

What is The SOURCE?

The SOURCE is a not-for-profit employee support organization designed to help employees keep their jobs, receive training to enhance their employment, and help employees move into better positions within or across companies. The SOURCE works with employees from:

- Belwith International
- Butterball Farms, Inc.
- The Decc Co.
- Hekman Furniture
- Keeler Brass
- Michigan Wheel
- Notions Marketing
- Pridgeon & Clay
- Spectrum Industries
- Vi-Chem

We are located very near each of these companies at:
1409 Buchanan Ave. SW.

Please call us at 452-5295 for more information or feel free to stop by the office at any time. Our office is open 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday, but special arrangements may be made for after hour appointments.



You CAN Afford to Buy a House

With The SOURCE's new partnership with the Inner City Christian Federation (ICCF), becoming a homeowner is one step closer to becoming a reality for many employees of SOURCE member companies. The new program is called Employer Assisted Housing, and all employees will enjoy the benefit of having individualized assistance throughout the home buying process. Someone will always be there to answer questions and offer support along the way.

This new partnership with ICCF means that employees of member companies now

have a vast array of services at their disposal to assist them with purchasing a new home. One of the services is assistance with opening an IDA, which is a match account for a down payment on a house (see *Frequently Asked Questions About IDA's* on the next page for more information).



Employees will also have access to classes about home ownership, including ICCF's Introduction to Home Ownership class, pre and post purchase education and counseling, and foreclosure prevention.

For individuals who need financial counseling and education, classes and information about budgeting, saving, investing, and financial management will also be available. ICCF can also review credit reports and help interested individuals repair their credit.

The SOURCE will be hosting informational sessions about the partnership with ICCF and Employer Assisted Housing benefits on April 20th at 9am and 7pm. Anyone interested in attending the informational session should contact The SOURCE to sign up at 452-5295.

Governor Granholm's Visit to The SOURCE

On March 9, The SOURCE was honored to welcome Governor Granholm for a visit. She wanted to learn all about the unique employee retention and support services that The SOURCE offers to the community and employees of our member companies.

SOURCE staff members Andrew Brower, Jeni Berndt, Irma Quintino, and Rachel Kunnath gave the Governor a personal tour of the facility and had an opportunity to explain to her what The SOURCE is all about.

The Governor visited the on-site computer lab and looked at the calendar of events at

The SOURCE, which included free tax preparation, and Spanish, ESL, GED, Financial Management, Word, Excel, and Catching on to Computers classes.



Governor Granholm also had an opportunity to meet with several other individuals affiliated with The SOURCE, including representatives from GRCC, GVSU, Goodwill Industries, The Delta Strategy, Department

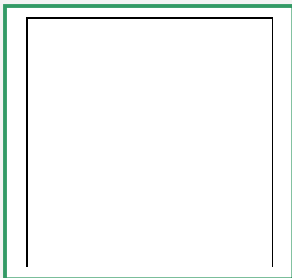
of Human Services, Pridgeon & Clay, and Vi-Chem, to discuss Best Practices and a vision for the future of The SOURCE.

Governor Granholm also focused attention on Cecilia Garcia, who advanced from Butterball Farms to Cascade Engineering last April, and Charles Freeze, who currently works at Butterball and is awaiting advancement into Cascade Engineering.

When asked what she thought of The SOURCE, Granholm said that The SOURCE offers a program that Michigan needs more of, and provides a program that other parts of Michigan may want to copy.



“I started the IDA because of the match, it’s hard to believe that anyone who had the opportunity would turn it down. Now my life is richer because of the IDA, I feel better about myself and I know what I can afford.”



Upcoming Classes for You and Your Family

Catching on to Computers If you or a family member is interested in learning more about how to navigate a computer, use Microsoft Word, and surf the Internet, Call The SOURCE to sign up for our basic computers class. Classes run once a week for three weeks and begin the first Thursday of every month. Morning and afternoon classes are available. This class is free and open to the public, so encourage your family members and friends to sign up!

Money Matters Classes
Every Wednesday Home Repair Services offers money matters classes that are free and open to the public. Classes are from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. Topics include:

- 3/30 Ins and Outs of Refinancing
- 4/6 Financial Basics
- 4/13 Credit Class – Free Credit Report
- 4/20 Money Management
- 4/27 Rainy Day Money

Home Maintenance Classes Home Repair Services offers free home maintenance classes that are open to the public. Classes are on Saturdays from 10am to noon. Topics include:

- 3/26 Trim/Wood Work
- 4/2 Electrical 2
- 4/9 Landscaping
- 4/16 Ceramic Tile 1
- 4/23 Ceramic Tile 2
- 4/30 Ceramic Tile 3
- 5/7 Roofing

All Home Repair Services classes are free and are located at 1100 S. Division. Call 241-2601 for more information

Frequently Asked Questions about IDA's

•What is an IDA?

IDA stands for Individual Development Account. IDA's are special savings accounts for individuals with limited income. Every dollar you put in the account is matched with an additional \$2 or \$3 in a separate account.

•How does the match program work?

For example, a potential homebuyer can save \$1000 in an IDA for a down payment on a first home and will receive up to \$3000 in matching funds for a total of \$4,000 in homeownership funds.

•Where does the match money come from?

The match money comes from the State of Michigan and other generous contributions from

the community.

•What can I spend the money on?

The purpose of an IDA is to make sure your savings will be used to purchase something of real value that increases your family's well being. You may use the money for a down payment on a first home, tuition for college or vocational training, or small business start-up or expansion.

•Who is eligible for an IDA?

You must agree to save an average of at least \$20 a month from your earned income. You must also agree to complete an educational series on financial management and asset planning. Lastly, you must meet the income guidelines

based on your family size (call The SOURCE for a complete list of income requirements)

•Will an IDA interfere with public assistance?

No. IDA's are not counted in determining eligibility to receive any FIA public assistance program. Also, IDA's are exempt as an asset for all federal public assistance and medical assistance. Participating in an IDA program will not impact receiving assistance through those other programs.

•How do I open an IDA?

The SOURCE is now able to set you up with someone who will walk with you through the process and answer your questions along the way. All you have to do is call! 452-5295

March is Parenting Awareness Month

Research shows that the most effective approach to raising healthy and competent kids is to concentrate on building developmental assets. Here are some ways to be intentional about asset building:

- Regularly do things with your child, including projects around the house, recreational activities, and service projects. Take turns planning activities to do together as a family.
- Eat at least one meal together

as a family every day.

- Talk about your values and priorities, and live in a way that is consistent with them.
- Give your children lots of support and approval while also challenging them to take responsibility and gain independence
- If you are parenting alone, look for other adult role models of both genders who can be mentors for your children.
- Nurture your own assets by

spending time with people who care about you and are supportive. You'll take better care of your children if you take care of yourself.

- Don't let anyone in your family (including you) watch too much TV. Find other meaningful activities for your children to do.
- Learn as much as you can about what your kids need at their current ages. Recognize that children need more than just financial support.