

Commuter Options

Overcoming transportation barriers for inner city workers

July 2009 Update

The Commuter Options program continues to move ahead providing service to Philadelphians who have a difficult or impossible commute to a suburban employers. In times of economic crisis with jobs being scarce, it's essential that Philadelphians have reliable and reasonable transportation to work. **As of July the Philadelphia Unemployment Project's Commuter Options Program has 32 van and car pools that transport Philadelphia workers to their jobs.** We thank all of participating companies utilizing this project to help ease the tough commute for their workers. We especially thank those companies who have not only sought us out as a resource but also helped to subsidize the much needed project. A special thanks to Quest Diagnostics, Synthes and JOB1USA and SRS for your continued financial support.

Many Philadelphians have been able to maintain their employment because of Commuter Options. We have partnered with Philadelphia EARN Centers, Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation, and various training programs to provide suburban transportation. We have been able to maintain 5 pools from these programs for nearly a year. One goal of the program is to help with job retention for new workers traveling outside the city to jobs. Currently over 30 of our riders are from the welfare, training and job placement programs.

Commuter Options Van/Car Pools- July 2009

Jobs1USA/U-Haul – 6 vanpools Positions include welders, machinists, and general laborers and pay ranges from \$9 to \$16 per hour. These 25 people travel from as far away as South West Philadelphia, West Philadelphia and Frankford to Fairless Hills, Buck County for first and second shifts.

Synthes – 3 vanpools – Medical manufacturing jobs that pay \$12/hr. and up. These 11 people travel from the N.E. section of Philadelphia going to West Goshen on various shifts.

Quest Diagnostics – 8 vanpools at two locations performing duties at the billing office and data entry (specimen processing) at another facility in Montgomery County. The wages are from \$12.50-\$17.00 per hour. There are two vans of 11 people traveling to the Horsham location. In addition we have 5 vans traveling to the Quest Billing Center in Norristown transporting about 20 people from West Philly, Olney and Frankford.

United Seed Production – One pool of 3 riders from North Philadelphia going to King of Prussia, PA making between \$9.00 and \$14.00 per hour.

Rite Aid Pharmaceutical – 1 car pool with 2 riders from North Philadelphia traveling to Fairless Hills, PA and making \$9.60/hr. Rite Aid is planning more hiring soon.

CSG – 1 carpool of 3 people traveling from North Philly to Cherry Hill, NJ to do customer service at \$10.00 per hour.

ESCO – Three pools with 16 commuters going to Penns Grove, NJ from Southwest, West and North Philadelphia, PA. making \$15 to \$19 per hour manufacturing air plane parts.

NCO Financial – 1 van from the People for People EARN Center in North Philadelphia to Glassboro, NJ. 7 people van pool to customer service jobs at \$8.00 to \$10.00 per hour.

Progressive Financial – Three van pools of people from Frankford, N.E. Philadelphia, and West Philadelphia traveling on various shifts to Eddystone, PA. The commuters are making about \$10.00 per hour.

St. Gabriel's Hall – 1 van pool of 5 people traveling from Kensington to Audubon, PA making \$9.50 to \$12.50 per hour. They work as residential counselors for at risk youth.

SRS/NCO – 1 van pool of 6 people from Mt. Airy/Germantown traveling to Horsham to do collections. The job pays \$9.00 base plus commissions.

Act 1/Xerox – 3 van pools of people traveling from Germantown to North Wales, PA for first and second shifts. These commuters are making \$10.35 per hour in the warehouse operation.