

Head of area CETA training program hopes it will survive budget crunch

By KATHLEEN MORAN
Editor

The impending change in national leadership which has many administrators of federal programs quaking in their boots hasn't panicked Dorothy Kaitz, acting director of the CETA job-training program based in Troy.

Any program which has been so successful at matching people with jobs has to survive budget cuts, she said.

But it already has suffered a one-third reduction in funding for the fiscal year which began in October, Ms. Kaitz said. The current \$140,000 budget means the office will service fewer people during 1980-81, she said.

In the five years Ms. Kaitz has worked in the Vocational Instruction and Placement office located in Troy High School, she has seen hundreds of adults and youths placed in jobs. Last year alone, 900 persons applied for work at the VIP office. More than 300 found jobs, another 300 are being processed for work. The remaining one-third were determined ineligible, referred to other agencies or found work elsewhere, she said.

THE CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act) funds are the lifeblood of the program, and could be

cut back drastically if President-elect Ronald Reagan makes good his promises to cut federal spending drastically.

But Ms. Kaitz said she thinks Reagan aims to run federal programs, not programs with proven records of success such as Troy's VIP. Besides, "It takes a whole administration to change something like this" rather than one person, she said.

"I'm a taxpayer too and I think taxes are too high and some areas can be cut," she said. "If I felt this program wasn't doing the job, I'd be the first to say we shouldn't get funded."

But CETA has an extensive system for determining eligibility, charting career paths, matching people with jobs and then following up regularly on CETA-paid employees.

Pains are taken to make sure people aren't put in jobs where "they are programmed to fail," she said.

"At VIP, there's never any doubt that people come first," she said. "This offers a very viable alternative to people being unemployed."

Once the unemployed are placed in subsidized jobs, CETA aims to have the workers move into unsubsidized jobs in the public or private sector. The Troy office has a proven record of success in that area. More than 85 percent of the persons placed in public-service jobs

subsequently found unsubsidized positions, said Ms. Kaitz. And during the time their salaries were subsidized, they were tax-paying citizens, rather than welfare recipients, she said.

THE ELIGIBILITY requirements for CETA jobs vary in the programs administered from the Troy office. The stringent income-requirement assures that those who really need work are hired, she said. A family of four can't have an income exceeding \$8,820, excluding unemployment compensation.

"That's rock bottom," she said. Ironically, the need for jobs is growing in Michigan at a time when CETA funding is shrinking. "There's a bigger need now than ever before," Ms. Kaitz said.

The flood of applications the agency has received is one indicator of the recession. The youth program has supplied another indication. Normally the agency builds an absentee force for the youth-training program because it

serves young people who sometimes have attitude problems.

"This year, we had kids who couldn't get their hands on enough hours," she said. "There were a lot more parents laid off and they needed more spending money."

When January arrives, Ms. Kaitz and other CETA supporters will have their fingers crossed, hoping for more funding for jobs rather than forcing more people on welfare.

Cancer seminar set for Dec. 11

A Focus On Living (With Cancer) meeting will be held on Thursday, Dec. 11 at 7:30 p.m. at Orchard United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, Farmington.

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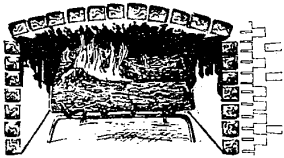
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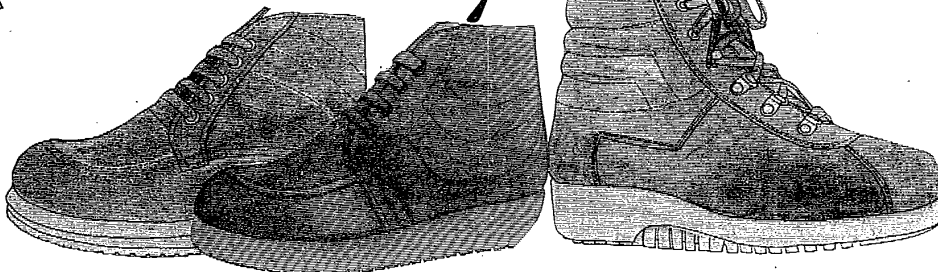
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