



140 Employed

Opportunity Junction fights poverty by helping low-income Contra Costa residents gain the skills and confidence to get and keep jobs that support themselves and their families.



1,124 Served

Message from the Executive Director

Thanks to you, this has been a year of incredible growth, both for Opportunity Junction as an organization as well as for our job seekers. We served more local residents than ever before: 1,124 people! We placed 98 job seekers into initial employment, helped 42 alumni earn raises or find new jobs, and racked up an 18-month retention rate of 81%. Highlights:

ADAPTED FOR GROWTH. This year, we increased our capacity to explore new opportunities by negotiating a lease extension and obtaining funding to renovate the office. We updated bathrooms, added new offices, moved the intern workstations, and even upgraded our technology.

REFINED ROAD MAP TO COLLEGE. As we support high-need 18- to 24-year-olds at Los Medanos College, we adjusted our model to focus on helping these young adults securely attach to the college while they pursue the educational dream of their choice, whether Career Technical Education certificate, A.A. degree, or transfer to a four-year institution.

JOINED THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE. We are proud to be a part of this new collaborative, an alliance with nine other organizations with one goal in mind--to ensure that anyone who needs a job has access to the resources they need, close to home. Opportunity Junction added two new career counselors placed in Antioch and at Los Medanos College, as well as a Career Center Coordinator to host evening career services and workshops.

PLANNED A NEW HEALTHCARE CAREERS PATHWAYS (HCP) PROGRAM. Funded by John Muir Community Health Fund and in partnership with Ombudsman Services of Contra Costa & Solano and Mount Diablo Adult Education, the program creates a new partnership model for delivery of training incorporating wrap around services including one-on-one case management, food and transportation support, job placement assistance, and professional skills.

We know that these accomplishments belong to the entire Opportunity Junction community, whether donor, volunteer, staff, participant, community partner, or alum. Thank you! We could not do this work without you.

With gratitude,

Alissa Friedman, Executive Director



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The life changing work that Opportunity Junction does would not be possible without the generosity of our supporters. Thank you!

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A big thank you to all of our volunteers! Thanks to the 125 volunteers who took on critical roles that we don't have staff resources to cover.

"I get tremendous gratification knowing that my small contribution means so much to Opportunity Junction participants. It means as much to me as it does to them."

~Estelle Evans, Food Bank Team Volunteer Lead

Your support is important to us. If we inadvertently misspelled your name or omitted your gift, please accept our apologies and contact us at (925) 776-1133.



“It was amazing to participate in this program where everyone’s goal was to help me succeed! I felt completely supported, uplifted, and valued. I have gained so much more than computer and administrative skills. Life Skills class helped my confidence soar and I was able to find strength in myself. Thanks to the support of everyone at Opportunity Junction, I am finally in a position and in a career I have been dreaming about. I will be forever thankful for my experience there. I feel accomplished and am a good role model for my daughter.”

