

Name of Organization: SKIP, Inc. Community Resource Services-Georgia

Official Contact Person: Valencia Miller, Phone: 404-401-2312, Email: skipgeorgiainc@gmail.com

SKIP, Inc. Community Resource Services-Georgia is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, family empowerment organization for children and families affected by parental incarceration. **SKIP** is an acronym for “Save Kids of Incarcerated Parents”, an organization created over 30 years ago in Montgomery, Alabama where the National Chapter is based. SKIP, Inc. Georgia is the newly expanded Chapter based in metro Atlanta, GA.

SKIP, Inc. Community Resource Services was founded by Mrs. Gloria Jean Canty-Williams in 1976 and incorporated in 1980 in the state of Florida. On April 9, 1997, the founder established SKIP, Inc. National Headquarters in the state of Alabama and now serves as its Executive Director. In 2003, SKIP chapters were established in Georgia, Michigan, and Texas. SKIP leadership has spent countless hours researching information and implementing programs for children and families, of incarcerated individuals, who are in at-risk situations. Our Mission is to break the cycle of generational incarceration by providing support services to children of incarcerated parents and their families and to increase public awareness of the underlying problems of these children as victims through education, advocacy, and research.

SKIP, Inc.-Georgia is well positioned to deliver entrepreneurship training to formerly incarcerated individuals through its highly qualified management team of reentry professionals. The organization continues to serve families of incarcerated individuals in its role as a direct service provider.

The Georgia Chapter, located in the Metropolitan Atlanta area, will provide total programmatic design and implementation for the Aspire Challenge. The proposed, geographic service areas will initially include low to moderate income families within Fulton and DeKalb Counties. Participant demographics will include male and female individuals, ages 18 years and older, who are returning citizens (formerly incarcerated).

Entrepreneur training presents the opportunity to offer the returning citizen a means to create their own jobs and allowing them to employ others within the community ecosystem. Consequently, this brings a solution to the problem of recidivism, and fosters improved personal self-worth and desire to be a positive contributor to the community in which they live. Once a participant is selected a needs assessment will be done to determine which community partners will be engaged as a supportive component for the individual to be successful.

Background of the SKIP, Inc., management team includes professional individuals and consultants. We have a combined, holistic approach to the entrepreneurship training. Our expertise includes criminal justice reform and reentry experts, case management, successful returning citizen entrepreneurs, peer-to-peer mentors, program development, instructional training and development, operations management, organizational leadership, faith-based guidance, recruitment, financial literacy and financial coaching.

Valencia Miller, President of our Georgia Chapter, has worked in the criminal justice reform arena, throughout the State of Georgia, for over (5) years. Her 30 plus years of expertise in business operations excellence, as a community programs developer, and strategic planner in the reentry field has helped expand the SKIP vision and opened a new avenue for service. Dr. Chandra Thornton is an experienced professional with over 17 years of experience in the legal field, education arena, and currently as a GED Instructor with the Georgia Department of Corrections. She is recognized for her knowledge of research and analysis methodology and techniques.

Sharon Turner is a recruiter, with strong experience in grassroots organizing and direct action engagement around the social issues faced by formerly incarcerated individuals. She designed a workforce training plan for community residents to receive certification and hands on work experiences in the revitalization of the Vine City and English Avenue neighborhoods known as the highest recidivism zip codes within the State of Georgia.

Francine Scott has over 30 years of administrative/Executive experience in state government. Her professional qualifications include supervising and directing the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, office manager of Planning and Operations for the Department of Corrections, and Program Assistant with a faith-based tutorial program. Theresa Mullins is a Parent Liaison with the Atlanta Public Schools where she is recognized for her ability to inspire, promote and provide networking opportunities for young adult students and families.

Participant Recruitment Plan

To support us in the process of identifying and recruiting participants, an email notice and flyer will be sent to local community based organizations and partners that provide reentry services to their clients. Among those agencies we will include The Georgia Department of Labor, Atlanta Work Force Development, Fulton County, and DeKalb Work Force Development. Each agency will be contacted to assist with advertisement and referral services. Also, we will include the Urban League of Greater Atlanta, the Department of Community Supervision, Morehouse School of Medicine, My Brother's Keeper, Atlanta Community Food Bank, Fulton Atlanta Community Action Authority, Westside Works, Partnership for Community Action, Atlanta Technical College, and Atlanta-Fulton County Pre-Arrest Diversion Program. This is a partial list of community and government organizations with whom we are currently partnered. This will be done via flyers and referral forms generated by SKIP, Inc.

We are in the process of vetting a local community partner that is a micro-development organization, with a proven successful track record of deliverables through their curriculum in the area of entrepreneurship education. This organization has over 10 years of experience providing leadership training and micro-enterprise development, promoting family self-sufficiency.

