



SIWIB NEWS

NEWSLETTER FOR BOARD MEMBERS ■ VOL. 3: ISSUE 1: FEBRUARY 2007

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SIWIB Initiatives: A Year in Review!

By Roxanne Brewer-Coffey, *Editor*

This has been a tremendously busy, productive, and exciting year! The following is a recap of some of the events that have generated unprecedented results. As we look back at 2006 and reflect on overall accomplishments, we too must appreciate the activities occurring at the onset of 2007!

■ For 2006, we had 28,418 customers utilize services at our two Comprehensive Centers located in Mt. Vernon and Marion and three affiliate sites located in Murphysboro, Du Quoin, and West Frankfort.

■ A total of 695 WIA adult and dislocated workers were served during the 2006 calendar year, expending \$210,679.38. WIA Formula Funded grants are issued annually and allocated to Local Workforce Areas based on a formula developed by the Department of Labor.

■ Total Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) funds spent for the year equated to \$280,233.97. This funding is received on an as-needed basis for layoff events that are affected by the Trade Adjustment Act. The number of affected workers served from Archway & Mothers Cookie Company, Technicolor Universal Media Services, and Maytag/Whirlpool in 2006 totaled 717. Of these 717 employees, 522 enrolled in training and 195 enrolled in job search.

■ Funds in the amount of \$371,071.83 were utilized by the special 1S grant designated for dislocated workers. This funding is received from the State of Illinois' reserve funds and is available to assist businesses who experience a mass layoff or plant closure. In the State of Illinois, businesses who employ 100 or more full time workers must comply with the Illinois WARN regulations if 33% of active full-time employees and 50 full-time employees are affected. This funding is also used to complement the services provided by the TAA grant.

■ A total of 274 youth received education and employment services in 2006. The services were

provided through contracts continued from 2005 with Carbondale Community High School Rebound, John A. Logan College's JEEP Program, Mt. Vernon Alternative School, and Rend Lake College's YES Program. In September, United Methodist Children's Home was awarded their first WIA youth contract to provide additional services to 20 youth that are also participating in Youth Build. A total of \$296,830 was expended on the youth year-round programs. A group of 38 youth participated in the summer portion of the program at a cost of \$55,063 with 60% of the money being paid directly to the youth.

■ The Illinois Critical Skills Shortage Initiative (CSSI) grant for adults and dislocated workers provided for \$201,667.46 in additional funds. This funding was awarded through a competitive grant process from the State of Illinois' Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. This funding was used to address the nursing shortage and to provide a Work Certified program for job seekers who need basic work skills.

■ Throughout the year, over \$107,000 was reimbursed to area businesses participating in the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program. Some of those businesses include National Railway and Continental Tire in Mt. Vernon, General Cable in Du Quoin, and Rend Lake Carbide in Benton. Two Murphysboro businesses participated: Penn Aluminum International, Inc. and Murphysboro Counseling Center. Two Marion employers also shared in the OJT experience: Warren Oil and Aisin Manufacturing, along with Natural Enrichment Industries in Sesser.

■ Dollars spent on all customers totaled \$1,063,652.64! These funds were used to assist customers with tuition, books, specifically required supplies such as tools or uniforms, transportation, and daycare arrangements

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Message from Our Chairman...



WILLIAM ARMSTRONG

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the out going Chairmen of Local Workforce Investment Area # 25: Chairman Gary Hartlieb from Jackson County, Harry Stewart Franklin County Chairman, and Commissioner Robert Barnett from Williamson County. I greatly appreciate the leadership they provided the local workforce investment area. I was pleased to have worked with such a dedicated group of Chairmen. They met every two months in order to keep apprised of the ever changing situations within the local workforce investment area. I will miss their leadership and willingness to share new ideas. I wish them every success in their new endeavors.

I would like to welcome the new Chairmen: Randall Crocker from Franklin County, John Evans from Jackson County, and Brent Gentry from Williamson County. I'd also like to recognize our two returning Chairmen, Wayne Bigham from

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allowing them to accomplish their employment goals.

■ With various expansion projects completed this year, we now occupy over 28,000 square feet in office space and employ a total of 70 dedicated, conscientious, and attentive staff! Without contributions made by these committed employees, many of the organizational accomplishments listed in this summary would be less than a reality.