~ Kiana, Job Training and Placement Program Alumna

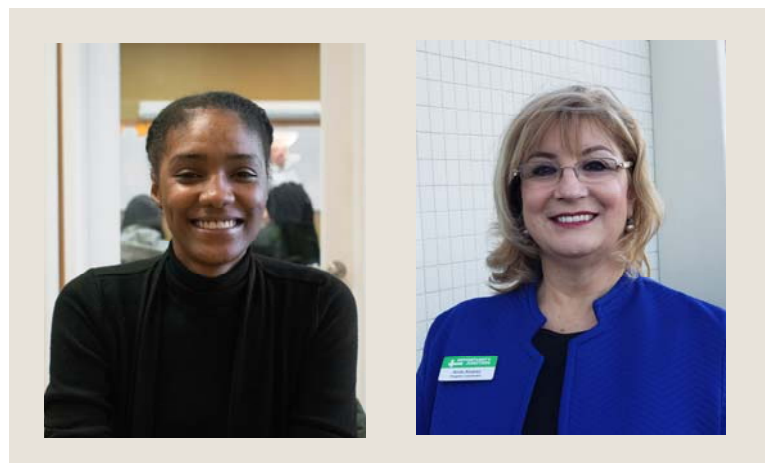
Job Training and Placement Program

The **Job Training and Placement Program** prepares participants for administrative careers, combining computer training with life skills, case management, paid work experience, mental health, career skills, job placement, and long-term alumni services. More than 95% enter employment within 3 months of program completion, and alumni programs support long-term career growth. We have verified employment data for 40% of our alumni at the five-year mark post-placement.

Five-year retention rate of 72%

Technology Center

The evening **Technology Center** offers no-cost access to computers, and the Internet, as well as classes in software applications, English as a Second Language, and a drop-in typing class. We also ran a series of evening informational events on topics like housing, employment, and immigration. We also added evening career services this year, hosted by Career Center Coordinator Maro'Jene Alexander, pictured here alongside Arcie Alvarez, Technology Center Coordinator.



643 local residents served

Everyone who is willing to work hard deserves an opportunity to succeed.

Road Map to College

Road Map to College targets low-income 18- to 24-year-old young adults who are out of school, out of work, and facing barriers to employment. In partnership with Los Medanos College, Opportunity Junction offers one year of intensive support to help students persist into the third semester as they pursue the college track of their choice: Associates degree, transfer to a four-year college, or career technical certification.

71% of Road Map's young adults are still enrolled at Los Medanos College or have been placed into employment

“Before Road Map, I was struggling,” says Justin, a Los Medanos College student enrolled in the Emergency Medical Services program. Justin was focused, working and going to school, but unsure how he would pay the many costs which included tuition, textbooks, uniform, a physical, and EMT certification test. Road Map college and career counselor Dionne helped Justin apply for financial aid, register for classes, and manage his time better. She helped him get a part-time job as an EMT driver, giving him much needed experience. Justin is due to graduate with his A.A. soon, working full-time as an EMT driver, and making plans to apply to the Fire Academy. Says Justin, “Dionne and Road Map made all the difference! I’m on my way to the career I’ve always wanted.”

~ Justin, Road Map to College Student

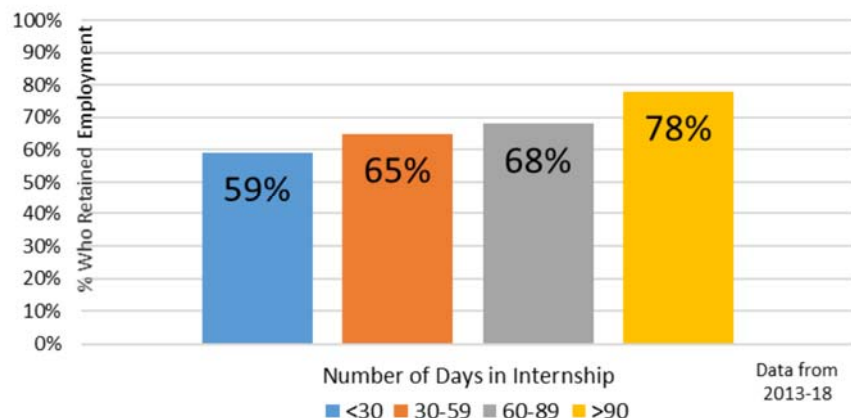


Employment Retention

With a mission that includes helping job seekers both get AND keep jobs, retention is as important to us as initial placement. We analyzed our alumni employment data to explore how to improve retention and identified a strong correlation between retention and length of time in the Job Training and Placement Program (JTPP) internship.

As the chart shows, there is value in a longer internship: more training, experience, and confidence. We have begun encouraging JTPP interns to stay longer; however, correlation does not equal causation. Those who leave early in the internship may have greater immediate financial need and accept jobs that aren't as good a fit, leading to lower retention. Future case-by-case study of early leavers may help us refine this analysis.

