Temple’s sixth annual Neighbors Job Fair brought representatives from more than 35 businesses, agencies and organizations, including Independence Blue Cross, SugarHouse Casino, Rite Aid and PECO-Excelon, to Temple’s campus in May to connect with residents of the surrounding neighborhoods seeking jobs.

Sponsored by Temple’s Office of Human Resources’ Division of Community Outreach and Hiring, the job fair is part of a larger outreach effort known as Temple’s Community Hiring Initiative. The goal of the initiative is to provide area residents with the resources they need to achieve their employment goals.

The job fair is one example of Temple’s ongoing commitment to the North Philadelphia community, said Kenneth E. Lawrence, Jr., senior vice president for government, community and public affairs.

“At Temple, we want our neighbors to think of us as a partner and a resource,” Lawrence said.

As part of this outreach effort, the university offers workshops designed to increase a candidate’s chances of employment at Temple and elsewhere. The workshops cover topics such as resume writing, interviewing skills and job search techniques and provide hands-on training to enhance workplace skills and personal effectiveness.

As a result of the initiative, ten percent of Temple employees currently come from the neighborhoods adjacent to either Main Campus or the Health Sciences Center; the university has hired nearly 1,400 individuals from the community around Main Campus and the Health Sciences Center over the past five years. Community residents have also obtained employment with other local businesses.

“We recognize that the future of Temple and North Philadelphia are dependent on one another,” said Karen Ward, assistant vice president for employment. “At Temple, we work hard to bring professional development and job-seeking resources to our neighbors.”

Representatives from more than 35 organizations, including Philadelphia’s SugarHouse Casino, shared information on employment opportunities with residents of the community surrounding Temple at the sixth annual Neighbors Job Fair.
Partnership Profile

Temple works with Philadelphia schoolchildren

Through the College of Education and a number of offices and student organizations, Temple is deeply engaged in Philadelphia’s public schools. Each year, more than 1,200 Temple students donate their time to work with Philadelphia’s school children by participating as Big Brothers, Big Sisters; teaching innovative music, dance and arts programs in underserved schools and neighborhoods; and helping prepare and guide students as they apply to college.

“Temple is dedicated to supporting the educational achievement of all Philadelphians,” said Kenneth E. Lawrence Jr., senior vice president for government community and public affairs. “Having a presence in the public school system is a crucial aspect of enhancing learning throughout the city.”

As a partner with the School District of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Temple has formalized its service to area schools. More than 150 students in Temple’s College of Education conduct their student teaching in Philadelphia schools each year, and Temple’s general education program includes the Philadelphia Experience, which requires students to get involved in the community and local schools as part of coursework. Additionally, Temple students engage Philadelphia students outside the classrooms and academic programs by working with a wide range of community organizations. Through work with faith-based and non-profit organizations such as Tree House Books, Temple provides after-school homework help. Students also regularly volunteer time with students at the Village of Arts and Humanities, Arthur Ashe Youth Tennis, Philly Goes to College, the East Park Revitalization Alliance and nearby Pennrose and Nelson recreation centers.

Temple continues to receive accolades for engagement and service

Over the past year, Temple has been recognized at the local and national levels for its many efforts to serve and engage with members of the community.

The university was recently honored as a leader in higher education community service by being named to the 2010 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest national recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to service. This is the third year Temple has received this distinction from The Corporation for National and Community Service, which has administered the honor roll since 2006. The honor roll recognizes institutions of higher education that support exemplary community service programs and raise the visibility of best practices in campus-community partnerships.

“As a university we strive to encourage our students, employees and alumni to dedicate themselves to serving the community,” said Temple President Ann Weaver Hart, “I am pleased and honored to accept this award from the President on behalf of the countless members of the Temple community who volunteer their time to helping others.”

In January, the university was among 115 higher educational institutions nationwide selected for the 2010 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The selection is a national acknowledgement of the degree of mutually beneficial collaboration between Temple and its greater community.

Institutions were chosen based on their level of curricular engagement with the community as well as community service and collaborative partnerships. The Carnegie Foundation, an independent policy and research center, cited the university’s “excellent alignment among mission, culture, leadership, resources and practices that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement.”

Another recognition came in December, from the regional chapter of a distinguished advocacy group. The Urban League of Philadelphia presented Temple with its 2010 Community Service Award at its annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Community Empowerment Awards Luncheon.

