



2020 ANNUAL REPORT



2020 IMPACT



NUMBER OF
PARTICIPANTS
OUTREACHED

4,728
PARTICIPANTS

TOTAL HOURS OF TRAINING
INVESTED INTO CLIENTS



46,380 HRS

1,813

PARTICIPANTS ENROLLED/
COACHED AGENCY WIDE



AVERAGE JOB TYPE (TOTAL 834)

649

185

FULL-TIME

PART-TIME



COVID-19 RESPONSE

Early on in the pandemic, it became necessary for SERJobs to pivot and establish innovative ways to continue providing career coaching and financial coaching while working on a plan for remote occupational trainings and the delivery of other workforce development services. SERJobs never ceased to provide job search/employment placement assistance and began delivering virtual and/or hybrid training classes on May 18. SERJobs provided virtual training via NewRow Smart Platform and quickly determined that technology was a barrier, so additional (and intensive) coaching/tutoring was needed for a majority of SER clients.

As unemployed residents in Houston, Fort Bend and Galveston looked for answers and sought services, collaboration among agencies was critical. Employer and community partners have been crucial in referring their clients to SER. Across 13 Texas counties, SERJobs and other agencies work together to help residents get back to work.

“...SERJobs has had to adapt to meet clients where they are at.”

Due to the many challenges associated with COVID-19, many clients have shifted their mindsets from long-term stability to short-term survival and SER has had to adapt to meet clients where they are at. The most devastating impact for clients has been job loss and/or reduction of hours and/or income. We are fielding more basic needs assistance requests and therefore has been sharing resources

and providing supportive services as available, like rental and utility assistance, help accessing food (which has been in particularly high demand), mental health services, and others on an individual basis. Due to current economic conditions, many are focused on survival jobs rather than career-based employment, so in some cases, clients are taking multiple part-time jobs (if available) rather than a single full-time job out of necessity. In these instances, career coaches and financial coaches are working with clients on budgeting and financial resources to help stretch each dollar further.

COVID has definitely changed the reality of employment and job search for many people. Some clients have expressed concerns about job searching for fear of COVID infection while others are concerned about access to personal protective equipment (PPE). Clients are concerned about employers not providing PPE, so the SERJobs team is coaching individuals about how to have those tough conversations with employers and helping clients understand the need to always masks and practice social distancing. Coaches are working with clients on “tactful communication” skills needed to best reach out to follow up on job applications, how to reach people, and ways to speak to keep a job while maintaining safety.

“The SERJobs team is coaching individuals about how to have those tough conversations with employers and helping clients understand the need to always masks and practice social distancing.”

CLIENT STORY | NAMITA KADEL

In 2014, Namita and her family left Nepal to live in Houston. Once Namita turned 18, she knew that she needed to find work but was anxious about getting a job. Her teacher at Wisdom High School told her about SERJobs's Summer Jobs program—a suggestion that changed the direction of Namita's career plans.

The Summer Jobs program places individuals between the ages of 16-24 in 4-7 weeks of paid work experience/internship positions at local businesses and non-profit organizations, while providing support, guidance, resources, and other services. Namita was placed with the City of Houston's Office of Business Opportunities.

"I didn't know much about jobs or working," Namita stated, "but everything was set up in a way that made it so easy to get a job, and my experience at the City of Houston was great."

After her internship, Namita went to college at the University of Houston—but she still came back to SERJobs every summer.

"I was pursuing Accounting as my major, so my second summer at SERJobs, I went to work at the Menil Collection in their accounting department," said Namita. "My third summer, I was able to work at Bank of America. I was interested in exploring the field of finance and banking."



"SERJobs helped me get a part-time position at Old Navy, Meyerland, until I could find something permanent, hopefully at a bank...my career coach helped me apply and arranged an interview with the training instructor."

Upon graduating, Namita began applying for full-time work. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic was at its peak, and no one seemed to be hiring. So, Namita returned to SERJobs.

"SERJobs helped me get a part-time position at Old Navy Meyerland, until I could find something permanent, hopefully at a bank," said Namita, "I follow SER on Facebook and knew they had a banking training. I worked with my career coach, Manny, who helped me apply and arranged an interview with the training instructor."

Namita landed a spot in the final banking training class in 2020.

“In class, I learned a lot of banking basics—literally everything I needed to know about retail banking,” said Namita. “The instructors shared their experiences and even stayed after class to answer questions and help prepare us for interviews. The class was very interactive with mock interviews and role playing. I learned my strengths and weaknesses, so I was very prepared to interview for a job.”

