

The Workforce Board covering Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Putnam, and Whiteside Counties.

BEST, Inc Receives Talent Pipeline Grant for Incumbent Worker Training

June 1st BEST, Inc. received a grant for \$50,940 from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to fund an Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program being conducted at Metform, LLC in Savannah, IL. The grant will train 205 employees in lean manufacturing and is part of BEST, Inc.’s focus on work based learning. Over the course of 12 months the employees at Metform will received training on lean manufacturing processes allowing both the company and the employees to become more competitive in their industry field. Metform is the Hot Forging division of MacLean Fogg Component Solutions and has 3 locations in Carroll County.

Mary Hass (Metform) states that, “Incumbent Worker Training Grant money has helped us with the cost of our Company-wide Lean Basic training. The training was started at Metform in May of 2014. Each week long class has 9 participants from all different departments and functions from Press operators to upper management to distribution clerks to CNC setup operators to manufacturing engineers. Since start of funding period June 2015 we have had 70 employees take Lean Basic. All come together to learn as a Metform team the power of lean principles in building world-class excellence within our organization. Topics covered during the week include the 7 different types of waste to be on the lookout for, organization and standardization using principles of 5S, Value stream mapping, methods for collecting data, Problem-solving tools, Total Productive Maintenance, and many more important concepts. Many of these concepts infiltrate the participants’ thought processes and can change the way they do small but significant things in their everyday lives outside of work.

The learning takes place under the guidance of 2 Certified Lean (OT) Organizational Transformation Champions. The activities are engaging, thought-provoking and well...fun! Everyone participates and contributes their unique perspective and ideas for improvement applied to what they see out on the shop floor and within the company. At the end of the week, small teams are formed to work on an improvement project going forward. Certain individual homework assignments must be completed and turned in. At the completion of these, a person becomes Certified in Lean Basic. Then those people initiate and participate in ongoing team-based improvement projects called Kaizens, creating a continual dynamic learning organization.”

Also in This Issue:

- Focus of WIOA on Work Based Learning Opportunities and Sector Strategies
 - Introducing our newest Business Relations Representative
 - 2015 Just Hire One Job Fair
 - News in Brief



@NCIWorks

WIOA's Work Based Learning and Sector Strategies Addressing The Specific Needs Of Business



For a number of years businesses have been saying that they do not see the skill sets that they are looking for in many of their applicants. The new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) aims to address that issue. On July 1st the WIOA legislation went into effect and gives employer and industry driven work based learning a priority. It allows local workforce areas to bring businesses together to identify the most urgent and long term needs that are currently lacking and to design programs to provide the necessary training to deliver the skills need for today and tomorrow's workforce.

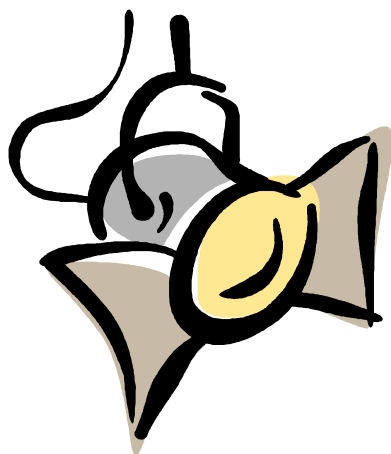
Initiatives available to area businesses include: ***On-the-Job Training*** which provides up to 50% reimbursement of wages for eligible new hires. The length of training will vary with the skills needed to be successful in the job. Eligibility of new hires must be determined prior to the first day of work. ***Incumbent Worker Training*** allows workforce areas to provide training funds that will help avert a layoff and retain a business' current workforce. Businesses must make a financial match (up to 50%) to the grant funds for this training. However, wages paid during that training count as the business' match. ***Work Experience/Internships*** can assist businesses with temporary, short-term employment through our paid work experience program. These experiences are designed to provide our youth, adult and dislocated worker customers with meaningful work and educational enrichment in a variety of occupational experiences.

