



Center for  
Employment  
Opportunities



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 19, 2020

**REDF, Seattle Jobs Initiative, and Center for Employment Opportunities Receive  
\$1.2M USDA Grant to Train Employment Social Enterprises to Serve SNAP Participants**

*REDF will lead group in creating a new program to train  
employment social enterprises to deliver SNAP Employment & Training services*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – REDF received a \$1.2 million grant from USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service to create an innovative new program that expands employment social enterprises’ capacity to provide on-the-job training and work experience to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants. REDF and partners Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI) and Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) will provide technical assistance to up to 400 employment social enterprises on offering SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) services.

“With this funding, employment social enterprises (ESEs) across the country will be able to provide jobs and support to thousands of SNAP participants striving for a better life who face real barriers to entering the workforce,” said REDF President and CEO Carla Javits. “SNAP resources will allow the ESE sector to expand its impact, reaching more people when it’s needed most.”

USDA funding will be used to create a program that offers a comprehensive range of training, technical assistance, peer support, and professional development opportunities to significantly expand the capacity of ESEs to deliver SNAP E&T services. When implemented, SNAP E&T provides critical federal support for vocational training that can quickly scale to meet the need, which has greatly increased due to the economic impact of COVID-19.

Seattle Jobs Initiative and Center for Employment Opportunities bring a wealth of SNAP E&T knowledge and expertise to the program. CEO is an employment social enterprise with experience as a SNAP E&T partner in nearly 30 cities. SJI, a workforce intermediary supporting adults with low-incomes and limited skills, is a nationally recognized expert in SNAP E&T policy and practice that since 2015 has partnered with the Food and Nutrition Service to operate the national SNAP to Skills technical assistance project.

“Eighty percent of employment social enterprise clients are justice-impacted. SNAP Employment & Training allows CEO the capacity each year to provide work experience and skills training to thousands of returning citizens in need of food security and a job,” stated Sam Schaeffer, Executive Director of CEO.

“We’re excited to extend this tool to our peers who will support SNAP recipients with job training and food access during a critical time for our communities and workforce.”

“To date, SJI has helped nearly 30 states operationalize their SNAP E&T programs,” said SJI’s Director of Consulting, David Kaz. “This exciting project will take a complementary, ground-up approach to building SNAP E&T by substantially increasing its capacity to serve ESE participants and help them enter and thrive in the workforce.”

This grant is part of USDA Food and Nutrition’s commitment to expanding its national third-party provider network for SNAP E&T – learn more about their efforts [here](#).

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**REDF** (the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund) is a pioneering venture philanthropy accelerating a national movement of employment social enterprises – mission-driven, revenue-generating businesses that invest the money they make into helping people striving to overcome employment barriers get jobs, keep jobs, and build a better life. Independent research shows this approach works. It leads to greater economic security and mobility and a significant rate of return to society—\$2.23 in benefits for every \$1 invested. For more information, visit [www.redf.org](http://www.redf.org)

**The Center for Employment Opportunities** (CEO) is the largest national provider of employment services for people coming home from incarceration. CEO is 501(c)3 nonprofit and currently operates in 30 sites across 11 states.

**Seattle Jobs Initiative** (SJI) is an outcome- and equity-focused, industry-driven workforce intermediary with 23 years of experience coordinating workforce systems, services, and partnerships between government, community-based organizations, education and training institutions, business, and industry. SJI’s vision is to help (1) individuals achieve self-sufficiency, (2) equity-minded organizations and agencies achieve success with their programs, and (3) workforce development and education systems better address social equity issues and serve the needs of communities and businesses. To meet this vision, SJI combines regional programs with regional and national research and consulting/technical assistance.