Other Noteworthy Points...

■ The list of companies with workers eligible to receive state reserve funding included American Coal, Liberty Coal, Zeigler Coal #11, Curwood Manufacturing, APAC Customer Services, Inc., Archway & Mothers Cookie Co., Joy Technologies, Alcan Packaging, Orpack, and Technicolor Universal Media Services. Archway in Du Quoin, Maytag/Whirlpool in Herrin, and Technicolor in Pinckneyville were also certified as a trade event allowing additional federal funding to be requested for assistance with eligible dislocated workers' training costs.

■ The funding received from CSSI enabled support dollars for adults and dislocated workers for training in the Licensed Practical Nursing and the associate degree nursing programs. It also provided funding for a mentor/tutor program for these students. This funding assisted approximately 120 nursing students in our workforce area. Additional CSSI funds were used for a marketing campaign that targeted nursing occupations.

■ The **CSSI manufacturing grant** allowed development of a Work Certified program that was designed and implemented to accommodate employers looking for stronger work ethic and soft skills in potential employees. The structured environment of this program prepares individuals for success both on the job and in the classroom. Of the 52 participants that have attended the program, 33 have received certification.

■ In February 2006, the **Technicolor Universal Media Services** plant issued a WARN notice announcing a major layoff. This layoff was also certified as a trade event. In April, the Technicolor plant laid off 200 employees.

■ In February 2006, **Maytag/Whirlpool** was certified as a trade event which affected

approximately 900 workers. A great deal of planning and teamwork began in order to effectively serve the workers who would be laid off on December 22, 2006. A transition team was assembled, comprised of 60 members representing diverse disciplines and community involvement. In an effort to better serve these customers, a Family Opportunity Center was created onsite at Maytag/Whirlpool, the Marion One-Stop Business and Employment Center, and a brand new facility was created in Du Quoin next to the Man-Tra-Con office housed in the JALC Extension Center.

■ Extended hours in the Marion One-Stop Business and Employment Center were instituted in an effort to better serve each of our clients and to offer informational workshops on job search techniques, resume writing, and computer skills.

■ The **Tax Counseling project** enjoyed a tremendously successful year and exceeded figures from the past four years. Federal refunds equated to \$987,000, with a total amount refunded of \$1,453,743 for the 1076 returns prepared. The average refund received was \$1,305. The total amount saved on filing fees was \$355,695.

■ The first issue of the monthly newsletter, *Transitions* was published in July 2006 to provide an avenue for discussions on various issues, concerns, and opportunities that the dislocated worker may face in our region.

■ Notification was also received in July from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) that receipt of \$68,153 could be expected as an annual incentive award for meeting and/or exceeding the negotiated PY 2005 performance measures.

■ An extremely successful **Career Opportunity Fair** was held in September at the Herrin Middle School with more than 40 representatives from area colleges and state agencies and over 300 visiting the event. Maytag/Whirlpool employees were able to learn about the excellent diversity and availability of educational programs and training opportunities in southern Illinois.

■ **Focus on Finance workshops**, a two-part series for the Maytag/Whirlpool employees and their spouses, addressed questions about securing, spending, and investing money in the job loss transition. Multiple sessions, led by David England, were held in October and November at the John A. Logan College campus. (Continued on page 3)

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■ Southern Illinois' first ever **Reverse Trade Mission** occurred in November. A delegation of Chicago-based foreign trade commissioners representing 15 countries spent two days touring our region's areas of interest and industries. The aim of this visit was to attract new investments, companies, and jobs to the area while opening up new markets abroad. The delegates were treated to a breakfast hosted by the SIWIB and Man-Tra-Con at the Marion office.

■ A Web site designed to provide information for a smooth and successful transition for dislocated workers went live on December 7, 2006. This valuable resource, www.TransitionsSI.com includes information on services available for dislocated workers and their families, job search information, educational opportunities, relocation information, FAQs, and a calendar of upcoming events.

■ A **silver ribbon campaign** was begun for the Maytag employees, similar to the yellow ribbons designated for our troops, to signify the "silver lining" opportunities job loss may bring to each of the workers and their families. Silver bows were also placed throughout Herrin and the surrounding communities.

