



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE *SKILLSOURCE* GROUP, INC. AWARDED \$500,000 BY U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TO ENHANCE COLLABORATION FOR REENTRY INITIATIVES

June 9, 2015 -- The *SkillSource* Group, Inc. (the non-profit arm of the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board, Workforce Area #11) has been awarded \$500,000 by the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration to provide returning citizens comprehensive workforce and training services prior to and after their release from the Fairfax County Pre-Release Center and the Adult Detention Center. *SkillSource* and Northern Virginia was one of 20 sites in the nation to be awarded program funding.

Successful community re-entry for offenders in Northern Virginia requires a comprehensive, multi-sector collaborative approach during incarceration. In partnership with the Fairfax County Sheriff, Fairfax County Government (Human Services), Fairfax County Public Schools, the Fairfax Re-Entry Council and Opportunities, Alternatives, and Resources (OAR), the *SkillSource* Success Through Education, Employment and Reintegration (STEER) Initiative will prepare 150 offenders currently incarcerated at the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center (ADC) located in Fairfax, Virginia to reenter the workforce and for successful reintegration back into their communities as productive citizens. This initiative will run for two years and will be aligned with existing reentry workforce services already underway.

Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid, who manages the Fairfax County ADC, said “Reducing repeat criminal offenses in Fairfax County requires all public agencies to collaborate effectively to have an impact. We look forward to being part of a broader community effort to enhance public safety in our community.”

The *SkillSource* STEER Initiative will expand capacity at the *SkillSource* Pre-Release Employment Center, operated in partnership with the Fairfax County Sheriff’s Office since 2007 and the first of its kind in a local Virginia jail. Effectively integrating workforce and reentry services at the Fairfax County ADC with workforce development programs offered at the six *SkillSource* One-Stop Employment Centers throughout Northern Virginia will prepare ex-offenders to effectively utilize a wide variety of community services upon their release to find and retain employment to ensure successful reintegration back into the community.

The Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Sharon Bulova, noted that “Our efforts to integrate public safety, education and human service programs to improve community outcomes and employment throughout the County are a critical priority of the Board of Supervisors. I am very pleased that Fairfax County’s efforts are being recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor.”

In highlighting the critical role of the public workforce system with offender reentry, returning citizens will be focused towards a stable career pathway in growing Northern Virginia business sectors, such as information technology, automotive services, construction, hospitality and food service, and retail services, with potential for future advancement and self-sufficiency.

Todd Rowley, the Chairman of the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board and Commercial Market Executive at Cardinal Bank, added: “Our Local Workforce Board has been a leader in offender reentry efforts and we are honored to be identified by the U.S. Department of Labor to further enhance our workforce initiatives. Our coalition of workforce and education partners, along with the Fairfax County Sheriff, intends to collaborate effectively to both reduce recidivism and to enhance public safety in the County and the Northern Virginia region.”

The ***SkillSource*** Group, Inc. and the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board (Workforce Area #11) serve over 1.9 million residents and thousands of businesses within the counties of Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William and the cities of Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park. For more information, please call (703) 752-1606 or visit www.myskillsource.org.

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