



*Geared Toward The Future*

NORTHWEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

**WORKS**

Fall 2017

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

### **Ken Williams, Mayor City of Oregon Received Community Leadership Award**



Linda Burt and Mayor Williams

October 27, 2017 NCI Works hosted its annual employer conference and awards at the Mendota Civic Center. Mayor Ken Williams of Oregon received the NCI Works Community Leadership Award for his continued leadership and support for workforce development. Mayor Williams has been a valued partner in the NCI Works Annual Just Hire One hiring event at the Oregon Coliseum; providing the venue and labor to set up and take down the event while also promoting participation to area businesses in the Oregon and Ogle County area.

In addition to the Community Leadership Award, NCI Works Members were recognized for their years of service to the workforce Board: Teresa Strum—5 years, Jim Knauf—10 Years, Tom Pigati—15 years, and Vicki Carlson—15 years. BEST, Inc. customers receiving Individual Achievement Awards included: Aaron Vos, Jolien Eikleberry, and Magdalene Rice.

Those attending the conference presented with an update on employment law from representatives from the Chicago law firm of Jackson Lewis. Laurie Guest presented an interactive session on Customer Services. From Laurie, attendees learned the three different categories of encounters and how each impacts the bottom line, a creative way to tackle process improvement, and ideas for improving the service level of every team member.

This was the fourteenth year that NCI Works has sponsored the employer conference portion of this event. Attendees completing event evaluations were once again pleased with the content of the day. Next year's conference and awards have yet to be schedule. Therefore, look for a save the date in the Summer 2018 newsletter.

#### **Also in This Issue:**

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- Fall Youth Leadership Conference
- Work in the Real World Carroll and Jo Davies Counties
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- November LMI



@NCIWorks

## NCAT To Conduct Business Survey

North Central Area Transit (NCAT) would like to help La Salle County businesses increase employee attendance by providing dependable transportation to those in need.

On December 18, 2015 President Obama signed into law Consolidated Appropriations Act (H.R. 2019) which established a transit fringe benefit. Employers can allow employees to use pretax dollars to purchase transit passes or pay for fares that provide transportation between their homes and the workplace.

Employers may currently allow employees up to \$255 per month in pre-tax income to pay for transit passes or fares. This provides a reduced payroll tax contribution for employers and an increase in after-tax spendable income for employees. In addition, employers experience an increase in employee attendance due to more dependable transportation.

NCAT feels this would be a valuable service to both employers and employees. If you feel your business would benefit from this type of program NCAT will need your input. In the following months, NCAT will be sending out surveys to La Salle County businesses looking for information such as: employee interest/needs, projected number of employees utilizing the service and times of day the demand would be highest. Please take the time to answer the survey so that NCAT can evaluate needs to develop a successful program.

Thank you in advance for helping North Central Area Transit develop a transportation program that best serves the County's needs.

### **Core Partners OF NCI WORKS**

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

## BEST, Inc. Fall Youth Leadership Conference

October 25, 2017 was the annual BEST, Inc. Fall Youth Leadership Conference at Illinois Valley Community College. Nineteen youth participated in this day-long event. The event included an interactive ice breaker to promote teambuilding, a budgeting presentation from Tri-County Opportunities Council, a financial literacy presentation by Nicki Butterfield, and an employer panel that included Pioneer and St. Margaret's Health. The focus of the employer panel was to instruct participants on the opportunities available and the type of education needed to be considered for entry level positions within the healthcare and agri-business industries. Keynote speaker, Tabitha Smiley from CanAm (also a previous BEST, Inc. customer) spoke about her personal experiences reaching her career goals and challenges she had to overcome to get there. Wal-Mart Distribution Center (Spring Valley) donated a 55 inch TV that was given away to one lucky participant. This event is done twice a year (spring and fall) with youth from Bureau, Putnam, and LaSalle counties. The event was organized by Kerri Hicks and Laura Olson, BEST, Inc. Career Advisors, with the assistance of Joel Torbeck, Business Relations Representative.



Nicki Butterfield, Financial Literacy



Nicki Butterfield, Financial Literacy



815 N Orland Smith Ave  
Room C328  
Oglesby, IL 61348  
815-224-0375 (Phone)  
815-223-1385 (Fax)

## Work in the Real World Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties Oct. 19, 2017

On October 19, 2017, BEST partnered with Tri-County Economic Development Alliance (TCEDA) and the Jo Daviess/Carroll CTE Academy to host Work in the Real World for high school sophomores in Jo Daviess and Carroll Counties in conjunction with TCEDA's annual Manufacturing Day tours.

