



SIWIB NEWS

NEWSLETTER FOR BOARD MEMBERS ■ VOL. 2: ISSUE 3: MAY 2006

SIWIB COMMITTEE CONTACT INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE

William Armstrong, Chair
e-mail: armstrong@mvn.net

John Rendleman, 1st Vice Chair
e-mail: jsr@fmgr.com

Mary Roe, 2nd Vice Chair
e-mail: roe@onecliq.net

John Alongi, 3rd Vice Chair
e-mail: johnr@onecliq.net

Rodney Cabaness, 4th Vice Chair
e-mail: cabaness@aol.com

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Milton Maxwell, Chair
e-mail: info@siwib.org

Kathy Lively, Vice Chair
e-mail: kathylively@mantracon.org

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

John Rendleman, Chair
e-mail: jsr@fmgr.com

Richard Morris, Vice Chair
rmorris@ides.state.il.us

MARKETING

James McPhail, Chair
e-mail: jimmac@mychoice.net

Crystal Lukens, Vice Chair
e-mail: irnsnfir@midwest.net

ONE-STOP

Patricia Drake, Chair
e-mail: pdrake@ides.state.il.us

Alan Summers, Vice Chair
e-mail: dhsz500@dhs.state.il.us

YOUTH COUNCIL

Tyler Young, Chair
e-mail: tyjr@midwest.net

June Hickey, Vice Chair
e-mail:
jhickey@cchs165.jacksn.k12.il.us

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www.siwib.org

SIWIB INITIATIVES UPDATE

Community Audit Update

The Economic Development Taskforce is currently discussing the development of a comprehensive region-wide economic development plan, along with creating a regional resume which will advertise our entire region's "Quality of Place" attributes. Also under investigation are a high-speed Internet program, in conjunction with Frank Knott's Vital Economy: SI Connect initiative, and an effort to encourage research and development of alternative fuels in our region.

The Business Services Taskforce has completed its deliberations and submitted recommendations for addressing several challenges identified in the Community Audit Final Report: Work ethic and work-readiness, life-long learning, encouraging an employer driven system, and increasing entrepreneurship.

The Healthcare Services Taskforce continues to provide a central point of contact and serves as meeting facilitator for the various healthcare service groups working in our region.

The Educational Services Taskforce is still discussing the challenges in their area: Creating a culture change in the educational community and among the population of southern Illinois; responding to business needs by focusing on improving students' work ethic and other soft skills proficiencies; and identifying "Best Practices" for education in southern Illinois that are consistent with the "One Region-One Vision" initiative.

A Community Audit Taskforce Leadership Appreciation Lunch was held on Tuesday, April 11, 2006, at Man-Tra-Con's Marion office. The luncheon provided an opportunity to assess successes already achieved and discussion of steps not yet taken. Taskforce leaders were recognized, as well as the leaders of various taskforce sub-committees, for their efforts and suggestions for addressing the challenges identified in the Community Audit Final Report.

CSSI Healthcare Update

A CSSI Steering Committee meeting was conducted at the request of Lori Clark, DCEO's CSSI project coordinator. Due to the weather Lori was unable to travel to Marion and the meeting was changed to a conference call involving Lori Clark and the WIA providers in the Southern Economic Development Region (SEDR). The conference call provided Ms. Clark with an update of SEDR activities involving the CSSI Healthcare grant and what is planned for the duration of the grant.

Mr. Cary Minnis, Healthcare Liaison for the grant reported that 76 students (46 LPNs and 30 ADNs) had been enrolled in services under the CSSI grant. Of those students, 64 have been enrolled in mentoring. The mentor program has grown from two students participating in the spring semester of 2005 to 60 students participating in the spring semester of 2006. Currently 36 students have been identified to receive

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Message from Our Chairman...



