

The Southwest Ohio Region
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

| 2006 REPORT |

Guiding you on your chosen path

Message from the Mayor

As the Chief Elected Official involved with the Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board (WIB), I welcome you to this review of all the accomplishments achieved by this hard working, multi-faceted organization in the past year.

Through the Super Jobs Center, its operational hub, the WIB provides direction and oversight to the regional public workforce development system.

In 2006, more than 8,600 local job seekers utilized the services available to them through the Super Jobs Center. Indeed, the more than 1,681 individuals who sought job placement assistance were hired by businesses throughout the Cincinnati USA region. In turn, Super Jobs staffers helped 840-plus area employers — both large and small — with applicant screening and hiring. For more data on the positive impact the WIB has made in our region, see page 9 of this report.

While these numbers represent a dramatic increase over the previous year's figures, the work of the WIB is far from complete. The WIB is dedicated to improving the overall business climate of our entire region by further expanding existing programs designed to benefit both businesses and individuals. With a more skilled and better trained workforce, businesses are more successful — assuring economic growth, inclusion for our diverse population, and prosperity for all citizens.

In this report, you will learn how the WIB system helps provide businesses with new sources for job applicants, along with a more diverse pool of applicants. In addition, it provides customized training for current employees that can result in increased productivity and a more stable employee base.

It also enhances a company's bottom line with cost savings related to recruitment and reduced turnover, as well as the direct benefits of tax credits for some workers.

Additionally, through WIB programs, job seekers of all ages, including youth, have easier access to everything they need to improve their skills or find employment. Through the Super Jobs Center, job seekers can take advantage of a range of services, including job postings, skills assessment, general employment training, and specific occupational skills development. Individuals facing barriers to work are connected to support services and training that helps them achieve self-sufficiency.

Please join me in congratulating the Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board on another successful year of working for the benefit of both businesses and individuals in Cincinnati USA.

Sincerely,



Mayor Mark Mallory

City of Cincinnati

Chief Elected Official

Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board



VISION

To become the model workforce development system.

MISSION

We will create and develop a comprehensive workforce development system that engages the entire community towards ever-increasing levels of self-sufficiency.

Establishing a path toward regional improvement

The Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board (WIB) serves both businesses and individuals throughout our region by working to improve the overall business climate to ensure economic growth, inclusion for a diverse population and prosperity for all citizens of Cincinnati USA.

The WIB is comprised of representatives from business, education, labor, non-profits, training providers, the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, Hamilton County officials and the Mayor of Cincinnati. By working together, we generate a proactive response to the changing global economy by improving the skills of regional workers. In turn, local businesses benefit from a better trained workforce, yielding increased tax revenues generated by new or better job opportunities for individuals and reduced social welfare needs.

The WIB is charged with the duty to strengthen and expand the region's workforce resources by consolidating the wide range of publicly-funded employment services into one coordinated system, as mandated by the Federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

In 2006, the WIB successfully reached several milestones that further established the agency as the region's workforce policy leader. These include:

- The formal collaboration of the WIB with several other regional workforce organizations. This united front solidifies the link between regional workforce development and regional economic development.
- The receipt of a \$230,000 Better Together Cincinnati Grant for assessment of workforce system capacity and evaluation of larger community needs.
- The implementation of a computerized, Internet-accessible universal customer tracking system called PASS – Personal Access to Super Jobs Services. This system allows job seekers to track in real-time the number and kinds of WIB services they've used, as well as offer information about other available services.
- The hiring and installation of the new Super Jobs Center Director, Michael Blackmon.
- The establishment of new committees by the WIB Board of Directors. These include the Action Plan/Business Advisory, External Relations, Performance and Public Policy committees.



New director leads the way



If you're looking for Michael Blackmon, the new director of the Super Jobs Center, check his office last. That's because Blackmon, a self-proclaimed "people person" is likely to be found just about anywhere else at the Central Parkway location.

From sitting in on orientations and training sessions to chatting with job seekers and interfacing with employers, Blackmon — shown above at right helping a job seeker — prefers to be in the action.

"I manage by walking around," he explains. "I can't get the heartbeat of what our customers are experiencing sitting in my office."

Blackmon joined the Super Jobs Center in April 2006, moving to Cincinnati from Texas where he'd been in the workforce services field since 2001. Prior to that, Blackmon logged 17 years of experience in retail management.

