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PROGRESS REPORT:

JOB DATE

September 5, 1978 to June 18, 1979

to: The Ford Foundation

The Vera Institute of Justice established Job Path to determine whether a supported work program could enable mentally retarded persons to make the transition from schools and sheltered workshops to the world of work. The Vera Institute had already created supported work programs to fit the needs of ex-offenders, ex-addicts, and rehabilitated alcoholics in their quest for employment, and, in so doing, had demonstrated that persons once thought to be unemployable can be productive. A moderately, mildly, and borderline retarded population, however, represents a decided departure from these previous groups. Ex-offenders, ex-addicts, and rehabilitated alcoholics have chosen to change their anti-social behavior. Mentally retarded people cannot significantly alter their intelligence.

Nonetheless, the results of a ten week pilot project in the winter of 1978 indicated that supported work might be feasible with mentally retarded people, too. The director of the project had found work sites where rather routine tasks required dependability and diligence more than reasoning and judgment, and the mentally retarded participants had responded well to supportive job counseling and supervision. The pilot project had only involved ten participants, however. Could a supported work program for mentally retarded youths and adults be effective with five times as many participants? With ten times as many? Could job counselors more than double their case load? Could enough work sites be found? By committing itself to accept between

fifty and one hundred participants over the course of a year,* Job Path was to be the real test of supported work for mentally retarded persons.

As is the practice with all Vera sponsored demonstration projects, a research arm was established to evaluate Job Path's impact.

The research report is scheduled to be completed by October 31, 1979. At this juncture, however, it is already apparent that Job Path is going to accomplish what it set out to do.

Seventy-seven mentally retarded individuals have already made the first step in moving from schools and sheltered workshops to sixty work sites in the public and private sectors. Thirty-two of them have moved beyond that step and have been hired.

It seems appropriate to present a progress report at this nine month point, that is based on observations of the Job Path staff as well as on preliminary research findings. As the following documentation indicates, supported work shows every sign of being a viable vehicle for enabling mentally retarded people to become independent, productive, contributing members of society - usually for the first time in their lives.

SUPPORTED WORK:

Although programs can be modified in order to serve the needs of a

*The year was to begin in July, 1978, but a delay in receiving CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) funding necessitated altering the schedule. The first group of trainees was admitted into the program on September 5, 1978.

particular population, five basic concepts are inherent in every supported work project:

1. Real job assignment - Every participant in a supported work program knows that he or she is doing meaningful work, in contrast to what is known as "make work" or "busy work". The skills that are learned are transferable to the current needs of the competitive labor market.
2. Graduated stress - A supported worker will experience incremental demands for productivity. Supervisors' initial expectations are significantly different from later ones.
3. Sympathetic, but firm, supervision - Excessive leniency will not prepare the supported worker for the realities of the competitive labor market, but insufficient empathy will prevent him or her from making the necessary adjustments to the work place.
4. Regular evaluation and feedback - Supported workers are less able to assess their performance on the job than other workers because they are inexperienced and because they have a low self-image. Consequently, regular evaluation and feedback are essential guidelines.
5. Peer support - Feeling different, strange, even alienated from the larger social group, supported workers need to share their

common concerns with one another. People from similar backgrounds can strengthen and support each other in ways that even the most gifted professional cannot.

POPULATION:

To understand the significance of Job Path's accomplishments to date, it is important to understand the nature of the program's population. According to the intake records that Job Path has received from twenty-five referral agencies,* every participant is mentally retarded. Individuals so classified are markedly less able than people with average intelligence to use their minds for thinking, reasoning, figuring, or remembering. Deficits in adaptive behavior typically accompany deficits in intelligence. Simply stated, adaptive behavior refers to the way an individual performs those tasks expected of someone of his/her age in his/her culture. Youths are expected to begin to earn money in our culture and adults are expected to be capable of adequate performance on the job. Ninety percent of the people who enter the Job Path program, however, had either never held down a minimum wage job, or had been unsuccessful on the job(s) they had attempted. (The remaining ten percent lost their jobs because of protracted illness, or because their firm either relocated or went out of business.)

*At the outset, Job Path was working with five referral agencies. After nine months, the program has established a working relationship with forty-six agencies, and has accepted participants referred from twenty-five.

Mental retardation is often reported in the form of I.Q. scores which purport to indicate whether a person is psychometrically of "normal" intelligence (scoring between 90 and 110), mentally advanced, or mentally retarded. I.Q. scores are divided into categories. The referral agencies use the categories and definitions which follow. (The numerical I.Q. range reported refers to scores obtained from the Weschler tests.)

<u>Level of Mental Retardation</u>	<u>Intelligence Quotient Score</u>
Borderline*	70-84
Mild	55-69
Moderate	40-54

Two further categories which are not applicable to our program are "Severe (I.Q. range of 25-39) and "Profound" (I.Q. range of 24 and below).

It should be noted, however, that intelligence tests have come under increasing criticism of late. The criticisms reported by the President's Committee on Mental Retardation include these:

- # The tests are based on the values of white, middle-class persons, and are, therefore, not pertinent to persons of other cultures.
- # The tests measure achievement based on differences in opportunity to learn, rather than native intelligence.
- # The tests are over-simplified reflections of complex and unique human characteristics.

*Although the referring agencies use the category of "Borderline", the definition adopted by the American Association on Mental Deficiency in 1973 eliminates this category.

In addition to being mentally retarded, the eighty-four people who have been admitted into the Job Path program between September 5th, 1978 and June 18th, 1979 exhibit other characteristics that affect their success in dealing with the competitive labor market. The median reading score that was reported on intake forms, 3.4, indicates functional illiteracy, and the median math score that was reported, 3.6, indicates limited ability to deal with numbers. Roughly half of the participants come from homes that are at or below the poverty level as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Forty-six percent of the participants are Black or Hispanic, and thirty-six percent are young - under age 21. According to intake forms, at least twenty-five percent have additional physical handicaps such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, speech impediments and markedly poor vision. To complicate matters further, as already noted, Job Path participants have a poor record of previous employment. Moreover, they are all classified as being unskilled or semi-skilled. Thus, Job Path trainees are classified as hard-to employ not only because they are mentally retarded, but also because they have limited skills, are young, economically disadvantaged, belong to minority groups, have other disabilities and present a poor employment history.

