



## **Courses to Employment: Sectoral Approaches to Community College-Nonprofit Partnerships**

**Initial Education and Employment Outcomes Findings for Students Enrolled In the Security Officer Training Academy (2009)**

**Community Career Development, East San Gabriel Valley Regional Occupational Program and Technical Center  
Los Angeles, CA**

**Prepared by Matt Helmer and Amy Blair  
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Workforce Strategies Initiative

**The Aspen Institute**

One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20036

202.736.1071 (phone) 202.467.0790 (fax)

[www.aspenwsi.org](http://www.aspenwsi.org)

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## Introduction

This document describes initial findings from research on the training and employment outcomes of 162 participants who enrolled in the Security Officer Training Academy in Los Angeles, CA in 2009. The Security Academy is operated through a partnership between East San Gabriel Valley Regional Occupational Program and Technical Center (ESGVROP/TC) and Community Career Development (CCD), a non-profit workforce development organization that operates a one-stop WorkSource Center in the Mid-Wilshire District in the City of Los Angeles. Participants in the Academy are recruited, screened and provided supportive services such as case management, career counseling, and assistance with transportation and licensing fees by CCD. Participants attend four weeks of full-time training at the campus in East San Gabriel Valley where they receive instruction in public relations, legal liability, weapons of mass destruction, procedures for and legalities around arrest, and search and seizure. In addition, participants are trained in how to use weapons, including batons and firearms, and earn CPR certification. They also earn a "Guard Card", making them legally eligible to work as a security guard in California. Though the Academy enrolls a diverse population, military veterans are targeted for this training class. For additional information about the community college and nonprofit partnerships in Los Angeles, please see AspenWSI profiles that are available for free download at <http://aspenwsi.org/CTEprofiles/LosAngeles.pdf>.<sup>1</sup>

## Courses to Employment

Community Career Development and its community college partners in Los Angeles have participated in a range of research and learning activities as part of the *Courses to Employment (CTE)* project. *CTE* is a three-year demonstration (2008-2010), funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and conducted by The Aspen Institute's Workforce Strategies Initiative (AspenWSI). *CTE* is designed to learn about how partnerships between community colleges and non-profit organizations can help low-income adults achieve greater success in post-secondary education and, ultimately, the workforce. *CTE* builds upon

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<sup>1</sup> For information about CCD, please see <http://www.communitycareer.org>, for additional information on ESGVROP/TC, please see <http://www.esgvrop.org/index.shtml>

what has been learned through AspenWSI's research and evaluation conducted over the past decade—research that has identified the promise of sectoral approaches for improving low-income adults' employment outcomes.

A range of capacities and resources are needed for workforce development programming to effectively serve both business and low-income participants. Partnerships between community colleges and non-profit organizations are a promising approach to improving the effectiveness and scale of services for low-income populations. In many communities and for many industries, no one single education or community-based organization has all of the necessary capacities and resources in-house to implement a sectoral employment development strategy that is both effective at learning about and responding to the needs of industry and/or of sufficient scale to meet the needs of the large numbers of low-income adults who need quality workforce development services. We define a sectoral strategy as a systems approach to workforce development—typically on behalf of low-income individuals—that:

- **Targets a specific industry or cluster of occupations**, developing a deep understanding of the interrelationships between business competitiveness and the workforce needs of the targeted industry;
- **Intervenes through a credible organization, or set of organizations**, crafting workforce solutions tailored to that industry and its region;
- **Supports workers in improving their range of employment-related skills**, improving their ability to compete for work opportunities of higher quality;
- **Meets the needs of employers**, improving their ability to compete within the marketplace; and
- **Creates lasting change in the labor market system to the benefit of both workers and employers.**

*Courses to Employment* research and learning activities have been designed to learn in-depth about how, using a sectoral approach to education and employment development, six different partnerships between community colleges and non-profit organizations, working in a range of different industries and with a diverse set of community college-based education and training approaches, meet the needs of low-income adult learners and job-seekers. The six community college-non-profit partnerships were selected

competitively from a pool of 89 applicants in late 2007.<sup>2</sup> AspenWSI has been conducting formative evaluations of the six partnership's activities as well as participant outcome assessments for each site. Grantees have been engaged extensively in research activities designed to promote learning throughout the demonstration. Specifically, the *CTE* project is working to inform the following learning questions:

