

the Workforce Quarterly

A Quarterly Update for the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board

Volume 3, Fall 2008

Board Chair Message

Recently CPWDC Executive Director, [William Brock](#), announced his resignation to assume the position of Chief Operating Officer with Straub Brewery Corporation in St. Marys, PA.

Under Bill's leadership, CPWDC hit many milestones and he, along with CPWDC Assistant Director Shannon Miller, nurtured this company from a mere concept into a thriving regional organization with a statewide and national reputation as a high performing WIB. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank Bill for his dedication and service. Of course, knowing Bill, this would already be more than he would want to hear. He would suggest that the CPWDC is well positioned and the future is bright with opportunities. He would remind me of the strengths of the CPWDC's dynamic and talented professional staff who as a team are

responsible for the successes. He would also stress that no progress was ever possible without the time and support of the WIB members serving over the last ten years, particularly those from the private sector and numerous other regional partners. Finally, he would say that change is good.

I agree on all counts and under the leadership of Shannon Miller as Acting Executive Director, I see the momentum of the CPWDC continuing and increasing with the culture of professionalism and innovation remaining strong. Nonetheless, we will miss Bill and his leadership and we wish him the best of luck as he assumes the leadership of a strong Pennsylvania-based family business. ●

— Dean Girton
Chairman of the Central Pennsylvania
Workforce Investment Board

Inside:

- **Guest Article:**
[Jim Shillenn](#) (p. 2)
- **Partnerships:**
[Pennsylvania Healthcare Industry Partnership](#) (p. 2)
- **Board Member Profile:**
[Eric Hussar](#) (p. 3)
- **Spotlight:**
[Recognizing WIB Member Service](#) (p. 3)
- **Grants:**
[CPWDC Awarded Over \\$1 Million](#) (p. 4)
- [PA CareerLink](#) (p. 4)
- [Labor Market Facts](#) (p. 5)
- [Acronym](#) (p. 5)

News Flash...

Local Student Recognized for Volunteer Work in Health Care

Every Thursday evening, [Alicia Tubbs](#), a senior at Williamsport High School, devotes a few hours to volunteering at the Williamsport Hospital. This year, Alicia is the winner of a local "Health Care Hero" contest which recognizes students who volunteer or work in health care facilities. In response to Pennsylvania's growing demand for healthcare workers, Governor Rendell and the Pennsylvania Center for Health Careers designate one week in November each year as Health Careers Week. Local school districts are encouraged to participate in activities and events related to exploring health careers. This year, CPWDC and Workforce Investment Boards across the Commonwealth coordinated the contest. School faculty, employers and students submitted nominations with short narratives explaining their experiences in health careers. Alicia is a true Health Care Hero; she has also volunteered for the Red Cross at the Womack Army Medical Center in Fort Bragg, NC and she is also the Vice President of WILLServe, a committee at the high school, which encourages students to volunteer. This activity was also sponsored by the Central PA Health Care Partnership and The Gold Medal Initiative. ●

Guest Article

The Manufacturing Challenge

—Jim Shillenn

Developing and maintaining a high quality workforce continues to be one of the most challenging issues for manufacturers. In good times, the challenge is finding enough skilled workers to meet customer demands. In more difficult economic times, the challenge is to keep these skilled workers on the payroll during a period of slumping orders so that these critical players are not lost when the business cycle improves.

The most important strategy for manufacturers to be successful in the competitive and always changing business climate is to have a clear strategy. This strategy must have measurable outcomes and be understandable to everyone in the organization from senior managers to production workers. Secondly, and just as important, the firm must align its workforce with this business strategy.

IMC Business, Strategies & Solutions (IMC) has been engaging the region's manufacturers for over 20 years and has assisted in developing their business strategies. The IMC assists companies with the implementation of the business strategy by working with them to introduce processes which reduce costs, improve quality and increase top-line growth.

IMC works directly with over 100 individual manufacturers each year to develop a customized approach to help them meet or exceed their business goals. IMC's focus is smaller manufacturers with fewer than 500 employees and IMC is partially supported through funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development through the Industrial Resource Center Program and the National Institutes of Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program.

To link and align the workforce with the business strategy and solutions that a manufacturer is implementing as part of that strategy, the IMC has often partnered with the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation to provide support for critical training for the highly skilled workforce that is needed for today's technology-based manufacturing enterprises. From incumbent worker training in Six Sigma and other advanced topics to manufacturing industry partnerships, which examine common issues, identify workforce needs, and aggregate training needs, the CPWDC provides a complementary and critical service to IMC's manufacturing customers. ●

For more information on IMC go to www.imcpa.com.

Jim Shillenn is the Executive Director and CEO of IMC Business Strategies & Solutions.

Partnerships

In August 2008, the Central Pennsylvania Health Care Industry Partnership hosted a joint training event Perfecting Patient Care (PPC). Twenty-one participants from three regional hospitals participated in this innovative and intense training program facilitated by the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative. Based on the principles of the Toyota Production System, PPC focuses on empowering individuals at every level of the organization to develop continuous improvement processes to eliminate error, inefficiency and

waste. The highly acclaimed program received accolades from participants; 75% of participants said the experience was highly motivating and 100% would highly recommend the program to all health care providers. Currently, the Health Care Industry Partnership is exploring ways to expand the offerings of this program and provide follow up trainings on leading culture change and coaching in a PPC environment.