NEED:

To move from child-like dependence to a self-reliant, independent life style mentally retarded people need to earn a steady salary that meets minimum wage standards, at the very least. The agencies

that refer mentally retarded people to Job Path recognize this need but have limited ability to find suitable jobs for the population they try to serve.

Six percent of the referrals come directly from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. OVR can provide jobs for some people who are ready to be hired, but it is not equipped to provide transitional employment with support services for people who are not yet fully job-ready. (OVR also indirectly refers another 69% of Job Path's population; this group will be discussed in a forthcoming section on sheltered workshops.)

Eight percent of Job Path referrals are made by developmental centers which offer mentally retarded people a place to live but which do not have an employment program of any kind.

Nineteen percent of the referrals are made by the Bureau for Children with Retarded Mental Development, a special division of the New York City Board of Education, or by private schools that were established for mentally retarded students. By definition, the youth who are in these schools have failed to keep pace with their non-retarded peers. Most of them have failed so many tests over the course of so many years that they have a built-in expectation of further failure. Their teachers also have greatly reduced expectations. It is, therefore, not surprising when the self-fulfilling prophecy* is realized. In unmistakable contra-

*See Robert K. Merton, "The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy", Merton, Social Theory & Social Structure, N.Y. The Free Press, 1968, enlarged edition, Chapter 13.

distinction, the Job Path staff views its participants as capable people and anticipates success.

Job Path's different attitude is important; its different position vis- a-vis the community is also important. Schools have a long history of standing in isolation from the community at large. They have almost no involvement with business people, with labor unions or with local organizations of any kind, and there is, consequently, virtually no community input in job development. Again, in clear contra-distinction, Job Path goes out of its way to create the very liaisons that schools avoid. The program has sponsored two conferences for potential employers, which the Ford Foundation hosted. Two job developers call upon business people and labor leaders every day of the week to seek their help in creating jobs for mentally retarded people. The job developers have met with key personnel from approximately 415 organizations which has resulted in developing sixty work sites where eighty-four people have received training and thirty-two people have been hired to date. In addition, a Job Development Advisory Committee, composed of business and labor leaders is in formation. The names of several advisors will be released shortly.

To prepare mentally retarded students for future employment the public school system has attempted to set up some work-study programs, but the work component differs greatly from genuine employment. Unlike Job Path, where every participant is paid the minimum wage, no one receives any wages whatsoever. Fifteen small stipends are

available for more than 1,000 eligible mentally retarded students.

If mentally retarded students could receive the training that is offered by the trade high schools the Board of Education has established, they might be able to get suitable jobs upon graduation. The trade high schools, however, have yet to mainstream mentally retarded students, which means that a realistic training program that is coupled with a training site is not available for this population. Consequently, mentally retarded graduates have not been equipped with skills they need in order to be hired.

In spite of all of the above constraints, some mentally retarded graduates manage to find employment. The schools provide them with no follow-up support services, however. Lacking a counselor to help them make the transition from school to the market place, these inexperienced mentally retarded workers stand a good chance of losing their jobs. Job Path views the follow-up counseling service it provides its graduates as an essential part of the program.

Sixty-nine percent* of Job Path participants have been referred by sheltered workshops for the mentally retarded. (The participants were previously referred to the workshops by OVR). When sheltered workshops were first established about one hundred years ago (for the physically disabled), they appeared to be an important social invention. Handicapped people who had no place to go all day long and had nothing to do with their time would be able to go to a day

* The percentages add up to 102 because of a dual referral.

facility that was intended to provide them with vocational training and, as the concept developed for the mentally retarded, with counseling for what is called "personal adjustment training". In order to provide the vocational training component, sheltered workshops for the mentally retarded contract with industry for jobs that can be handled by this population.

The sheltered workshop concept is a valid one for people whose handicaps are so severe as to prohibit employment in the competitive labor market. Unfortunately mentally retarded people who are capable of functioning on "the outside" - to use their terminology - remain in sheltered workshops where they work four days a week for hourly pay that is twenty-five to fifty percent of the minimum wage. Moreover, the work they do is often unnecessarily dull and repetitive, neither preparing people for work in the private nor in the public sector.

A major problem is that sheltered workshops are at the mercy of the business contracts they are able to secure. Instead of being able to introduce sheltered workers to progressively more difficult tasks, the staffs have to assign workers to whatever contract awaits completion. (e.g., stuffing paper inside of pocketbooks, inserting nail files in plastic cases, gutting the tops on ball point pens)

Most sheltered workshops emphasize training in bench work as described above, which does not equip people for employment outside of the workshop, because factory jobs are continuing to leave New York City. Although workshops provide some training in porter-

maintenance and mailroom-messenger work, they seldom offer training in simple clerical filing, despite the fact that one employed New Yorker in three works in a clerical capacity. In general, there is inadequate correlation between the training given by workshops and the jobs available in the public and private sectors.

Inadequate correlation contributes to the low exit rate from workshops. Also contributing, are the decided handicaps under which workshop placement counselors work. Since they have small numbers of people looking for outside employment at any given time, it is difficult to find precisely the right job for the right person. A placement counselor may learn, for example, of a messenger job at a time when the workshop has no messengers ready to leave. (Job Path does not labor under that handicap; if there is no messenger available in the program, the intake counselor has forty-six referral agencies to turn to.)

Underlying attitudes at sheltered workshops also help explain the low exit rate. There is an unquestioned assumption that the overwhelming majority of sheltered workers could not function on the "outside". Alfred Miller, Executive Director of Federation & Guidance Service, has suggested instead that the burden of proof should be on demonstrating why sheltered workers have to remain in the workshop. Were this shift in attitude to occur, the workshops could devote themselves to mentally retarded people who cannot hold down a job in

the competitive labor market. Until it does occur, however, mentally retarded people in need of a transitional employment program are not likely to find what they need in a sheltered workshop.

