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Agency: Labor & Economic Growth

**Michigan Leads Nation in Access Points That Help Job Seekers Find Work
Success of DLEG's "SHARE Network Michigan" Recognized by U.S. Department of
Labor**

November 19, 2007 - The Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG) and its SHARE Network Michigan project was recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) Center for Faith-Based & Community Initiatives (CFBCI) for leading the nation with the highest number of Access Points that provide local resources to help citizens achieve self-sufficiency.

Access Points, staffed locally by volunteers, are a key component of the SHARE (*Sharing How Access to Resources Empowers*) Network that includes a website at <http://www.michigan.gov/sharenetwork> which DLEG launched last year in partnership with the USDOL. The site features a Resource Directory that centralizes information on local and state job search, and human service resources.

Erica Pelman of the USDOL-CFBCI made the announcement recently to DLEG workforce developers, SHARE Network partners - leaders of faith-based organizations, community service groups, non-profit agencies, Michigan Works! agencies, and Access Point volunteers, who met at the Washtenaw County Michigan Works! Employment Training and Community Services Group in Ypsilanti. Michigan has the highest number of Access Points (42) among the 12 states participating in the project launched last year.

"Access Points are the local connection to job search and support services that are so vital in helping our citizens find, keep, or get a better job," said DLEG director Keith W. Cooley. The SHARE Network project is also helping maximize access to jobs and training through Governor Granholm's No Worker Left Behind initiative."

Governor Granholm announced the No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) initiative in August; an innovative plan to train 100,000 citizens in three years for jobs in high demand occupations and emerging industries or entrepreneurial endeavors. NWLB gives Michigan workers the opportunity to acquire the skills they need to win good-paying jobs in today's global economy. By reorganizing and augmenting federal funds currently used for workforce development, NWLB will provide up to two years of free tuition at any Michigan community college, university, or other approved training program for qualifying participants.

SHARE Network Access Points provide local job search assistance and referral to other services in various faith-based and community organizations throughout the state. At Access Points, job seekers can receive help preparing a resume and accessing the Michigan Talent Bank and Career Portal to search for job opportunities in Michigan. Local Michigan Works! agencies are charged with training volunteers/ambassadors at community Access Points and performing local outreach activities to faith based and community organizations to encourage participation in the SHARE Network.

Currently, 14 Michigan Works! agencies are participating in SHARE Network Michigan. Of the 42 Access Points statewide, 25 are connected to the Washtenaw County Michigan Works! agency. Any faith-based or community organization interested in becoming an Access Point can contact their local participating Michigan Works! agency at 1-800-285-WORK.

"Our goal is to rapidly increase the number of Access Points in communities statewide so that

the SHARE Network will become fully utilized throughout the Michigan Works! System," said Trena Rusher, director of the Washtenaw County Michigan Works! agency.

Organizations interested in joining the SHARE Network Resource Directory can go to www.michigan.gov/sharenetwork and click on "Become a Member" to register. Community organizations, churches, and other service groups must provide human services to citizens at little or no cost to be listed in the directory. Services include assistance with child care, food, clothing, and housing; job training, literacy assistance, mentoring, and other resources that help individuals and families attain self-sufficiency, and strengthen communities through partnerships.

The public can locate resources on the SHARE Network by searching the type of service, its location/county, or provider name, link directly to service provider contact information (address, hours of operation, services offered), and create an online referral. The website currently features more than 500 human service organizations representing 9,500 services. More than 5,000 referrals have been made to member service providers.

Contact: Ardis Cazeno, DLEG Bureau of Workforce Programs at 313-456-3001 or email sharehelp@michigan.gov.

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