



## IN THIS ISSUE...

### DISLOCATED WORKER PROFILE, p. 3

Alvin and Michelle Ford, both laid off from H.B. Fuller, share their job-search journeys.

### HIRED ASSISTS RETURNING SOLDIERS, p. 4

HIRED helps veterans re-enter the workforce.

### SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS, p. 5

HIRED recognizes the extraordinary commitment of its staff members through peer-nominated Service Excellence Awards.

### GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND FUNDING UPDATE, p. 5

HIRED lobbies to secure funding for its industry sector training programs.

### HIRED WORKS: JOBS AS SOLUTIONS, p. 6

Learn more about HIRED's monthly "get-to-know-us" program.

### HIRED NEWS BRIEFS, p. 7

### CONTRIBUTORS, p. 7

### FOSTERING LIVES, p. 8

HIRED's newest youth program focuses on supporting teens in the foster care system.



HIRED · 1200 Plymouth Avenue North  
Minneapolis, MN 55411  
TEL 612-529-3342 · FAX 612-529-7131  
[www.HIRED.org](http://www.HIRED.org)

## DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM PROVIDES PERSONALIZED SERVICE

Ford Motor Company. Andersen Windows. Best Buy. ConAgra. CitiFinancial. Northwest Airlines. Musicland. Old Home Foods.

The Twin Cities media is saturated with stories of local, big-name employers facing extensive layoffs. More often than not, the companies emphasize early retirement programs, severance packages and outplacement services. The workers are encouraged to think of ways their experience is transferable to any number of future careers. But what really happens to these workers when a company closes its doors?

Enter HIRED.

Each year HIRED assists thousands of dislocated workers from a variety of industries and with a wide range of skill levels. From entry-level employees to senior executives, they share one common thread – none of them ever imagined they'd be in such a vulnerable position.

Nancy James, senior program director of HIRED's Dislocated Worker Program, says, "What people don't realize is that for those affected by a layoff, there is a rather extensive grieving period." She continues, "Many of the people we serve have been heavily vested in their careers for 10, 20, sometimes 30 years, and walking away from that sort of comfort and stability isn't something that they're ready to deal with right away."

Because each company's program is different and the dislocated workers' needs

vary, one of HIRED's distinct advantages is its commitment to customized programs. Currently, HIRED is managing four large-scale dislocated worker projects – Andersen Windows (in collaboration with Washington County), Best Buy, ConAgra and Ford Motor Company (in collaboration with Ramsey County) – among a host of other state-funded "formula" projects which involve workers dislocated in smaller scale layoffs.

Lenore Rockler, a senior employment coordinator at HIRED's Bloomington office, has clients who were employed at each one of the major companies with which HIRED is currently working. When asked about the similarities between them, she comes up with very few. "The challenges of each project are so different... each has its own culture," she says.



HIRED's Lenore Rockler meets with former client Elizabeth Waldhaus.

With Andersen Windows, for example, HIRED's team of employment counselors has found that it's an unusually young

*(continued on page 2)*

**DISLOCATED...** (from page 1)

population – one that hasn't settled into defined career paths, and sees the recent layoff as an opportunity to gain additional training. Best Buy's former employees, on the other hand, have often been with the company through the tech boom and subsequent bust. Many have found themselves searching for a new career altogether. The ConAgra project is particularly complex because the majority of the clients HIRED is serving have indicated that English is their second language,

**"... it's our job to support and empower them by giving them confidence and hope."**

a challenge that HIRED's diverse staff is well-prepared to handle. And Ford, one of the most heavily reported recent closings, had offered employees extraordinary wages and benefits – both of which have proven to be nearly impossible to replace.

Although there may be identifiable trends within the various projects, HIRED's personalized approach allows each counselor to provide the services that most benefit his or her client. Career assessment surveys, emergency financial assistance, assistance in securing training tuition, financial counseling, résumé development and job-search assistance are all part of the resources HIRED offers.

Michelle Knappek, an employment counselor at HIRED's Burnsville location, says one of the first steps in help-



**Client Profile: Elizabeth Waldhaus**

*From her HIRED counselor, Lenore Rockler...*

"Elizabeth is an active 64-year-old who entered HIRED's Dislocated Worker Program when she was laid off from her job at a senior care center. With her unemployment insurance running out, she told me that she needed to continue working because she suffers from fibromyalgia and sleep apnea, conditions that require medication.

Burdened with chronic depression and a spotty work history, Elizabeth knew finding a job wouldn't be easy, but she was determined to find a position comparable to what she had. The first time we met we discussed her options, but it was immediately clear that she had but one goal: to find a job working with the elderly.

