



# Your Workforce Connection

Preparing Today's Workforce For Tomorrow's Jobs

Spring 2008

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board publishes this quarterly newsletter to promote awareness of its programs and activities among the regional partners of Local Workforce Area 12.

## Goodyear Granted On-the-Job Training program

Volume 6, Issue 2

### Inside this issue:

Goodyear Granted OJT Funding 1

5 Free WorkKeys® Job Profiles Available 2

TN Career Centers offer WIA Scholarships 2

On-the-Job Training: An Overview of Opportunity 3

Applications Accepted for IWT Grants 3

Tennessee Career Center Locations 3

Area Youth Attend Southern Growth Conference 4

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development awarded Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company an On-the-Job Training Grant for a hiring surge the company had planned for its Union City facility in April 2007.

“The Department of Labor works very hard to keep jobs in Tennessee and when the department had the opportunity to secure an increase in jobs of approximately 260 positions in Union City, the department was eager to assist” said Ann Pennell, Business Services Coordinator for the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board and the Tennessee Career Centers in northwest Tennessee.

From April 2007 through June 2008, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company added 260 new employees through On-the-Job Training (OJT). The OJT program enabled Goodyear to hire and train jobseekers with little to no experience in the position at a reduced cost to the employer. The OJT grant pays half of the new-hire's wages from the first day on the job up to an 8-week maximum training limit.

“The OJT grant encourages companies to invest in jobseekers with little experience and a lot of determination. The employer spends less on training and an unemployed or underemployed jobseeker gains valuable skills and meaningful employment” said Pennell. “It's a win-win situation for the employer, jobseeker, and Tennessee.”

The OJT provided training funds for positions such as Maintenance Mechanics, Banbury Operators, General Operators, Stock Changers, Tire Inspectors, Tread Handlers, Splitter Operators, among 32 other positions.

Director of the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board, Henry Lewis, summed up the grant's purpose, “The OJT grant program is an excellent source of funding to assist business and industry considering expanding their workforce. On-the-Job training is going to be a requirement for most positions and by hiring a jobseeker without experience enables the employer to train that individual in their processes, their way. It also affords the unemployed, unskilled the opportunity to gain the necessary tools to succeed in the workplace.”

“Goodyear had a planned expansion and the Tennessee Department of Labor worked to house that expansion in Tennessee” concluded Lewis.

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company has also been awarded a Skills Shortage Training Grant to increase the skill level of their current workforce.

For more information on the On-the-Job Training opportunity contact Henry Lewis, Director, (866) 286-3585, extension 16 or [lewis@nwtworks.org](mailto:lewis@nwtworks.org).





The Career Readiness Certificate is the answer for employers who want a trainable workforce. When applicants carry the Career Readiness Certificate, they demonstrate skills in math, reading and information processing. Employers can use these scores to make the best decision when hiring or training workers.

## 5 FREE WorkKeys® Job Profiles Available

The **Career Readiness Certificate (CRC)** is a portable skills credential, assuring employers that a job applicant actually has the basic skills they seek. The CRC is a credential that is easily and universally understood and valued by employers, educators, and recipients that will help facilitate job placement, retention, and advancement in our mobile society.

The CRC credential describes what the holder is capable of in the workplace (workforce skills) and will serve northwest Tennessee employers as an excellent supplement to a high school diploma, a GED, or a college degree.

To date more than 15,000 job profiles have been completed using WorkKeys® assessments, and results are shown in the ACT, Inc. occupational profile national database. Examination of this database reveals that three WorkKeys® assessments Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information are used in more than 85% of the profiles conducted across all industry sectors and all occupations. Consequently, these three assessments were chosen to form the basis of the CRC in Tennessee.

The Career Readiness Certificate is awarded after an individual completes the standardized WorkKeys® assessment. Job-seekers can earn one of three levels of Career Readiness Certificates based on their test performance:

- ◆ Bronze signifies that a recipient possesses skills for approximately 30% of all jobs.
- ◆ Silver signifies that a recipient possesses skills for approximately 65% of all jobs.
- ◆ Gold signifies that a recipient possesses skills for 90% of all jobs.

As part of the Career Readiness Certificate and WorkKeys® introduction in Tennessee, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development has made 5 FREE WorkKeys® Job Profiles available to business and industry in northwest Tennessee.

The Job Profiles take approximately 2 working days to complete and involve key personnel who will serve as “subject matter experts” for the WorkKeys® certified Job Profilers.

“The Job Profiles are very valuable for the employer” said Ginger Powell, CRC Coordinator for the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board. “Research has shown that companies that employ the WorkKeys® Job Profile system experience less turnover and find their employees to be more satisfied in their positions.”

Any employer interested in employing the WorkKeys® Job Profile system should contact Ginger Powell 866-286-3585 or email [powell@nwtworks.org](mailto:powell@nwtworks.org). The free profiles will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis.

## TN Career Centers offer WIA Scholarships

Young Adults between the ages of 18 to 21 may be eligible for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Needs-Based Scholarship that can pay up to \$4,310 per year for unmet needs incurred due to training costs.

- Tuition, fees, and books
- Pell Grant
- Lottery Scholarship
- Other federal & state financial aid
- = Unmet Need

The Workforce Investment Act provides Needs-Based Scholarships to eligible students entering approved post-secondary training programs.

Institutions providing training services must be certified as eligible training providers by one of Tennessee’s 13 Local Workforce Investment Boards to be placed on the statewide list monitored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. To determine if the post-secondary education program that you are interested in qualifies, visit the Tennessee Higher Education Commission website at: <http://www.ja.state.tn.us/thec/cbit/PgSrchEng.jsp>

Transportation stipends are also available to eligible Young Adults to help reduce the cost of traveling to and from the training institution.

