Job Quality

Improving the quality of jobs for low wage workers

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Strategies for improving employment outcomes

- Upgrade job
- Upskill worker
- Remove barriers
Wage Polarization

Hourly wages of workers by wage percentile

- High (90th percentile)
- Middle (50th percentile)
- Low (10th percentile)

Growth in wages

Source: Economic Policy Institute, State of Working America 2012
The Hollowing Out of Middle Class Jobs

Changes in employment by skill percentage (1980-2005)

Change in Employment by Occupation

Percent Change, 1980 to 2009

- Low skill: 110%
- Middle skill: 46%
- High skill: 100%

Source: Autor and Dorn (2013)

Source: Abel and Dietz 2011; U.S. Census Bureau
Who Earns Less Than $15 per Hour?

- 43% of all workers in GA, 37% in Atlanta
- Majority are women
- Disproportionately Black and Latino
- Vast majority are adults, not teens
- More than half have some college education and approximately 15% have a bachelor’s degree or higher
- Most are primary earners in their families
- Most are full-time

Source: American Community Survey 2016
What is job quality?

Working conditions
- Retirement savings
- Adequate hours

Wages
- Paid sick days

Benefits
- Worker engagement and voice

Income stability
- Schedules

Healthcare
- Fair and safe workplace

Paid family and medical leave
Can Better Jobs Lead to Better Business?

• Zeynep Ton shows that a Good Jobs Strategy can be effective in low-cost industries such as retail. Examples: Costco, Trader Joes, QuikTrip

• Recent study in Gap stores showed increased productivity in stores where managers were encouraged to provide more consistent schedules.

• Tight labor market creates opportunities for employers to focus on job quality
Additional Levers and Incentives to Increase Job Quality

- Public Policy
- Government Contracts
- Company Procurement Policies
- Community Benefit Agreements
- CDFI loans and other funds
Boston Fed Job Quality Initiative

• Online interview-based magazine *Invested* – Many Roads to Quality Work.

• Employer engagement partnership with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and Commonwealth Corporation.

• Promoting research on job quality to inform policy and practice.