

# BLUEGRASS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

## STAFF REPORT OCTOBER 2011 ACTIVITIES

11/14/2011

### **Business Business Services**

#### **Job Orders**

The Business Services staff are actively working with participants to secure employment with local companies. As part of that assistance 125 new job orders were posted.

#### **On-the-Job Trainings**

Three new On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts were developed in October for employers in Jessamine, Madison and Scott Counties.

#### **Application Screenings**

There are currently 10 companies utilizing application screening representing employers in: Boyle, Fayette, Garrad, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer and Scott Counties.

#### **Computerized Assessments**

Three employers utilized computerized assessments: from Madison and Scott Counties. Ninety-five assessments administered through the various Career Center locations.

#### **Rapid Response**

There was no Rapid Responses conducted in the month of October.

#### **Job Fairs**

Staff participated in three job fairs during the month of October: Hiring Our Heroes in Lexington, RockTenn in Nicholasville and Danville High School Career Day in Danville. A total of 584 individuals attended the three events.

#### **Business Development**

*Business Services Specialists located at the Career Centers have been working on developing new relationships with businesses in the Bluegrass Area as well as building on relationships with businesses currently receiving services through the BGWIB. Recent efforts of the Business Services Specialists are highlighted below.*

Career Center staff assisted with a job fair with RockTenn on October 1<sup>st</sup> to recruit entry-level employees. The job fair was held at the Jessamine County area Career and Technical Center. A total of 284 applicants attended; of that number RockTenn interviewed approximately 70 applicants on site. By the end of the job fair, RockTenn had identified 30 potential hires to fill the 15 vacancies. Out of the applicants in attendance 72 became registered with Focus Career. As of Oct 31<sup>st</sup>, four were going to offered employment to begin in mid-November.

#### **Danville**

The Danville Business Services Specialist reports:

- Wausau Paper hired eight individuals for Converting Operator; all 8 began work on October 24<sup>th</sup> and are OJT eligible. They are also continuing to accept applications through the Career Center in Danville and plan on hiring another group of workers in the next 2 months.

#### **Georgetown/Frankfort**

The Georgetown/Frankfort Business Services Specialist:

- Assisted in preparation for the Paul Sawyer Library Career Fair to be held on November 5<sup>th</sup>, by securing 6 employers to attend
- Assisted with a mock interview for one of DVOP's

## **Business** *Business Services (continued)*

- Assisted an Franklin County employer with their first hire under the OJT agreement
- Assisted Scott County employer in finding a bi-lingual Administrative Assistant for their OJT agreement
- Met with a Scott County employer and obtained an OJT agreement
- Attended a luncheon for the Bourbon County Chamber of Commerce on October 12th
- Met with several employers in Woodford County, as well as, the Mayor's Office in Midway.

### **Lexington**

The Lexington Business Service Specialist:

- Attended Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair
- Assisted with Resume Classes for a local employer.

### **Richmond/Winchester**

The Richmond/Winchester Business Services Specialist:

- Assisted 55 individuals with resumes at a Madison County employer.
- Was nominated to be secretary for the Madison County Industrial Managers Club (MCIMC)

## **Career Center** *Updates*

### **Danville**

The Office for Employment and Training (OET) has gained a new volunteer from the Pace Program, who will be assisting three days a week. Staff is also working on adding an Experience Plus volunteer, to assist throughout the career center.

ManPower for the Danville location of DanaCorp visited the career center for two weeks in October. The PIC group, a temporary employment agency for Hitachi was present also accepting applications. Spirit Construction visited the career center to conduct on-site interviews on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> and have stated that everyone who applied will have the opportunity to interview with the employer. To date Spirit Construction has hired four individuals and five others are pending hire. RR Donnelley, who currently has 24 vacancies, also scheduled two onsite application administration days during last week of October.

Staff participated in Danville High School Career Day held at the Danville High School gymnasium. Juniors and seniors were given the opportunity to visit various booths set up by local employers. The Career Center booth was visited by approximately 50 students. Information was shared the benefits of visiting the Career Center once they were ready to enter the workforce. Information on the Career Focus website and how to register as a user was also provided.

### **Frankfort**

WIA Staff provided resume workshops for those in KEN classes and partnered with Veteran Services to locate employment for a client.