STAFF:

The program staff consists of the project director, the assistant director who serves as intake counselor and placement counselor, the director of job development, a second job developer, the senior job counselor, three additional job counselors, and an administrative assistant. The research staff is a separate, independent unit which has its own office in another building. The project director is responsible to the director of special projects at the Vera Institute of Justice, while the research unit is responsible to Vera's director of research.

Intake:

Job Path's intake counselor works with the staffs of schools, OVR (Office of Vocational Rehabilitation) facilities, developmental centers and sheltered workshops in order to select appropriate participants. To be appropriate for Job Path, a candidate must be evaluated as moderately, mildly, or borderline retarded. It is interesting to note that at times Job Path's intake counselor has had to encourage referral sources to take more risks. Intake has yet to reject a candidate because he or she was functioning at too low a level; but a number of applicants have been rejected because they were functioning at too high a level to need the services

the program provides.

Job Path has learned this year that our staff can teach work habits and work skills, but that we do not know how to inculcate the work ethic in someone who is completely unmotivated. As a result, our intake counselor seeks applicants who have the desire to work. Intake has also learned to avoid accepting applicants who have serious psychological problems. The job counselors, whose functions will be described below, are able to provide a variety of supports, but they are not equipped to handle people who are extremely disturbed.

By recognizing Job Path's strengths and limitations and by developing a solid working relationship with the staffs of forty-six referral sources, the intake counselor has been able to accept an appropriate, albeit a difficult, population that puts the program to the test. Ninety-two percent of the eighty-four people who have been admitted into the program have proven to be appropriate choices, i.e. they have been able to function well and to progress in a supported work environment.

Job Development:

Central to the Job Path methodology is a training experience at a real work site in the public or private sector. When the job developers approach a potential employer to request training slots, they propose an attractive incentive that the Vera Institute provides.

All Job Path trainees are put on the Vera payroll and are paid the minimum wage plus fringe benefits. Thus, the responsibility to the trainee is Vera's, and the employer does not have to make a commitment to hire or even to train anyone who does not work out, for whatever reason. Vera, however, has a commitment to employ the trainee in another work site - except in the rare case when a trainee has to be discharged from the program. (Only eight percent have had to be terminated from Job Path.)

Job developers are able to offer a trainee's services to employers in the public sector at no cost whatsoever; private sector employers reimburse Vera at least fifty percent of the trainee's salary, as agreed upon in advance.

Although job developers naturally prefer work sites where there is a prospect of future hiring, they also accept sites that are purely for training. As it happens, employers have been so satisfied with Job Path trainees that over a dozen training sites have turned into real jobs.

Job developers explain to each company they approach that, although our program is highly individualized, the general plan provides for a period of initial training that lasts from four to six weeks, under optimal circumstances; the first work site is located in the public sector, more often than not. When the trainee is ready for the second phase of the program, job developers seek a work site that

offers the possibility of future hiring. Again, under optimal circumstances, the trainee remains at the second site for another period of four to six weeks. When the trainee is considered job-ready, he or she is either hired at the second site, or the job developers seek another work site where placement is in the offing or where direct placement is available.

Placement:

Job Path's placement counselor works closely with the staff's job developers and with supervisors who are in the employ of the companies or agencies that have agreed to accept our trainees. The placement counselor's goal is to arrange the best possible match between work site and trainee. Since she also serves as intake counselor, she has interviewed all of the trainees who have been admitted into the program and has a clear sense of their strengths, their weaknesses, and their potential.

The placement counselor visits every work site the job developers have created so that she can find out precisely what abilities the trainee will need to have. A mailroom job, for example, may also include outside messenger work. Someone who clears tables in a cafeteria may also have to make coffee and slice pies. Since job developers limit their contact to the personnel departments of firms in which they hope to place trainees, they are unfamiliar with the precise details of a particular work site. By visiting the super-

visor to whom the trainee will be responsible, the Job Path placement counselor learns the exact nature of the job.

Her visit serves another purpose as well. Most supervisors have had little or no experience in directing the work of a mentally retarded person. They do not know what they can expect and what they can demand. Nor are they likely to be familiar with a program that is only nine months old. Consequently, the placement counselor offers supervisors an orientation session in order to sensitize them to the needs and abilities of the mentally retarded and to explain the purpose, structure, and function of the Job Path program.

Job Counselors:

The senior job counselor and the three job counselors whom she supervises provide essential supports to both the trainee and to their supervisors as well. Every trainee is assigned a job counselor who visits the work site at least three times a week, and who also provides the trainee with an hour of weekly individual counseling. The job counselor schedules a meeting with the supervisor every other week in addition to the casual meetings that take place in the course of visiting the work site. (A statement of what job counselors do when they visit a work site is attached.)

Job Path counselors are available when needed, which is contrary to the cursory contact too often provided by other programs. The counselor's role is preventive as well as remedial. He or she keeps

abreast of progress and of problems, and acts before matters reach crisis proportion.

Job counselors concentrate on reinforcing good work habits and skills so that trainees will be hired and will then stay hired. Counselors also focus on building each trainee's sense of self-worth and on encouraging socialization skills.

The senior job counselor has a reduced case load in order to free her to supervise the job counselors and to conduct weekly group meetings for clusters of ten to twelve trainees. The group meetings are particularly important, because they provide the peer support that is inherent in the supported work concept.

It was originally thought that peer support would best come from placing several trainees together on the same work site. Job Path has learned, however, that this approach results in segregating mentally retarded people from the rest of the work force, instead of integrating them into the larger group. Therefore, Job Path no longer seeks to place crews of trainees on the same work site. Instead, peer support comes from weekly group meetings.

The senior job counselor and the other three counselors are all responsible for providing follow-up services for trainees who move on to unsupported jobs and, therefore, leave the program. Job counselors are expected to visit ex-trainees on their new jobs once a week for the first month, and then taper off the visits gradually according

to individual need. Job counselors are also expected to confer with the employer every other week during the first month and at whatever intervals seem appropriate during the next few months. Ex-trainees and employers can call a job counselor any time a job-related problem arises. It is important that the supports do not end abruptly, and Job Path counselors see to it that there is regular contact during the transition period.