Determined to succeed, Elizabeth set out to obtain her certified nursing assistant's certificate from Hennepin Technical College. After she passed her exam, we worked together to build her confidence and prepare for interviews, and master a few basic computer skills. Soon after, she landed a position with a home health care company that makes home visits to elderly clients – Elizabeth was elated and I was so proud!

Looking back, I think the most I did for Elizabeth was give her hope when she didn't have any and encourage her when she was ready to call it quits. Being there for her when others were not, and believing in Elizabeth, keeps me inspired to continue my work... It's the human connection that keeps me coming back, and I have to thank Elizabeth and hundreds of others for making my work at HIRED so rewarding day after day." **h**



The first step in HIRED's Dislocated Worker Program is setting a job-search plan.

ing a client is sitting down and together coming up with a job-search plan. "We'll let our clients be upset, but only for a while. Once they have had their time to sort through the emotional pain of a layoff and get over their initial feelings of inadequacy and humiliation, it's our job to support and empower them by giving them confidence and hope."

Rockler and several other HIRED counselors have found that their own personal experiences with a layoff

have been helpful in earning a client's trust. Sai Vongvanith, a senior employment coordinator in HIRED's Bloomington office, connects with her ELL (English Language Learner) clients when she tells of her family's immigration to the U.S. and her own struggles with learning English and gaining confidence in her skills. "I've lived through many of these struggles," says Vongvanith. "I'm proud to draw on my experience to help others regain their footing."

In the end, HIRED's approach to dislocated worker services is about the human connection: one person helping another person see that there is life after a layoff. **h**

## Current HIRED Dislocated Worker Projects

Company	Projected Number Served	Sample Positions	Specific Challenges
Andersen Windows	75	Production and related manufacturing	Lack of jobs with same wages
Best Buy	60	Service technicians, customer service representatives	Specialized jobs, non-transferable skills
ConAgra	140	Food production packers and machine operators	90% of clients cite English as their second language
Ford Motor Company	85	Union and non-union auto assemblers and tradespeople	Manufacturing skills need updating

### Client Profile: James “Alvin” and Michelle Ford

Employees at H.B. Fuller for a combined 24 years, James “Alvin” and Michelle Ford were hit hard when both of their jobs were eliminated. “We went from two steady, well-paying jobs with great benefits to almost nothing overnight,” recalls Michelle. “We were both grieving and there were days where it was difficult to be a supportive spouse.”



Michelle and Alvin Ford with their HIRED counselor, Mary White (front).

Senior Employment Coordinator Mary White says what makes Alvin and Michelle’s story unique is their individualized approaches. “Their job-search styles were completely opposite, but equally effective. Alvin’s easy-going ‘I’m willing to learn anything’ attitude allowed him to connect with employers right away and Michelle’s ‘strictly business’ approach showed managers that she’s a responsible professional.”

As a part of H.B. Fuller’s management team, Michelle had an excellent résumé and a breadth of experi-

ence. However, after leaving the company, she was faced with an unexpected challenge. “I knew it would be tough but I didn’t realize how much of my network was my job, so I really had to start from scratch.”

After a few tweaks to her résumé and

a mini MBA program, Michelle was ready to jump into her job search. Alvin, on the other hand, worked closely with Mary to identify his transferable skills. “When I started looking at jobs, I had a hard time getting past the job title – I’d see ‘manufacturing technician’ and immediately assume I was underqualified,” said Alvin. “Mary and Michelle helped me dig deeper and pull apart the pieces of the job description. Once we did that, it was easy to see that I had a lot to offer employers.”

Along with identifying positions for which Alvin was qualified, HIRED

helped him master computer skills, create a résumé and hone his interviewing skills. “I feel blessed to know Mary,” said Alvin. “She helped me in more ways than I can count.”

In the end, Michelle secured a position at Power Electric as a customer service manager and Alvin is now a manufacturing technician at Secure Computing.

Both Alvin and Michelle are proud to say that they successfully rebounded from nearly six months of unemployment without any debt, though it wasn’t without the help of HIRED and others. “I don’t think people really understand what it means to be a dislocated worker,” said Michelle. “We came around to knowing that it wasn’t our ‘fault’ but I’m not sure others understand. Regaining your confidence and pride can be a difficult process, but that’s the only way to really move on, and we’re grateful for all that HIRED did to help us along the way.”


“We have so many people to thank,” said Alvin, “but Mary’s the one that helped us most. She’s definitely a lifelong friend.” [h](#)

## HIRED Honors Its Employer Partners

On September 27, HIRED honored more than 75 of its employer partners at a recognition gala hosted at Minneapolis Central Library. The event, which featured a message from HIRED Executive Director Jane Samargia and a presentation by Steve Hine, Research Director for the Labor Market Information Office, was well attended.