If you are interested in learning more, contact your local area Tennessee Career Center WIA Case Manager.

## On-the-Job Training: An Overview of Opportunity

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is a unique program designed to promote, educate and expand your workforce. All new hires require on-the-job training, even if not subsidized by Workforce Investment Act funds. Our OJT program focuses on training new hires on *your* work processes, *your* way.

When you identify the need to fill a vacant position for your company or small business, you have a choice of hiring a skilled worker or a worker who needs additional training. If you are willing to hire an individual who has no prior experience in the vacant position, an on-the-job training contract may be developed. Under this agreement, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board can pay up to 50% of the trainee's wages during the specified training period. Eligible candidates can be selected from any of the WIA programs: Dislocated Workers, Underemployed Adults, Younger Youth (14-18) or Older Youth (19-21).

### Benefits to Employers:

- ◆ Candidates are selected from a pool of prescreened applicants.
- ◆ Your training cost is reduced by up to half of the new employees' wages.
- ◆ You receive quality workers who benefit from "hands-on" training.
- ◆ You may be eligible to receive tax credits.
- ◆ There is minimal paperwork involved.

## Applications Accepted July 1 for IWT Grants

The Incumbent Worker Training program is providing grant funding for customized training for existing businesses. Through this customer-driven program, Tennessee is able to effectively retrain and keep local businesses competitive through upgrading the skills of its existing full-time employees.

The program is structured with flexibility to allow each individual business to design and meet its particular training objectives. Training may include industry or company specific skills, computer and technical skills.

Awarded businesses may use public, private, or its own in-house training provider based on the nature of the training. Program instructors can be full or part-time educators, vendors or subject matter experts or professional trainers employed by the business.

### Program Requirements:

- ◆ Existing Tennessee business must have been in operation in Tennessee for at least one year prior to application date
- ◆ Must have at least five full-time employees
- ◆ Must demonstrate financial viability
- ◆ Must be current on all state tax obligations

### Funding Priority given to businesses whose proposal represents:

- ◆ A significant layoff avoidance
- ◆ A significant upgrade in employee skills

### Reimbursable Training Expenses:

- ◆ Instructor's / trainer's salaries
- ◆ Tuition Expense
- ◆ Curriculum Development
- ◆ Textbooks / manuals
- ◆ Materials / supplies

Applications will be accepted for the 2008-09 funding cycle beginning July 1, 2008 and will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. Applications are available from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development:

[http://www.state.tn.us/labor-wfd/et\\_services\\_employers.html](http://www.state.tn.us/labor-wfd/et_services_employers.html)

Applications must be accompanied by a letter of support from the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board. Companies who have been awarded in the last calendar year are not eligible.

For more information or for assistance in developing your grant proposal, contact Henry

Page 3 Lewis, Director, at 866-286-3585 or [lewis@nwtworks.org](mailto:lewis@nwtworks.org).



### Humboldt

1481 Mullins Street  
Humboldt, TN 38343  
731.784.3552

### Ripley

301-C Lake Drive  
Ripley, TN 38063  
731.635.3479

### Tiptonville

217 Church Street, Suite B  
Tiptonville, TN 38079  
731.253.8171

### Alamo

334 South Bells Street  
Alamo, TN 38001  
731.696.2530

### Covington

724 East Lucky Plaza,  
Hwy 51 North  
Covington, TN 38019  
901.475.2529

### Union City

126 East Main Street  
Union City, TN 38261  
731.884.2621

### Dyersburg

Comprehensive Center  
439 McGaughy Street  
Dyersburg, TN 38024  
731.286.8300

TDD

800.848.0299

or

731.286.8383

Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board  
Dyersburg State Community College  
313 West Cedar Street  
Dyersburg, TN 38024

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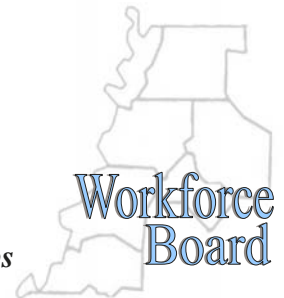
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We look forward to serving you better in the future!

*Preparing Today's Workforce for Tomorrow's Jobs*



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**For more information or to contact your local Workforce Investment Board Business Services Unit, call Henry Lewis (866) 286-3585, ext. 16 [lewis@nwnworks.org](mailto:lewis@nwnworks.org)**



Dyersburg State Community College is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TDD# 731-286-8383

**Area Youth Attend Southern Growth Conference**

On June 1-3, Northwest TN Workforce Board Director Henry Lewis and Youth Coordinator Lori Marberry hosted two area youth and their chaperones during the Southern Growth Policies Board Youth Conference in Little Rock, AR.

The 3-day conference included keynote speakers, panel discussions on youth development and engagement, a town hall meeting with Southern Governors and opportunities to network with regional leaders from business, government and higher education. Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe hosted the conference presenting the 2008 Report on the Future of the South, a compilation of 153 community forums with more than 3,200 participants focusing on challenges facing our young people.

"After attending the local forum in Gibson County, I really enjoyed hearing about the programs and ideas sparked by young people around the South. I hope to continue talking to our local leaders about changes that need to happen in Milan to give young people more positive outlets," said Matthew Hicks.

*Pictured from left to right: Henry Lewis; Deborah Hicks (Milan); Tracy Halliburton (Ripley); Summer Halliburton (Ripley), Dyersburg State Community College student; Debora Tyus (Ripley), Projecting A Positive Image (PAPI) Advisor; Matthew Hicks (Milan), Milan High School junior; Lori Marberry.*