The award recognizes Temple’s ongoing efforts to provide high-quality education, job opportunities and medical care to underserved members of the community. The League cited Temple’s range of community programs across all of its schools and colleges, the more than 46,000 hours faculty, students and staff volunteer each year, and the free medical services the university provides through its medical, dental and podiatry schools.
Temple welcomes the construction of nearby international student housing

In October 2010, Beech Interplex and Temple University broke ground at the site of Beech’s latest community development project: Beech International Apartments at Temple University.

The complex is being built by Beech on the 1500 block of Cecil B. Moore Ave., just off of Temple’s Main Campus. It will house the university’s growing population of international students, faculty and researchers, as well as students studying international affairs. It will also include a café and retail shops.

“This is a partnership that involves jobs for our community, homes for our students and a welcoming place for international students and international scholars,” said Temple President Ann Weaver Hart. “This is where Temple will welcome the world.”

Richard Bazelon, chairman of Beech Interplex Inc., noted that the “project will enhance Temple University, the community and Philadelphia through its presence” in what has long been an empty lot next to a developed commercial strip of shops, offices and housing.

The 100-unit residential facility is expected to create more than 200 short-term construction jobs and 50 long-term positions once the building opens. Beech plans to hire a majority of the facility’s staff from the local North Philadelphia community.

Beech International Apartments will open in the fall.

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Student Profile  Gabriella Rovito

‘Miss Gabbie’ teaches nutrition to area kids

When Miss Gabbie comes to visit the Paul V. Fly Elementary School kindergarteners in Norristown, Pa., the children know they’re in for a treat — literally.

Miss Gabbie is Gabriella Rovito, a Master of Public Health student who has been visiting the children since October as part of her Albert Schweitzer Fellowship to teach them about healthy habits related to nutrition. Every other week, Miss Gabbie visits five classrooms and gives a lesson on healthy eating, followed by a taste-test of the food she’s just discussed.

Rovito’s curriculum is based on the Kindergarten Initiative (KI), a program run through The Food Trust in Philadelphia, where she was an intern for several years. The KI program stipulates that in order to participate, a school must meet the requirements for the SNAP-ED program, an extension of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that provides schools with nutrition education. This was the first year that Paul V. Fly was not eligible, so Rovito elected to use her funding from the Albert Schweitzer Foundation to extend it for another year.

“Childhood obesity is rampant among young children, and research has shown that healthy eating habits develop early in life,” she said. “The goal is to introduce children to healthy foods in hopes that their preferences will carry over into the home.”

And so far, it seems to be working. Lauren Zibelman, a kindergarten teacher at Paul V. Fly, has seen first-hand the effects of instilling good habits early on.

“Introducing healthy choices as early as possible helps them become a natural way of life, rather than something that has to be done,” she said. “The children love it when Miss Gabbie comes to visit.”
**Partner Profile: Habitat for Humanity**

Student volunteers work to ensure a healthy Habitat

Temple enjoys strong relationships with many community partners, including non-profit helping organizations such as the Philadelphia chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Established in Philadelphia in 1985, Habitat marshals the resources of a network of volunteers to build homes for families in need. The chapter has dedicated 153 homes in Philadelphia, including numerous projects in Temple’s North Philadelphia community, so a partnership with the university has grown naturally.

A standing group of Temple students volunteers at Habitat project sites at least twice per school year, lending muscle to the construction of new family homes. Other students staff the organization’s local ReStore building supply stores, which sell donated goods at discounted prices. The university also provides warehouse space for donations, which allows Habitat to increase its sales in support of future building projects.

Temple’s Architecture Department has collaborated on the design of several new Habitat homes, and graduate students from the Fox School of Business have also pitched in, devising business plans for a new ReStore location in Kensington that will open later this year.

Most recently, Habitat has created a position on its board of directors for a Temple business student to serve as a non-voting fellow each year. “We are very appreciative of Temple’s support,” said Habitat Philadelphia Executive Director Frank Monaghan. “They are making a difference, making us much more viable, helping us build houses.”

**Temple program gives small non-profits an edge**

Twenty years ago, Richard De Jesus started the non-profit Richard and Friends as a way of helping his neighbors facing food emergencies and crises such as homelessness. Today De Jesus, who runs the organization with daughter Jessica Castro out of his North Philadelphia home, remains as committed as ever, but must compete for scarce resources in the city’s increasingly crowded non-profit arena.

