



Geared Toward The Future

NORTHWEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

WORKS

Spring 2017

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

Community Audit and Underemployed Study Planned for Spring 2017

Over the next couple of months, Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. (BEST, Inc.) an affiliate of Northwest Illinois Central Works (NCI Works), and a partner of the American Jobs Center, in conjunction with Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA), a workforce consulting firm, will be conducting a community audit and underemployed survey of the eight-county area that comprises BEST, Inc. (Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Putnam, and Whiteside). This study will outline the current economic and workforce landscape of our region, a comprehensive assessment of educational opportunities, quality of life, commuting patterns, and other demographics. As part of this study, labor market information will be collected, analyzed, and summarized by Individual County and collectively as a region. Surveys will be distributed to local employers to gauge their input of their business' talent needs. Items that will be addressed in the survey include employment numbers and projections, skills needs and gaps, education and training needs, training challenges, and desired industry recognized credentials. The findings will tie together the three pillars that make up a strong and sustainable Talent Development System, Education, Workforce Development, and Economic Development.

Once completed, the findings of this study will be presented to the community in a State of the Workforce Event that will be scheduled for some time in late May. The public rollout event will provide community stakeholders the opportunity to review the data collected and engage in a dialog with businesses, economic development, education, and workforce development in an effort to identify challenges and strategize solutions to address those challenges.



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- Summary of Workforce Area 4's Industry Employment

UPDATES FROM THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

Hiring Event

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) hosted the February Multiple Employer Hiring Event in the Ottawa, Illinois office. The event included 5 employers; Hearthside Food Solutions, Independence Tube Corporation, Mediacom Communications, RGIS and US Foods. The event was attended by 46 job seekers and from those in attendance the employers estimate hiring 14 over the next year.

MyTax Illinois

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) is working with the Illinois Department of Revenue to integrate the monthly wage reporting, the quarterly unemployment insurance report filing and the contribution payment process into the MyTax Illinois portal.

MyTax Illinois is the secure website used by Illinois employers and individual taxpayers to electronically file and pay more than 200 taxes and fees. Bringing the unemployment insurance process into MyTax Illinois makes great business sense and simplifies the tax experience for both new and existing Illinois employers.

Some of the benefits that you can expect to see will include the ability to:

- *Register your new business with IDES and IDOR in one secure location*
- *Eliminate the time you now spend completing and mailing paper reports by filing your wage reports and paying your unemployment contributions electronically*
- *Make changes to your account information quickly and easily*
- *Get immediate online confirmation that reports and payments have been received and processed timely*
- *View IDES correspondence, account balances and other documents through a secure message center*

The scheduled roll out date is September 2017. Keep watching the IDES website www.ides.illinois.gov for additional information. If you have any questions, please contact the IDES Employer Hotline at 1-800-247-4984. Thank you!

Core Partners OF NCI WORKS

◆ Adult Education

◆ Business Employment Skills, Inc.

◆ Illinois Department of Employment Security

◆ Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services



Member Spotlight

Rhonda Krueger

Illinois Department of Employment Security

What is your professional background?

My name is Rhonda (Owens) Krueger. I moved to the Illinois Valley area in 1990 from Springfield (my hometown). I obtained my B.A. from Illinois State University with a major in Spanish and a minor in Criminal Justice. I worked for LaSalle County 13th Judicial Circuit in Juvenile Detention and Probation for over a decade. I also worked as a Foster Care Case Worker at Youth Service Bureau. I started in workforce development in 2002 when I worked for Business Employment Skills Team. I continued my experience in workforce development in 2004 when I was hired by the Illinois Dept. of Employment Security (IDES) as an Intermittent Program Rep. In 2007, I was promoted to Employment Security Service Rep. My main duty as a Service Rep was investigating unemployment adjudication issues and issuing determinations to the claimants and employers. I also assisted local employers with placing job orders in the system to help find qualified candidates. In August 2015, I became the Local Office Manager at the IL Dept. of Employment Security Ottawa office. I believe that the experience I have gained in workforce development, Unemployment Insurance claims and my knowledge of the Unemployment law as an adjudicator have really helped me in my current position as Local Office Manager at IDES.