During the training, Namita and her classmates were able to meet with and converse with representatives from SERJobs’s banking partners.

“I feel so lucky that I found SER; they really helped me, I’m still young and deciding on my future—maybe I’ll eventually get my MBA—but for now, I plan to be at BBVA for a long time.”

“Building that network in the banking industry was one of the best things about the training,” said Namita. “I must have impressed the BBVA rep because they asked if I would be interested in interviewing with BBVA. My interview went well and I was able to show my knowledge. I was already using banking terms, so they could see I knew what I was talking about.”

The interview must have gone very well, because Namita received an offer from BBVA before training ended!

Now Namita works in a personal banker hybrid role where she opens accounts, acts as teller, and even has sales goals.

“I’m having fun,” said Namita, “I really enjoy my job. I am personally into management, so I’d like to go further, possibly as a Client Experience Manager.”

Namita’s career coach Emmanuel Escot said, “We are all so very proud of the work that Namita has done with SER over the past few years! It’s been such a pleasure having her be a part of our SER family, and we cannot wait for her continued successes!”

“I feel so lucky that I found SER; they really helped me,” said Namita. “I’m still young and deciding on my future—maybe I’ll eventually get my MBA—but for now, I plan to be at BBVA for a long time.”

We’re excited to be a part of Namita’s journey, which was made possible by Bank of America, This Way Forward, Harris County, the City of Houston, UnidosUS, United Way, the Gulf Coast Community Services Association, Inc., Prosperity Bank, Frost Bank, Wells Fargo, and Capital One.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

We are excited about beginning the construction of a new Workforce Training Center; the 20,000 sq ft center will provide critical space for hands-on training for individuals in need of opportunity! While the demand for workers with middle-skills across the Greater Houston region is steep, nearly one million Houstonians lack the qualifications to fill these positions. This shortage of skilled workers plays a substantial role in both the city's unemployment rates and in the continuing cycle of poverty for many families.

The Workforce Training Center will give students the training and experience they need to be attractive candidates for these positions and be competitive in the job market in the long term. Constructed 1,000 feet behind SERJobs's Workforce Opportunity Center in Houston's historic East End, the center will

include 8 classrooms, 3 training labs, office space, and training equipment to help students meet their goals and gain the skills and credentials needed to succeed in today's workforce. Through this expansion, SERJobs will be able to equip and empower over 8,000 people by 2022 through education, training, employment placement, and financial literacy education.

“At SERJobs, we believe in connecting people with the power and purpose of work, and the Workforce Training Center will enhance our capacity to do just that.”

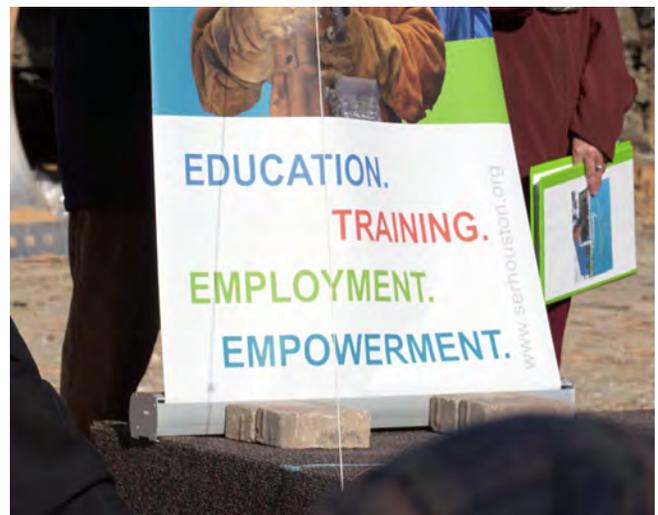
Sheroo Mukhtiar
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &
CEO OF SERJOBS.**