Although he hasn't been here for a full year, Blackmon is already delighted with the results he and his staff have worked hard to achieve, and energized to continue improving. He is particularly pleased with the increased speed and proactive approach his team has adopted in identifying and delivering services to both employers and job seekers.

The Center's business service unit has evolved from being "job order takers" into a more market driven approach, Blackmon says.

By proactively reaching out to offer employers a variety of customizable solutions to meet their needs, Center staffers are better serving the needs of local corporations.

"We go out to the employers' work sites and see what it takes to do the jobs that need to be filled," he explains. "Then, when we come back to the Super Jobs Center to screen for employees, we know exactly what is needed. We've looked at what it takes to get the job done, we understand the educational background and we understand the credentials that the employer requires."

Likewise, job seekers are now able to more quickly gain access to the Center's network of services, which results in their being placed with jobs or into the training they need faster, he says.

Ultimately, says Blackmon, workforce development is all about helping people find gainful employment so they can support themselves. "If there's anyone out there who truly wants to work we should be ready, willing and able to assist them to reach that goal."

And under Blackmon's dedicated leadership, the Super Jobs Center is poised to do just that well into the future.



“The Workforce Investment Board is dedicated to showing true value to regional businesses through services designed to help them in their selection and hiring process. This, in turn, helps reduce both the cost to the businesses as well as their hiring cycle time.”

– Dr. Ronald McKinley, Chairman
Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board

Serving the needs of employers to provide greater value

Throughout 2006, the WIB has focused on addressing and anticipating the needs of employers in order to provide improved value. By better responding to the needs of local businesses, the regional workforce investment system ultimately will grow in strength and reach. In order to provide those companies with workers who possess the skills they demand, it's imperative that the WIB understand the needs of the employers. Effectively completing this cycle positively impacts regional economic development through long-term improvements in our local economy.

By working with the business service team at the Super Jobs Center, employers throughout Cincinnati USA have access to a wide range of services designed to help them find the best candidates for their job openings. These services include using the facility to conduct recruiting events such as job fairs, outsource pre-employment assessment screening and perform initial interviews and hiring. Additionally, businesses can take advantage of customized training, staffing services, wage and labor market information, personal and technical referrals, national job search capabilities and economic development assistance.

With an eye toward proactive anticipation of regional employers' current and future needs, the WIB has identified several fields as being high-growth and high-demand in the Cincinnati USA region.

These include Healthcare, Construction and Environmental Abatement, Customer Service for both Retail and Finance, Technology, and also Security, an occupation that crosses a wide range of sectors. By knowing the areas of highest demand for skilled employees, the Super Jobs Center team can better target training programs to help develop these workers, improving their chances for long-term employment.

In the past year, many companies have taken advantage of the Center's software upgrades, including online tutorials and the addition of an online module for the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) testing process. This allows businesses to use the Center's facility to screen prospective employees, yielding cost and time savings for companies of any size by allowing the Center to process and filter applicants.

Further, through the Center's main Central Parkway location, as well as through its two outreach locations in Springdale and Jordan Crossing, employers have embraced the opportunity to conduct individual hiring events specifically for their company. This service offers a business the chance to screen and interview a number of applicants pre-qualified specifically for their unique job opening.



Custom solutions fill openings

In April 2006, Darla Olson, director of employment services for TriHealth, contacted the Super Jobs Center. Olson was interested in using the Center to streamline the recruiting and screening process used at TriHealth's two hospital facilities.

Olson hoped the Center could help with hiring entry-level personnel in environmental services, the department responsible for cleaning the hospitals.

"While it's an entry-level position, we are looking for people with floor care experience who understand how to clean and use the equipment," says Olson, pictured above. "Also, because we have an emphasis on customer service, applicants need those skills too."

Olson worked with Denise Becker from the Super Jobs Business Services unit to develop a screening process for the environmental services openings. She was impressed that Becker personally visited both hospital sites to learn first-hand what skills the position demands. TriHealth passed along their interview assessment form, basic information about the job and its pay scale.

"What I like about Super Jobs is they're very willing to customize their services to meet your company's specific needs," Olson notes. "They don't come back and say 'this is our process.' They work out a process with you." For TriHealth, the environmental services applicant screening process was up and running within six weeks.

Now, TriHealth forwards all applications for those jobs to the Super Jobs Center. The Center reviews the applications and selects potential candidates for a phone screening, also conducted by the Center. Select applicants are invited for a face-to-face interview at the Center, whose staff then refer selected candidates to the appropriate TriHealth location for an interview by an environmental services manager.

