

Remaking our Resources



W O R K F O R C E , I N C / R E C Y C L E F O R C E , L L C

RSF Social Finance Helps Expand Impact of Scrappy Indiana Non-Profit

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 14 /CSRwire/ - The Federal Reserve's most recent economic survey revealed "little or no change from existing low levels of commercial and industrial lending," but one innovative social finance organization continues to make high-impact loans.

On October 14th, 2010, *RSF* Social Finance (*RSF*) announced a \$400,000 loan to Workforce, Inc. The loan enabled Workforce to acquire sophisticated recycling equipment that will more than double the volume of e-waste it processes. Since its completion is late October, the machine has created more job opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals while simultaneously boosting WFI's earned income.

As many of our readers know, Workforce, Inc. has a dual mission to help formerly incarcerated individuals successfully transition back into civil society by providing employment supported by a host of social services, and to keep as much waste as possible - especially electronic waste - out of Indiana's landfills. Since its inception in late 2005, our recycling enterprise has grown from two employees, to 56, and has processed over 8 million pounds of electronic waste. In the process WFI has served more than 370 formerly incarcerated individuals with a recidivism rate of 11%, a dramatic improvement over the local area average of 70%. It was these impressive results that caught *RSF*'s attention. According to Ted Levinson, Senior Lending Manager at *RSF*, "Workforce is exactly the type of borrower we're looking for. They've created a business model that solves multiple social problems efficiently and affordably."

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Operating out of an old RCA Television factory, Workforce manually takes apart electronics such as televisions, computer monitors, old microwaves and stereos. Armed with drills, pliers and wrenches, Workforce staff efficiently deconstruct electronics into their basic components, which are then sold onto metals processors. As Anthony Smith, operations manager for the recycling enterprise, explains, "Essentially, we are miners." On a good day Workforce's television crew can process 200 televisions or computer monitors.

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Scrappy Indiana Non-Profit, continued from front page

Submitted by: [RSF Social Finance](#)

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The copper wiring and steel is processed by a local metals processor while circuit boards are shipped to Japan, and the *cathode ray tubes* (containing dangerous levels of lead, mercury and hexavalent chromium) are trucked to Missouri for proper disposal.

Since the new equipment became operational in late October, Workforce has increased its output from 200 units dismantled per day to 200 units per hour. The room-sized system is composed of a shredder, an industrial magnet, three conveyors and a state of the art dust collection system that ensures no harmful chemicals are released into the air. With 250 million analog TVs in the U.S. and 20% of Americans possessing unused, obsolete computer monitors, there is no shortage of raw material for Workforce to recycle. "For all of you who still have that *Macintosh Classic* in your basement, it is time to recycle it" says Gregg Keesling, founder and president of Workforce.

About RSF Social Finance

Located in San Francisco, CA, RSF Social Finance (RSF) is a non-profit financial services organization dedicated to transforming the way the world works with money. Since 1984 the organization has made over \$200 million in loans throughout the U.S. and Canada to non-profits and businesses with a social mission.

RSF's capital comes primarily from one thousand individuals who have invested \$1,000 or more in the organization's Social Investment Fund Notes. Investors earn a competitive return on their money comparable to a certificate of deposit while their funds are deployed to businesses and non-profits that work in the areas of food and agriculture, education and the arts, and ecological stewardship. RSF's loan portfolio totals approximately \$70 million, and current borrowers include independent schools, organic food companies, and the largest supplier of recycled office paper.

[To read this article in its entirety click here](#)



PANDORA'S BOX; Where does an ex-offender find hope?

Article by Angela Wheatley

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Everyone should of course know the story of **Pandora's box**, an *artifact* in *Greek mythology*. The "box" was actually a large jar given to *Pandora*, which contained all the *evils* of the world. When Pandora opened the jar, the entire contents of the jar were released, but for one – hope. Today, opening Pandora's box means to create evil that cannot be undone.



Having a conviction is just like that. Upon release from prison you are handed this beautiful box with instructions to never open it. Human nature will of course tell us that the box must be opened, but what is released from it are not the evils of the world, but barriers.

Many offenders have difficulty finding permanent, unsubsidized, well-paid employment after release because they may face one or more barriers. For an ex-offender some of those barriers can include, but are not limited to, lack of job-seeking experience, a work history, and occupational skills, lack of reliable transportation, or lack of education. Possibly the worst barrier of all can be the fact that many employer's simply won't give you a chance if you have a conviction.

Although most employer's claim to hire felons, the majority won't glance twice at an application that has that little box checked regarding convictions. Even with Federal Bonding Programs and tax credits for hiring minorities such as ex-felons, many employers still refuse to take a chance on someone with a criminal background.

After opening the box, after releasing the barriers, all that is left for an ex-offender is hope, but where does an ex-offender find hope?