A Final Service:

All of the supports in the Job Path approach are designed to enhance independent functioning. Since so-called permanent jobs may not be permanent, it is essential that trainees develop the skills required to find a job on their own. Job Path's director of job development has designed a four session course on Employability Skills for trainees who are close to job-ready. The course includes a session on filling out application forms, two sessions on the interview process, and a session on job-hunting. Each trainee who is close to job-ready is also given a Resource Directory which lists essential information about employment agencies, Social Security offices, and the like. This particular support is intended to hold Job Path graduates in good stead so that they do not have to return to the program in future years for anything more than help in up-dating the resume with which Job Path provides each trainee.

MAJOR FINDINGS:

Although all the data have not yet been collected, a number of salient points are apparent after nine months of program operation. Job Path's major findings to date can be summed up in five unequivocal statements:

I. MENTALLY RETARDED PEOPLE CAN BECOME PRODUCTIVE WORKERS

Job Path had hoped to enable between fifty and one hundred mentally retarded people to make the transition from schools and sheltered workshops into the world of work by the end of its first year of operation. By the end of the third quarter, eighty-four trainees had entered the program and been placed on work sites in the public and private sectors. Seven trainees (eight percent) have been unable to make that transition. (Three trainees were insufficiently motivated, three were too emotionally disturbed, and one, who entered the program in its early days, simply needed more socialization, which an experienced Job Path staff now feels it could have provided.)

Job Path's mentally retarded trainees are proving to be such satisfactory workers that thirty-two of them have been hired by their training sites and placed on the employer's payroll like every other worker. At this point thirty-one have succeeded. The one failure was a trainee whom the employer insisted upon hiring prematurely. The Job Path counselor wanted the trainee to remain in the program for further support services but was unable to prevail. (The trainee

has since been readmitted into the program. Although the firing was an unfortunate set-back for this trainee, his job counselor has no qualms about future success.)

Four more trainees are expected to be hired in June. Based on the reactions of supervisors to trainees now in the program, the Job Path staff anticipates that between forty-five and fifty trainees will have been hired by September 5th, 1979, when the program completes its first year of operation.

The research arm of the project has provided further documentation to support the statement that mentally retarded people can become productive workers. Research asked forty-three supervisors to compare the job performance of our retarded trainees with that of non-retarded workers doing comparable jobs. A rating scale enabled the supervisors to indicate whether the trainees performed below the worker of normal intelligence, as well as the worker of normal intelligence, or above the worker of normal intelligence. The percentage listed next to each category in the following table represents the proportion of ratings that were either above or the same as the worker of normal intelligence. Thus, for example, 90.7% of the replies indicated that mentally retarded trainees were as dependable or even more dependable than workers of normal intelligence, whereas only 9.3% rated the trainees as less dependable. In every category more mentally retarded workers were rated equal to or above workers of normal intelligence than were rated below normal workers.

SUMMARY OF SUPERVISORS' EVALUATION
OF JOB PATH TRAINEES
IN COMPARISON TO OTHER WORKERS

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE THE SAME AS OR SUPERIOR TO NORMAL WORKER</u>
1. Dependability	90.7%
2. Attire	90.7%
3. Interest in work	93.1%
4. Acceptance of Supervision	90.8%
5. Punctuality	88.3%
6. Attendance	91.0%
7. Hygiene	81.0%
8. Getting along with co-workers	86.0%
9. Initiative	53.0%
10. Attention span	67.0%
11. Stamina	86.0%
12. Overall quality of work	70.0%
13. Understanding of job duties	67.5%
14. Retaining new skills	67.5%
15. Speed	60.5%
16. Skill in organizing work	51.2%
17. Acceptance of change	83.6%
18. Coping with job pressure	53.5%
19. Overall quality of work	58.1%
20. Ability to carry a task from start to finish	69.7%

Job Path trainees were rated particularly high in areas that suggested motivation to work: dependability, interest in work, punctuality, attendance, acceptance of supervision, and getting along with co-workers. These are all areas which job counselors stress, as are hygiene, grooming, and attire, where trainees also scored well.

Although trainees had more difficulty in areas that suggest cognitive ability, it should be noted that in each of these areas more trainees were rated as comparable to or better than employees already on the job than were rated below them.

II. MENTALLY RETARDED PEOPLE NEED A SUPPORT SYSTEM IN ORDER TO MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM SHELTERED WORKSHOPS TO THE COMPETITIVE LABOR MARKET

In order to determine the impact of the Job Path program, the research department established a controlled study. The experiences of fifty-eight* program participants (experimentals) is in the process of being compared with the experiences of fifty-nine randomly selected non-participants (controls).

The research department has determined that the two groups were comparable in the past when it came to getting jobs and holding them. Sixty-five percent of the experimentals and fifty-five percent

*Fifty-nine experimentals were selected, but one person chose not to enter the program.

of the controls did not report any previous employment at minimum wage or above; thirty-five percent of the experimentals and forty-five percent of the controls reported largely summer or intermittent employment.

The experience of the two groups has diverged since the experimentals entered the program. Although twenty-one members of the control group found employment,* only three of them were able to hold down jobs in the competitive labor market for more than a month.** By contrast, thirty-two members of the experimental group have moved into jobs in the competitive labor market and only one has lost his job thus far. The first experimental was hired in December, 5 were hired in January, 3 in February, 6 in March, 4 in April, 4 in May, and 9 in the first eighteen days of June.

The experimentals had received training as supported workers in work sites where they were eventually hired. Their job counselor and their supervisor had helped them acquire necessary work habits and work skills. By the time their employer decided to hire them without further subsidy, the experimentals had proven their ability. Indeed, as noted earlier, the one experimental who was unable to retain his job had been hired before he had had sufficient opportunity to solidify his strengths.