- What are the roles, responsibilities, tasks and services involved in collaboration to better serve low-income adults? Which are taken on by colleges and which by non-profits?
- How do policies, funding, governing and capacity issues enable (or restrict) the college or non-profit organization in serving different roles or providing specific services? What institutional variables affect flexibility, authority, efficiency or other aspects of successful collaboration?
- How are the non-academic needs of low-income adults met, and how does this relate to education and employment persistence and success? What are the costs of non-academic support services and how are these funded?
- What are the education, employment and income experiences of participants? How do these relate to outcomes of similar groups outside this demonstration?
- What does a successful collaboration cost? What are the elements of these costs, and how are they financed? What financial and other benefits accrue over time, to the college, the non-profit, business, worker and other stakeholders? How are these benefits measured?
- Does this type of collaboration offer opportunities for "scaling up" to address a community-wide need in a more systemic way? Can collaboration between a college and non-profit strengthen the ability of partner organizations to address systemic problems? What types of problems? In what ways?
- Can collaboration impact how intensive and extensive relationships with businesses are managed and leveraged? How are the needs, interests, and outcomes for business balanced relative to those of low-income adult students?

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<sup>2</sup>Profiles of all six partnerships are available at <http://www.aspenwsi.org/WSIwork-HigherEd.asp>.

## Participant Outcomes Study Methodology

An important goal of *CTE* research activities is to not only inform key learning questions about the partnerships' activities and outcomes but also to help build capacity within each partnership for ongoing learning independent of AspenWSI. Toward this end, each of the six participant outcomes studies was designed based on the existing data management systems in use by the six partnerships. Having said this, each site received substantial technical assistance from AspenWSI researchers in assessing their existing systems, and all made significant modifications in response to specific input. In most cases, outside data sources were needed to inform key learning questions. In particular, gathering information about education progress and employment outcomes proved to be particularly challenging at each site. Each site implemented different processes and used a variety of different data sources to obtain the data needed to inform questions about outcomes. In no case did either the non-profit organization or the community college partner have all of the information needed to answer relevant questions about outcomes. Thus on a case-by-case basis, AspenWSI researchers worked with the different partners and outside data providers to build the datasets needed to answer questions both about education and employment outcomes.

In Los Angeles, data on participants in the Security Academy came from two sources. Community Career Development staff collected participants' demographic information and employment histories during registration for the Academy. CCD staff worked with Academy faculty at ESGVROP/TC to track program completion. Participants' post-training employment outcomes were obtained through CCD and ESGVROP/TC staff during follow-up interviews with students. While CCD was able to obtain most students' job placement information immediately after the Academy, it was more challenging to find and interview students about their employment status one year after graduation. To supplement data provided by students and to obtain data for students who could not be contacted after training, CCD obtained access to California State Unemployment Insurance (UI) records. UI data, which is collected quarterly, was obtained for Academy participants for the quarter they enrolled, for the quarter they finished the Academy, and for the quarter one year after they finished the Academy for a limited number of participants for whom enough time had elapsed. UI data provides an employer's name and total

quarterly earnings. During data cleaning and verification, AspenWSI researchers observed notable inconsistencies in the UI data and became concerned that participants' California UI earnings data records might not be up-to-date or complete. As a result, AspenWSI researchers decided to use the UI data only to verify employment status (and not use the dollar amount of earnings data reported in these records). CCD staff compiled demographic, employment and UI data in an Access database and Excel spreadsheets. Data were forwarded to AspenWSI researchers in the form of Excel spreadsheets. AspenWSI researchers worked closely with CCD staff to clean and verify the data.

The following charts and tables offer a detailed examination of the demographic characteristics and pre- and post-training employment experiences for Security Academy participants. This report summarizes information in charts and tables, and provides a wide range of summary highlights, but we also present information in more raw formats. Our hope is that by providing as much information as possible in different formats, this document will serve as a helpful resource for policymakers, college and research communities, and practitioners.

