



The Southwest Ohio Region  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

The latest news from  
The Southwest Ohio Region  
Workforce Investment Board

# NEWSWIB

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Dear Pat,

Building on a 10-year success story, a newly renamed tri-state workforce collaborative -- Employers First Regional Workforce Network -- was unveiled May 17 at a jobs summit at the Oscar Event Center in Fairfield.

Employers First represents a partnership among four area Workforce Investment Boards, including the [SWORWIB](#), [Workforce One of Southwest Ohio](#), [Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board](#), [Indiana Region 9 Workforce Board](#), as well as the [Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce](#), and the [Greater Cincinnati Workforce Network \(GCWN\)](#), now located within the United Way of Greater Cincinnati.

**Employers First** aims to be the "first and best source for solutions to workforce challenges" facing employers from the region, said **Barbara Stewart**, Executive Director of the Northern Kentucky WIB, at the summit. Several hundred workforce stakeholders attended the conference, which featured a keynote video address by [Jane Oates](#), Assistant Secretary of the Department of Labor.



Jeff Weber, Workforce One; Sherri Carbo, Southwest Ohio Liaison for Gov. Kasich; Ross Meyer, GCWN; and Sherry Kelley Marshall of the SWORWIB at the Employers First summit in Fairfield.

For more than 10 years, the executives of the region's Workforce Investment Boards have worked together on a number of employer-generated initiatives. In 2010, that work was recognized by a \$250,000 Regional Innovation Grant from the Department of Labor. Meanwhile, the GCWN was

established in 2008 to focus on career pathway development for low-income and disadvantaged workers. It made sense to combine these two efforts, said Sherry Kelley Marshall, President/CEO of the [SWORWIB](#).

Employers First, which has a new [website](#), will offer easy-to-find information on resources that employers typically need when they plan to hire, but which up to now have not been collected in one place.

"One of our goals is to make sure workforce education and training more closely align with the needs of employers," says Marshall. "We plan to work very closely with employers throughout the Tri-State to make sure this happens."

### NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR OUR WORK WITH PARTNERSHIPS

Eager to research best practices, several national groups are paying attention to the SWORWIB and its partnerships.

On May 23, the [White House Council on Community Solutions](#) visited Cincinnati as part of a "listening tour" to learn more about [STRIVE](#), the Greater Cincinnati Workforce Network, and SWORWIB initiatives that focus on disadvantaged youth. **Sherry Kelley Marshall** and **Nicole Ware**, Emerging Workforce Coordinator, attended the gathering at the Fifth Third Convening Center.

Meanwhile, [Jobs for the Future \(JFF\)](#), a Boston-based workforce research organization, will visit Cincinnati June 6 to learn more about the expanded partnership now known as **Employers First Regional Workforce Network**. They are interested in how the WIBs have supported career pathway initiatives for low-skilled citizens. The June visit will lay the groundwork for a possible later visit by the Congressional Staff Workforce Network, comprised of key staff from the House and Senate who are involved in workforce policy.

Additionally, at the request of the [Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee](#), the [Government Accountability Office \(GAO\)](#) is conducting a study of local WIBs that successfully facilitated collaboration among workforce development, education, and economic development activities. The GAO intends to highlight collaborations that represent promising practices and yielded tangible results. The SWORWIB has been selected among only a few Workforce Boards nationally. The GAO's research is expected to assist Congress as it considers the reauthorization of the [Workforce Investment Act](#) by providing best practice information, such as Cincinnati's 10-year-old [Health Professions Academy](#) and [Health Careers Collaborative](#).

### CONSTRUCTION CAMP IS COMING!

Middle school students will be hammering away this summer at Construction Camp in Price Hill. This new program, sponsored by the SWORWIB, the [Spirit of Construction Foundation](#), the [Greater Cincinnati Foundation](#), [Associated Builders and Contractors \(ABC\)](#), and the [Greater Cincinnati Tech Prep Consortium](#), will be held from June 6-23 at Resurrection School on Iliff Avenue.



Dan Freese and a Quebec Heights student.

ABC will provide volunteers from its member companies to lead the actual construction project. The students will build a playhouse, which will be auctioned after camp, with proceeds going back into the program's funds.

"We will make this happen," said ABC chair-elect **Dan Freese**, president of United Group Services. "It is too big of an opportunity to make a positive impact on these young lives to let pass by."

The 18 students attending will be selected from three [Cincinnati Public Schools](#) in the Price Hill area that have already hosted afterschool Construction Clubs, as well as two new schools, Resurrection and St. Lawrence. These parochial schools have been looking for an opportunity to bring the construction outreach program

to their students, and this seemed like an ideal plan. "This looks great," said St. Lawrence Principal **Alma Lee Joesting**. "I hope many of our students will take advantage of this great opportunity!"