Temple’s Non-Profit Management Certificate program is helping the father-daughter pair rise to the challenge. The program offers an ongoing series of seminars and workshops designed to help small non-profits strengthen their insider knowledge and technical expertise so they can find and exploit funding opportunities.

De Jesus and Castro have been attending the classes—which are taught by Temple professors and administrators—since last fall, gaining expertise in grant writing, financial management, social media and organizational effectiveness.

“I basically help my father run his program,” said Castro. “We go together so we can build our skills and make sure our organization stays afloat. We have learned how to write grants, look for funding resources and be a more professional organization.”

The program is a collaborative effort among several administrative entities at Temple: the Center for Social Policy and Community Development and the School of Social Work under the College of Health Professions and Social Work; Temple University Harrisburg; and the Office of Community Relations.

The program is designed for emerging leaders who live in the communities they serve, rather than paid executives who run large non-profits. It is funded by the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND) and Learn and Serve America.

“The non-profit sector doesn’t have the same professional development requirements that other fields have,” said Hillary Kane, director of PHENND. “This is a way to provide support and training to folks who don’t normally get the opportunity.”
Health Information Professions program aims to close unemployment gap

A new Temple program is providing a pathway to jobs in one of the nation’s fastest-growing employment areas.

Funded by a $1.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children and Families, Temple’s Health Information Professions (HIP) Career Pathways Initiative offers qualified low-income residents free training leading to certification for positions in medical accounts and electronic health records.

The U.S. Department of Labor has classified health information professions as an emerging job market. With Philadelphia’s unemployment at nearly 2 percent above the national average, the program is designed to help more city residents find work.

“We want to empower low-income people with the opportunity to get into a rapidly growing field where they’ll be able to earn their own self-sustaining wages,” said Shirley Moy, interim director of the Center for Social Policy and Community Development (CSPCD), which is coordinating the program.

The center also offers supplemental help during participation in the Career Pathways Initiative, including childcare services, adult literacy services and case management.

Non-credit certification takes about 18 weeks, but the program also offers assistance with scholarships and tuition help to eligible students who enroll in credit-bearing programs leading to an associate’s or bachelor’s degree in health information management or master’s degree in health informatics. Upon completion of the program, CSPCD will assist with job placement.

“We understand that success doesn’t mean simply completing the training program,” said Moy. “To that end, we’re offering supportive services to break down some of the barriers that impede access to achievement—things like transportation, childcare issues and lack of social supports.”

The inaugural class of the HIP Career Pathways Initiative recently completed their orientation at Temple’s Main Campus, and several participants lauded the program’s support system.

“This program is beyond what any technical school offers in terms of support,” said participant Naemah Felder, a single parent to four girls. “This is a much better opportunity, both in terms of time and the level of assistance you receive.”

Veterans programs offer support for those who have served

Temple is making it easier than ever for our troops to find the support they deserve back home.

Through its participation in the federal Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program, the university provides access to a range of benefits for those who have served the nation in the armed forces. As a result of the program, which provides veterans with up to the highest tuition rate for a Public university, in-state veterans receive full-tuition benefit to attend Temple. The Yellow Ribbon program also helps veteran students cover the costs of housing and books by providing a monthly stipend of up to $1,000.

“Temple has a long history of supporting vets coming back from active military service,” said William Parshall, executive director of Temple’s Ambler and Center City campuses. “We’ve really stepped up our efforts to recruit vets and build up the infrastructure within the university to meet their needs.”

The university is getting the word out about these and other benefits through monthly Veteran Information Sessions. The sessions are held at Temple University Center City campus on the third Wednesday of each month, and periodically at Temple Ambler.

On campus, veterans are supported by a task force comprising key administrators from various departments, including Career Services, the Office of Disability Resources and Services and the Tuttleman Counseling Center, among others. Students have also recently formed the Temple Veteran’s Association, which provides a forum for veterans to connect with one another in an informal setting.

As of the fall 2010 semester, there were 280 self-identified veterans among Temple’s students and 673 among faculty and staff.

“We owe them all a debt of gratitude,” said Parshall. It’s appropriate that we reach out to them and help them achieve the education that they’ve put on hold to defend our country.”
Temple researchers address community concerns

Temple’s researchers are working to address the health concerns of the surrounding community through various research initiatives.

