

The City of Gary has designed a five-stage program spearheaded by the Gary Youth Services Bureau (YSB) to help the City of Gary launch a campaign to create a culture of financially empowered residents. The program's target audience is broken down into 4 categories: Elementary School Students, Students in After School Programs, 15-24 year old youth who participate in the Gary Youth Works Employment Program, and parents.

A new approach

Through use of its Mobile Literacy Lab, the City of Gary will take its financial literacy programming to the city's underserved communities. The program uses a web-based approach, with a website where registrants can enroll and be directed to web-based resources and instructor led sites. The nature of the program allows YSB to utilize web analytics to track mobile and web based visits to website.

In addition to this ability to "Go mobile", collaboration and the strategic use of press and community partners allow YSB to employ public spaces and take the training to the community. Working closely with its housing authority and public library system, the initiative will bring advisors and notebook computers to sites where they are needed the most, a feature that allows every citizen access to Financial Literacy education.

A primary piece of the initiative will also be to use city sponsored summer programming to build literacy and numeracy skills and reduce summer learning loss amongst youth. Over 210 youth participate in city sponsored summer programs

annually, providing an opportunity to engage youth in ongoing financial literacy.

Moving the program forward

Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson serves as the chief champion for Gary's financial education efforts. The Mayor uses the press to inform the public of the effort, and encourages individuals and organizations from the financial, business, community and faith-based sectors to collaborate, recruit, engage, support, and help sustain the program. Throughout the program, Mayor Freeman-Wilson remains informed of the progress of the initiative, receives monthly reports, and is invited to speak and congratulate the graduates on successful completion of the city's annual financial education initiative.

Partnerships

The Gary Youth Services Bureau (YSB) serves as the lead agency for Gary's financial education program by providing financial web based literacy education programs and donating space and technology used to engage participants. 5/3 Bank, Horizon and Centier Banks, Indiana University Northwest, Indiana Parenting Institute and Project Rebuild Truancy, the Salvation Army, and Communities That Care also play a critical role. In addition, partnerships with several area schools are essential. Through direct recruitment at schools and joint marketing efforts with collaborative partners, YSB through it takes advantage of captive audiences of youth already engaged in after school programming throughout the city, and engages middle school and high school students and young adults in the program.



Mayor Karen
Freeman-Wilson

OPPOSITE
*Kids who
participate in
Gary's after-
school Cafe 839
go online to
learn about how
banks work.*

Through use of its Mobile Literacy Lab, the City of Gary will take its financial literacy programming to the city's underserved communities.



ABOVE *Marty Hernandez from Fifth Third Bank teaches kids about understanding debit cards. The Youth Services Bureau sponsored a financial literacy workshop for youth along with partners Fifth Third Bank and Indiana University Northwest.*

The DollarWise investment

The DollarWise Innovation Grant, awarded in January 2014, will be used to:

- Market the city's financial education initiative and attract financial partners;
- build a stronger collaboration of financial institutions to lead in program design;
- establish relationships between the community and involved partners;
- recruit youth participants through school based events, and engage a minimum of 100 youth and 50 adults in the program's initial launch;
- aid in the creation of a 15 unit mobile literacy lab;
- and evaluate the program (pre/post-tests, surveys) in partnership with Indiana University Northwest and build a sustainability model with a 80% rate of increased financial literacy skills.

Gary looks to become a city brimming with new businesses, improved education, and increased opportunities for its residents. The city views the DollarWise funding as an opportunity to: position Gary at the forefront of preparing Steel City residents for the anticipated economic recovery, to make great strides toward breaking the cycle of poverty, teach residents to invest in the long term financial success of their families and the city, and build a generation that will be financially empowered.