* Some agency personnel reported having made an extra effort to find work for people in the control group in order to compensate them for not having been selected to participate in the Job Path program.

** In considering the data it should be noted that the research department has been able to track down the employment records of 53 members of the control group rather than the full 59.

The control group, in sharp contrast to the experiments, also had received none of the supports and, with three exceptions were not able to hold their jobs.

To gain a clearer picture of the difference in outcomes, between the two groups, the research department is presently comparing the nature of the jobs that the experimentals and controls hold or have held. It is too early to draw firm conclusions, but early inquiries suggest that the experimental population performed higher level work at better pay at more prestigious firms.

There has been ample time, however, to consider the experience of the ten mentally retarded participants in the pilot project during the winter of 1978. Their rate of job retention provides added evidence that the Job Path program helps people keep the jobs they find.

Nine of the people from the pilot project are employed in unsubsidized work. Four have worked for the same company since March, 1978 and have received raises. The fifth person has worked for the same employer since September, 1978. These people have all expanded the scope of the jobs for which they were hired. The remaining five were admitted into the Job Path program in September, 1978. One was later terminated and the remainder were hired in December, 1978, January, 1979 (two) and June, 1979, as reported earlier. Although the last person to be hired has just begun working in an unsubsidized capacity, he had been placed on the work site in March, 1979 and had done well for three months before being hired.

In a further effort to determine the significance of the support system, the research department decided to ask supervisors of trainees (experimentals) to assess the impact of Job Path's presence. Each of the ten supervisors who has been interviewed thus far has expressed the conviction that Job Path's supports were absolutely critical to the trainee's success.

"If it weren't for the counselors, I'd probably let certain things slip by. I wouldn't check up on him when he's late. I wouldn't ask twice to make sure he understood ... I don't think he'd last."

Supervisor in a bank.

"There are a lot of things that I just don't have time to do. The counselor can spend the time, ... tell him how he's doing ..."

Supervisor in a library.

"The counselor's role is critical...She helps you catch small problems before they become large ones."

Supervisor in a city agency.

"The job counselor takes away the fear of working with someone who is strange to you. The counselor is somebody I trust and turn to without hesitation."

Supervisor in a private non-profit agency.

"With Job Path I know that there's the backing so that if a person doesn't work out here, they'll find him another job and they'll find someone else who could do the job."

Supervisor in a state agency.

The program staff has its own evidence to underscore the importance of supports. H., for example, succeeded because of the concerted efforts of his counselor, the senior job counselor, a job developer, and the placement counselor. H. had to be placed on five different work sites before the Job Path staff managed to find a task that he could perform at an acceptable rate of speed. The staff's perseverance finally resulted in H's being hired by a factory.

P. also succeeded because of Job Path's supports. After doing well on the program initially, P. allowed his hygiene and grooming to deteriorate and, despite frequent reprimands from the supervisor on his second work site, P. repeatedly arrived late or did not bother showing up at all. Job Path's staff placed him on another work site and redoubled its counseling efforts. Today P. is a valued employee of a large bank where he operates a Xerox machine. P. expects a raise next month and has already made plans for his first paid vacation.

Not every Job Path trainee who receives its full range of supports necessarily succeeds. M. was a product of so many years of institutionalization that he was afraid to assume responsibility. As soon as it appeared as if he might be hired, M. sabotaged the opportunity. After repeated attempts at changing M's behavior, the staff reluctantly decided that he needed more psychological help than Job Path was equipped to provide.

No one knows right now whether the support system will enable J. to succeed. What is clear, however, is that without supports J. will undoubtedly fail. At her first work site J. had an urgent need to leave what she was doing and call her mother at frequent intervals. Although the work day didn't end until 4 p.m. J. began to get restless by 2 p.m. Her counselor discovered that J. was afraid that she would get lost on her trip home. The counselor also learned that J's anxieties were exacerbated by the fact that J. thinks her parents maybe in the process of separating.

J. has been put on temporary leave while she receives additional counseling directed at the anxieties that are getting in the way of work. Meanwhile, a job developer is seeking out a new work site where it is hoped that the supervisor will be able to provide J. with time and guidance. The counselor thinks that if J. knows she can call home during her morning and afternoon coffee breaks as well as during lunch, she may be able to handle the work day. Clearly, Job Path supports will be essential for J.

The referring agencies have also indicated their belief that the supports Job Path provides are crucial. When placement officers in sheltered workshops were asked for the reasons that people they had placed were dismissed from their jobs, three reasons emerged that reflect the need for supports.

1. Poor attendance: In one rather typical instance, a retarded member of the control group didn't go to work because he felt inadequate. Then, feeling upset about not going, he stayed home a second day and a third. The longer he was absent, the more difficult it was to return. It was a week before his placement counselor discovered the absenteeism. By then the job was lost. In a similar instance, a Job Path counselor would have discovered the absenteeism the day it happened or the next day at the latest, would have met with the trainee and with his supervisor to resolve the immediate problem, and would have worked with the trainee in counseling on both the underlying issue and on the importance of attendance.

2. Confusion: Retarded people who are accustomed to working in a sheltered workshop may find the "outside" - to use their terminology - a frighteningly different environment. "They get confused and sometimes run back here," a placement counselor told the interviewer from the research unit. A trainee in the Job Path program will see his/her counselor every day of the week if that much support is needed. At a minimum, the counselor will visit the work site three times a week, and provide an hour of weekly individual counseling. In addition, the weekly group meeting provides an opportunity to air problems with other trainees under the leadership of the senior job counselor. The supports are reduced gradually in response to each trainee's needs.

3. Speed: Time and again placement counselors in referral agencies told interviewers from the research unit that jobs were lost because of lack of speed. "She (or he) is a fine person, but she (he) is just too slow," employers complain. Some Job Path trainees also had to be moved from training sites because they were too slow, but an active job development department was usually able to place such people in less pressured jobs. A trainee who could not keep up the pace required in a busy cafeteria, was able to handle a food services job in a hospital. Another trainee who could not file rapidly enough for the demands of a large bank was able to handle a clerical job in a small office.

