Spotlight on Cooperatives

Co-op Initiative Symposium

On December 1 & 2, people from all across the U.S., Australia and Mondragon, Spain gathered in Cincinnati for the 3rd Biennial National Union Co-op Symposium to learn about further development of the union co-op sector for the
The Symposium offered a look at what's happening to establish networks of worker-owned businesses.

Participants discussed best practices, union co-op management, financing and the opportunities available as many employers consider how to retire from their family businesses while continuing to be a presence in their community and a source of employment for their workers. SWORWIB President Sherry Kelley Marshall addressed the possibilities of averting layoffs, particularly in small and mid-sized manufacturing operations, as well as other enterprises through consideration of conversion to worker co-operative operations. Her remarks focused on co-ops working with their public workforce system and economic development partners to present options to owners and to deploy workforce resources to train employees for more involvement in a variety of aspects of business operations. She encouraged working with their workforce partners to embed apprenticeship training programs in businesses to broaden and increase the skills of workers for improving operations and profitability.

December Business Retention Meeting

SWORWIB President Sherry Kelley Marshall and Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative (CUCI) leaders, Ellen Vera, Director of Development (to the right) and Kristen Barker, Executive Director and Isabel Uribe (on left) presented to economic development professionals in Hamilton County at the December 5, 2017 HCDC Business Retention Meeting.

Marshall introduced encouraging employers to work with the OMJ Center to connect to companies laying off staff as candidates for other employers, particularly in manufacturing. She also reviewed the possibilities of using workforce funds for layoff aversion when company leaders are considering retirement and exploring options.

CUCI leaders reviewed the five-step process involved for owners to consider selling their business to their employees. All speakers shared their learnings from visiting and studying the Mondragon Corporation, a corporation and federation of workforce cooperatives based in the Basque region of Spain and very successful in a variety of businesses.
**Spotlight on Apprenticeship**

Congratulations to Richards Industries and their Industrial Manufacturing Technician (IMT) Apprentices (Seated from left to right: Scott Ethier, Josh Dunn, Greg Betts, and Hunter Hoskins. Standing is their instructor, Robert Keith Bailey, retired IUE-CWA professional with an Associate Degree of Applied Science from Sinclair College, OSHA Certified and a Certified Production Technician Instructor. The apprentices began their first Related Technical Instruction training December 5, 2017. They started with the safety module of the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council's Certified Production Technician credential.

The SWORWIB is proud to have been invited to join the Midwest Urban Strategies Consortium that won funding as the "Compete Midwest America's Promise Alliance". Richards Industries is the first Hamilton County company to obtain standards approval for the IMT Apprenticeship and these four apprentices are the first to begin the related technical instruction in Hamilton County.

We are working with other manufacturers to provide this apprenticeship training, in-house and on-site. Interested employers in Hamilton County are encouraged to contact the SWORWIB while funding is available to cover the costs of related technical instruction.

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**Spotlight on Rapid Response**

The Rapid Response Team at the OMJ Center has been working with the employees of Avon in Springdale to prepare them for their next job implementing our philosophy of "re-employment instead of unemployment."

One of the first major activities is running data reports from the employee surveys and from Wanted Analytics. These reports play a significant role in developing our Rapid Response program. The reports also aid us to strategically target Rapid Response activities during the time before workers exit their current employment. Obtaining survey data from affected workers early in the process...
through the Rapid Response Workforce Survey is key to a successful plan of action. The individual responses are compiled to show the aggregate data for the affected workforce. This helps design services, both desired and needed. Moreover, these reports support our effective communication of critical information about the impacted workforce with area economic development, employers and training partners.

The Wanted Analytics data identifies targeted, detailed, and timely, re-employment opportunities based on variables such as geographic region, identified skill-sets, occupation openings, specific locations of job openings, top area employers for the various skill-sets, indication of repetitive job postings for the identified skill-sets and overall time frame for the postings. With the employee surveys and the Wanted Analytics data, the Rapid Response Team has customized information to identify top area employers seeking similar occupational skill competencies in order to better link dislocated workers to best re-employment potential which improves results for the workers losing their current jobs and for those employers seeking similarly talented workers for their current and growing workforce needs.

Avon workers have received re-employment orientation, completed surveys on their hopes for their next opportunity, and attended workshops on resume writing, interviewing and searching for jobs on OhioMeansJobs.com. On December 14th, 42 of the laid off workers participated in a re-employment and training fair on site at Avon to explore future employment and consider any additional training they might need to obtain in order to improve their future employment prospects.

We thank the following companies that met with candidates from Avon at the Job and Education Fair: Amazon, Clippard, Festo Industries, Fifth Third, ITW-Evercoat, Sysco, Richards Industries, The ARMOR Group, Wornick, and WS Packaging.

We thank the following Area #13 eligible training providers for explaining their in-demand occupation training offerings: Napier, New Horizons, Elucidate Technology Solutions, Max Technical, Great Oaks and ProMark.

We thank our rapid response team members for their services and wish the Avon dislocated workers all the best in obtaining new employment for the 2018 New Year.

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**Short Takes on Workshops & Hiring Events**

Here is a of schedule of workshops specifically designed for the formally incarcerated that are available from a partnership group of providers. The topics discussed will include Certificates of
Qualification for Employment, applying for pardons, background-check errors, over restrictive hiring rules, and more...

The OhioMeansJobs Center of Cincinnati-Hamilton County has posted the January 2018 Workshops Calendar. You can view the calendar here.

The SWORWIB, OMJ and the Public Library have scheduled the winter series of Work Readiness Series. You can view the location and dates here.

The SWORWIB and OMJ Center have again partnered with United Way to conduct Free Tax Prep Sessions at the OMJ Center and throughout the region. Click here to get all the information.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter!

The SWORWIB has a Facebook page where we post news, pictures, events and up-to-date information at https://www.facebook.com/sworwib.

Also, follow us on Twitter @CincyWorkforce and we'll keep you informed throughout the month. The SWORWIB now has over 200 followers including @joelcomm. Joel Comm is an author, speaker, entrepreneur, and consultant. He specializes in growing online businesses through marketing strategy, website design, social media campaigns and much more! To learn more about Joel Comm click here.

Donations Appreciated

The SWORWIB is a 501c3 non-profit organization. Would you or your organization like to support the continued success of the workforce board? To make a donation (tax deductible) to the SWORWIB in support of Cincinnati-Hamilton County workforce initiatives, email Sherry Kelley Marshall at smarshall@sworwib.org.

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