The Frankfort Career Center partnered closely with the Paul Sawyer Public Library throughout the month of October for an ongoing employment series. Staff provided resume and interviewing skills workshops every Monday night throughout the month. Many of the attendees learned about the services provided through the Career Center and scheduled appointments for additional assistance. These workshops targeted different populations than those who visit the career centers. Additional workshops will be scheduled after the holidays.

### **Georgetown**

The Georgetown Career Center continues to hold resume classes every other Thursday, as well as continued computerized testing for a variety of local employers.

At the October partner's meeting the group discussed the Re-employment Eligibility and Assessment (REA) Grant. This grant is unique to the Career Center in Georgetown and will last for one year. Twenty individuals will receive intensive case management and a detailed plan to re-join the workforce. The CareerTrack program was also a topic of discussion during the partner's meeting. Dara Jackson, CareerTrack Coordinator requested that any staff meeting the age

## Career Center *Updates, continued*

requirements (19 – 21) who visit the career center be directed to her for assistance. She also requested ideas from staff on how to market the program locally to the target population.

### Lexington

For the month of October, 4,211 individuals visited the Career Center for assistance, 49 of those were interested in learning more about the WIA Program, and 315 utilized the Job Search Room. Staff in the Job Search Room also assisted 6 individuals with computerized applications.

Resume classes were offered every Wednesday throughout the month of October, all individuals who attended the Resume classes left with an updated resume.

Five individuals were given the Work Keys Assessment, 2 qualified for the bronze NCRC and 3 qualified for the silver certificate.

Fed Ex held interviews onsite for five applicants on October 20th.

A Veteran's Job Fair was held October 25th in partnership with Commerce Lexington at the Lexington Convention Center. Over 40 employers and vendors were in attendance. 250 individuals attended the Job Fair. WIA staff assisted with registration.

Partners in attendance at the monthly meeting included representatives from Veteran Services, the Native American Program, Adult Education and WIA. The Hire Our Heroes job fair was a topic of discussion, Reggie Youngblood reported that 250 individuals registered and attended the event, with more in attendance that did not register. Partners suggested contacting the Board of Education to obtain a listing of high school graduates in order to help market the program.

Becky Haley with Adult Education reported that she will be relocating to the Leestown location and the Career Center will be getting a new Adult Education Instructor in January. She also explained a new Adult Education grant called Accelerating Opportunities, in which students working on their GED will be permitted to take college courses. The students will not be required to have their GED to begin the courses. The grant focuses on two areas of college training, Construction and Business Systems Classes.

Partner's decided on holding a quarterly staff orientation to allow new staff the opportunity to meet

and ask questions of the partners. It was also decided to begin a Calendar of Events for the Career Center to be shared with the partners.

### Richmond

For the month of October 2,168 individuals visited the Career Center for services, 15 of those completed Toyota testing, 3 people watched the WIA orientation video, 130 job searches were conducted, 122 for Office of Vocational Rehabilitation services and 12 applicants for NACCO Materials Handling Group.

OET has been posting new job listings on a dry erase board in the front lobby which created a noticeable improvement in interest. Tony Horn, Mobile Career Center Coordinator, conducted a basic computer and basic Microsoft Word class on October 31<sup>st</sup>, with a total of 10 individuals in attendance.

Meetings are currently being scheduled with companies to inform them of the upcoming shift to Focus Career, a new employment database that provides an easy to read resume of individuals looking for employment. The employer module of Focus Career will be piloted in some regions of state by the end of the year and become available statewide by March of next year.

Madison County has met 3 components to become a Work Ready Community. An outline of how we can meet the remaining components will be submitted to hopefully allow us to the 1st Work Ready Community in the State. This would also provide more incentive for companies looking to locate in Madison County

NACCO Materials Handling Group is utilizing the National Career Readiness Certificate for applicants that do not meet the requirement of 6 months experience. Okonite, an Electrical Wire and Cable Manufacturer in Richmond is using it for individuals who only have a GED. Also, the Madison County Board of Education is planning on implementing NCRC testing for all High School seniors.

The Office of Employment and Training have been conducting the new Consumer Satisfaction surveys twice a week and feedback has been good.

### Winchester

ACS held a job fair a career fair at the Career Center in mid-October to fill permanent full-time positions. Representatives indicated that they needed to fill 500-700 full-time permanent positions. Due to the short notice and little promotion, the job fair was not as successful as hoped.

