



2006 ANNUAL REPORT

TALENT DRIVES PROSPERITY

CENTRAL ILLINOIS WORKFORCE BOARD

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www.WorkforceNetwork.com

CENTRAL ILLINOIS WORKFORCE BOARD



Jim Ardis
Mayor, City of Peoria

Chris Glynn
Board Chairman

Bashir Ali
Director, City of Peoria
Workforce Development

BACKGROUND

The 21st century brings new economic realities of global competition sparked by innovation, new technologies, accelerating change and higher skills to the local talent pool. To be relevant in this century - national, state, and local workforce development systems must align human capital to meet the current and emerging economy by focusing on the quantity, quality and talent alignment of the entire workforce.

The Central Illinois Workforce Board has taken a leadership role, focusing on the needs of the regional economy and businesses. The Central Illinois Workforce Board has conducted several research initiatives such as the 21st Century Workforce: Central Illinois, Talent Force 21 and the 2004 & 2005 State of the Workforce Reports. These initiatives have identified a number of economic, education, workforce and quality of life challenges in Central Illinois.

The City of Peoria, together with Peoria, Marshall, Stark and Woodford counties, established the Central Illinois Workforce Development Board to begin the process of creating a true workforce development “system” out of various local, state and federal programs at work in our communities. In 1998, Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act, which formalized the creation of similar bodies across the country. The Central Illinois Workforce Board is composed of 40 leaders representing business, labor, education, economic development, community-based organizations and one-stop partners.

The Central Illinois Workforce Board has created a model workforce development system of public and private sector organizations to address the workforce needs of businesses and individuals. As we better understand the challenges of the new knowledge economy, it is apparent that we must continue to focus on providing comprehensive workforce systems led by businesses, workforce boards and local elected officials.

Statement of Purpose “To ensure the integration of services to meet the needs of business and industry.”

BOARD MEMBERS

Christopher Glynn, Caterpillar Inc. (Board Chairman)

Raylana Anderson, Anderson Consulting

James Booth, B & B Properties

McFarland Bragg, Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Opportunity

Dr. Gerald Brookhart, Peoria County Regional Office of Education

Rev. Michael Brown, Universalist Unitarian Church

David Chapman, UAW Local 974

Dr. John Erwin, Illinois Central College

James Fassino, Mid-America National Bank

Dr. Cynthia Fischer, Peoria Public School District 150

Dr. John Gilligan, Fayette Companies

Lee Hager, Stark County

Stephen Hall, Illinois Department of Employment Security

Kyle Ham, Heartland Partnership

Mike Hiell, Mayor of Lacon

Dallis Howard-Crow, Methodist Medical Center

Craig Hullinger, City of Peoria Economic Development

Carolyn Jackson, ADM

Gabe Jaja, New Horizons Computer Learning Centers

Roger John, Peoria Housing Authority

Roger Mohn, Jubilee Foods

Earl (Sandy) Moldovan, STS Consultants, LTD

Mary Phelan, Illinois Migrant Council

Carol Randall, Illinois Department of Human Services

Martha Reismeyer, Stark County

Merle Rocke, CGN & Associates

Nancy Saville, NANS Jobs A to Z

Caroline Schertz, Green Acres Herb Farm

Dan Silverthorn, West Central Illinois Building and Construction Trades

Michael Snyder, Laser Electric

Joanne Thomas, Central Illinois Agency on Aging, Inc.

Rick Travis, Advanced Technology Services, Inc.

Lizette Tripur, Department of Human Services–Office of Rehabilitation Services

Alicia Washington, Deca Properties

Cathy Worlow, Supply Chain Services International

Ex-Officio Members:

Ginger Johnson, TRICON

David Koehler, PALM

Carol Leach, P.E.R.F.E.C.T.

Scott Petty, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

James Polk, Illinois Central College

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Carol Leach, P.E.R.F.E.C.T. (Chair)