"Super Jobs narrows down the candidates to the ones who are most qualified," says Olson. "It really saves time for the hiring managers and for the recruiter in that area, because they're not involved until after the candidates have already been screened. Then it flows through our regular process and a reference check."

Encouraged by the success of the environmental services process, which has so far placed 31 in positions at TriHealth, the Super Jobs Center was the first place Olson thought of when she needed help with the application process for a different position.

In early July 2006, Olson was notified that TriHealth's in-house administrator of the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) examinations would no longer be offering that service by mid-August. The TABE is required for candidates interviewing for another entry-level hospital position as a patient care assistant (PCA), personnel that helps nurses provide care in a unit.

She immediately called Becker, who worked with Olson and the PCA recruiter to build a process that enables selected PCA candidates to take the TABE exam at the Super Jobs Center during one of two designated days every week. Since the testing was outsourced to the Center, 16 PCAs have been hired at TriHealth.

"They've been a huge help," says Olson. "We've been very happy with the support and with Super Job's customer service approach of 'here's your problem, let's see what we can do to help you with it.' We're continuing to look for ways to use the Super Jobs Center."



VALUES

Long-term economic growth of our region | Ensuring global economic competitiveness of employers and workers | Aligned partnerships that include, but are not limited to, WIA | Customer focus: job seekers and employers | Business leadership | Maximization of the employment potential of the individual | Employment services addressing the employment needs and life circumstances of each customer | Removing barriers to self-sufficiency, workforce participation and retention | Continuing education as a primary means for skill development and growth | Positive and measurable community impact on employer and work success

Hiring events, HR training improve customer service

As a small, but rapidly growing business, SentiLock, LLC needed help finding qualified applicants to staff their customer service center. The company, located in Sharonville, manufactures electronic lockboxes for the real estate industry.

“We had several new customers and needed more Level One Support Technicians — a good problem to have,” recalls John Warner, assistant support manager at SentiLock, pictured at right. “The position involves both technical support for the Realtors® across the country who use our product, and customer service.”

Warner contacted the Super Jobs Center in spring 2006. The company was immediately included in two job fairs at the Center, exposing SentiLock to a large number of candidates at one time. Additionally, the Center’s outreach location in Springdale hosted two hiring events specifically for the company.

“Super Jobs screened candidates ahead of time and invited them to a hiring event held at their Tri-County location,” says Warner. “It brought in people that lived in our area, or near enough to travel here easily.”

The hiring event allowed Warner and other SentiLock managers to conduct 10 to 20 interviews on the spot. After the first hiring event in the summer, Warner worked with Super Jobs account executive Betty Poling to refine the process, and a second SentiLock hiring event was held a month later. The job fairs and hiring events yielded seven qualified candidates, all of whom accepted positions.

“That department has 24 support technicians total, so the seven that we’ve hired through Super Jobs is a big chunk,” Warner observes. Although the company doesn’t have any additional hiring events currently planned with the Super Jobs Center, Poling continues to screen potential candidates and forwards qualified resumes to Warner weekly.

To help SentiLock during the training process of their seven new hires, the Super Jobs Center provided government-funded On the Job Training reimbursements to the company. The reimbursements pay half the employee’s salary during the three-month training period. Additionally, Warner says, Poling helped him and other SentiLock managers with human resources training.

“Being in a smaller company, we take on a lot of the administrative tasks that normally a human resources specialist would be doing,” he explains. “Betty provided us with interviewing guidelines, tips about the hiring process, and things that really helped to make us better at our jobs. That speaks to Super Jobs’ level of commitment to their customers.”

“We’re more than satisfied with the Super Jobs Center. They’re providing this service with a lot of dedication to us as the employer,” Warner concludes. “They look out for us and meet our needs. It’s been a very good relationship.”





Job seekers use resources

Student finds training, job

When a mix-up at Cincinnati State and Technical College's finance department forced recent high school graduate Rasah Kennedy, pictured below, to abandon plans to study nursing, she turned to the Super Jobs Center.

Kennedy completed assessment testing at the Center, then met with Mary Harrill, who told her about educational and employment options in the medical field.

"Mary helped me a lot," recalls Kennedy. "I was interested in the health care coordinator program, but Mary showed me more opportunities in the field of medical coding." Shortly after she enrolled at Tech Skills, and currently is completing her last two courses.

