

# Grace-Mar Services, Inc.

Financial Literacy

Job Readiness/Placement

Self-Sufficiency

2/11/2014

February 2014

## Word from our President

Dear Friends,

Grace-Mar Services is excited about what lies ahead for us in 2014! We continue to provide quality services through education, counseling and professional networks to displaced workers, minorities and low-to-moderate income families in the areas of financial literacy, job readiness/ placement and self-empowerment. 2013 was an amazing year for us! Not only was it our fourth year in existence, but we also had some major accomplishments which included:

\*Celebrating our second year at the Center of Employment Services.

\*We interviewed and administered skills assessment tests to 582 candidates, with 293 of those reporting to have found employment in 2013.

\*Securing new funding relationships with the Department of Social Services, the City of Charlotte, Wells Fargo and the NC Department of Commerce.

\*Hiring two full-time recruiters to the Grace-Mar Services' staff.

Even though last year was a significant one, our focus remains the same: increase employability, increasing homeownership opportunities and promoting self-sufficiency within the de-



mographics we serve.

Please know that Grace-Mar Services accomplishments in 2013 were made possible by your support and assistance. The Grace-Mar Services staff would like to thank you and wish you a successful and rewarding 2014!

— Kenny

## Reprint Charlotte Housing Authority Newsletter January 2013

Grace-Mar Services, Inc., a job readiness and placement services provider, has now opened an office at CHA's Center for Employment Services (CES). The mission of this nonprofit agency is "Empowering Others Through Education, Counseling and Professional Networks."

Taking referrals from CHA's case managers, Grace-Mar founder and president Kenny Smith provides job placement, one-on-one coaching and classroom education to CHA clients seeking to find and maintain employment. The agency's three core services are Job Readiness and Placement, Financial

Literacy, and Computer/other vocational skills training.

While Grace-Mar currently only offers its classes and services to public housing and HCV residents with a case manager, Mr. Smith says they do plan to eventually offer services to all public housing residents and HCV participants seeking employment.

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### **DO YOU KNOW?**

**77% of all jobs filled in the US in 2012 never made it to a website?**

## Reprint from Charlotte Works Newsletter (Volume 1, Issue 37)

A seven-month-old pilot partnership between Grace-Mar Services, Inc., a job developer that connects employers and employees and a Charlotte Works SNAP (Share Network Access Point) site, and fellow SNAP site Charlotte Housing Authority bore fruit when nine Grace-Mar clients were hired by Convergys for call-center positions on October 31.

Working together, the two organizations transformed the Housing Authority's Center for Employment Services into a recruitment facility for employers. Kenny Smith, president/founder of Grace-Mar, says the Housing Authority approached his organization to come "in-house" to focus on serving its clients when it noticed that Grace-Mar offered many of the same job readiness program and skills training they were looking for. The Center for Employment Services, located on Caronia Street, houses five partner agencies that are focused on getting people back to work, including two GED programs,

the Urban League, the Benevolent Fund and now Grace-Mar.

The Center offers pre-employment screening and testing to ensure that candidates meet employers' minimum requirements. Grace-Mar also provides skills training for individuals to get them job-ready.

"By utilizing the SNAP center as a satellite testing center, prospective candidates can schedule time to test and prepare to meet with the employers one on-one during scheduled, all-day employer recruitment days," Kenny says. "The Center operates like a regular staffing agency, but doesn't charge employers or its candidates a fee for its services."

Kenny says the program has been such a huge success that the Center has closed its doors to walk-in foot traffic. To date, more than 160 SNAP visitors have been hired via events at the Center, including those mentioned above.



**"By utilizing the SNAP center as a satellite testing center, prospective candidates can schedule time to test and prepare to meet with the employers one recruitment facility for employers."**

## Grace-Mar's Access 21 TV Show is BACK!

We are excited to announce that our Access 21 TV show will began to air in June 2014! This years' show will contain information on job search strategies and careers opportunities in the area.

Grace-Mar has assembled a team of professionals to deliver insightful and impactful workshops in the areas of computers, job search strategies, finan-

cial matters, healthy living and more.