James Booth, B & B Properties

Jennifer Brackney, City of Peoria Workforce Development

Loraine Bryson, Tri-County Urban League

Wayne Cannon, Parent

Pete Fandel, University of Illinois

Carrie Felker-Thomas, Center for Independent Living

Dr. Cynthia Fischer, Peoria Public Schools

Lee Ann Hohstadt, Children’s Home

George Irwin, Peoria County Regional Office of Education

Bruce Marston, City of Peoria Workforce Development

Tom McLaughlin, Illinois Federation of Teachers

James Polk, Illinois Central College

Ron Pruess, Illinois Department of Employment Security

ShamRa Robinson, City of Peoria Workforce Development

Christopher Setti, Day Treatment for Children

Lizette Tripur, Department of Human Services–ORS

Todd Welton, Department of Human Services

Lisa White, Illinois Central College

WORKFORCE NETWORK PARTNERS

AARP

Central Illinois Agency on Aging

City of Peoria Workforce Development

Community Workshop and Training Center

Goodwill Industries

Human Service Center

Illinois AFL-CIO

Illinois Central College, Carl Perkins

Illinois Department of Employment Security

Illinois Department of Human Services–Rehabilitative Services

Illinois Department of Human Services–TANF E & T

Illinois Migrant Council

PARC

Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Opportunity

Peoria Regional Office of Education–Adult Education

Peoria Public School District 150–Adult Education

Safer Foundation

BUSINESS PARTNERS

Central Illinois Business Publishers Inc.

Economic Development Council of Central Illinois

Employers’ Association

Hult Fritz Matuszak Inc.

Insight Media Advertising

The Classified Department of the Journal Star

Manpower, Inc.

Midstate College

New Horizons

Northwoods Mall

Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce

Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

Peoria Times Observer

Vote Photography

Week 25

HIGHLIGHTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Met or exceeded all 17 U.S. Department of Labor “Performance Standards” for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program Year ending June 30, 2006, and as a result, qualified for WIA “Incentive Awards” for outstanding program performance.
- The Workforce Network one-stop system provided career resources to 25,332 individuals, including job search assistance, job referrals, career transition, resume assistance, career workshops and program orientations.
- The Workforce Network one-stop system provided services to more than 500 local employers, including labor market information, career fairs, internet-based job postings, employee recruitment/screening, employee referrals, career transition and customized services.
- The City of Peoria Workforce Development enrolled more than 750 individuals in U.S. Department of Labor training programs with approximately 3000 placed in employment and 329 individuals who received credentials.
- Congressman Ray LaHood appointed an Education Skills Taskforce, led by the Central Illinois Workforce Board, to research the skills needed for high school graduates to successfully enter the workforce. The Taskforce has identified skills gaps, made recommendations and created goals.
- Coordinated the *Mayor’s Careers for Youth 2006* program by facilitating the connection between 23 students from Peoria Public Schools and participating employers offering summer internship opportunities.
- Received state and national recognition as a demonstrated leader in workforce development, as a result, was designated as one of three pilot sites to implement Illinois workNet, an internet-based, virtual one-stop system.
- Worked with Peoria Public Schools to help make “*Full Service Community Schools*” a reality in Central Illinois by establishing a Workforce Network Satellite Resource Center at Manual High School.
- Implemented the 10th Annual *Youth Employment for Success (YES)* by connecting 189 young people with employers offering job opportunities.
- Selected by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to be the first pilot site in Illinois to launch JobFit, a web-based tool to measure job-related qualities.
- Sponsored the *2006 Workforce Forum*, an excellent opportunity to educate the community on the tremendous economic and workforce challenges ahead for our nation, state and region.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Workforce Pilots Next Generation of Candidate Selection Software

Workforce Network was selected to be the first pilot site in the state of Illinois to launch the JobFit System from Profiles International, a web-based, job match and assessment tool.

In the last decade, technology has revolutionized how businesses fill job vacancies and how job seekers conduct job searches. The JobFit System reduces the time required to match job seekers with job openings. The JobFit System replaces outdated assessments, condenses technologies and streamlines the application and hiring process – one system serves both businesses and job seekers.

The JobFit System assists individuals by providing uniform, consistent service to all customers, regardless of location. It helps businesses make better, more informed hiring decisions because JobFit evaluates the applicants' thinking and reasoning aptitude, behavioral traits and occupational interests.



Full Services Community Schools

As a result of Talent Force 21, the Full Service Community Schools concept was recommended for implementation. In March 2005, Peoria Public Schools hosted a tour of a Full Service Community School in Chicago.

Full Service Community Schools recognize that citizens who are actively engaged in our schools help create a better climate for learning and a stronger constituency for public education. By turning schools into community centers, schools can provide a variety of activities and services designed by and for the surrounding community, enable people to become resources to their own communities and create a system to successfully develop society's most precious resource – its young people.

Workforce Network embraced the opportunity to help implement the Full Service Community School concept in Central Illinois. As part of the process, focus groups were formed to solicit feedback from parents and students and to determine the needs of the community. Thanks to the strategic alliance with Peoria Public Schools, Community Builders Foundation and Workforce Network, a Career Resource Center has been established at Manual High School and is open to the public offering computers for resumes, internet job searches, job listings and referrals, resume design services and career planning. By enhancing educational resources, we hope to foster a learning community that results in a well-educated workforce ready to meet the challenges and opportunities of a knowledge-based economy.

Illinois workNet

Workforce Network was one of three pilot sites selected in the state of Illinois to implement Illinois workNet. Illinois workNet is a unique tool that connects people looking for jobs with employers looking for workers, and also provides career, education and work support service information for individuals and businesses. The website was designed to enable individuals and employers to access an array of career services all in one place and ultimately expand and enhance access to economic opportunity. Throughout the pilot project, Workforce Network staff provided feedback and recommendations to upgrade and improve the system. Illinois workNet has been successfully integrated into Career Resource Center activities and it was featured at Careers 2006.

Careers 2006

Workforce Network, Northwoods Mall and the Classified Department of the *Journal Star* sponsored two successful Careers 2006 events each featuring approximately 70 employers and as many as 1,500 job seekers. These exciting events provided employers with an opportunity to recruit, screen and hire qualified candidates, and allows job seekers to submit resumes, complete applications and meet with employers face-to-face. In addition to enhancing advertising opportunities, the *Journal Star* sponsored Peoria's first "virtual career fair" as part of the career fair event. The "virtual career fair" is available at the *Journal Star's* website www.PJStar.com. A benefit of the virtual career fair is that job seekers can link to numerous area businesses via the internet.

BOARD COMMITTEES

Board Development Committee

Chair – Dan Silverthorn

Mission: To ensure and promote the development of a well-informed, representative and dynamic board.

Accomplishments:

- Recruited and selected board members to fill vacancies.
- Reviewed attendance records to meet criteria for board recertification.
- Hosted a successful 5th Annual Central Illinois Workforce Board Meeting.

Marketing and Business Outreach

Chair – Raylana Anderson

Mission: To create a comprehensive strategic plan to increase visibility within the community, develop and strengthen business partnerships and to inform and educate learning institutions of current and potential skills gaps in the workplace.

Accomplishments:

- Implemented a marketing and communications plan for the Workforce Network.
- Updated the design of the www.WorkforceNetwork.com website to expand access to services.
- Maintained the e-newsletter "Workforce News" and sent it to more than 2,000 subscribers per month.
- Developed and maintained 14 business partnerships that contributed almost \$200,000 of in-kind services.
- Participated in over 25 community outreach efforts including trade shows, special events and festivals.
- Coordinated business service activities including career fairs, career connections, specialized recruitment and customized solutions.
- Created comprehensive, professional marketing materials to promote and brand Workforce Network to both businesses and individuals.

Continuous Improvement

Chair – Cathy Worlow

Mission: To provide a forum for system accountability and establish standards for certification, continuous improvement and customer satisfaction.

Accomplishments:

- Implemented Workforce Network Career Center Business Plan guidelines.
- Researched and implemented an internet-based Agency Referral Network for tracking customer services.
- Implemented the Empowerment Workshop Series to increase participants' knowledge of Workforce Network resources designed to help them achieve their educational goals.
- Enhanced the regional Career Resource Center and county satellite office resources.

Workforce Network

Chair – McFarland Bragg

Mission: To expand access to workforce development programs in Central Illinois and recommend policies necessary to establish and develop the local one-stop delivery system.

Accomplishments:

- Completed the One-Stop Center cost allocation and resource sharing plan with the assistance of the Workforce Network partners.
- Continued to provide private sector leadership to develop the local workforce system to meet the needs of businesses and individuals.
- Continued to submit Request for Applications and grant proposals to provide additional funding to support Workforce Network initiatives.

Youth Council

Chair – Carol Leach

Mission: To ensure coordination of local workforce development programs to eliminate duplication and expand youth education and employment opportunities.

Accomplishments:

- Coordinated youth workshops to provide information on programs available to youth in our Local Workforce Investment Area.
- Continued to work with Peoria Public School District 150 to implement the Full Service Community School initiative by establishing a Career Resource Center at Manual High School and facilitating career fairs and career days.
- Coordinated the *Youth Employment for Success (YES)*, private-sector employment program for 189 youth.
- Sponsored the Tri-County Urban League Program and the Children's Home Program to provide basic skills, pre-employment training, paid and unpaid work experiences and adult mentoring for 39 young people.

Rural Issues

Chair – Dr. Gerald Brookhart

Mission: To ensure coordination of local workforce development programs in the rural counties to eliminate duplication of services and expand employment opportunities for residents, including youth.

Accomplishments:

- Increased awareness of services currently available in the counties at the rural Workforce Network Career Center satellite offices.
- Continued to assist in implementing Full Service Community Schools in two county school districts.
- Increased collaboration between partners and stakeholders in rural communities.



Pat Mark

After her layoff from Mitsubishi, Pat Mark came to Workforce Network for assistance in December 2004. She had 27 years of factory and production experience, however she lacked formal training. At first she was apprehensive about the type of work she could do and still

earn a living. After much consideration, Pat decided to pursue training that, along with her work experience, would allow her to easily find work in the manufacturing field.

Pat enrolled in the 15-week Structural Welding Specialist program at Illinois Welding School. With the encouragement from her welding instructor and the special projects coordinator, she met the challenges of training head-on and persevered. With hard work and endurance, Pat successfully graduated from training in June 2005.

In the fall of 2005, Pat participated in the interview process and was hired by Caterpillar as a Fabrication Specialist. Today Pat is pleased to be working and enjoys her job and her co-workers at Caterpillar.



Sarah Blanch

Sarah was referred to Workforce Network by Lutheran Hillside Village. At the time, she was working in the cafeteria as a hostess and waitress. Sarah wanted to pursue a more advanced position within the health care field, however, there were many barriers to attaining this goal – mostly she

lacked money, time and a support system.

With scholarship assistance through the Grand Victoria Program, Sarah was able to pursue her dream of becoming a Physical Therapist. The Grand Victoria program provides resources to underemployed, incumbent workers who have barriers preventing them from receiving training in a health care career that would offer a family-sustaining wage.

Sarah graduated in May 2006, with a 3.5 GPA. She accepted a Physical Therapy Assistant position at Rosewood Care Center working with the elderly. She feels working with the elderly is very rewarding. Sarah is thankful for the wonderful career counseling and support she received through Workforce Network.



Jerry Flowers

Jerry was laid off from his machinist position with Komatsu in April 2003. Jerry was hesitant about continuing on in the manufacturing field – he wanted a new career. After the layoff, Jerry's dream of pursuing a career in the health care field seemed hopeless. He wasn't sure what to do,

where to receive training or how he could pay the tuition costs.

Jerry received career counseling that helped get him on the right path to making a career change. Jerry researched career options, received information about employment trends and developed a career plan to reach his goal of becoming a Respiratory Therapist.

Jerry enrolled in the Respiratory Therapy program at Illinois Central College. With hard work and commitment to his goal, Jerry successfully completed the program and graduated in May 2005. Soon after graduation, Jerry found full-time work as a Respiratory Therapist at OSF St. Francis Medical Center. Jerry is now self-sufficient and personally fulfilled in his health care career.



Elaine Porter

Elaine Porter came to Workforce Network seeking training in a career that would provide a living wage so she could take care of her family. She spoke with a career counselor and reviewed various career opportunities. Elaine decided to pursue a career in the health care field. She

enrolled in the Certified Nurse Assistant (C.N.A.) program at Illinois Central College.

After obtaining her C.N.A., Elaine realized that she really enjoyed the medical field and wanted to continue her education to become a Licensed Radiographer. She worked hard to make good grades while working two jobs on the weekends and maintaining a household with a husband and three small children.

She graduated from Illinois Central College with an Associate Degree in Radiography.

Elaine was offered a job as a Diagnostic Radiology Technician at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center where she received a \$5,000 sign on bonus and a starting salary of \$15.68 per hour. In addition, she was able to purchase a car and she received \$10,000 towards the purchase of her house through the City of Peoria Home Ownership Assistance Program.

Elaine is truly a role model for those who are attending school, working and taking care of a family. At the same time, she is very grateful for the resources, support and encouragement that she received as she worked toward her career goal.



Renita Trapp

Renita's journey through the nursing program has been a true struggle because of her numerous health issues and income restraints. Renita is a mother of two children and is suffering from loss of vision as a result of chronic diabetes. Toward the middle of Renita's program her health issues

worsened. She dealt with the removal of cataracts, progressed to retina detachment and hemorrhaging, and finally ended in the total loss of vision in her left eye.

Although many others would have quit, Renita was determined to provide a better life for her family. Renita credits her mother for being the driving force behind her success in achieving her career goals.

Renita graduated from Methodist School of Nursing in May 2006. Renita is grateful to Workforce Network for helping her achieve her life's dream. Renita says that the Workforce Network has made it possible for her and her family to move out of poverty. She is thankful for the opportunity to attain her education.