For more information on PPC, visit http://www.prhi.org/ppc_what.php ●

Participant Quotes:

"I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed the PPC training...It was by far the best training I have ever participated in."
— Shamokin Area Community Hospital

"I think it was a good introductory training for "lean in healthcare" concepts...I liked the interactive portions of the week."
— Geisinger Health System

"I highly recommend this program to any facility that wants to improve their care delivery process. The key is to send not only management though; getting the employees doing the work to understand the PPC concepts is key to a successful program."
— Evangelical Community Hospital



Board Member Profile

Eric Hussar

Division Manager—Farm Home Oil, Milton, PA

As cold weather approaches, home heating becomes a hot topic and Eric Hussar has devoted the last 20 years of his career to this business. As Division Manager for Farm Home Oil, his office markets petroleum products to homes, school districts and businesses in over nine counties in Central Pennsylvania. Farm Home also does residential and light commercial service and installation of oil heat, air conditioning and heat pump systems. Bio home heating oil has been distributed since 2006.

Eric graduated from Widener University and received his MBA from Frostburg University. Along with serving on the WIB's Executive Committee, Eric serves on the Union County Industrial Development Committee, the SUN Counties District Operating Board for Junior Achievement of Central PA, and is a classroom volunteer for Junior Achievement. Lewisburg has been home to Eric, his wife and four daughters for 12 years. CPWDC is fortunate that Eric includes workforce development with his many services to the community. ●

Staff Members

Shannon Miller
Acting Executive Director

Jacob Smith
Finance Manager

Rachel V. Smith
Senior Manager of Workforce
Research and Development

William Berry
Research Coordinator

Sandie Fairman
Quality Assurance Coordinator

Tracy Hower
Research Coordinator

Stacey Kifolo
Workforce Coordinator

Mary Lilla
Fiscal Coordinator

Kate Lomax
Youth Coordinator

Cheryl Reish
Fiscal Coordinator

Laura Seward
Office/Board Coordinator

Chris Wilusz
Workforce and Community
Development Educator

Kristy Anderson
Senior WorkKeys/Operations
Assistant

Jeannette Calhoun
Grant Assistant

Sarah Gill
Senior Research Assistant

Spotlight

Thank You WIB Members

Due to retirements, change in work responsibilities or reassignment, the following Workforce Investment Board members have left the Board. CPWDC thanks them for their service to the Central PA WIB.

- Anne Day** — Professional Building Systems, Middleburg
- Ruth Fisher** — JC Penney, Burnham
- George Freiji** — Hilex Poly, Milesburg
- Terry Krezmer** — Lonza, Williamsport
- Michael Pierce** — Evangelical Community Hospital, Lewisburg
- Pam Wildt** — County Assistance Office, Selinsgrove

Over the last several months, many new representatives have been appointed to the WIB. CPWDC would like to welcome the following Board members:

- Joe Agosta** — Greater Pennsylvania Regional Council of Carpenters, Sunbury
- Jason Dugan** — Financial Advisor, Morgan Stanley, Montoursville
- Glenda Hartzler** — Administrative/Clinical Resource Coordinator, Lewistown Hospital, Lewistown
- Jim Jordan** — Plant Manager, Hilex Poly, Milesburg
- Marla Keck** — Assistant Regional Director, Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership, Williamsport
- Jim Nemeth** — Director of Human Resources, Rieter Automotive, Bloomsburg
- Susan Swartz** — District Administrator, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Williamsport

If you are interested in becoming a Board member or recommending someone for membership, please contact CPWDC. ●

• Grants •

CPWDC Awarded Over \$1 Million to Sustain Industry Partnerships

In a press release issued on November 3, 2008, Governor Ed Rendell announced that the CPWDC will receive \$1,035,000 in funding from the General Assembly to support seven industry partnerships. For the fourth year in a row, the CPWDC will receive funds to help employers “identify specific training needs and skill gaps, help connect young people to careers, help educational and training institutions arrange curriculum to meet business demands, address worker recruitment and retention, develop career ladders within companies, highlight best practices, and promote communication among companies.” (www.paworkforce.state.pa.us)

The CPWDC along with regional partners and the PA CareerLinks will support the following partnerships:

- **Building and Construction** – managed by Associated Builders and Contractors, Central PA Chapter
- **Factory Built Housing** – managed by the Factory Built Housing Center at Pennsylvania College of Technology
- **Health Care** – managed by CPWDC
- **Information Technology** – managed by Husky Research Corporation, Bloomsburg University
- **Lumber and Wood Products** – managed by Keystone Wood Products Association

This year’s funding will allow the CPWDC to extend its reach to all manufacturers through the creation of an Advanced Manufacturing Partnership with working groups committed to Plastics and Food Processing. A new Energy partnership, developed in response to the Marcellus Shale natural gas exploration, will focus on the employment needs of the natural gas industry as well as other companies that may be impacted by the labor needs of the natural gas exploration. ●

PA CareerLink

In October, CPWDC generated a survey to over 1,500 businesses that use the PA CareerLink system, members of the Industry Partnerships and Workforce Investment Board members. The survey was conducted to collect information on the perceptions and use of the services offered in the region’s seven CareerLink facilities. One hundred seventy-five (175) employers responded to the survey and provided CPWDC with a basis for framing the future direction of the CareerLinks in Central Pennsylvania. The survey responses were equitably received from employers across all nine counties.

Areas of note include a majority of employers that are in agreement with the statement that CareerLink staff and management are professional, diligent and responsive to the needs of companies. Additionally, most employers felt that they could connect with the CareerLink to satisfy their needs. Satisfaction with CareerLink services was also high, with a majority of respondents saying they were satisfied. The number one hiring issue indicated was “work ethic” which was listed along with basic skills deficiencies, finding employees with specialized skills and analytical skills.

The survey results were used as a starting point for discussions about the future of the CareerLinks at the Workforce Investment Board meeting on November 21st. ●

Labor Market Facts

Did you know?

In an environment of economic uncertainty, the employment situation in Central Pennsylvania has changed significantly since January 2008. In October, the Central Region saw its unemployment rate increase to 6.2%, its highest level since May 1996. More than 19,400 Central Pennsylvanians were unemployed, meaning they were actively seeking work or waiting to be called back to work.

According to information provided to the PA CareerLinks in Central Pennsylvania, there have been over 3,500 employees impacted by dislocations (plant closures or layoffs) in 2008. The majority of dislocations have occurred within the diversified manufacturing cluster, with considerable slowdowns in lumber and wood products and factory built housing, but the retail sector has also been impacted by the economic conditions.

Despite the unemployment and dislocation data, employment opportunities, ranging from entry-level food service positions to highly specialized health care professions, continue to be available in Central Pennsylvania. ●

Calendar

The Workforce Investment Board, Executive Committee and other standing Committees will commence in January to finalize their meeting schedules for 2009.

Change of Address?

We want to be certain that you do not miss an issue, so please send address changes to lseward@cpwdc.org so that we can move with you.

Prefer the Electronic Version? If you would rather receive the electronic version, please send your email address to lseward@cpwdc.org. Thank you for helping us to use our resources wisely.

Did You Know?

• EARN •

Funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, the **Employment Advancement Retention Network** is a comprehensive program that assists individuals who are unemployed and/or receiving TANF benefits. The EARN programs provide employment and training services to prepare individuals for the workforce and career advancement. Services include assessments, job skills development and work activities. Through a comprehensive curriculum, individuals can optimize their employability skills. Structured job placement activities are tailored for each individual to assist in their efforts to establish and maintain meaningful employment.



Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation

1610 Industrial Blvd., Suite 500 A - Lewisburg, PA 17837

Counties Served: Centre • Clinton • Columbia • Lycoming
Mifflin • Montour • Northumberland • Snyder • Union

Central Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board Members and Affiliations

Harry Adrian
Union-Snyder Community Action Agency

William "Joe" Agosta
Greater PA Regional
Council of Carpenters

Keith Atherholt
Lewis Lumber Products

Jamie Aurand
Susque-View Home, Inc.

Marc Baranouski
Merck & Co., Inc.

Diane Belusko
Columbia County Assistance Office

Dave Capperella
Capperella Furniture

Jason Dugan
Morgan Stanley

Ed Edwards
Columbia Montour Chamber/Columbia Alliance

David Frey
Williamsport Regional Airport

Tim Gage
Brodart Company

Davie Jane Gilmour
Pennsylvania College of Technology

Dean Girton
Girton Manufacturing Company

Dennis Greenaway
Greenaway Certified Appraisals

Glenda Hartzler
Lewistown Hospital

Eric Hussar
Farm and Home Oil Company

Jim Jordan
Hilex Poly Company

Marla Keck
Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership

Robyn Long
Conestoga Wood Specialties

Harry Mathias
Central Columbia School District

Rich Merkle
Geisinger Health System

Keith Miller
Lock Haven University

Chris Minnich
Northumberland County MH/MR
Homekeepers Program

Jim Nemeth
Rieter Automotive North America

Rob Postal
Mifflin County Industrial Development
Corporation

Russ Reitz
State Farm Insurance Company

Billy Robinson
Kreamer Feed, Inc

Dennis Robinson
SEDA-COG

Roger Sheets
Woolrich, Inc

Susan Swartz
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Harry VanSickle
Havsho, Inc

Kevin Varano
Varano's Warehouse

Mike Wilson
Title II Representative

Dave Zartman
Zartman Construction

Local Elected Official Board & Affiliations

Commissioner Rich Rogers
Centre County

Commissioner Tom Bossert
Clinton County

Commissioner Dave Kovach
Columbia County

Commissioner Jeff Wheeland
Lycoming County

Commissioner Otis Riden
Mifflin County

Commissioner Trevor Finn
Montour County

Commissioner Kurt Masser
Northumberland County

Commissioner Joe Kantz
Snyder County

Commissioner John Showers
Union County