## Key Findings and Highlights

### *Demographics*

- 60.5% of the participants were military veterans.
- 83% of participants were men; 34% were African-American; 28% were Asian-American; 28% were White.
- Median age of participants at enrollment was 37; 24% were married, and 30% had dependent children.
- 17% of participants reported having a criminal background at enrollment.
- 85% of participants had earned a high school diploma or GED prior to enrollment.

### *Enrollment and Completion*

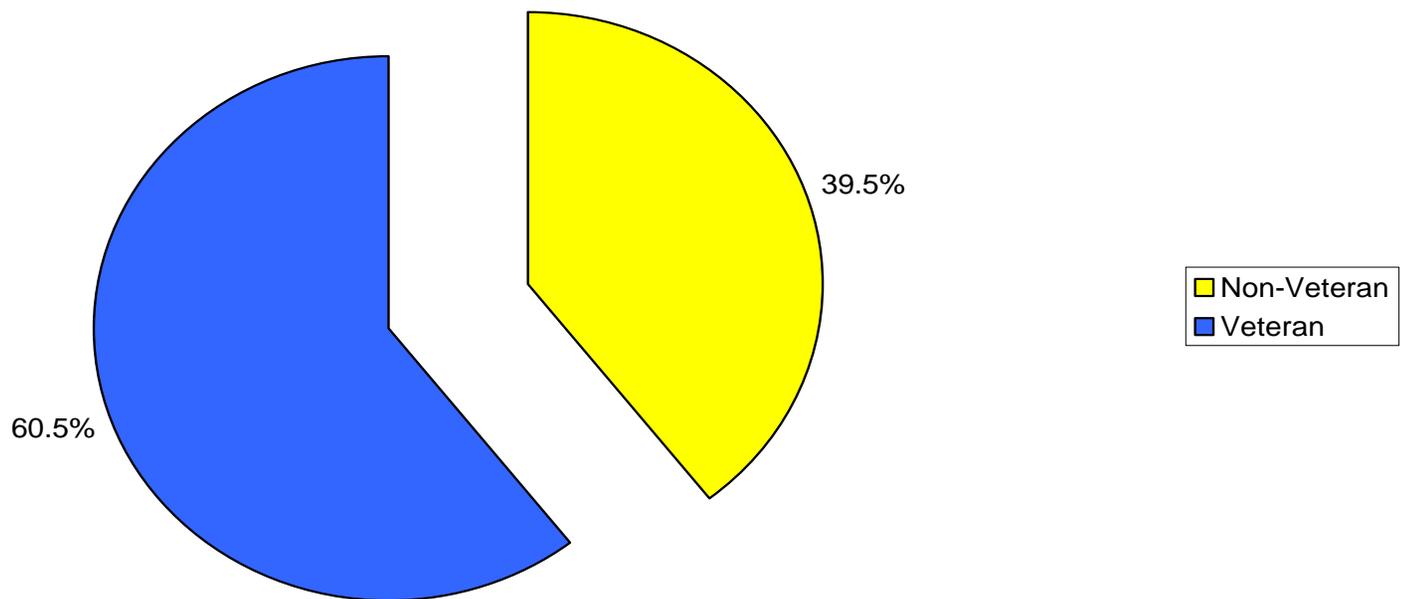
- 162 students participated in one of five Security Academies offered during 2009; 154 (95.1% completed the Academy).