Samargia said, “Each and every day there are hundreds of employers and business professionals across the Twin Cities who help us fulfill our mission to provide personalized and innovative work solutions.” She continued, “This was our way of saying thanks for all you do.”

HIRED’s partners help in many ways, large and small, public and private. Twin Cities businesses provide opportunities for HIRED clients to gain employment experience and confidence by offering internships and conducting on-site workshops. By posting open positions in Job Link, HIRED’s online proprietary job-search database, and serving on volunteer boards to inform of industry trends, employers provide knowledge that gives HIRED clients the upper hand in their employment search.

For more information about partnering with HIRED, please contact Nancy James at [Nancy.James@HIRED.org](mailto:Nancy.James@HIRED.org). 

## HIRED Assists Returning Soldiers


When you think of dislocated workers, you don’t often think of our country’s military personnel. Yet, in many cases, that’s exactly how returning soldiers can be classified.

Nearly one year ago, HIRED formed a 12-member veterans services planning committee with the intent of better serving members of the armed forces as they returned to Minnesota after serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Helping train – or re-train – veterans as they seek to enter – or re-enter – the job market goes beyond simply reviewing résumé construction and interviewing skills. Many of the returning soldiers deal with physical or mental health issues brought on by their time in combat. HIRED provides assistance for these individuals and works with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that – whether they are entering a formal educational setting or unsure how to

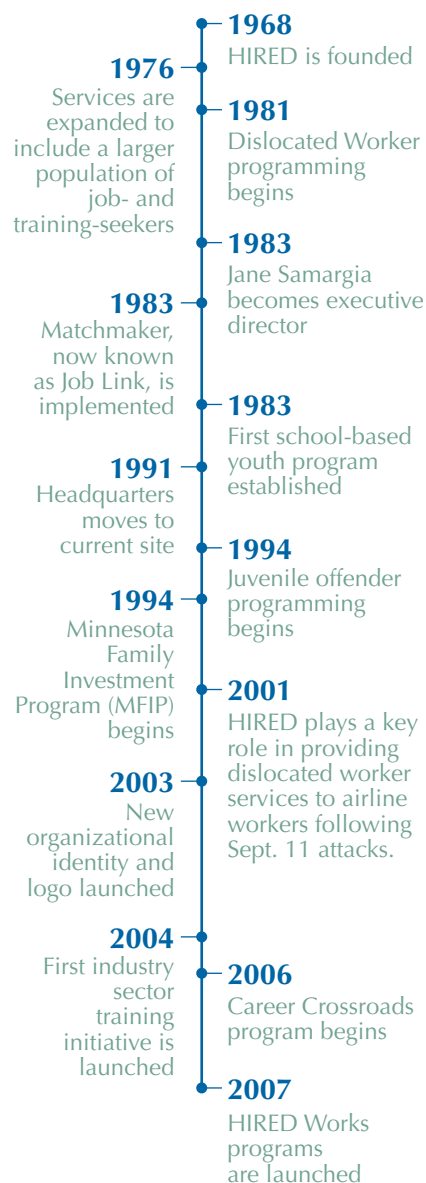
look for and secure a job – they have access to the resources they need.

Recently, HIRED participated in a pair of Minnesota National Guard job fairs to help returning Guard members find employment. HIRED was at the fair as a resource to educate attendees about the employment services available to them, as well as to provide on-the-spot job-search advice.

Carol Aharoni, a senior program director at HIRED and member of the veterans services planning committee, said, “The job fairs offered us the chance to have some quality interaction with these individuals... to help them answer the “What now” question. Because many of these veterans are so young, they have a myriad of opportunities ahead of them... and an equal number of choices to make. HIRED is a resource for them in a time of complexity and confusion.” 

## 39 Years and Counting...

HIRED was established in 1968, originally with the purpose of helping ex-offenders to find employment and avoid returning to criminal behaviors. Since that time, HIRED as an organization has grown and expanded to the point where, in FY 2007, more than 8,000 persons were served in 56 programs.



## Staff Recognized for Service Excellence

Three times each year HIRED recognizes the extraordinary commitment of its staff members through the peer-nominated Service Excellence Award. Each winner is selected for his or her commitment to advancing the organization's mission, as well as his or her service, participation and initiative. Some of the most recent award winners include: Kari Kraft, Pam Huff, Jodi Schlichting and Kari Felegy. Each was recognized at an all-staff meeting and received a commemorative plaque, one additional vacation day and a \$100 Visa gift card.



