

# BOKONON SYSTEMS OF WEST VIRGINIA

September 21, 1995

Mr. Bruce Reed  
Deputy Assistant for Domestic Policy  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Reed,

The following quote is attributed to you in today's New York Times:

"The current system does nothing to require work and little to encourage work. It does little to provide child care. And it does little or nothing to expect responsibility from teen parents."

If you said this, I would like to try to change your mind. I direct training programs in West Virginia that serve AFDC recipients. We are in existence because of the 1988 Family Support Act. Given the legislative opportunity the State empowered the Department of Health and Human Resources as the lead agency for AFDC programs directed to training and employment. The Department set up an integrated program designed to place people in programs that met their needs. Those that lacked the educational background were counseled into Adult Education where the focus was on obtaining a GED (a necessity for employment even in West Virginia). When they had their GED, as they did with those who had High School Diplomas, they were subsequently referred to training programs such as ours. Day Care funds are reserved for recipients in programs or for those that have gone to work and require transitional services.

I will admit that our program is unique in that graduation from the program only occurs when employment is obtained. As an extreme example let me tell you about a woman we recently placed. She had been on welfare for more than five years, when she came to us she

Martinsburg Office  
217 North Queen Street  
Martinsburg, WV 25401  
Tel:(304) 264-0621  
Fax:(304) 264-0974

*"training for success"*

had no marketable skills, her only future, at best, a minimum wage job with no benefits. She stayed in the program for sixteen months, complaining mightily that she would never learn and we would never get her a job. We had been so successful with the employer that we finally placed her with that the probationary period for our referrals was cut to one month. On the day she completed her probationary period, when her health benefits kicked in, she showed up at the training center, happier than a pig in mud, and asked if she could talk to the trainees. What she told them was "look at me I was here sixteen months and thought I would never get a job, well I did and you will too! Don't get discouraged."

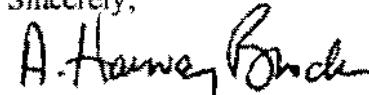
The 1988 legislation allowed those states that were interested to undertake innovative programs many of which are only now bearing results. Had the President not made such a todo over "ending welfare as we know it" and pushed to strengthen the legislation maybe we would have seen changes that we all could have been proud of. Unfortunately, with the "new" legislation we might better be concerned with building grates for the "new" homeless and soup kitchens.

For your information I have included some material that describes our programs. I have also included letters from welfare recipients that you have a better feel for the real people that will suffer from the changes.

I had hoped to write this letter avoiding your comments about teen pregnancy, alas, I must say something. Suffice to say, if you think that ending support is going to effect the rate of illegitimate teen pregnancy (which by the way has remained constant over the last few decades) then I have a large bridge to sell you located in Brooklyn.

I hope that this letter has been informative.

Sincerely,



A. Harvey Block, Ph.D.  
Director

*P.S. Feel free to come visit and speak with our trainees*

**BOKONON SYSTEMS OF WV**

217 N. Queen St.  
Martinsburg, WV 25415  
(304) 264-0621

A. HARVEY BLOCK, Ph.D.

*"training for success"*

# BOKONON SYSTEMS OF WEST VIRGINIA

The attached letters were prepared by trainees at the Martinsburg Center. They were not solicited by BOKONON, they resulted when a trainee who had been offered a position as a legal secretary announced to the group that she was going to write a letter to the program thanking it for the support and training which were provided her. Other trainees decided to do the same.

Since these letters were written, five of the trainees were placed in employment.

28 August 1995

P.S. Five have obtained employment since these letters were written.

Maryland Office  
3313 Cummings Lane  
C.C., MD 20815  
Tel: 301-656-2250

*"training for success"*

August 17, 1995

Hontas Kay Kidwiler  
112 Apple Tree Gardens Rd.  
Apt #202  
Ranson, WV 25438

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a 41 year old, single parent on Welfare, who is putting my life back together. I couldn't do this without programs like GED, Job Readiness, and Bokonon Systems. By attending these programs as well as Bokonon, I've come to realize how valuable I am to my community and to my family. With Bokonon, I am now facing life with a sense of achievement; because, by acquiring this vocation of data entry, Word Perfect, and general office skills, I am now a productive commodity and in demand by employers. A year ago, I couldn't imagine being in demand for anything. I wish I could give this feeling of success and self-worth to everyone on Welfare so they may also have what I have; A CHANCE TO BE INDEPENDENT, but that is up to those who have the power to vote on the Welfare Reform issue.

Just recently, I was informed that the GED program was cut in my county; Jefferson County, WV. There weren't enough people attending to keep the program open. I can tell you this is not because of lack of interest; It is due to a lack of information. Cutting funds is not a way to give them help. We, welfare recipients, need these programs to pull ourselves out of the Welfare trap. Do you really think most people want to sit home and watch the world go by? I believe they don't, but they don't know how to begin to get out. Let's educate the uneducated! Let's put up educational flyers in every welfare office. Let's promote the programs that promote progress.

I have worked long and hard to become what I am today. I won't take a step backwards, but I still need a little help from some Welfare resources. If more of these programs are cut, how am I a person who has the skills, the employment capability, and the motivation to accomplish my goals going to achieve them?

All I ask you is to please put yourself into my position and think of what these cuts are doing to others who need them and are trying to be productive citizens and not a drain on the tax payer. I worked for twelve years before I ever needed help from Welfare. If I need to work twelve more years to help someone else end this cycle I am presently in, I feel it would be well worth it.

Since I have never been contacted by a political figure, I decided to share my views with you. Businesses ask their employees for suggestions. Perhaps those involved with welfare reform could ask welfare recipients for suggestions. They know the system first hand.

Thank you,

*Hontas Kay Kidwiler*  
Hontas Kay Kidwiler

August 17, 1995

Mr. Darrell McDonald  
3017 Greenspring Drive  
Martinsburg, WV 25401

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing regarding my second chance in life, that's what I call it because that is exactly what it is. Bokonon has helped me in many ways. I have learned to do many things at Bokonon that have helped me in many areas of my life. Computer skills are a must in this computer-oriented world. Bokonon has taught not only that; it has taught me job keeping skills that I were totally unaware of and it makes me realize that if I were unaware of these skills how many others out there are also unaware of these skills.

In the light that so many programs are being cut these days, I believe that in the long run these training programs would benefit not only the individual, not only a community, but the nation as a whole. I hope you take a look at these programs that are being cut and try to see through the eyes of the people who are in desperate need of these programs and not through preconceived ideals.

Thank you for taking time to read my letter. Please remember our future belongs to our children. Let's keep programs that are beneficial so that our children may have hopes and dreams and that they have the means and knowledge to reach for the stars and be whatever they want to be.

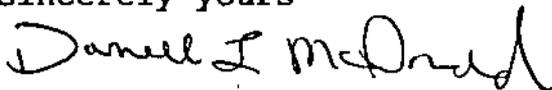
I would like to point out that I am a father raising my four children on my own. Bokonon has given me courage and confidence and a desire to make a better and brighter future for them.

Remember, not all welfare recipients are not-motivated and unproductive people. I realize there are always those who abuse and use the system but stereotyping doesn't solve problems.

In conclusion, schooling or training is not good without qualified teachers. Christy Hummer is an exceptional teacher and more institutions that provide teaching would benefit if they had more teachers that cared for there students as she does.

Thank you for taking time to listen and may you make the decisions that will help us to grow as a nation that our forefathers intended it to be.

Sincerely yours



Darrell McDonald

Michelle Byrd  
405 Roberts Dr. 3a  
Martinsburg, WV 25401

August 15, 1995

To Whom it May Concern:

I am a single mother of two young children who is on welfare. Just recently, I enrolled in training at Bokonon Systems of West Virginia. Since starting this program, I have more confidence in myself than ever before.

Now that I have started training, I am planning to be off of welfare soon and have a job. I have looked for jobs prior to coming to school. Without training, I couldn't find anything that would give me healthcare benefits and enough money to take care of my children. I felt as though my only option was to continue collecting money from the state. Now, I am learning skills that I never thought I was capable of achieving.

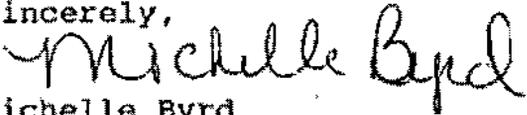
This program is about a lot more than typing and computer's. It also teaches you the skills to keep your job after you get it. This way, I will never have to be on welfare again. In my opinion, there isn't a better way to help people than this. Just kicking people off of welfare is not going to help, if they have no skills it will be difficult for them to earn money. Be it legal or illegal they have to support their families. I have been fortunate enough to be involved in this program and learn the right way to support my family. I have goals and plans now that I never thought were possible for anyone "like me".

I do think welfare reform needs to be looked at; but, I don't think that cutting out training funding is the answer. If we could get more people into training, I know we would have more people off welfare in the long run. I have not met a person yet that would rather live on welfare than to have a good job and support themselves. With this school and others like it, we learn that this goal and many more are within our reach.

We ask that you research our program and others like it before cutting out the funding for welfare training. In this program alone, over 150 people have gotten jobs and off of welfare. Some people have gone through this program in 2 months or 6 months, others take longer. The end result is the same. They are now supporting their families themselves.

If you would like more information about our program, we would be glad to share it with you.

Sincerely,

  
Michelle Byrd

VALERIE R. BAILEY  
P.O. Box 869  
Charles Town, WV 25414

August 17, 1995

To whom it may concern:

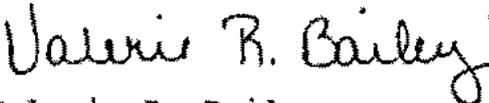
I am a twenty-six year old, single, black female. I have been out of work for almost 5 years. I can honestly say I need the training so I can find a job that will get me off of WELFARE. If it wasn't for this training, I would be sitting home watching TV. The reason I would be sitting home is that in the past I believed I did not have skills. Therefore, I did not have the confidence to go out and seek employment.

Bokonon Systems of WV has been beneficial in numerous ways by teaching me many skills that are useful in the workplace. Such as:

1. WordPerfect 5.1
2. Remote Bar Coding Simulation
3. Keyboarding
4. Dress for success
5. Interview properly
6. Communicate effectively

To me, the training is very important because it is building my confidence and getting me ready for the responsibilities of a job. That is reason enough for me to write this letter of reference for the job training programs.

Sincerely,



Valerie R. Bailey  
Student of Bokonon Systems of WV

vb/ltr

August 17, 1995

Linda Berry  
132 Midway Court  
Falling Waters, WV 25419

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in regard to the controversy over whether it is of benefit to provide training to Welfare Recipients. I and many others are a positive example of this program working. The lack of education and the ability to provide the requirements that are needed today to do a job was what kept many people on welfare from becoming independent. Educating people on Welfare through these training programs not only changes the Welfare system but changes life in many way, not only for the person trained but for everyone around them, in everything they do.

The cost of educating people today will result in a long term change in the Welfare system that will make a lasting effect on our economy. If the training programs are eliminated and people are taken off of Welfare without training there will be a higher cost to pay later. There will be many who cannot find work to feed their children, to buy them clothes, families will fall apart worst than they are now, the crime rate will increase because people will find ways to feed their children.

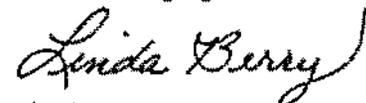
This is a wonderful way to eliminate Welfare. It will change many things. It is a hard decision for anyone to make, and it will be costly, but it does and will work.

There is more to these training classes than just training people to go to work. Many of us have spent our whole lives believing we were not worthwhile, that we had nothing to offer to our community. These classes change many things in a persons life. We walk out of there knowing we can do it. We are better for it. We have something to go out and offer to our friends, our community, our children, the confidents to walk into a company and say "I can do it."

I am a 43 year old women who feels that I have been given a chance in my life that I never thought possible. I am grateful every day that someone cared enough to want to do this for us. I can never begin to thank the people who made this possible.

People on Welfare are not lazy people, we want to work. We want to be right out there with the rest of you and do it on our own. The best way to see if these classes work, talk to the teachers, talk to the students, talk to the families. It is the greatest idea anyone has ever came up with, it works.