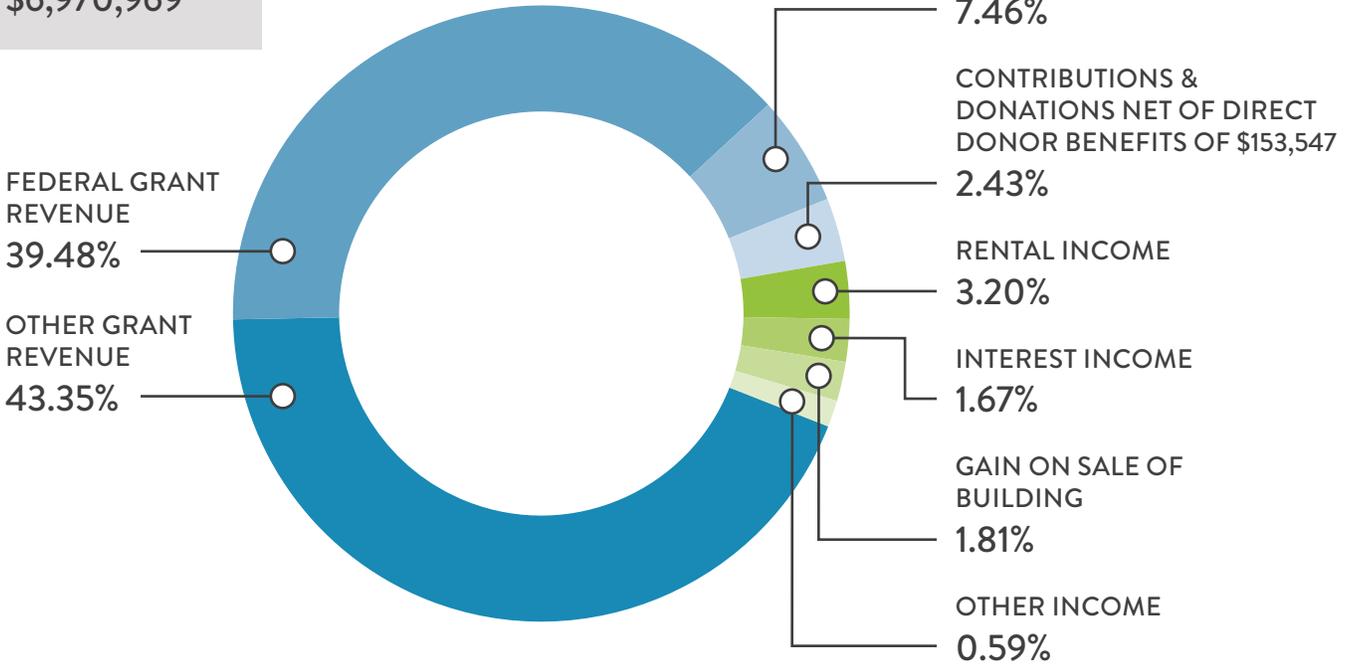
SERJobs is a nonprofit community organization that supports, educates, and equips people in the Texas Gulf Coast Region who come from low-income backgrounds or who have significant barriers to employment. We believe the power and purpose of work can transform lives and communities. SER is the Spanish verb, “to be,” so that is exactly what we impart on the people we serve – that they can be whatever they want “to be.”

“This training center, much like our Workforce Opportunity Center, will be much more than another beautiful building,” Mukhtiar continued. “It will bring about transformational change for the individuals, families, and communities that we serve.”

