

## Greetings!

A group of youth and workforce leaders from the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC) participated in the Youth Provider Roundtable April 13 to learn more about Area 13's Youth programs. The meeting was set up by **Graig Pellman**, WIA Technical Assistance Manager at the state Office of Workforce Development, at the request of COWIC, which is looking at different youth models around the state as it considers new approaches.

"Our board decided years ago that it made more sense to tap into Cincinnati's wealth of expertise among non-profits that offered youth services instead of doing it ourselves," said **Sherry Kelley Marshall**, President/CEO of the Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board (SWORWIB), explaining the history of Area 13's approach. "These providers had to learn about the Workforce Investment Act and its youth eligibility requirements, but they had in place the expertise and services that we could then leverage for our youth."



*COWIC staff with Tim Dingler, back row, left, and Sherry Kelley Marshall, third from right.*

Area 13's current youth providers -- Connect2Success, Easter Seals Work Resource Center, Lighthouse Youth Services, Literacy Center West, and Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates -- have consistently attained "exceeded" scores on the federal Common Measures scorecard.

The COWIC team, which included **Shirley Costantino**, Chief Operating Officer; **Roy Landreth**, Director of Planning, Policies & Compliance Services, and **Gailmarie Harris**, Director of Youth Workforce Services, peppered the youth providers at the roundtable meeting with questions about their practices, case load, and WIA training and compliance, among other topics. They directed administrative questions to Marshall and **Tim Dingler**, who monitors the providers' performance for Hamilton County Job and Family Services. "We really appreciate the opportunity to be here," Harris said. "You've given us a lot to think about in how we serve youth and young adults in Central Ohio."

## YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: JOB CORPS HELPS WITH BASEMENT CONVERSION AT SUPERJOBS

Dust was flying in the basement of the SuperJobs Center on April 4, as a young, industrious crew from Job Corps removed acoustic tiles in the basement's ceiling. They filled wheelbarrow after wheelbarrow with the tiles, which were trundled to the dumpster behind the building.

The basement at SuperJobs is being converted from storage space to usable office, testing and classroom space by [Cincinnati State](#) and [Great Oaks](#) as well as other required WIA partners. Job Corps has a long history of training its youth in various skilled trades, including construction, so asking them to undertake the ceiling project was a way to save money and allow the youth hands-on experience, said **Sherry Kelley Marshall**.

**Mike Williamson**, who teaches facilities maintenance at Job Corps, supervised the project at SuperJobs. His students have experience in pouring concrete, framing, finishing and hanging drywall, plumbing and running wire, among other things. One student that day was **Calvin Black**, 23, who enrolled with Job Corps in January. "It's an excellent program," he said. "The instructor is very hands-on. All you have to do is listen to him, and apply what he says to the situation." Black aims to be an electrician.

Several young women were among the crew that day, including **Roni Williams**, 22, who is studying carpentry. "I love doing carpentry; I love being hands-on," said Williams, who hopes to become an apprentice carpenter. **Faith Bridgett**, 18, wants to be a real estate agent - and have the expertise to buy, renovate, and resell properties.

**Wes Miller**, building manager at SuperJobs, is grateful for the assistance and remarked that the project "gives these young people valuable experience that will help them as they move into a career."



*Roni Williams takes equipment into the SuperJobs basement.*

#### YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: LIGHTHOUSE YOUNG MEN GIVE BACK TO COMMUNITY

The Job Corps crew wasn't the only young team working at SuperJobs this April. Youth from Lighthouse Youth Services' [Civic Justice Corps](#) replaced a weed patch out front with brick landscaping.



*Mikel Irby, left, follows directions from stonemason Ohmar Gibson.*

The Civic Justice Corps works with young men who have been adjudicated through the Juvenile Justice system. They perform community service as a way to heal the harm they have done to their communities, noted Kathryn Thompson of Lighthouse. Lighthouse has partnered with [Lawn Life](#), a non-profit whose Executive Director is **Tim Arnold**, which teaches young men from disadvantaged backgrounds basic landscaping and carpentry skills, as well as essential work readiness behaviors. "We provide a steppingstone into the workforce for these youth," says Arnold. The Civic Justice program requires each young man to work 32 volunteer hours for Lawn Life before being apprenticed (and paid) for six months.

The morning of April 2, **Mikel Irby**, 18, and **Quaron White**, 18, were working with stonemason **Ohmar Gibson**, who was teaching them how to prepare the bed, lay brick and cut stones to fit a particular space. The brick design incorporated the angular exclamation point that is part of the SuperJobs Center's logo. **Brandon Wilson**, 19, who had recently become an apprentice at Lawn Life, came down on his own to help out the team. Wilson said his community service with Lawn Life "kept me out of trouble. I enjoy the work. I love working outside."

"If you want to stay out of jail," he added, "this is the best way to go."

The SWORWIB is one of several organizations that partnered with Lighthouse Youth Services to win the Civic Justice Corps grant from the Department of Labor.

Jabari Watkins, left, and Maya Williams were part of the class at Taft Information Technology High School learning about careers at Duke Energy from HR speaker Diane Smiley April 5. Duke coordinated with Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates to speak to JCG students this spring as part of the nationwide Get Into Energy program. The program, in which the SWORWIB participates, reaches out to young people to alert them to the potential for careers in the energy industry, which expects to see hundreds of vacancies as its mature workforce starts to retire. Smiley discussed the entry and mid-level jobs Duke offers, and schooling and training necessary to be considered for hiring.



