

## Nygard: Brighter Days Ahead

<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Provider</b>	Nygard
<b>Location</b>	<a href="#">Western Canada</a>
<b>Highlights</b>	The closure of the Nygard plant on May 16, 2008 was one of many in the garment industry, which was once the second-largest industry in Manitoba. In 1997, about 9,000 people worked in the industry; by 2009, that number had dwindled to 2,000 as many major players moved their manufacturing plants from Winnipeg.
<b>Overview</b>	In May 2008, the Nygard garment manufacturing plant in Winnipeg closed, laying off 230 people. Many were immigrant women with limited literacy and numeracy skills. Working with the Manitoba government, local colleges, Unite Manitoba Joint Labour Council and Options for Success, a local company, many of these workers received retraining and moved to other careers.
<b>Issues Targeted</b>	<p>For the workforce, other options in the garment trade were few. The garment manufacturers that remained in Winnipeg are mainly small and cater to niche or boutique markets. To find other employment, most workers would have to look in another sector.</p> <p>Most of the former Nygard employees were immigrant women -- coming from India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, China, Vietnam and Cambodia. Some had worked at the factory for 30 years, while others were newcomers with limited language skills. Their jobs ranged from sewing machine operators to warehouse labourers and quality assurance personnel.</p>
<b>Key Features</b>	<p>The adjustment program for Nygard had two elements; the Nygard Labour Adjustment Project and the Nygard Job Creation Program.</p> <p>1) Nygard Labour Adjustment Project</p> <p>Options for Success, a private company, helped workers at the time of the initial layoff. Founded in 1999, the Government of Manitoba, employers and unions frequently hire the firm to provide career and transition services.</p> <p>Options for Success worked with 225 workers, providing labour market services including developing employment/action plans, inventorying skills, developing</p>

	<p>resumes, and executing a marketing blitz to employers seeking labour and production employees.</p> <p>The skills assessment showed that 30 of the workers lacked Basic English skills. These individuals enrolled in a special year-long adult-education course offered through the Winnipeg School Division. Others simply needed help enrolling with local educational institutions, such as Red River College, or in honing their job-hunting and resumé-writing skills.</p> <p>2) Nygard Job Creation Project (JCP)</p> <p>The Nygard Job Creation Program involved a group of 50 participants and began in September 2008. In the first 6 months, workers were provided with intensive language and essential skills upgrading (learning to use computers, fill out forms, follow instructions, work in teams, how to ask questions) to prepare them to train for a new career. One of them was Rose Lozano, an immigrant from the Philippines who had sewn clothes and done quality checks at Nygard for 34 years when she got her layoff notice. For 20 years, she'd been moonlighting at a care home, where, because of her lack of training, she was largely relegated to cleaning and laundry duties. Her closest contact with the clients she wished to serve was to bring them down to the dining room for their meals.</p> <p>Lozano enrolled in the health-care aide certification program operated by St. James Assiniboia Continuing Education at John Taylor Collegiate. The health-care aide course, a pilot project involving the provincial Labour and Competitiveness, Training and Trade departments, concluded in the summer of 2009 with a six-week practicum -- three weeks at a hospital and three weeks in a personal-care setting.</p> <p>Others workers enrolled in culinary arts, early childhood education and hair-styling and other programs at other institutions.</p>
<p><b>Key Results</b></p>	<p>According to the 2009-2010 Options for Success Annual report, the organization provided labour market services for 225 employees. All clients but three moved on to pursue English language and literacy, and retraining for new career/jobs.</p> <p>Of the 50 participants who pursued retraining through the Nygard Job Creation Program, 47 completed the training.</p>
<p><b>Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Nygarde Garment Factory, Winnipeg, Manitoba</p>
<p><b>Sectors</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Manufacturing</a></p>

<b>Projects</b>	<a href="#">Worker Adjustment</a>
<b>Sponsors</b>	<a href="#">Business: medium sized (between 100 and 499 employees)</a>
<b>Target Audiences</b>	<a href="#">Immigrants and foreign-trained workers</a> <a href="#">Members of visible minority groups</a> <a href="#">Women</a> <a href="#">Workers</a> <a href="#">Workers with low levels of literacy or essential skills</a> <a href="#">Workers with low levels of official language proficiency</a>
<b>Target Audience Details</b>	The 230 workers laid off as a result of the closure of the Nygard garment factory.
<b>Initiative Types</b>	<a href="#">Practice</a>
<b>Funding Mechanisms</b>	<p>The Nygard Worker Labour Adjustment Project was funded by Employment Manitoba and supported by UniteHere, the workers' union.</p> <p>Entrepreneurship Training and Trade, Winnipeg, Workplace Education Manitoba, and Adult Language Training Branch provided the financial assistance for the Nygard Job Creation Program.</p>