Sincerely yours;



Linda Berry

CAROLYN M. ALLEN  
9 BOWIE DR. APT. 27  
FALLING WATERS, WV 25419

August 17, 1995

To Whom It May Concern:

My life has changed for the best because of Bokonon Systems. Honestly, I don't know where I would be if it wasn't for them. They have helped me so much and given me a whole new outlook.

Along, with the computer training, support and guidance is given. Now, I feel much more confident to go out and have the career I've always wanted. Speaking for others, we are not lazy as so commonly stereotyped. Just citizens trying to start over from a difficult situation. Programs like this turn a negative experience into a positive one.

Sincerely,

*Carolyn M. Allen*

Carolyn M. Allen

Tawanda L. Duckett  
406 Roberts Dr. Apt. 1A  
Martinsburg, WV 25401

August 18, 1995

As a 22 year old, single, black woman with a 1 year old daughter, I'm writing to tell you how valuable training is. I'm a graduate of Bensalem High School of PA. We are now living in West Virginia where I'm attending Bokonon Systems.

I've been receiving welfare since Oct. of 1994. It's not because I haven't wanted to work. I needed some help and a little direction. The direction I obtained came from attending Bokonon Systems. I now know how to type 40 WPM and 6,000 keystrokes per hour in Data Entry. These skills not only benefit me but they will benefit my daughter in the long run. The program has helped so much so, that I'm now looking for work. (I have an interview Monday morning.)

Life is not easy for everyone and people struggle everyday. Some may need the help more than others. Being on welfare is not all about sitting at home watching TV and waiting for a check to come in the mail. It's about being in a position where you need help. I realize there are some people who are abusing the system and getting away with it. However, most people I know are searching for a way to get off the system. I applaud the JOBS program for giving me a way to get off the system.

Sincerley,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tawanda Duckett". The signature is written in black ink and has a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tawanda Duckett

August 17, 1995

Ms. Tammie Barker  
Rt. 4 Box 45  
Hedgesville, WV 25427

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like for you to know what being on welfare and the opportunity for a better education was like for me.

I have heard that people on welfare like the free ride and have no ambition to better themselves. That may be true in some circumstances but I feel the majority hates it. Being on welfare, does nothing for ones self-esteem. To me, being on welfare has been degrading. It can be a vicious cycle of dependency with no obvious solution of rising above poverty. In my situation, it provided merely a way to survive. I am a single mother of two and without receiving this aid my family would not have had a place to live or food to eat. Even though I had job skills from previous employers, I could not find a permanent job or a job using the skills I had acquired.

Mrs. Alice French, a case worker, with the Department of Health & Human Resources of West Virginia, suggested I could attend school to improve my job skills and acquire new skills to make me job ready. I was very excited about the prospect of finding new employment and becoming self-sufficient.

Bokonon Systems of West Virginia was the school I chose to attend. I walked in Bokonon with a low image of myself thinking it would be a long time before I would complete the courses formatted for their students. I realized I had a long way to go to become employable. Christy Hummer, teacher and facilities director, helped me see as she has helped many other students see that this was just the beginning. Christy did not do the work for us; instead she showed us that we could think for ourselves and make our own decisions. She also showed us that we could learn new skills and improve the skills we already had. She made us aware that we had a great future ahead of us and that we could find a job. Another very important thing I learned from Christy was to take responsibility for my own life and my own actions. These may not seem very important to you but for me it was the world.

I received knowledge in WordPerfect, Data Entry, and Remote Bar Coding. Other valuable knowledge I received included communication skills, job keeping skills, how to conduct a successful interview, how to write a resume, cover letter, and fill out an application.

Many recipients of welfare feel there is no alternative to the life they currently lead. They need to know that there is a better future for them and their children than what they now have. Education is extremely important; but, so is their perception of themselves as being successful. Bokonon has given that to me and it is something that no one can take away.

If funding for education is cut from the welfare budget it inevitably will cause the cycle of poverty to continue. Schools like Bokonon Systems of West Virginia and teachers like Christy Hummer care about us as people and not statistics. Maybe Congress should see us the same way. Poverty is defeated through education and everyone should have a chance to rise above their circumstances.

Sincerely yours,

*Tammie Barker*

Tammie Barker  
Student of Bokonon Systems  
of West Virginia

Karen C. Lowe  
115 1/2 N. Alabama Avenue  
Martinsburg, WV 25401

August 17, 1995

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am a single mother going through a divorce. Having been out of the work force for the past ten years, finding a job was not the easy task some working people make it seem to be. Although I took typing courses in high school and college, computers were an unknown to me. My daily search through the newspaper was discouraging when almost every typist position required computer skills. Having no job, no savings, no friends in high places, learning computer skills seemed impossible.

Then, a caseworker at Human Resources told me about a place called "BOKONON" where I could learn remote bar coding and get a job with the postal service. Being a recipient of AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) qualified me to receive this training FREE! What an opportunity! I could hardly believe that in this most difficult period in my life there was opportunity and support available for someone considered the "dregs" of society--a welfare recipient.

BOKONON SYSTEMS, INC. has given me a new life. Not only have I been trained in word processing, data entry, and remote bar coding, our instructor incorporated into our studies "job seeking" skills. She has instructed us in what employers are looking for, ways to present ourselves to our best advantage, and most importantly the knowledge that we can succeed and ~~deserve~~ success.

When I came to BOKONON my life seemed almost too difficult to bear. No employer wanted my services. I felt totally discouraged and alone. Thanks to BOKONON and a wonderful teacher, Christy Hummer, today I am an employed single mother. Now the future looks promising and I feel valuable.

"Being on welfare" is not a way of life, it is a state of crisis. Not one of the men and women I met while in this program wanted to be in this state. Everyone wants independence. We only need the tools to attain it. Mandatory job training has, for all intents and purposes, saved my life. It has given me hope, self-respect, and a future. **THANK YOU CHRISTY!**

Sincerely,

Karen C. Lowe

August 17, 1995

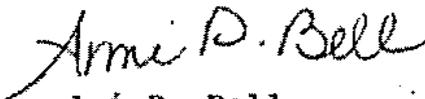
Miss Ami D. Bell  
146 Boarman Place  
Martinsburg, WV 25401

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter to let you know how this program (Bokonon Systems) has helped me. When I first started Bokonon, I barely had the skills I needed to get a good job. I had very little typing experience and no computer skills. In only a two-month period, I have achieved 40 wpm and I have the skills I need to go out there and find a good job. I will prove to anyone out there that I can do the job I am applying for and a lot more.

I've been on welfare for two years and if it hadn't been for Bokonon being here I would have given up on myself and would be on welfare for many more years to come. That's why I think Bokonon systems and other schools like Bokonon can be the best thing to happen to anyone if they are willing to help themselves by taking the initiative to attend training.

Sincerely yours,



Ami D. Bell

## WELFARE TO WORK: A COMPANY MISSION

BOKONON Systems of West Virginia (BSWV) is a company dedicated to providing training and placement services to the economically disadvantaged, mainly AFDC recipients, for identifiable job opportunities which result in employment at wages high enough for recipients to become self supporting. BSWV presently operates employment focused training centers in Charleston and Martinsburg.

There are several major distinctions that make BSWV's training unique and successful. First, training is focused on skills identified as required by local employment opportunities.

Second, each person that enters the BSWV program is unique, BSWV signs a separate contract with the State for each trainee, making the company responsible for the trainee as an individual. The trainee in turn signs a separate training contract with BSWV which specifies their responsibilities to the program and the companies to them.

Third, because many trainees have previously demonstrated failure in classroom situations or because they have not been in a classroom for many years, training takes place in a simulation of a working environment where trainees enter at their skill level and work at their own learning pace to meet specified standards. Trainee success in meeting the standards serves as a singular motivator, since nothing guaranties "success" like "success". This "working environment" has the additional advantage of providing documentation on the attendance and work oriented performance of trainees allowing BSWV to provide recommendations to employers on trainee motivation.

Fourth, training is not completed until the trainee obtains gainful employment at a wage sufficient to eliminate the need for welfare.

The intent of the program is to prepare an applicant for employment by providing training in a work oriented environment and with a clear employment goal. The end result is a boon to employers who are able to hire motivated employees who are immediately productive.

BSWV's approach to training is predicated on the concept that the training environment must be similar to that of the eventual work situation. On the basis of this position BSWV has developed physical simulations of several specific employment opportunities. Among these are a simulation of the U.S. Postal Service's Remote Bar Coding (RBC) functions, a medical office management program that prepares a trainee to meet the requirements of managing a medical practice and a series of data entry modules that prepare trainees for a wide variety of data entry positions.

The training program is self-paced and allows trainees to enter at a point most relevant to their prior experience. The program covers basic computer literacy, keyboarding skills, word

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*'training for success'*

processing, data entry applications, medical terminology, medical office management and image processing, providing specific as well as general employment skills. Additional program elements allow BSWV to customize training for other local employment opportunities.

Since June 1993 over 78% of those who entered training have mastered specific job skills and obtained employment at an average annual wage of almost \$15,000. Of those who were placed prior to April 1995 from the Charleston Center, 98% remain employed. At Martinsburg after a eighteen months, for those who could be identified 97% remain employed.

It is interesting to note BSWV's experience with the Postal Services Remote Bar Coding facility in Charleston. Of the twenty-four who entered the Postal Service's certification program 75% were certified and employed. This certification pass rate compares favorably to the 35% certification rate of the general public who applied. Additional placements have been made at local banks, AT&T, Owens-Corning and local insurance companies among others.

An examination of the first twenty-two recipients placed at Charleston indicated that their most recent average length of stay on welfare was just over 43 months with a range of from eight months to fourteen years-one month. This wide range supports the contention that welfare recipients want to work and what is required to reduce welfare participation are programs that identify employment opportunities and provide specialized training required by the available jobs.

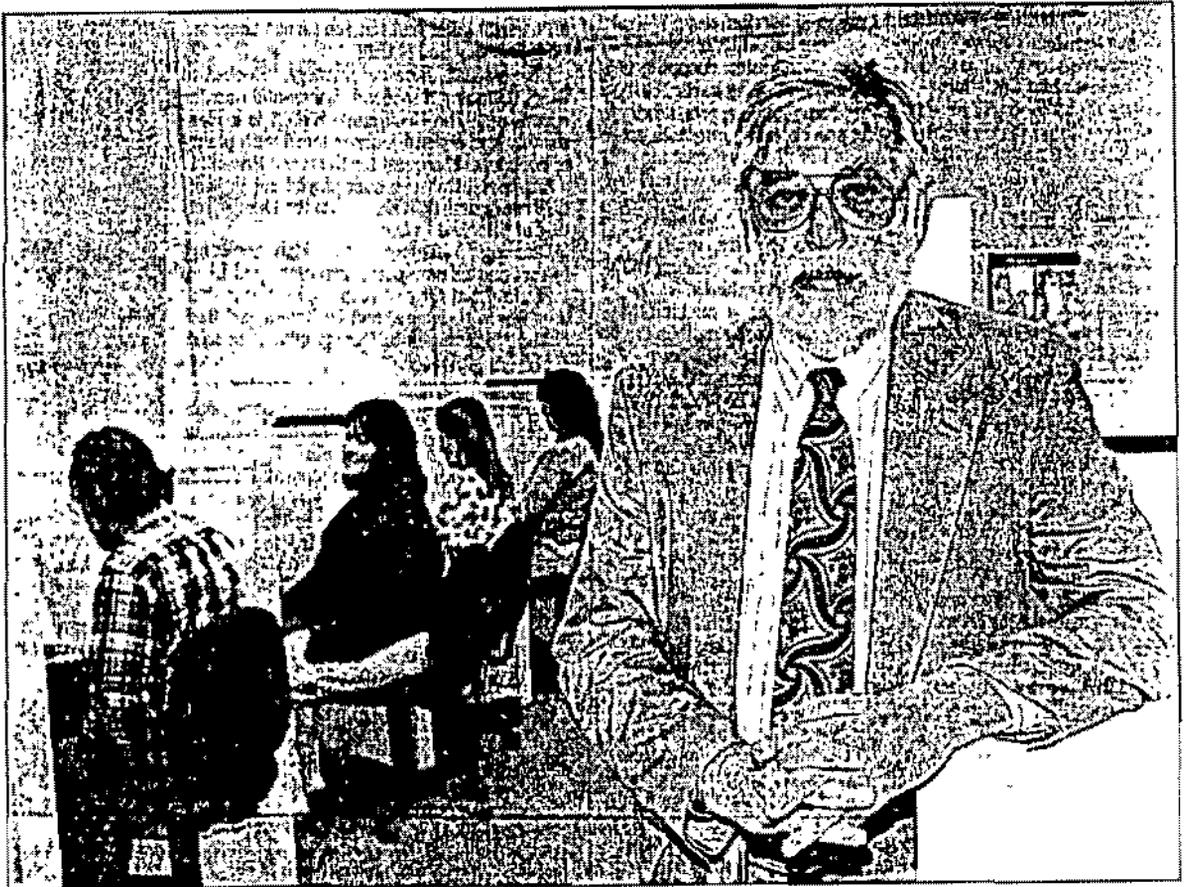
BSWV staff has had extensive and successful experience providing training to welfare recipients. During the past several years BSWV staff have initiated training programs at data conversion facilities at Manassas, Virginia and Beckley, West Virginia. At both sites BSWV staff established pre-training programs that opened opportunities to welfare recipients. These programs were funded by a wide variety of sources: In Virginia the pre-training program was funded by the Training Division of county JOBS' program through Grant Diversion, local JTPA funding and local Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab) programs. In West Virginia funding was obtained from the West Virginia Development Office's Workforce Program; the Work and Training Office of the Department of Human Resources (JOBS) and the State Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) program.