18-Month Retention by Time in Internship



Opportunity Junction program alumni have earned more than \$56 million!

Career Counseling and Placement Assistance

Career Counseling and Placement Assistance provides individualized case management, career counseling, group activities, and job placement services at SparkPoint Contra Costa in Bay Point. Opportunity Junction employs two full-time career counselors who offer employment assistance to a broad spectrum of career interests.

Steven, a dining room supervisor, never imagined a job with full benefits, annual bonuses, and opportunities for growth. But that's exactly what he got after working with career counselor Leticia Wiesner, who helped him update his resume, practice interviewing, and research companies. Says Steven's manager Chris at the Waterford at Rossmoor, "Matching candidate skill sets to my open positions was a huge help and made it easy to streamline the interview process and accelerated the training process. Steven is doing well and his attendance is exemplary."

~ Steven, Career Counseling and Placement Assistance Participant,
with his new manager Chris



Starting wages increased to \$15.60 per hour

Do-It-Yourself Tax Assistance

During tax season, we teach low-income taxpayers to prepare their own returns using a free website. Experienced, trained session leaders — alumni of the Job Training and Placement Program — run the program for three months, offering coaching in English and Spanish.

248 families claimed more than \$445,000 in tax refunds

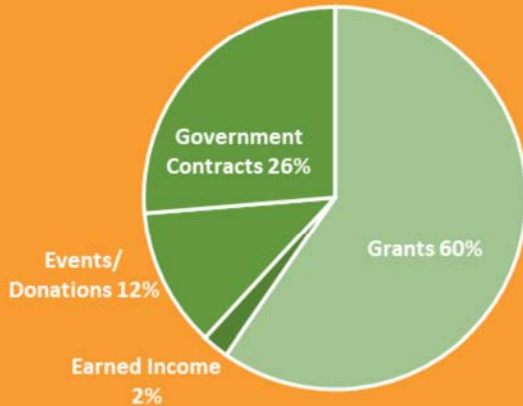
- 99% were very confident or pretty sure that they prepared their taxes correctly.
- 91% would likely come to another Do-It-Yourself tax session next year.
- 88% said it was easy to follow the session leader's instructions.
- 71% intended to save a portion of their refund.

Served 1,124 local residents in all programs for the year.

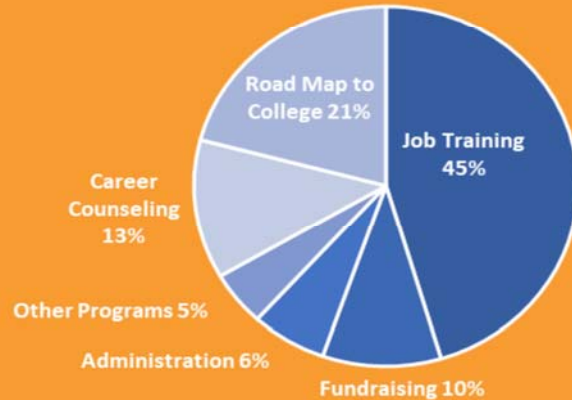
OPPORTUNITY JUNCTION

Finances and Support FY 2017-18

Operating Revenue \$2,317,640



Operating Expenses \$1,849,045



Two hundred supporters gathered on May 5 for a night of festivities and fundraising for our 2018 Imagine Gala - Celebrate Connection, presented by Chevron. Our guests, sponsors, and donors raised nearly \$160,000 to support our life changing employment programs.

"I love my job. I am able to support my children on my own."
~ K'Zia Wissner (JTTP, Class 47)

See featured alumna K'Zia's full story here: <http://bit.do/KZiaWissner>



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2019 Imagine Gala

Saturday,
April 6, 2019

If you want to get
involved, call us at
(925) 776-1133.

Tickets available at:
www.opportunityjunction.org/gala

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