

SUCCESS

Newsletter for Lake County Workforce Development

vol.7 ed. 1

Who's Inside?

Ecosystem	1
Youth	3
DHS Transition	6
5 Steps	7
Transportation	8

Lake County Workforce Development is a partner in the Lake County Workforce EcoSystem—a system of multiple organizations that ensure that employers have access to the talent pipeline in Lake County. Lake County Partners connected E.H. Wachs with Lake County Workforce Development when they were considering a move into Lake County. Workforce Development has access to job seekers of diverse backgrounds and skills from multiple partners which allows Workforce Development to source appropriate resumes based on employer needs. Workforce Development also administers grant-funded programs to assist in bridging the talent gap.

Business Move to Lake County Aided by Workforce Strategy

In early 2017, E.H. Wachs consolidated its production division with its headquarters in Lincolnshire. **“Lake County was very attractive in skill sets and available talent,”** explained Business Unit Manager, Nathan Miller. Lake County Workforce Development met with the E.H. Wachs team to establish a workforce strategy. E.H. Wachs expressed a desire to attract additional engineers and a videographer to assist with the transition and complete pending projects.



Lake County Workforce Development sourced resumes, with particular attention to individuals from previous layoff events who would be a fit for a direct hire or internship opportunity. The results of this collaboration with E.H. Wachs were as follows:

- 1 Electrical Engineer was hired directly. E.H. Wachs had previously been looking for the right person to fill this role for over a year. Workforce Development provided 10 resumes of individuals who were laid off from a large manufacturer. The E.H. Wachs team interviewed and hired a candidate within 60 days.
- 2 CAD Engineers filled a work experience for 6 months, closing out engineering change orders related to the move. Workforce Development subsidized a percentage of the wages, investing in the skill development of these workers/trainees so that they would receive an equitable wage.
- 1 Videographer was brought on as a contractor to create instructional content for the company website.

“The Lake County Partners and Lake County Workforce Development partnership defines how an integrated ecosystem should work. The Lake County Ecosystem can really flourish when we have companies like E.H. Wachs that trust the process, and allow the collaborative unit to implement the necessary solutions,” explained Demar Harris, Director of Programs at Workforce Development.

Waukegan Housing Authority



Celester Rodney (left) says that a work experience was the right solution for her organization and for Catherine (right).

When the Waukegan Housing Authority identified a need for additional administrative support in early 2017, Celester Rodney, Director of Human Resources, reached out to the Business Service Team at Lake County Workforce Development. She was already familiar with the work experience program since the Waukegan Housing Authority had previously hosted and hired work experience candidates. Workforce Development and Celester screened and interviewed potential candidates; and Catherine stood out.

“The work experience gave us a chance to see whether we truly needed another full-time staff person and if Catherine was the right person for the job,” stated Celester. The answer was yes. Catherine was hired permanently as an administrative clerk in April 2017.

During the course of her work experience, Catherine learned to conduct third party verifications for annual adjustments and processing re-certifications. In addition, she assisted the Director of Public Housing Operations by ensuring all rent was applied to proper ledgers. Throughout the entire process, Catherine was exposed to new office

methodologies and public administration practices which assisted in her professional growth.

“Candidates may not initially fulfill 100% of the employers’ expectations,” explains Kay Dewane, Business Service Representative. **“The work experience allows an employer the opportunity to structure training, maximize budgets and create an overall customized employee to fit into business expectations.”**

Workforce Development business service team members support the employer throughout the work experience. Celester described her experience with the program. **“The work experience is a streamlined process from beginning to end; a worthwhile training program.”**

Does your business want to tap into the resources of a work experience?

Contact Demar Harris
dharris@lakecountyil.gov
847.377.3423

Youth Work Experience



Lake County employees and visitors stop for breakfast and lunch at a busy cafe on the southwest corner of the Lake County building in Waukegan. T. Nash, Cafe Manager, had a problem though. **"I kept hiring people and then they wouldn't work out. We were short-staffed. The employees that I did have, we couldn't ever take a break."** Someone suggested that she contact the Workforce Development Department to discuss workforce solutions. A food service training program eventually grew from this contact.

Workforce Development staff discussed staffing needs with cafe management. **"We customize hiring strategies for employers,"** explained Director of Programs, Demar Harris. **"In this particular case, it was a perfect fit because we had a pool of young candidates who were seeking to further their careers."** Cafe management agreed to set up an internship and training program in five areas: cashiering, food prep, cooking, barista and janitorial. Workforce Development identified eligible young adults interested in a food-service career and enrolled them in a six-month paid internship at the cafe. Participants could also earn a ServSafe certificate.



Daniel (pictured left) is one of the interns. He spent 5 years after high school with a band touring throughout the U.S. and Central America. He said that touring didn't allow him time for his family, and he decided to stay in Illinois to look for work in 2017. He had a longtime passion for food service. As a child, he would often prepare food with his mother for events at his father's workplace. He became frustrated with job search and says he was ready to give up when Workforce Development contacted him about this opportunity. **"That was one of the best calls I ever got."** Daniel wants to become a chef.

T. Nash (pictured above) oversees the interns at the cafe. **"I want them to stay busy. I want them to take initiative and try new things."** She provides training in food service standards and also shares tips for professional behavior. Workforce Development also meets with the interns regularly to provide ongoing mentoring and support.



Developing a Feeder System for Young Talent

The Manufacturing Career Expo was held in March 2017 and was designed to give high school students a chance to learn about career opportunities and desired skills in the high growth, high demand manufacturing industry. Modeled after a job fair, almost **20** employers staffed booths at the Lake County High Schools Technology Campus. The employers said they signed up for the Expo to make students aware of careers in manufacturing, create a talent pipeline and fill immediate needs.

Glenn Lewiston, representing Ludlow Manufacturing, gathered 50 resumes from interested



students during the first two hours of the event. He said that his company primarily needs welders.

"I'm looking for students who will graduate in a few months and want to start their career right away or students who plan to work during the day and go to college at night."

The Expo was held during the school day, allowing over 300 Tech Campus students to meet with employers during classroom hours. Tech Campus instructors could be seen walking around the event, but they let students work the Expo independently. **"We prepared them but we didn't require them to wear dress clothes or bring a resume; they did that on their own,"** explained Carol McKinny, instructor for pre-engineering and mechatronics.

Jim McCarten who represents Nosco said that the Expo gave him a chance to share current manufacturing career information. **"Our operations are high tech, not what most think of when they hear the word manufacturing. We want students to see this is an exciting field that can provide them with a solid career path."**

The Expo was sponsored by the Lake County High Schools Technology Campus, Lake County Workforce Development and Lake County Partners.

"Lake County companies requested assistance with developing a strategy and a forward thinking model that allows them to educate, attract, recruit and train the upcoming generation," explained Demar Harris, Workforce Development Manager. **"The strategy that is incorporated within baseball as it pertains to a feeder system can be adopted to our current aging workforce."**



Representatives from Chicago Pipefitters Local 597 (left) spoke to students about career options.

Continuing a Feeder System for Young Talent



Rosalind Franklin University spoke to students about trends in healthcare.

The Health Science Career Expo was held in May 2017 at the Lake County High Schools Technology Campus and mirrored the format of the Manufacturing Career Expo. Over 500 students spoke to the 15 vendors and employers participating in the Expo including: Vista Health to discuss hospital careers; several fire departments to discuss opportunities in emergency medical services; Six Flags Great America to inform students about their Safety Supervisor internship program; and education & training institutions to discuss career pathways and training programs.

Gina Schulyer, Workforce Development Coordinator/ Education for Employment at the Tech Campus, said the goal with the Expo was to achieve three layers of success:

- Build advisory connections so that the curriculum of the Tech Campus accurately reflects industry need;
- Allow students to interact with employers & practice their soft skills; and
- Offer students the chance to learn about internship and job shadowing opportunities.

The consensus from employers, schools and students was that these three goals were achieved. One employer in attendance committed to developing an internship program after discussing successes with another employer. The Technical Campus Medical Assisting Program secured a lead from one of the vendors and is in talks to add phlebotomy to their course offerings. Margaret Rolfe of Workforce Development said that the goal of the event was to foster excitement and interest in career options in healthcare.



Representatives from the Waukegan Fire Department (left) spoke to students about careers as Emergency Responders.

Kurt Beier from First Institute (right) showed students a training arm for venipunctures or blood draws.



Future Career Expos are being planned for key industry sectors of Information Technology, Transportation and Logistics, Healthcare, and Business/Finance.

Transition Workshop Series

In February 2017, the Department of Human Services (DHS) launched the Transition Workshop Series at the Job Center of Lake County. Coordinated by Michael Wilson of the Department of Human Services, several DHS staff members meet with customers at the Job Center on Fridays for five weeks. The curriculum is structured around the "So, What's Next?" job search workbook. **"We spend two sessions just working on resumes, but it's not just about typing the resume. We brainstorm with the customers about their job options."**

For the fifth session, participants wear interview attire and run through a practice interview with staff members. **"This is exactly the type of partnership that we want to build,"** explained Jennifer Serino, Director of Lake County Workforce Development. **"The Job Center has resources. Other agencies have customers in need of employment. Let's work together to make that happen."**

Transition to Financial Independence

Quishawna has been unemployed for the past 2 years. As a single mom, she had a hard time finding a job that paid a family-sustaining wage and offered hours that fit her family needs. She was enrolled in TANF (temporary assistance for needy families) through the IL Department of Human Services (DHS) but knew that this program is limited to a 60-month lifetime benefit. When her DHS Case Manager invited her to attend the Transitions workshop at the Job Center of Lake County in July 2017, Quishawna didn't know what to expect. At the first meeting, though, she created a resume and saved it to a flash drive. When she learned about an upcoming job fair, she was ready.



Quishawna attended a job fair in Round Lake on July 11, 2017. 50 employers were present, and she initially approached the employers who offered cashiering jobs since she had experience in that field. She stopped at the Glenkirk table and asked about their staffing needs. Glenkirk is a nonprofit agency that serves individuals with disabilities. Quishawna thought about her mother who is involved in a mental health program and decided on a new career path right then. **"I felt the chemistry, as they explained what the job was about. My experience with my mother and my customer service background fit together for this type of work."** Glenkirk staff called Quishawna back the next day for an interview and she was hired that week. **She started a full-time job on July 26, 2017 as a Direct Support Professional.** She coordinates enrichment activities for individuals with disabilities. **"I've never had a job with benefits before. Now I can earn vacation days. The company offers a retirement package and a medical plan."**

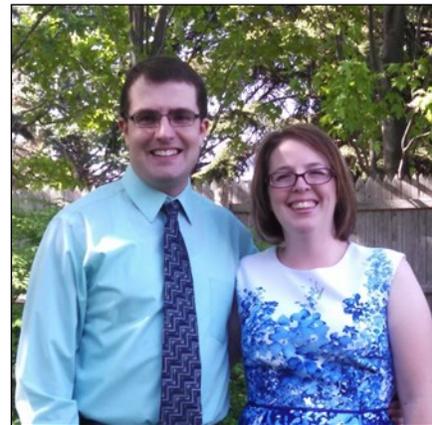
5 Steps to Your Next Job

Lake County Workforce Development offers a five-day, monthly workshop series called “5 Steps to Your Next Job” at various locations in Lake County.

Participants receive 10 hours of training in the latest job search techniques and network with other job seekers and workforce professionals.

168 job seekers participated in the workshop series between January and July 2017. Many have provided feedback on how it has made a difference in their job search and landing a job. The following is recent feedback from a participant who sums up the success of the workshops.

“Just wanted to send you a note. The workshop helped me immensely. Both myself and my husband used your tips to update our resumes. He starts a new position at Uline on Monday! I finally set up a LinkedIn profile based on your workshop after thinking for years that it wasn't needed. A week later I sent an old friend who I hadn't seen in years a 'congratulations on your promotion' note. That started a dialogue and led to a contract position at the publishing company where she works. It's a 6 month contract but I am hopeful it will lead to something more. And the best part is I can do it from home around my kids' schedules!”



Climbing the Job Ladder



June stopped in the Job Center in 2017 to reconnect with the Workforce Development team that had worked with her years earlier to find and land a job. June was eager to share the news about her recent promotion to **Dietetic Technician** at the Great Lakes Naval Base. In 2013, June was in a crisis when she first visited the Job Center. She had moved to Lake County with family members after a layoff. Her housing situation wasn't stable and she needed a job. Workforce Development helped her to create a resume and to practice interviewing. Within a few months, June secured a part-time food service position at Great Lakes Naval Base.

June also received a referral to a public housing organization that helped her secure subsidized, transitional housing. Her recent promotion has allowed her to move into her own, unsubsidized housing. “I love this new place,” she grins. “It has a private balcony, a barbecue, a great view.” June recommends that anyone seeking employment use the Job Center.

LAKE COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

1 N. Genesee Street
Waukegan, IL 60085
847.377.3450

www.lakecountyjobcenter.com

jobcenter@lakecountyil.gov



Like us on Facebook.
*Lake County Workforce
Development*



Join our group on LinkedIn.
*Lake County Illinois Workforce
Development*



Follow us on Twitter.
@LakeCountyJobs



TRAINING • CONNECTING • DEVELOPING ILLINOIS' WORKFORCE

A proud partner of the
americanjobcenter[®]
network

An equal opportunity program/ employer.
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.

Transportation Connection

The transportation, distribution and logistics industry is a key industry in Lake County and truck drivers are in high demand. The Job Center responded by hosting a Transportation Summit in January 2017. Interested job seekers, career changers and unemployed individuals were invited to sessions to learn about the industry and occupation. A total of thirty-one (31) individuals attended the Summit at the end of the month which was held in the evening to accommodate the individuals' schedules. Presentations were given by:

- A major employer, Schneider, a transportation and logistics company
- Two CDL training schools: 360 Training Academy and Kotra
- Business Service Representatives from Lake County Workforce Development

Throughout the course of the following months, over twenty (20) individuals pursued CDL training information and to date six (6) individuals have been hired.

