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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE SKILLSOURCE GROUP, INC. ANNOUNCES TWO NEW GRANTS FROM THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

June 20, 2011 – The *SkillSource* Group, Inc. (*SkillSource*), the non-profit arm of the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board (NVWIB), was recently awarded two (2) grants from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) totaling \$81,470 through their Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs. The funds will increase transportation options for low-income individuals and people with disabilities in the Northern Virginia region.

SkillSource will utilize \$40,470 in funding through the JARC program to support the Northern Virginia Road to Employment project, a van service that will transport low-income inmates at the Fairfax County Alternative Incarceration Branch (AIB) to and from work. The Northern Virginia Road to Employment van will be operated by *SkillSource* and will serve clients at the *SkillSource*-Fairfax County Sheriff Employment Center within the AIB, which opened in May 2008. This Employment Center, the first of its kind in a local Virginia jail, prepares inmates for community reentry by providing job search assistance, career guidance and skills training, and the opportunity to gain employment while incarcerated, which can translate into full-time employment upon release. With JARC funding, *SkillSource* will expand employment opportunities for this low-income population and provide a reliable source of transportation to work sites.

In addition, \$41,000 in new grant funding through the New Freedom Program, *SkillSource* will support the employment-related transportation needs of disabled adult job seekers in the Ticket to Work Program throughout the metro region. In October 2010, *SkillSource* became an Employment Network for the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia. This workforce initiative assists disabled adults receiving Social Security Disability payments to prepare and place them into employment and maximize their economic self-sufficiency. With this funding, *SkillSource* will support approximately 100 disabled job seekers with taxi vouchers and gas cards, to assist their transportation requirements for the first four to six weeks of their new employment.

Janet Samuelson, the Chairman of *SkillSource*, said, “In a difficult economy, job seekers must contend with barriers unique to their circumstances, in addition to their transportation needs. *SkillSource* is pleased for the opportunity to further enhance the delivery of employment services to job seekers with disabilities and ex-offenders, as they respond to the challenges of re-entering the Northern Virginia workforce.”

For more information on the *SkillSource* Group, Inc. and the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board, visit www.myskillsource.org or call (703) 752-1606.

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*A non-profit entity of the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board
enhancing workforce excellence and economic prosperity*