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THE DELAWARE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

DWIB DIGEST

The Newsletter of the Delaware Workforce Investment Board
Issue 3, July 12, 2007

Hon. Ruth Ann Minner, Governor

Hon. Thomas B. Sharp, Secretary of Labor

John McMahon, DWIB Chairman



The Spirit of any law is only as effective as the people who carry it out.

When the Workforce Investment Act became law on Aug. 7, 1998 it fell to workforce professionals to learn it, live it, and make it a reality. Sometimes it may seem like our successes are small in the big scheme of things and go unnoticed. So when we are successful and are recognized, it is definitely a time to celebrate and let the world know.

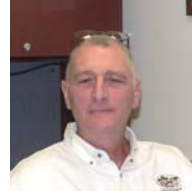
This is one of those times.

It was recently announced that the Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB), Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training (DOL-DET), and the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) are eligible for incentive funds for successfully meeting all the required performance measures mandated by the federal government for program year 2005.

Leaders up and down the ladder are brimming with pride.

"I am extremely proud of the efforts put forth by the DOL Division of Employment & Training staff that allowed for the State of Delaware to be one of only 9 states eligible for an incentive award as a result of meeting all 17 performance measures negotiated with the USDOL," Thomas B. Sharp, Delaware Secretary of Labor.

John McMahon, Chairman of the DWIB was equally bowled over at the accomplishment. "I am proud of each and every one of you," he said. "You don't get this kind of award without a lot of hard work on everyone's part."



For the DWIB each and every one truly means everyone. It takes all of us, employment services specialists, staff, state leaders, training providers, partners and the individuals we serve to be successful.

But success always comes with bumps in the road and it is important to realize that short-term setbacks are the building blocks of long term success.

Teddy Roosevelt, our 26th president, put it this way: "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; because there is no effort without error and shortcomings; but who does actually strive to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement and who at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly. So that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

Now is a great time to bask in glow of your achievement, but in the back of your mind remember what was once a goal is now a starting point. It is time to dare greatly ... strive to do the deed ... know the great enthusiasm ... the great devotion and spend yourself in a worthy cause.

Gwen Jones, Executive Director

Bill Potter, Deputy Director

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Reeder Named New DET Leader

The Delaware Department of Labor (DOL), Division of Employment and Training (DET) turned to one of its own when it tapped Lori Reeder to be its new director.

Reeder, with more than 15 years of state service, took the job when previous director Bob Strong was picked to become the Deputy Principal Assistant to Delaware Secretary of Labor Thomas B. Sharp.

The moves were announced mid-June by Secretary Sharp.

Reeder takes charge of a division which is doing very well and firing on all cylinders. She credits much of this to Strong's leadership.

"Bob did a great job," she said. "I have some really big shoes to fill."

Filling those shoes includes matching Strong's record of receiving incentive grant money from the federal government for three years in a row.

"That's a huge accomplishment," she said.

The federal government gives states incentive grants based on performance and this year Delaware was one of only nine states to garner an incentive grant. The Delaware grant was worth more than \$900,000.

Even though Reeder feels she has a lot to live up to, she brings a truckload of talent and experience to her new duties.

Her first nine years of state service were with the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) as a fiscal specialist where she learned the bare-knuckle lessons of managing state and federal dollars.

For the past six years she worked for DET as the division's deputy director.

Reeder, who brings a people-focused approach to leadership, says one of her core beliefs is in leadership by example.

While at DHSS, it was not uncommon for her to roll up her sleeves and dive in when things got tight, she said.

That fits with another of her core beliefs; it's people that make the

difference.

"Team and family are very important to me," Reeder said. "You see we are not only a team in DET, but also a family."

While that may be true there is another group of families which concerns her — the DET clients.

"What we do is important because we affect people and how they support their family," Reeder said.



Lori Reeder, new Director, Division of Employment and Training.



The Delaware Workforce Investment Board recently hosted the regional leadership meeting. Workforce professionals from West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia. The meeting was held at the Goodwill Building on Lea Boulevard in Wilmington.