■ The Man-Tra-Con Center hosted an open house January 16 through January 19, 2007 at John A. Logan College. The College graciously donated space for a centrally located lounge that offers a relaxed atmosphere to study, to relax, and to visit with fellow students. Man-Tra-Con staff is available to assist all students that are Man-Tra-Con customers.

■ Sunday, January 21st was designated as a **Regional Day of Prayer** to honor former Maytag/Whirlpool employees and their families. A gathering of friends and co-workers took place at the Herrin Civic Center. Featured speakers included Herrin Mayor Vic Ritter, Dr. Glenn Poshard, and two former Maytag employees. Music was provided throughout the evening by the Christian Life Center Praise Band. A complimentary BBQ dinner was served after the program. Workers were able to visit with Man-Tra-Con staff and ask questions in a social atmosphere.

■ A **Volunteer Corp program** was initiated at John A. Logan for the Man-Tra-Con customers that were beginning college and in need of a mentor. Many faculty and staff have offered their time to assist these students who may be intimidated or frustrated with their new exposure to academia.

Spotlight On...

LIANBIN CUI

We are pleased to announce the addition of Lianbin Cui to the Special Projects Team. Cui (pronounced Tree) is a graduate assistant who will be working on statistical analysis, spreadsheet/database management, and other miscellaneous projects at Man-Tra-Con. Cui's presently a third year doctoral student with the Department of Workforce Education and Development (WED) at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. His research interests include "on demand" learning, international training, corporate training, curriculum development, instructional design, E-learning/distance education, and training systems design.



Lianbin Cui

In August 2004, Cui earned his Master of Science in Education at Bowling Green State University (OH), where he majored in Business Education with specialization in Training and Development.

Prior to studying at Bowling Green State University, he was the Training Manager for UFSOFT Corporation in Beijing, China, which provided ERP (Enterprises Resources Planning) software and consulting services for customers in the Greater China Area.

He graduated from the University of Science and Technology Beijing (China) and earned his Master of Management in Education Economics & Management in 2001. He also received a Bachelors of Engineering in Mineral Processing at the same university in 1998.

In his spare time, Cui loves to play tennis and to watch Hollywood movies. Congratulations and welcome to the team! ■

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Assistance comes in answering questions, providing directions, and explaining procedures.

■ The **Employment Opportunity Fair: Smart Choices for Today and Tomorrow** was held on Tuesday, January 23rd at the Marion One-Stop Business and Employment Center. Coordinators of this event included Illinois Department of Employment Security, John A. Logan College, and Man-Tra-Con. Sixty-one businesses participated in this event that drew an astounding 1112 job seekers! Exit surveys were provided to both the employers and job seekers with favorable responses submitted by both groups.

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**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

3000 W. DeYoung Street, Suite 800B
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INSIDE:

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★ **SIWIB Board Meeting, Thursday, March 15, 2007.**
Location and time to be announced. ★

*Additional information about SIWIB Initiatives and board members
can be found on our web site at www.siwib.org.*

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■ Sadly, the end of January saw the announcement that **Technicolor Universal Media Services** would be closing its doors, permanently displacing 440 employees in March of 2007. ■

Message from Our Chairman

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Perry County and Ted Buck from Jefferson County, who will share their expertise with the new Chairmen.

Congratulations to Chairman Wayne Bigham from Perry County on his election to Chairman of the Chief Local Elected Officials and the new CLEO Vice Chairman Brent Gentry from Williamson County. I look forward to working with all the Chairmen as we plan for the new USDOL Regulations and we await the WIA Reauthorization and its implementation.

Our prayers go out to all the workers at Whirlpool/Maytag and Technicolor Universal Media Services who are looking for new employment opportunities. We hope they will take maximum advantage of the services, programs and training available to them. We trust we will be able to assist them in their endeavors. ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY 14, 2007

Youth Council Meeting
4:00 p.m. at the
Marion One-Stop Business
& Employment Center

FEBRUARY 16, 2007

**Board Development
Committee Meeting**
12:00 noon
Family Opportunity Center
DuQuoin, Illinois

FEBRUARY 20, 2007

One-Stop Committee Meeting
8:00 a.m. at the
Marion One-Stop Business
& Employment Center

MARCH 15, 2007

SIWIB Board Meeting
Location and time
to be announced