
President's High Growth Job Training Initiative

Retail Learning Leadership Initiative



Grant amount: \$2,250,000

Grantee: NRF Foundation

Key Partners: Toys "R" Us, Saks Inc., Home Depot, CVS Pharmacies

Leveraged amount: \$6,200,000 in leveraged funds from Toys "R" Us; \$3,962,670 in leveraged funds from Saks, Incorporated

Location of Grant Activities: Nationwide.

Challenge:

Service sector employment, including retail trades, is growing. Three of the top thirty occupations expected to yield the highest job growth between 2002 and 2012 are found in retail – salespersons, cashiers, and first-line supervisors of retail sales workers. Overall, the retail industry is predicted to add 2.1 million new jobs between 2002 and 2012.

Yet the industry lacks training models and skills certifications that can be used consistently across the industry to build similar skills requirements for positions at all levels to encourage career growth. Retailers are struggling to attract qualified individuals, train them, and have them advance their careers

Addressing the Challenge:

With its \$2,250,000 grant, the Retail Learning Leadership Initiative will have the NRF Foundation work with retail employers, to create a comprehensive cross-industry career ladder from sales associate through senior management. With retail employers led by Toys "R" Us and Saks Incorporated, the NRF Foundation will develop and distribute a core competency and training curricula model for each level in the career ladder throughout the industry and the public workforce system.

Toys "R" Us and Saks Incorporated will provide their internally developed competency models and curriculum to the National Retail Federation and the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The curricula will initially be tested among select retail industry companies and One Stop Career Centers. These materials will then be refined with input from other retailers, including Home Depot and CVS, to create an industry wide model that can be distributed nationally.

Projected Outcomes

- In the initial phases of the grant, approximately 6,800 incumbent workers at Toys "R" Us and Saks Incorporated will be trained for management-level positions; and
- An estimated 25,000 workers will be trained for entry-level positions, with opportunities to advance in the industry.

