



The Southwest Ohio Region
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

The latest news from
The Southwest Ohio Region
Workforce Investment Board



NEWSWIB

April 2014

Spotlight on Labor *Apprenticeship Fair at Training Center attracts more than 120*



More than 120 people turned out for an Apprenticeship Job Fair held April 9 at the [IBEW-NECA Electrical Training Center](#).

Among them were pre-screened job seekers referred from [OhioMeansJobs Cincinnati-Hamilton County](#), as well as several youth from [Literacy Center West](#), [Lighthouse Youth Services](#) and YouthBuild, a program of [Easter Seals TriState](#). Students from Western Hills High School and Summit Academy also attended.

Twenty-two trades are represented locally in construction apprenticeships, said **Chris Fridel**, Director of the [Greater Cincinnati Apprenticeship Council](#), and about half of those were at the Apprenticeship Job Fair to talk more about their specific program. "Apprenticeships are our lifeblood," said Fridel, "as we bring new members into the industry."

Apprenticeships, often called a "best kept secret," offer job seekers the opportunity to earn money while learning their trade through a combination of classroom and on-the-job training. Once accepted, apprentices are eligible for regular wage increases and a benefits package. Their training will also often count toward college credit, Fridel said.

Brandon Creech, Morio Cathey and **Sherrod Jackson** attended with Literacy Center West Manager **Thanapat Vichitchot**. The young men are in the process of earning a National Career Readiness Certificate before beginning pre-apprenticeship training. The training is being organized by the SWORWIB, with funding from the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) administered by the [National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#).

"My great uncle worked for 25 years as an electrician for Duke Energy," said, Creech, 20, who hopes to become an electrician. Cathey wanted to learn more about electricians and bricklayers, and Jackson said he wanted to learn more about the painters/roofers and carpenters apprenticeships.

Fridel said the Apprenticeship Council plans to make this job fair an annual event. For more information on apprenticeships in Greater Cincinnati, go to www.earnandlearn.com.



Morio Cathey, left, Brandon Creech, and Sherrod Jackson, all youth enrolled in Literacy Center West, learn about electrician apprenticeships from Chris Fridel at the Apprenticeship Job Fair April 9.

Spotlight on the Board

Luxottica recruiters hold mock interviews with Withrow JCG students

Students enrolled in Cincinnati Youth Collaborative's JCG program at Withrow High School were interviewed by the pros March 25-27 -- recruiters from Luxottica who gave the students pointers as they asked questions and listened to answers.

Alicia Tidwell, Senior Manager, Diversity and Inclusion at Luxottica, and a member of the SWORWIB, worked with CYC to set up the mock interviews. "This is all about the future workforce," said Tidwell, whose company has a long history of providing mentors to Withrow students. "Maybe some of these students will come to work for us."

Brittany Montgomery, a senior at Withrow, has been accepted to Wilmington College, where she plans to major in physical therapy. To prepare for her interview, she updated her resume, practiced answering questions, and researched Luxottica, so she would have questions to ask at the end of the interview.

A very enthusiastic recruiter, **Lisa Stephens**, spent about 15 minutes with Brittany. She asked Brittany what she wanted to major in, and was impressed that Brittany had a clear idea of her major and what profession she wanted to pursue. Stephens gave Brittany pointers on how to polish her resume even more. For example, Brittany has experience as a baby-sitter, which indicates that she is responsible, punctual and trustworthy -- all qualities that can be showcased on a resume.

Brittany said that she really liked the JCG program. "It's helping us get ready for the future," she said.

This is one in an occasional series looking at workforce initiatives from leading companies and organizations in Greater Cincinnati, especially those represented on our board.



Lisa Stephens, left, concludes her interview with Brittany Montgomery.

Cameron, Strum offer wealth of experience

It's important that the SWORWIB have members who represent and can speak for economic development interests in Cincinnati and Hamilton County. Currently, the board has two such members: **Barry Strum** and **Jack Cameron**.