**Name:** Pam Huff  
**Year Joined**  
**HIRED:** 2005  
**Role:** Payroll Specialist

From her colleagues: "Pam goes the extra mile often...She takes her job seriously and also uses humor whenever possible...Pam takes clients' problems seriously and always follows through

to ensure they have been resolved... She does her best with a smile."

**Name:** Kari Kraft  
**Year Joined**  
**HIRED:** 2002  
**Role:** Program Manager



From her colleagues: "Kari is an ideal supervisor. She is self-motivated and possesses character, honesty, integrity and a professional work ethic...She takes her job seriously and accepts complete ownership of her work...She holds firmly to the conviction that if it is worth doing, it is worth doing right..."



**Name:** Jodi Schlichting  
**Year Joined**  
**HIRED:** 2002  
**Role:** Project Manager

From her colleagues: "Jodi has an outstanding and consistent display of professionalism, courtesy and positive attitude...She actively participates in opportunities beyond her daily job duties that benefit the entire organization...Jodi takes the initiative to identify areas for improvement and responds with action."

**Name:** Kari Felegy  
**Year Joined**  
**HIRED:** 2000  
**Role:** Program Manager



From her colleagues: "Kari does just about everything with excellence. She goes over and above to do things well... Her door is always open...She always has a smile on her face...She willingly takes on tasks and participates in discussion...Kari is always very friendly and willing to help answer any questions our team may have." [h](#)

## Bipartisan Support for HIRED Appropriation; Governor Vetoed

The 2006-2007 legislative session was one of the most promising in years. Legislators on both sides of the aisle were interested in human services and open to supporting programs with strong track records of success. HIRED staff worked closely with a number of legislators and legislative aides to craft a bill that would provide support for expanded industry sector training programs and arranged for a client to testify before committees. In spite of strong bipartisan support in both

houses, Governor Pawlenty chose to line-item veto the appropriation to support HIRED.

The governor's staff referred HIRED to the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership (MJSP) for future funding, apparently not aware that MJSP funds will not cover the expenses included in the original appropriation.

"It is a setback," says HIRED Executive Director Jane Samargia. "We've demonstrated such success in establishing

and operating our industry sector training partnerships. There's a clear need for these programs, which result in very good jobs for workers, and a better-trained workforce for employers."

Despite their disappointment, HIRED plans to approach the House and Senate with a new bill when their sessions resume in February 2008. [h](#)

## HIRED Works: Jobs as Solutions

In July, HIRED launched a new series of ongoing “get-to-know-us” programs entitled HIRED Works. Presented on the second Wednesday of each month, HIRED Works seminars give visitors the opportunity to hear firsthand about HIRED’s programs and how the organization continues to provide job-skills and employment training to nearly 8,000 Twin Cities residents each year.

Jane Samargia, executive director, said, “HIRED Works gives us the chance to tell our story directly to Twin Cities leaders and to people who live and work in the communities we serve. We know that our work is important and we believe that for many, good, stable employment is the key to success – once our clients have a good job they have new meaning and



Clint Dixon, HIRED board member, prepares to welcome HIRED Works guests.

purpose in life.” Each hour-long program is held at HIRED’s main office, located at 1200 Plymouth Avenue North in Minneapolis. Speakers range from HIRED board members to employment counselors to program directors. During

each session participants will spend time taking a tour through HIRED’s office and hearing stories about some of the organization’s clients.

Samargia continued, “Right now there are approximately 134,000 Minnesotans without work, and the state’s poverty rate is stuck where it was in the recession of 2001 despite five years of economic growth. Combined with the changing employment landscape – with layoffs continuing and outsourcing becoming more and more common – it is absolutely essential that the HIRED story be told.”

For more information or to register, contact Charlie Levine at 612-302-8504 or e-mail [Charles.Levine@HIRED.org](mailto:Charles.Levine@HIRED.org).

Please consider attending one of the following upcoming sessions.

- November 14, 2007:** 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- December 12, 2007:** 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- January 9, 2008:** 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- February 13, 2008:** 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- March 12, 2008:** 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- April 9, 2008:** 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- May 14, 2008:** 7:30 – 8:30 a.m. [h](#)



HIRED staff set up a sign-in table for guests.

## HIRED Launches a New Website



A screen shot of HIRED’s newly-designed website, [www.HIRED.org](http://www.HIRED.org).

HIRED is pleased to announce that it has launched its newly-designed website – [www.HIRED.org](http://www.HIRED.org)! In addition to providing valuable information to job seekers, employers and policy makers, the site’s fresh, energizing design brings the stories of HIRED’s clients front and center. On the home page, pictures, quotes and up-to-date news items show visitors HIRED’s mission in action.