Other Job Path trainees were slow at the outset and would have been fired, were it not for the commitment of supervisors and the effort of counselors to structure the work sites so as to arrange for graduated demands for productivity. The interim period, during which trainees have an opportunity to learn to work up to par, has saved many jobs for mentally retarded people who need more time to perfect their skills. Supervisors value the extra time because it gives them further opportunity to train the workers to meet the job standards. Job counselors also use the training time to help trainees master whatever skills are proving difficult.

III. MENTALLY RETARDED PEOPLE CAN MOVE FROM
FINANCIAL DEPENDENCY TO INDEPENDENCE

The mentally retarded people who enter Job Path present a picture of economic dependency. Forty-five percent of the participants had been receiving S.S.I. benefits when they entered Job Path; they continued to receive S.S.I. while in Job Path under a plan for self-support, although the amount was somewhat reduced because of increased earnings. (S.S.I. continues payments for a "trial work" period to enable recipients to make the transition from dependency to unsubsidized work.) Yearly payments ranged from \$1,560 to \$4,200, depending on living arrangements; those who were not on S.S.I. were either financially dependent on their families or receiving welfare.

Sixty-nine percent (or twenty-five participants) were referred by sheltered workshops where the hourly pay is twenty-five to fifty percent of the minimum wage. The remainder of the referrals were unemployed or out of the labor force altogether. The cost (wages plus operating expenses) of maintaining a person for a year vary from one sheltered workshop to another, but, based on estimates from the Association for the Help of Retarded Children and from Federation Employment & Guidance Service, it would appear that \$4,000 per person per annum is about average. Thus, the twenty-five who came to Job Path from sheltered workshops would have been likely to require workshop expenditures of about \$100,000 a year. Of course, even in sheltered workshops, the product of the work has economic value; but no attempt has been made here to estimate the value of those benefits; or, indeed, of the benefits produced by Job Path

trainees.*) During their stay in Job Path, participants remain economically dependent in the same way. The yearly cost per person comes to \$5,682. Thus far, however, the average length of stay in Job Path's transitional employment program is estimated at six months, but it is rather uncommon for a sheltered workshop client to leave in less than a year. Indeed, some Job Path trainees had been in sheltered workshops as long as three, four, and even five years.

The thirty-one Job Path graduates who have been hired without subsidy and are successfully performing on the job are no longer in a state of economic dependency. Ex-trainees' present annual salaries range from \$5,278 to \$11,000 plus fringe benefits, and they no longer receive any S.S.I. money. Job Path is too new a program to be able to project how many people will have retained their jobs for a full year. Were there to be no discharges, however, which is unlikely, and were there to be no raises, which is also unlikely, these Job Path graduates would earn a total of \$216,791 and would pay an estimated \$29,700 in income taxes at the end of a year's work.

Although a full cost/benefit picture cannot be composed from data presently at hand, the indicators seem very good that such a picture would show Job Path to be a good investment, reducing the costs of the economic dependency of the target population.

*Over a longer term, in a fully researched project, it would be possible (and certainly desirable) to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of some sophistication. There is no attempt made in this report to do that. This section is merely intended to indicate that mentally retarded people can move from financial dependence to financial independence.

IV. JOB PATH HAS ENABLED MENTALLY RETARDED

PEOPLE TO GROW SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY

Three groups of people are in a position to evaluate the affective growth of Job Path trainees. They are placement counselors at referral agencies, work site supervisors, and Job Path counselors. Preliminary interviews indicate that all three sources have observed significant growth in the trainees.

Observations of placement counselors:

"J. became more outgoing, more confident. She looked less disorganized and confused. Her social life began to move...Very simply, she looked happier. She was working. She had money. She was able to buy clothes...take people out to dinner. She felt good about herself and apparently this had some kind of feedback effect on her...This allowed her to do more than anyone expected she could do."

* * *

"With B. it was a question of his being more mature, more related in a social way, more appropriate socially. He dresses better. He takes care of himself more. He knows what is expected of him... The whole area of social interaction used to be very, very difficult. I see him as significantly better."

* * *

"The people we have placed in your program call me with some frequency. A typical, conversation begins, 'Are you sitting down? Wait 'til you hear this!' The good news that follows reflects improved job skills, work habits, and overall socialization."

* * *

"The biggest asset of the Job Path program is the social component. Social growth comes from being in a real job with normal people in a normal situation, with normal expectations."

Observations of supervisors:

"G. used to seek my approval before attempting any task. He would even check with me before polishing a door knob. Now he decides what should be done and proceeds on his own initiative."

* * *

"E. used to have trouble getting along with people on the job because of his impulsive behavior. He used to act first and think later. Now E.'s behavior has changed so much that he is an accepted member of the group."

* * *

"K. was terribly gullible when she first started on this work site. She misjudged casual friendliness from men and assumed they had romantic intentions. She has become far better able to judge the social situation around here. Now K. relates to people in an appropriate manner."

* * *

"When I used to talk to A., she always assumed she was going to be reprimanded. I could feel her apprehension. Now she seems completely comfortable in her relationship with me as a supervisor."

Observations of Job Path counselors:

"I see a great difference when I conduct weekly group meetings. After some time in the program, trainees become better able to communicate, more assertive and more self-assured."

* * *

"Trainees lose their workshop habits. It takes three to four weeks before they feel free to ask questions of their supervisors, because in the workshop any talk at all was likely to have been discouraged. They isolate themselves from their co-workers at first for the same reason. In time, however, they socialize appropriately."

* * *

"Our trainees develop self-confidence and initiative. You see it when someone who has been in the program a while shows a new trainee how to open a bank account or how to go shopping. You see it on the work site, too. Last week P. took the time to show L. how to do a job that L. was having trouble mastering."

* * *

"E. had been going steady with someone from the workshop, but she has outgrown him. They are still friends, but E. tells me she will not marry him. She recognizes the change in herself and the lack of change in her former boyfriend."