Life is what you make it!

There was no bitterness in her voice as Ms. Brenda Freeman sat and spoke about the events that brought her to where she is today. She fell for the wrong man, made some bad choices, and was punished for it. All throughout her incarceration she remained positive. Even after the struggles she faced post release, even after she was wrongly violated, twice, she still remained positive.

“I will not focus on what got me there, but rather where I am now!” says Brenda.

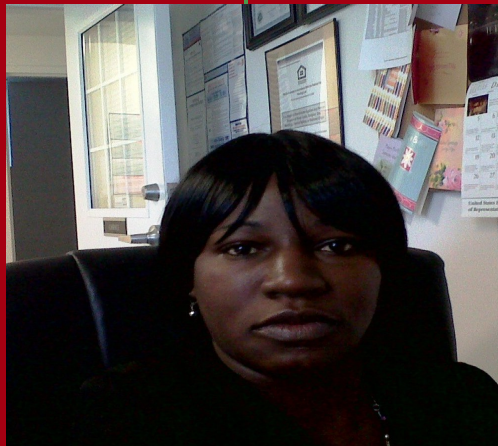
While being incarcerated was not the best thing to happen to her, Brenda admits that it helped her to realize a few things. She, like many others, had dreams and goals, but it wasn't until she 'caught her case' that she decided it was time to stop dreaming and start doing.

Her first step toward her new life was getting connected with Barb Overton, the Coordinator of the Women's Reentry Aftercare Program, (or WRAP), a program offered through the Liberty Hall Women's Work Release Center.

Through Ms. Overton she was able to get the resource info she needed to get connected to several

places, including WorkForce, Inc.

While at WFI she utilized all of the program she could, spending hours a week in the computer lab doing her development time. She worked on KeyTrain, learned how to do a job search and upload a resume, and even had the help of the staff to assist her in creating a resume.



“It was with the help of those at WFI that I was not only able to create a beautiful resume, but that very resume landed me a great job where my bi-lingual skills will be of use.”

Brenda is now the Resident Coordinator of a Senior Living Corporation, and has just received the news that she will be in charge of the new building upon its completion.

To those seeking help from WFI Brenda says this; ‘Utilize all your resources while at WFI. You have six months there, 180 days, don't wait until day 175 to look for a job. The WFI staff is there to help you, don't be afraid to ask for that help. Life is what you make it, you are in control of your own destiny, don't want until it's too late to attempt to make changes!’





LOOK WHAT WE'VE DONE THIS YEAR!!!



What a year we've had here at Workforce, Inc. There have been some ups and downs. Some joy, sadness and sorrow. We have lost, but we have also gained.

In addition to the RFS loan WorkForce, Inc. received (mentioned on the first page), we are also happy to report the continuation of the Community Crime Prevention Grant, as well as the Community Economic Development Grant. It is because of this that we are able to continue serving ex-offenders, reduce the recidivism rate, and reduce the amount of waste received in Indiana's landfill.

We also proud to announce that this year alone more than 3 million lbs of e-waste has been processed through RecycleForce and kept out of Indiana's landfills.

At this time we would like to give special thanks and remembrance to the following;

First we would like to take the time to remember three clients that passed away this year; Donald Cantrell, Anthony Fields, and Douglas Craft. Although they are no longer with us, they will forever remain in our thoughts and in our hearts.

Secondly we would like to give a very special thanks to the following organizations for their continuous support in our program.

- Nina Mason Pulliam Fund
- Clowes Fund
- Richard M. Fairbanks Fund

Next we would like to thank the Marion County Probation officers that have taken the time to visit their clients on site.

And lastly we would like to thank a few of our successful clients that have graduated from the WorkForce, Inc. TJP, Brenda Freeman, Orathay Peankhamhor, Josh Fugate, Kenny Myers, and William Smith to name a few. These individuals have not only completed the TJP, but they have successfully proven that once you give a man a fighting chance to do the right thing, most will!



Seasons Greetings



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**Work, Responsibility, Reward
Remaking our Resources**

January 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Sustain Indy Post Holiday Recycling Event

Not sure what to do with that tree once the holiday is over? Got some new electronics for Christmas and need to dispose of your old ones? Or just have some extra wrapping paper you want to get rid of? Well, pack up your recyclables and join WorkForce, Inc. for the annual **Sustain Indy Post Holiday Recycling Event**.

The event, hosted by SustainIndy, is an initiative launched by Mayor Greg Ballard in fall of 2008 in order to bring long term cost savings to Indianapolis through environmental improvement efforts.

When: January 8, 2011

Time: 10—2

Where: Garfield Parker, Ellenburger Park, Krannert Park & Broadripple Park

Hope to see you there!