



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**  
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## **JVS PARTNERS WITH BANKWORK\$™ FOR BAY AREA EXPANSION OF AWARD-WINNING FINANCIAL CAREER TRAINING PROGRAM**

**Collaboration seeks to address growing economic divide in the region**

**San Francisco** – Prominent Bay Area career training provider JVS will partner with BankWork\$™ to deepen its long-time work with adults from low-income and minority communities and those with barriers to employment. The partnership to prepare workers for careers in the financial services industry comes as BankWork\$™ continues its \$4-million national expansion to 15 cities by 2019.

“With its long, successful track record of helping people throughout the Bay Area find well-paying jobs, JVS was a perfect choice for us,” said Les Biller, BankWork\$™ founder and co-founder of The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation. “We were looking for a partner we could work closely with to bring our proven program to the Bay Area and together offer a career opportunity to those in need. JVS understands the need to provide training in the skills that employers are looking for, which helps ensure that its graduates can find employment and advance in their careers.”

JVS has combated unemployment in the Bay Area for 40 years. JVS’s award-winning programs throughout San Francisco, the East Bay and the North and South Peninsulas have helped people build the skills and employer connections needed to find work and transform their lives. Last fall, the White House awarded the nonprofit a \$6.4-million grant to provide long-term unemployed candidates with advanced skills training to help them return or transition to the tech industry.

“We’re excited to partner with BankWork\$™ and develop training and employment opportunities for banking industry candidates,” said JVS Executive Director Abby Snay, who recently celebrated her 30<sup>th</sup> year as executive director of JVS. No stranger to the banking sector, Snay added that “JVS has had the support of local banking organizations in our workforce development efforts for years. We look forward to strengthening these relationships and filling employment demands with BankWork\$™ graduates.”

BankWork\$™ launched in 2006 in Los Angeles and expanded to Seattle in 2011. It currently places about 200 graduates each year and will continue its expansion to Phoenix and Portland, Ore. in 2015. By 2019, BankWork\$™ will be operating in 15 or more cities nationwide. Its \$4-million national expansion is funded by Bank of America, U.S. Bank and Wells Fargo, which have each pledged \$1 million over five years to support the rollout, and by The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation, which founded the program and has also pledged \$1 million.

Since its launch, BankWork\$™ has achieved enviable results. It has successfully placed more than 800 graduates who were hired by banks and other financial institutions. BankWork\$™ achieves a graduation rate of approximately 75% and is placing approximately 70% of graduates with partner banks each year. BankWork\$™ graduates also stay employed in their jobs: retention rates for 2013 BankWork\$™ graduates showed that 86% were employed six months after their hire date and 72% one year from their hire date.

“Wells Fargo is excited to support the BankWork\$™ expansion to the San Francisco Bay Area,” said Jim Foley, EVP and president of the Bay Area region for Wells Fargo. “BankWork\$™ has developed an innovative training program that addresses the needs of the financial industry and provides potential employees with



the skills and mentoring they need to succeed. Our company's focus is to help our customers achieve their financial objectives, and to do that we need to have qualified team members. We know from our Los Angeles and Seattle locations that BankWork\$™ graduates meet and exceed our high expectations for our employees so this is a win-win for students and for Wells Fargo.”

BankWork\$™ classes are free for participants. Banking industry professionals and BankWork\$™ Founding Partner JVS Los Angeles developed the curriculum, which is designed to be hands-on training with exposure to banks and the financial industry, and teaches sales and customer service skills through simulation exercises. The classes run for eight weeks and provide training in the skills needed for jobs as tellers, customer service representatives and personal bankers. The course culminates in a graduation and job fair with local banking partners, giving graduates the opportunity to interview for jobs immediately. BankWork\$™ also offers resume building, job interview practice, job placement assistance and ongoing coaching and mentoring to help with career advancement. Participants must be 18 years or older, have a high school diploma or GED, be fluent in written and spoken English, have basic computer skills and no adult felony convictions.

“It always is so gratifying to see our graduates interview with potential employers and successfully put into action all they have learned during their BankWork\$™ classes,” said Colleen Anderson, BankWork\$™ Executive Director, who spent 30+ years in the financial services industry. “Given its expertise at workforce development and the high quality of its staff led by Abby Snay, JVS is the perfect partner for us as we expand into the Bay Area.”

After two initial classes in 2015, the program anticipates placing close to 100 graduates in jobs in 2016.

“The economic divide is growing in the Bay Area, making high-skills training programs like BankWork\$™ vital,” Snay added. “Helping people secure the kinds of jobs that can support families over the long-term is good for business, good for those seeking jobs and, ultimately, good for our community.”

BankWork\$™ reflects the collaboration much sought after by the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. The Los Angeles Business Journal recognized BankWork\$™ with the Project Collaboration Award at the Nonprofit and Corporate Citizenship Awards for its work in bringing together partner banks, local government agencies and philanthropies to support job training.

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About BankWork\$™: The program was started in 2006 in Los Angeles by The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation and currently runs in Los Angeles and Seattle, placing more than 200 individuals in banking careers every year. As part of a five-year, \$4-million national expansion in partnership with Bank of America, U.S. Bank and Wells Fargo, it will add operations in San Francisco, Phoenix and Portland, Ore. in 2015 before moving to a total of 15+ cities by 2019. For more information, visit [www.bankworks.org](http://www.bankworks.org).