In the coming months partners of NCI Works will work to convene a series of employer forums. These forums will give business the opportunity to hear from BEST, Inc., IDES, Adult Education, the community college system and the Office of Rehabilitation about services currently offered to assist them. The forums will also give businesses an opportunity to assess what their current workforce needs are and which services they can benefit from now and in the future. These forums are intended to be a precursor to the development of a facilitated sector strategy initiative that will bring businesses from a given industry sector together to help form solutions to their common needs, both immediate and long term. While no dates have yet been set for either the forums or the sector strategy events, the goal is that the forums will be conducted yet this fall with the more concentrated sector strategy events planned for the Spring of 2016.



More information on work based learning or to add your name to a mailing list for the forums and the sector strategy events contact

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Member Spotlight

John Spencer

Vice-President of Operations
LaSalle County Broadcasting



What is your professional background?

I've been in and on the radio since 1983, and with La Salle County Broadcasting since 1992. In my 20+ years with LCBC, I've moved up from on-air and production, to our Vice-President of Operations. I like to joke that I traded a studio for an office and a microphone and headphones for a snow shovel and plunger.

What made you decide to volunteer to serve on a workforce board?

I recognize the need for quality jobs for individuals and quality individuals for jobs. I believe there are both in our region and that our board and my position with LCBC can help bring the two together. Part of our mission statement is "connecting communities", and this absolutely qualifies.

How long have you been a board member? (including pre-consolidation)

I joined NCI Works in 2010.

As you have served and learned more and more about the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (and maybe even its predecessors) what do you see as the main value of our federal program?

While this board assists many individuals and businesses, the most important and beneficial programs are those that help displaced and under-privileged people get the training they need to become self-supporting members of our community.

Northwest Central Illinois Works (NCI Works) is a locally appointed workforce board that oversees workforce development programs that are funded by millions of federal tax dollars for an eight-county area (Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Putnam and Whiteside Counties).

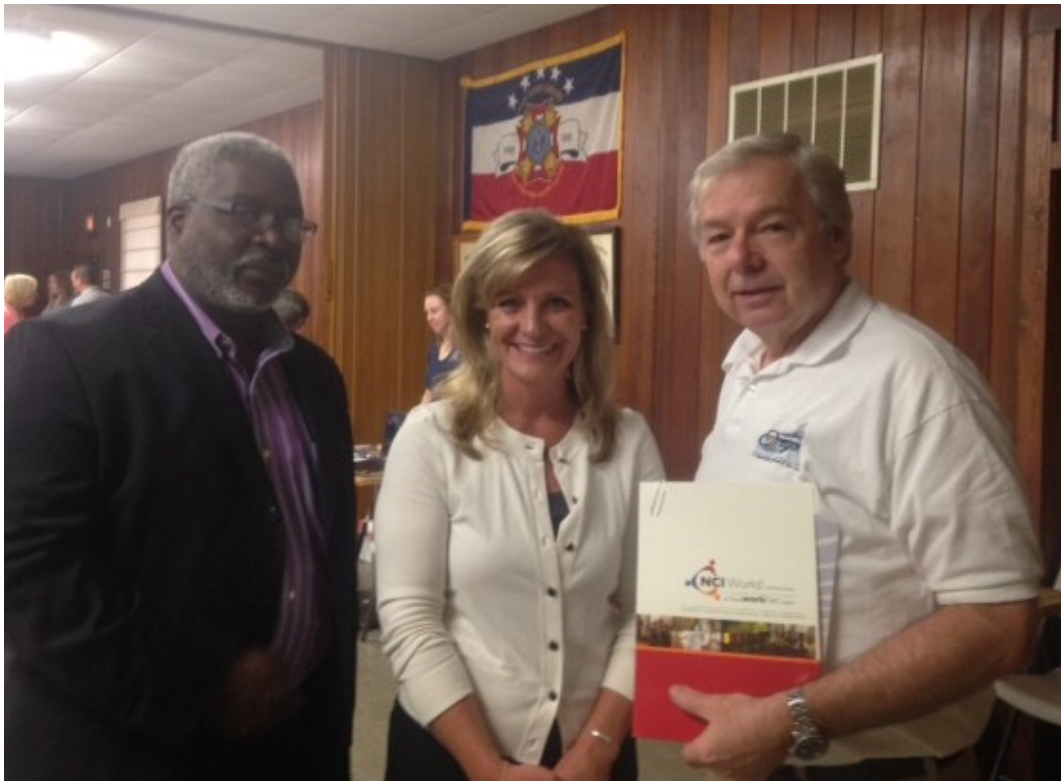


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2015 Just Hire One a Success in Ogle County