WIRED GRANTS GO TO OTHER STATES *DWIB READY FOR CHALLENGE*

When Bill Potter, Deputy Director, Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB), found out the federal grant the state submitted with Maryland hadn't been approved, he was upset.

"It's okay," he said. "This just makes it a little harder to get the things done, but when we do get everything done, it'll feel even better."

BRAC

What he is hoping to get done is help Delawareans take advantage of a potential explosion of job opportunities resulting from an increase of civilian jobs at and around Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) in Maryland's Harford County.

Earlier this year the DWIB teamed with the Susquehanna Workforce Network (SWN) and the departments of labor from Delaware and Maryland and applied for a federal grant under the Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) initiative.

The federal government announced in mid-June the grants would go to 13 other states leaving Delaware and Maryland to figure the best way to take advantage of inbound gains from the military's

Base Realignment And Closure (BRAC) actions.

BRAC is an effort by US Department of Defense (DOD) to save money by closing some military bases, move military and civilian jobs from one base to another, and increase the size of other bases. APG is one of the bases set to grow.

As many as 45,000 jobs are anticipated in Cecil and Harford counties over the next ten years, says Potter.

"The growth at APG could be good news for Delawareans," he said. "The initial influx of jobs is high skill careers with excellent wages, but as time goes on the secondary and tertiary jobs will have good wages and perhaps broader appeal.

"Think about it; those counties can't sustain this kind of growth alone. This is a perfect opportunity for Delawareans."

As the communities in Harford and Cecil counties grow they will need all the infrastructure, services and products to go with it and workers in Delaware can help, Potter said.

Even though the federal grant didn't pan out the DWIB did get something perhaps even more valuable — new partners.

The process brought the two states together and kicked off discussions about the inbound jobs.

"Grant or not, growth seems to be coming," Potter said. "It will take lots of partners working together to ensure we get the most out of this opportunity."

WIRED



Colleen Morrone of Goodwill Delaware gives a tour of the ShopRite Training Facility for a recent DWIB sponsored meeting held at its Lea Boulevard location.

DWIB GETS AWARD, GRADUATES GET OPPORTUNITY



Photo Submitted by Goodwill DWIB Deputy Director Bill Potter, accepts an award on behalf of the DWIB at a recent Shop Rite graduation. From L: Bill Potter, Goodwill CEO Ted Van Name, and Wakefern Food Senior Manager Marty Glass.

A recent Friday the 13th was a lucky day for the Delaware Workforce Investment Board when it received an award from Goodwill Industries of Delaware.

The award, presented at a Shop Rite Cashier Training Program graduation on April 13, 2007, was accepted by DWIB Deputy Director Bill Potter.

“Receiving an award like this at an event celebrating workforce development is as good as it gets,” Potter said. “The DWIB is in the business of getting people ready for work and this program does that.”

The three year old Cashier Training Program is a four week school designed to teach students about life skills and cashier duties such as operating a cash register, scanning and bagging items and researching product prices, said Shannon O’Neill Goodwill’s marketing coordinator.

The mid-April graduation was the final step for seven people who

join more than 90 others who previously completed the program, O’Neill said.

More than 90 percent of the graduates from the program immediately begin working at Shop Rite.

While the job placement rate is high, so is the retention rate of workers graduating from the program. ShopRite reports a retention rate of more than 70 percent, while workers hired without the benefit of Goodwill training have an attrition rates as high as 90 percent.

The jewel in the crown of the training program may be Goodwill’s mock store complete with cash registers, food, scanners and customers.

The students get a wide breadth of experience in the training setting which includes dealing with irate customers and processing orders in a timely fashion.



Friends and family applaud at a recent graduation ceremony of the 13th Cashier Training Program held in mid-April. More than 200 people attended the event.



Left: - Helena Wallace speaks to the graduating class after getting a special recognition from her students.
Right - Wakefern Food Senior Manager Marty Glass explains the Cashier Training Program. US Senator Thomas Carper is at lower left.