The School of Medicine recently partnered with local volunteers—called community ambassadors—to act as links between researchers and their neighbors. In December, the first group of ambassadors completed training at the Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities (CMHHD) on community-based practices.

Ambassadors educate community members about research processes and protocols while providing researchers information on which health priorities are most important to their neighbors.

Several of the ambassadors have also gone through training in Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies and received certification in Human Subjects Protection, which allows them to participate in research with human subjects at Temple and other sites.

A major concern of the ambassadors is getting youth interested in health and science. To that end, they hosted Youth Health Day to raise interest in health careers, especially among African Americans and Latinos, and offer tips for healthy living.

“It’s not just a one-sided benefit for researchers,” said Majeedah Rashid, the chief operating officer of the Nicetown Community Development Corporation and an ambassador. “It can benefit everyone.”

Another local community to benefit from Temple’s research initiatives is Asian Americans. Temple’s Center for Asian Health, now in its 10th year, is dedicated to reducing cancer and health disparities among this group.

Through community-based participatory research, the center has partnered with more than 250 Asian community organizations to reach more than 200,000 Asian Americans through outreach programs. Participants receive in-person health education and screening.

“The center’s mission is to raise the physical, mental and social health of Asian Americans to the highest possible level,” said Grace Ma, the center’s founder and director, and a professor of Public Health in the College of Health Professions and Social Work.

Through the Patient Navigation program, the center helps Asian Americans, who often face language barriers, connect patients with providers.

The partnership between Ma’s research team and Asian community leadership has led to more than 50 NIH-funded community-based participatory research projects. The latest grant will fund a nationally comprehensive study on cancer disparities.

Outpatient clinic among initiatives that extend dental school’s service

Several new federally funded Kornberg School of Dentistry initiatives will expand the delivery of oral healthcare in Philadelphia’s underserved communities.

The initiatives include establishing an outpatient community dental clinic at the school; creating a Master of Public Health degree track with the College of Health Professions and Social Work to train dentists to promote community health; and enhancing the pediatric dentistry program and its community outreach.

“This will be the first program in the country where we are combining education in clinical dentistry with public health,” said Kornberg School of Dentistry Dean Amid Ismail, who received a five-year, $2.17 million grant to establish the new outpatient community dental clinic. “Most of our current dental programs focus solely on clinical training of dentists.

The new outpatient clinic will be separate from the Kornberg School’s existing educational dental clinic, at which student dentists serve nearly 19,000 people (80,000 visits) per year under the close monitoring of Temple faculty. The new clinic will be staffed by full-time dentists and support personnel as well as dental residents in the new MPH program, and it will expand the capacity of the school to meet the extensive dental needs of the community in North Philadelphia, said Ismail.

The new outpatient clinic will be in operation this summer, with the first cohort of MPH students enrolled beginning July 1.

A second $298,000 grant was awarded to Meredith Bogert, associate professor and director of the Advanced Dental Education program, to completely equip the new 10-chair outpatient clinic.

A third, five-year $1.64 million grant was awarded to Mark Helpin, acting chair of Pediatric Dentistry in the Kornberg School, to train dental students, medical students and other medical personnel in infant dental care and oral healthcare, and establish comprehensive health homes for children’s medical and dental care.

For the past 10 years, Temple’s Center for Asian Health has worked side-by-side with Asian-American communities along the East Coast through events like free screenings and health education fairs, to provide better research outcomes that address the unique health concerns of Asian Americans.
Temple Performing Arts Center starts student arts initiative

A new initiative designed by the Temple Performing Arts Center will offer free arts programming to students enrolled in selected local elementary and secondary schools.

Eyes Wide Open in North Philadelphia, which will be supported by a two-year grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation as part of its Knight Arts Challenge, will invite local students to campus to experience a range of live performances in dance, chamber music and theater.

The program was designed to give local students early exposure to the arts, said Sue Rock, Temple Performing Arts Center director of programming.

“Many of the schools in our area have very little access to arts programming,” said Rock. “We wanted to design a program that allowed students to discover the arts in their own backyard.”

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation’s Knight Arts Challenge is a $9 million initiative supporting innovative projects that inspire and enrich Philadelphia’s communities.