EMPLOYERS FIRST SUBMITS WORKFORCE INNOVATION FUND PROPOSAL

Members of the Employers First Regional Workforce Network (EFRWN) recently submitted a grant application to the Department of Labor's \$98 million Workforce Innovation Fund to expand current regional workforce resources and services to employers. If awarded, Employers First would receive nearly \$6 million during the next three years. Employers First is a collaboration of four Workforce Investment Boards from Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana; the SWORWIB is the lead fiscal agent.

Proposed enhancements to current services included employer engagement and development training for the region's Business Service Representatives, new profiling and job matching assessments for employers, a regional database system, the implementation of new career pathways and increasing employer outreach by adding additional Employers First staff members, said **Andrew Lotter**, Regional Liaison for Employers First. Decisions regarding WIF grant awards are expected during the summer.

In other news, Employers First and the SuperJobs Center teamed up for a workforce seminar April 11 sponsored by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber. The event -- How the Public Workforce System Works for You -- was held at the Boy Scout Achievement Center in Evendale. Pictured at left, front row, **Lotter**; **Katie Lazarus**, Viox; **Jean Heffron**, General Tool Co.; **Kim Phillips**, Blue Frog Productions; back row, **Steve Browne**, LaRosa's, SWORWIB board member and moderator; **Carolyn Reynolds**, SuperJobs Center; **Daina Dennis**, SuperJobs; **Susan Balzer**, Viox, and **Rick Phillips**, Viox.



VETERANS SPOTLIGHT: MAKING STRIDES IN EMPLOYMENT WITH SUPERJOBS

Seeking some partnership opportunities, veterans representatives and SuperJobs staff met on April 4 with **Jeanne Buse**, National Account Executive with Recruit Military, a Loveland-based staffing agency that facilitates hiring between private employers and veterans who are seeking work.

Recruit Military holds Veteran Opportunity Expos around the country, including one scheduled for May 31 at Paul Brown Stadium, a job fair featuring employers who are interested in hiring veterans. Recruit Military makes sure that employers are familiar with various incentives the government offers to private companies that hire vets. At the meeting, Business Services Manager **Chuck Walters** told Buse about On-The-Job-Training funds, an incentive that helps to pay for 50 percent of the wages of a new employee while they are being trained. Veterans have first preference among the job seekers for these funds, he noted.

**MAYOR'S YOUTH JOB FAIR A SUCCESS:** More than 2,600 young people flocked to **Mayor Mallory's** seventh annual Youth Job Fair, held March 29 at Duke Energy Convention Center. Employers who set up booths included Meijer, Frisch's, Hilton Hotels, Helping Hands, Cincinnati Metro, and several City of Cincinnati departments. Mallory, who is Lead Elected Official of the SWORWIB, welcomed the young people and employers at the start of the event. Meanwhile, the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati was selected through an RFP process to administer the city's summer youth employment program. The Urban League will hire 335 local youth from 14-18 years old to participate in the eight-week program that will place them at one of over 40 local businesses or non-profits. Application information is available [here](#). The SWORWIB and Hamilton County Job and Family Services will implement a TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) summer youth employment program as well.



***Lamont Taylor, Employee Relations at Frisch's, hands out applications to young people at the city's Youth Job Fair.***

**MAYOR UPBEAT IN STATE OF THE CITY:** Calling for "Pride, Commitment, Investment, Partnership and Promotion," **Mayor Mallory** delivered his 7th State of the City address April 19 at the Aronoff Center for the Arts. About 350 were in the audience. The Mayor spoke about fast-changing Over-the-Rhine and its extensive rehabilitation; the new jobs that will be coming into the City of Cincinnati with the Nielsen Co.'s move downtown and the expansion of dunnhumby USA. He unveiled the design of the city's new streetcars by preferred vendor CAF USA. He ended his speech by touting the World Choir Games, coming to Cincinnati this summer, and the worldwide spotlight this will shine on our city.

**CHAMBER PRESENTS POLICY AGENDA:** A group from the Cincinnati Regional USA Chamber, including **Sherry Kelley Marshall**, traveled to Columbus on March 28 to present the Chamber's 2012 Policy Agenda to key legislators and the governor. In education and workforce development, the Policy Agenda calls for greater investment in early childhood education; greater focus on accountability and outcomes in education; support of higher education grant funding; support of streamlining and coordination of employer services in the Tri-State region; support for federal reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act, and support of targeted expansion of federal employment Visa programs.

**WIB EXECUTIVES MEET WITH FREDERICK:** **Sherry Kelley Marshall**, Area 13, and **Jeff Weber**, Area 12, toured the new Office of Workforce Transformation and met with Executive Director **Rich Frederick** on March 21, prior to the monthly meeting in Columbus of the Ohio Workforce Investment Board Collaborative.

**EUROPEAN CHAMBER TO HOLD SKILLED WORKFORCE CONFERENCE:** The European-American Chamber of Commerce will host a conference May 16 on Skilled Labor Workforce: U.S. & European Perspectives to address the issues and challenges the U.S. faces in recapitalizing its skilled labor workforce for economic prosperity and global competitiveness. Speakers include **John Francy**, CFO and CAO of Milacron, LLC, **Karen Elzey**, Director of the Skills for America's Future at the Aspen Institute, and **Joerg Ernst**, Executive Vice President Global Business at Siemens AG. Employers First Regional Workforce Network will be among the exhibitors. To find out more and register, click [here](#).