Numbers Don't Lie – DET, DWIB, and DOE Best By Test

Venerable Seattle Seahawks coach Chuck Knox once put it this way, “What you do speaks so loudly, I can't hear what you say.”

And the “doing” by the Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB) the Delaware Department of Labor's Division of Employment and Training (DET) and the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) was heard loud and clear recently in Washington.

Working together the three were awarded incentives worth more than \$900,000 for exceeding federally mandated performance measure.

Delaware was one of only nine states to garner an award announced by the federal government in late April.

This is the third year in a row Delaware has reaped an incentive award based on its performance.

“(This) demonstrates the professionalism and commitment of DOL/DET employees to help Delaware citizens in their critical time of need,” said Thomas B Sharp, Secretary for the Delaware Department of Labor.

Planning is underway on how to best use the award.

Right now the plan includes expanding the DWIB's Adult Basic Education/GED program, buying new desktop computers for DET staff, and funding improvement initiatives in select DOE programs.

At the DWIB's recent quarterly board meeting in May its chairman John McMahon said the grant was an indication of a lot of hard work on the part of everyone involved. He especially mentioned how proud he was of all DET staff members.

Something Old, Something New; Website Now White and Blue

Looking gooooooood!

That's the verdict on the new Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB) website unveiled earlier in June.

The site now has the same look and feel as other State of Delaware websites.

Though it has new look it has the same web address so people won't have to change their favorites (we all know

<http://www.delawareworks.com/wib/index.shtml> is one of everyone's favorites).

The changes to the new look took a few months to orchestrate.

It required close coordination between Tim Li Delaware Department of Labor (DOL) computer guru and the DWIB.

Though up and running, the site will still need some fine tuning as events and requirements change.

If anyone experiences problems with the site contact Bill Potter at William.potter@state.de.us.

Don't Forget!

<http://www.delawareworks.com/wib/index.shtml>

DWIB KICKS OFF OUTREACH, SCORES WITH PROMOTION ITEMS

In March's Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB) newsletter, Executive Director Gwen Jones said the board was starting its outreach campaign.

That push got a real shot in the arm May 16, when the DWIB joined more than 300 business people and government officials at the Delaware Department of Labor 9th Employer conference at the Chase Center on the Riverfront.

"The employer conference creates a much needed sense of community," Jones said. "(It) serves as a reminder that we all have a part in contributing to workforce development and maintaining a vital economy in Delaware."

Jones and board member Dana Shreve teamed up to man an exhibitor table with more than 50 other vendors in the center's huge Governors Hall.

The event also was the first time the DWIB unveiled its new selection of promotional items meant to help the board establish its brand, said Deputy Director, Bill Potter.

"Our goal is to ensure all our marketing and outreach materials are uniform and have that 'at-a-glance' feel to them," he said.

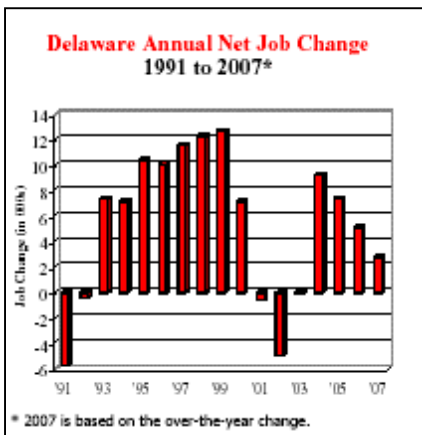
The items ,which included a retractable ID badge holder and logo emblazoned keychain flash lights were a huge hit with the crowd, Jones said.

The plan now is for the DWIB to use the contacts made at the conference to develop relationships and partners.

"It's simple," Potter said. "All of us really can do more than one us."