The Pathway to Self Sufficiency workshop series will be led by Kenneth Smith, President and Founder of Grace-Mar Services, Inc. and author of "Design & Conduct your Job Search Like the Pros! Stay tuned for more details regarding this program.

**Empower**  
*Inspire*  
**MOTIVATE**

# Grace-Mar Receives “Community Partner of the Year” Award

Grace-Mar Services, Inc. received the 2013 Community Partner of the Year award from Convergys! Convergys is a contact center management organization that is focused on helping their clients deliver a superior customer experience through the optimal mix of agents, technology and analytics. Last year, over 100 of Grace-Mar’s candidates were hired by Convergys! A big thank you from Grace-Mar to Convergys for creating great career opportunities in the Charlotte community and supporting Grace-Mar Services, Inc!



*Convergys, Inc.’s Community Partner of the Year Award*



*Chris Campbell (CHA) with Convergys Staff Members*

## Design and Conduct Your Job Search Like the Pros!

“Design and Conduct Your Job Search Like the Pros” is the latest book from Grace-Mar Services, Inc’s Founder and President, Kenny Smith. After a successful career in corporate sales with organizations like Wells Fargo, General Electric and American Express, Kenny decided to leverage his skills and experience he acquired by helping individuals with employment issues – mainly the job searching part of the process.

“Design and Conduct Your Job Search” is a road map that will shorten one’s trip to gaining employment.



A directive and straight-to-the-point book, Kenny shares his experiences – including mistakes and achievements – of how to take job searching to the next level. Order your copy now at [ww.gracemar.org](http://ww.gracemar.org). (100% of the proceeds go to Grace-Mar Services, Inc. a 501 (c)(3) not for profit organization.)

## 2013 Outstanding SNAP Site of the Year : Grace-Mar Services, Inc.

On February 6, 2014, Grace-Mar Services, Inc. became the Triangle Award Recipient of the 2013 Outstanding SNAP Site of the Year award. “The Triangle Award represent the embodiment of the partnership shared with the SNAP site, the community and the job-seeker.” In 2013, Grace-Mar interviewed and assessed 582 individuals and 293 of those assessed reported to having gained employment in

2013. Grace-Mar Services, Inc. is so excited to receive this award and to be acknowledge as an “engaged, empowered”, and valued partner of the SNAP program!



*2013 Outstanding SNAP Site of the Year Award*

## Grace-Mar Services, Inc.

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*Grace-Mar Services, Inc. would like to acknowledge a special thanks and appreciation to the following partners and friends: in 2013*

Andre Paige, Little Caesars

Harris Teeter

Angela Mauldin

Jay Everett

Karl Gaukstern, Olive Garden

Kenneth Reynolds, Bojangles

Charlotte Housing Authority (CHA)

Kris Fountain

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Main Library

The Maids

CharlotteWorks

The Men's Wearhouse

Connexions

Sherreka Tharps—Target

Convergys

Queen City Catering

Dwight Crawford, Fifth Third Bank

Rob Banks

Gerrod Rivers, Amlot Productions

Wells Fargo

## Reprint from The Charlotte Housing Authority 2013 Annual Report

*An interview with Kenneth Smith, Founder and President of Grace-Mar Services, Inc. in The Charlotte Housing Authority 2013 Annual Report.*

Grace-Mar has been lending supportive services for the CHA client services division for three years. The company's contributions have added significant value to the CHA case management model in areas of financial literacy, job readiness, placement, resume preparation, career training and coaching.

"There are many people that have taken advantage of and benefited from Grace-Mar Services. A client

came to our intense job placement program and started job training with the sales and customer services classes. She took the initial screening test with Convergys – a company that was hiring at the time – and she didn't pass and unfortunately, was unable to move forward in the hiring process. But she didn't give up on us and we didn't give up on her. We prepped her; we had her practice at home in order to get her scores up. We had no doubt she could do the job", said Kenneth Smith, Grace-Mar CEO. "We worked intensely with her for six months and we invited her to come to another event where Convergys

was on site – she was hired."

Grace-Mar has been successfully advocating for employees in the marketplace, encouraging employers to consider fully capable candidates currently living in public housing.



*Kenneth Smith, Founder/President of Grace-Mar Services, Inc.*