

SWWDB Update



A publication describing matters of interest regarding the services and programs of the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board

TONYA ARCHIE—FROM MANAGING PARTS TO MANAGING STUDENTS

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It is quite a shift going from managing parts to managing people, but for Tonya Archie, the transition couldn't be more positive. Even though she earned her B.S. degree from UW-Eau Claire in finance in 1991, Tonya utilized the Dislocated Worker (DW) program to earn her teaching certification, which has transitioned into a very satisfying and productive position as a business and information technology education teacher for the Highland (WI) school district.

"Working in inventory can be a very stressful job," she said. Having worked at several businesses over a 15-year period such as Lands End, Stardust Corporation in Verona, and most recently PartsNow!, where she was laid off in June, 2009 after a year and a half, she decided to make the transition into teaching. But that would take further education to earn her teaching certificate.

Enter the DW program, which helped to

underwrite her costs to enroll in the Project Teaching-Norda, a teacher certification program offered in a variety of fields, including business education, and approved by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction for persons with bachelor's degrees in appropriate areas. She completed that program in February, 2011.

"It was affordable—about \$6,000 compared to a traditional college which would have been about \$12,000—and it was in a field (business and informational technology education) that faced a critical shortage, so the outlook was positive for me," Tonya said. She was also able to substitute part-time in the Barneveld school district, which later helped to lead her to her current position at Highland, where she is still part-time (she has increased from half-time to $\frac{3}{4}$ time), but which also fits her life situation, caring for three children, ages, 16, 14 and 8.



"I don't know if I will go full-time next year either, but I would like to transition to full-time if it is available," the Middleton native explained. Highland is transitioning to a charter school, which is an exciting time and great experience for Tonya. Also good experience is the fact she is the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and yearbook advisor. "It is an excellent school and district, and a wonderful community. I really like the smaller school district," she added. The only drawback is the 40-minute commute, "but it's not bad this year," she said.

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LEE ANNE McNEAL UTILIZES E-HUB TO HER ADVANTAGE



“My boss was very impressed with my certificate and the business knowledge I gained from the class.”

---LeeAnne McNeal

LeeAnne McNeal has nothing but good things to say about the E-Hub program. Even though she hasn't yet implemented her business plan due to the sluggish economy, it is just a matter of time before she proceeds. “I had a great experience with E-Hub,” she said. “The class gave me a great opportunity to meet small business owners and entrepreneurs in the community.” E-Hub, offered through the SWWDB, is a program that helps potential and current entrepreneurs to succeed.

But E-Hub is even helping her in her current job at Applianceworks in Evansville. “My boss was very impressed with my certificate and the business knowledge I gained from the class,” she said. That translated into extra duties she picked up in her job along with a raise.

LeeAnne, who has four children, ages 22, 17, 9 and 6, plans on eventually opening an ‘artisan-type’ of shop that will include combining various ‘artsy’ furniture motifs along with various media, forming combinations that work together. “The economy has not been conducive to starting this business yet, but hopefully within a year or two it might be possible,” she said. But she won't make that move until she knows her chances of success are viable.

The gregarious 47-year-old Orfordville resident, who has worked at Applianceworks since September, 2010,

lost her job at The Gap in Janesville when it closed. She worked briefly at Kutter Harley Davidson when her hours were cut and she quickly found her current position. “I still use the ‘old-fashioned’ method of job searching—I would go to the places I had applied to in-person to introduce myself. I believe that helped greatly in landing employment quickly,” she said. Truly her personality and outgoing demeanor has helped in making her a desirable hire. And it is that trait that will allow her to succeed in her future plans developed through E-Hub.

“E-Hub offered me the information I needed to gain the knowledge about owning my own business,” she said. She especially praised the efforts of class instructor Julie Foster. “She was tremendous,” LeeAnne said. “She is extremely knowledgeable and helpful. That allowed LeeAnne to gain more information and education to understand the business ownership expectations to be successful.

LeeAnne would like to open the business in Janesville, but that depends upon where the greatest chance for success resides. “The timing and place has to be right. I'm looking at all possible options,” she said.