For its inaugural challenge, The Knight Foundation received more than 1,700 applications from the Greater Philadelphia region. The Temple Performing Arts Center was one of 32 arts-based programs selected to receive the foundation’s inaugural grant. Recipients were chosen based on their ability to create programming that complements the Foundation’s mission to improve communities and spur local economic growth through the arts.

New program aims to create future string teachers, performers

Recognizing the difference the arts can make for young people, Temple is a leader in community arts education through programs such as the Philadelphia String Project.

The new community-based music instruction program hosted by the Boyer College of Music and Dance offers group string lessons at a reduced price to children who may not otherwise have access to music instruction.

The project builds on the success of the Community Music Scholars program, another Boyer program that offers community music instruction.

“Children who study music intensely are said to have everything from better academics to better attendance and lower dropout rates,” said Mark Huxsoll, director of Community Music Scholars.

The Philadelphia String Project fills a gap in the local music education landscape by training the next generation of string performers and educators. Classes are led by Boyer undergraduate students majoring in music education and performance. Participants include a mix of mostly third and fourth graders from Philadelphia schools.

Many of the students come from schools where 95 percent of the student population participates in the free lunch program, a marker for the economic level of the families, said Melissa Douglas, coordinator of the Philadelphia String Project.

“One of the benefits is that children get to visit a college campus, they get used to being here and they’re able to develop a one-on-one relationship with an instructor who encourages their talent and challenges them to do their best,” said Douglas.

In addition to increasing the number of up-and-coming young string players, the project also provides valuable experience to college string musicians, thereby strengthening and growing the pool of qualified string teachers. Undergraduates involved in the program act as professional teachers, instructing classes, recruiting students, planning lessons, writing report cards, keeping records and conducting orchestra. As a result, said Huxsoll, many discover that they enjoy teaching.

The Philadelphia String Project is funded by the National Association of Music Merchants through the National String Projects Consortium and the Children Can Shape the Future organization.
Computer donation helps bridge Philadelphia’s digital divide

With printed phone books, help wanted ads and classified listings trending toward obsolescence, access to the Internet is no longer a luxury—it’s becoming a necessity for daily living. Yet for as many as 40 percent of Philadelphians, online access remains out of reach.

To help bridge this digital divide, Temple recently partnered with the City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia School District to create a community computer laboratory open to residents of North Philadelphia. The university recently installed 15 refurbished computers at the John F. Hartranft Elementary School, near Temple’s Main Campus, to provide online access for both school students and adults from the nearby community.

“This opportunity with the lab is not just about the computers and the learning that will take place,” said Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, at the lab’s grand opening event in January. “It’s another opportunity for true community partnership and engagement.”

Staffed by community volunteers, the lab will be open after school hours. Temple instructors will provide free classes in which adults can learn basic computing and word processing skills.

The project was coordinated by Temple’s Office of Community Relations, with computers provided by the university’s Computer Recycling Center, which refurbishes and redistributes used equipment. Since 2003, the center has donated more than 1,200 computers to local organizations. The Dell PCs installed at Hartranft are four to five years old, but have been completely restored and updated with office applications and virus scanning software provided by the Philadelphia School District.

“Giving these computers is just one more indication of how committed Temple University is to community empowerment, community engagement and really being a partner with this particular community,” said Nutter.

Clothing drive outfits the local workforce

Going to work for the first time—or re-entering the workforce—can be nerve-wracking, but Temple’s efforts have helped to make job hunting a bit easier for local residents.

To help give local workers a leg up in their job searches, Temple’s Office of Community Relations recently hosted its annual collection drive to benefit members of the community in need of professional clothing for job interviews.

Temple faculty and staff dropped off lightly used men’s and women’s professional clothing at bins located around campus. All the items—which included more than 65 women’s and men’s suits, 75 ties, 15 sports jackets, 50 dresses, 35 dress shirts and 20 blouses—were collected and delivered to area service organizations.

“We’re pleased by the university’s efforts this year,” said Beverly Coleman, assistant vice president for community relations and economic development. “The success of the clothing drive indicates the generosity and compassion of Temple’s employees.”

This year, Temple partnered with the National Comprehensive Center for Fathers, a Philadelphia-based organization that helps more than 2,000 men dress professionally each year through its “Work ‘n’ Style” program, and the Career Wardrobe, the nation’s largest independent, community-based non-profit organization that serves women entering the workforce by providing them with professional attire.