V. JOB PATH HAS MADE INROADS WITH EMPLOYERS

THAT OTHER PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO MAKE

"Job Path has had better access to employers in the public and private sectors than any sheltered workshop for the mentally retarded has had," Dr. Max Dubrow, Director of the New York League Work Center recently observed. The League Work Center is a sheltered workshop that is operated under the auspices of the Association for the Help of Retarded Children. "Both the numbers and variety of possible job openings have been broadened considerably because of Job Path's activity," Dr. Dubrow continued.

In terms of sheer numbers, Job Path has approached approximately four hundred and fifteen companies and agencies in the last nine months and developed sixty work sites. On average about ten telephone calls are necessary for each work site that is finally developed. In addition, one visit is made by a job developer and another visit by the placement counselor. Two conferences for potential employers that the Ford Foundation hosted were a great help to job development.

The variety of work sites is particularly interesting. Job Path has placed trainees with two of the most distinguished law firms in the nation: Cravath, Swaine & Moore, and Webster & Sheffield. The Cravath trainee is doing well, and the Webster & Sheffield trainee has been hired as a regular employee of the firm. Another trainee is about to start at Greenbaum, Wolff & Ernst.

Schools and sheltered workshops for the mentally retarded would like to arrange placements in quality firms of this sort because of the desirable atmosphere, but they do not have the necessary access. Nor do they have an association with the Vera Institute of Justice. Or two full time job developers, whose time is not diluted by doing placement and follow up as well. (Other staff members handle these functions.)

With the resources at its command, Job Path has also been able to place trainees in investment banks, which is another previously untapped employment opportunity. One trainee was placed at Lazard Freres and another at Bear Stearns. Both have been hired by the firms as regular employees.

Twelve trainees received training at the Chemical Bank; two have become regular Chemical employees and four were hired by other companies. Nine trainees received training at Irving Trust, and one has been hired, even though Irving Trust specified that it was only a training site. Two trainees are about to begin at the Republic National Bank and two at Greenwich Savings Bank.

The list of work sites is attached to this report, but some of the public sector work sites are also worthy of particular mention. Job Path trainees are receiving work experience in the Office of the Borough President of Manhattan, the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court, the Office of New York City's Deputy Mayor for Criminal Justice, the Mayor's Office of Correspondence, and the Mayor's Messenger Service as well as in six other city agencies and ten state agencies. Ex-trainees have been hired by one federal agency, seven state agencies and four city agencies.

To arrange for hiring, public sector employers had to be both inventive and determined, because they had no lines in their budget but Job Path was told time and time again that our trainees are too valuable to lose. One trainee in a public agency actually created his own job. E. was offered an opportunity to learn how to operate a Xerox machine. Not satisfied with merely operating the machine, E. learned how to clean it and repair it. Instead of waiting for secretaries to bring work to him, E. personally went to each department, soliciting work and returning the finished collated product. In time, people in the agency wondered how they could function without E.'s services. A once wary supervisor became E.'s sponsor. He went out of his way to make certain that, budget crunch or otherwise, E. was hired.

Trainees do more to educate employers about the abilities of mentally retarded people than anyone else, but Job Path's professional staff plays a critical role. The placement counselor meets with

every supervisor for an orientation session before trainees are placed on a work site. Once the trainee has begun, a job counselor visits a new work site at least three times a week and has a scheduled meeting with each supervisor every other week in addition to the casual meetings that occur in the course of general visiting. "The luxury of Job Path is that there's an on-the-site counselor," a placement counselor at one of the referring agencies told an interviewer from the research department. "If I send somebody to a regular job, there's a lot of education to give an employer in a very short time. A lot of them aren't willing to listen, or they say they are but they are really too busy."

There are a considerable number of times when a job counselor is able to intervene with an employer and save a job that would be lost under ordinary circumstances. One trainee was caught stealing, but the job counselor was able to mollify the employer so that the trainee could return to the work site. The counselor was also able to guide the trainee so that there was no further stealing. The trainee has been working well and has moved from the public sector to the private sector where hiring is a distinct possibility.

Another counselor saved four factory jobs by being on the spot at a crucial time. Through no fault of his own, one trainee had gotten into a fight and the employer threatened to fire all four

trainees as a result. The counselor broke down the employer's stereotypes about retarded people and made it possible for all four to remain on the work site. They have since been hired and our job developers anticipate placing another crew in the same factory in the very near future.*

Thus, employer education is an on-going process that begins with the job developer, continues with the placement counselor, and ultimately is the concern of job counselors -- and of the trainees themselves.

Placement counselors in sheltered workshops work under a decided handicap because they cannot be on the site. They work under another handicap when they have to resort to using employment offices for job placements because it means that mentally retarded people must compete with non-retarded people who are familiar with the "outside" world. Job Path trainees ultimately have to be as good as non-retarded workers, but they have the opportunity to learn work habits and skills while they are gaining experience and confidence -- and receiving \$2.90 an hour as well. Sheltered workshops also try to use private contacts in seeking out jobs, but they work with such small numbers of people at any given time that the right job is often not available at the right time. Since Job Path works with forty-six referral agencies, whenever there is a work site opening which requires skills our trainees

*Since they do not work near one another, it is possible to place four trainees with the same company without fostering the aforementioned segregation.

lack, the intake counselor calls the agencies and arranges for someone who has had training in the requisite skill to enter the program.

Alfred Miller, Executive Director of the Federation Employment & Guidance Service, is in an excellent position to evaluate the impact that Job Path has had these past nine months. "Perhaps the greatest contribution that Job Path has made to rehabilitation services for the mentally retarded," Mr. Miller notes, "is that it has demonstrated that retarded people can achieve satisfactory vocational rehabilitation through job placement at a higher level than has generally been recognized. It is the effect that Job Path's success has and will continue to have," Mr. Miller explains, "that will have professionals and agencies continuing to strive to upgrade our expectations on what the mentally retarded can achieve."

