

Two Birds, One Stone

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funded by the U.S. Dept of Labor, in the latter part of 2007. When she enrolled, she was unable to speak any English, much less read or write in English. Maria was provided with a tutor to begin one-on-one ESL courses to elevate her ability to speak, read, and write English and also elevate her self confidence. She also wanted to learn basic computer skills to complement her newly learned English. Again, Telamon Corporation recruited a computer literacy tutor to administer basic computer courses. Three years have passed and Maria is fluent in English and has acquired enough computer skills to begin an entry level administrative position. Although Maria feels more confident speaking English in public and comfortable enough to maneuver a computer, she lacked sufficient employment history due to her extensive farmworker background. When we presented the Bay Aging opportunity to Maria, she was excited to take on the task. "I think this will be a good experience for me to begin my quest in finding better employment," stated Maria.

Another NFJP customer, Miguel Zamora, entered the program with a different goal in mind. Miguel is currently enrolled at Rappahannock Community College pursuing an Industrial Electricity & Electronics degree. Miguel has been a very active participant of the program and occasionally visits the office to socialize and express his appreciation for the program's willingness to assist him with reaching his goal. When we proposed the Bay Aging project to Miguel, he was very willing to participate and involve himself in the community. "I think this will be a good opportunity to inform other Hispanic people of other resources available to them in this community," stated Miguel.

These work experiences, paid by Bay Aging, have been quite beneficial to both Telamon Corporation and Bay Aging. Thanks in part to the Telamon Corporation participants, Bay Aging will now have a manner in which to reach out to the Hispanic population and promote its numerous services. In addition, thanks in part to Bay Aging, two of our program's participants will not only possess a work reference, but also the experience and confidence to achieve their individual goals.

Message from the State Director Sharon Saldarriaga

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Unfortunately, our *iConexiones!* Project, which provided limited English proficient speakers in the Richmond Metro Area with access to workforce development services, has ceased operation due to lack of funding. Efforts will continue to seek funds to operate this much needed program.

On another note, it appears that immigration hysteria has once again been stirred up as a Northern Virginia county supervisor has proposed a statewide bill, The Virginia Rule of Law Act, which targets undocumented immigrants. While comprehensive immigration reform should be addressed, such legislation as proposed in this Act would appear to do more harm than good.



Richard Ruffin setting up blower door test at 238 Ross St in Danville

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Message from the State Director Sharon Saldarriaga

I am pleased to report that Department of Labor funding was recently awarded, enabling us to continue the National Farmworker Jobs Program, which provides training, employment, and support services to farmworkers in the Commonwealth. We are in the process of expanding our services to the Shenandoah Valley and we are very excited to be opening a new office within the Harrisonburg One-Stop Career Center.

We recently received Community Development Block Grant funds from the City of Danville to continue Foreclosure Prevention counseling for Pittsylvania County and City of Danville residents. We also received additional funds from the City of Danville to rehab another house. Continued on page 6

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Two Birds, One Stone

Alfonso J. Montalvo/Sara Lopez
 Regional Mgr/Program Office Assist

Telamon Corporation in Montross, Virginia recently partnered with Bay Aging, a provider of programs and services for people of all ages. Bay Aging is extremely diverse in the programs that it offers through four major divisions: Community Living, Bay Transit, Bay Family Housing, and Community Action Partnership. Bay Aging works at the grassroots level to bring the services that are needed for people of all ages to live healthier lives and to remain as independent as possible. Lorraine Justice, Community Action Planner at Bay Aging, brought to our attention the issue of her agency not being able to attract more Hispanic clients who could benefit from the many programs her agency offers. "In the last program year, I believe we had only two Hispanic customers take advantage of our programs," stated Lorraine. That was all it took to begin brainstorming and developing the idea of partnering with each other. In the process, we simultaneously pinpointed that Bay Aging had a deficit in Spanish language promotional materials

and that Telamon Corporation had bilingual participants that needed work experience in order to enhance their skills and employment background.

To address this issue, we proudly joined forces with Bay Aging and agreed to enter two of our current National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) participants into Bay Aging's Youth Program. Maria Alvarez-Ochoa and Miguel Zamora will be involved in translating various Bay Aging promotional materials from English to Spanish, which will achieve the agency's goal of extending outreach throughout the Hispanic community. They also will be presenting basic Spanish courses to various local agencies that interact with predominately Spanish-speaking patrons, thereby providing more communication skills to those who need to interact with this population. Our joint efforts will assist these local agencies to attract and reach out to an extended clientele and be able to promote and provide their services to every demographic within the community. "I am very excited about our newfound partnership with Telamon Corporation and I hope to work alongside your program for many more projects," stated Lorraine. Maria Alvarez-Ochoa enrolled into our NFJP program,



**Congratulations to Carolyn Walker—
25 Years with Telamon!**

What is the exact date you started at Telamon?