Additionally, as Kennedy supports herself while pursuing her studies, the Center staff helped her with her job search, particularly for positions in the health care field. "They helped me with my resume, and called when they had a job opening or hiring event," she says.

Through the Center, Kennedy found a Pharmacy Tech job with Walgreens, where she's worked since summer 2006.

"Because I am single, I'm only 20, and I don't have children or disabilities, I was sure there was no help out there for someone like me," says Kennedy. "When I found the Super Jobs Center, they helped me better myself so that I can have a good career and a good future."



After finding herself unemployed for the first time in 30 years, Yolanda Hill found the Super Jobs Center in May 2006. Once there, she was impressed by the friendly, helpful staff she encountered.

"All of the staff were helpful," says Hill, pictured above. "I primarily used the work resource computer lab, which helped me cover a lot of ground in terms of my job search."

With many companies no longer accepting paper applications, Hill notes, having access to the computers was a tremendous benefit offered by the Center. And, "being a little computer handicapped, it was even better that people were there to answer questions."

Hill worked with career coach Erwin McIntosh, who offered some suggestions for making her resume more functional. She also enrolled in a week-long course at Cincinnati Works.

"Although the class I took at Cincinnati Works was directed more to people with inconsistent employment history — and I didn't fall into that category — I found their information to be great," Hill recalls. "They covered how to interview, timeliness, things that help people who are just getting out into the workforce or that have problems keeping a job. And they have speakers from different corporations describe the types of people that they don't hire."

Shortly after she completed the workshop, Hill signed on for temporary assignments with Psych Temps, an opportunity she discovered through the Super Jobs Center. While she currently works as a receptionist, and expects a new assignment in the spring upon the completion of her current post, she still hopes to find permanent employment in her field of social services — which will bring her back to the Super Jobs Center.

"Super Jobs is a great access point for anyone seeking a job, and not everyone has a computer in their home," she says. "The people there are available to answer questions, and no one seemed bothered by the questions or annoyed if you asked them at any given moment. Everyone appeared to love what they do and appreciate being needed, and I've found that to be rare."



“For job seekers, the Workforce Investment Board helps individuals know and understand the needs of area businesses. We help them identify and develop the skills those businesses need, then link these job seekers to the businesses. If an individual needs additional skills or training to qualify for the position, we connect them with that as well.”

– Pamela R. Carter, President
Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board

Putting job seekers on the path to employment

The WIB is driven to ensure that job seekers are equipped to meet the demands of the labor market. To meet that goal, the Super Jobs Center has been designed to provide a wide range of assistance to individuals conducting a job search or looking to improve their marketability and skills.

Services at the Center include access to local and national job listings, resume development, employment testing and assessment, job readiness workshops, a listing of state-approved eligible training providers and employment information, and financial assistance for training. Center staffers work to understand the needs of employers, then guide job seekers to the training they may need to develop or improve the skills that are most in demand by local companies.

Further, job seekers are offered assistance with unemployment insurance, adult education, GED testing and financial aid information. Also, customized programs for job seekers with disabilities, veterans, mature workers and migrant or seasonal workers are available.

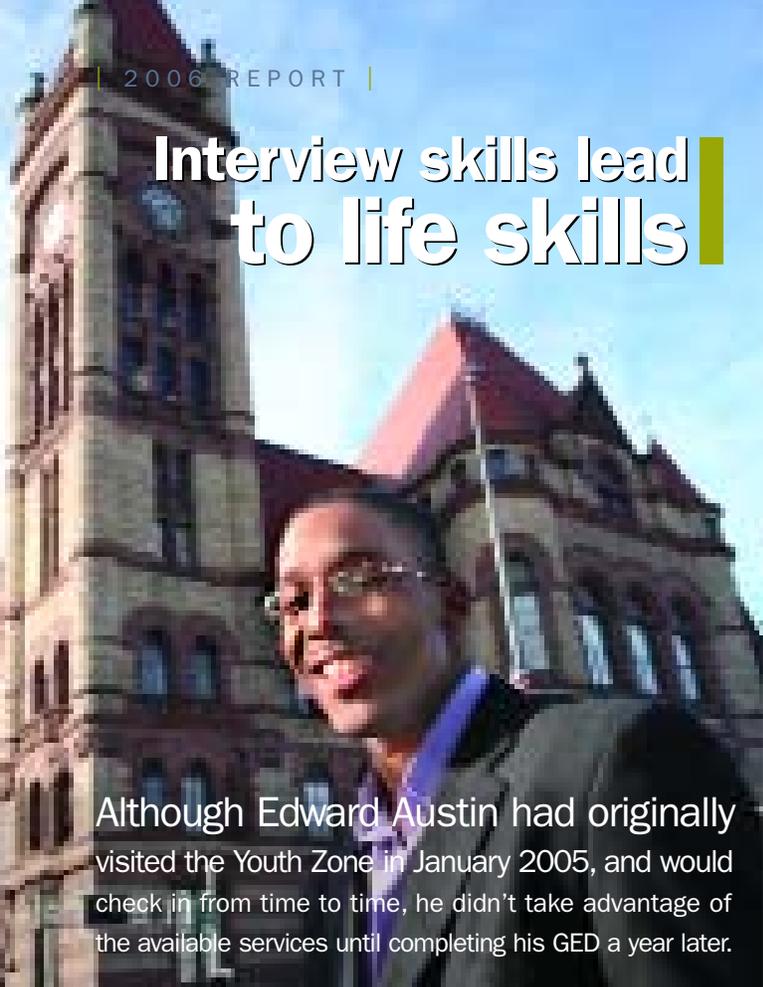
Job seekers already take advantage of the Center’s new computerized, Internet-accessible universal customer tracking system called PASS – Personal Access to Super Jobs Services.

