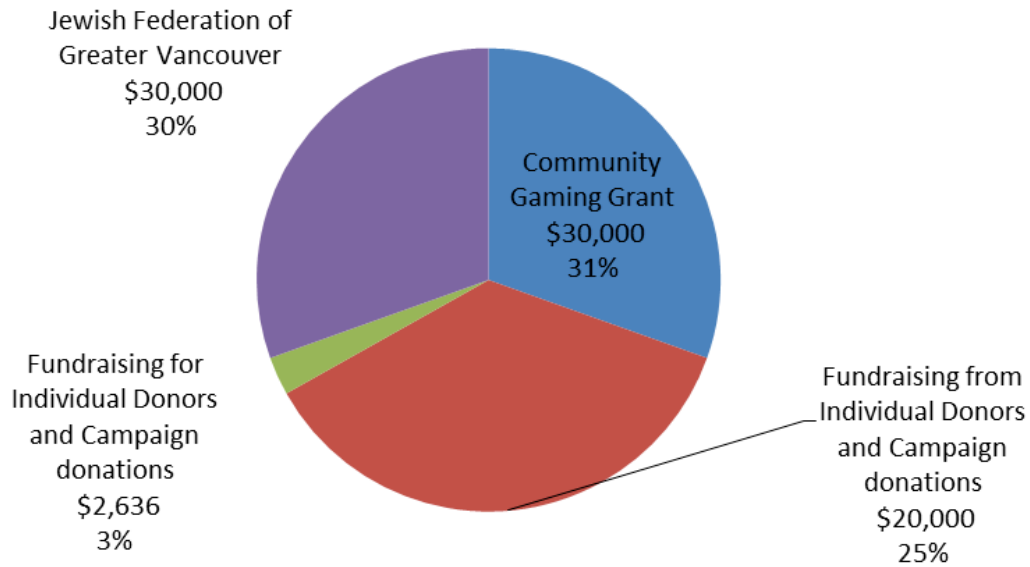
- MOSAIC – Skills Connect Program
- YMCA's Youth Skills at Work Program
- Neil Squire Society
- Job Options BC – Mental Health and 55 Plus
- Avia – Back in Motion
- Langara College – Employment Access Program
- Dress for Success
- Embers Business Training and Support Services
- Immigrant Services Society (ISS)
- Vancouver Public Library
- Vancouver Community College
- Skills Trades Employment Program (STEP)
- Douglas College's Employment Skills Access Program (ESA)

Staffing

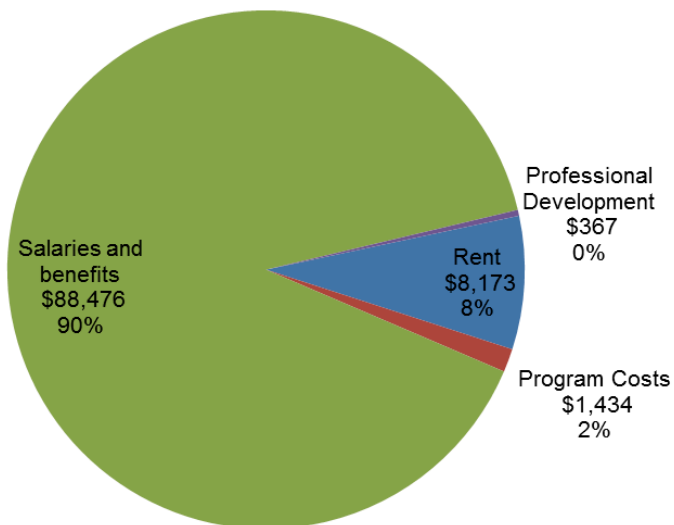
Last year's funding levels allow JFSA to deliver services with a staff capacity of two part-time staff (1.0 FTE) that carry a load of 70 active clients per Employment Counsellor.

Program Budget: \$98,450

Revenues 2013-2014



Expenditures 2013-2014





Arnold's Story

When Arnold first moved to Vancouver in 2000, he needed help finding housing and work and JFSA helped him establish a life in his new city. Years later, with a positive memory of his experiences with JFSA, he reached out to the agency again during his time of need.

In 2012, at the age of 46, Arnold had reached a low point in his professional and personal life. Aware that he was going to be fired from his job, and facing a divorce from his wife of 7 years, he suffered from low self-esteem, and feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness. Arnold needed help, and he decided to make three critical decisions: he joined a men's support group, he began seeing a therapist, and he contacted JFSA.

Working with his employment counsellor at JFSA, Arnold developed a plan to address his impending firing. They prepared a proposal for Arnold's boss, an exit strategy, whereby he would be allowed to resign, and to leave with dignity. His boss agreed, accepted the resignation letter, and agreed to provide an employment reference, as well.

Shortly after resigning, Arnold, with the help of his counsellor took the positive, necessary steps to reestablish his career. He said yes to every opportunity, and worked diligently to further his skillset. Arnold attended JFSA employment workshops, practiced and polished his interview skills, and conducted several informational interviews, which proved to be very useful. Arnold's counsellor encouraged him to go after his "dream jobs," jobs he would love, but didn't feel confident enough to apply for. But he did apply, and was hired by a not-for-profit organization in Hawaii that focuses on early childhood development.

His JFSA counsellor stayed in contact and helped Arnold stay focused and positive during a difficult first few months in Hawaii. Now, he earns well above state-average salary, bicycles to work, and has a comprehensive benefits package, too. After some dark years, Arnold is living his dream.

"I accomplished so much in a short period of time because I asked for help and you were there. Thank you for giving me hope, encouragement and for supporting me during such a difficult moment in my life."

For more information on this program:

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