Strum is the Senior Economic Development Specialist at [Hamilton County Development Company](#) (HCDC). Cameron is Administrator and Economic Development Director for the [Village of Evendale](#) and also leads the Evendale Community Improvement Corporation, which is the economic development arm of the Village.

HCDC

For those not familiar with HCDC, it is contracted to provide economic development services to Hamilton County but is not part of Hamilton County government. It also provides SBA 504 loans and operates the Hamilton County Business Center. In 2013, the HCDC reported investments of \$97.7 million, creating 240 jobs, and retaining 1,195 jobs. Its incubator's tenant companies generated more than \$17 million in revenues in 2013. "Hamilton County has two goals in economic development," Strum said. "To enlarge the economic base and to keep the businesses we have."

Strum primarily works with townships and municipalities throughout the county. He often focuses on existing businesses. "I will ask them, 'Are you satisfied? Do you have any expansion needs? Are there shifts in your business in terms of technology? Do you have any problems getting help?'" If a company is interested in expanding, Strum can provide them with potential sites, but he tries to keep them in the same community. He also works with townships and cities to put together incentives for existing and prospective companies to make the site as attractive as possible. And, when appropriate, he will connect the company to SWORWIB President **Sherry Kelley Marshall** if the company needs workforce help.

We are in the midst of one major workforce trend, Strum notes: the ever larger population of seniors as more boomers retire -- or don't retire. The impact is felt both ways, he said. Some industries are witnessing a major exit of their workforce, leaving them with vacancies that are not necessarily easy to fill. The flip side is those boomers who want to continue working -- or need to continue working -- well into their 70s.

Evendale

The Village of Evendale boasts that its Business Ready Evendale Strategy "focuses our efforts to be the easiest government to do business in Southwest Ohio."

In March 2013, the Village Council approved a Zoning Code and Zoning Map revision after a 20-month process that included extensive input from numerous stakeholders including existing businesses, said Cameron.

"The intent in overhauling our Zoning Code was to make it easy to read, easy to apply, and easier to accommodate our businesses' needs to serve them better," said Cameron, who has been Economic Development Director since 2004.

Evendale is best known as the home of [GE Aviation](#)'s world headquarters and [Formica Group](#) North American headquarters as well as other global and national headquarter operations. GE is by far the biggest employer, with approximately 6,000 employees in Evendale.

Cameron believes it is important for the Village to be engaged in workforce development to serve its industrial clients and to unlock opportunities for jobs in the community. "In my time with Evendale Sherry Kelley Marshall has been involved in organizing skilled training, helping companies obtain training grants, and leading efforts for a plant closure to find work for displaced workers," Cameron added.

Sen. Brown tours Richards Industries

U.S. Sen. **Sherrrod Brown** held a press conference April 22 at [Richards Industries](#), a local valve manufacturer, to highlight his Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act of 2013. At the press conference, Brown touted the relationship between Richards and the staff of OhioMeansJobs Cincinnati-Hamilton County, which has worked with Richards on On-the-Job Training grants. Richards has hired 17 people using OJTs.

"Addressing our country's skills gap is critical to filling open positions and meeting the demands for high-tech job growth," Sen. Brown said. "We know economic development and workforce skills training go hand-in-hand. When the skilled workers are



Standing behind Sen. Brown at his press conference is Cheryl Neiheisel, Vice President of HR at Richards.

there, more investments follow. By partnering local employers with local workforce boards, labor unions, and job training programs at companies like Richards Industries, we can ensure a clusters-based job growth strategy that improves our economic competitiveness while reducing the unemployment rate." The SECTORS Act is co-sponsored by Sen. **Susan Collins**, R-Maine.

Spotlight on the WIB

City's Trade and Development Department briefed on workforce



Sherry Kelley Marshall, center standing, held a briefing with staffers from Cincinnati's Trade and Development Department April 17 at the OMJ Center. Also attending was Council Member Chris Seelbach, second from left. Diane Powers, left seated, is Senior Economic Development Analyst for the department.

