

# Grace-Mar Services, Inc.

Financial Literacy

Job Readiness/Placement

Case Management

## 2015 Wrap-Up & Review

7/1/2016

2016 Mid-Year  
News Letter

Dear Friends,

Grace-Mar Services is excited about what lies ahead for us in 2016! 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. 2015 was an amazing year for us! Not only was it our 6th year in existence, but we also had some major accomplishments within our programs, which includes the following;

### Job Placement Program

2015 was our biggest and best year for our job placement program B.K.A. “*The Intense Job Placement Program*” We interviewed and administered skills assessment tests to 1,451 candidates and we successfully placed 404 of those candidates into new job opportunities. In addition, the average income of those that we placed in new job opportunities in 2015 experienced a pay increase of 18%.

### Case Management

In March of 2015 we completed our first full year of case management services. In March of 2014 Grace Mar began providing case management services for Hope VI and The Moving Forward Family Self-Sufficiency program, for 260 Charlotte Housing Authority (CHA) residents. Our program objectives were measured based on 6 deliverables that were created by the program manager( CHA). As a first year program contractor Grace Mar Services Inc exceeded ALL six program deliverables. Some of the objectives included, increasing the number of working families within the caseload, increasing those families incomes and tracking and increasing the job retention rates.

### Financial Literacy/Housing Counseling

In 2015 Grace Mar introduced a 1 year homeownership program for our case management clients. We had 35 individuals to enroll with 22 of those individuals graduating from the program in July of 2016. Of the gradu-



ates we already have 4 individuals who have either purchased a home, or have been approved for a mortgage.

### Awards and Recognition 2015

- Recognized by the IRS for providing free income tax preparation.
- Awarded “Outstanding Achievement in Professional Services by Carolinas/Virginia Diversity Supplier Council.

As you can see 2015 was a great year for us. As we move into 2016 we are confident that we can continue to have a profound impact on the community. We will like to thank our 2015 partners for their support, they include;

Wells Fargo Bank, Charlotte Housing Authority, HUD, Charlotte Works, Convergys,

Sheraton/Le Meridien Hotel, US Department of Social Security and G4S Secure Solutions (USA) Inc.

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### **DO YOU KNOW?**

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

## Multi-Award winning Job Placement Program B.K.A “The Intense Job Placement Program”

Grace Mar’s Intense Job Placement program has grown significantly from its humble beginnings in 2012, where we serviced only 50 clients, to serving 1,451 clients in 2015.

Today our program has grown into a industry leading job placement service. Currently, we have over 70 employment partners and our partnerships continue to grow. Our program is lead by a team of 4 recruiters;

**Mrs. Grace Smith** VP, Job Coach and Ticket to Work recruiter

**Mr. Elijah Gray** Talent Acquisition Manager and Job Developer

**Ms. Leah Lasco** , Recruiter & Officer Manager

**Mrs. Sophie Underwood**, Employment Specialist, Jobs Plus Program and Ticket to Work Coordinator

From January 1, 2016 to June 1st 2016 these individuals have interviewed 531 new clients and have successfully helped 197 of those individuals with success finding employment this year.

Also, this team has helped our program to be again recognized as a industry leader by being awarded the award in “Outstanding Achievement in Professional Services” from the Carolinas-Virginia Minority Supplier Diversity Council. (2015)

Well done team and keep up the great work!



2013 Community Partner of the Year— Convergys



2013 Triangle Leadership Award— Charlotte Works



2014 Star Partner Award— Charlotte Works



2015 Outstanding Achievement in Professional Services  
CVMSDC

## Grace Mar Hires two New Case Coordinators

Mrs. Ayanna Drake is the new Case Coordinator at the Park at Oaklawn site. As the case coordinator, Mrs. Drake will provide supportive services for 89 residents who are enrolled in the Family Self-Sufficiency program. Mrs. Drake has been serving in the Human Service field for over 10 years. She found her true calling to serve while working at a Women’s Work-Release Facility in Willimantic, CT back in 2007, which prompted her



to obtain her Associate’s Degree as an Addiction Counselor from Manchester Community College located in Manchester, CT. After receiving her Associates, she immediately went on to obtain her Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology from Charter Oak State College (online school) located in New Britain, CT with a concentration in Applied Behavioral Science. In every area of her life and career, Mrs. Drake works towards providing service with integrity, compassion, and excellence. Mrs. Drake is honored to be a part of the Grace Mar team as we work towards guiding individuals to obtain a better quality of life.



Mrs. Brenda Hayden is the Case Coordinator operating our Nia Point and Montgomery Garden Apartment. Mrs. Hayden will serve 50 residents that are enrolled in the Family Self Sufficiency program. Mrs. Hayden a long-time resident of Charlotte by the way of Boston Massachusetts. Brenda brings a wealth of knowledge and resources to our agency. As the former Area Director of Builders of Hope another local non profit agency, Brenda is no stranger to helping individuals to achieve their goals and dreams. Mrs. Hayden holds a bachelors degree from Northeastern, a MBA form Queens University and is a licensed real estate agent in both NC and SC.