Through a swipe card system, users can keep track of all the different services that they’re using within the system. Super Jobs Center team members and affiliated service partners can also access the system to help job seekers identify additional services that will further help them improve their skills and expand their range of employment opportunities.

Planned for the end of 2007 is a “Tour of Services” link on the SuperJobs.com web site. This new resource for job seekers will provide an interactive, audio visual overview of the range of services available to them at the Super Jobs Center. This will allow job seekers to fully explore all the options available to them through the Center, providing better service.



Interview skills lead to life skills



Although Edward Austin had originally visited the Youth Zone in January 2005, and would check in from time to time, he didn't take advantage of the available services until completing his GED a year later.

"In the last year I've received the most help from the Youth Zone, because I was willing to help myself at that point," says Austin, above.

Youth Zone staffers helped Austin, now 21, develop his resume, conduct one-on-one practice interviews to prepare for a job search, and explore employment options.

"They taught me things like how to carry myself, my demeanor — things that took me to a place that I want to be in," he says. "Those are skills that I use all the time and I really appreciate."

Through connections he made via the Youth Zone, Austin participated in a public television program discussing youth issues. He has also taken a part-time position as a Youth Streetworker with the City of Cincinnati's Human Relations Commission. In this role, he works to assist, support, advocate, mentor and guide street youth.

As for Austin's dreams, he's started the process toward the goal of earning his Juris Doctorate by enrolling in the winter 2007 term at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College to study political science. The Youth Zone helped him complete his Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms.

For other young adults facing similar challenges, Austin highly recommends the Youth Zone and the Super Jobs Center.

"If people could just see that these are one of those doors that are open — you have to be the one to walk in the door," he reflects. "They have a lot of great opportunities and a staff that is willing to help you. I would encourage everybody that it's a really good place to go, just to learn a skill like how to type. It's a good place all around."

YOUTH SERVICE PARTNERS

Citizens Committee on Youth |
Easter Seals Work Resource Center | Henkles & McCoy | Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates | Literacy Center West | YWCA | Youth Zone

Steering youth to a brighter future

In addition to helping employers and job seekers, the Super Jobs Center hosts a special place for young adults seeking exposure to, and assistance with, the local employment market. The Youth Zone, which is operated by Easter Seals WRC, helps 14–21 year-olds develop skills that enable them to be successful in a working environment. Besides providing information on education, employment and community resource opportunities for that age group, the Youth Zone offers assistance with career exploration, resume development and other employment-related tools, techniques and workshops.

Further, the Youth Zone acts as a gateway, helping low income and disadvantaged young individuals identify and apply for a variety of services. These organizations are designed to target the unique challenges common to young adults. Services include helping out-of-school youth connect with education opportunities to finish their high school education or GED, as well as prepare for post-secondary education and job readiness skills. Other programs help with transportation, child care, housing or even the appropriate clothes to wear during interviews and on the job.

The Youth Council subcommittee of the WIB oversees the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County's workforce development system.

Youth Council Members

Doug Arthur
Business Support Services

Bari Ewing
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College

Beverly Hardy
Greater Cincinnati Urban League

William Harris
Zion Baptist Church

John Haysbert
Cinergy Corp.

