

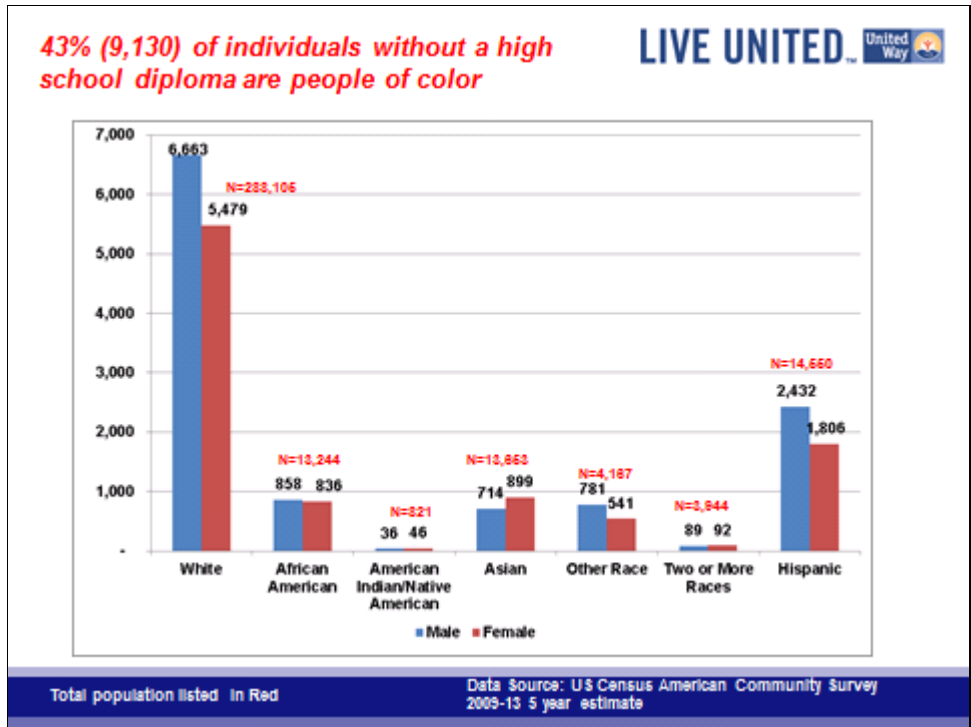
The HIRE Initiative

Celebrating where we are; looking forward to where we are going.

United Way of Dane County has a long history of investing in programs that help individuals get prepared for, secure and retain employment. We also have been working on racial equality and disparities. Challenged by our Board of Directors to do even more about the poverty issues in our community after the 2013 release of the Race to Equity report; we changed one area of our Agenda for Change from “There is a reduction in violence towards individuals and families” to “More people on the pathways out of poverty.”

Our HIRE Initiative is helping hundreds of people with remedial education and industry specific training. Additionally the Employer Council has committed to hiring people out of poverty with a focus on people of color.

Census data from 2010-2014 estimates that 12,067 adults (aged 25 to 64) in Dane County do not have a high school diploma. We also know that individuals without a high school degree have a much harder time finding employment and their unemployment negatively impacts our community. The chart below shows that more males lack a high school diploma than females.



Without a high school diploma it is harder to find employment where you can earn a wage that will support you and your family. Often times, people without a high school diploma work two or more jobs and live in poverty or just above the poverty level.

We also know that the consequences of lost jobs, especially long-term unemployment, have implications for all of our Agenda for Change areas. Loss of employment has contributed to loss of housing. It also has an impact on our Health agenda on behavioral health services and impacts access to employer-sponsored health plans. It has an impact on our Income agenda as parents struggle to find employment and their focus is not always on getting their kids to school and often youth have to find employment to help support the family. This was reemphasized at our Board discussion in November 2013 on Born Learning recognizing the impact parental stress has on the brain development of their children.

