

Dakota County Workforce Investment Board News and Notes

May 2003 Edition, Vol. 1-3

Mission: Providing comprehensive, professional, and timely services for jobseekers and employers.

Welcome to the Dakota County Workforce Investment Board's News and Notes. The newsletter's purpose is to provide you with an update of Workforce Development activities.

Upcoming Events

Workforce Investment Board Meeting: 7:30 a.m. June 20th @ Waterous. Waterous is a manufacturer of fire hydrants and fire engine pumps in South St. Paul. Bill Smith, V.P. of Manufacturing, serves on the WIB Board.

Dakota County Labor Market

Dakota County added 5,700 jobs between 2nd Quarter 2000 and 2002, according to Kyle Uphoff, Regional Market Analyst for the State Department of Economic Security. However, the manufacturing sector shed about 1,200 jobs. Sectors hardest hit were industrial machinery, fabricated metal, plastics and rubber and furniture.

Dakota County Unemployment Rate

The April Unemployment Rate in Dakota County is 3.7%, down from 3.8% in March. The State Unemployment rate was 4.6%. These statistics are not seasonally adjusted. For more information on employment rates go to: <http://data.mnwfc.org/lmi/laus/detail.asp?geog=2704000037&adjust=0>

Looking for More Business?

The Minnesota Trade Office promotes and assists in the expansion of exports and foreign direct investments that contribute to the growth of the Minnesota economy. Their services are tailored for new exporters as well as experienced international companies, and include education and training, information and marketing, and counseling.

From export training classes to individualized counseling and participation in international trade shows, the Trade Office can equip you with the tools needed to succeed in global markets. They'll help you assess your product or the marketability of your services, and work with you to develop a strategy that will get your product into the international markets.

The Trade Office also helps foreign companies invest in Minnesota through new business startups or expansions. Whether seeking joint venture partners, products to source or an attractive U.S. business location, it pays to consider Minnesota. <http://www.dted.state.mn.us/03x00f.asp>

You'll also want to check out the Trade Office's "Export Minnesota" newsletter... <http://www.dted.state.mn.us/mto-news/xmindex.html>

Dakota County Quality Council Presents: Hot Trends in Community Development

Thursday, June 5, 2003

*8 a.m. Registration * 8:30 Presentation and discussion
Dakota County Technical College, Room 2-140-141
1300 E. 145th St. (Cty. Rd. 42), Rosemount, MN 55068*

From "new urbanism" to urban redevelopment projects, cities across the country and Dakota County are busy working on developments that will shape their residents' lives in the 21st Century. Learn about the latest trends in development, hear about some local examples, and listen to a seasoned professional give the inside scoop about current community projects.

Stacie Kvilvang is a financial advisor for Ehlers and Associates, a Roseville-based public finance group that works with many Twin Cities municipalities, including many in Dakota County, on community development projects.

For more information, call 651 423-8293.

Having a High School Diploma Pays

"Approximately 550,000 people in the state, between the ages of 20 and 60 do not have a high school diploma or GED," says Kristin Keller, South Suburban Adult Basic Education.

Other interesting facts from the Adult Basic Education Unit of the MN Department of Education for the Adult Basic Education Policy Task Force include:

- Major MN employers report large costs to train and retrain employees whose lack of basic skills or ability to speak English are liabilities to the profit line. The average dropout earns \$7,000 less annually than the

average high school graduate/equivalent. *MN Bus. Partnership and 2000 Census*

- 12% of Minnesotans over 25 lack high school equivalency: *2000 Census*
- The NALS (*Nat'l Adult Lit. Survey - 1993*) study reports 8% of MN's adult population is at the lowest of five levels of functional literacy and 20% have "functional literacy" needs.
- 42% of the current Minnesota Family Investment Program caseload does not have a high school degree or the equivalent. Many participants who have completed a high school education have reading and math abilities far below the 12th grade level. It is often difficult for this group to find and retain jobs. *DHS TANF report*
- MN's immigrant and refugee population has expanded to record levels, especially Asian, Hispanic and African population groups; 5.3% of all Minnesotans are foreign born; an estimated 200,000 are in need of English as a Second Language. *DHS 2001*
- Approximately 35,000 permanent Minnesota residents lack U.S. citizenship. *2000 DHS est.*
- Public schools report that the numbers of parents are growing, whose lack of basic skills are barriers to the success of their children. *CFL*
- 36% of job applicants tested by major U.S. firms in 1998 lacked the reading and math skills to do the job they sought. This figure is up from 23% in 1997, and 19% in 1996. *Amer. Mgt. Assoc.*
- Job seekers with educations below that of a typical dropout will qualify for just 9% of the new jobs created between 1998 and 2008. Dropouts in 1998 earned an average of \$20,300 while earners with some college brought home \$31,600 that year. *ETS Study, 2002*

Go to <http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2002-06-05-education-census.htm> and then click on "Take a Look at the Numbers" to see an interesting set of demographic information by state. For information on GED attainment, contact Kristin Keller at (651) 457-9441.

Serve on the Workforce Investment Board

The Dakota County Board of Commissioners seeks qualified applicants for seven private sector and four public sector vacancies on the Dakota County Workforce Investment Board (formerly known as the Workforce Council). The application deadline is Friday, June 13.

The 21-member Workforce Investment Board (WIB) oversees the activities of the Workforce Centers in Dakota County. In partnership with the County Board, the WIB determines methods and delivery systems to assure the best possible mix of programs and services for Dakota County residents who are eligible for Workforce Center programs.

WIB members must live or work in Dakota County. These openings are not limited by location within a specific city or county commissioner district; they are all countywide.

A qualified private-sector applicant must be the owner of a business concern, chief executive or chief operating officer of a non-governmental employer, or a private sector executive with substantial management or policy responsibility. Private-sector applicants must be nominated by a general-purpose business organization (e.g. chamber of commerce).

A qualified public-sector applicant must represent one of the following types of organizations: community-based, public assistance, public employment, or rehabilitation. Applications for public-sector representatives must be accompanied by a letter of support from the parent agency.

The WIB meets monthly. Appointment terms are two years. More information on the WIB is available from Dakota County Workforce Services at 651-554-5633.

Contact the Dakota County Administration Department at 651-438-4418 to obtain an application form or go to the Dakota County web site at http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/board/meetings/ca/ca_how_to_apply.htm.

Looking For A Job?

The number one way to find a new job is networking. Talk to your friends, neighbors, people at church and/or school, former customers, etc. to find out about jobs. Often, you may hear about positions that haven't even been listed. In addition, attend a job club meeting where people exchange leads and information about companies.

In Dakota County, the Workforce Center in West St. Paul hosts a job club on Monday afternoons (651-554-5955) and the Workforce Center in Burnsville hosts a job club on Thursday afternoons (952-997-4850). Additionally, Prince of Peace Church hosts a job club on Tuesday nights (952-898-9388).

Besides the more commonly known resources such as on-line job boards and newspaper ads, other sources for jobs include company web sites, recruiters, and temporary agencies. Some temp firms have permanent jobs available, but act as a screening agency for the employer. Additionally, some temp. agencies even offer benefits and computer training. Check the yellow pages under "employment agencies."

For more information about contents of this newsletter, contact Mark Jacobs at 651 554-5622 or via e-mail at mark.jacobs@co.dakota.mn.us