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THE DELAWARE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

DWIB Digest

The Newsletter of the Delaware Workforce Investment Board

www.delawareworks.com/wib

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Welcome to the first newsletter of the Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB). The Governor's Workforce Investment Board is comprised of members from state government, the private business sector, local government, labor, education, and housing. The board, led by Chairman John McMahon, forms a public/private partnership that has oversight of federal funds to be used to help individuals in the state of Delaware (who have barriers to employment and other job seekers) increase their skill set through training, in order to meet the needs of Delaware employers.

This is accomplished by working with and through the One-Stop Delivery Centers which are located in each of the Department of Labor offices throughout Delaware (Wilmington, Newark, Dover and Georgetown). The Delaware Workforce Investment Board oversees and assists the Department of Labor with how employability and training services are delivered to the public.

The expertise that exists amongst the members of the board is second to none as it works with local, state and federal partners to assist with the delivery of services that give our clients the tools they need to improve their lives and to become self sufficient and work toward earning a sustainable living wage.

There are members on this Board who began serving the public workforce system when this body of members was known as the Private Industry Council (PIC). Through all of the changes, the board has remained steadfast in its decision to serve "the hardest to serve" in Delaware, and have not swayed from that commitment. It has been a pleasure to serve as staff to this incredible board for the past five years.

In the days ahead the Delaware Workforce Investment Board will be focusing on collaborative efforts around regional job growth, addressing the needs of our youth, customized training, marketing to business community, and other initiatives to meet the needs of the clients. Through this newsletter and its publisher Bill Potter, Deputy Director of the Delaware Workforce Investment Board, we hope you will get to know us and in turn we will get to know you, and together we will work to serve the citizens of this great State of Delaware.

For a listing of the Delaware Workforce Investment Board members and to learn more about the Board visit www.delawareworks.com/wib.

Gwen Jones
Executive Director
DE Workforce Investment Board

DOL ON THE MOVE WITH MOBILE ONE STOP

A new mobile high-tech employment office is on the road and could be headed your way.

Dubbed a Mobile One Stop, the \$280,000 camper converted to a high-tech unit resembling a satellite TV news van on steroids, can help workers and employers connect.

The unit is part of a move by the Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB), The Delaware Department of Labor's Division of Employment and Training (DET) and the division's Prison to Work Reentry Program, to bring more services to underserved populations.

Both job seekers and employers will benefit from the Mobile One Stop's 13 computer stations, which includes Internet access and resume preparation software.

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Delaware's new Mobile One Stop ready for action.

The unit is totally self contained and internet ready once its satellite dish is activated. This allows job seekers to use the onboard computers to conduct real time job searches, apply for openings and post resumes.

Not only will the Mobile One Stop help traditional job seekers but the unit can be brought to the prisons so individuals can conduct job searches ahead of their release dates.

The DWIB, DET and the Prison to Work Reentry Program look forward to assisting other agencies and businesses in the state, address workforce needs by bringing the Mobile One Stop, with all its resources, to onsite locations.

The goal is to meet the needs of the public and business community by taking services to where the customers are.

DET Makes Perfect



A 300 game in bowling, a 10 in gymnastics and a no hitter in baseball -- all signs of perfection. The Division of Employment and Training had its own perfect score by exceeding all the federally mandated performance measures for the program year ending last June.

The perfect report card gauges everything from participant success, to how much laid off workers earn when they get jobs. Though Delaware knocked the lights out of the performance measures, DET's Bob Clarkin, who watches the numbers, said it is no time to get complacent. The federal government is going to move the goalposts and make things harder, Clarkin said.

The news that DET met all its measures is a huge milestone, said DWIB Performance Measures Chairman Jeff Bross.

GED HELP ON THE WAY



Above Nancy Little watches as students take practice tests. Below Regina Kennedy works some math equations



Tia Tyson, 20, of Wilmington was so close to earning her high school diploma two years ago that she even attended her senior prom and then the sky came crashing in on the young woman.

A series of personal misfortunes caused her to leave school before finishing and since then door after door has closed in her face; she lacks educational credentials.

And unlike Chicken Little who thought the sky was falling, Tyson found out it actually could.

"You can't make it anywhere without a GED or high school diploma," she said.

But help is on the way thanks to the Delaware Workforce Investment Board, New Castle County Vo-Tech and Goodwill Industries of Delaware.

Tyson, along with about 35 other Delawareans lacking a GED or diploma, have been attending a GED preparation program sponsored by the three organizations.

The pilot program, under the direction of DWIB Executive Director Gwen Jones and New Castle County Adult Basic Education Coordinator Kathy Butler, is designed to meet the needs of job seekers who realize improving job opportunities begins with earning a GED.

"This program meets our clients where they are, by helping them realize their goal of getting a GED or high school diploma and then obtain improved employment or even go on to post-secondary education or training, Jones said

Students are referred by the Delaware Department of Labor's, Division of Employment Training, One Stop Career Center on Market Street in Wilmington.

Job seekers needing a GED are referred to the Goodwill Center at 300 Lea Blvd. where they are given an assessment, said program monitor Nancy Little.

The assessment tells students which subjects they need work on. The students complete a self-paced program until ready for the GED test.

The program, which began in early September, has about 35 students and two are ready to take the GED practice test. The practice test is the last step before taking the GED final test.

Youth Council Comes of Age – Chair’s Notes

The DWIB Youth Council is developing an aggressive agenda to enhance its ability to support programs connecting Delaware’s “neediest” and “at risk” youth (ages 14 to 21) with services that lead them to educational and long term employment opportunities.

