



For immediate release

Robert Reich Joins Advisory Board at Springboard Forward ***Former Secretary of Labor cites potential in workforce development model***

Mountain View, CA – November 12, 2004 Springboard Forward, an innovator in on-the-job coaching and mentoring programs for low wage and entry level earners, announces the addition of Robert Reich to its advisory board. The former Secretary of Labor in the Clinton Administration is lending his expertise to the organization in support of its model to help the working poor lift themselves out of poverty and realize their potential.

A recent report from the United Way of the Bay Area found that one in four families around the Bay has income too low to pay for basic necessities such as housing, food, transportation, child care, health care, and taxes. Springboard Forward (SBF) has pioneered a new coaching and development program that works directly with employers to motivate entry-level workers, and address the very real problems facing the working poor in the San Francisco Bay Area. SBF offers those in need who have just started a new job the tools and coaching they require to improve their incomes, career prospects and lives.

“Springboard Forward has it exactly right,” says Secretary Reich. “On-the-job coaching to build confidence and improve communication offers skills that are useful across all industries.” SBF’s innovation is to work with its clients after they have landed a job – a situation that often gives a temporary lift, but is then overcome by the reality of the income they can actually earn. “Outlining a sequence of steps and executing a plan is critical for advancement in any job,” Reich went on to say. “Springboard Forward is an excellent model.”

“We are thrilled that Secretary Reich has joined our advisory board, and look forward to his guidance as we move forward,” says Elliott Brown, president and founder of SBF. “As we look back at our successes with over 250 clients in the last year, we know that his support and insight will help us to expand our offerings to the nearly 20 percent of Bay Area families that are working, but still struggle to make ends meet.”

About Springboard Forward

Springboard Forward (SBF) is a non-profit organization that teaches low-wage workers to launch careers and lift themselves out of poverty by working directly with their employers. Launched in 2002, SBF has already provided employment and advancement services to over 600 low-wage and entry-level workers through a variety of customized programs and services. In partnership with employers like Home Depot, Stanford University and the City of Palo Alto, SBF currently serves clients in Silicon Valley.

SBF is the recipient of the internationally recognized *Ashoka Fellowship*, and was named to *Fast Company Magazine’s Top 40 Social Entrepreneurship Firms* in the US in 2004. In 2003, SBF won the Silicon Valley HR Symposium’s *Top Award for Innovation*.

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