Since the organization’s founding in 1968, HIRED has employed a variety of technological tools to connect job-seeking clients with local employers. In fact, Job Link, HIRED’s online, proprietary job-search database, which allows clients to search for jobs by geographic area or career field, was the first of its kind in the region. [h](#)

## HIRED NEWS BRIEFS

### HIRED'S M-POWERED TRAINING EXPANDS TO PLASTICS

This month, HIRED's extremely successful M-Powered Training Program will launch a new course to train job seekers for careers in the plastics industry. The 130-hour program, modeled after the metalforming course, is designed to prepare HIRED clients for careers that use injection molded plastics technology. For more information, contact Judy Swanson at [Judy.Swanson@HIRED.org](mailto:Judy.Swanson@HIRED.org).

### HIRED YOUTH OPEN DYNASTY RETAIL SHOP

Teens involved in HIRED's retail training class at Broadway High School have embarked on a unique project that not only draws on the skills they've learned in the classroom and applies them to a real world setting, but that will also provide valuable work experience for use on future job applications.



Shoppers search for the perfect outfit for their children.

Through financial support from Macy's, and under the guidance of Tryce Gewont, HIRED senior trainer, Broadway students opened Dynasty Retail Shop – a second-hand



Broadway students scour the racks for a great buy.

clothing store that specializes in articles for young mothers and their children.

"This is a great project for our students," said Gewont. "They have worked hard to get this store up and running. From collecting donations, to marketing the store, to pricing items and setting up the displays, they have really led the charge, and we're very proud of what they've accomplished."

The girls, who staff the store during their retail training class hour and lunch hour, have completely transformed a small office inside the school's library. With two clothing racks – one for boys, one for girls – and a table that lines shoes from end to end, it's estimated that there are more than 500 items for sale.

### CONTRIBUTORS FROM MARCH 16, 2007 TO AUGUST 31, 2007

3M Foundation  
 Carol Aharoni  
 Arthur Alexander, III  
 Jeff Ambroz  
 Dan Arrell  
 Amy Barwick  
 Cynthia Bremer  
 Nancy Buysse  
 Steve Engelkes  
 Carol Estocko  
 Finnegans Community Fund  
 Patricia Frederickson  
 Thomas Her  
 Nancy James  
 Valerie A. Knudsen  
 Tom Lehman  
 Adam Levy  
 Bruce Mallory  
 Mark Mann  
 Steve Marino  
 Smith McClure  
 Peggy Metzger  
 Minnesota Twins  
 David Mitchell  
 David & Ruthie Neuger  
 Neuger Communications Group  
 Omot Ochan  
 Otto Bremer Foundation  
 Mike Overline  
 Belinda Peterson  
 Walter C. Rasmussen-Northeast Bank  
 Foundation  
 Trudy Rautio  
 Rosemount Inc.  
 Jill Rudnitski  
 Jane Samargia  
 Andrea L. Schilling  
 Jodi M. Schlichting  
 Rick Siri-Outhay  
 Anthony Stavig  
 Thrivent Financial for Lutherans  
 Timothy N. Tracey  
 Laura & Tim Vitelli  
 Xcel Energy Foundation



HIRED  
 1200 Plymouth Avenue North  
 Minneapolis, MN 55411

Nonprofit  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 Permit No. 1238  
 Minneapolis, MN



## HIRED OPERATES INNOVATIVE YOUTH PROGRAM

Through a partnership with Hennepin County, HIRED has developed, and is currently operating, Fostering Lives, a comprehensive employment and training-services program for youth ages 15 to 21 who are a part of the long-term foster care system.

The program, which began in May, has enrolled 22 youth to date.

HIRED's educational component includes vocational assessment and career exploration, subsidized

internships and job placements, job-seeking and job-keeping skills training, and retention services.



HIRED offers comprehensive job-search planning for youth of all ages.

Dawn Hall, senior employment coordinator for HIRED's Fostering Lives program, says, "This program is meeting a real need in our community... It's a true success story. The kids that we work with don't have a lot of trust in adults, but because of our passion and commitment to seeing them succeed,

we're able to build a rapport and be the caring adult-figure they've longed for."

Many of the youth HIRED serves through Fostering Lives have struggled with mental health issues or suffered through abusive relationships, and some are even homeless. Hall continues, "One of the most important things we can do for the teens we see is help them establish an employment plan. Once they have a direction and the necessary support, they're extremely resourceful and extraordinarily dedicated to making it work."

For more information about Fostering Lives, contact Dawn Hall at [Dawn.Hall@HIRED.org](mailto:Dawn.Hall@HIRED.org). 