

# Dakota County Workforce Investment Board News and Notes

## November/December 2004 Edition, Vol. 2-9

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

---

*Welcome to the Dakota County Workforce Investment Board's (WIB) News and Notes. This newsletter's purpose is to provide you with an update of workforce and economic development activities.*

---

### **WIB News**

The **December WIB meeting** will be a luncheon on Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> at the West St. Paul office.

The Minnesota Workforce Council Association (MWCA) elected Dakota County Commissioner **Will Branning** as Vice-Chair for the upcoming year at its annual meeting. The meeting also concluded **LaDonna Boyd's** term as Chair of the MWCA. Boyd is currently the Dakota County Workforce Investment Board Chair and Economic Development Director at Dakota Electric.

Thanks to these Workforce Investment Board members for dedicating their time to "provide comprehensive, professional, and timely services for jobseekers and employers."

- **LaDonna Boyd**, Economic Development Director, Dakota Electric Association
- **Don Buckner**, President, Infinity-Management and Development Associates
- **Eugene Grazzini, Jr.**, CEO/President, Grazzini Brothers & Co.
- **Jane McKay**, Owner, Mac's of St. Paul (dba – McDonald's Restaurant)
- **Peter Michalowski**, V.P. Human Resources, Goodrich Sensor Systems
- **Dean Schwanke**, V.P. Human Resources, Smead Mfg. Co.
- **William Smith**, V.P. of Manufacturing, Waterous
- **Darlan "Wally" Wall**, President, Illbruck Sealant Systems, Inc.
- **Catherine Weik**, Sr. Vice President Administration, Stratis Health
- **Corinne Shepherd**, Manager, Recruitment, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota
- **Jennifer A. Brigham**, CEO, Snelling Personnel Services
- **Ann Moreno**, Operations Manager Human Resources Flint Hills Resources
- **Gail Morrison**, Foundation Director, Inver Hills Community College
- **Sharon LaComb**, Vice President, Dakota County Technical College
- **Dan Rogness**, Dir. of Community Development, Dakota County CDA
- **Mark McAfee**, Political Action Director, AFSCME Council 5
- **Michael Cook**, Vice President, Business Representative, Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers Local Union #1 of MN
- **Connie Giles**, Rehab. Counselor Supervisor, Rehabilitation Services
- **Steven Ditschler**, President, ProAct, Inc.
- **Kari Jacob-Davis**, Executive Director of Power Surge Volunteers, Power Surge Mentoring, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
- **Mike Yanda**, Manager, Department of Employment and Economic Development
- **Daniel Engstrom**, Assistant County Administrator, Hennepin County
- **Will Branning**, Dakota County Commissioner

### **October 2004 Unemployment Information**

#### **Dakota County Unemployment Rate 3.5 %**

This compares to 3.8% for the State and 5.1% nationally. Numbers in September 2004 were 4.0% for the County; 4.4% for the State; and 5.1% nationally. Numbers in October of 2003 were 4.2% for the County; 4.5% for the State; and 5.6% nationally.

<http://data.mnwf.org/lmi/laus/detail.asp?geog=2704000037&adjust=0>

---

### **Community Resources for Food, Clothing and/or Gifts**

The Holiday Helpers list of community resources in the area is now online.

<http://www.mnwf.org/dakota/holidayhelpers.htm>

---

### **Three Local Companies Listed as Top Mailing Service Firms**

*The Business Journal's* recent list of Top 25 Minnesota Mailing Service firms ranked by pieces of mail processed included three Dakota County firms:

- #4 – PrimeNet Marketing Services, Egan
  - #15 - Information Management Systems, Egan
  - #20 - Lone Oak Cos. Inc., Egan.
- 

### **Minnesota and Biotech**

According to *Business Facilities* (Nov. 2004), Minnesota is ranked #13 of the 50 states as a Top Place to locate a biotechnology business. There's a formula used to calculate the leaders. Essentially, if the state is outpacing the national average for employment in the industry, it's considered a leader and model for other locations according to the magazine. Minnesota rated #2 in the Medical Devices & Equipment subsector.

---

### **Minimum Wage**

Thirteen states have minimum wages set above the federal standard. Topping the list is Washington with a \$7.16/hr. rate. Alaska is a close second at \$7.15/hr. Washington, Florida (\$6.15) and Oregon (\$7.05) index the rates to inflation according to the Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> issue of BusinessWeek.

*For past newsletters and information on the WIB and local WorkForce Centers* <http://www.mnwf.org/dakota/>

---