

City Unwraps Career Training Programs

By Russell Clark
Post Staff Writer

Many people believe that Santa Claus only comes once a year, but Charlotte's Employment and Training Department greets career-minded Charlotteans all-year-long with a fat list of career opportunities.

In an effort to help fill gaps on this year's roster, the City is currently seeking youth and unskilled adults for entry into the City/County job market.

As a 30-year-old single parent, Gail Towne unwrapped an early Christmas present from herself after she graduated from Central Piedmont Community College's Registered Nursing Program.

Now employed at Presbyterian Hospital, Gail is earning \$25,000 per year.

"There were times when I wanted to give up, but I realized I had no choice. I had no skills and I had no way to support my children," enlightens Towne in "The Bottom Line," (a newsletter by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Private Industry Council).

Gail continues, "I always had my nose to the grindstone looking for assistance or money to support me and my family while I was in training. With all the stress of being a single parent and in a training program that required at least 60-75 hours of work each week, I didn't need financial concerns too. I made up my mind I would complete the training or die trying."

She admits that her social life was put on hold for two years, but it was worth the wait. "I took care of my kids and studied, and occasionally I had time to eat and sleep. It was worth every bit of effort. Now I have a good job and a good salary," she enlightens.

The self-motivated Towne offers advice to others. "Be committed, be willing to make sacrifices, and be willing to ask for help when you need it. If (your situation) will only be tempo-



Leslie Cowan, a participant in the City Special Summer Youth Program, helps out with receptionist duties at the Employment & Training Department.

rary but the results are permanent."

Gail was one of 200 Individual Referral Scholarship participants sponsored by the City's Employment and Training Department. The scholarship pays the full cost of tuition, books, supplies, lab fees, student fees, uniforms, and tools. Students receiving the scholarship are also eligible for child care assistance and monthly bus passes to enable them to attend training courses.

Programs of this nature are funded by the Job Training Partnership Act (J.T.P.A.) whose purpose is to provide job training to economically disadvantaged individuals and others facing serious barriers to employment.

"We want to get unskilled people out welfare programs and place them in our programs where they can earn full-time permanent jobs," relates Gus Psomadakis, Program Director.

"There are also 24,000 Charlot-

teans who are underemployed. This means they are making minimum wages or family income is still at or below the economically disadvantaged. We want to reach them also that they can compete in today's job market and stop depending on assistance from the government."

The following programs are new and presently available to eligible Mecklenburg County residents. Eligibility is determined on the basis of income and program design.

Basic Education focuses on assisting individuals in acquiring basic reading, math, and language skills, in securing a high school diploma or certificate. The employment and training staff helps participants locate part-time jobs while training. Assistance for child care and transportation is also available for eligible students.

Skills Building for the Under-

employed provides a full-range of educational and occupational training to those who are working full-time or part-time but whose families is still at or below the economically or marginally disadvantaged level. The program is flexible and will not conflict with work hours of participants. Its goal is to increase the individual's skill level to with hopes of increasing their earnings.

Self Directed Job Search provides career exploration, job seeking and job getting skills training, however, each student is responsible for locating his/her employment. Participants will be taught how to find employment, and through use of telephone lab, can initiate job search plan.

These programs are to help decrease employment problems that have been identified in the disadvantaged population.

Whether your career interests are in Computer Operations, Office Technology, Engineering, Mechanics or Business, you can spark your career path by calling the Employment and Training Office at 336-3101.

Views On Dental Health



MICHAEL GIVENS, D.D.S.

CHECKING DENTURES

Fortunately - or unfortunately - you no longer have any problems with your upper teeth. They were all removed some years ago and you now wear a full upper denture. Does this mean you can forget about visiting your dentist regularly? Not if you value your health and future comfort!

Regular appointments with the dentist are as important for denture-wearers as for people with natural teeth. The mouth tissue, bony ridges and gums that support dentures are constantly undergoing changes and may impair the dentures' proper function. Even such general health ailments as vitamin deficiencies, extended illness, drug therapy, weight loss, diabetes or high blood pressure can change the way dentures fit.

Ill-fitting dentures can seriously damage the mouth, causing abrasions, bruises, inflammation and rapid destruction of the supporting bone. Prolonged irritation of this kind may result in the development of tumors.

It is important to have a dental checkup at least once a year to insure that your dentures are properly adjusted and that your mouth is in good health.

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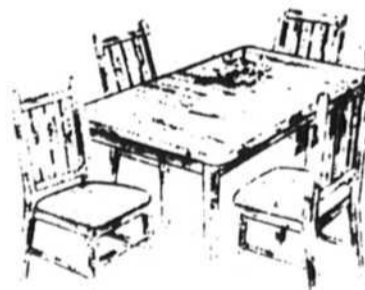
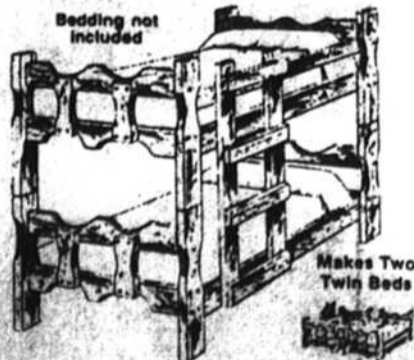
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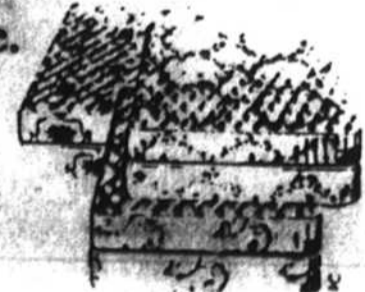
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