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Mid-Carolina Regional Council Receives Grant

Center for Workforce Inclusion awards workforce inclusion grant for older jobseekers 55+

Fayetteville. January 5, 2023 – Mid-Carolina Regional Council announced today that it was awarded a \$527,268 workforce inclusion grant from the Center for Workforce Inclusion, Inc. (Center). Almost 90 percent of this grant – originally from the U.S. Department of Labor – will provide on-the-job training to no less than 88 low-income older North Carolinians living in Bladen, Cumberland, Lee, Moore, Richmond, and Robeson counties. This workforce inclusion grant will help the Mid-Carolina Regional Council operate its Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).

For sixty years, the Center has worked with older, low-income jobseekers overlooked by traditional workforce programs. Both directly and through a nationwide network of local partners, the Center empowers older jobseekers to attain in-demand skills, overcome barriers to employment, and secure employment. Workforce inclusion grants, including those grants supporting the operation of SCSEP, are a critical element of the Center’s mission.

In its 56th year, SCSEP is a cornerstone program of the Older Americans Act and the only federal job training program targeted exclusively to low-income, older jobseekers. Jobseekers who participate in SCSEP become skilled, reskilled, and/or upskilled to meet the local employment needs in their community.

“Older adults will soon be the largest single segment of the American workforce,” said Gary A. Officer, Center for Workforce Inclusion President and CEO. “It is an economic necessity that we ensure our older jobseekers are equipped with the tools required to be successful in the workforce. Therefore, I am very pleased to continue our support of the Mid-Carolina Regional Council in 2023.”

“SCSEP was a godsend during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Justin Hembree, Mid-Carolina Regional Council Executive Director. “Jobseekers participating in SCSEP were able to keep training from home. And now, the majority of SCSEP jobseekers are back at their training sites where they help the local community, faith-based, and public agencies carry out their missions, such as the Cumberland County Association for Indian People, Boys & Girls Club of Cumberland County, Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina, and Robeson County Veterans Service Office and the NCWorks Career Centers. By working in SCSEP positions, SCSEP is providing

hope and dignity to low-income jobseekers 55 and older who have the toughest employment challenges. The grant from the Center is essential to our being able to deliver this program in our community.”

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About Mid-Carolina Regional Council

The purpose of the Mid-Carolina Regional Council is to encourage and assist local units of government to collaborate in improving the health, safety, and general welfare of their citizens, and to plan for the future development of the region. Mid-Carolina also strives to assist members in solving current problems and helping eliminate monetary waste.

A voluntary coalition of local governments, the Mid-Carolina Regional Council (MCRC) functions as a multi-county, planning, development, and human services organization. We reach across the county and municipal borders to provide technical assistance to our local governments and to administer programs that benefit our region’s citizens.

Our mission is to provide creative regional solutions to relevant and emerging issues in Cumberland, Harnett, and Sampson Counties, North Carolina while providing a standard of excellence in the delivery of federal, state, and regional services for our communities.

MCRC is governed by a six-member Board of Directors. The Board consists of local elected officials representing the counties and municipalities in our region.

About the Center for Workforce Inclusion

The Center for Workforce Inclusion is the only national nonprofit dedicated exclusively to employment for older workers in both the public and private sectors. Since 1962, the Center has provided workforce development and support services to nearly half a million older workers. Our mission is to deliver workforce readiness programs that empower local jobseekers, attract employers, and transform communities. The Center provides employment opportunities for low-income and other older adults aged 50 and older in 34 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. For 56 years, the Center has operated the Senior Community Service Employment Program and currently partners with a diverse network of local organizations in 12 states. For more information, please visit www.centerforworkforceinclusion.org.