BSWV's approach provides a successful solution to reducing welfare dependency while also providing a solution to the problems of employers who contended that entry level applicants all to often lack the skills necessary for employment.

Benefits to the State which pays for the services have been conservatively estimated at a return on investment of 20:1 over five years. Benefits to the employer result from reduced training costs and the new employee rapidly reaching a productive level.

A. Harvey Block, Ph.D.  
Director, August 1995

# Welfare to Work



By Richard T. Meagher/Staff Photographer

Harvey Block teaches welfare recipients to use a computer that simulates work done by the U.S. Postal Service.

## WEST VIRGINIA

# Unique system leads 50 into jobs

By RICHARD F. BELIBLE  
Staff Writer

MARTINSBURG, W.Va. — When the U.S. Postal Service developed remote encoding centers, it gave Harvey Block the idea that he could take people on welfare, train them to use computers, find them good jobs and get them off welfare.

The postal centers were the "gimmick" Block, 60, of Bethesda, Md., said he needed to set up Bokonon Systems of West Virginia, his specialized training centers designed to get people off the welfare rolls.

Block set up two training centers, one in Charleston and one in Martinsburg at 217 N. Queen St. He installed computer work stations and programmed the computers to simulate the work done at the encoding centers which sort hand-written envelopes that computers in post offices can't read.

"There's no classroom training here," Block said. "I developed the simulator to train people. It's all done like you're on a job."

Trainees stay in the center for five to six months, or as long as it takes to find them a job that pays at least \$5.61 cents an hour, plus benefits or a high enough wage to pay for their own benefits.

Block said the program won't work if trainees get jobs that pay less. "That's the minimum amount it takes to live on."

Any less, he said and they go back to welfare.

The West Virginia Department of Human Services pays Block \$3,000 for each trainee who finds a full-time job and gets off welfare.

Trainees must be able to read and do math on an eighth grade level to qualify for Bokonon training programs.

Block said he has about 25 trainees

currently enrolled in the Martinsburg center.

So far, he said, he's placed all who have completed the program, nearly 50 clients so far. The dropout rate at Bokonon is about 25 percent, due mostly to day-care or medical problems or lack of transportation, Block said.

He said the Martinsburg center doesn't do as well as the one in Charleston because there are fewer job opportunities. "The jobs just don't exist here," he said.

Block has spoken with officials with Quad/Graphics, the Wisconsin-based magazine printing firm that will open a new plant here next year. He said the company will hire his trainees.

"It's a myth that poor people are not motivated," Block said. "They just don't know how to get into the system."



CHIP ELLIS/DAILY MAIL

**JOB TRAINING:** Harvey Block set up Bokonon Systems of West Virginia to train people on welfare for jobs that require keyboarding and computer skills. So far, Block's program has trained peo-

ple to work for the U.S. Postal Service, AT&T and other area businesses.

# Training teaches workers new tricks

By BECKY FLEMING  
DAILY MAIL STAFF

**M**ARTHA Peters earned a degree in accounting from West Virginia State College and searched for years for a job in her field.

But she couldn't find anything, and she spent 11 years on welfare.

This year, a case worker referred her to a new training program, Bokonon Systems of West Virginia, which was established to offer people on welfare specific training for specific jobs.

After spending four months practicing keyboarding and computer skills, Peters, a single mother of two, got a job as an account representative with AT&T.

"It's a great feeling," said the Dunbar resident. "I can support my family."

Harvey Block, a training specialist, started two offices of Bokonon Systems, one in Martinsburg and another in Charleston. Both were set up to take advantage of potential jobs with the U.S. Postal Service's remote encoding centers.

At the Charleston center, employees see the handwritten addresses of mail sent from two regions of Maryland on their computer screens and type in information so a bar code can be placed on the envelope.

Eight people trained by Bokonon are now working for the post office. Others have gotten jobs with AT&T, Bank One, and Owens-Corning.

Block purposely made his Charleston cen-

"It's clearly the way to go. Employers are going to appreciate having employees who have the skills they need."

**Sharon Paterno**

State Department of Health and Human Services

ter, located downtown at 922 Quarrier St., look less like a classroom and more like a workplace so students could learn in a work-like environment.

Each student sits at a computer terminal in a small booth to practice typing and computer skills. The students also use a special program that is similar to the one used in the bar coding center.

An envelope appears on the screen, and the student types in the numbers required from the zip code or street address.

Students have to treat the training like a job, coming in for several hours in the morning or afternoon, and typing virtually non-stop.

One former student, Sonja Brown, said Bokonon could make the keyboards more like the one in the post office's encoding center, which Block says he's now doing. But Brown, who lives in Danville with her daughter, said the program did help her increase her typing speed.

She works from 1 to 9:30 p.m. at the postal center. The work is stressful, but she likes the job and the pay. Employees are paid \$9.74 an hour.

"I never get to see my little girl, but I'm paying the bills," she said.

Clients are referred to Bokonon by case workers with the state Department of Health and Human Resources.

The department's Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training program pays for the education and training clients need to get back into the workforce, said Sharon Paterno, the director of the work and training program. The program is funded by federal and state money, she said.

Paterno said the department refers clients to many different educational and training programs, but she said Bokonon is different because it is market driven. Students are trained for specific jobs.

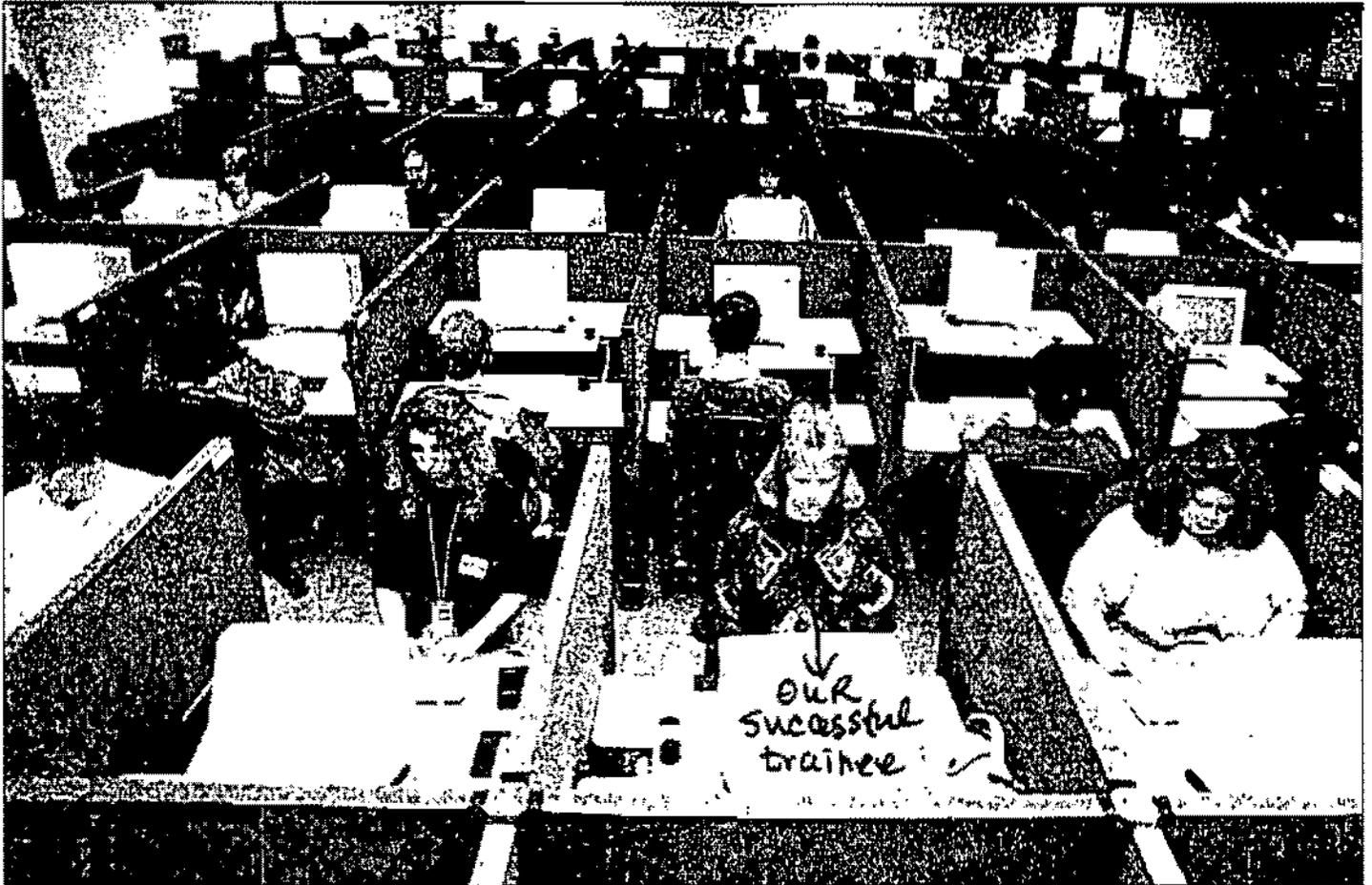
"It's clearly the way to go," she said. "Employers are going to appreciate having employees who have the skills they need."

But Block, a former college professor, has other reasons for offering the training. He wants to dispel the idea that people on welfare do not want to work.

He believes that unemployment reflects a lack of entry-level jobs and the bad impressions some employers have of the poor.

"It's a question of finding jobs and training people for the jobs," he said.

CHARLESTON MAIL 27 SEPT '94



CRAIG CUNNINGHAM/DAILY MAIL

**NEW JOBS:** More than 150 people have gotten jobs in the new remote encoding center at the post office on Lee Street. The center processes mail originating in Maryland that cannot be

read by a machine. The information typed in by the employees is turned into a bar code that's placed on the envelope.

# Maryland mail gets local assistance

By **BECKY FLEMING**  
DAILY MAIL STAFF

**D**ESPITE her messy handwriting, a woman in Maryland got her letter across town last night because of a postal employee in Charleston.

The U.S. Postal Service opened its remote encoding center in Charleston in June. It employs 153 people now, and as many as 350 people may work there within the next two months, said Weston Worth, the manager of the center.

The center helps process mail that originates in two regions of Maryland, even though the actual envelopes never pass through the center.

Employees sit at rows of computers, where they look at pictures of envelopes on their computer screens.

The employee types out the part of the address that a machine can not recognize. That may

"We came to Charleston because we knew the people wanted jobs."

**Weston Worth**

U.S. Postal Service manager

include the zip code, part of the city or state names, or part of the street address.