# Financial Literacy/Housing Program

## Fifth Third EBus Event

To kick off the “Destination Homeownership”, Grace Mar Services Inc partnered with the Fifth Third Bank’s Ebus, WHR Realty and the Charlotte Housing Authority. On June 1, 2016 the Fifth Third Ebus pulled into the Park at Oaklawn apartments and from 12 noon to 7pm and served over 160 clients. This event was a huge success and it would not have been possible without the help of our partners. We would like to thank the following individuals;

Mrs. Romelda Chambers, Manager of the Park at Oaklawn Apartments, Ms. Jada Grandy, Mr. Joel Dancy and the entire Fifth Third Bank staff. Also, we would like to thank, Mrs. Monica Nathan of the Charlotte Housing Authority and the staff at Grace Mar Services Inc which includes, Mrs. Grace Smith, Mrs. Robin Craig, Mrs. Sophie Underwood, Ms. Leah Lasco, Mrs. Ayanna Drake, Mr. Chris Hill and Mrs. Brenda Hayden. Lastly, we would like to thank those individuals we were able to serve.



### Chris Hill-Financial Coach



Chris Hill joined Grace Mar Services Inc on June 1, 2016. Chris will provide housing

counseling, financial literacy counseling and training to our program participants. Chris is no stranger to the housing industry, he spent two years serving as a Marketing Specialist with “West Blvd Community Development Corporation” helping individuals and families to achieve homeownership. Chris is a licensed Real Estate agent and a graduate from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte with a Bachelor’s degree in Business Management. In addition, Chris spent 5 years as a Business & Technology teacher in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School system. Chris has 2 sons and is a personal trainer, his hobbies include weight training and working on computers. Please assist Grace Mar in welcoming Chris to the team. We are confident that he will be a major contributor to our success for many years to come.

## Home Ownership program is on the Move!

Grace Mar’s home ownership program is starting to hold its own. Most people think of job placement or workforce development when they think of Grace Mar. However, what most people don’t know is that Grace Mar started out as a housing agency and has been a HUD approved housing counseling agency since 2010.

Last year Grace Mar introduced a new one year homeownership training program for our case management clients. This July, twenty-two of our enrollees have graduated from the program with a certificate of completion. Their certificate can be used to receive tens of thousands of dollars in down payment assistance monies for those individuals who qualify for a mortgage loan and purchase a home (some restrictions do apply)

In addition, to the homeownership program, Grace Mar successfully adopted the National Housing Counseling Standards issued by NeighborWorks and we successfully passed our March audit conducted HUD, where we were granted a 3 year extension on our housing counseling program. We also, signed a MOU with CHA to provide housing counseling services to individuals that enroll in the “Destination Homeownership program”, which serves CHA residents who are “Housing Choice Voucher” clients formerly known as “Section 8”.

We are expecting big things from our housing program and we look forward to serving those CHA residents who are seeking the to become home owners.

## Some Client Testimonies from 2016

I just want to thank the staff at Grace-Mar for assisting me with finding work. Not being from NC, I was hesitant to trust agencies with finding me work as I did not know the reputation of many companies.

However upon going to Grace-Mar and meeting with Elijah Gray, he assured me he would help. Well he held true to his words and assisted me with finding employment with a reputable company in NC. Since then I have referred many people to Elijah and they have also found employment. If I had to do it all over again I WOULD. Thank you Leah for the emails, Kenny for the career path evaluation, Elijah for the referrals and the job. You guys ROCK!

*Pauline R. Malloy - Job Placement client*

As a member of the Jobs Plus Program, Grace Mar has given me many opportunities and has opened many doors for me. The Jobs Plus Program introduced me to Grace-Mar (Ms. Sophie). Grace-Mar gave me a chance to obtain full time employment with HMS Host with Charlotte Douglas International Airport. I am very grateful to be working with a company like HMS Host. This company has really change my life. It has allowed me to receive an increase in my income and make more independent decisions. In addition, this has given me self- confidence in myself. By having this job, I am able to invest with a 401K and have stocks in a company for the first time in my life. Therefore, without the Jobs Plus Program, without Grace-Mar, and the people who have been working with me to make a difference in my life, I do not know where I will be in life. However, I truly want to thank the staff, Ms. Sophie, and my Case Coordinator, Ms. Linda, for all the hard work and time that they have given me.

*Ms. Faulkner Jobs Plus client*

I was accepted into the FSS program 2010. Since being accepted into the program I was able to improve my credit scores, save money, learn different things, and most of all be put in a position to buy a house.

The workshops that we attended once a month were also very beneficial to my development, especially the workshops that I have attended this past year through Grace Mar's homeownership program, which have helped me to get approved for a mortgage loan and become a homeowner. Each one of my case workers were always there when I needed them. The 5 year program seemed like a very long time but in the end was worth every minute. I just want to thank CHA HOPE IV FSS for accepting me into their program and I want to thank the Montgomery Gardens Management and Grace Mar Services Inc. for everything they've done.

*Latasha Beard. Case Management & Housing Counseling Client*

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### Thank you to our partners for your contributions!

Bojangles

Harris Teeter

Bank of North Carolina

Moe's Restaurants

Best Buy

Olive Garden

Charlotte Works

Regions Bank

Charlotte Housing Authority

Thomas Davis Defending

Community One Bank

Dreams Foundation

Fifth Third Bank

Xerox Foundation

HMSHost Foundation

Wells Fargo Foundation