

notifications will also be published on the ODEP Homepage.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

### Part I. Delivery of Applications

1. *Late Applications.* Any application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice will be considered non-responsive, unless it is received before awards are made and it: (a) Is determined that its late receipt was caused by DOL error; (b) was sent by U.S. Postal Service registered or certified mail not later than the fifth calendar day before the date specified for receipt of applications (e.g., an application submitted in response to a solicitation requiring receipt of applications by the 20th of the month must have been post marked by the 15th of that month); or (c) was sent by the U.S. Postal Service Express Mail Next Day Service to addressee not later than 5 p.m. at the place of mailing two working days prior to the date specified for receipt of applications. The term "working days" excludes weekends and Federal holidays. "Post marked" means a printed, stamped or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable, without further action, as having been supplied or affixed on the date of mailing by an employee of the U.S. Postal Service.

2. *Withdrawal of Applications.* Applications may be withdrawn by written notice or telegram (including mail gram) received at any time before an award is made. Applications may be withdrawn in person by the applicant or by an authorized representative thereof, if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt of the proposal.

3. *Hand-Delivered Proposals.* It is preferred that applications be mailed at least five days prior to the closing date. To be considered for funding, hand-delivered applications must be received by 4:45 p.m., ET, at the specified address. Failure to adhere to the above instructions will be basis for a determination of non-responsiveness. Overnight express mail from carriers other than the U.S. Postal Service will be considered hand-delivered applications and must be received by the above specified date and time.

### Part II. Authority

Omnibus Appropriations Resolution, 2003, Pub. L. 1087; Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2001, Pub. L. 106-554, 29 U.S.C. 557b.

### Part III. Background

ODEP's mission is to provide leadership to increase employment opportunities for adults and youth with disabilities through expanded access to training, education, employment supports, assistive technology, integrated employment, entrepreneurial development, and small business opportunities. Through partnerships with both public and private sector employers and with regional and local agencies, ODEP also fosters the creation of employment opportunities by increasing awareness of the benefits of employing people with disabilities and disseminating information on effective employment strategies.

The CFBCI seeks to create effective partnerships between faith-based and community-based organizations and DOL at the Federal, state, and local levels. The purpose of these partnerships is to bring faith-based and community organizations, which are often in closest touch with the people and problems that are the focus of Federal social policy efforts, into DOL's employment and training programs.

The CFBCI coordinates a comprehensive departmental effort to incorporate faith-based and other community-based organizations into DOL programs and initiatives. CFBCI supports the creation of initiatives and programs within DOL that utilize the strengths of faith-based and community organizations to better address the needs of underprivileged populations. The Center directs national outreach efforts to educate faith-based and other community organizations about the opportunities for partnership with local One-Stop Career Centers, State and Local Workforce Investment Boards, State Workforce Agencies, and the U.S. Department of Labor. CFBCI also works in conjunction with DOL agencies to remove barriers to the participation of faith-based and community organizations in Federal programs, including, but not limited to, the reform of regulations, procurement and other internal policies and practices, and outreach activities.

This SGA reflects a collaborative effort between ODEP and CFBCI born out of their commitment to promoting positive employment and transition outcomes for youth with disabilities through mentoring. There is solid evidence that effective mentoring programs can change the direction of the life of a youth with a disability, improve academic performance, and help the youth develop skills, knowledge, and motivation to successfully transition from high school

to adult life. (Moccia, Schumaker, Hazel, Vernon, & Deshler, 1989; Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000). Accordingly, this grant program supports the objectives of both President Bush's New Freedom Initiative and the Leave No Child Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. 107-110.

Mentoring is defined generally as a sustained, close, developmental relationship between an older, more experienced individual and a younger person with the goal of building character and promoting positive, healthy youth development. In mentoring arrangements, adults or experienced peers serve as advisors and role models, working with youth one-on-one or in groups. Electronic mentoring, also called e-mentoring, uses a combination of e-mail and face-to-face meetings to facilitate mentoring relationships between young people and adults. Mentoring relationships provide valuable support to youth, not only in offering academic and career guidance, but also in building leadership and interpersonal skills and problem-solving skills. Mentoring can also connect youth with important employer contacts, thereby opening doors for networking and future employment.

The purpose of this grant program is to help build the capacity and knowledge of faith-based and community organizations to better meet the needs of young people with disabilities through mentoring. This will be accomplished through the funding of intermediary organizations that have demonstrated expertise in working with and providing technical assistance to local faith-based and community organizations in a variety of areas including, but not limited to: effectively operating and managing their programs; accessing governmental and private funding sources; developing and training staff; expanding the types and reach of services in their communities; and replicating promising and effective practices. The funded intermediary will also issue sub-awards to local faith-based and community organizations for start-up, operations, or expansion of mentoring programs for youth with disabilities as detailed previously in the Summary Section of this SGA.

This SGA is for the Intermediary Grants for Mentoring Youth with Disabilities Initiative. This grant program is consistent with the objectives of the President's New Freedom Initiative.

### Part IV. Funding Availability and Period of Performance

ODEP anticipates awarding three competitive grants funded up to