



Three-Year Accreditation

CARF
Survey Report
for
Futures Explored, Inc.

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Three-Year Accreditation

Organization

Futures Explored, Inc.
3547 Wilkinson Lane
Lafayette, CA 94549

Organizational Leadership

Will Sanford II, Executive Director
Dean Evans, IT Director
Robert L. Bass, Board President

Survey Dates

March 13-15, 2013

Survey Team

Martin D. Schwartz, Administrative Surveyor
Christine Camene, Program Surveyor

Programs/Services Surveyed

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development
Supported Education

Governance Standards Applied

Previous Survey

February 17-19, 2010
Three-Year Accreditation

Survey Outcome

Three-Year Accreditation
Expiration: April 2016

SURVEY SUMMARY

Futures Explored, Inc., has strengths in many areas.

- The organization is led by an experienced and respected team that values its employees and the participants. The management staff is enthusiastic, well qualified, and highly committed to providing optimal services.
- Futures Explored appears to have maintained financial stability despite major cutbacks in state funding. It benefits from strong leadership and sound financial management and decision making. The executive director is highly commended for exercising astute financial management that has enabled the organization to meet its mission while faced with considerable financial challenges.
- Families report high levels of satisfaction with staff members and the services offered by the organization, commenting that the participant plans are based on individual needs and that staff members assist with problem solving and provide guidance to the participants in exercising self-advocacy. The participants state that the staff members provide them with a support system.
- The active and dedicated board members are recognized for their strong commitment to the mission of Futures Explored and the quality of its programs.
- The organization's staff members are commended for their comprehensive and effective support of the self-advocacy efforts undertaken by the participants.
- Futures Explored enjoys an excellent reputation among the participants, referral sources, and other stakeholders, all of whom express a noteworthy degree of satisfaction with its services and high praise for staff member performance and the organization's professionalism.
- The executive director is complimented for developing and instituting a peer evaluation system regarding his performance, maintaining strong collaborative ties with other organizations throughout the region, and effectively lobbying with state legislators.
- Futures Explored does an excellent job of networking with community businesses and cultivating affiliations that increase its visibility in the community and help create employment opportunities for the participants. Connections are also created as a result of staff members' personal relationships outside work.
- The organization is visionary and proactive, continuing to create new programs and reinstate former successful programs such as the Joey Travolta Film Camp, despite cutbacks in government funding. The Joey Travolta Film Camp inspires the participants to live their dreams through instruction, education, production, and interaction via film technology.
- The leadership readily moves forward when approached with opportunities to create programs that meet the needs and interests of the participants.
- The organization's human resource functions are well organized. Personnel file content is thorough and well documented in all sections.
- Futures Explored is commended for developing the Nifty E-Waste program, which provides employment for the participants and serves as a source of potential revenue for the organization. The technological expertise of the IT director further enhances the program's success.

- The organization's highly dedicated staff members are empowered by the leadership to provide services in creative and innovative ways that meet each participant's needs.
- Futures Explored uses many tools and resources to collect extensive information regarding the participants prior to beginning services that is useful in developing their individual plans and tailoring services to complement their skills and desires.
- The organization has developed multiple group worksites at which the participant employees, many with significant disabilities, are paid at or above the minimum wage and provided the opportunity to work in a more supportive environment.
- The Community College Transition Program (CCTP) offered by Futures Explored provides highly needed supports, inside and outside the classroom, to public school students that are not offered through the public school system. CCTP staff members promote activities that encourage more active involvement in campus culture and the building of natural supports and relationships between the participants and their peers.

Futures Explored should seek improvement in the areas identified by the recommendations in the report. Consultation given does not indicate nonconformance to standards but is offered as a suggestion for further quality improvement.

On balance, Futures Explored demonstrates substantial conformance to the CARF standards. The organization is dedicated to providing quality services. It enhances and expands its services to meet the evolving needs of the participants and has developed innovative programs in the areas of public school transition, employment, and film technology to better meet their needs and interests. It is evident that the participants benefit from the programs and services provided. The highly dedicated staff members are empowered by the leadership to use creative approaches in providing services. The organization's board, leadership, and management team demonstrate effective decision making and sound financial management that maintain its vigor despite the challenges posed by funding cutbacks. The preparation of the executive director, management team, and staff members for this survey and their receptivity to the feedback offered throughout the survey instill confidence that the organization possesses the willingness and capacity to address the areas for improvement noted in this report.

Futures Explored, Inc., has earned a Three-Year Accreditation. The board, leadership, management team, and staff members are recognized for their efforts in pursuit of accreditation. They are encouraged to use their resources to address the opportunities for improvement noted in this report and to continue to use the CARF standards as guidelines for continuous quality improvement.

SECTION 1. ASPIRE TO EXCELLENCE®

A. Leadership

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations identify leadership that embraces the values of accountability and responsibility to the individual organization's stated mission. The leadership demonstrates corporate social responsibility.

Key Areas Addressed

- Leadership structure
 - Leadership guidance
 - Commitment to diversity
 - Corporate responsibility
 - Corporate compliance
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

B. Governance

Principle Statement

The governing board should provide effective and ethical governance leadership on behalf of its owners'/stakeholders' interest to ensure that the organization focuses on its purpose and outcomes for persons served, resulting in the organization's long-term success and stability. The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization is managed effectively, efficiently, and ethically by the organization's executive leadership through defined governance accountability mechanisms. These mechanisms include, but are not limited to, an adopted governance framework defined by written governance policies and demonstrated practices; active and timely review of organizational performance and that of the executive leadership; and the demarcation of duties between the board and executive leadership to ensure that organizational strategies, plans, decisions, and actions are delegated to the resource that would best advance the interests and performance of the organization over the long term and manage the organization's inherent risks. The board has additional responsibilities under the domain of public trust, and as such, it understands its corporate responsibility to the organization's employees, providers, suppliers, and the communities it serves.

Key Areas Addressed

- Ethical, active, and accountable governance
 - Board composition, selection, orientation, development, assessment, and succession
 - Board leadership, organizational structure, meeting planning, and management
 - Linkage between governance and executive leadership
 - Corporate and executive leadership performance review and development
 - Executive compensation
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- It is suggested that the board, which is presently composed of eight members, be expanded within the range established in the bylaws to add directors with expertise in a variety of areas that could be beneficial to the organization.
-

C. Strategic Planning

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations establish a foundation for success through strategic planning focused on taking advantage of strengths and opportunities and addressing weaknesses and threats.

Key Areas Addressed

- Strategic planning considers stakeholder expectations and environmental impacts
 - Written strategic plan sets goals
 - Plan is implemented, shared, and kept relevant
-

Recommendations

C.2.a.(1) through C.2.a.(3)

C.2.c.(1) through C.2.d.

A written strategic plan should be developed with input from the participants, personnel, and other stakeholders. The plan should set goals and priorities and be implemented.

D. Input from Persons Served and Other Stakeholders

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations continually focus on the expectations of the persons served and other stakeholders. The standards in this subsection direct the organization's focus to soliciting, collecting, analyzing, and using input from all stakeholders to create services that meet or exceed the expectations of the persons served, the community, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Ongoing collection of information from a variety of sources
 - Analysis and integration into business practices
 - Leadership response to information collected
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

E. Legal Requirements

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations comply with all legal and regulatory requirements.

Key Areas Addressed

- Compliance with all legal/regulatory requirements
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

F. Financial Planning and Management

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations strive to be financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports their mission, values, and annual performance objectives. Fiscal practices adhere to established accounting principles and business practices. Fiscal management covers daily operational cost management and incorporates plans for long-term solvency.

Key Areas Addressed

- Budget(s) prepared, shared, and reflective of strategic planning
 - Financial results reported/compared to budgeted performance
 - Organization review
 - Fiscal policies and procedures
 - Review of service billing records and fee structure
 - Financial review/audit
 - Safeguarding funds of persons served
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- The executive director has done a commendable job of serving as the interim business manager, primarily as a cost-saving measure for the organization. Given the many other responsibilities inherent in his leadership position, it is suggested that the business manager position be filled as soon as possible.
-

G. Risk Management

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations engage in a coordinated set of activities designed to control threats to their people, property, income, goodwill, and ability to accomplish goals.

Key Areas Addressed

- Identification of loss exposures
 - Development of risk management plan
 - Adequate insurance coverage
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

H. Health and Safety

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations maintain healthy, safe, and clean environments that support quality services and minimize risk of harm to persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Inspections
 - Emergency procedures
 - Access to emergency first aid
 - Competency of personnel in safety procedures
 - Reporting/reviewing critical incidents
 - Infection control
-

Recommendations

H.8.a. through H.8.d.

H.8.e.(9)

H.8.e.(10)

H.8.e.(16) through H.8.e.(18)

Futures Explored should expand its written procedures regarding critical incidents to include prevention; reporting; remedial action; timely debriefings conducted following critical incidents; and incidents of wandering, elopement, suicide or attempted suicide, sexual assault, and other sentinel events, if appropriate.

Consultation

- It is suggested that any safety equipment or other loose items within the vehicles owned by the organization be firmly secured to avoid a hazardous situation in the event of a quick stop or an accident.
-

I. Human Resources

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate that they value their human resources. It should be evident that personnel are involved and engaged in the success of the organization and the persons they serve.

Key Areas Addressed

- Adequate staffing
 - Verification of background/credentials
 - Recruitment/retention efforts
 - Personnel skills/characteristics
 - Annual review of job descriptions/performance
 - Policies regarding students/volunteers, if applicable
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

J. Technology

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations plan for the use of technology to support and advance effective and efficient service and business practices.

Key Areas Addressed

- Written technology and system plan
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

K. Rights of Persons Served

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations protect and promote the rights of all persons served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and ongoing interactions with the persons served.

Key Areas Addressed

- Communication of rights
 - Policies that promote rights
 - Complaint, grievance, and appeals policy
 - Annual review of complaints
-

Recommendations

K.4.a.(5)

The policy and written procedure by which participants may formally complain to the organization should be expanded to specify procedures for written notification regarding the actions to be taken to address the complaint. It is suggested that the procedural language regarding the availability of external review be clarified as it pertains to the complainant and the organization.

L. Accessibility

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations promote accessibility and the removal of barriers for the persons served and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Written accessibility plan(s)
 - Status report regarding removal of identified barriers
 - Requests for reasonable accommodations
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

M. Performance Measurement and Management

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations are committed to continually improving their organizations and service delivery to the persons served. Data are collected and information is used to manage and improve service delivery.

Key Areas Addressed

- Information collection, use, and management
 - Setting and measuring performance indicators
-

Recommendations

M.1.

Futures Explored should have a written description of its performance measurement and management system.

M.2.a. through M.2.d.

It is recommended that the organization demonstrate how its data collection system addresses reliability, validity, completeness, and accuracy.

M.7.b.(1)

M.7.b.(2)

The organization should measure service delivery performance indicators for each service seeking accreditation in effectiveness and efficiency. Efficiency indicators might relate to the organization's budget, including service hours delivered, units of service, and numbers of participants.

Effectiveness indicators could relate to demonstrations that the service is making a difference in participants' lives, including the average number of goals achieved per participant within a given time frame or the number of participants achieving their primary vocational goal.

M.8.a. through M.8.d.

For each service delivery indicator, Futures Explored should determine to whom the indicator will be applied; the person(s) responsible for collecting the data; the source from which data will be collected; and a performance goal based on an industry benchmark, the organization's performance history, or a target established by the organization or other stakeholder.

N. Performance Improvement

Principle Statement

The dynamic nature of continuous improvement in a CARF-accredited organization sets it apart from other organizations providing similar services. CARF-accredited organizations share and provide the persons served and other interested stakeholders with ongoing information about their actual performance as a business entity and their ability to achieve optimal outcomes for the persons served through their programs and services.

Key Areas Addressed

- Proactive performance improvement
- Performance information shared with all stakeholders

Recommendations

N.1.b.(2)(a)

N.1.b.(2)(b)

The written analysis that analyzes performance indicators in relation to performance goals should include service delivery of each program seeking accreditation, including effectiveness and efficiency.

SECTION 2. QUALITY INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

A. Program/Service Structure

Principle Statement

A fundamental responsibility of the organization is to provide a comprehensive program structure. The staffing is designed to maximize opportunities for the persons served to obtain and participate in the services provided.

Key Areas Addressed

- Services are person centered and individualized
 - Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes
 - Documented scope of services shared with stakeholders
 - Service delivery based on accepted field practices
 - Communication for effective service delivery
 - Entrance/exit/transition criteria
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

B. Individual-Centered Service Planning, Design, and Delivery

Principle Statement

Improvement of the quality of an individual's services/supports requires a focus on the person and/or family served and their identified strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences. The organization's services are designed around the identified needs and desires of the persons served, are responsive to their expectations, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice.

The person served participates in decision making, directing, and planning that affects his or her life. Efforts to include the person served in the direction or delivery of those services/ supports are evident. The service environment reflects identified cultural needs, practices, and diversity. The person served is given information about the purposes of the organization.

Key Areas Addressed

- Services are person-centered and individualized
 - Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- For clarification and greater ease of reference, Futures Explored might consider adding a column in the participant plan adjacent to service plan goals and objectives in which the party or parties responsible for implementation could be specified.
 - Although the risk assessment document completed with participants is clear and understandable and identifies potential risks, the participants sign a separate liability waiver to indicate their agreement to accept risks when taking part in programs offered by Futures Explored. Potential risks are outlined in the planning meeting documentation. The organization might consider adding a statement to its risk assessment document that clearly specifies the party or parties responsible for addressing each potential risk along with a signed/dated statement validating the acceptance of risks.
-

D. Employment Services Principle Standards

Principle Statement

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment services provides individualized services and supports to achieve identified employment outcomes. The array of services and supports may include:

- Identification of employment opportunities and resources in the local job market.
- Development of viable work skills that match workforce needs within the geographic area.
- Development of realistic employment goals.
- Establishment of service plans to achieve employment outcomes.
- Identification of resources and supports to achieve and maintain employment.
- Coordination of and referral to employment-related services and supports.

The organization maintains its strategic positioning in the employment sector of the community by designing and continually improving its services based on input from the persons served and from employers in the local job market, and managing results of the organization's outcomes management system. The provision of quality employment services requires a continuous focus on the persons served and the personnel needs of employers in the organization's local job market.

Key Areas Addressed

- Goals of the persons served
- Personnel needs of local employers
- Community resources available
- Economic trends in the local employment sector

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

F. Community Services Principle Standards

Key Areas Addressed

- Access to community resources and services
 - Enhanced quality of life
 - Community inclusion
 - Community participation
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

SECTION 3. EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Principle Statement

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment and community services assists the persons served through an individualized person-centered process to obtain access to the services, supports, and resources of their choice to achieve their desired outcomes. This may be accomplished by direct service provision, linkages to existing generic opportunities and natural supports in the community, or any combination of these. The persons served are included in their communities to the degree they desire.

The organization provides the persons served with information so that they may make informed choices and decisions. Although we use the phrase *person served*, this may also include *family served*, as appropriate to the service and the individual.

The services and supports are arranged and changed as necessary to meet the identified desires of the persons served. Service designs address identified individual, family, socioeconomic, and cultural preferences.

Depending on the program's scope of services, expected results from these services/supports may include:

- Increased inclusion in community activities.
- Increased or maintained ability to perform activities of daily living.
- Increased self-direction, self-determination, self-reliance, and self-esteem.
- Increased independence.
- Increased employment options.

- Employment obtained and maintained.
- Competitive employment.
- Economic self-sufficiency.

C. Community Employment Services

Principle Statement

Community employment services assist persons to obtain successful community employment opportunities that are responsive to their choices and preferences. Through a strengths-based approach the program provides person-directed services/supports to individuals to choose, achieve, and maintain employment in integrated community employment settings.