WILLIAM ARMSTRONG

I'd like to start by thanking each of you who sent a letter of support to our congressional delegates. As many of you are no doubt aware, both the House and the Senate were inundated with letters supporting the return of funding to WIA programs. As a result of your efforts the Senate passed a budget resolution that provides \$16 billion more in discretionary spending. Also, Senators Spector and Harkin introduced, and the Senate passed, a bipartisan budget amendment which provides \$7 billion in "advance" appropriations for programs within the purview of the Senate Labor- HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee which includes WIA programs. The House is expected to take up the issue of the budget again early in May.

Illinois stands to lose \$37 million or more in funding if the President's proposed budget were passed. We must take action or face a very devastating reduction in funding. I beseech each of you to take a moment and email or telephone Congressman Costello and Congressman Shimkus and thank them for their continued support for the WIA programs. If the budget for

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SIWIB COMMITTEE PROJECT OVERVIEW

One-Stop Committee

The One-Stop Committee members were provided updates on activities at all sites from partner agencies at their last meeting. Phil Minnis with John A. Logan College provided an update from the most recent meeting of the Consortium of Operators. Proposed budget cuts and changes in service delivery for FY07 may require cost-saving measures for the comprehensive centers and satellite offices. The Consortium of Operators reviewed the costs of doing business at each location in the event of budget cuts and any suggested changes in service delivery. The resource room team is finalizing signage to be placed in all the centers. The new signs will be displayed to assist self-service customers who use the equipment and resources.

Youth Council

The Council approved their final plans for the Youth Conference which was

held April 25, 2006, at Rend Lake College. WIA youth from Rebound, Mt. Vernon Alternative School, John A. Logan College's JEEP, and Rend Lake College's YES programs were in attendance. The conference featured Judson Lapple, a motivational speaker, as the opening keynote speaker. A variety of workshops and exhibits were also provided. The conference concluded with a networking luncheon.

In other business the Youth Council released a Request for Proposals (RFPs) for Program Year 2006. They seek entities to provide educational and employment service programs for WIA eligible youth in LWA #25. Successful bidders will be awarded contracts which will run from September 1, 2006, through June 30, 2007. An RFP for a summer of 2007 program will be released later. ■

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ITAs and supportive service funds through the CSSI grant.

After the update, Ms. Clark was asked to approve several projects to help the SEDR meet the goals set forth in their original plan. She agreed to the following projects: continuing ad-itorials in the Health Magazine, co-hosting a "Healthcare Alternative Delivery Method Forum," creation and distribution of a Nursing Career Handbook for all high schools within the SEDR, and a newsletter for area high schools to promote nursing. Ms. Clark also authorized the purchase of mentoring materials and NCLEX review software for use with CSSI nurse mentors and students. To ensure students are aware of the new services, Mr. Minnis will visit the colleges to inform and recruit students for the WIA providers

CSSI Manufacturing Grant

A third class of the Work Certified program was completed by seven participants at Rend Lake College. A total of 23 WIA customers have successfully completed the program since the pilot class was launched at John A. Logan College last November. The three-week work readiness program culminates with a 75-question web-based certification exam that is facilitated by certified proctors. Participants must score a minimum of 80% on the exam to be "Work Certified." To date, the average passing score for program participants in LWA 25 is 89% — at least half of the examinees achieved scores over 90%.

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Project Coordinator, Lucinda Pearce, believes this is an excellent start for the program that was piloted in the area less than six months ago. "The majority of program participants have not been in a classroom environment in a number of years," noted Ms. Pearce. "The Work Certified program is fast-paced and a lot of material is covered during the three weeks. Returning to a classroom, completing assignments, and taking several quizzes during a short timeframe can be intimidating — even for 'experienced' students. Most of our participants have recently been laid off from jobs they have held for quite a while and they are working through an extremely stressful time in their lives. I am very happy to see such high scores on the comprehensive exam and I know the students were thrilled." Ms. Pearce stated.

