

April 12, 2012

Barry Burton  
County Administrator  
Lake County  
18 N County St  
Waukegan, IL 60085

Dear Mr. Burton:

The recession and high unemployment numbers have posed unprecedented challenges across industries and communities as millions of long term unemployed individuals continue to struggle to realign skills to meet the jobs of today. The workforce development system s had to quickly develop and execute an array of programs and solutions to meet these challenges in the most positive of manners assisting a large percentage of the unemployed with gaining additional skills and reinventing themselves for new careers.

As a current workforce leader charged with taking on this challenge, I have successfully brought together partners, stakeholders, community colleges, employers and community leaders to develop and implement strategies throughout northern Cook County. The successes in the last several years have been rooted in a collaborative nature to deliver immediate services at the community level. As a workforce leader, I have been in the forefront playing a critical role fostering relationships to bring the right people and agencies together to address workforce and economic development needs and leverage knowledge, expertise and resources.

I would bring these skills forward into the job of Director of Workforce Development in Lake County. With my twenty-three years of experience, I will quickly be able to manage the workforce successes rooted in the communities of Lake County and lead redesign initiatives to improve overall systems, programs and performance. During the past six years, I have been the executive director of the Workforce Board of Northern Cook County providing oversight, policy, procurement and grant management of the Workforce Investment Act funds and programs. I have extensive management, operations, client services, and relationship building experience that would benefit the workforce system and communities of Lake County.

If you are looking for a committed and dedicated team leader and team member with the ability to multi-task in a high demand environment, I am your candidate. I look forward to discussing how my background is a match for this opportunity.

Best regards,

Jennifer Stasch  
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## **Jennifer Stasch**

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### **Results driven workforce leader with extensive experience serving communities and designing innovative workforce solutions through board and partner strategies**

#### **Functional Strengths**

Superior strategic attitude and vision applied with a clear sense of purpose and urgency. Superior strengths in project management, grant oversight, system integrations, budgeting and strategic planning. Facilitate and lead meetings and discussions with business leaders, key stakeholders and community partners. Coordinate the composition and writing of proposals, grants and contracts to ensure a high level of service, address regulations, meet performance measures, and receive additional funds. A team leader and an active team member and partner.

#### **Leadership Abilities**

Results-oriented leader adept at managed risk taking with ability to assess complex situations rapidly and make necessary changes to meet grant and program goals. Recently engaged a team of workforce professionals across multiple workforce agencies through defined roles and metrics resulting in seventy long term unemployed individuals being hired through a prescribed department of labor program and fully obligating grant funds within a six-month time frame. Instrumental in fostering relationships with regional colleagues to leverage resources, receive additional funding opportunities, and institute system-wide standards – awarded grants for more than three million to development and implement regional projects.

#### **Effective Financial Management**

Demonstrates responsibility in maintaining the integrity of grants and funds. Oversees grant budgeting and reporting according to comprehensive policies, procedures and compliance. Addresses monthly financial statements to board of directors with high-risk variances explained and solutions noted. With the formation of a talented team of professionals have achieved placing greater emphasis on higher level financial management functions to deliver to financial performance at all levels and all programs – meeting compliance and reporting requirements, reducing vendor reimbursement turn-around time by, managing cash flow with minimal variances.

#### **Successful Workforce System Management**

Bridge federally mandated requirements with workforce board strategic plans. Hold professional staff and service delivery system to high expectations with roles and responsibilities clearly defined. Work alongside program delivery network and help drive effective training investments, meeting compliance and leading to high wage/high growth jobs. Led a procurement process resulting in a new vendor serving in the role as the grants manager and fiscal agent – reducing these costs by 47% in one year's time and being able to redirect additional funds into direct program services during a time when grant funds were reduced.

#### **Community Alliances**

Cultivates community relationships that have resulted in redesigning community strategic workforce plans with economic development, community leaders, and local elected officials. Established a service center within a city library - accommodating an average of 400 visitors a month. Currently an active team member designing a workforce center in the heart of an underserved community. Ongoing engagement of economic developers in workforce development discussions resulting in projects to meet specific community and employer needs. Received a grant to coordinate activities among faith-based organizations, enhancing employment related services in the communities. Oversee a scholarship campaign motivated by local municipalities, awarding education scholarship to residents.

## Professional Experience

**Workforce Board of Northern Cook County, Park Ridge, Illinois** 2003-Current

**Executive Director** for a nationally recognized federally funded non-profit agency responsible for building a workforce through community successes and board strategies. Provide leadership and recommendations to a board of directors regarding strategic alignment, planning, development, and collaborations driving the vision and mission of the organization.

Manage an annual budget of over twelve million in federal funds. Allocate federal funds across twenty grants serving over 1,500 customers annually. Carryout and successfully achieve federally mandated measurements and board strategic directions. Led the review and recommendation of the organizational structure for effective support functions of the organization, including human resources administration, business processes, communication systems, operations, technology, and accounting. Manage the expenses of the organization, with an eye to maximizing resources to best support and build capacity.

**Workforce Development Inc. (Private Industry Council), Park Ridge, Illinois** 1989-2003

**Director, Administration and Finance** for a non-profit agency, managing the financial systems and program evaluations of the local job- training plan with an annual budget of over fifteen million in federal and state funds. Administrated the agency's operations and personnel policies- including managing four agency departments. Drive and determination has progressed me along a career pathway with the organization from front line staff to management and director position.

## Consulting Experience

**Chicago Workforce Board, Chicago, Illinois** 2003-2004

Worked directly with the executive director of the agency to change practices and improve process efficiencies to ensure projects were implemented and operating within compliance guidelines of grants and legislation.

**Working Solutions, Inc., Park Ridge, Illinois** 1999-2002

Manage operations for a non-profit offering temporary work opportunity to immigrant populations. Established training and succession plans for the workers to move from temporary positions to full-time employers.

## Education

**2006** **Keller Graduate School of Management, Chicago IL**  
Pursuing a Master of Business Administration

**1992** **Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago IL**  
Graduate course work in adult career counseling

**1989** **Loyola University, Chicago, IL**  
Bachelor of Science, cum laude