### EMPLOYER SUCCESS STORY: GE

Getting a job at General Electric is not easy.

The company's standards are high, and many applicants vie for each opening at [GE- Aviation](#) in Evendale. When the company has openings for positions in skilled trades, it goes to one place -- the [SuperJobs Center](#).

Human Resources Manager **Teresa Lacefield** works closely with the Business Services staff at SuperJobs when hourly openings arise.

Lacefield has used the SuperJobs Center since 2005, she says, and has posted for about 25 openings in 2011.

"We have posted this year for positions in electrical maintenance, mechanical maintenance, electronic maintenance, and production assembly mechanics," says Lacefield. "The SuperJobs staff takes in resumes for us and screens them. Because of the high volume of resumes we receive, we are not equipped logistically nor staffed adequately to take resumes on-site at GE, so working with SuperJobs really helps us."



"Using SuperJobs also allows us to get the posting to many diverse organizations and candidates on a wide scale," says Lacefield. "We are always looking for a diverse pool of qualified applicants, so that networking is a great benefit to us."

### CINCINNATI USA PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHES GROWTHFORCE

The [Cincinnati USA Partnership](#) recently announced the launch of **GrowthForce**, a business expansion and retention initiative designed to cultivate and accelerate the growth of regional businesses.

"The key to economic development will always be the vibrancy of our diverse, existing business base," says **David Dougherty**, the interim executive director of the Cincinnati USA Partnership. "We work tirelessly to attract new businesses to the area, and now GrowthForce will nurture the success and expansion of companies that already employ people and make our community a great

place to live and work."

GrowthForce is led by the Partnership, the economic development initiative directed by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber. It is funded by a \$250,000 business retention grant from the Ohio Department of Development. **Julia Muntel**, Director of Investor Relations and Business Retention at the Partnership, applied for the grant with assistance from the SWORWIB's **Sherry Kelly Marshall**.



From left, Julia Muntel, Partnership; Sherry Kelley Marshall, SWORWIB; Debbie Dutton-Lambert, Partnership; Catherine Hudson, Partnership.

Through GrowthForce, the Partnership will provide businesses with information about common needs such as identifying sources of capital, assistance in recruiting and training a talented workforce, potential tax incentives and abatements, and networking and marketing opportunities that will lead to new customers.

GrowthForce will publish the Cincinnati USA Regional Business Resource Guide, a compilation of services and support available to businesses, as well as provide training, orientation and other necessary materials to partners. The Resource Guide, along with other materials, will be available at a new website, [cincinnatiusa.org/growthforce](http://cincinnatiusa.org/growthforce). For more on GrowthForce, click [here](#).

## SHORT TAKES: TAKING A TOUR OF HOME DEPOT

### BUSINESS SERVICE REPS VISIT

**HOME DEPOT:** Business services representatives from one-stops in Northern Kentucky, Southwest Ohio and Southeast Indiana met April 25 at the [Home Depot](#) Rapid Deployment Center in Monroe to learn more about employment opportunities at the massive (675,000 square feet!) facility. Human Resources Manager **Michael Morgenthal** addressed the group, invited through the Employers First Regional Workforce Network, and hosted a tour of the automated facility that currently employs almost 340, up from 150 when the warehouse opened in 2009. Morgenthal said his Rapid Deployment Center, which serves 138 stores across the Midwest, currently has opening for about 25 workers.



Michael Morgenthal, left, of Home Depot conducts a tour of the facility with Angela Hodges, Clermont County Workforce One, Bruce Bufford and Chuck Walters, both of SuperJobs Center.

**Randy Stilling**, field driver recruiter at [Schneider National Inc.](#), a national trucking firm, also spoke to the group about the current shortage of qualified drivers his company faces. Schneider employs 14,000 drivers, and is the largest privately owned trucking company in the United States. "We are struggling to find good quality drivers," Stilling told the group. New drivers make approximately \$35,000 their first year, he said. The company currently needs about 600 drivers.

**PARTNERSHIP HONORED:** [Site Selection](#), a corporate real estate magazine, named the [Cincinnati USA Partnership](#) one of America's Top 10 economic development agencies for 2010. The rankings are based on four metrics: new jobs, new jobs per 10,000 residents, new investment and new investment per 10,000 residents; and subjective attributes such as innovation, leadership and customer service. Others named included the Charlotte Partnership, the Indy Partnership, the Greater Houston Partnership, and World Business Chicago. Congratulations to the Partnership!

#### **IN THE NEWS:**

##### **Coverage of Employers First:**

Health sector jobs grew most since 2001, [survey](#) commissioned by Employers First shows

[YouTube](#)

[Examiner.com](#)

[Cox Media](#) (Hamilton, Middletown, etc.)

[Business Courier](#)