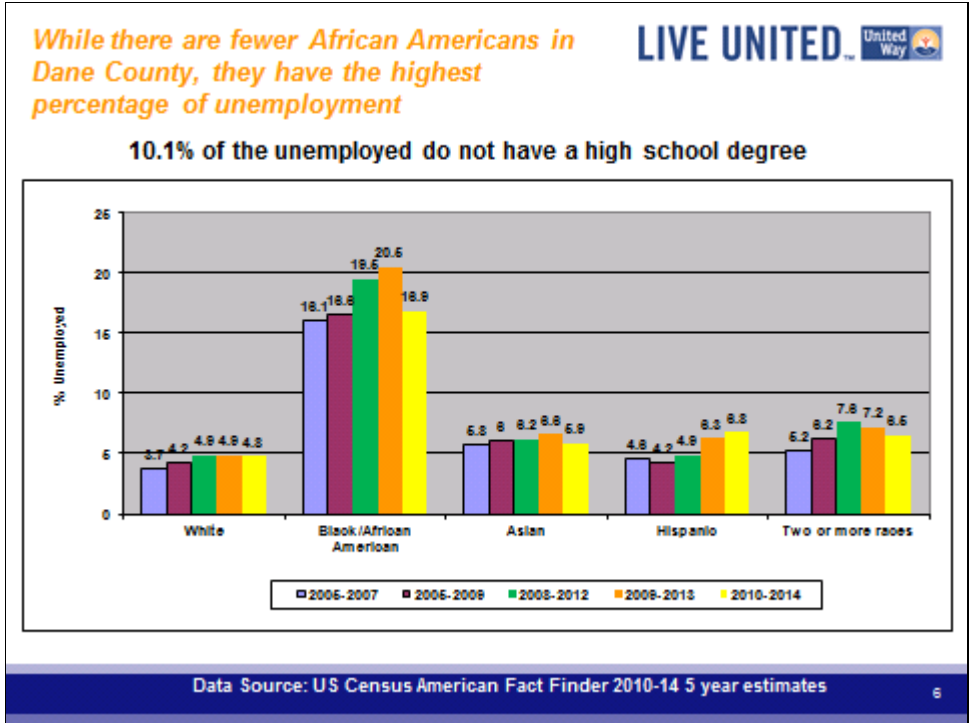
A Look at Income Stability in Dane County

To provide an economic backdrop to this discussion, it is worth noting that the Dane County median income of \$57,687 (down from \$60,519¹ in 2011) is much higher than the state average of \$50,395 (down from \$51,598 in 2011) and the US average of \$50,054 (down from \$51,914 in 2011), largely because of a highly educated population and a high percentage of jobs in higher education, the government sector, and well-paying service industries.

In evaluating how the economy has impacted our unemployment rate, we see the Dane County unemployment rate still high at 6.8% as of July 2013 compared to 5% as of August 2012. The state of Wisconsin ranks with us at 6.8% and the United States rate is at 7.4%². As of November 2013, the Wisconsin Workforce Development WORKnet states that the unemployment rate for Madison (only) is 4.1%.

¹ US Census Quickfacts 2006-2010

² Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Bureau of Workforce Information – July 2013



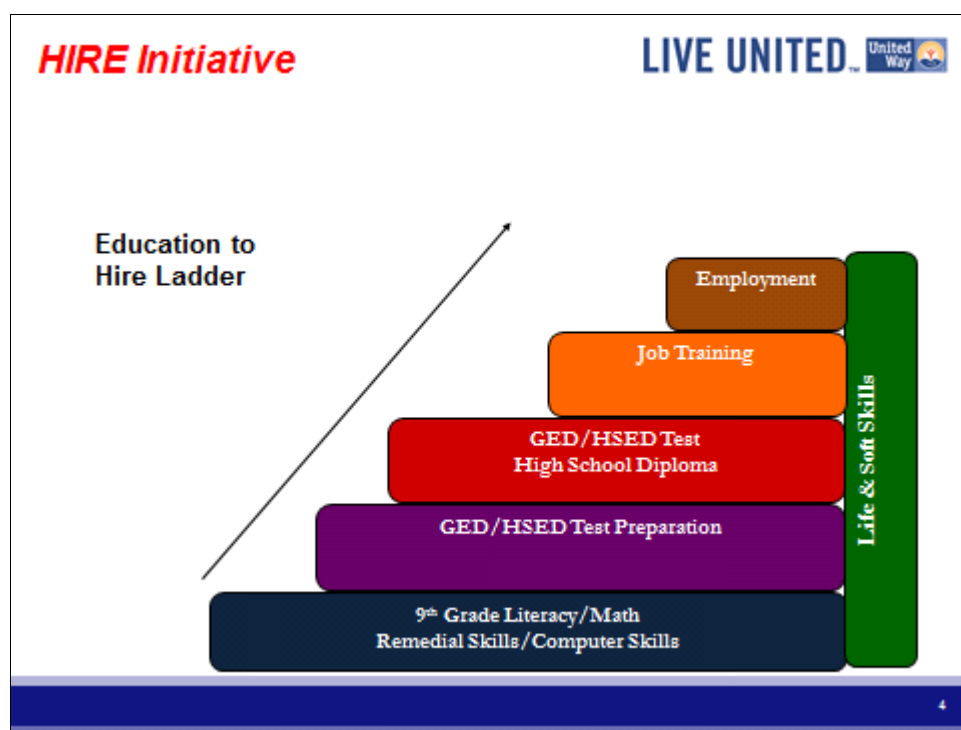
Even before the Great Recession, the labor market had begun to structurally change.