### *Pre- and Post-Training Employment and Earnings*

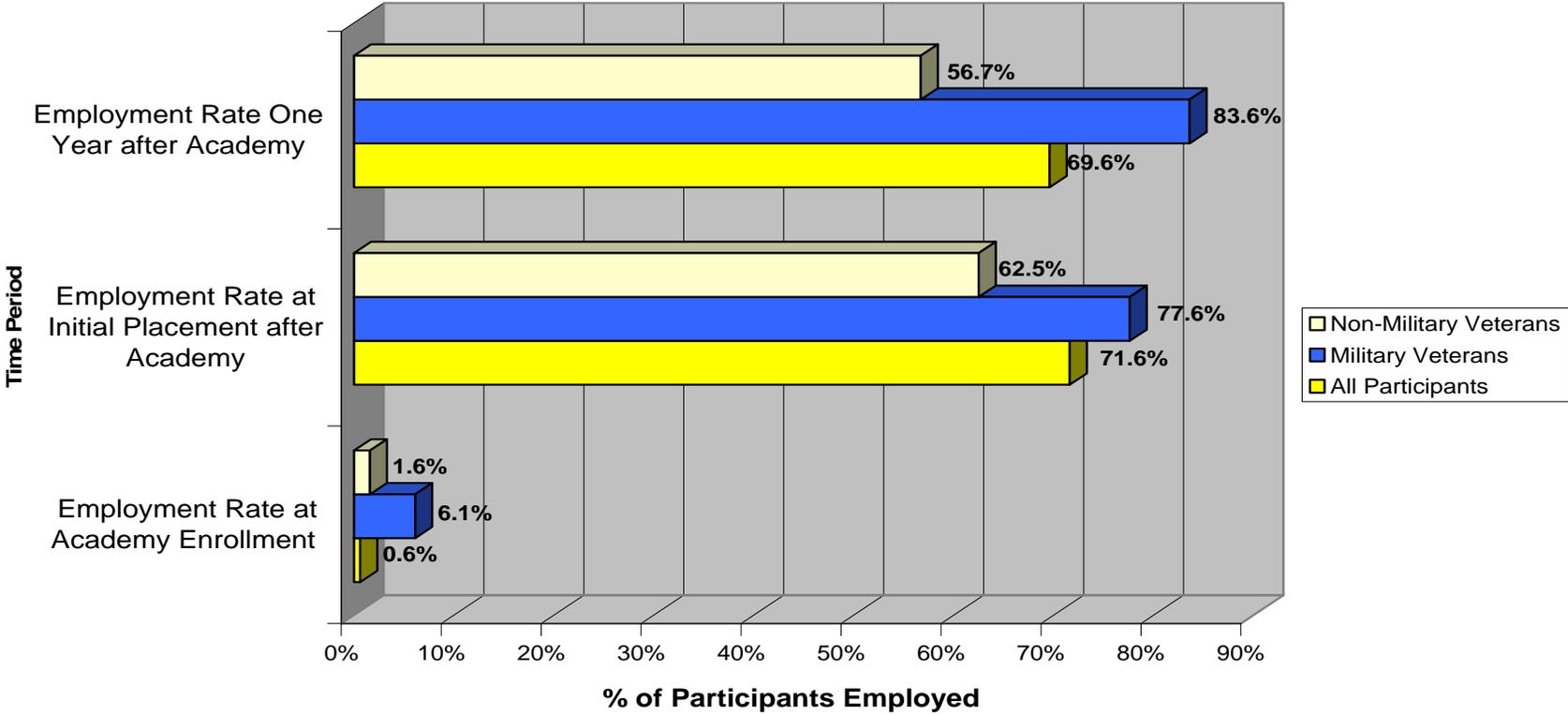
- At the time of enrollment in the Security Academy, only seven participants were employed (4.3%).
- In the quarter following graduation from the Academy, 116 or 71.6% of the 162 participants were employed (based on CCD staff follow-up with students and UI Quarterly Wage Data).
  - 90 or 55.6% of the 162 participants were known to have obtained a job in the security field as their initial job following graduation from the Academy.
  - In this initial job after the Academy, students earned a median of \$11.50 per hour. 21 participants earned more than \$20.00 per hour.
- One year after exiting the Academy, 80 (69.6% of the 115 participants for whom one year had passed since they exited the Academy) were employed. Of these, 63 (54.8% of the 115) were employed in a security-related position (based on CCD staff follow-up with students and UI quarterly wage data from the quarter one year after students graduated).
- Military veterans saw employment and earnings gains that exceeded those of non-veterans.
  - 77.6% of military veterans participating in the Security Academy were employed within four months of finishing the Academy (compared to 62.5% of non-veterans).
  - 60.2% obtained a job in security within four months of finishing training in the Security Academy (compared to 48.4% of non-veterans who obtained work in security immediately following the Academy).