CONCLUSION:

Since Job Path is a demonstration project, it has aroused the interest of a great many people. No one has been more interested than the New York State Department of Labor because of the CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) funding* which provides a major portion of Job Path's budget. A team of CETA evaluators spent two months assessing the Job Path program. They interviewed the entire staff, with the exception of one job counselor, visited work sites, and inquired into the worth of supported

* A list of all funding sources is attached.

work by talking with personnel at randomly selected sheltered workshops. The report that the CETA monitors filed with the New York State Department of Labor includes this statement:

"The project is addressing an unmet need for special services for retarded individuals. No other project of this kind exists at present in this area. Without such a project, most enrollees would remain in a sheltered workshop setting."

The CETA report approved of every aspect of the program design and administration. Indeed, the CETA evaluators were so satisfied that they made no recommendations for improvement. A CETA report without such recommendations is most unusual. The Public Information Office of the New York State Department of Labor is currently preparing a press release which it will send state-wide to report on Job Path's accomplishments.

Placement counselors from referral agencies are also well pleased with Job Path's services. "The transition that Job Path makes available is exactly what is needed. I tried direct referrals but they weren't successful," a rehabilitation counselor from the Adult Retardata Center told a research interviewer. "Mentally retarded people who come from a workshop, need the transition. If they're not successful, it's another failure, and they have had enough failures."

Job Path clearly provides a much-needed service that is not available anywhere else. It has earned the confidence of the mentally retarded people whom it enrolls, of placement officers who refer them, of supervisors who over-see their work, of employers who have hired them, and of professionals in the field of mental retardation.

JOB PATH is the only transitional employment program in New York City for mentally retarded people who do not need to be segregated in sheltered workshops but who are not yet ready to compete successfully for a place in the competitive labor market.

JOB PATH is the only resource in New York City that provides training for mentally retarded people in actual work settings in the public and private sectors.

JOB PATH is the only agency for mentally retarded people in New York City that pays the minimum wage of \$2.90 an hour plus fringe benefits for a 35 hour week beginning with the first day a trainee participates in the program.

JOB PATH is the only program in New York City in which mentally retarded workers consistently move from less complicated skills to more complicated ones in an orderly fashion.

JOB PATH is the only agency for mentally retarded people in New York City that has created a sophisticated support system involving job developers, a placement counselor, and job counselors who work in concert to provide services for every trainee in the program.

JOB PATH is the only employment program for mentally retarded people in New York City that offers employers a full range of support services so that they can structure the work site and supervise in a sympathetic but firm manner.

In sum, Job Path is a program that provides an essential service.

What Counselors Should Do

On A Jobsite Visit

- I. Counselors are responsible when visiting a jobsite to observe each trainee while he/she is performing specific job tasks to:
 - a. assess trainees' adjustment to and ability to perform task.
 - b. determine ease or difficulty with which the task is being accomplished.
 - c. detect speed and accuracy with which task is being performed.
 - d. determine when trainee has mastered a particular skill and is ready to take on new assignments.
 - e. assess and have specific knowledge of the skills that the trainee is learning.

- II. Counselors are to observe how trainees relate to supervisors:
 - a. does he/she ask questions when in doubt?
 - b. does he/she shy away from supervision?
 - c. does a good rapport exist between trainee and supervisor?

- III. Counselors are to observe how trainees interact with co-workers:
 - a. does he/she talk to co-workers?
 - b. does trainee go to lunch with co-workers once in a while?
 - c. does trainee participate in staff functions (birthday party celebrations, going away parties, etc.)?
 - d. generally speaking, is trainee considered a part of the group?

- IV. Counselors may occasionally become involved in teaching specific job tasks to a trainee during a worksite visit.

- V. Counselors discuss with supervisors the progress that a trainee is making on the job to:
 - a. establish necessary rapport with supervisors.
 - b. help supervisors understand the special nature of working with mentally retarded adults.
 - c. determine when a trainee is job-ready.
 - d. determine trainees' strengths and weaknesses.
 - e. determine trainees suitability for a particular job.

- VI. Counselors are to observe trainees personal appearance on the jobsite:
 - a. to assess if trainee is appropriately attired for work he/she is involved in.
 - b. to make sure trainees maintain personal hygiene.

- VII. Counselors are to observe trainees' attendance and punctuality record on a jobsite.

LIST OF FUNDING SOURCES

The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation

The Ford Foundation

The Governor's Four Percent Discretionary Fund (CETA)

New York State Department of Social Services

New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

Council on Developmental Disabilities

New York/Long Island County Services Group

New York State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

CETA FUNDED WORK SITES

Baruch College	New York State Department of Probation
Bellevue Hospital	
Criminal Justice Agency	New York State Department of Social Services
Mayor's Office of Correspondence	New York State Department of Taxation & Finance
Metropolitan Music School	
National Parks Service	New York State Human Rights Appeal Board
New York City Department of Corrections	New York State Office of General Services
New York City Department of Employment	New York State Office of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities
*New York City Department of Environmental Protection	New York State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
*New York City Department of Records & Information	New York State Supreme Court - Appellate Division
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation	Nutrition & Health Center
New York City Office of Borough President of Manhattan	One to One
New York City Office of Deputy Mayor - Criminal Justice	Victim Services Agency
New York City - Human Resources Administration	Y.M.C.A.
New York State Department of Housing & Community Renewal	
New York State Department of Insurance	
New York State Department of Labor	

*Pending meeting with placement counselor

AGS Computer

Silverstein Properties

A&M Leatherlines

United Parcel Service

Advertising Checking Bureau

Vera Institute of Justice

Alexander's

WINS Radio

Automation House

Webster & Sheffield

Bear, Stearns & Co.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield

Enai Zion

Bruning Microfilm Corporation

Chemical Bank

Cravath, Swaine & Moore

Epicure Cheese Shop

Four Color Lithograph

Freshway Food Systems

Greenbaum, Wolff & Ernst

Greenwich Savings Bank

Hudson Printing Co.

Inhilco

Irving Trust Company

Lazard Freres

Marsel Mirror & Glass Products

Metropolitan Museum of Art

Mail Order Department

Metropolitan Opera Guild

Mail Order Department

Minute Men Messenger Service

New York Public Library

for the Blind

Republic National Bank