

Greetings!

As the year draws to a close, I am reminded how grateful I am to all of you for your support, dedication, and commitment to workforce development throughout the Greater Cincinnati area. Our partnerships make us stronger, and allow us to accomplish all that we have.

From our offices in the Carew Tower -- overlooking Fountain Square this season -- the SWORWIB staff and I wish you and your loved ones a happy, healthy and prosperous 2012!

Sherry Kelley Marshall

President/CEO
Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board



CONGRESSIONAL STAFF TAKE WORKFORCE LEARNING TOUR OF REGION

Partnerships among workforce stakeholders, employer-focused outcomes and building on effective models have been the keys to Greater Cincinnati's success in career pathway development, a team of researchers from the Congressional Staff Workforce Network learned during a visit to the region on Dec. 9, 2011.

Hosted by the [Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board](#) (SWORWIB) and [Partners for a Competitive Workforce](#), the team visited several sites to learn more about industry sector initiatives such as the [Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati](#) (HCC), and cooperative ventures among the region's Workforce Investments Boards, including the [Employers First Regional Workforce Network](#). The team also visited [Gateway Community and Technical College](#) to see its Advanced Manufacturing Center.

The visit was facilitated by [Jobs for the Future](#) (JFF), a public policy group that works on strategies to move low-income youth and adults into successful career pathways, with support provided by the [Joyce Foundation](#).

"The visit allowed Congressional staff to look more closely at cooperative initiatives among Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana's Workforce Investment Boards as Congress looks to update the Federal Workforce System," noted **Sherry Kelley Marshall**, President/CEO of the SWORWIB. "We are one of the few areas in the country where Workforce Investment Boards work across state lines to leverage our resources to better serve our region's employers."

Among the highlights of the visit:

Employers First Regional Workforce Network: Established earlier this year, Employers First builds on more than 10 years of collaborative work among the WIBs of Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. It has positioned itself as the first stop for employers who need help in hiring, getting up-to-date labor market information, and accessing information quickly from local technical schools, community colleges, and universities regarding workforce training opportunities.

Health Careers Collaborative: The Collaborative, whose roots are nearly 10 years old, was established at a time of high employment to "amp up the talent supply chain," so that hospitals would not continue to poach nurses and other skilled workers from each other, said HCC Executive Director **Lawra Baumann**. Longtime partners include the SWORWIB, [Great Oaks](#), [Cincinnati State](#), [Dress for Success Cincinnati](#), [Mercy Neighborhood Ministries](#), and employers [Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center](#), [UC Health](#), [Mercy Health Partners](#), and [Tri-Health](#).



Alan Jones, who is retiring as the Chairman of HCC's Managing Partners Group, discusses the HCC's history.

Advanced Manufacturing: To find out more about how workforce stakeholders have responded to the needs of one of its industry sectors, advanced manufacturing, the researchers visited Gateway Community and Technical College in Florence, Ky., which opened its [Advanced Manufacturing Center](#) in October 2010. Both Ed Bisig, Vice President of Human Resources for [MAG Industrial Automation Systems](#), and Mike Vogt, Vice President of HR for [Mazak Corp.](#), spoke about their need for more skilled workers.

A complete press release is [here](#).

ODJFS DIRECTOR URGES GREATER USE OF OJT ACCOUNTS

As federal dollars become scarcer, workforce training in Ohio must be short-term and targeted toward jobs for the unemployed. **Michael Colbert**, Director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, told a special meeting of the Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board Dec. 8 that the state will put more emphasis into [On-the-Job Training](#) and wants the Workforce Investment Boards of Ohio to move quickly in this direction.

"We don't have the money to do long-term classroom training," Colbert said. He said both OJT and incumbent worker training would be emphasized under **Gov. John Kasich**, and urged close collaboration with Greater Cincinnati's employers. He mentioned that the [Metropolitan Sewer District's](#) upcoming multi-billion-dollar efforts to satisfy an EPA decree had the potential for jobs that could be filled through OJTs - a partnership that the [SuperJobs Center](#), Hamilton County's one-stop center, is already working on, noted **Sherry Kelley Marshall**.



From left, Director Michael Colbert, Sherry Kelley Marshall, and Mike Conner, Chairman of the SWORWIB.

Under On-the-Job Training, an employer who hires a dislocated or adult worker agrees to provide training and is reimbursed part of the worker's wages during the training period. OJTs have primarily been funded through a federal National Emergency Grant awarded to the State of Ohio to help combat the state's high unemployment rate, currently at 9 percent.

Marshall said that the SWORWIB already has policies addressing several of the issues Director Colbert brought up, including requiring training providers to substantiate graduation and employment numbers; and to make sure job seekers are trained in in-demand occupations. She noted that SuperJobs had worked with dislocated workers OJTs under various National Emergency Grants awarded to the state.

Employers who wish to find out more about OJTs under the National Emergency Grant can contact **Chuck Walters**, Business Services Manager at the SuperJobs Center, at (513) 458-6599 or cwalters@superjobs.com. This [brochure](#) also has information on the program.

A complete press release is [here](#).

SUPERJOBS OFFERING CREDENTIAL IN LOGISTICS

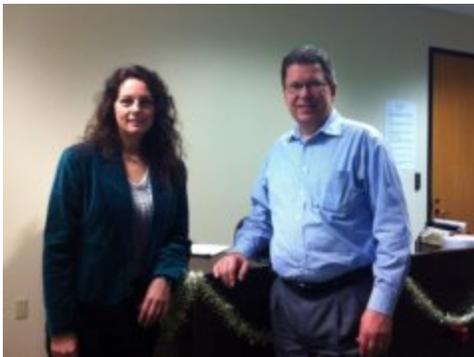
New credentialing in logistics for dislocated workers is available, thanks once again to the SWORWIB's successful partnerships with the Alliance for Green Skills Manufacturing, its lead organization the Communications Workers of America, and the Cincinnati Labor Agency for Social Services.

Approximately 40 workers who earned a credential for the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council's Certified Production Technician are being selected now for training in the MSSC's Certified Logistics Technician classes. The workers were laid off from plants throughout Southwest Ohio, noted **Cathy Metcalf**, CLASS's coordinator of the program, including Avon, Jim Beam, and Graphic Packaging in Hamilton County. The dislocated workers will primarily do the training through online classes, said Metcalf. MSSC training for both credentials was paid through a Department of Labor grant awarded to the Alliance for Green Skills Manufacturing, and the new program begins Dec. 29, 2011.

EMPLOYERS FIRST HELPS WITH REGIONAL HIRING

Taking advantage of the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber connections, the SWORWIB continues its outreach to area businesses to update them on successes and introduce the recently renamed regional collaboration of Workforce Investment Boards known as Employers First Regional Workforce Network.

Sherry Kelley Marshall and **Andy Lotter**, Regional Employer Liaison with Employers First, met recently with two business advisory boards to the Chamber to discuss the benefits that Employers First can offer to local companies, especially when it comes to recruiting. Marshall and Lotter met with the Small Business Advisory Board, comprising employers with one to 50 employees, on Nov. 29, and with the Middle Market Advisory Board, companies that have 51-399 employees, on Dec. 12. **West Africa**, a board member of the SWORWIB, is also on the Small Business Advisory Board and attended the meeting.



Recruiter Peggy Billups and Dennis Curran, Regional HR Director, both with Zwicker & Associates.

Employers First also recently coordinated hiring events for Zwicker & Associates P.C., a law firm based in Hebron, Ky., specializing in debt collection. Zwicker needed to quickly fill 25 positions, and wanted to work across state lines. Lotter worked with one-stops in Florence and Covington, Ky., and Lawrenceburg, Ind., to set up the the events in late November. Sixteen people were hired, and recruiter **Peggy Billups** said she was impressed with the results. Zwicker is holding additional hiring events Dec. 27-29 at these one-stops. To find out more, contact Lotter at (513) 655-7175.

SHORT TAKES: GAO STUDY MOVES AHEAD

IT'S A GO WITH GAO: The U.S. Government Accountability Office is including the SWORWIB as part of a best practices report to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and

Pensions. The SWORWIB is being recognized for its role in the launching of, and continued partnership with, the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati.

RELAUNCH & REBRAND: Our frequent collaborator, the Greater Cincinnati Workforce Network, has rebranded itself as Partners for a Competitive Workforce. Under the auspices of the United Way of Greater Cincinnati, Partners for a Competitive Workforce will help to coordinate the region's efforts to develop and supply skilled workers for Greater Cincinnati's employers. Partners will be chaired by **John Prout**, President/CEO of TriHealth. Vice Chairman is the **Rev. Michael Graham**, President of Xavier University. **Ross Meyer** will continue as Executive Director. "Everything we've been working on is now fully aligned," Sherry Kelley Marshall said of the umbrella organization. Congratulations to Ross and Partners for a Competitive Workforce!

FAREWELL TO A GREAT LEADER: Well-wishers gathered Dec. 9 to say goodbye to **Lisa FitzGibbon**, President and CEO of Easter Seals Work Resource Center who has led the agency since 1987. FitzGibbon oversaw a major expansion of Easter Seals WRC, including the launch of Building Value, a nonprofit that employs Easter Seals WRC customers and sells salvaged materials to the public. Easter Seals WRC is one of the SWORWIB's long-time youth provider vendors. FitzGibbon will be succeeded by **Pam Green**, currently Vice President of Development and Community Engagement.



*Sherry Kelley Marshall
and Lisa FitzGibbon*

YOUTH PROVIDERS RFP: A review committee is continuing to evaluate bids received to provide youth services for Cincinnati and Hamilton County from July 1, 2012-June 30, 2014. Evaluators hope to complete the process by the end of the year.

IN THE NEWS: Cincinnati.com picked up the press release about the Greater Cincinnati Construction Career Collaborative's Workforce Development Award from the Construction Users' Roundtable, and CURT posted the release to its Linked In page.

The Business Courier covered the launch of Partners for a Competitive Workforce.



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