



**PREPARED BY**  
Schenectady Works | City Mission  
in partnership with  
Schenectady Community Action Program

# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 21, 2019



2018

# ERN-NY ANNUAL REPORT

## Executive Summary - The Crock Pot Theory

I love a good, slow-cooked meal from a crock pot. The crock pot has to be one of the greatest inventions of all time. Throw in some food and spices, power it up, and several hours later, you come home to a well-cooked and amazing smelling meal. Brilliant.

As we look back on 2018, the crock pot theory comes to mind. Depending on the particular business or organization, the ingredients may vary: initiatives to recruit, methods to train and mobilize the workforce, and throwing in a few perks every once in a while; but, as many employers might suggest, once you add in the "meat" of a Success Coach available to work with employees on their personal and professional challenges, you have one amazing, slow-cooked "meal".

2018 has brought many new opportunities and successes. Nevertheless, I cannot escape the foundation of the Employer Resource Network model: **supporting the success of employees and employers across our region.** With all the complex factors that made the ERN model a reality, the simplicity of it all still holds true at a basic level – the men and women across the region that are working some of the most demanding and stressful jobs are the true, inspiring heroes. These heroes range from the maintenance worker who takes three buses to get to work every day, or the single parent of two kids juggling two jobs, to the direct support worker who cares selflessly for the most vulnerable in our community while struggling to make his/her own ends meet. All of these examples demonstrate what drives the economic engines of our businesses and the honorable humans that represent our most important business assets.

In reviewing a recent report from one of our Success Coaches, I was reminded of the simple, yet profound, ways in which a Success Coach assists employees. It read:

***An employee needed pots and pans and some other household items because they had been lost during a move. The employee was referred to a resource within the community and was able to secure all of the items that she needed for her new home.***

Think about that for a moment. It is likely that this employee has had to move often, and research shows that constant moves have a negative impact on health, education, stability, and more. Added to this reality, the employee lost some of the foundational items that compose many of our homes. Without something as simple as pots and pans, one can imagine the rippling consequences: in replacement of home-cooked meals, fast food becomes the easiest alternative. Over time, the employee and his/her family are not as healthy and become more susceptible to illness, resulting in more sick days. As we know, when employees do not come to work, the effects in the workplace become highly noticeable: increased workload imposed on coworkers leads to decreased productivity and value of service to their customers. Thus, the story goes on.

And here, we return to the simple, necessary, and valuable kitchen appliances. Pots and pans are a "big deal" to some and, indirectly, even to our customers.

You, as business and organizational leaders, have played a critical role in elevating the standard of excellence amongst the regional workforce partly due to the value you have placed in aiding the "all of life" challenges of your employees. Yes, most of us want to build, expand, increase our profits, and impact with efficiency; but we also want our work to be meaningful – making an impact beyond the bottom line. There is a wide variety of great initiatives that go beyond the bottom line to invest in the greater good. However, I would argue that the ERN model leverages and expands many of these initiatives for a greater impact and value by offering an amazing platform for synergy and partnership across sectors and industries. This cross-sector model is a slow-cooked, crock pot journey. Within that crock pot, true stability, depth, and growth simmer into a clear focus. It tastes so much better now, doesn't it?

As we close our fourth year of work and move into the future, I am amazed at the willing investment so many business leaders in this region have made to support and empower their employees. I recognize that having a Success Coach available to employees is often only one piece of the overall benefit package, but as you will soon see and hear, the effect of a Success Coach is enormous. To each of you, the businesses and organizations that you represent, and the thousands of people that compose this collective workforce – **THANK YOU!** As always, our hope with this annual report and presentation is for you to notice that the employees you have intentionally picked and your investment in this program are positively affecting your bottom line. This impact is evident in your employees' families, neighborhoods, and future generations.

This is good, slow-cooked business.

*Nathan Mandbager*



# HISTORY OF ERN-NY

2014

Schenectady Works, a division of the City Mission of Schenectady, launches ERN-NY with the Schenectady Area ERN, five businesses and one Success Coach.

2015

With growing demand, two more Success Coaches were added to serve 18+ businesses. A second network was launched mid-year, serving businesses in Albany, Rensselaer, and Saratoga counties.

2016

ERN-NY grows to three networks, thirty businesses, and five Success Coaches. This growth is a direct result of providing a cost-effective employee benefit that generates tangible and meaningful results.

2017

In 2017, one of Schenectady Works' strategic community partners – Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP) – was awarded seed money to launch the Mohawk Valley ERN. Due to high demand, Schenectady Area ERN was split into two separate ERNs making ERN-NY home to five networks.

2018 & BEYOND

ERN-NY now serves forty businesses, with five Success Coaches who are available to more than 12,000 employees.

As the model in the greater Capital Region has proven successful across industries, it has assisted in the development and launch of the Jefferson County ERN, based in Watertown.

ERN-NY also hosted the 2018 ERN-USA National Learning Conference as it has proven to be a national leader in the implementation and impact of this model.

ERN-NY expects many more opportunities to serve both business and employees with innovation and excellence in 2019 and beyond!

# 2018 BREAKDOWN

Overall Data YTD (based on December 31, 2017-December 31, 2018)

**employees  
served**

**1,456**

**services  
requested**

**4,535**

**employee  
retention**

**88%**

**return on  
investment**

**311%**

job saves

364

new referrals

1,821

employees with  
access to coach

12K+

1 coaching/follow up  
*1,400+ requests*

2 financial/financial literacy  
*290+ requests*

3 counseling\*  
*270+ requests*

4 housing  
*150+ requests*

5 legal assistance  
*70+ requests*

top  
five  
services  
requested

\*number includes career & personal

### honorable mentions

*(service requests of 50 or more)*

clothing



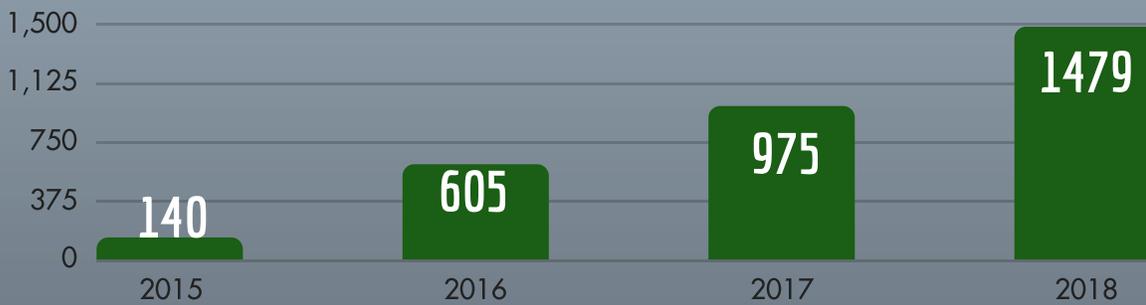
health/insurance



utilities

# 2018 COMPARISONS

Overall Growth of New Distinct Employees Seen by a Success Coach Yearly 2014-2018





# 2018 COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS STORIES

**These success stories and countless more are only due to ERN-NY's amazing partnerships and collaborations!**

*An employee was having serious life issues struggling with a divorce and alcoholism.*

The Success Coach worked with an employee over the course of a year across a broad range of issues including child support struggles, divorce struggles, housing, securing food and dealing with alcoholism. Through extensive coaching on subjects such as communication, attitude/perspective adjustments, organization of money, and priorities, the employee has grown by leaps and bounds. They have now graduated from an outpatient substance abuse program, secured housing suitable for visitation with their child, smoothed out a very burdensome divorce, and ironed out problems with child support. The employee has put a plan in place to pay off debts and secure a piece of land to create housing of their own! This story continues to be blanketed with many successes and the coach/employee team continue toward building the life envisioned for the employee.

*An employee's power was shut off while in an abusive living situation.*

The Employee was short on money and needed food and clothing for their children. The Success Coach worked with the National Grid Advocate on a reasonable amount to pay each month to get the power turned back on. The coach and employee talked about the importance of having a safe living environment for the whole family. The employee ended up telling their abusive partner to leave and the Success Coach gave the employee the number for Domestic Violence hotline. The coach connected the employee with food and clothing for their children-- including winter coats for the family.

*An employee behind on rent due to spouse's severe medical issues.*

The Success Coach and employee met to discuss finances and come up with a budget to help with financial hardships. It was clear that more assistance was necessary, so the SAVE Loan process through First NY FCU was initiated. The employee's loan application was approved and their landlord was given the outstanding rent. The employee was also able to refinance a car loan already in existence to save an additional \$70 per month.

**Thank you to all the businesses, agencies and  
non-profits who played a part in employee  
success in 2018!**



reducing turnover costs  
improving performance  
creating a better workplace culture

## What are ERNs?

Employer Resource Networks are private-public consortia whose purpose is improved workforce retention through employee support and training.

## How it works

Success Coaches serve as a direct conduit to community resources and services that provide fast relief for many issues that employees face, including reliable transportation, workplace conflict, childcare, housing challenges, family challenges, etc.

The onsite Success Coach is a confidential resource that employees can access on a predictable, ongoing basis. Employees who face a crisis from lack of resources can get immediate, personal relief, onsite.

ERNs in New York are administered by the following organizations:



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