



Your Workforce Connection

Preparing Today's Workforce For Tomorrow's Jobs

Winter 2010

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.

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Bredesen Taps Stimulus for Jobs

\$3.7 million pays for 175 jobs through the Lauderdale Co. Job Recovery Program

Following a model first implemented months ago in Perry County, Governor Phil Bredesen announced a plan mid-December to create up to 175 government-paid jobs in both the public and private sectors in Lauderdale County, where the jobless rate has hovered at nearly 20 percent since a large manufacturer closed in January 2009.

The plan uses \$3.7 million in federal economic stimulus funds to pay for 50 highway maintenance jobs with the Tennessee Department of Transportation and 125 jobs at private companies in the county.

Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board employees, LaMar Bartlett and Jan Tickle began canvassing private employers to participate in the program in mid-December.

The jobs will be paid through September 2010, when program administrators and officials hope the private employers will hire the temporary workers permanently.

About 3,300 jobless Lauderdale County residents contacted the Tennessee Career Center at Ripley over the past 12 months. Those residents received letters informing them of the program and the application process.

The Lauderdale County Job Recovery Program held the first of several scheduled job fairs January 19. Twenty local employers attended, accepted applications, and interviewed eligible applicants.

Lauderdale's jobless rate stood at 14 percent a year ago in the midst of layoffs at several of the county's largest employers. The rate has hovered between 18 and 20 percent for most of 2009, the highest for a Tennessee county since the earlier jobs program in Perry County trimmed joblessness there from 27

Local employers who participate will be reimbursed for 100 percent of the wages and benefits paid to workers.



Theresa Ethridge, Northwest TN Workforce Board Account Clerk, greets Lauderdale County Job Recovery participants at the first job fair held at the National Guard Armory January 19, 2010.

percent in January 2009 to 17 percent by November 2009.

About 1,900 Lauderdale residents are currently unemployed and looking for work, according to state officials.

County Mayor Rod Schuh and State Representative Craig Fitzhugh said the program won't provide jobs for everyone who needs and wants them, but it will help.

"We had over 3,000 people hit the unemployment office in the last year," said Schuh. "We've sent out over 3,000 letters and only 175 people will get jobs. I wish there could be more, but we're glad for anything we can get."

"We've had loss of jobs through no fault of our own — jobs going overseas. Our workforce is ready and willing to

Please see **Recovery**, 3

4 Area Employers Awarded Incumbent Worker Training Grants

Governor Phil Bredesen and Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner James Neeley have awarded \$1,666,868 in Incumbent Worker Training grants to 64 companies across the state. Over the past 4 years, training grants have totaled more than \$12 million to assist more than 45,000 employees. As a result of these grants, workers are being trained, saving jobs and preventing companies from downsizing or moving out of the state.

“Job training to upgrade the skills of Tennessee’s workers is one of the best things we can do for our economy,” Bredesen said. “Now more than ever, it is important to continue training our workforce to keep employees and companies competitive.”

Four west Tennessee companies have been awarded a total of \$104,755 to train 301 employees.

The Delfield Company, Marvin Windows & Doors of Tennessee, NSK Steering Systems America, and PolyOne Corporation have recently been awarded.

These grants will be utilized to provide training employees need to remain competitive and will in turn help the state move forward with providing skilled workers and high paying jobs.

The Delfield Company of Covington has been awarded \$50,000 to train 147

employees in safety, OSHA, assembly, fabrication, industrial maintenance, and refrigeration skills.

Marvin Windows and Doors of Tennessee has been granted \$6,400 to train 80 employees in Microsoft Office computer skills and Marvin Problem Solving: Planning and Tactical Management.

NSK Steering Systems America was recently awarded \$24,000 to train 33 employees in Six Sigma.

PolyOne Corporation has been awarded \$24,355 to assist 41 employees in attending TPM program training, K-Tron and Accurate Feeder training, Design Learning Certificate, and RECRA Environment Training.

The Incumbent Worker Training program provides grant funding for all types of industries, large and small. The training modules vary to include training such as basic math skills, automated computer programming, leadership principles, and lean manufacturing concepts.

Companies interested in applying for an Incumbent Worker Training Grant should visit: http://www.tennessee.gov/labor-wfd/et_services_employers.html for instructions and an application or contact the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board Business Services Coordinator, Ann Pennell at 731-286-3585, extension 20 or pennell@nwtworks.org.

Business Services

For more information or for assistance in developing a grant proposal for Incumbent Worker Training or On-the-Job Training, contact:

Ann Pennell

(731) 286-3585, ext. 20
pennell@nwtworks.org

or

Henry Lewis

(731) 286-3585, ext. 16
lewis@nwtworks.org

Apprenticeship Assistance Program accepting applications

In January 2008, the Workforce Development Division of the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development began receiving applications for the newly introduced Apprenticeship Assistance Pilot Program.

Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner James Neeley led program development to bring valuable skills training for the building trades and other skills related jobs in high-growth industries.

Organizations that participate in the US Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship training are key in providing the skilled workers needed to insure Tennessee meets the skilled workforce de-

mands of the 21st century.