Area schools sent 200 students and their Guidance Counselors to the CTE academy where they learned about veterinary medicine, medical reers, construction, running a flower farm, raising goats as a business, culinary arts, golf management, facilities maintenance, retail, broadband installation, careers as an electrical lineman, natural gas technicians, water treatment and public works, careers in law enforcement, and apprenticeships in the skilled trades.



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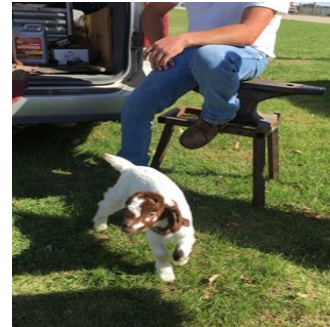
Culinary Arts, Small Town Saloon

The businesses whose 22 speakers gave so freely of their time and expertise were:

JoCarroll Energy, Elizabeth  
Territory Veterinary Service, Galena  
Robbe Farrier Service, Elizabeth  
Midwest Medical Center, Galena  
Project First Rate, Rockford  
United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters, Local Union 23, Rockford  
Jeff Finn Construction, Elizabeth  
Thomson AUSD, Thomson  
Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa, Galena  
Brightflower Farm, Stockton  
Small Town Saloon, Elizabeth



JoCarroll Energy



Brightflower Farm

NCI Works meets the 4th Tuesday of the following months at Illinois Valley Community College, Sauk Valley Community College, and Carroll County Housing Authority via Electronic Meeting Capability  
at 5:30pm:

January	July
March	September
May	November

***Meetings are open to the public.***

(Location are subject to change. Please consult the NCI Works website, [www.nciworks.org](http://www.nciworks.org), for updated meeting locations.)

## Work in the Real World Sauk Valley Nov. 17, 2017

Work in the Real World took place on November 17th. Approximately 250 students from schools in Lee, Ogle, Whiteside, Carroll, and Bureau counties attended the event at Sauk Valley Community College to learn more about jobs from the people who do them. Representatives from Ag., Arts, Building Trades, Business, Cosmetology, Criminal Justice, Culinary Arts, Digital Media, Education, IT, Nursing, Manufacturing, Military, Music, Social Work, and Unmanned Air Systems all shared information about jobs, skills/education needed, and other related topics which included professionalism, how they chose their careers, stories about mistakes that were made, trends for the future, and the increased use of technology. New this year was the Unmanned Air Systems (UAS) section where students learned how drones are being used in a variety



of different kinds of businesses such as business, real estate, and agriculture.

The annual event is organized by BEST, Inc., Sauk Valley Community College, Whiteside Area Career Center and Area Health Education Center.

Lynn Rynkewicz, Medical Lab Technician:  
KSB Hospital

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

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

*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).*

**October 2017 Unemployment Rate Most Recent Available:**

**National 4.1%**  
**State of IL 4.9%**  
**LWIA 4 4.3%**  
**Bureau Co 4.2%**  
**Carroll Co. 4.0%**  
**Jo Daviess Co. 4.0%**  
**LaSalle Co 4.7%**  
**Lee Co 3.7%**  
**Ogle Co 4.3%**  
**Putnam Co 4.0%**  
**Whiteside Co. 4.3%**

***Wondering what the NCI Works partners can do for your business? Our matrix of business services is available online at [www.nciworks.org](http://www.nciworks.org).***



*“The Labor Market Demographic is an invaluable resource for those of us involved in Economic Development. We use this information when responding to a number of “request for information” such as: Grants, State Site Searches, Realtors, Retail , Disaster etc. Though you would think all would seek the same information, this is not the case. Having the very detailed breakdown in the Labor Market Demographic allows us to respond to specific Labor Market Demographic questions quickly and accurately.”*

*Boyd Palmer  
Executive Director*

<b>Labor Force Data</b>	<b>Current Month (Dec. 2016)</b>
Employment	129,757
Average Annual Wage	\$40,977
Percentage Change Over 2016	-1.2%
Unemployment Rate: September 2017	4.3%
<b>Industry</b>	
Ag, Fishing, Forestry/Hunting	5,201
Mining/Quarrying/Oil/Gas	1,008
Utilities	1,756
Construction	6,160
Manufacturing	20,079
Wholesale Trade	5,099
Retail Trade	14,888
Transportation/Warehousing	8,811
Information	1,245
Finance/Insurance	3,723
Real Estate/Rental and Leasing	1,603
Professional Science/Technical	3,146
Management	370
Administrative Support	4,659
Educational	10,530
Health Care/Social Assistance	15,372
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	1,623
Accommodation/Food Service	10,410
Other Services	5,478
Public Administration	7,466
Unclassified	128
<b>Total All Industries</b>	<b>129,757</b>
LWIA 4 Industry Employment Data/Source: Jobseq (2017Q2)	