February 11, 1985

What was your position at that time?

Field Service Representative

What is your most memorable experience?

A house was completed through the Housing Preservation Grant that did not have a kitchen; the home was rehabbed and a kitchen was added. It was a family of three-one being handicapped (bed ridden), one in a wheel chair, and the mother. She thanked us and we used that home in an article for the South Hill Enterprise. As a result the public responded by sending checks to help the program

houses being built at the Park View Senior High School site by students. After the completion of the homes, they were moved to the site and two families received homes that originally were structurally unsound. The houses had one thing that the clients never had—indoor plumbing. The houses consisted of two bedrooms, living room, bath and kitchen.

Please briefly describe what your position today is and what your duties include.

My position is to coordinate the implementation of housing programs operated out of the South Hill office. Listed are the grants and funds: American Recovery Reinvestment Act, \$1,246,464; Department of Social Services/Liheap, \$207,196; Department of Energy/Weatherization, \$45,901; State of Virginia/Emergency Home Repair Grant, \$9,102. We received \$1,246,464 of the Stimulus funds that the President deemed necessary to reduce energy costs. It has been a harrowing experience ramping up for this new grant. We were given \$100,000 to purchase needed equipment at the onset of this grant and we purchased two new vehicles, infrared cameras, which cost a total of about \$20,000, and other equip-

ment necessary to make sure that the ARRA program runs smoothly. We hired five new full-time employees with benefits. The new grant implemented a lot of new changes in this office but, we are rolling with each new punch that comes our way. In a normal year, we were only weatherizing around eighty homes and now we are weatherizing approximately 200 homes. The ARRA funds benefit Telamon Corporation by enabling us to hire additional employees and they benefit the communities we serve through the energy savings realized by more low income families.

Tell us something about your personal life – what you like to do away from work, your family, etc.

I work with my church in many capacities, I shop, and I read. My husband and I have two sons and two grandchildren.

Staff Notes

Gretna staff attended class in Danville to become Lead Renovators. The class, by Virginia Commonwealth University Instructor, Leonard Vance, was hosted by the City of Danville Housing and Community Development Division. Robin Roark and Lynita Falls successfully completed the training and certification in May 2010.

We welcome Alfonso Montalvo as the new Regional Manager in our Montross, VA office.



**Yellow Tag Construction
Specials**

The housing market is challenging right now, as we all know. Buyers expect and can get more for their money, which makes it tough to compete, even in the affordable housing market. In June, the Virginia Deputy State Director of Housing, Mayra Nickerson, learned that the Tuesday Morning stores, where she had already seen greatly reduced prices on kitchen and bathroom faucets, bathroom lights, and vessel sinks, were marking down all previously reduced merchandise another 50 percent. After some strategic shopping, she was able to purchase approximately \$5,000 worth of beautiful bath and kitchen fixtures for the Telamon Gretna office's rehab and new construction projects for just over \$1,000 after taxes. Yipee!



Among the many upscale bargain treasures guaranteed to provide some "wow factor" is this etched vessel sink from Arizona Glass Crafters (MSRP \$900). We paid \$40 each and bought two.



**EarthCraft Excavation Starts in
Dry Fork**

Lynita Falls
Housing Counselor

As the long hot days of summer continue in Southside, the loader pulls in on W. I. Powell Road in Dry Fork. Excavation starts on the first phase of the eight lots in the W. I. Powell Affordable Housing Program, funded in part by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. Careful planning took place before the excavation to protect and preserve native trees on each lot. Dry Fork native, Kenny Byrant, quickly clears away some of the trees and the invasive plants of the briars and poison ivy located on Lots 18, 19, 20, and 21. Below the surface is rich soil that will be the site of the first four homes to

be built under our W. I. Powell project. Each lot has a quarter of the lot remaining in trees as the preservation area and nice established trees throughout the lot. The trees will serve as good shade and an energy saver for the future homebuyers. The removed trees and stumps were chipped by the excavator and left as a pile of mulch for later use on the project.

In the W. I. Powell project, Telamon will be constructing eight EarthCraft™ certified homes. EarthCraft™ certified housing is the start to healthy, comfortable homes that reduce utility bills and protect our environment. These homes will also be Energy Star qualified and have Universal Design techniques for easy accessibility. Staff are finalizing the work write-ups and plan to start construction in the next 60 days. Green building is a new concept to the Gretna office. We are excited and look forward to the new challenges ahead in this project.

