**Speed Networking session gives Job Corps**

**students close-up look at interviewing**

**process**

How long does it take a jobseeker to sell him or herself and firmly take charge of the

situation during the course of a job interview?

Can a meeting that results in an applicant successfully establishing a good rapport

with an eventual employer take place quickly – say in the span of 15 minutes or so?

Those questions and others were put to the test recently when students and educators

from the Hartford Job Corps Academy came to Central Office for the latest

installment of their “Speed Networking” course. The brainchild of Brandon McGee,

Business/Community Liaison at the school, the program is intended to acquaint young

people with the interviewing process.

“This is the third time we’ve tried Speed Networking,” McGee explains. “We organize

it around a luncheon and invite a group of soon-to-be graduating students, as well as

local business people, to sit down over sandwiches and cold drinks to chat for a few

minutes about how to look for a job. The idea is to have the two meet in a low-pressure

environment.”

Past sessions were held at the Hartford Job Corps Academy and the State Capitol.

A total of 25 students from the school sat down during the DOL session, which was

held in Conference Rooms A, B and C. Participating, as well, were representatives

from the Connecticut Department of Labor, The City of Hartford, Travelers, New

Alliance Bank, Liberty Bank, the Connecticut Business and Industry Association and

Hinkle Corp. (Lactate).

The hour-long session is based on the speed dating concept, which allows possible

couples to explore their compatibility during brief meetings.

“The goal is for the students and business to have a frank discussion about career

opportunities, any barriers they may have faced and the prospect of employment in

their prospective field, McGee said. “After 15 minutes with one employer, a group of

students will then move on to another business person.”

Among some of the questions students posed to their interviewers, McGee said, were:

▪ What really motivates you in your job?

▪ What are the keys to your career achievement?

▪ If you could do it all over again, would you choose the same career path?

“The DOL session was quite successful,” McGee said. “We definitely intend to

continue them in the future.”



Lunch and Learn: Hartford Job Corps students had a bite to eat and some food for

thought.



Brandon McGee explains the program.

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Students Maury Bruno (left) and Miguel Torres work with an employer.

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Lynn Murphy of WIA Administration helped advise the young people about the job

interviewing process.



Tammie Schwiekert, Hartford Job Corps Academy Director, and Chris Flammia, DOL

employee out-stationed at the Hartford Job Corps, advise a participant.

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Mark Stankiewicz of WIA Administration, who also offered job interviewing tips to

participants, wishes one of the students well.