



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **WCF AND COVENANT HOUSE FLORIDA TEAM UP TO FIND JOBS FOR HOMELESS YOUTH**

Orlando, FL – A bed and a hot meal are critical but homeless youth need jobs to restore their dignity and lead them on a path to self-sufficiency. Workforce Central Florida and Covenant House Florida are coaching 100 homeless youth in job skills, linking them to Work Experience Internships and educational programs, while helping them explore their career options.

WCF's **Project ConNEXTion** has expanded to include instruction at Covenant House Orlando's shelter, which will grow from the current 22 residents to another six males and six females, who will live in two new Dove residential areas geared specifically for job training. **Project ConNEXTion** is a year-round program that educates youth ages 16-21 and develops their job skills and work experience.

The youth will learn how to write a resume, practice mock job interviews and develop leadership skills during the program, which runs through Sept. 30, 2014. They can obtain a high school diploma or GED, acquire industry-recognized certifications or find out how to enroll in college or the military. About 90 percent of the participants will have the chance to gain real-world work experience through eight-week internships that pay \$8.25 an hour. **Project ConNEXTion** is funded through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

"Our ultimate goal is to educate youth and provide jobs that will lead to self-sufficiency and independent living," said Kenneth Gathers, WIA youth program manager.

Covenant House Florida serves runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth under 21 through street outreach, crisis shelters, transitional housing projects and aftercare.

Workforce Central Florida offers tools for residents of Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Sumter counties to find a job and advance their careers. On average, WCF provides nearly 8,800 job seekers each month with services such as an online job bank, career counseling, recruitment events, training, financial aid, career assessments and internships. WCF also assists an average of 1,300 employers each month with recruitment, retention and training. For more information, visit [www.workforcecentralflorida.com](http://www.workforcecentralflorida.com).