- 1) Employers and particularly those in healthcare, biotechnology and logistics need skilled employees but not necessarily those with 4-year college degrees.
- 2) Dane County has been producing just over 300 dropouts annually, this is down from prior years when it ranged between 400 to 500 on an annual basis³. As a result, they are ill-prepared for family sustaining 21st century jobs.
- 3) The recession has hurt those with low skills the most. In particular the highest unemployment rates coincide with the demographics of our highest dropout rates.
- 4) The low-wage jobs that we had 30 years ago now require more technical skills but, on the up-side, they are more likely to have health and retirement benefits.

³ DPI 2014/2015 School Year Drop Out Data

The HIRE Model – How we are making a difference

After a year and a half of research, listening to experts in employment, people seeking work, employers and our partner agencies, we began to look at new ways to help non-high school graduates and people living in poverty navigate their way through the various and complex systems needed to get the job they desire. The new model was developed after significant community engagement telling us how different it was for people to access jobs and the difficulty fitting into employer culture.



How the model works

- Collaborative model with 7 partner agencies -- Literacy Network, Centro Hispano, Madison-area Urban Ministry, Omega School, Urban League of Greater Madison, Vera Court, and the YWCA are collaborating to ensure that all participants receive an Individualized Hiring Plan (IHP) that outlines the steps needed to achieve their education and employment goals.

- Once the initial intake has been completed, staff from the partner agencies help participants develop an Individualized Hiring Plan (IHP) outlining the steps that participants need to reach their goals.
- We are training people for the following industries: Customer Service/Hospitality, Food/Restaurant, Health Care, Manufacturing, Information Technology, Road Construction, Skilled Trades and Certified Nursing Assistant.
- Each step on the HIRE ladder provides participants with the various skill sets they will need to find and maintain employment.
- Participants can enter this initiative through any of the partner agencies.
- Each of the partner agencies tracks and monitors progress of the participants to ensure that they are reaching their goals through the use of a shared database. This encourages each agency to see and make referrals to programs as needed for the participant's growth.
- Community volunteers assist in tutoring, mentoring and coaching the HIRE participants at each step in the process.
- Employers partners joined the HIRE Employer Council, where we look explore best practices in recruiting, hiring, on boarding practices, retention and other strategies that will help with successful employment. We want careers for the HIRE participants not just a job.
- Employers are linked with a non-profit partner to provide a mutually consultative relationship.

Communicating with Employers

- The HIRE Employer Council meets monthly to discuss issues, share best practices and learnings for hiring and retaining employees of color and people living in poverty.
- Participating employers are then matched with one of our partner agencies to help provide them with employees.
- The non-profit partner works closely with an employer to understand their recruitment needs and customize training to create successful candidates.
- We ask employers to commit to hire at a family-sustaining wage with benefits.
- We use Yammer software as part of our internal communications mechanism for all of the companies and partner agencies that are a part of the HIRE Employer Council.

Why the HIRE Initiative matters to Dane County

- We are increasing diversity in the workforce for Dane County.
- As of July of 2016, 336 people who have participated in training through the HIRE partner agencies are currently looking for employment.
- Without adequate education to get employment, residents are unable to provide for themselves and their families.
- Participants model the importance of education to their children.