Scott Henderson
Pro Train

Billy Hensley
Knowledge Works Foundation

Marquicia Jones-Woods
Cincinnati Metro. Housing Authority

Paula London
Career Education & Resource Center

Wayne McFarland
Hamilton County Juvenile Court

Karen Parchment
Global Personnel Solutions

Paul Ramstetter
Cincinnati Public Schools

Stanley Ross
Cincinnati Human Relations Com.

Bob Scarborough
Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development

Tyronne Stuckey
TYS Construction Services

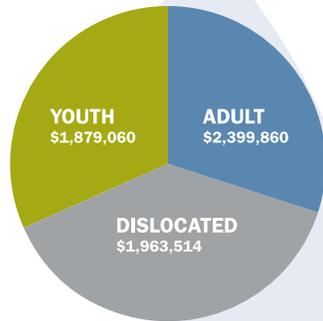
Sharon Thompson
Cincinnati Job Corps

Carolyn Turner
Cincinnati Parents for Public Schools

Carol Walker
Time Warner Cable

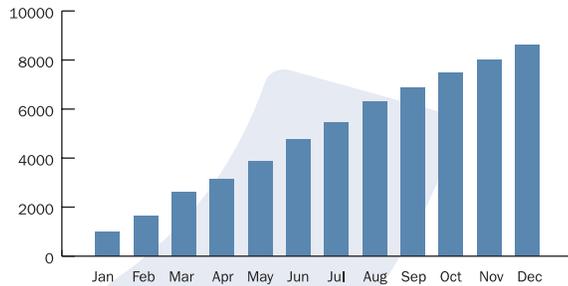


2006 FINANCIAL SUMMARY



Total 2006 Budget:
\$6,242,434

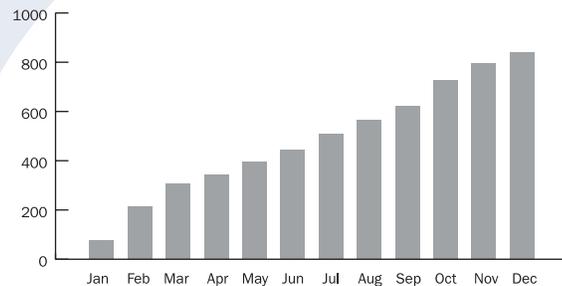
2006 PERFORMANCE SUMMARY



Cumulative Number of Job Seekers Served: 8,606



Cumulative Number of Successful Placements (Job Seekers Employed): 1,681



Cumulative Number of Business Contacts: 841

The Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board of Directors

Stephen J. Bailey
Bailey Contracting Svc. LLC
Melissa Bledsoe
Spectrum Learning Centers

Beth Brannigan
Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Svcs.

Darraugh Butler
D. Butler Management Consulting

Michael Conner
Frisch's Restaurants Inc.

Alfonso Cornejo
AC & Consultants

Pat DeWine
Hamilton County

Kimber Fender
The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

Dave FitzGibbon
ILSCO

Drew Fox
Amantea Nonwovens LLC

Paul Heldman
The Kroger Co.

Wayne Hicks
Cincinnati Business Incubator

Carl Hilliard
Cincinnati Job Corps Management and Training Corporation

Kathleen Kraemer
Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission

Paul Magnus
Mature Services

Ron McKinley
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

Walter McLarty
TriHealth

Anthony Perzigian
University of Cincinnati

Dave Phillips
Cincinnati Works

Dan Radford
AFL-CIO

Rob Reifsnnyder
Greater Cincinnati United Way

Paul Reynolds
Fifth Third Bank

Gwen Robinson
Cincinnati-Hamilton Co. Community Action Agency

Jim Schwab
US Bank

Cynthia Smith
Hamilton Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services

Annette Smith-Tarver
Blackwell Consulting Svcs. of Ohio

Pete Strange
Messer Construction

Tyrone Stuckey
TYS Construction Services

Donald Troendle
Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority

Robin White
Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development

Ron Wright
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College

John Young
Freestore/Foodbank

Joe Zimmer
Building Trades Council

The Super Jobs Center operates in partnership with Arbor E&T LLC, and is supported by the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County and the Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board. An equal employment opportunity program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request for individuals with disabilities.



1916 Central Parkway • Cincinnati, OH 45214
Phone: 513.731.9800 • Fax: 513.458.6147
SuperJobs.com



The Super Jobs Center is an affiliate of the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber.