

Hundreds Seek Summer Jobs Employers Still Sought

The Workforce Connection is still recruiting both eligible young people and employers for the **Summer Youth Jobs Connection**.

More than 800 young people picked up applications during workshops held during spring break at the Rockford Public Library and the Workforce Connection Belvidere office and more than 200 of those applications have been returned and the young jobseekers determined to be eligible for the program.

The next round of eligibility sessions is scheduled for April 14-17 at the Workforce Connection offices in both Rockford and Belvidere. Interested young people should pick up a registration packet in advance, complete the required paperwork and bring it to the meeting.

The program is open to young people in both Winnebago and Boone Counties ages 16-24 whose families meet income guidelines and other eligibility requirements.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the economic stimulus legislation signed last month by President Obama, authorizes a summer employment program for eligible low-income youth. Local officials estimate the two-county area will receive more than \$1.5 million for youth programs. The local effort is being planned by the Boone & Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board and delivered by the partners of The Workforce Connection.

In addition to recruiting youth participants, The Workforce Connection partners are also recruiting government agencies, schools, non-profit organizations and private businesses in the two-county area to serve as worksites for the summer program. These positions will be subsidized "work experience" positions, designed to give the youth exposure to the working world and its requirements.

Both young jobseekers and potential employers can get more information from The Workforce Connection's website at www.theworkforceconnection.org.

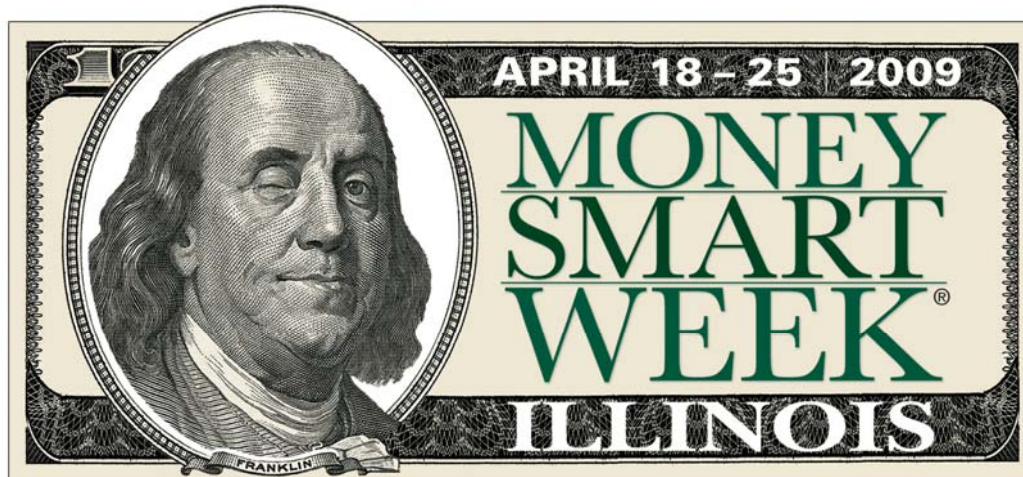


Area Employers Still Being Surveyed on Training and Employment Needs

Employers in Winnebago and Boone Counties are still being asked for input to help determine the best ways to spend training dollars associated with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. An employer survey completed just over a year ago indicated a need in this region for skilled workers. While this new survey is unlikely to uncover a large need for new employees, it is hoped the survey will indicate skill sets that will be needed once the current economic downturn eases.

The survey is available on-line at www.theworkforceconnection.org.

Workforce Connection to Participate in Money Smart Week



@The Workforce Connection
303 N. Main Street, Rockford

Tuesday, April 21, 2009

9:00am-10:30am **Do You Really Want to Start a Business?**

9:00am-10:30am **Computer Basics, Mousing Around**

10:30am-12:00pm **How to Stretch a Buck**

10:30am-12:00pm **Consumer Be Aware (Consumer Basics)**

1:30pm-3:00pm **Computers-The Essential Tool for Getting a Job**

3:00pm-4:30pm **Interview the Interviewer**

Thursday, April 23, 2009

9:00am-10:30am **Computer Basics-Mousing Around**

For ages 55 & older

9:00am-10:30am **Interviewing 101**

10:30am-12:00pm **Interview the Interviewer**

1:30pm-3:00pm **Computers-The Essential Tool for Getting a Job**

1:30pm-3:00pm **Consumer Be Aware (Consumer Basics)**

3:00pm-4:30pm **How to Stretch a Buck**

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

www.moneysmartweek.org

Workforce Trend

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The Downsides of Cutting Training

It is not unusual, during economic contraction, for employers to cut their training of workers. These reductions are at best unwise and at worst, dangerous.