TONYA ARCHIE (Continued from Page 1)

Tonya is certain she could not have returned to school without WIA funding assistance. “It was a real blessing,” she said. But completing the Norda certification didn't guarantee a job. “It took me eight months and five interviews before being offered this position,” she explained. In fact, she was hired a week before school started (her networking helped in that regard). “I had to scramble, but it has certainly been worth it,” she said.

Her change in career paths has been supported by her family, and she is very satisfied with the change. “Now I'm not investing my time in inanimate parts, but in people, helping to mold lives and futures,” she said. “I'm not worrying about ‘climbing the corporate ladder’ but helping students, which has much more meaning,” she added. That makes her career transition most worthwhile!

JOB FAIR ATTRACTS OVER 1,100

Over 1,100 job seekers came to the Rock County Job Center on April 18 for a Job Fair (see bottom three photos). The 50 companies and organizations which participated (as of 4-16) are listed at the left:

[Note: A special thanks to the American Legion, who provided food and refreshments! And the Vet's staff for their tireless efforts!]

- ABC Supply Co.
- Adecco
- Agrace HospiceCare
- American Aluminum Extrusion
- Applied Behavior Analysts
- Birdseye Foods
- Blackhawk Technical College
- Bliss Communications
- BrightStar Care
- Brodhead Chevrolet Buick
- Cardinal Stritch
- CareerSource LLC
- Community Action
- Concordia University, WI
- Co-Staff
- Covance Laboratories
- Creative Community Living Serv.
- DRM/Arby's
- Dunkin' Donuts
- Durst-MasterGear
- Evonik Goldschmidt
- Express Employment Profession.
- Fairbanks Morse Engine
- Generac Power Systems
- Globe University
- Humane Manufacturing
- iPacesetters
- LTI Services
- Lutheran Social Services
- Manpower, Inc.
- Masterson Personnel
- Mercy Health System
- Miniature Precision Components
- Parallel Employment
- Prent Corporation
- QPS Employment Group
- REM Wisconsin
- Riverfront, Inc.
- Rx Tech Prep
- Scot Forge
- St. Mary's Janesville Hospital
- Staff On Site
- Stainless Tank & Equipment
- Staples Fulfillment Center
- State Collection Service, Inc.
- Stoughton Trailers
- Tigre
- Union Bank & Trust
- United Alloy, Inc.
- Wisconsin & Southern Railroad
- Woodward, Inc.



What Not To Wear—Several of the WIA Case Workers (left) came prepared to show participants in the *Preparing for a Successful Job Fair* class (held a week prior to the Job Fair) inappropriate attire (the two at the right). Included (l to r) are Beth Wheelock, Cyndi Pohl, Nancy Alseth, Kris Case, and Casey Dobson.



JENNIFER GOODWIN USES WIA TO PREPARE FOR FUTURE

Jennifer Goodwin of Beloit has taken advantage of career and college exploration activities, offered through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), to improve her future job outlook. But it hasn't been easy as a single, 19-year-old mother supporting her son without any outside help. "I knew that a quality education would be the only way I could improve my job outlook for the future," she explained.

Prior to her graduation from Beloit Memorial High School, Jennifer attended a WIA-

Life event. "That event was a real 'eye opener' for me and truly has motivated me to enroll in the accounting program at Blackhawk Technical College," she said.

But Jennifer didn't just enroll and expect to automatically succeed—this past summer she enrolled in several basic education classes at BTC's Eclipse Center in Beloit to help build her preparatory skills. She is now a full-time student at BTC, well on her way to her goals. In fact, Jennifer worked so hard to prepare for the classes that WIA has helped

to hear that news, since I didn't qualify for any other grants," she said. "Knowing someone has faith in me makes me want to work even harder."

Jennifer is currently seeking employment to supplement her financial needs while attending school, with her ultimate goal being to graduate and become an accountant and better provide for her family. "It's not an easy road, but it is the best and correct way to go," she added.



"I knew a quality education would be the only way I could improve my job outlook for the future."

---Jennifer Goodwin

JOB CENTER, SWWDB PARTICIPATE IN 'REALITY STORE'

Eric Kuznacic, Business Services Manager with the SWWDB and Casey Dobson, WIA Case Manager at the Rock County Job Center with Manpower Government Solutions, assisted at the recent **'Reality Store'** program held at Beloit Memorial High School. 'Reality Store,' organized through the Business and Education Committee of the Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation, offers 'real life' situations to high school students to assist them in realizing what it takes to manage income, bills, and family and occupational responsibilities.

