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Contact:
Karen E. Pride
Assistant Press Secretary
Chicago Housing Authority
312-742-9948

CHA Residents Graduate to Jobs as Bank Tellers *Program Offers Career Path and Financial Independence*

CHICAGO – Seven former Chicago Housing Authority residents successfully completed intensive bank operations training this week, demonstrating the difference specialized training and personal connections can make for job seekers.

Five of the trainees have already found jobs as bank tellers as a result of the courses.

“Programs like this help CHA residents get practical, real world training in rapidly growing industries,” said Terry Peterson, CEO of the CHA. “These efforts are a great benefit in preparing residents to move into long-term careers that will allow them to achieve financial independence and homeownership.”

The program is a partnership of CHA, the City Colleges of Chicago, LaSalle Bank, Harris Bank, Shorebank, Citibank, TCF Bank and a number of smaller community banks.

It provides 12 weeks of comprehensive instruction in mathematics, computer skills, customer service, sales techniques, communications, the role and responsibilities of a bank teller, resume writing and tips on interviewing for jobs.

Classes were held at Dawson Technical Institute at 3901 S. State St.

Brandi Starnes, 28, a mother of three and a former resident of the Ida B. Wells Homes, will join the TCF Bank in a South Side Jewel Food Store.

“This course teaches you all the things you need,” she said. “Cash handling, dealing with people and how to dress for work. There was a lot I didn’t know.”

Lenice Prince, 47, who most recently worked part-time at Kmart, is considering job offers from three different banks.

“I thought it would be tough because I have been out of school for a long time,” she said. “But with this program, it doesn’t matter how old you are or how long you’ve been out of school.”

Prince is grateful for the emphasis CHA officials are putting on helping residents find jobs with family-supporting wages and benefits.

Bank teller training is one of several CHA-sponsored programs to help residents and former residents develop skills necessary for financial self-sufficiency.

CHA tenants interested in learning about these and other training opportunities should call the CHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program office at 312-742-8840.

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Downloadable photos of this event are available at:

<http://www.mkcpr.com/filebin/BrandiStarnesBanktellerGraduation.jpg>

CAPTION 1:

Brandi Starnes already has found a job at TCF Bank after graduating from the CHA's bank teller training program at Dawson Technical Institute.

CAPTION 2:

The seven graduates of the CHA's most recent bank teller training program listen to remarks during their graduation ceremony.

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