Work is a fundamental part of adult life. Individually tailored job development, training, and support recognize each person's employability and potential contribution to the labor market. Persons are supported as needed through an individualized person-centered model of services to choose and obtain a successful employment opportunity consistent with their preferences, keep the employment, and find new employment if necessary or for purposes of career advancement.

Such services may be described as individual placements, contracted temporary personnel services, competitive employment, supported employment, transitional employment, mobile work crews, contracted work groups, enclaves, community-based NISH contracts, and other business-based work groups in community-integrated designs. In Canada employment in the form of bona fide volunteer placements is possible.

Individuals may be paid by community employers or by the organization. Employment is in the community.

Job Development

Successful job development concurrently uses assessment information about the strengths and interests of the person seeking employment to target the types of jobs available from potential employers in the local labor market. Typical job development activities include reviewing local employment opportunities and developing potential employers/customers through direct and indirect promotional strategies. Job development may include facilitating a hiring agreement between an employer and a person seeking employment. Some persons seeking employment may want assistance at only a basic, informational level such as self-directed job search.

Employment Supports

Employment support services are activities that are employment-related to promote successful training of a person to a new job, job adjustment, retention, and advancement. These services are based on the individual employee with a focus on achieving long-term retention of the person in the job.

The level of employment support services is individualized to each employee and the complexity of the job.

Often supports are intensive for the initial orientation and training of an employee with the intent of leading to natural supports and/or reduced external job coaching. However, some persons may not require any employment supports at the job site; others may require intensive initial training with a quick decrease in supports, while some will be most successful when long-term supports are provided.

Supports can include assisting the employee with understanding the job culture, industry practices, and work behaviors expected by the employer. It may also include helping the employer and coworkers to understand the support strategies and accommodations needed by the worker.

Supports are a critical element of the long-term effectiveness of community employment. Support services address issues such as assistance in training a person to complete new tasks, changes in work schedule or work promotion, a decrease in productivity of the person served, adjusting to new supervisors, and managing changes in nonwork environments or other critical life activities that may affect work performance. Routine follow-up with the employer and the employee is crucial to continued job success.

Key Areas Addressed

- Integrated employment choice
- Integrated employment obtainment
- Pays wages at or above minimum wage
- Provides a benefits package
- Employment provided in regular business settings
- Integrated employment retention
- Provides career advancement resources
- Business plan is used to design service

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

X. Supported Education Services

Principle Statement

Supported education reflects the assumption that education is a community resource to which all should have access. Society today has a greater emphasis on lifelong learning and development for persons to maintain employment and career development. Often there are cycles of education and career transition and development that persons pass through during their lifetime. The supported

education program provides resources that help persons prepare for transitions and supports that allow them to be successful during their continued education, and it creates collaborations with other community partners to meet the needs of the persons served in educational settings.

Supported education expresses the belief that individuals can attend classes, learn, and improve their options. Practices promote participation in education programs for all who express interest. Supported education occurs in the community in settings such as an academic campus, vocational/trade school, college, and other post-secondary educational settings, and may include online learning venues. The purpose of supported education is to provide supports to individuals who are enrolled or want to enroll in an education program to achieve their learning goals. These goals may lead to persons being gainfully employed in the job or career of their choice.

Supported education provides individualized services and supports. Supported education services address transitional academic needs, develop strategies for educational success, and secure resources and accommodations for students to access activities of post-secondary education. Program staff work with students to create a foundation of skills and to secure supports necessary to achieve success.

Key Areas Addressed

- Supports enable participation in community education
- Individualized, flexible supports
- Person-centered planning to achieve educational goals
- Person integrated into community educational environment
- Outreach promotes understanding of supported education services

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

PROGRAMS/SERVICES BY LOCATION

Futures Explored, Inc.

3547 Wilkinson Lane
Lafayette, CA 94549

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development
Supported Education

Governance Standards Applied

Vocational Training and Employment

428 J Street, Suite 550
Sacramento, CA 95814

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development
Supported Education