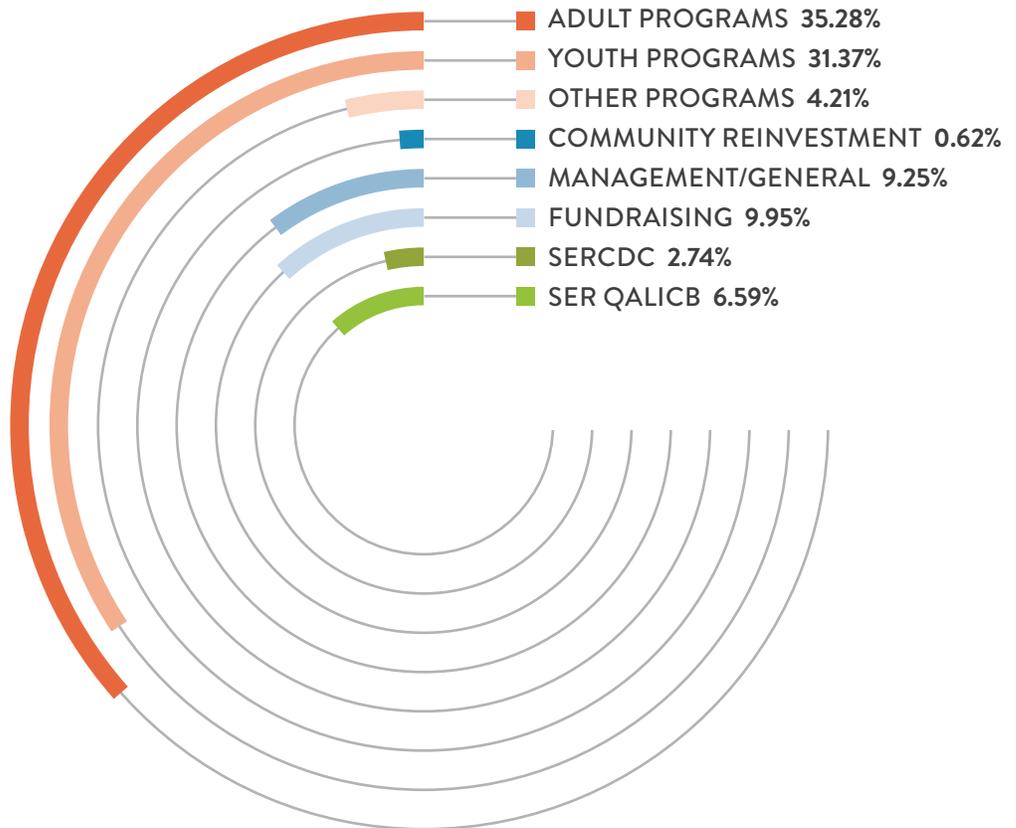


FY FINANCIALS

REVENUE
\$6,970,969



EXPENSES
\$7,587,061





A LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends,

I have had the pleasure of being involved with SERJobs for many years both professionally and as a community volunteer. SERJobs's ability to meet our clients' needs was highlighted by the events of this past year. As an agency, SERJobs has survived because of its adaptability, resilience, responsiveness, and willingness to embrace change. This year was yet another example of how SERJobs is able to thrive in times of adversity and how that adaptability benefits our clients.

SERJobs's tagline is "Where Opportunity Works" and I think we embodied that in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to think differently and make a leap that many nonprofits are hesitant to make – to embrace "virtual" services that allowed us to carry out our mission with limited face-to-face interaction. Our friends and supporters, like you, made this leap possible by funding SERJobs's technology needs to best meet the needs of our clients. During the latter portion of 2020, SERJobs provided more than 1,000 individuals with resources, coaching, training, and employment services. SERJobs served more clients in 2020 than it did in 2019, due to this access to virtual services. The work SERJobs does is always important, but in times of crisis, the impact is even greater.

As we move this service strategy forward into 2021, virtual services will be an important component of SERJobs' continued growth and expansion with the agency's new Workforce Training Center. The product of SERJobs' second capital campaign in roughly four years, this new endeavor has widespread support with 100% board participation, significant staff participation, government commitments, and philanthropic investments. In a year full of division and challenges, the "Investing in the Future" effort brought people together for a common goal: to provide hope and opportunity to our neighbors in need.

We're creating opportunities for people and putting resources to work – both in person and virtually. 2020 was a tipping point for many, but for SERJobs it was a launchpad. I'm proud of all the organization accomplished this year and grateful to you for being a part of our journey.

Warm regards,

Diane Schenke
Board Chair



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Diane Schenke
Board Chair

Paula Mendoza
Vice Chair

Elliot Metzger
Treasurer

Kathie Forney
Secretary

Sherri Brudner

Bart Wilson

Raymond Valdez

Ricky Cortez

Bryan Neely

Tanya Sterling

Mark McCullough

Lori Arnold

Christen Bagley

Dr. Jeri Lyons

Hugo Mojica

DeRae Crane

Steve Rosencranz

KEY LEADERSHIP

Sheroo Mukhtiar
Chief Executive Officer

Beth Wilson
Chief Advancement
Officer

Gerald Eaton CPA, CGMA
Chief Financial Officer

Chris Valka
Chief Operating Officer

Tara Dennis
Director of Programs

Sandra Achury
Director of Quality
Control and Assurance

Mou Sarkar
Director of Training

Alma Perez-Silva
Director of Buildings
and Facilities

Maria Carter
Director of
Human Resources

Christi Vasquez
Director of
Marketing and
Communication

MISSION

To help individuals from low-income communities transform their lives through education, training, employment, and financial empowerment services.



VISION

To be the premier workforce opportunity provider in the Texas Gulf Coast Region.

VALUES

Accountability,
Innovation, Respect,
Excellence, Equality