The envelope that is located in a Maryland processing center then is marked with a bar code that gives its destination.

Worth said each employee read an average of 715 addresses an hour last week, a figure that exceeds the national average for bar encoding centers.

"We came to Charleston because we knew the people wanted jobs," he said. "Then we found out people in Charleston really want to work and do a good job."

The post office spent \$1.6 million to set up the center in its former distribution center on Lee Street. The area that was once filled with sorting equipment is now lined with 132 computer consoles.

The center operates from 1 p.m. until 7 a.m. The employees work four- to eight-hour shifts with a five- or 10-minute break each hour.

The employees hired to staff the center are paid \$9.74 an hour, but they earn few benefits because they are considered long-term temporary employees. In five or 10 years, computers are expected to do the work they now do.

But that hasn't dampened the enthusiasm of the people who have snagged the jobs. About 2,700 people applied for the positions initially.

Trish Armstrong, a 31-year-old Madison resident, needed a job to help pay bills. She's a computer science student at

Southern West Virginia Community College, and her husband drives an ambulance in Boone County.

"I was really tired of just making ends meet," she said. "I couldn't pass this up."

Armstrong said the experience she's getting in working on a computer may also help her get a job later.

Chris Gillenwater, 20, drives 45 minutes each way from his home in Griffithsville in Lincoln County to attend West Virginia Career College and work at the post office. He says his new job pays better than his last, when he was a cook at Bob Evans.

Although postal officials caution people that the temporary jobs won't automatically lead to permanent positions, Gillenwater hopes it will for him.

"What I was really looking at was the experience and getting my foot in the door at the post office," he said.



Tammy Booth, on welfare for five years, is now taking computer training through a West

Virginia program that also will help place her in a job next year.

## Mothers find hope in new skills

**M**ARTINSBURG, W.Va. — Tammy Booth and Teresa Nutter are the people Congressional Republicans point to in their "Contract with America" and its promise to change the nation's welfare system.

Nutter, 37, lives on Barkdoll Road in Hagerstown, has three teenaged children and was on welfare for two years.

Booth, 28, has been receiving \$250 a month in Aid to Families with Dependent Children from the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources for five years.

In 1993, after training and counseling through Project Independence, Maryland's program to move people off welfare, Nu-

ter got a job as a parenting aide in the Washington County Department of Social Services.

Nutter, a housewife for years, had no skills for a job outside the home.

Now, with a good job and new skills, she has hopes of going to college to become a social worker.

Nutter said her job as a parenting aide requires her to use what she learned through Project Independence, skills in clerical and social work.

She lives in the 700 block of W. King Street in Martinsburg with her 5-year-old son and 9-month-old daughter. She's a single mother with no child support from the children's father.

Please turn to **MOTHERS**, F5

# Welfare — to — Work

## What the states do to help train people for paychecks

By **RICHARD F. DELIBLE**  
Staff Writer

**T**he federal government requires that 15 percent of all people receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children benefits be put into job training programs that will get them off welfare.

Those affected by the mandatory work rule are single parents whose children are older than three, unemployed parents and high school dropouts.

Betty Lidstone, deputy director of Washington County's Department of Social Services, said her department handles about 1,400 AFDC cases a month, with 236 clients in job training in March, nearly 17 percent.

In West Virginia 28 percent of the state's eligible AFDC clients are enrolled in job training, said Kathy Bradley, spokeswoman for the Department of Health and Human Services office in Martinsburg. The office covers the three Eastern Panhandle counties.

Pennsylvania officials said 31 percent of their eligible AFDC clients are being trained for permanent jobs that will get them off welfare. In Franklin County 32 percent of recipients are in job training. In Fulton County it's 50 percent.

Washington County sends its clients to the Western Maryland Consortium for job training, said Peter Thomas, consortium director.

Typically, training programs include remedial education for a GED, entry level computer training, basic office skills, health field skills, from nurses aides, licensed practical nursing to RN training, medical record keeping, tractor-trailer driving and construction skills, among others, officials said.

Thomas said an average client stay is about 18 months. The cost to DSS averages \$4,500 per client, he said.

According to West Virginia's Bradley, among the 5,600 Panhandle welfare recipients, there are 2,231 adults and children receiving monthly AFDC payments in Berkeley County; 1,201 in Jefferson; and 347 in Morgan County.

Payments average about \$22 a month per household.

Some 607 Panhandle adults are enrolled in job training programs.

Please turn to **WELFARE**, F5

# Mothers

Continued from F1

She said he's unemployed. She said if she wasn't living with her father she couldn't make it.

"I want to do something with my life. I can't stay on welfare. I need to provide for my children," she said.

Booth's only work experience was fast-food restaurants before her son was born.

Her dream is a job with Quad/Graphics, the Wisconsin magazine printing company that's building a \$60 million printing plant in Martinsburg.

Booth said she'll be ready to work there when the plant opens next year.

Booth is learning how to run computers at Bokonon Systems of West Virginia at its training center at 217 N. Queen St., Martinsburg.

The state will pay Bokonon \$3,000 to train Booth and find her a job when she finishes the six-month program.

Booth said the Department of Health and Human Services is helping her to change her life and is giving her the chance she needs.

She he earned her high school equivalency diploma through another DHHR program, she said.

Booth said all of her 20 or so fellow students being trained at Bokonon are as determined to get off welfare as she is.

She said she has a message for Congress about reforming welfare. "Let people get educated and trained before they put them in a dead-end job and they'll stay off welfare."

— Richard F. Balisle

Continued from F1

The federal government puts up 90 percent of the cost; the states add a 10 percent match.

Three years ago the West Virginia Legislature cut \$300,000 from its matching fund, in effect, cutting out \$3 million in federal job training funds for welfare clients.

"They didn't look at the whole picture," Bradley said. The loss means fewer people can earn high school equivalency diplomas or get job training, she said.

"The shifting focus in Congress is more emphasis on work, but it will force people with no skills into minimum wage jobs and they won't make it. I hope that doesn't prevail, because it will only lock them into deeper poverty," Thomas said.

The Frederick County Department of Social Services has 11,065 households receiving AFDC, said director Stephen Mood. The county's Job Training Agency trains and places DSS clients in jobs.

"It's been a very effective program," Mood said. "Our problem is there's not enough money to train people, to give them the skills they need to get a job." He said he has about 450 adults eligible for job training but his agency doesn't have the money to pay for it.

"We can't wish away the problem. These people need skills."

In Pennsylvania, 6 percent of the state's population receives AFDC and state general assistance payments. They live in nearly 200,000 households including 8,801 of which are two parent.

Franklin County has 2,819 people on welfare, about 2.3 percent of the county's population. Fulton County has 498 on the rolls, about 3.5 percent of the county's population.

Statewide more than 400,000 residents went off the welfare rolls and into jobs since the state's New Directions program was established in 1987, said Dave Lapan, deputy director of the Department of Public Welfare in Harrisburg.

In the same period 635 Franklin Countians have either been placed in jobs or completed education and training programs. In Fulton County the number is 140.

In 1994 some 3,500 Marylanders got into jobs and off welfare, she said. Since Project Independence began in 1989, more than 14,000 welfare recipients have gotten jobs, she said.

Charlene Gallion, director of Maryland's Project Independence, the jobs training program for welfare clients, said about 30,000 AFDC clients are eligible for job training but the money isn't there to pay for it.

Their fate remains a big question.

"If they don't get training they'll stay in the system," Lidstone said.

Thomas said two-thirds of the welfare clients in Washington County who complete Consortium training programs stay off welfare.

# ANNIE'S TALE

Annie T. made a mistake at 17, the result a beautiful baby girl. With no other resources she dropped out of school and turned to AFDC for support. During the next 12 years Annie went to classes and obtained her GED and worked at several state agencies under CWEP. Unfortunately, neither the training or CWEP placements led to a job. Then she was accepted to a special JOBS funded training program and obtained employment as a Remote Bar Coding operator at the United States Postal Service. She subsequently passed a second test and is now a counter worker earning \$25,000 plus health benefits.

Her story is not unique, it has happened 50 times in the last seven months. The program, operated in Charleston by Bokonon Systems of West Virginia, trains welfare recipients in a work oriented simulation for specific employment opportunities. The program is performance based and trainees complete the program only when they are placed in employment.

While the primary focus of the training center is jobs at the US Postal Service's remote bar coding facility, to which end they have developed a simulation of the tasks required for employment, other placements have come at AT&T, local

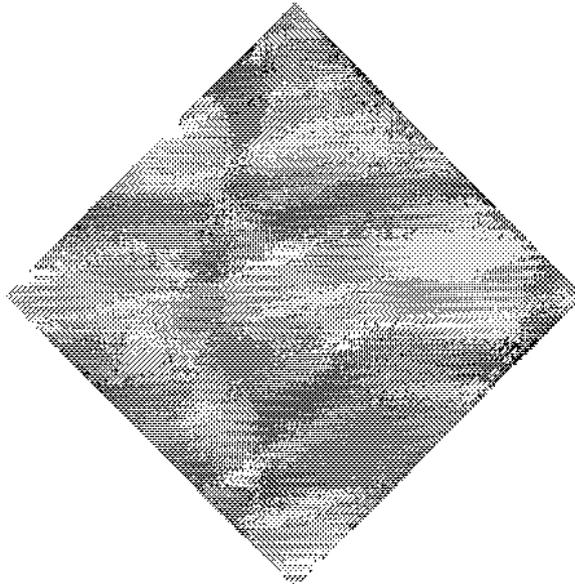
banks and insurance companies.

Don't tell the staff at Bokonon or the employer's who have hired their trainees that welfare mothers (and fathers) don't want to work, they know better! To date as these welfare recipients completed the program they obtained employment at an average wage of \$6.33 with many positions including health benefits. The minimum

placement has been at \$5.60/hr plus benefits. The Postal Service, where sixteen have been employed, pays \$9.74/hr but does not provide benefits although the union is negotiating for benefits at present.

While the program requires recipients to have a high school diploma or GED, the length of time of their recent welfare spell averaged forty-three months with a range of eight months to fourteen years. Clearly, this program reaches long term recipients and despite the prevailing beliefs, have found them willing and desirous of employment.

The return to the state is estimated as 20:1 on a five year basis. This return results from the elimination of the AFDC grant, Medicaid and food stamps and increased tax revenue from increases in income and purchases.





STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
Capitol Complex, Building 6  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Gaston Caperton  
Governor

November 3, 1994

Mr. A. Harvey Block, Ph.D.  
Bokonon Systems of West Virginia  
922 Quarrier Street  
Charleston, West Virginia 25301

Dear Mr. Block,

This is in response to your request for information about average length and the range of receipt of public assistance of those individuals who participated in the skills training conducted at the Charleston facility of Bokonon Systems of West Virginia. The review of information available indicates that the average length of receipt of public assistance for these individuals is 43.68 months. The range of the individuals varies from the shortest period of eight months up to 14 years and one month for the longest individual's receipt of public assistance.

We hope that this information will assist you in the continued services to welfare recipients. If you require additional information, please contact Pam Santone at 558-5202.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sharon Paterno".

Sharon Paterno, Director  
Office of Work and Training

# BOKONON SYSTEMS OF WEST VIRGINIA

## WELFARE TO WORK: SOME RESULTS

BOKONON SYSTEMS is a training company that develops programs for specific employment opportunities and focuses upon providing training and placement services to the economically disadvantaged, specifically AFDC and JTPA recipients. The company utilizes simulation as its primary method of training: training is conducted in a simulated workplace and utilizes simulations of real work tasks.

The primary placement focus of the training center in Charleston is the US Postal Service's Remote Bar Coding (RBC) center where successful trainees have obtained employment as VDT operators. Another major source has been AT&T where trainees have been hired as service clerks. About 40% of placements have been at the RBC, with another 22% at AT&T. The remaining 38% being distributed among other employers. The minimum placement has been at \$5.80 /hr plus benefits, with the average placement at \$6.33/hr plus benefits, although at present the USPS jobs which pay \$9.74 do not include benefits.

**USPS Placements:** The USPS tests administered to establish ranking on the register from which persons are selected for USPS training was given prior to BOKONON's full implementation of its training program. The extent of the capabilities of our trainees is evidenced by the results which found over 50% passing, a rate that compares favorably with that of the population taking these tests. A special training unit focusing on the written test has been implemented and we expect to increase the pass rates at subsequent testing.

Of those that made the USPS register 65% reported for postal service training, the rest had already been placed in other employment. Of those that entered USPS training over 70% were successful and are now employed at the RBC site. This success rate is very high and substantially better than that for other USPS participants. At present we have made major revisions to our simulation and hence expect even higher success rates in the future.

**AT&T Placements:** The early groups tested by AT&T obtained about the same success rate as the general population, with about 30%. As a result we instituted a training module designed to improve test performance with the result that trainees obtained a pass rate of about 55% on the most recent recruitment call-up.

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**W**

# **ELFARE TO WORK**

**CHARLESTON CENTER: 1ST YEAR  
PERFORMANCE & COSTS**

**BOKONON SYSTEMS OF WEST VIRGINIA**

**922 QUARRIER STREET  
CHARLESTON, WY 25301**

# *BOKONON SYSTEMS* OF WEST VIRGINIA

## **CHARLESTON TRAINING FACILITY PERFORMANCE AND COSTS AT ONE YEAR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**BOKONON SYSTEMS** is a company that develops training programs for specific employment opportunities and focuses upon providing training and placement services to the economically disadvantaged, primarily AFDC recipients. **BOKONON's** uniqueness lies in its approach: training takes place in a simulation of a working environment and program success is defined by a trainee entering un-subsidized employment at a wage sufficient to obtain self-sufficiency.

**BOKONON** operates two training centers in West Virginia. This report covers the status of trainees at the Charleston Center which serves welfare recipients from Kanawha, Boone, Lincoln and Putnam counties. .

Support for the program in is provided by the Office of Family Support of the Department of Health and Human Resources through JOBS program funds. Funds are provided as an investment in welfare recipients, providing training and placement services leading to un-subsidized employment at a wage rate sufficient for the recipient to obtain self-support.

At the end of the first year 134 welfare recipients entered the program. Thirty-nine were in training, seventeen had been terminated for cause, while sixty-one had been placed in employment resulting in most (59) no longer receiving an AFDC grant. Placement wage rates averaged \$7.43, with a range of \$5.61-\$9.74.

Performance indices used to rate success showed that placements outnumbered terminations by a factor of 3.6 yielding a success rate of 78% (Placements/Placements plus Terminations or  $61/78=78\%$ ). Cost analysis showed the average cost of a placement at \$2324. This compares with an estimated annual State and federal cost of \$10,860 to support a welfare recipient, suggesting a four to one savings to investment return for the program. Projection of investment return per recipient over five years shows a return of twenty dollars for each dollar invested in training.

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**CHARLESTON TRAINING FACILITY**  
**PERFORMANCE AND COSTS AT ONE YEAR**

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# CHARLESTON TRAINING FACILITY

PERFORMANCE AND COSTS AT ONE YEAR  
MARCH 28, 1994- APRIL 15, 1995

## INTRODUCTION

BOKONON SYSTEMS is a company that develops training programs for specific employment opportunities and focuses upon providing training and placement services to the economically disadvantaged, primarily AFDC recipients. BOKONON's uniqueness lies in its approach: training takes place in a simulation of a working environment and program success is defined by a trainee entering un-subsidized employment at a wage sufficient to obtain self-sufficiency.

BOKONON operates two training centers in West Virginia, one in Charleston, the other in Martinsburg. The Charleston center serves welfare recipients from Kanawha, Boone, Lincoln and Putnam counties. Martinsburg serves Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan county.

Support for the program is provided by the Office of Family Support of the Department of Health and Human Resources through JOBS program funds. In addition, the Charleston Center also serves several JTPA eligibles through funding on a buy-in basis from the PIC of Kanawha County.

This report covers the status of trainees at the Charleston Center. Other reports detail the performance of trainees from Kanawha county (the largest provider of referrals at Charleston) and performance at the Martinsburg Center.

## THE PROGRAM

BOKONON's training program is unique for several reasons: First, staff identify existing job opportunities by making contact with local employers and develops special simulations of specific tasks required for successful employment. All of the training is computer based and trainees enter the program with a module that provides basic computer skills and knowledge. This computer oriented focus is in line with recent US Department of Labor studies that estimate that 80% of all new jobs will require computer skills.

Among the job specific simulations available at the Centers are a proprietary program that mimics the USPS Remote Bar Coding (RBC) tasks, a data entry training program and a recently introduced medical management and medical terminology program that simulates operations in a physicians office and provides experience in claims processing.

This later module has been introduced to open employment opportunities with locally based insurance companies as well as in local practitioner's offices.

Second, because many of the trainees have previously demonstrated failure in classroom situations or because they have not been in a classroom for many years, training takes place in a simulated work environment. Trainees are treated as employees with specific rules for attendance and tardiness in place; violations of these rules result in termination from the program (trainees who are terminated are referred back to the local Family Support Office for adjudication with many agreeing to return to BOKONON under strict conditions). In addition to insuring that BOKONON staff are able to provide recommendations to employers with respect to attendance and tardiness, the work environment serves as a stimulus to the trainees who come to recognize that they are ready for work. Bokonon staff also believes that simulating a work environment makes real the old saw that "having a job is the best way to get a job".

Third, training is individualized and self paced, allowing the trainee to proceed at a pace geared to their own learning style. In addition to employment oriented training modules, support is provided which focuses upon upgrading of basic skills (eg. work oriented reading comprehension, math comprehension, etc.) and general job search skills. Enrollment is open and depends on the availability of a training cubical.

Fourth, completion of the program only occurs when a student obtains employment. BOKONON's policy states explicitly that trainees will continue to refine their skills within the program until they leave for employment. There are exceptions to this policy, some trainees are terminated for cause, some are terminated for administrative reasons and others are referred to programs that better meet the trainees needs.

The training programs are defined by a series of skill benchmarks, with 20% of the total costs withheld and paid over the first sixty days of employment. Trainees remain in the program until suitable employment is found, however, some trainees have left the program for employment at wage rates below the contractual amount or for employment that is not training related. Although, BOKONON believes that any employment is relevant to the training program, no reimbursement for placement is claimed for those trainees who opt for jobs not related to training or for those that take employment at wage rates below a specified level (\$5.61 plus benefits, which is the federal wage and labor standard for the State).

This later problem (employment at below standard rates) although rare, is understandable in that the level of grant payment to AFDC recipients is so low that even minimum wage provides more income. The problem is that most of these jobs do not have benefits and unless they find new employment we expect that those that choose this option will be back on assistance once their transitional medical and day care support ends.

## TRAINING MODULES

The training center houses a twenty-five node Lantastic network and operates two sessions. Training focuses upon computer keyboarding skills with specific modules replicating job oriented tasks. Following is a brief description of the program modules:

**EFFECTIVE LISTENING AND COMMUNICATIONS:** This interactive video is designed to sharpen listening and communication skills by requiring the trainee to define the content of speech segments under various conditions. This program is a prerequisite for all other modules.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE PC AND DOS:** An interactive computer program that introduces trainees to the workings of the PC and the functions of the Disk Operating System. Additional training is provided that describes networks and how to interact with them. The basis for this latter section is the training network.

**KEYBOARDING AND WORD PROCESSING APPLICATIONS:** This module uses a special purpose keyboarding program embedded in Word Perfect 5.1. Trainees test into the program and proceed at their own pace. The module is supported by additional keyboarding programs that allow the trainee to work on overcoming specific skill deficiencies. At the completion of the program the student will have mastered Word Perfect and be able to key at least 40WPM. As training progresses trainees continue to be tested for speed and accuracy to ensure that standard skills are maintained and improved. After meeting the program standard trainees receive certificates for each five word increase in speed at appropriate accuracy levels.

**DATA ENTRY:** This module utilizes a tutorial program for data entry. It consists of a series of applications during which the trainees learns to enter and verify different types of information. The trainee learns to master both the keyboard and keypad. A new module is being introduced which is specific to medical billing and claims processing. This was implemented to meet the needs of local insurance and claims processing companies as well as to open physician offices as additional employment opportunities.

**RBC SIMULATION:** This module was developed by BOKONON to meet to meet the job opportunity made available by the instillation of a USPS Remote Bar Coding site in Charleston. It presents images of mail pieces and allows trainees to practice the specific tasks required at the RBC. The success rate of trainees with the RBC certification program attests to its capability.

Additional support is provided in mathematics and language to aid trainees in passing employer written tests. The staff also aids in the preparation of resumes and conducts group discussions around mock interviews.

Performance standards have been established for each module and trainees are required to meet standards before proceeding to the next module. It is expected that trainees will be able to type 40 words per minute and key at least 8,000 key strokes per hour before placement efforts begin.

All trainees are tested using the Adult Basic Educational Level (ABEL) test. The test is used to identify trainee deficiencies and since many local employers also use the test as an entry level criterion, the results also allows for BOKONON staff to determine potential placement eligibility of trainees. Supportive services are provided to trainees who score poorly either within the program or through referral to Adult Basic Skills classes. Trainees, who score poorly are retested periodically until appropriate performance levels are obtained. Having these results serves as an incentive to employers who use the test as they are able to use our results, thereby saving recruitment costs.

As trainees complete their mastery of keyboard skills and word processing they develop a resume. This resume is refined during counseling by BOKONON staff and is used by the trainee when they begin to respond to available jobs. the resume is accompanied by a letter of recommendation prepared by BOKONON staff and details the trainees skill levels and on-the task performance

In summary the intent of the program is to prepare an applicant for employment by providing training at a pace that is suited to the trainees learning style, in a work oriented environment and with specific employment goals.

### JOB DEVELOPMENT AND PLACEMENT

BOKONON staff focus on job development as well as supporting trainees own efforts at obtaining employment. To date the following companies have employed trainees and have used BOKONON as a regular recruitment source:

United States Postal Service	AT & T
BankOne	Acordia Insurance
Consultek	

Trainees have been placed with other employers, but those noted are in a growth pattern and each has hired at least four trainees during the past year. With the support of the State Office of Family Support, the West Virginia Development Office and BIDCO, the local development agency, we have contacted other employers and expect that our

employer base will grow. To this end we have arranged part time employment for enrollees at a company (Consultek) that has grown into a preferred employment placement opportunity. For those employed part-time, while still registered in the class, the employment gives trainees a chance to demonstrate their ability to function in a working environment, earn income and add to their resume experience.

### FACILITIES

The Charleston Center is located centrally adjacent to the downtown area and is available by public transportation. The Center houses a 25 station local area network. The physical setup is similar to that of the local USPS remote bar coding site. Trainees work at self contained individual cubicals at their own pace, except when they are brought together into small groups for special instruction.

### PERFORMANCE

Program status of trainees is defined by the outcome. Trainees are successful if they achieve employment. There are three types of employment outcomes:

1. training related (TR) is the case in which employment is directly related to the training provided and at or above the wage and benefit standard (\$5.61) ;
2. training related-below standard (TR-BS), in which employment is directly related to the training but wages are below the \$5.61 standard or have no benefits; and
3. non-training related (NTR), the case where employment is not related to training.

Terminations from the program are also of three types:

1. "Termination for Cause", refers to those who are terminated by program staff because they have violated the provisions of the training contract (excessive absences or lateness);
2. those who have been closed for administrative reasons (eg. no longer eligible for AFDC, moved, failure to meet agency requirements etc.). It should be noted that BOKONON allows trainees who are no longer eligible for AFDC to remain in the program until they can be placed and several trainees have availed themselves of this opportunity. No costs are recovered for trainees who have lost their eligibility.

3. "Referral to other programs". In some cases we have found that trainees need additional support to bring their basic skills up to par, in other cases trainees had found that they want more than the program can provide (eg. one trainee has left for college and another is scheduled to leave on June 1).

Termination is based on unexcused absenteeism and tardiness. Trainees are required (by contract) to call in and provide a legitimate excuse. Failure to call or an unacceptable excuse is counted against the limit of three. After the first failure, a telephone follow-up is initiated and the trainee is warned and counseled prior to termination. Termination is effected by notifying the W&T unit. Trainees who are terminated may be allowed to return at the recommendation of the W&T staff.

