

**Press Release**

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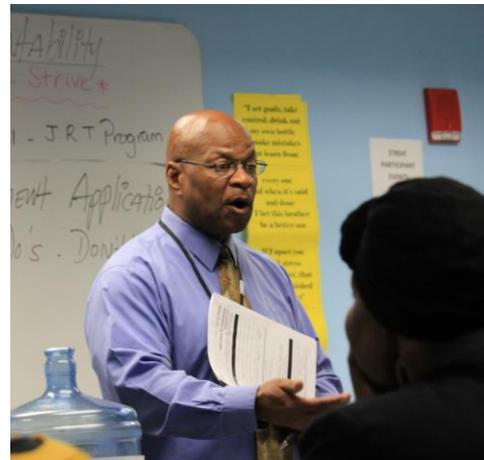
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 25, 2016**

**Westhab Wins State Regional Economic Development Grant Award  
to Expand its Proven Job Training Model**

YONKERS, NY (January 25, 2016) Westhab has received a grant from the New York State Department of Labor and the Mid-Hudson Economic Development Council to provide occupational skills training and employment placement to 160 job seekers facing significant obstacles to securing employment.

Westhab's proven Employment Services Model – *WesthabWorks* - has placed 1,547 individuals in jobs over the past three years. From 2014 to 2015, Westhab increased annual job placements from 492 to 550, increased average starting wages from \$9.66 to \$10.02 per hour, and increased job retention from 80.1% to 89.3%. These are remarkable results given that the agency primarily serves the homeless, long-term public assistance recipients, and individuals with disabilities.

The Regional Economic Development award will support the new *Ready to Work* component of *WesthabWorks*, which will provide trainings in security, safe food handling, and electrical trades taught by Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Southern Westchester instructors. Claudia Murphy, the Director for Adult and Community Services at BOCES, noted, "When students decide to come to us to continue their education or to start fresh, we help make their dreams come true. That is the most rewarding part."



Critical to the program's success is Westhab's established network of 100+ area employers who will hire Ready to Work participants. Business Council of Westchester President/CEO Marsha Gordon commented, "This program clearly meets the need to train people who are available and ready to work for jobs that are available in the labor market. The Business Council is pleased to see that Westhab is providing this essential education and support to the people in the community who want to advance their careers and the businesses who need well-educated and prepared employees."

NYS Senator Andrea Stewart Cousins (35<sup>th</sup> District) added, "I'm pleased that key projects in my district will get essential resources in this highly competitive grant process."

About Westhab: Westhab's mission is: "Building Communities. Changing Lives." Headquartered in Yonkers, Westhab is a leading not-for-profit provider of housing and social services for homeless and low-income families throughout Westchester County and the Bronx. Since 1981, Westhab has built 2,500 units of affordable housing, moved 6,000 homeless families to permanent housing, placed 4,000 public assistance recipients into employment, and delivered after-school services to over 10,000 youth. For more information, please visit [www.westhab.org](http://www.westhab.org).

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