Participants have been very satisfied overall with the program and many are now planning to pursue additional training and educational opportunities. "One of the goals of Work Certified is to provide encouragement to people who may be learning a new skill set," said Lucinda. "Many of the program 'graduates' have thanked me for offering the program because they learned something new and enjoyed the experience. One gentleman succeeded on a pre-employment exam he had to take as part of a job interview because of the math refresher offered in Work Certified. He told me that he might not have passed that test otherwise," recalled Ms. Pearce.

Recruitment for additional classes at both community colleges is on-going. However, gaining support for the program from employers is vital to its success. "We hope to begin placing Work Certified graduates with local employers and through these successful placements earn their support for the program. The curriculum taught in the program

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Spotlight On...

BOARD MEMBER LEO CHILDERS

Leo Childers has served as President of the Good Samaritan Regional Health Center, a member of the St. Mary's Good Samaritan, Inc. since November 1, 1993. St. Mary's Good Samaritan, Inc. is co-sponsored by SSM Health Care (St. Louis) and Felician Services, Inc. (Chicago). SSM Health Care has the honor of being the first ever winner of the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in health care.



Leo Childers

Mr. Childers was born in Florence, South Carolina. He is a 1968 graduate of Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina, where he attained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration. In 1981, he graduated from Duke University with a Master's Degree in Health Care Administration.

Leo has over thirty years in health care administration having previously served as President of Saint Eugene Community Hospital in Dillon, South Carolina, Vice President for Professional Services and Associate Administrator of Southampton Memorial Hospital in Franklin, Virginia; and various administrative positions at military hospitals as a Captain in the United States Air Force Medical Service Corps.

Leo is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and currently serves on the College's Regent's Advisory Council. Other professional affiliations include the American Hospital Association, Catholic Health Association, and the Illinois Hospital Association. He currently serves on the Policy Council and Patient Safety Steering Council of the Illinois Hospital Association. He is currently a member of the Jefferson County Development Commission, and he serves on the Board of Directors of the Rend Lake Foundation, the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce, American Red Cross and the Old National Bank. Leo is a member of the Rotary Club and the American Legion Post 32 and is a deacon at the Logan Street Baptist Church. He had previously served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Jefferson County United Way and the Mt. Vernon Rotary Club. Leo has been a member of the Southern Illinois Workforce Investment Board since September 2003 and serves on the Business and Economic Development Committee.

For recreation, Leo enjoys jogging, golf and spending time with his wife, Tam, and their dogs, Pepper and Baby. Leo and Tam have four children: Wesley, Cathy, Tony and Julie. They have two adorable grand children, Gabriel and Abigail. ■



**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

3000 W. DeYoung Street, Suite 800B
Marion, IL 62959

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★ **SIWIB Annual Board Meeting, Thursday, June 15th, at Herrin Civic Center and Bocce Courts. 5:00-6:00 p.m. — Meeting; 6:00 p.m. — Networking.** ★

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

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covers soft skills — a skill set that employers have indicated is lacking in our workforce. This program is new to the area and it will take some time to get the word out, however, over time I believe it will be very successful. I hope to see help wanted ads that state ‘Work Certified’ job applicants preferred,” Ms. Pearce stated.

For additional information on the program, please contact Lucinda Pearce at (618) 998-0970, Ext. 226, or lucindapearce@mantracon.org. ■

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

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WIA is cut, it would mark a first step in the case for gubernatorial control of WIA programs. Local control and local workforce boards could be legislated away as part of new WIA Re-Authorization legislation. Once we know there are funds to serve our WIA customers, then we can begin to deal with how we will serve our customers. Please support a budget which gives us the funds necessary to serve both our business customers and our job seeker customers. ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 9, 2006

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

MAY 19, 2006

Marketing Committee Meeting
11:00 a.m. at the
Marion One-Stop Business
& Employment Center

MAY 24, 2006

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

MAY 25, 2006

Executive Committee Meeting
5:00 p.m. at the
West Frankfort One-Stop
Business & Employment Center