The Youth Council expanded its membership this year by adding new and essential participants. The Council’s current membership includes:

Dolores Allen-McIntyre, Delaware Department of Services for Children Youth and Their Families Ferris School
Dana Sawyer, Delaware, Department of Services for Children Youth and Their Families
Amy Benjamin, Delaware, Department of Services for Children Youth and Their Families
Hon. Vince Lofink, State Legislature (DWIB Board Member)
Rhonda Austin, Job Corps
Sam Lathem, AFL-CIO
Jay Reed, Business Community (DWIB Board Member)
Kathy Butler, New Castle County Vo-Tech
Alice Coleman, Delaware Department of Health and Social Service (DWIB Board Member)
Dana Shreve, Business Community (DWIB Board Member)
Ed Crumlish, New Castle County Vo-Tech
Anna Street, Job Corps
Diane Griffith, Business Community (DWIB Board Member)
Hon. Valerie Woodruff, Delaware Department of Education (DWIB Board Member)
Andrea Guest, Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

There have been two Youth Council meetings since mid-year 2006: Both sessions were designed to provide members with a broad overview of the Youth Council’s 2006 objectives, and to establish a common baseline of understanding as the Council prepares to construct its strategic and operational plans for the upcoming Program Year beginning July 1, 2007.

Delaware applied for, and was one of 16 states selected to participate in an advance level technical assistance Youth Vision Forum. This forum, which was held in Atlanta GA in September, 2006, is sponsored by a collaborative partnership of Federal agencies.

Representatives of the “Delaware Team” were assembled from a diverse cross section of Delaware agencies. Each of the represented agencies have a vested interest in helping the State’s neediest youth acquire the necessary skills that will allow them to enter into, and remain, in the state’s work force. The objectives of the forum were to assist states by introducing them to processes and techniques that will help develop a vision for the youth in their home states.

MEET A STAFF MEMBER – FREDDY RODRIGUEZ

It's 7:45 a.m. and Freddy Rodriguez is doing what he does every workday morning; spray bottle in hand he cleans the glass tops of about 8 computer terminals in the Pencader One Stop – before the rush.

Rodriguez, an Employment Service Specialist with the Division of Employment and Training, will work with as many as 100 job seekers in a day, giving resume tips, mock interviews and in-depth assessments.



Freddy Rodriguez prepares applications for job seekers in Pencader

"I'm here because I feel and I can contribute," he says. "I think it is challenging."

Rodriguez, an Army retiree, is master of the Pencader's Resource Room and ready for the diverse challenges that go with it.

To hear him tell it, there are plenty.

Many clients come to the Resource Room unprepared to take advantage of it, he says.

Some haven't thought out their job histories before working on resumes or applications, others aren't computer savvy to conduct job searches, and still others are generally disorganized.

Even so he tries to help as best he can.

To do that, he stays current on the latest trends with a personal professional development program.

"I keep my eyes open, talk to my co-workers and review (workforce) development web sites."

Though his time in the resource room keeps him busy, he has also become the main interpreter for Spanish speaking clients.

"Talking to the clients in their native language gives me a greater insight to what is really going on," Rodriguez said. "It also helps them. This way they feel there is someone they can relate to."

At 8 a.m. he puts his spray bottle away, turns on his computer, and waits for the first client to arrive; it doesn't take long.

By 8:05 the room is half filled with people wanting help with the copy machine, the fax machine, resume builder software, and general job search advice.

Rodriguez smiles, looks at the clients and says, "No habla Ingles."

Everyone laughs and the day begins.

Delaware Workforce Investment Board Honors Agilent Technologies, DelTech, DOE For Science Kits

The Delaware Workforce Investment Board presented awards on Oct. 31, 2006 to individuals from Agilent Technologies of Centerville, Delaware Technical and Community College and the Delaware Department of Education for an after school project called "Science Experiments In A Box."

The three organizations trained mentors, who guided youth to use the science kits in after school programs, community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs and summer programs in hopes of raising awareness about careers in science.

Using a train-the-trainer approach, more than 120 mentors guided about 2,200 students through the experiments. These results smashed the initial goals of 50 mentors and 1,500 students. **Continued Next Page.**



Awards2. From L: Kathy Melvin, Delaware Department of Education Science Division; Sue Zawislak, Delaware Technical and Community College; and Bob Lydum, Agilent Technologies

“It just seemed a perfect fit,” said Agilent spokesman Bob Lydum. “There was an opportunity and we took it.” The opportunity presented itself when Delaware was awarded a \$250,000 bio-technology grant from the U.S. Department of Labor in June, 2004 as part of a federal outreach program to raise interest in science-based careers.

POTTER JOINS DWIB

The Delaware Work Force Investment Board tapped a Division of Employment and Training worker to fill out its staff naming Bill Potter deputy director.

Potter, a retired Army Officer, was working at the Pencader One Stop as its marketing specialist when given the nod for the job.

“I consider this one of those sacred trusts that rarely comes to a person,” Potter said. “I really appreciate the faith Gov. Minner and Secretary Sharpe have in me. I won’t let them down.”

Before joining DET, Potter worked as the business writer for the Delaware State News

in Dover.

“I guess you could call me a recovering journalist,” he quipped.

Before coming to Delaware, Potter held several active duty positions while assigned to the Montana Army National Guard.

He served in several combat battalions, as an Inspector General, an Army spokesman and the Chairman of the Recruiting and Retention Advisory Council for the eight Northwest states.

He holds a MA in Humanities from California State University, Dominguez Hills, is a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College and holds a BA in journalism from the University of Rhode Island..



The Delaware Workforce Investment Board

Chairman of the Delaware Workforce Investment Board - John McMahon

Chair, Public Relations and Community Outreach Committee - Patricia Creedon

Chair, Proposal Review and Certification Committee - Duane Wayman

Chair, Financial Oversight

Chair, Youth Council - Dana Shreve

Chair, Performance Measures & Customer Satisfaction - Jeff Bross

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