Data detailing the performance of trainees from each county appear in Appendix A. At the end of the first year of operations 134 trainees had been registered from all of the counties (Kanawha County=118, Boone=13, Lincoln=2, Putnam=1) with the following results:

#### NUMBER AND PERCENT OF TRAINEE OUTCOME AT END OF FIRST YEAR

<u>STATUS</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
In Training.....	39	29
Employment		
Training Related.....	54	40
Training Related-Below Standard.....	4	3
Non-Training Related.....	3	2
Terminations		
For Cause.....	17	13
Administrative Closing.....	8	6
Referred to other Programs.....	5	5
Special Cases		
Failed USPS certification		
Counted "In Training".....	5	
Awaiting Reentry.....	2	1.5
NTR-Failed Awaiting re-entry.....	2	1.5

Several trainees (2) left the program before completion and went to work at minimum TR-BS placements, found that they were financially unable to continue and reapplied for welfare. These former trainees are awaiting program re-entry.

Four other trainees took "training related below standard employment" and still remain off the AFDC rolls.

Three others are employed in non-training related employment, one went to work for the West Virginia Treasury Department in the warehouse facilities, one became a waitress and one found employment as a dancer (type not identified).

Another group (7) left the program for the USPS certification and failed. Five of these have returned to the program and are counted as "In Training", two others are awaiting re-entry to the program.

Placement wages for "training related" placements averaged \$7.43, with a range of 5.61 to \$9.74. With the exception of the Postal Service RBC placements which paid \$9.73, benefits were included at employment or after a probationary period. The Postal Service union did indicate that they are in the process of pursuing a benefit package for the RBC jobs. In any event the provision of transitional services by the JOBS program aids recipients who had to meet a probationary period and those at the Post Office by leaving the former recipients access to a medical card.

#### PERFORMANCE INDICES

Although the program has many anecdotal success stories, for example, one trainee was on welfare for twelve years and now is employed by the USPS in a regular (non-RBC) position at more than \$25,000.00 plus benefits, the only adequate measure is the extent to which successful "placements" out-number "terminations for cause". In the present case placements are 3.6 times terminations (61/17), which translates to a success rate of 78% (Placements/Placements plus Terminations or  $61/78=78\%$ ). The success score for each county is as follows:

#### SUCCESS SCORE FOR EACH COUNTY

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>PLACED/TERMS</u>	<u>PLACED/PLACED+TERMS</u>
KANAWHA	2.9	75%
BOONE		100%
LINCOLN		100%
PUTNAM		100%

Of the sixty-one employed, participation in the training program averaged 5.4 months with a range of 1-12 months. Placement has occurred in each month after the first

month with monthly placements ranging from 1 to 8. To date the group averages 5.6 months of employment and all of the direct placements remain employed and either off the welfare rolls or receiving minimum support because of large family size (2 cases) .

**USPS Employment:** Twenty-three of the trainees entered the USPS employment certification program with sixteen passing and obtaining permanent/temp status at a wage rate of \$9.74 per hour. This pass rate of 70% compares favorably with that of the general population whose pass rate hovered between 30-35%. Since the end of the first hiring phase BOKONON has upgraded its RBC simulation and expects that the pass rate will go even higher during the next hiring phase.

Of those entering USPS employment, one took the regular USPS exam and has transferred to regular status in the main Charleston Post Office earning \$25,000 per year plus benefits. Two others have been selected as permanent employees which is accompanied by full USPS benefits. Another has moved on to employment at Georgia Pacific at Mt. Hope and is earning \$27,000 per year with full benefits.

It should be noted that the Work & Training supervisors and staff have worked closely with BOKONON staff to maximize utilization of the training program. Consequently, many of those who have been terminated for cause and those who have not managed to maintain employment have been referred back to the program. Presently there are five in attendance and another six on a wait list. If these trainees are successful in the future these positive results will show additional improvement.

It is also of note to consider the length of time that trainees were on welfare during their most recent continuous spell. While we do not have complete data, the average length of last spell for the first twenty-two placements was 43.8 months with a range of 8 months to twelve years. A later report will delineate data for each type of program performance and contrast different outcomes.

### COSTS

Program status of trainees is defined by the outcome. Training is successful only if trainees achieve employment. Cost of training as defined by the contract is dependent on the type of outcome. The cost of training and placement is \$3060.00 for a trainee who completes the program, is placed in training related employment above the required standard of \$5.61/hr. plus benefits and remains in employment at least 60 days. Full payment is not achieved for every placement. Some leave successfully before completing the program, others take non-training related employment, while some are terminated for cause and still others are referred to other training programs. As a result the table which follows provides a breakdown of costs by placement and termination type.

It should also be noted that BOKONON allows trainees who are no longer eligible for AFDC to remain in the program until they can be placed and several trainees have availed themselves of this opportunity. No costs are recovered for trainees after they have lost their eligibility.

#### AVERAGE COST BY TERMINATION AND PLACEMENT TYPE

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>AVERAGE COST</u>
Terminations	
For Cause	795
Administrative Closing	1022
Other Training Programs	1430
Employment Failed	1360
Employed	
Training Related	2639*
Training Related-Below Standard	1497
Non-Training Related	2170

\* these costs are estimates as several in this category were not billed within the time period covered by this report. The number reported assumes that full payment will be obtained for those who have gone to work.

Average costs for "training related" placement (\$2639) is considerably less than the full amount (\$3060). Furthermore, average cost for all placement types (TR, TR-BS, NTR) was even lower at \$2102. Finally, the average cost for all placements and terminations for cause (TR, TR-BS, NTR, For Cause/ TR,TR-BS, NTR) was \$2324.

#### COST IMPACT

Considering even these fragmentary results in light of the savings to the state and federal government, the value of the program is evident. If we can assume that long stays on welfare condition even longer stays, the potential cost savings projected over five years for each placement is extensive. Consider the following:

Estimated Average Annual AFDC Cash Grant	3336
Estimated Average Annual Medicaid Cost Per Case	3600
Estimated Average annual Food Stamp Saving	2400
Estimated Annual State Sales and Other Tax Income	<u>750</u>
Estimated Annual Cost Savings per Placement	10860

Even when considering the State's low FFP rate the return on the investment, through cost saving from retirement of eligibility and increases in taxes, is obtained in less than one year. Projections over a five year period suggest savings of the magnitude of \$20 for each dollar invested.

# **APPENDIX A: PERFORMANCE AND COSTS**

# KANAWHA COUNTY

TRAINEE STATUS: 4/94 - 3/95

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
			<b>PLACED</b>
101	1360	Work	NTR EMPLOY
102	2060	Work	CONSULTEK
103	1210	Work	TR-BS: C&O MOTORS
104	3060	Work	USPS
105	3060	Work	HEALTH ECONOMICS
106	3060	Work	USPS
107	1360	Work	TR-BS: STATE(MANPOWER4.90hr)
108	960	Work	NTR EMPLOY
109	2310	Work	USPS
110	2710	Work	ACORDIA
111	3060	Work	DEPT OF HEALTH&HUMAN SERVICES
112	3060	Work	BANKONE
113	2660	Work	AT&T
114	3060	Work	AT&T
115	610	Work	WVSC LIBRARY
116	2460	Work	TR-BS: EMPLOYED
117	2460	Work	CAMC
118	2760	Work	ACORDIA
119	2060	Work	HEALTH PLUS
120	3060	Work	CHARS PARKS & RECREATION
121	1710	Work	BANKONE
122	3060	Work	AT&T
123	1360	Work	TR-BS: EMPLOYED
124	2760	Work	CREDIT&RECV SERVICES
125	2060	Work	BANKONE
126	2360	Work	HEALTH ECONOMICS
127	3060	Work	USPS
128	3060	Work	AT&T
129	3060	Work	USPS
130	3060	Work	USPS/GEORGIA PACIFIC
131	3060	Work	AT&T
132	3060	Work	USPS
133	2760	Work	ACORDIA
134	1360	Work	TR-BS: PAY BELOW CONTRACT
135	1660	Work	ACORDIA
136	3060	Work	OWENS CORNING
137	3060	Work	AT&T
138	1960	Work	RED CROSS
139	2810	Work	UPS
140	2060	Work	CONSULTEK
141	1360	Work	USPS
142	2460	Work	NTR EMPLOY
143	1960	Work	LAW FIRM
144	3060	Work	USPS/REG USPS
145	2160	Work	CONSULTEK
146	3060	Work	USPS
147	3060	Work	USPS
148	3060	Work	AT&T/CREDIT&REC SERVICES
149	3060	Work	AT&T
150	960	Work	JOB CORP

**KANAWHA COUNTY**  
**TRAINEE STATUS: 4/94 - 3/95 (continued)**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
			<b>IN TRAINING</b>
201	2460	COMPL	USPS/FAILED/AT BOKONON
202	2460	COMPL	USPS/FAILED/AT BOKONON
203	2460	Compl	USPS/FAIL/AT BOKONON
204	2460	COMPL	USPS/FAIL/AT BOKONON
205	2460	COMPL	USPS/FAILED/AT BOKONON
206	260	PCDOS	
207	260	PCDOS	
208	610	20WPM	
209	960	30WPM	
210	960	30WPM	
211	960	30WPM	
212	960	30WPM	
213	960	30WPM	
214	960	30WPM	
215	960	30WPM	
216	960	30WPM	
217	1360	40wpm	
218	1360	40WPM	
219	1360	40WPM	
220	1360	40WPM	
221	1360	40WPM	
222	1360	40WPM	
223	1360	40WPM	
224	1360	40WPM	
225	1360	40WPM	
226	1710	6000KS	
227	1710	6000KS	
228	1710	6000KS	
229	1710	6000KS	
230	1710	6000KS	
231	1710	6000KS	
232	1710	6000KS	
233	1710	6000KS	
234	2060	8000KS	
235	2060	8000KS	

# KANAWHA COUNTY

TRAINEE STATUS: 4/94 - 3/95 (continued)

## TRAINEE TERMINATIONS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
301	260	INTAKE	
302	260	INTAKE	
303	260	INTAKE	SANCTIONED
304	610	20WPM	
305	610	20WPM	
306	610	20WPM	
307	610	20WPM	SANCTIONED
308	610	20WPM	SANCTIONED
309	960	30WPM	
310	960	30WPM	
311	960	30WPM	SANCTIONED
312	1360	40WPM	
313	0	40WPM	NO PAY/SANCTIONED
314	1360	40WPM	SANCTIONED
315	1360	40WPM	SANCTIONED
316	1360	40WPM	
317	1360	40WPM	SANCTIONED

## ADMINISTRATIVE TERMINATIONS

401	260	INTAKE	DAYCARE PROBLEMS
402	260	INTAKE	MEDICAL/REFER TO BOKONON
403	960	30WPM	MOVED TO NICHOLS COUNTY
404	969	30WPM	FAMILY PROB/REFR TO BOKONON
405	1360	40WPM	CASE CLOSED/NO CHILD
406	1360	40WPM	CASE CLOSED
407	1360	40WPM	MEDICAL

## TRAINEES REFERRED TO OTHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

501	260	INTAKE	MEDICAL/OTHER TRAINING
502	1360	40WPM	MEDICAL/OTHER TRAINING
503	1360	40WPM	MEDICAL/GARNET
504	1710	6000KS	WV STATE COLLEGE
505	2460	COMPL	CWEP

## TRAINEES WHO LEFT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND RETURNED TO AFDC

601	260	INTAKE	JOB/QUIT/REFER TO BOKONON
602	1360	40WPM	USPS/FAILED/REFR TO BOKONON
603	1360	40WPM	NTR/QUIT/REFR TO BOKONON
604	2460	COMP	USPS/FAIL/REFER TO BOKONON

# BOONE COUNTY

TRAINEE STATUS & COSTS: 4/94 - 3/95 (continued)

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
		<b>PLACED</b>	
B101	3060	Employed	USPS
B102	260	Employed	NTR
B103	2410	Case Closed	ATT/QUIT/NOT ON AFDC
B104	3060	Employed	USPS
B105	3060	Employed	BankOne
B106	3060	Employed	RGIS
B107	2460	Employed	NTR/WV Treasury
B108	3060	Employed	USPS

## ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSING

B109	1360	Admin Close	Family Income
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## IN TRAINING

B110	960	30WPM	In Training
B111	960	30WPM	In Training
B112	260	Intake	In Training
B113	960	30WPM	In Training

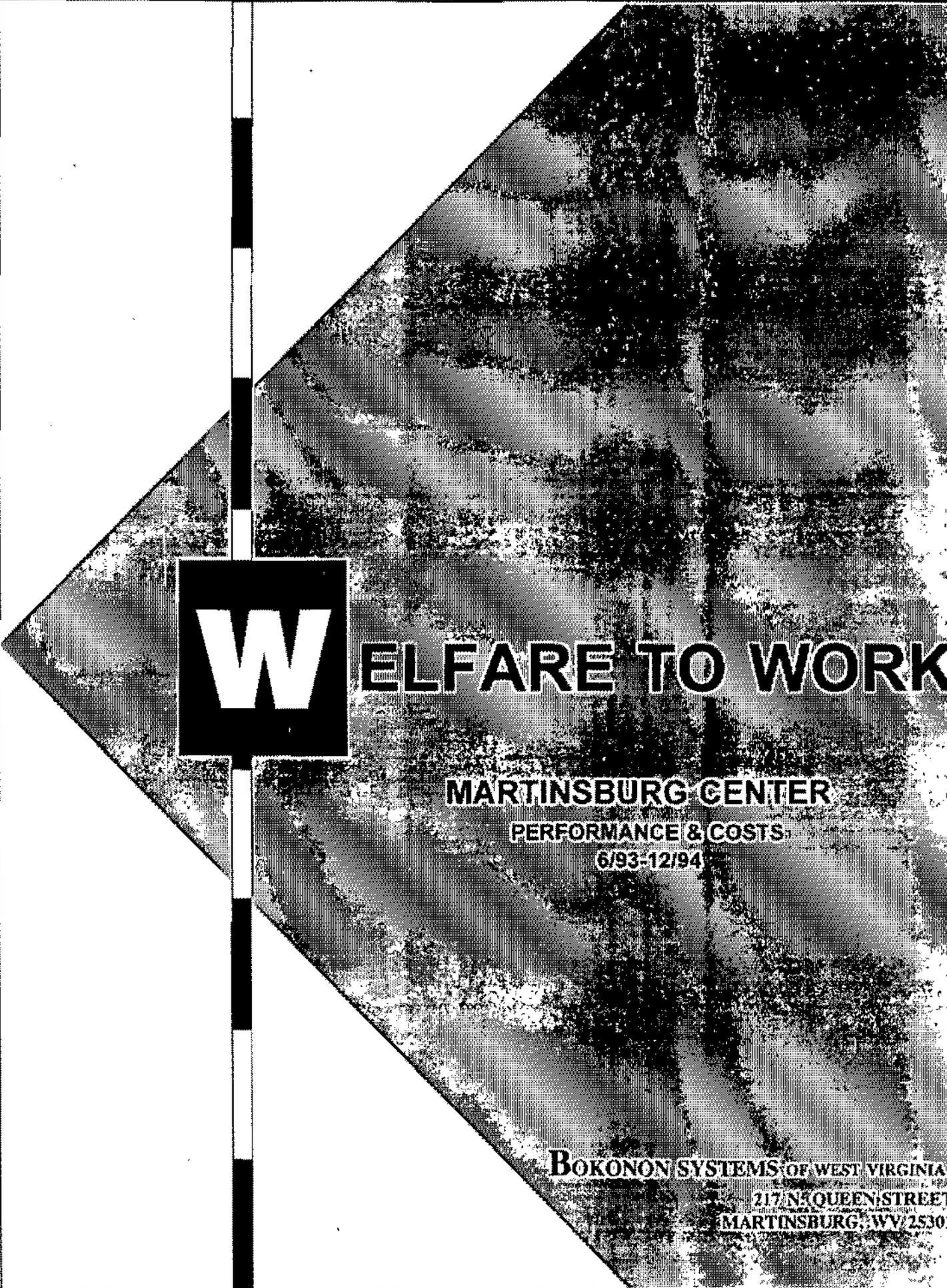
**LINCOLN COUNTY**  
**TRAINEE STATUS & COSTS: 4/94 - 3/95 (continued)**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
		<b>PLACED</b>	
L101	3060	Employed	USPS
L102	3060	Employed	USPS

# PUTNAM COUNTY

TRAINEE STATUS & COSTS: 4/94 - 3/95 (continued)

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
P101	1960	Employed	Health Economics



**W**

# ELFARE TO WORK

**MARTINSBURG CENTER**

**PERFORMANCE & COSTS**

**6/93-12/94**

**BOKONON SYSTEMS OF WEST VIRGINIA**

**217 N. QUEEN STREET  
MARTINSBURG, WV 25301**

# **BOKONON SYSTEMS** OF WEST VIRGINIA

## **MARTINSBURG TRAINING FACILITY PERFORMANCE AND COSTS: 6/93-12/94 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**BOKONON SYSTEMS** develops training programs for specific employment opportunities and provides training and placement services to the economically disadvantaged, primarily AFDC recipients. **BOKONON's** uniqueness lies in its approach: training takes place in a simulation of a working environment and program completion is defined by a trainee entering un-subsidized employment at a wage sufficient to obtain self-sufficiency.

**BOKONON** operates two training centers in West Virginia. This report covers the status of trainees referred from Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan counties to the Martinsburg Center.

Support for the program is provided by the Office of Family Support of the Department of Health and Human Resources through JOBS program funds. Funds are provided as an investment in welfare recipients, providing training and placement services leading to un-subsidized employment.

During the period 6/93-12/94, 118 welfare recipients had been referred from the three counties. Seven were in training, thirty-nine had been terminated mostly for transportation or medical reasons. Sixty were placed in employment resulting in most no longer receiving an AFDC grant. Placement wage rates averaged \$6.11, with a range of \$5.61-\$7.50.

Performance indices used to rate success showed that placements outnumbered terminations by a factor of 1.5 yielding a success rate of 60% ( $\frac{\text{Placements}}{\text{Placements} + \text{Terminations}} = \frac{60}{99} = 60\%$ ). Cost analysis showed the average cost of a placement at \$2954. This compares with an estimated annual State and federal cost of \$10,860 to support a welfare recipient, suggesting almost a four to one savings to investment return for the program. Projection of investment return per recipient over five years shows a return of twenty dollars for each dollar invested in training.

Martinsburg Office  
217 North Queen Street  
Martinsburg, WV 25401  
Tel:(304) 264-0621  
Fax:(304) 264-0974

*"training for success"*

# MARTINSBURG TRAINING CENTER

PERFORMANCE AND COSTS: 6/93-12/94

## INTRODUCTION

BOKONON SYSTEMS is a training company that develops programs for specific employment opportunities and focuses upon providing training and placement services to the economically disadvantaged, primarily AFDC recipients. BOKONON operates two training centers in West Virginia, one in Charleston, the other in Martinsburg. The Charleston Center serves welfare recipients from Kanawha, Boone, Lincoln and Putnam counties. The Martinsburg Center serves Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties.

Support for the program is provided by the Office of Family Support of the Department of Health and Human Resources through JOBS program funds. In addition, the Charleston Center serves several JTPA eligibles through funding on a buy-in basis from the PIC of Kanawha County, while the Martinsburg site serves one JTPA eligible funded by the PIC of West Virginia.

This report covers the status of trainees at the Martinsburg Center. Other reports detail the performance of trainees from the counties served by the Charleston Center.

## THE PROGRAM

BOKONON's training program is unique for several reasons: First, staff identify existing job opportunities by making contact with local employers and develops special simulations of specific tasks required for successful employment. Among the job specific simulations available at the Centers are a proprietary program that mimics the USPS Remote Bar Coding (RBC) tasks, a data entry training program and a recently in the process of introducing a medical management program that simulates operations in a physicians office and provides experience in claims processing. We are also in the process of contacting Quadgraphics to ascertain their training needs.

Second, because many of the trainees have previously demonstrated failure in classroom situations or because they have not been in a classroom for many years, training takes place in a simulated work environment. Trainees are treated as employees with specific rules for attendance and tardiness in place; violations of these rules result in termination from the program (trainees who are terminated are referred back to the local Family Support Office for adjudication).

Third, training is individualized and self paced, allowing the trainee to proceed at a pace

geared to their own learning style. Enrollment is open and depends on the availability of a training cubical.

The training program is performance based, with 20% of the costs withheld and paid over the first sixty days of employment. Trainees remain in the program until suitable employment is found, however, some trainees have left the program for employment at wage rates below the contractual amount or for employment that is not training related. No reimbursement for placement is claimed for those trainees who opt for jobs not related to training or for those that take employment at wage rates below a specified level (\$5.61 plus benefits, which is the federal wage and labor standard for the State).

**TRAINING MODULES:** The training center houses a twenty node Lantastic local area network (LAN) and operates one session at present. Training focuses upon computer keyboarding skills with specific modules replicating job oriented tasks. Following is a brief description of the program modules:

**EFFECTIVE LISTENING AND COMMUNICATIONS:** This interactive video is designed to sharpen listening and communication skills by requiring the trainee to define the content of speech segments under various conditions. This program is a prerequisite for all other modules.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE PC AND DOS:** An interactive computer program that introduces trainees to the workings of the PC and the functions of the Disk Operating System. Additional training is provided that describes networks and how to interact with them. The basis for this latter section is the training network.

**KEYBOARDING AND WORD PROCESSING APPLICATIONS:** This module uses a special purpose keyboarding program embedded in Word Perfect 5.1. Trainees test into the program and proceed at their own pace. The module is supported by additional keyboarding programs that allow the trainee to work on overcoming specific skill deficiencies. At the completion of the program the student will have mastered Word Perfect and be able to key at least 40WPM. As training progresses trainees continue to be tested for speed and accuracy to ensure that standard skills are maintained and improved. After meeting the program standard trainees receive certificates for each five word increase in speed at appropriate accuracy levels.

**DATA ENTRY:** This is utilizes a tutorial program for data entry. It consists of a series of applications during which the trainees learns to enter and verify different types of information. The trainee learns to master both the keyboard and keypad. A new module is being introduced which

is specific to medical billing and claims processing. This unit was implemented to meet the needs of local insurance and claims processing functions to open local hospital and physician offices as another employment opportunity.

**RBC SIMULATION:** This module was developed by BOKONON to meet the employment opportunity made available by the instillation of a USPS Remote Bar Coding site in Charleston. It presents images of mail pieces and allows trainees to practice the specific tasks required at the RBC. The success rate of trainees with the RBC certification program attests to its capability.

Additional support is provided in mathematics and language to aid trainees in passing employer written tests. The staff also aids in the preparation of resumes and conducts group discussions around mock interviews. Efforts at job development are undertaken by staff to increase placement opportunities.

Performance standards have been established for each module and trainees are required to meet standards before proceeding to the next module. It is expected that trainees will be able to type 40 words per minute and key at least 8,000 key strokes per hour before placement efforts begin.

All trainees are tested using the Adult Basic Educational Level (ABEL) test. The test is used to identify trainee deficiencies and since many local employers also use the test as an entry level criterion, the results also allows for BOKONON STAFF to determine potential placement eligibility of trainees. Other supportive services are provided to trainees who score poorly and who are retested subsequently until appropriate performance levels are obtained. Having these results serves as an incentive to employers who use the test as they are able to use our results, thereby saving recruitment costs.

In summary the intent of the program is to prepare an applicant for employment by providing training at a pace that is suited to the trainees learning style, in a work oriented environment and with specific employment goals.

**JOB DEVELOPMENT AND PLACEMENT:** BOKONON staff focus on job development as well as supporting trainees own efforts at obtaining employment. Originally the center operated two sessions of 20 trainees each. The primary employer was AMI, which operated a Remote Bar Coding site under contract to the US Postal Service. Over half the original group of trainees was placed at AML. Unfortunately, this employer was found to be impossible, violating many provisions of the Contract Service Act and word soon got around with the result that few trainees were interested in applying for positions there. It should be noted that a class action suit has been brought

against AMI, with several of our former trainees joining the effort. The Postal Service is now in the process of taking control of the facility.

Placement became even more problematic as several other major employers (CityCorp Card Services, AB&C Corp) turned from direct employment and began using temporary services to staff their jobs. The extent of this recent transition to the use of temporary services is evidenced by what occurred when Norm Thompson, Inc. a catalogue company which relocated to Jefferson County from Oregon. They originally estimated that they would hire at least 100 full time employees and supplement them with part-time employment. When they opened the number of full time employees were substantially less and all other employees were brought on through temporary service organizations.

As a result of the difficulty in placement we reduced operations to a single session and focused on identifying single site employment opportunities. Participation also slowed with registration in November and December of 1994 limited to seven participants.

Starting in January a new group of trainees entered and a new instructor was employed. Attention has now been directed to developing new opportunities for employment with a push toward the new US Postal Service jobs and preparing for a new employer (Quadgraphics) planning to expand to the area.

### FACILITIES

The Martinsburg Center is located centrally in the downtown area and is available by public transportation. The Center houses a 20 station LAN. The physical setup is similar to that of the local USPS remote bar coding site. Trainees work at self contained individual cubicals at their own pace, except when they are brought together for group instruction.

### PERFORMANCE

Program status of trainees is defined by the outcome. Trainees are successful if they achieve employment. Terminations are of two types, those who are terminated by program staff because they have violated the provisions of the training contract (excessive absences or lateness) and those who have been closed for administrative reasons (eg. no longer eligible for AFDC, moved, failure to meet agency requirements). It should be noted that BOKONON allows trainees who are no longer eligible for AFDC to remain in the program until they can be placed and several trainees have availed themselves of this opportunity. No costs are recovered for trainees who have lost their eligibility. A final outcome is that of employment failure.

Termination is based on unexcused absenteeism and tardiness. Trainees are required (by contract) to call in and provide a legitimate excuse. Failure to call or an unacceptable

excuse is counted against the limit of three. After the first failure a telephone follow-up is initiated and the trainee is warned and counseled prior to termination. Termination is effected by notifying the W&T unit. Trainees who are terminated may be allowed to return at the recommendation of the W&T staff.

During the period 6/93-12/94 124 trainees had been registered from the three counties with the following results:

<u>Status</u>	<u>Number</u>
Cumulative Enrolled	124
Placed in Employment	
Training Related	59
Non-Training Related	1
Other Terminations	
Terminated with cause	39
Administrative	8
Referred to other training	10
In Training	7

"Administrative" terminations refer to cases closed through loss of eligibility or other W&T or Dept. administrative requirement.

In preparation for this report we attempted to contact those who had been employed. We were able to determine status of 37 of the 60 who were placed in employment. Thirty-six of the Thirty-seven were still employed, one left employment to get married.

Of the twenty-six who were placed at AMI, six were still employed there, five were employed at other jobs, one moved and the others were unreachable.

Thirty-nine of the enrollees either dropped out or were terminated at Bokonon's request. Of the known reasons for termination, ten had transportation difficulties, six had medical reasons, but only one terminated because of child care. We were unable to ascertain the reasons for sixteen of those that terminated.

Sixteen of the thirty-nine who terminated did so just after intake. Another fifteen ended their contact with the program after achieving the first skill benchmark (20WPM). These apparently did not think that the programs opportunities were in their interest.

Eight of the terminations were administrative decisions of W&T or the Department. Most of these were cases which were closed because of increased family income or no children in the case.

Most of the ten referrals to other programs were the decision of the enrollee, although several were the result of recommendations of BOKONON.

We are presently examining the data to determine length of stay in the program and also expect to obtain information on the length of time of enrollees most recent stay on welfare.

### COSTS

Contractual costs per successful placement at the Martinsburg Center is \$3010, however, since some trainees have left without indicating that they had obtained employment or because some have left for employment at a wage rate below that contracted for or because some have left for NTR employment the average placement has been made at a price of \$2,203, when the cost of terminations are factored the average cost per placement is \$2,954.

The following table provides the average cost for each outcome:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>AVERAGE COST</u>
Terminations	1127
Admin Terminations	810
Other Training Programs	1023
Employed	2203
Employ + Terminations	2954

Average costs, even when the cost of terminations factored still remain below the contracted cost.

Considering even these fragmentary results in light of the savings to the state and federal government, the value of the program is evident. If we can assume that long stays on

welfare condition even longer stays, the potential cost savings projected over five years for each placement is extensive. Consider the following:

Estimated Average Annual AFDC Cash Grant	3336
Estimated Average Annual Medicaid Cost Per Case	3600
Estimated Average annual Food Stamp Saving	2400
Estimated Annual State Sales and Other Tax Income	<u>750</u>
Estimated Annual Cost Savings per Placement	10860

Even when considering the State's low FFP rate the return on the investment, through cost saving from retirement of eligibility and increases in taxes, is obtained in less than one year. Projections over a five year period suggest savings of the magnitude of \$20 for each dollar invested.

# **APPENDIX A: PERFORMANCE AND COSTS**

TRAINEE STATUS: DECEMBER 1994

TRAINEES WHO COMPLETED AND WERE EMPLOYED

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>START DATE</u>	<u>PROGRAM STATUS</u>	<u>DEC.94 /MAR.95</u>
1.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/OP
2.	3010	APR '94	EMPLOYED	AMI/TRAN
3.	2410	OCT '94	COMPLETED	OP(EN)
4.	2410	FEB15'94	EMPLOYED	OP(EN)
5.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/TRAN
6.	3010	NOV 8'93	EMPLOYED	Dr off/CL
7.	2410	JUN '94	EMPLOYED	AMI/wk ?
8.	3010	NOV 8'93	EMPLOYED	WORK/OP
9.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/TRAN
10.	2410	APR '93	EMPLOYED	AMI/JS/OP
11.	2410	JUL14'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/mv/CL
12.	2410	JUL14'93	EMPLOYED	WRK/TRAN
13.	3010	JUL26'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/?
14.	2410	JUN '94	COMPLETED	WK/TRAN
15.	2410	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/OP
16.	2410	Aug 2'93	EMPLOYED	AM/OP
17.	3010		EMPLOYED	OP(EN)
18.	2410	AUG16'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/OP
19.	3010	OCT26'93	EMPLOYED	MAR/CL
20.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/TRAN
21.	3010	AUG23'93	EMPLOYED	WORK/OP
22.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/TRAN
23.	3010		EMPLOYED	OP(EN)
24.	2410	FEB 2'94	COMPLETE	MV/wk/CL
25.	3010	NOV17'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/WK/TR
26.	2410	JUL19'93	EMPLOYED	WORK/OP
27.	2410	MAY '94	EMPLOYED	AMI/TRAN
28.	2410	JUL14'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/CL
29.	3010	AUG 2'93	EMPLOYED	Dr Off/CL
30.	2410	AUG10'93	EMPLOYED	AB&C/?
31.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/CL
32.	2410	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	WORK/CL
33.	3010	FEB 3'94	EMPLOYED	WK/CES/CL
34.	3010		EMPLOYED	OP(EN)
35.	3010	JUL '94	EMPLOYED	AB&C/CL
36.	3010	FEB 7'94	EMPLOYED	AMI/CL
37.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/CL
38.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/OP
39.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	DHHS/CL
40.	3010	APR '94	EMPLOYED	WK/TRAN
41.	2410	JUL19'93	EMPLOYED	WK/CL
42.	2410	SEP30'93	EMPLOYED	AB&C/CL
43.	3010	JUN 6'93	EMPLOYED	AB&C/CL
44.	3010	JUL14'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/CL
45.	3010	MAR 1'93	EMPLOYED	AMI/TRAN

**TRAINEES WHO LEFT FOR EMPLOYMENT BEFORE PROGRAM COMPLETION**

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>SSN</u>	<u>DATE START</u>	<u>PROGRAM STATUS</u>	<u>DEC.94 /MARCH95</u>
46.	210	Jun '93	INTAKE	AMI/CL
47.	210	JUN 6'93	INTAKE	CL
48.	210	APR '94	INTAKE	MVD/WK/CL
49.	210	JUN 6'93	INTAKE	WK/TRAN
50.	210	JUN '94	INTAKE	Win Star/CL
51.	210	JUL '94	INTAKE	MED/WK/TRAN
52.	210	Jun '93	INTAKE	WORKING/OP
53.	560	FEB 2'94	20WPM	AMI/CL
54.	560	NOV 3'93	20WPM	WK/CL
55.	560	FEB 2'94	20WPM	AMI/OP
56.	560	AUG 9'93	20WPM	WK/OP
57.	910	MAY '94	30WPM	WK/(NTR)/OP
58.	910	JUN 6'93	30WPM	Royce/WK/CL
59	1310	SEP '94	40WPM	WORKING/CL
60.	1310	JUN 6'93	40WPM	AMI/CL

After this report was completed we obtained information on the status at the end of March 1995, of those who had entered employment. This data has been entered in the preceding tables in the final column according to the following key:

- CL = Closed Case
- OP = Open Case
- TRAN = Transitional Services
- ? = unknown

TRAINEE STATUS: DECEMBER 1994 (continued)

TRAINEES TERMINATED BY PROGRAM

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>DATE START</u>	<u>PROGRAM STATUS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
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REASON FOR LACK OF ATTENDANCE: UNKNOWN

61.	210	FEB 1'94	INTAKE	?
62.	210	NOV30'93	INTAKE	?
63.	210	NOV '94	INTAKE	?
64.	210	NOV '94	INTAKE	?
65.	210	SEP20'93	INTAKE	?
66.	210	JUN '94	INTAKE	?
67.	560	NOV '94	20WPM	?
68.	560	APR '94	20WPM	?
69.	560	APR '94	20WPM	?
70.	910	JUN 6'93	30WPM	?
71.	910	NOV 8'93	30WPM	?
72.	910	NOV 8'93	30WPM	?
73.	910	MAR14'94	30WPM	?
74.	1310	JUN 6'93	40WPM	?
75.	1660	SEP 3'93	6000KS	?
76.	1660	DEC 6'93	6000KS	?

REASON FOR LACK OF ATTENDANCE: TRANSPORTATION

77.	210	DEC 3'93	INTAKE	TRANS
78.	560	JUN 6'93	20WPM	TRANS
79.	560	JUN 6'93	20WPM	TRANS
80.	560	NOV 3'93	20WPM	TRANS
81.	560	NOV29'93	20WPM	TRANS
82.	560	SEP 3'93	20WPM	TRANS
83.	560	MAY '94	20WPM	TRANS
84.	560	JUN 6'93	20WPM	TRANS
85.	910	SEP 8'93	30WPM	TRANS
86.	1310	JUN 6'93	40WPM	TRANS

REASON FOR LACK OF ATTENDANCE: VOLUNTEER STATUS

87.	210	JUN 6'93	INTAKE	VOLUNTEER
88.	210	SEP13'93	INTAKE	VOLUNTEER

**TRAINEES REFERRED TO OTHER PROGRAMS**

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>DATE START</u>	<u>PROGRAM STATUS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
108.	210	AUG '94	INTAKE	Secur Train
109.	210	JUN 6'93	INTAKE	Jms Rumsey
110.	210	SEP 8'93	INTAKE	GED
111.	560	FEB15'94	20WPM	JOB RDY
112.	910	JUN 6'93	30WPM	B..JOB RDY
113.	910	JUN 6'93	30WPM	B..JOB RDY
114.	910	APR '94	30WPM	VTC
115.	2410	AUG26'93	COMPLETED	At VTC
116.	2410	JUN22'93	COMPLETED	AY VTC
117.	2410	JUN 6'93	COMPLETED	CWEP

**IN ATTENDANCE AT BOKONON SYSTEMS**

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>DATE START</u>	<u>PROGRAM STATUS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
118.	210	JUN 6'93	INTAKE	in program
119.	210	SEP '94	INTAKE	in program
120.	210	MAY '94	INTAKE	in program
121.	560		20WPM	in program
122.	910	OCT13'93	30WPM	Bk in prog
123.	1310	SEP '94	40WPM	END3/95
124.	1660	OCT '94	6000KS	