Delaware Employment Data

Source: Delaware Office of Labor Market Information



Delaware Employment Trends

- In May 2007, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment was 438,900, down by 300 from April 2007. The decrease was mainly due to over-the-month job losses in Professional and Business Services.
- Since May 2006, Delaware's total nonfarm jobs have increased by 2,800, a rise of 0.6%. Nationally, the gain over the past twelve months was 1.4%. Over the past twelve months, the largest job gains in Delaware were in Education and Health, +2,600; and Professional and Business Services, +1,300. The largest job losses were in Manufacturing, -900; and Construction, -700.

**Delaware Hours & Earnings
Manufacturing Production Workers**

	May 2007	Apr. 2007	May 2006
Weekly Earnings	\$688.35	\$716.00	\$726.41
Weekly Hours	39.2	39.8	40.2
Hourly Earnings	\$17.56	\$17.99	\$18.07

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP YIELDS NEW PLAN

During the past few years the working relationship between the Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB) and Delaware Department of Labor's Division of Employment and Training (DET) has grown to one of partnership.

That was never more evident than the recent work the two did preparing and submitting this year's installment of the state's strategic plan.

The plan, a 139-page roadmap covering everything from programs, to personnel, to money, is submitted every two years to the US Department of Labor (DOL).

This year's plan was submitted to the federal government at the end of April, but the work began much earlier.

Months before, the two agencies divided the document into functional areas, giving staff sections responsibilities for researching and writing updates to the plan.

In the middle of it all was Betsy Archer, DET's Chief of Employment, Training, and Policy.

She had the Herculean task of taking the diverse sections and melding them into a single document.

Assembling the plan was more complex than DET and DWIB first thought. But, because the two outfits have, over the past 18 months, strengthened their ties they were able to address some Delaware specific requirements.

While some states could just update existing plans, the Delaware plan required more detail because the DWIB fielded a new fulltime staff since the last submission and DET is introducing a new Management

Information System to replace the current VCNET.

Even so, the work rolled smoothly under Archer's watchful eye and the plan was submitted to Governor Ruth Ann Minner on time and on target.



ODDS AND ENDS



Job Corps Director Anna Street orients staff and volunteers to the park.



Wilmington Job Corps, a DWIB partner, recently held its 1st Staff Celebration at the Brandywine Picnic Park.



Job Corps Staff mix it up on tilt-a-whirl

DWIB YOUTH COUNCIL BUSIER THAN EVER, MORE ON THE WAY

If the old axiom, “if you want something done, ask a busy person,” is true the Delaware Workforce Investment Board (DWIB) Youth Council may be the group to ask to get something done.

It has been very busy.

The Youth Council, in partnership with Delaware’s Youth Vision Team, recently announced it earned a US Department of Labor grant of about \$83,000 to develop methods to enhance services provided to youth aging out of the foster care system.

“Among the outcomes of the program is to take the “lessons learned” and techniques acquired from the grant experience, and replicate the practices to serve other segments of ‘at-risk” youth,’ said Youth Council Chairman Dana Shreve

While a grant is big news by itself, the youth council hasn’t stopped there.

At its recent June 19, 2007 meeting, the Youth Council decided to adopt a committee-styled structure of three committees: strategic planning, membership, and resources & development.

Council members are being asked to serve on the committees, with start-up meetings planned before the next Youth Council meeting in October 2007.

If that weren’t enough, the council is also participating in a collaborative effort to secure a grant from the US DOL to create a YouthBuild program in the state.

YouthBuild strives to balance in-school learning, leading to a high school diploma or GED, and construction skills leading to career placement for youth.

The primary targets for the program are high school drop outs, adjudicated youth, youth aging out of foster care, and other “at risk” youth.

To make it all work the Youth Council has developed an impressive list of partners including: Petinaro Construction, Delaware Department of Labor, Delaware Department of Education, The DE Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCYF), Goodwill Industries, West End Neighborhood House, The Challenge Program, Delaware Skills Center, and the AFL-CIO.



Youth Chairman Dana Shreve.
File Photo

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 – John Castle

Chair, Financial Oversight

Chair, Youth Council - Dana Shreve

Chair, Performance Measures & Customer Satisfaction - Jeff Bross

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If you have any ideas for this newsletter please contact Bill Potter via email or phone.