Larry Fields

Larry Fields is a 17-year-old student from District 150's Peoria Adult Education Center. He was having difficulty finding employment. Larry joined the Youth Employment for Success '06 (YES) program in the spring where he showed dedication and a commitment to finding employment.

In May, Larry was hired at Bob Evans on Big Hollow Road as a Service Attendant for the restaurant. He is impressed by the opportunities that were available at Workforce Network and through the YES program.



Kelly Rasmussen

Kelly was a Certified Nurse Assistant when she first came to Workforce Network. Based on her current education, she was limited as to the type of job she could obtain within the health care field. Her career goal was to be a

Registered Nurse, however that goal seemed just impossible.

Kelly enrolled in the Registered Nurse Program at OSF St. Francis School of Nursing in 2003. During the second year of her training, Kelly was diagnosed with leukemia. The difficulty of balancing the treatments, attending training and caring for her family could have been an excuse to quit - Kelly persevered!

In May 2006, Kelly received her Registered Nurse pin as a graduate of OSF St. Francis College of Nursing. She is working at OSF Medical Center as a Nurse in the Fourth Surgical Department.

Kelly realized her purpose in life was to help people. Kelly believes that Workforce Network was vital to her success.



Laura Rodgers

Laura was laid off from Conger Dental Studio where she had been employed for the past two years as a Dental Technician. She came to the Career Resource Center every day and looked up available jobs, completed interest surveys, researched labor market information and talked with other job

seekers. Finally, she noticed that there was a high demand for commercial truck drivers and thought to herself, "I can do that!"

Laura enrolled in the Commercial Truck Driving program at Illinois Central College Professional Development Institute. After successfully completing the training and passing the State of Illinois driving test, several companies recruited her. She accepted a position with JCJ Transportation. Laura is thrilled to be an over-the-road driver and is excited to report she has now been in every state except Washington – not bad for the first few months!



Donnie and April Johnston

Donnie and April Johnston came to the Workforce Network in 2005 seeking employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities as a referral from St. Paul Baptist Church. Their last employment

was a seasonal job as bell ringers for the Salvation Army.

Later that year, Donnie lost his benefits from the Social Security Administration which paid the largest share of household expenses, and they were asked to vacate their house. It was a tough time for them and they needed more than just career counseling. The Workforce Network Partners were able to join together in a collaborative manner to help.

Now Donnie and April Johnston are both employed at the Peoria Civic Center. Donnie and April love their jobs and happily report they have nice supervisors and good co-workers. Donnie and April are genuinely pleased with how things have turned out and are thankful to all of the partners for working together to help them get on the right track.

Business Leadership Award



Afni, Inc.

Afni, Inc. is a leading provider of customer interaction solutions for market leaders, primarily in the communications and insurance industries. It is a privately-held company headquartered in Bloomington, Illinois. The company currently has approximately 4,600 employees in five states throughout the nation. Eleven hundred of those individuals are employed at the Bloomington facility and 550 individuals are employed at the Peoria facility.

Over the last five years, Afni has played an integral role in local workforce development. They promote employment opportunities through participation in workforce events. Afni has attended the last nine career fairs held at Northwoods Mall sponsored by Workforce Network. The company regularly participates in Career Connections, including those held for the Youth Employment for Success (YES) program and the Stark County Job Fair.

Afni understands that the current and emerging workforce is vital to Peoria's economic growth. Afni has provided valuable insights into the development of a demand-driven workforce system in Peoria.

We commend Afni, Inc. for taking a leadership role in recruiting a skilled talent force. We believe the efforts of Afni, Inc. and its representatives truly make a difference in our community.

Collaboration Award



Manpower

Manpower of Peoria is a leader in the employment services industry, offering customers a continuum of services to meet their needs throughout the employment and business cycle. While striving to meet the needs of business customers, Manpower became aware of a skills shortage in the available – employable workforce in the call center and forklift driving fields.

Manpower and Workforce Network share the vision of building a talent force for the future. Through the power of partnership, a comprehensive and coordinated collaboration was developed to help fill the skills-shortage gap in Central Illinois. Manpower is now offering free training at the Workforce Network office in call center/customer service and forklift operation. Individuals receive free career training, and Peoria area businesses receive candidates trained specifically to work in the call-center and forklift operation fields.

We greatly value the proactive approach Manpower has taken to address workforce issues in the Peoria area. We believe Manpower and its representatives truly make a difference in our community, and we look forward to continued partnership.