- In this initial job following the Security Academy, veterans earned a median of \$12.79 per hour (compared to \$10.25 for non-veterans).

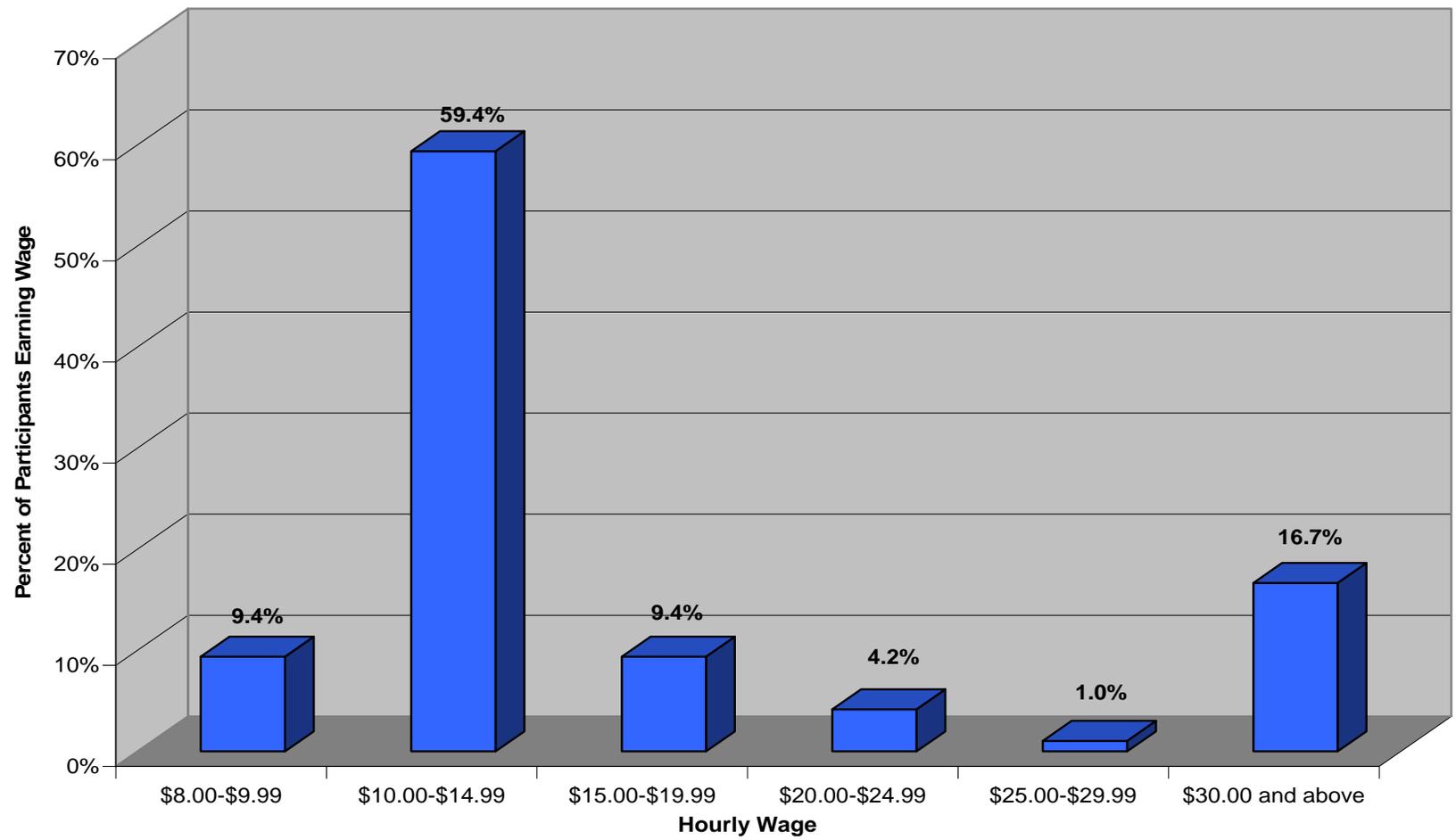
### Security Academy Participants' Military Veteran Status