## Career Center

### Updates, continued

#### Mobile Career Center

The Mobile Career Center worked extensively with a Madison County employer by providing personnel as well as twenty computers during Federal Resume Workshops. These workshops provide existing employees the opportunity to update a Federal resume and provide them with an electronic, as well as, a hard

copy. To date more than 120 employees have been served. Finally, during the month of October the Mobile Career Center held a resume workshop during the Hiring Our Heroes Career Fair at the Lexington Convention Center. The workshop focused on how to transition military experience into the civilian job market.

## Youth Services

#### Older Youth

*Career Track is a program designed to help individuals 19-21 years old (Madison County also serves 16 - 18 year olds) that wish to improve their quality of life. The program provides one-on-one services, such as; career counseling, GED assistance, resume writing, interviewing skills training, and job search assistance.*

CareerTrack started a marketing campaign for the program re-design. In October, the CareerTrack Coordinator visited several agencies to distribute flyers. The CareerTrack staff has worked diligently on the development of workshops that will be offered for new clients. Workshops will provide clients with Work Readiness Skills, as well as soft skills to sustain employment.

#### Younger Youth

*The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program currently has four younger youth programs in the Bluegrass Region: TREK, WIN, Back on Track and YIP. These programs serve out-of-school youth or in-school youth and are operated in several different counties.*

#### TREK

*The TREK program serves out-of-school youth in Clark, Estill and Powell counties.*

During the month of October, the TREK program had 4 students achieve their GED credential and 8 students with Literacy/Numeracy Gains.

October marked the beginning of Community Service/Service Learning projects. Students participated in the Mums Project; clearing yard debris and performed general home exterior clean-up projects for two disabled community members. Students also provided labor to move a disabled community member from an upstairs apartment to a downstairs apartment. In addition to the Mums Project students organized and managed the third of six planned TREK fund-raising yard sales at KRFD's Irvine office. Finally, students participated in

the Estill County Lions Club road clean-up; picking up 25 large trash bags of debris from along Richmond Road in Irvine.

#### WIN

*The WIN program serves out-of-school youth in Franklin County.*

Currently, WIN has 7 students with Literacy/Numeracy Gains and 2 students that received their GED and 3 gained employment during the month of October.

The program celebrated the end the month with a Halloween party with a story contest, games, and a pot luck lunch.

#### Back on Track

*Back on Track program serves out-of-school youth in Scott County.*

No new information is available for this program.

#### YIP

Grades for the Youth Investment Program (YIP) students at Powell County High School improved during the second reporting period.

Estill County High School reports grades on trimesters so their first report cards will be ready by early November and will be reported next month.

Five youth attended a day retreat at Youth Haven Camp in Lee County in preparation for the 2012 Steps-to-Success Youth Competition.

Twelve youth participated in community service projects at ECHS track "Halloween Town" with treats for local children. A leadership trip was made to Clothes from the Heart and Bluegrass Community and Technical College.

# Re-Entry Program

## Updates

### "Steppin' to a New Beat"

*The Re-Entry Program is dedicated to the purpose of guiding the released man or woman into the process of transitioning back into the community, or to keep from becoming a potential inmate. Ex-offenders will participate in workshops lasting 12 weeks.*

In the month of October, the "Steppin' to a New Beat" served 86 active clients. Sixteen new applicants were enrolled in the program and 11 clients received employment.

"Steppin' to a New Beat" expanded to Garrard County. Mark Metcalf, County Attorney, asked for assistance with individuals with Child Support cases. In the month of October the Reentry Specialist met with Beth Wesley and Sarah Ballard at the County Attorney's Office to map out a schedule and location for the classes. The Re-Entry Specialist sat in on the Child Support Family Court in Garrard County Beth Wesley, sharing observations in a brief meeting with the Judge and Defense Attorney's afterward. Classes for those individuals with Child Support cases will begin November 16<sup>th</sup>.

### Bluegrass Re-Entry Council

*The Re-Entry Specialist works in partnership with several other re-entry related events and programs in the Bluegrass Area.*

The Bluegrass Re-entry Council met on October 27, to discuss House Bill 463, this bill is described as; "the bill (that) modernizes Kentucky drug laws by reducing prison time for low-risk, non-violent drug offenders who possess small amounts of illegal drugs." Kentucky State Senator Tom Jenson conducted the presentation, which was held at the Chrysalis House. Over 50 providers attended the meeting.