"Students visited our booth if they needed to land a part-time job as a part of their 'real-life' scenario," Kuznacic said. "For many, it was a real eye-opener for them," he added, as students were placed in a variety of situations, such as some supporting a family with children, others being single, some having a substantial income while others were poor and had to pay child support.

Each student had to negotiate real life situations involving banking, credit, mortgages, auto maintenance and insurance, everyday necessities such as clothing, food, and similar situations. "Students were supposed to visit our booth only if they needed part-time jobs or extra income, but we even had one student visit who was a 'doctor' making in excess of \$100,000 per year," Dobson said. "It was very interesting to see how students reacted to see how it wasn't very easy to manage life's situations when they had to balance all of their responsibilities, including working one or more part-time jobs when necessary," Kuznacic said.

About 465 students from BMHS participated in the event, with each student assuming one of a variety of occupational roles, such as waiter, assembler, office worker, professional, and other types of jobs. "It was a sobering experience for the students and I believe we who staffed the booth as well as the participants learned a great deal," Dobson said.



Casey Dobson provides information to a BMHS student.

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---Casey Dobson

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See us at:
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CORY WINTERS WINS *SERVE WISCONSIN* AWARD

Beloit resident, former homeless youth and WIA Younger Youth program participant (administered through the SWWDB and CAP) Cory Winters was presented the Serve Wisconsin Service Award on March 15 at the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board meeting at the Department of Military Affairs in Madison. Through the program, citizens are given the opportunity to not only enrich the lives of the people and communities they serve, but also their own lives through professional and personal development. A single father who finished high school through CAP's Fresh Start program in June,

2011, it was discovered that he was homeless ('couch jumping', as he termed it) and had been moving from place to place for quite some time. Through CAP's Transitional Living Program, he was able to locate housing. Winters was featured in the movie 16:49 about homeless teens in Rock County, and since then has spoken at screenings about his situation. He is currently attending Blackhawk Tech in the Consumer Service Technician program while working at McDonald's part-time, planning on transferring to UW-Whitewater to major in psychology. "Cory has proven he is a natural leader not only

on the job site but in the classroom," said Nicole Ditzenberger, WIA Transition Coordinator. "He has worked very hard to pay off his financial obligations and obtain a driver's license and car." In September a scholarship came to Ditzenberger's attention for students involved with YouthBuild. "Cory was the first one that came to mind," she said. **(Continued below)**

About the SWWDB...

The Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB) serves a six-county area in the Southwest corner of Wisconsin. We are a dynamic collaboration of private and public leaders working together

to promote innovation and quality in local workforce development activities.

The Board meets on a quarterly schedule to address workforce development issues and provide

oversight to the eight Southwest Job Center offices located in the area. Committee members meet on an as-needed basis to provide guidance and direction on topical issues.

DIGNITARIES TOUR UNITED ALLOY, SSI

Shown below, SWWDB Executive Director Robert Borremans (foreground) listens to United Alloy CEO/CFO Terri Roessler conduct a tour of her facility, along with (l to r) Tim Sullivan, Special Consultant for Business and Workforce Development; Reggie Newson, Secretary, DWD, and Paul Jadin, CEO/Secretary, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). The group also later toured SSI Technologies, Janesville. United Alloy was presented up to \$200,000 in tax credits through the WEDC.



CORY WINTERS (Continued from above)

"I was very nervous about filling out the application because students from all across the nation were being considered for this award," Winters said. But both exploded with pride when they learned he was one of the 37 recipients. The \$2,000 Helene D. Stoneman Scholarship and Civic Leadership Program Award helps YouthBuild student leaders achieve their educational goals. Winters is currently in follow-up status with the WIA Younger Youth program. "I'm very confident he will achieve his goals for himself and his family," Ditzenberger said. As Winters added when he accepted his award in Madison, "I did the best that I could to become the best that I am!"



*Cory Winters (right) received his award from Tony Hallman, **Serve Wisconsin** President*