- This work complements the employment strategy for our Journey Home participants, people who have recently returned to Dane County from prison.
- When individuals have jobs earning sufficient wages, they are less stressed, able to provide for themselves and their families and are less apt to engage in criminal activities that affect our community safety.

Benefits of HIRE

Working collaboratively together to ensure that the HIRE have the skill sets needed for employment is a common mission of all partners that are a part of this initiative.

Individuals

1. Assessed to identify participants' skill set levels
2. Simplified entrance to getting help for HSED/GED completion and/or finding employment
3. Connected to simplified learning paths that are easier to understand
4. Receive assistance in finding career opportunities
5. Receive assistance from a Resource Specialist in finding housing, childcare and other supports that are needed

Hired by employers who are providing family sustaining wages that have made a pledge to provide career paths not just a job

Employers

Improves the ability to hire employees with the skill sets or certifications they need for their industry

1. Provides opportunity to partner closely with a non-profit and work together to build our future workforce
2. Provides greater access for employers to reach non-traditional employment channels
3. Be a part of a Community of Practices that focuses on best practices in hiring and retaining employees while learning and sharing best practices with other employers and non-profits in the community
4. Work with Resource Specialists who link your employees to housing, child care and other supports which will help with employee retention
5. Access to the various trainings that can assist in employee retention; such as Mental Health First Aid and Implicit Bias trainings

Your logo on the HIRE website

6. The Community

1. More people in the workforce improves the standard of living in Dane County
2. Centralized marketing creates stronger interest and demand for participants and employers
3. Initiative provides greater understanding of the scope and dimension of employment and skill problems and the strategies that are needed to address these issues

How are we doing?

The HIRE Initiative launched in April of 2013 to help people earn educational foundation to be able to navigate the steps needed to find and maintain employment. Our goal is to place 80 people annually in a job with a family sustaining wage with a minimum of 1 year retention.

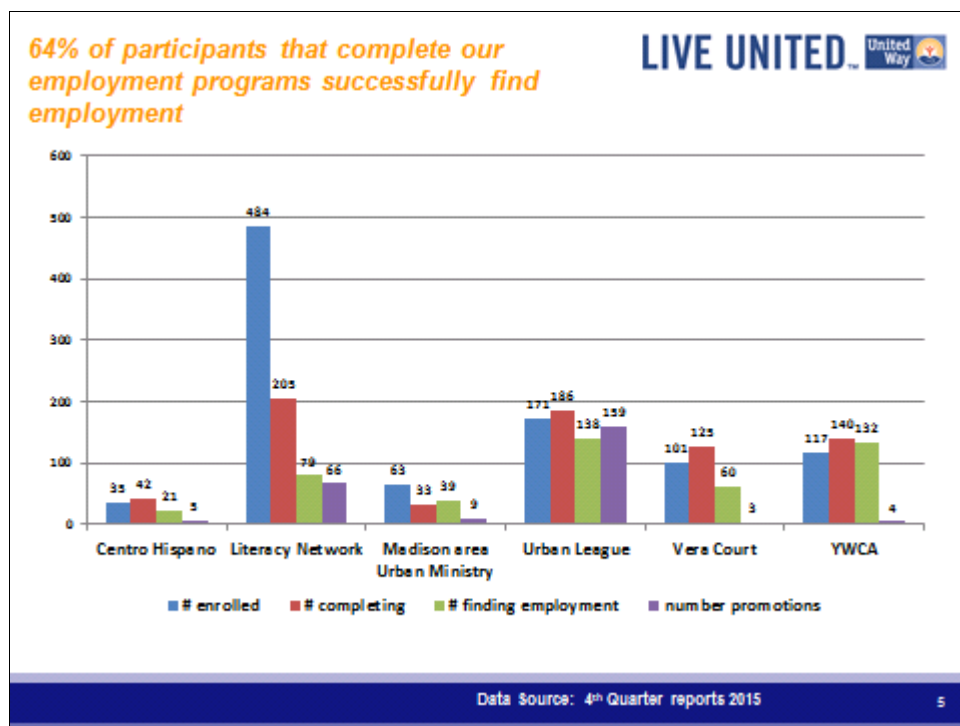
Our Results

Since we began, we have seen the following results:

- 356 individuals received their GED/HSED
- 905 found employment (65 finding employment earning \$15 an hour or more in 2015)
- 378 people received a promotion

Industries for which we are specifically training our participants:

- Customer Service
- Food/Restaurant
- Health Care
- Manufacturing
- Road Construction
- Skilled Trades/Construction
- Information Technology



Greater help from our community

Thanks to a challenge by Jack Salzwedel/American Family and other donors, an additional million dollars was raised to expand our work. We are so grateful to all of the donors who helped to get us to the million dollars!

This expansion helped us expand our goals to ensure participants have housing and early childhood supports for young families.

How can you help?

Here are the ways that you could become involved with this work:

- Become a mentor to the participants who are part of the HIRE Initiative
- Become a tutor and help people prepare to take their GED exams
- Volunteer to do mock interviewing, resume writing or help provide training for the participants
- Provide internships for the HIRE participants to allow them exposure and to learn more about your business industry
- Hire participants who graduate from the training being offered by the HIRE Initiative
- Donate funds to help with training

10 Ways Dane County Employers Can Help Alleviate Poverty in Our Community

Thank you to the companies participating in the United Way of Dane County HIRE Employer Council, working together with the community's non-profit employment partners to develop new ways and practices to employ low income people and give them pathways out of poverty. We've learned much about recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and retaining people living in poverty, and wish to share what we've learned.

We offer these ideas to employers who want to help address poverty through their workplaces.

1. \$15/hour is considered a "family-sustaining" wage today. For people hired for full time work, with annual earnings of \$31,200, an employee can afford \$780/month for housing.
2. Uneven schedules, and those announced at the end of each week for the following week, are not only difficult for the employee and their families, but the company's risk for employee retention is high when schedules are uneven, inconsistent, or lack full-time hours.
3. You're invited to align your recruiting, training, and retention efforts with a HIRE non-profit partner for a mutually consultative relationship. The HIRE nonprofit can recruit and help you retain employees. This service is free to employers.
4. Call United Way 2-1-1 or connect with a Resource Specialist at one of our non-profit partners if an employee needs help because she/he is having a life issue that prevents him/her from coming to work. Absenteeism is a major cause of job loss. A Resource Specialist will work with an employee and connect them to additional supports in the community.
5. Encourage the use of benefits available through government resources e.g., Earned Income Tax Credit, child care support, or Affordable Care Act Marketplace insurance (which can be subsidized with United Way's HealthConnect program).
6. The hiring process is a substantial expense to a company—turnover costs are high for an employer to hire, and represents lost employee productivity when employees leave the company. It's important that supervising managers have an understanding of the needs of an employee who has experienced poverty. We've learned that onboarding with a more specialized training plan, and working with the employee to plan for alternative forms of transportation will be effective in retention efforts.
7. Our employers have learned to examine their culture to determine if their companies support culturally diverse employees. This can include your website, hiring materials and process, and

branding that is aligned and inviting to people living in poverty and those of diverse backgrounds. HIRE non-profit partners can help you with this.

8. We've learned employees who've experienced poverty and trauma can feel isolated as they adjust to their new job, relationships, and company culture. We recommend you create mentors and new employee groups to help employees support one another and help employees with the unwritten rules of your workplace and culture. And, help your hiring manager(s) to understand this issue within the work team.
9. One of the best ways to hire people of color is to network within communities of color and your own employees who are advocates for your company. Use your diverse employees to make recommendations of people to contact or network with the HIRE non-profit partners.
10. Evaluate each step in your hiring process and determine potential barriers in each
 - How do people apply? Are there different points of entry (e-application, paper application, walk-in?)
 - Job descriptions for "education requirement creep." Do you really need a college or graduate degree for your position? Can "equivalent experience" be a useful alternative? Create leadership development and stretch opportunities for seasoned employees to create paths for upward mobility.

Please join us to create a stronger, financially healthier, and more productive Dane County!

To learn more about the HIRE Initiative contact:

Angela Jones, Community Impact Director at (608) 246-4350 or visit our website at www.HIREindane.com

