



## WORK TRAINING PARTNERSHIP



April 17, 2015

### **Letter of Affirmation for the Plainfield District # 202 and Joliet Junior College Partnership: Work Training Partnership.**

I affirm that the Work Training Partnership (WTP) is an innovative program that aligns with the global definition of sustainability primarily in the areas of social and economic, but there are also ecological components as well. The partnership, founded in 2001-2002, is a training program that teaches vocational skills to individuals with disabilities ages 16-22. WTP meets sustainability criteria in the areas of curriculum, campus engagement, public engagement, diversity, affordability, wealth, wellbeing and work.

WTP improves social and economic sustainability by first increasing the chances of gaining community, or supported employment, for a population (individuals with disabilities) that statistically has much higher unemployment rates than the general population. The program provides structured, well supervised, training opportunities in six different career focus areas. Accommodations are implemented on an individual basis. Daily evaluations and feedback are provided for each student to identify strengths and areas needing improvement, so that over the course of the experience each student learns the skills expected of an employer. Socially, WTP has a reciprocal effect in improving sustainability. Individuals with disabilities are often isolated from integrated environments, and the general population often becomes sensitized to them due to lack of understanding and experience; in other words, pushes them out. By providing training in an integrated environment, individuals with disabilities work side by side with non-disabled employees, both benefiting by learning to work together and rely on each other for a single purpose (thereby desensitizing). The process outcomes are not limited to vocational skill growth of the individual with a disability, but in social growth and acceptance on everyone's part. As a job in our career focus areas of custodial, clerical and technical-maintenance, students assist JJC staff with the ecological sustainability by helping with recycling efforts. They recycle aluminum and tin cans, they take apart non-working items in the technical department and separate them so they can be recycled for their separate reusable materials (repurposing) and they catalogue surplus items for resale in the community (reusing).

After examination of the Work Training Partnership for innovation as a sustainability focused program, I believe it is evident that it meets or surpasses sustainability principles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ms. Cindy Fischer".

Cindy Fischer  
WTP Program Coordinator  
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