### Prison to the Streets

*Prison to the Streets takes Steppin' to a New Beat into the correctional facilities to address re-entry prior to the release of inmates.*

Prison to the Streets and "Steppin' to a New Beat" partnered for the last class on October 10 with 34 inmates in attendance. Chad Hockensmith, Re-Entry Coordinator at Blackburn Correctional Complex, identified the inmates that were going to the Parole Board; these individuals will continue training upon release as clients of the "Steppin' to a New Beat". Eight of the inmates in attendance at the training will be returning to the Lexington area upon release.

### CADC Board Meeting

*The Re-Entry Specialist is a Board Member of the Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC).*

"Steppin' to a New Beat" participated in the

CADC (Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor) Board meeting in Frankfort. The board continued reviewing complaints and also reviewed applications for new counselors. All board members were present. A report from the National Conference was delivered by Todd Trumbore.

### Other Events

*The Re-Entry Specialist works in partnership with several other Re-Entry related events and programs in the Bluegrass Area.*

**October 5:** The Kentucky State Parole Board held a retreat in Frankfort. The Parole Board provided different trainings throughout the two-day event. Trainings presented during the retreat included: Domestic Violence, Wardens Roundtable, Sentencing Phase, and Transitional Housing. "Steppin' to a New Beat" was a highlighted Re-entry Program by Chairman Verman Winburn. The Re-Entry Specialists provided the Board with information concerning additional barriers that inmates face upon release and solutions that "Steppin' to a New Beat" can offer as assistance in these circumstances.

**October 6:** Ten inmates from the Special Population Prison to the Streets program attended the BRIDGE class taught by the Re-Entry Specialist. They received resources and information concerning assistance for their home community. BRIDGE facilitated by Pat Blanford meets weekly at the Roederer Correctional Complex. BRIDGE class is a Spiritual Faith-Based program offered for sex-offenders re-entering communities.

**October 18:** Over 50 governmental staff members, agencies, and organizations were represented at the Governor's Re-Entry Task Force meeting. The next meeting will be held on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. The task force put together an outline to be presented to the General Assembly concerning re-entry, substance abuse, funding, treatment, homelessness, and other issues facing individuals facing re-entry into society.

**October 27:** "Steppin to a New Beat" and Prison to the Streets held a class at Kentucky State Reformatory. 60 members attended; the men shared about fears of going home. The EdTV team interviewed the Re-Entry Specialist concerning the program. The interview will run in the inmates living quarters with a copy being sent to the Re-Entry Specialist and the Bluegrass Area Development District for viewing.

## Success Story

### James Parks

James Parks is many things: a husband, a Christian, a father to 8, a sponsor to 3 recovering addicts, a tax-paying citizen and most recently, an entrepreneur. Change has not been easy for James, but he has stepped up to the challenge and it is paying off. With a strong support system, his faith, and a little help from the “Steppin’ to a New Beat” Re-Entry Program, he has gone from inmate to entrepreneur.

James had difficulty locating more work because of his criminal record. While unemployed, James heard about the “Steppin’ to a New Beat” Re-Entry Program while on a bus. He overheard a gentleman talking about a service to help former felons locate employment. He knew from the excitement in the man’s voice that this program was something he needed to check into. He visited the Career Center to learn more; that’s where he met the Re-Entry Specialist, Tayna Fogle. Tayna immediately got him signed up for the WorkNow program and assisted him with setting up payments for his child support. James proudly added, “I haven’t missed a payment since I got a job.”

Through WorkNow, James learned several skills

that will benefit him as an entrepreneur including; painting, cleaning and refinishing flooring. He successfully completed WorkNow and “Steppin’ to a New Beat” and now acts as a mentor and spokesperson for the program. He credits “Steppin’ to a New Beat” with setting him on the right track for starting his own business. It was his training through Community Ventures and that connection to the United Way 2-1-1, a program for individuals who make less than \$49,000 a year to receive financial assistance to purchase a home, continue an education, or start a business, that led him to start We Shine, his own carpet cleaning business. Through the United Way 2-1-1 program, James has received \$4,000 toward his own business, by completing 10 hours of financial training and eight hours of budgeting workshops.

The day James was interviewed, he excitedly shared that he had just completed his physical and drug screening to be permanently hired with a local manufacturer. He added that as soon as the hiring process is complete he will receive a pay increase of more than \$3.00 an hour, taking him from \$9.50 to \$12.65.



James Parks at the Bluegrass Area Development District in October.

Social Media



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