### Employment Rates Pre- and Post-Security Academy



Hourly Wage of Security Academy Participants in Initial Job Following Training



## Data Tables

### *Demographics at Enrollment*

<b>GENDER</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Female	28	17.3%
Male	134	82.7%
Total	162	100%

<b>ETHNICITY</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
African-American	55	34.0%
Asian	8	4.9%
White	45	27.8%
Hispanic	45	27.8%
Other	5	3.1%
Missing	4	2.5%
Total	162	100%

<b>AGE AT ENROLLMENT</b>	
Valid	154
Missing	8
Mean	39.2
Median	37

<b>MARITAL STATUS AT ENROLLMENT</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Married	39	24.1%
Single	112	69.1%
Single Parent	3	1.9%
Missing	8	4.9%
Total	162	100%

<b>PARTICIPANT HAD DEPENDENT CHILDREN AT ENROLLMENT</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
No	113	69.75%
Yes	49	30.25%
Total	162	100%

<b>MILITARY VETERAN</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
No	64	39.5%
Yes	98	60.5%
Total	162	100%

<b>PARTICIPANT REPORTED CRIMINAL BACKGROUND AT ENROLLMENT</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
	9	5.6%
No	126	77.8%
Yes	27	16.7%
Total	162	100%

<b>HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED PRIOR TO ACADEMY</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Some High School	13	8.0%
GED	7	4.3%
H.S Diploma	82	50.6%
Some College	24	14.8%
Associate's Degree	15	9.3%
Bachelor's Degree	9	5.6%
Master's Degree	1	0.6%
Missing	11	6.8%
Total	162	100%

<b>PARTICIPANT WAS RECEIVING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AT ENROLLMENT</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
No	131	80.9%
Yes	21	13.0%
Missing	10	6.2%
Total	162	100%

<b>PARTICIPANT WAS RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS AT ENROLLMENT</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
No	102	63.0%
Yes	51	31.5%
Missing	9	5.6%
Total	162	100%

### Employment and Earnings at Enrollment

Employment and Earnings at Enrollment N=162		
Employed at Enrollment	Median Hourly Wage at Enrollment <i>(for the 7 who were employed)</i>	Mean Hourly Wage at Enrollment <i>(for the 7 who were employed)</i>
7 (4.3%)	\$13.94	\$17.41

### Security Academy Enrollments and Completions

Five Security Academy classes were conducted in 2009. Median class enrollment was 35.

Security Academy	Number of Participants Enrolled in Academy	Number and Percent Completing Academy	Number and Percent Withdrawing from Academy
1	48	47 (97.9%)	1 (2.1%)
2	38	38 (100%)	0 (0%)
3	29	27 (93.1%)	2 (6.9%)
4	12	12 (100%)	0 (0%)
5	35	30 (85.7%)	5 (14.3%)
Total	162	154 (95.1%)	8 (4.9%)

### Initial Employment Post-Security Academy

A student was considered employed at placement and at one year follow-up if the partnership obtained employment data from the student or if the student showed any earnings in UI Quarterly Wage Data for the quarter after the Academy and/or for the quarter approximately one year after the Academy.

Employment and Earnings at Initial Placement after Security Academy N=162				
# and % Employed within Four Months after Academy Completion	# and % Employed in Security within Four Months after Academy Completion	# and % of those Employed Working Full-Time	Median Hourly Wage at Initial Placement (for those employed)*	Mean Hourly Wage at Initial Placement (for those employed)*
116 (71.6%)	90 (55.6%)	48 (41.4%)	\$11.50	\$15.52

\* An hourly wage was obtained for 96 of the 116 participants employed within four months after the Security Academy.