SWORWIB looks for new home

As the [Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber](#) prepares for its move later this year to Three East Fourth Street, which will also house the Port Authority, the Cincinnati Business Committee, the Cincinnati Regional Business Committee, and REDI (Regional Economic Development Initiative) (see [press release](#)), the SWORWIB, which has been housed at the Chamber's offices in Carew Tower since its inception, is weighing its options. "Ideally, we would like to continue to share space with the Chamber, especially now that other economic development entities will also be in the same building," said President Marshall. "It's important that workforce be at the same table, and proximity makes that easier." But, she added, there are rent and space issues that must be worked out.

In the meantime, Marshall asks any NewsWIB readers whose companies or organizations may have space for the WIB staff (three full-time and one contractor) to contact her to discuss options at smarshall@cincinnatiachamber.com

Marshall presents at NAWB annual forum

At the annual forum for the National Association of Workforce Boards ([NAWB](#)) held March 29-April 1 in Washington, D.C., President Marshall was a presenter at two workshops. At the all-day Health Professionals Pathways (H2P) Consortium Summit, she and **Andrea Milani**, Director of Student Activities at Cincinnati State, spoke about the partnership between the SWORWIB and Cincinnati State and how it contributed to the continued success of the Greater Cincinnati Health Careers Collaborative. Marshall also participated in a session on WIA youth presented by Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus and Dayton WIA and Connecting the Dots representatives.

More details on MSSC's June Annual Conference

Leo Reddy, Chairman and CEO of the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council, and President Marshall are finalizing the agenda for the MSSC's Annual Conference, which will be held in Cincinnati June 17-18. Most of the activity will take place June 18, with a full array of panels comprised of industry, education and workforce leaders. Among the companies represented will be General Electric, Cummins and Wagstaff. The presidents of Ivy Tech, Gateway, and Cincinnati State community colleges will be leading the education panel. The day at GE will conclude with a tour. To register for the MSSC Annual Conference, email Catherine Feeney with MSSC at cfeeney@msscusa.org or call her at 703-739-9000 ext. 2222. *Reserve your seat now.*

Later that afternoon, **Brig. Gen. John E. O'Neil IV**, Commandant, U.S. Army Quartermaster School, will lead a discussion at the 21C Museum Hotel about initiatives to assist veteran re-entry into the civilian labor force. If you are interested in attending this, email Tina Driessen at tdriessen@msscusa.org, or call her at

703-739-9000 ext. 2223. On June 19, a Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair will be held at Sharonville Convention Center from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Registration link for Hiring Our Heroes Veterans Job Fair is [here](#). More information on Hiring Our Heroes is found [here](#).

OhioMeansJobs upgraded website goes live



Meet **Owen!** Owen is the mascot for the State's new [OhioMeansJobs](#) website. The website, which is now live, is very user-friendly for both job seekers and employers. Individuals can assess their skills, map out a career plan and, of course, search for jobs. They can build a portfolio using a handy backpack that acts as a file cabinet. Employers can easily post jobs and search for resumes. Separate portals exist for veterans and K-12 students. Expect to see more marketing on this from the state later this year. And how did Owen arrive at his name? Well, it wouldn't be government if there weren't an acronym attached, right? Owen stands for

Ohio Workforce & Educational Network.

In the news

The Chamber's Currents [covered](#) the branding change for the city-county One Stop job center to OhioMeansJobs Cincinnati-Hamilton County.

Johnna Reeder, formerly of Duke Energy, is [tapped](#) as the new executive for **Regional Economic Development Initiative** (REDI), formerly the Cincinnati USA Partnership.

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The SWORWIB now has its own [Facebook](#) page, where we will post news, pictures and interesting tidbits throughout the month. And we also have a Twitter feed -- [@CincyWorkforce](#). So like us on Facebook and follow us on [Twitter](#) [@CincyWorkforce](#) and we'll keep you up to date throughout the month!

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