Apprenticeship is not just a job, but a career opportunity! It is occupational training that combines supervised on-the-job experience with classroom instruction. Apprentices usually begin at a salary less than that of journey workers who have completed apprenticeships and have earned industry certifications. Apprentice’s pay rate increases as they progress through the training program. The chance of securing a well-paying job in the industry is increased as they complete their training.

Basic standards of an apprenticeship program include:

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Stand Up for a Skilled Workforce, Ask for The Certificate

Now more than ever, American businesses need a strong, skilled workforce to overcome today's challenges. When an employer asks for the National Career Readiness Certificate, issued by ACT, that employer hires only the most skilled employees.

The Certificate is *the* work-related skills credential, providing objective documentation of employees' skills that can be accepted nationwide. It is composed of three WorkKeys® assessments that measure skills critical to on-the-job success:

- Applied Mathematics
- Reading for Information
- Locating Information

The Certificate is awarded at three levels based on an individual's performance on the assessments:

- Gold—skills for 90% of the jobs in ACT's extensive database of occupational profiles—the largest of its kind.
- Silver—skills for 65% of profiled jobs
- Bronze—skills for 35% of profiled jobs

The Certificate is a proven, successful program because it is based on the WorkKeys® system employers have used for nearly 20 years to document real results, including decreased turnover and training time. Along with other education and background information, the Certificate serves as a valuable tool in making employment and training decisions.

Take the first important step toward standing up for a skilled workforce by asking for the National Career Readiness Certificate.

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work and becoming more educated every day," Fitzhugh said.

"Any jobs are welcome, but these are especially good because they start right away. They last a year, but we're going out to the private sector and hopefully they will be able to keep them on."

The program is similar to one Bredesen crafted in May 2009 in Perry County. More than 450 people found jobs as a result of that effort, and the plan garnered national attention for its use of American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funding, routed through the state Department of Human Resources.

"The goal of this effort is to use Recovery Act funds to provide assistance where it's needed most," Bredesen said.

The Lauderdale County Job Recovery Program is seeking employers interested in participating in the program. Local employers who participate will be reimbursed for 100 percent of the wages and benefits paid to workers. Employers will be able to pay workers their standard wage rate for the position.

Interested employers should contact LaMar Bartlett, Program Coordinator, at 731-221-0650.

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- Full and fair opportunity to apply
- A schedule of work processes in which an apprentice receives training and experience on the job
- Organized instruction designed to provide apprentices with knowledge in technical subjects related to the trade
- A progressively increasing schedule of wages
- Proper supervision of on-the-job training
- Apprentice's progress, both in job performances and related instruction
- No discrimination in any phase of selection, employment, or training.

Applications are currently being accepting for funding for the 2010 year. Applicants must be registered with the Office of Apprenticeship. Applications that promote training in apprenticeship prep, first year apprentices and first time application will receive priority. Application will be funded up to \$50,000 with a dollar for dollar company match. Applications should be submitted to the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board. For more information contact Ann Pennell, Business Services Coordinator at 731-286-3585 or pennell@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

973 Highway 51 N,
Suite 16
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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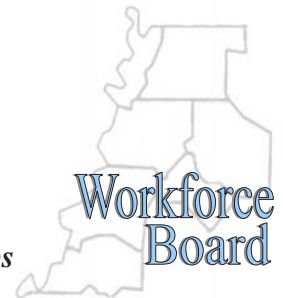
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you better in the future!

Preparing Today's Workforce for Tomorrow's Jobs



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For more information or to
contact your local Workforce
Investment Board Director,
call Henry Lewis
(731) 286-3585, ext. 16
lewis@nwnworks.org



Dyersburg State Community College
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Auxiliary aids and services are avail-
able upon request to individuals with
disabilities. TDD# 731-286-8383

\$2.9 Million ARRA Department of Labor Grant Awarded

A \$2.9 million Energy Training Partnership Grant under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Green Jobs Training Program has been awarded to Memphis Bioworks Foundation. The two-year initiative will fund programs to train area workers for jobs in energy-efficient and renewable energy occupations.

The Grant will benefit a 26-county area of west Tennessee and Arkansas through training programs for higher education organizations, employers, training providers, and workforce development agencies.

In partnership with the Memphis Bioworks Foundations, key recipients include Dyersburg State Community College, TN Local Workforce Investment Areas 11, 12, and 13, the Eastern Arkansas Workforce Investment Area, Jackson State Community College, the University of Memphis BEST Program, Mid-South Community College, Seedco, Southwest Ten-

nessee Community College, the National Electrical Contractors Association, and multiple employers.

The project will leverage existing training curricula coupled with input from employers to produce new training programs in such areas as, agricultural production for biomass crops, sustainable design and construction, chemical processing, plant process operations and solar installation.

"We are pleased to partner with these highly-qualified educational institutions and employers in this effort to bring transformational training to the regional workforce," said Dr. Steve Barnes, president and executive director, Memphis Bioworks Foundation.

"This multi-county, multi-state partnership is built on broad-based regional cooperation and a shared economic development goal of leadership in green industry and new jobs in the biosciences."