

Dakota County Workforce Investment Board News and Notes

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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 **March WIB meeting** is 7:30 a.m., March 18th at the Northern Service Center in West St. Paul.

Congratulations to **Jennifer Gale, President of the River Heights Chamber**, who was recently appointed to the Workforce Investment Board.

December 2004 Unemployment Information

Dakota County Unemployment Rate 3.4%

This compares to 4.2 % for the State and 5.1% nationally. Numbers in December of 2003 were 3.9% for the County; 4.9% for the State; and 5.4% nationally.

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

Are You Prepared to Protect your Business and Employees from Potential Disasters?

On Thursday, March 3, the Director of Emergency Preparedness for Dakota County will share information about disaster planning for businesses. This presentation is brought to you by the Dakota County Quality Council and will take place at 14200 Cedar Avenue, Apple Valley. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. with the presentation and discussion at 8:30 a.m. Call 952 997-9540.

Futurist Highlights Economic Summit

Dakota Future will host the 2005 Dakota County Economic Summit on March 16 at Dakota County Technical College. The Economic Summit will feature noted futurist Ed Barlow as keynote speaker. Barlow was also the speaker for the 2003 Summit that attracted close to 200 participants. Attendees were motivated to action by Barlow's incredible portrayal of the increasing competitiveness of the global economy. Many of the trends that Barlow highlighted have become more evident since the 2003 Summit, especially relating to globalization, business practices and educational trends.

Interested citizens are invited to attend and participate in the Summit. Complete information, including online registration, is available online at www.dakotafuture.com. The registration fee for the Summit is \$25.00, which

includes a continental breakfast and lunch. Registration deadline is March 4. The Summit begins at 8:00 a.m. and will adjourn at 1:00 p.m.

Job Fair – March 24th at Eagan Civic Arena

Great place for employers to find employees and a great place for job seekers to talk with employers.

www.mnwfc.org/dakota/jobfair

Railroad Conductors Needed

Due to the increased demand within the railroad services industry and the many employees reaching retirement age, there's a demand for railroad conductors. In response to that demand, Dakota County Technical College started a 15-week program to train individuals in this field. Salaries for this position begin at \$40,000 according to the college.

<http://www.detc.mnscu.edu/index.htm>

A Busy Place – 45,891 Visitors

In 2004, there were 45,891 visitors to the WorkForce Center resource rooms in Dakota County. That's up slightly from 45,542 visitors in 2003 and from 38,592 visitors in 2002.

Work At Home – Opportunity or Scam?

Learn more from the United States Postal Service.

<http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/wahscams.htm>

Positive Return on Investment

The Dakota County employment programs that are designed to help people laid off from companies get back to work have a return on investment of \$8.54, according to a recent analysis.

Dakota County Businesses in Recent Business Journal Listing

Top 50 Largest Employers (ranked by total number of Minnesota employees)

#11 – Northwest Airlines, Eagan – 16,000

#25 – Thompson Legal & Regulatory, Eagan – 5,700

#46 – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Eagan - 3,776

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