According to the "Maintenance Evangelist" Joel Leonard, a well-respected global advocate for maintenance training, "the postponing of maintenance training costs employers billions of dollars, both in accidents and machinery that is not maintained properly". Making the situation worse is the aging maintenance workforce; the average age of maintenance workers around the globe is 48. If we do not bring young people into the field, train, and retain them, we will simply not function as effectively. Many of us have already witnessed the effects of this lack of training: machines breaking down and not being fixed for days or weeks and even planes falling out of the sky. Effects of this situation are inconvenience or even death.

Second, if, due to lack of training, we don't have the depth of bench strength to promote people to higher positions of responsibility (a common situation in Corporate America), we have to hire more experienced people from outside. These more experienced people not only command higher salaries, but often cost more to recruit and take longer to adjust to the culture.

In the logistics industry, not training drivers is very expensive. One fatality crash costs an employer over \$1,000,000; one two vehicle injury crash costs \$140,500. Moreover, the transportation industry wastes tens of billions of dollars annually on preventable wrecks that are caused by driver error.

Other research from Ric Newell of Happy Endings, a national driver-training program, reflects that a transportation company can expect an average 10 to 15 preventable wrecks, per 100 drivers, per year. Many companies spend tens of thousands of dollars a year paying for preventable wrecks. Every year, companies that depend on their drivers lose substantial profits to avoidable driver mistakes. "Saving" money, by not investing in driver training, costs trucking companies and other employers billions of dollars every year.

Our forecast: wise employers will use this time to reinforce and add more bench strength. Employers choosing to reduce training are leaving themselves vulnerable.

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Unemployment Up Again in February

The unemployment rate for Winnebago and Boone Counties jumped to 14% in February, up from 13.6% in January and up from 8.2% in February, 2008. According to the recent report from the Illinois Department of Employment Security, unemployment in the Rockford MSA was the highest of Illinois' metro areas.



TRAINING • CONNECTING • DEVELOPING ILLINOIS' WORKFORCE

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The mission of the **Boone and Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board** is to create a competitive, skilled and educated workforce by providing a system for the citizens of Boone and Winnebago Counties to gain meaningful employment responsive to the needs of business.

The Workforce Connection is a partnership of state and federally funded employment and training programs, economic development agencies and educational entities committed to providing a workforce that meets the needs of our business community, now and in the future.

The One-Stop Centers in Rockford and Belvidere provide one contact for employers to find workers and for job-seekers to receive training, education and employment services

Programs and services are funded by the Boone & Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board, IL Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, and the U.S. Department of Labor. Equal opportunity employer/ program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact the WIA Equal Opportunity Officer at (815) 547-9616 or TTY (815) 966-2436 or (815) 547-0253. This program is subject to the provisions of the "Jobs for Veterans Act" Public Law 107-288, which provides priority of service to veterans and spouses of certain veterans.



Representatives from the Workforce Connection last week spent part of a morning with a group of 7th graders at Eisenhower Middle School in Rockford. The discussion centered around future career options and the importance of studying math and science. The visit was in preparation for the students' field trip to the EigerLab later this month as part of the Year of Innovation '09. Our thanks to those companies that donated products and other items produced by local manufacturers.



One-Stop News

Our friends at Cumulus Media and Rockford Career College are planning an **Education & Employment Expo** for May 21st. The Workforce Connection is a co-sponsor and plans to have a table promoting our many programs.

New Faces: IDES has four new program reps working in the Rockford office. Welcome to Sylvia Martin, Latasha Faulkner, David Pipitone and Jeanne Rowell.

There were 33 vets attending Dana Brinkmeier's Job Search Workshop for Veterans, held this week at Memorial Hall.

Congratulations to WIB CEO Mayor Larry Morrissey on his re-election to a second term.



Workforce Connection
Job HotLine
815-395-6608
www.theworkforceconnection.org
www.illinoisworkNet.com



Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, April 14th@7:30am
Communications Committee

Wednesday, April 15th@7:30am
Youth Council

Wednesday, April 15th@12:30pm
Program Oversight Committee

Tuesday, May 5th@7:30am
Workforce Investment Board

This schedule is tentative. You will receive an email officially informing you of a scheduled committee meeting. Please let us know if you are unable to attend. The Illinois Open Meetings law does not allow us to conduct any business or have any discussion without a quorum.

Workforce Investment Board
Visioning Session

*"Clarifying Our Vision for a
New Economy"*

*April 15, 2009
1:00-4:00pm
EIGERLab
605 Fulton Ave.
Rockford*