Classroom Instruction:

The following outline is a 12-week micro-enterprise training cycle of classes scheduled to occur once per week for two hours. Candidates will attend an information session, submit applications and the required documents, and be evaluated on their business concept or established business for potential participation. Other requirements may be based upon demographics to be determined, (i.e., low to moderate income requirements, community, and county residency). The final outcome of this training is that the participant will present a PowerPoint business plan and an Elevator Pitch. There will be opportunities for personal business coaching and access to partner resources, structured to promote the phases and successes of establishing or expanding their existing businesses. Access to classroom activities and homework will be made available via the SKIP website. Each session topic will be facilitated by an expert. Books and curriculum materials are provided for each class participant and the class will evaluate the instructor and make any suggestions they find to be beneficial in making their training experience a success. Following is a description of the 12 week training:

- Session 1: Introduction, Overview & Entrepreneurship
- Session 2: Planning and Research: Entrepreneurial Essentials
- Session 3: Organizational Matters: Management & Legal Structure
- Session 4: Marketing – “Behind the Scenes”: Analysis & Understanding
- Session 5: Marketing – “On Stage”: Strategies, Tactics & Implementation
- Session 6: Financial Overview: Book, Records & Controls
- Session 7: Managing Your Money: Financial Planning, Budgets & Assumptions
- Session 8: Managing Your Money: Developing & Using Cash Flow Projections
- Session 9: Understanding and Using Your Financial Statements
- Session 10: Financing Your Business: Sources of Money
- Session 11: Green Business Opportunities: Environmental Solutions
- Session 12: Your Business Future: Negotiating, Managing Growth & Plan Completion

At Session 12, each participant is required to make a PowerPoint presentation of their Business Plan. Then, a Graduation Ceremony will be held where each participant will receive a Certificate of Completion.

At completion of the 12 weeks, there will be follow up of individualized business coaching, financial coaching, and invitations to ongoing entrepreneurial, educational, networking opportunities, and access to capital. In addition, to guide all participants, we will host a networking event with other established business organizations which can include the Chamber of Commerce, Atlanta Business League, Women's Business League, and the Alum from the graduation. Each participant will also be required to complete a Vision Board to present at the networking event.

Mentoring:

During and after the 12 weeks cohorts, each participant will have access to community resource partners for supportive services, such as employment services, educational resources, clothing, housing resources, transportation assistance, and behavioral health support, etc., as needed.

For individualized support, mentors will be recruited and identified among the partnership organizations. We will schedule a welcome event and give them an orientation to the entrepreneur training program. In turn, mentors will:

- Be respected as an experienced and successful professional in their organization
- Support their organization's mission, vision, and goals
- Stay accessible, committed, and engaged during the length of the program
- Offer encouragement through genuine positive reinforcement
- Be a positive role model
- Share "lessons learned" from their own experiences as entrepreneurs and business people
- Be a resource and a sounding board

For sustainability, each participant will receive 14 hours of individualized business coaching upon completion of the 12 weeks. Additionally, we will provide peer mentoring through connecting graduates of the program with successful entrepreneur returning citizens. This will be accomplished through a planned Peer Mentoring Meet and Greet event.

Community Connections:

Through collaboration with local community stakeholders, business entities, and direct service providers, an informational meeting will be held and a presentation will be made to introduce and share details of the entrepreneur training program. We would also establish an Advisory Council for the program which will consist of business, government, and community to become vested in our Vision and Mission. A partnership with interfaith and multi-cultural Faith-based organizations will be fostered to promote greater participation, support and involvement with returning citizens and their families. A number of local faith-based entities, with reentry programs, have been identified as Stations of Hope through the State of Georgia's Healing Communities program. This program is specifically designed to serve returning citizens throughout the State.

Specifically, one of our largest and solid community partners is The Georgia Micro-Enterprise Network (GMEN) which consists of a 75 member network of micro-enterprise development organizations (MBO) throughout the State of Georgia. We have the ability to receive technical assistance, expert advice, presentations, and consultations through this collaboration. Our staff and participants have access to educational opportunities and networking across the State of Georgia. The SBA recently awarded GMEN with funding to roll out a statewide initiative for the RITES (Reentry Initiative Through Entrepreneurial Services) which advises micro-enterprise development organizations on how to link returning citizens with access to capital for their micro-businesses. Also, Kennesaw State University's Edge Connection Entrepreneur Program will be used as a resource. Ultimately, this community collaboration would result in our team creating a Resource Guide for returning citizens and their families.

Access to Capital:

We will research the local micro-lenders in the area and vet them by inviting them to attend the graduation ceremony. As part of our networking we will develop a partnership with ACE (Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs, Inc.) because they are a non-profit servicing under-served people and community. Since ACE started making loans in the year 2000, they have made more than \$37,000,000 in loans, creating or saving more than 6,200 jobs in Georgia. Angel lenders would be another source of funding as they offer seed money to individuals wanting to start a business.

We would also encourage and assist our participants in crowd funding to raise money for their businesses. This approach to generating capital for business has become a popular and effective alternative to traditional investments in business.

Through our educational financial literacy training component, participants will learn to become bankable and financially responsible, and solvent, both personally and business-wise.

We will also write grants for establishing IDA (Individual Development Accounts) for match savings for business. A collaborative partnership between a financial institution, a funding source and our participants saving will be the formula to increase their opportunities to have access to capital.

We will prepare participants to meet with capital providers by teaching them to dress for success, proper business etiquette, and mock pitching sessions in front of real business professionals who can offer constructive feedback. To assist with preparing proper documentation, we will assure participants have their financial statements in order and available. Additionally, we will partner with a local financial institution known for their ability and willingness to support under-served populations such as returning citizens. This will present a great opportunity for us to plan and schedule matchmaking events for program participants.