October 9th the partners of NCI Works (Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. (BEST, Inc.), Experience Works, and Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) along with the Byron, Oregon, and Dixon Chambers, Oregon VFW and the Byron American Legion co-sponsored a hiring event at the Oregon VFW. Fourteen employers and 104 job seekers were given the morning to meet and exchange employment information, with 2 job seekers hired on the spot. The event, which ran from 9am to 1pm, is the fourth such event initiated by the partners of NCI Works. Other events have been hosted in LaSalle County, Putnam/Bureau Counties, and Lee/Whiteside Counties.

The organizing committee was comprised of Dianna Schuler (BEST, Inc.), Joel Torbeck (BEST, Inc.), Beth Heaton (BEST, Inc.), Ted Duckett (IDES), Scott Haugh (IDES), Colleen Neary (IDES), Flo Cunningham (Experience Works), Deanna Mershon (Byron Chamber), Debbie Dickson (Oregon Chamber), and Vicki Carlson (Dixon Chamber). The committee wishes to extend its sincerest thanks to the Oregon VFW for the donation of the facilities for the event and to the Oregon American Legion for providing refreshments. It is our intention to continue to provide such opportunities for the businesses and residents of our eight county area.



2015 Just Hire One Hiring Event. Pictured left to right: Ted Duckett (IDES), Theresia Charley (BEST, Inc.), Mayor Ken Williams, City of Oregon

BEST, Inc. Welcomes Mary Katos and Theresia Charley As The New Business Relations Reps for Carroll/Jo Daviess and Ogle Counties

Please join us in welcoming the newest members of the BEST team, Mary Katos, serving Carrol and Jo Daviess Counties, and Theresia Charley serving Ogle County. Mary and Theresia both come to us with HR backgrounds. We are all very happy that Mary and Theresia have joined our staff and invited you to sit down with them to learn what BEST, Inc. can do for your company.



Mary Katos

Mary can be contacted at mary_katos@best-inc.org, or by calling 815-244-2522 (Mt. Carroll) and 815-777-6177 (Galena). Mary's hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Theresia can be reached at theresia_charley@best-inc.org or by calling 815-732-0148. Theresia's hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Theresia Charley

Core Partners OF NCI Works!

- ◆ Business Employment Skills, Inc.
- ◆ Illinois Department of Employment Security
- ◆ IDHS-Office of Rehabilitation Services
- ◆ Adult Education

Access to the services provided by each of these agencies is available at:

Southtowne Mall	2323 E Lincolnway
1550 First Avenue	Sterling, IL 61081
Ottawa, IL 61356	815-625-9648
815-434-3111	TTY: 800-526-0844

August 2015 Unemployment Rate Most Recent Available:

- National 5.2%**
- State of IL 5.6 %**
- LWIA 4 5.6%**
- Bureau County 5.6%**
- Carroll County 4.9%**
- Jo Daviess County 4.4 %**
- LaSalle County 6.2%**
- Lee County 4.8%**
- Ogle County 5.6%**
- Putnam County 5.3%**
- Whiteside County 4.7%**

News In Brief!!!!

- > LWIA 4 Economic Update is available on the NCI Works website at www.nciworks.org.
- > Annual Youth Work in the Real World Event will be November 13th at Sauk Valley Community College.
- > The third annual Manufacturing Expo at Illinois Valley Community College October 22nd.
- > The Sauk Valley area will be celebrating manufacturing throughout the month of October with speakers going into the schools and various tours being offered.
- > Sector Strategy Forums: Be On The Lookout For A SAVE THE DATE for these very informative and helpful forums.
- > National Manufacturing Day in Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties provided 229 area students the opportunity to tour 1 or 2 of 6 manufacturers. This event gave them the opportunity to see first hand the various occupations present in their communities.

NCI Works meets electronically on the 4th Tuesday of the following months at Illinois Valley Community College, Sauk Valley Community College, Highland Community College and Kishwaukee College at 5:30pm:

January	July
March	September
May	November

***Meeting information is available on the NCI Works website
(www.nciworks.org)***

Meetings are open to the public