Hourly Wage Earned by Security Academy Participants in Initial Job Following Training		
	Frequency	Percent
\$8.00-\$9.99	9	9.4%
\$10.00-\$11.99	42	43.8%
\$12.00-\$13.99	13	13.5%
\$14.00-\$15.99	4	4.2%
\$16.00-\$17.99	6	6.3%
\$18.00-\$19.99	1	1.0%
\$20.00-\$29.99	5	5.2%
\$30.00-\$39.99	14	14.6%
\$40.00-\$49.99	2	2.1%
Total	96	100%

### Employment One Year after the Security Academy

The tables below show employment and wage statistics for Security Academy participants one year after finishing the Academy. At the time data collection ended, less than one year had passed for the 47 participants who enrolled in the fourth and fifth Security Academies (conducted in late 2009). This is important to note because the participants who earned the highest hourly wages (\$30 and above in initial jobs following graduation) were those who participated in the fourth and fifth Security Academies.

Employment and Earnings One Year after Security Academy N=115*				
# and % Employed in Any Job One Year after Academy Completion	# and % Employed in Security One Year after Academy Completion	# and % Working Full-Time	Median Hourly Wage at One Year Follow-up (for those employed)*	Mean Hourly Wage at One Year Follow-up (for those employed)*
80 (69.6%)	63 (54.8%)	35 (43.8%)	\$10.50	\$12.22

\*An hourly wage was obtained for 67 of the 80 participants employed one year after the Security Academy.

Hourly Wage Earned by Security Academy Participants One Year After Training		
	Frequency	Percent
\$8.00-\$9.99	13	18.3%
\$10.00-\$11.99	38	53.5%
\$12.00-\$13.99	7	9.9%
\$14.00-\$15.99	1	1.4%
\$16.00-\$17.99	4	5.6%
\$18.00-\$19.99	1	1.4%
\$20.00-\$29.99	5	7.0%
\$30.00-\$39.99	2	2.8%
\$40.00-\$49.99	0	0%
Total	71	100%

### ***Military Veterans' and Non-Veterans' Employment Pre- and Post-Security Academy***

The tables below show the post-training employment experiences of military veterans and non-veterans who participated in the Security Academy. A student was considered employed at placement and at one year follow-up if the partnership obtained employment data from the student or if the student showed any earnings in UI Quarterly Wage Data for the quarter after the Academy and/or for the quarter approximately one year after the Academy.

<b>Employment and Earnings at Initial Placement after Security Academy for Military Veterans and Non-Veterans</b>					
	<b># and % Employed in Any Job within Four Months after Academy Completion</b>	<b># and % Employed in Security within Four Months after Academy Completion</b>	<b># and % of those Employed Working Full-Time</b>	<b>Median Hourly Wage at Initial Placement (for those employed)*</b>	<b>Mean Hourly Wage at Initial Placement (for those employed)*</b>
Veterans (N=98)	76 (77.6%)	59 (60.2%)	40 (52.6%)	\$12.79	\$17.38
Non- Veterans (N=64)	40 (62.5%)	31 (48.4%)	8 (20%)	\$10.25	\$11.80

\* An hourly wage was obtained for 34 of the 76 veterans and 32 of the 40 non-veterans who were employed after the Security Academy. 14 of the 76 participants were earning more than \$30.00 per hour at placement.

<b>Employment and Earnings One Year after Security Academy*</b>					
	<b># and % Employed in Any Job One Year after Academy Completion</b>	<b># and % Employed in Security One Year after Academy Completion</b>	<b># and % Working Full-Time</b>	<b>Median Hourly Wage at One Year Follow-up (for those employed)**</b>	<b>Mean Hourly Wage at One Year Follow-up (for those employed)**</b>
Veterans (N=55)	46 (83.6%)	39 (70.9%)	21 (53.8%)	\$11.00	\$13.21
Non- Veterans (N=60)	34 (56.7%)	24 (40%)	14 (41.1%)	\$10.00	\$10.66

\* At the time data collection and analysis ended, less than one year had passed for the 47 participants who enrolled in the fourth and fifth Security Academies.

\*\* An hourly wage was obtained for 41 of the 46 veterans and 26 of the 34 non-veterans who were employed one year after finishing the Security Academy.