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

I was asked to become a member of the NCI Workforce Board when I became the Local Office Manager/Public Service Administrator at IDES Ottawa office in August 2015. I have been a member since that time.

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?

I believe WIOA is valuable as it integrates the workforce service programs and helps maximize the value and benefits to customers that are served in the One Stop Centers. By partners working together to plan and coordinate services, we are able to use our joint resources to help better serve the customers and business



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BEST, Inc. and Jo-Carroll Career and Technical Education Academy Host Youth Summer Job Fair

One hundred youth from Jo Daviess County and Carroll County area high schools attended the first ever youth summer job fair hosted by BEST, Inc. and Jo-Carroll Career and Technical Education. The event was held Thursday, March 16th, from 1pm to 4:30pm at the Jo-Carroll Career and Technical Education Academy in Elizabeth. Participating businesses were recruited based on their ability to offer age appropriate employment opportunities for the upcoming summer.

With many of the area businesses offering summer seasonal opportunities, organizers believed that by hosting a hiring event, they could connect youth 16 and older with businesses that cater to summer tourism. By making that initial connection between the youth and businesses, even though many of the jobs are seasonal, if the employer/employee relationship works well the first summer, the businesses will often re-hire the same youth during subsequent seasons.

We would like to thank the following businesses for supporting our effort to connect area youth with summer employment opportunities:

Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa, Galena
 Chestnut Mountain Resort, Galena
 Galena Territory Owners Association, Galena
 Timberlake Playhouse, Mt. Carroll
 Country Inn & Suites, Galena
 Furst Staffing, Stockton
 Apple Canyon Lake Association, Apple Canyon Lake
 Midwest Medical Center, Galena
 Happy Joe's, Galena
 111 N Main, Galena

Plans are under way for next year!

NCI Works! meets the 4th Tuesday of the following months at Illinois Valley Community College, Highland 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, for updated meeting locations.)

Illinois Department of Employment Security, BEST, Inc , and Illinois workNet Partner to Provide Employer Webinar

On February 23, 2107, Don Ryan from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) presented a webinar, [Finding Qualified Candidates Through Illinoisjoblink.com](#) , in partnership with BEST, Inc. and Illinois workNet. During the webinar, businesses were informed on how to navigate the state's labor exchange website, Illinoisjoblink.com, to create a company registration, how to search and save resumes of job seekers, and how to refine search criteria. Don also covered a list of employer resources available through the Illinois Department of Employment Security including: recruiting and hiring veterans, the department's fidelity bonding program, tax credit programs, labor market information and federal contractor compliance resources. In addition to the services offered through IDES, a brief overview of partner services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as provided by BEST, Inc. was also given. Those services include reimbursement for cost of training new hires through BEST's On-the-Job Training program and grant funding for training one's current workforce through their Incumbent Worker Training Program.

Additional information on resources provided by the Illinois Department of Employment can be obtained by calling Tory Davis (309) 671-4976, Tory.Davis@illinois.gov or Ted Duckett (815) 395-6645, Theodore.Duckett@illinois.gov. Information about BEST's On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training Programs can be obtained by calling Dianna Schuler at (815) 433-4550, diana_schuler@best-inc.org.

Additional webinars are in the planning so be certain to keep an eye out for an invitation from IDES, BEST, Inc., and Illinois workNet.

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	

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).

January 2017 Unemployment Rate Most Recent Available:

National	5.1%
State of IL	6.5%
LWIA 4	8.0%
Bureau Co	8.1%
Carroll Co.	7.8%
Jo Daviess Co.	7.5%
LaSalle Co	8.9%
Lee Co	6.5%
Ogle Co	8.4%
Putnam Co	7.5%
Whiteside Co.	7.2%

Wondering what the NCI Works partners can do for your business? Our matrix of business services is available online at 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
Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry*

Additional Labor Market Information is available at the NCI Works website at www.nciwork.org

Labor Force Data	Current Month (Dec. 2016)
Employment	129,987
Average Annual Wage	\$40,650
Percentage Change Over 2015	0.0%
Unemployment Rate	6.1%
Industry	
Ag, Fishing, Forestry/Hunting	5,063
Mining/Quarrying/Oil/Gas	881
Utilities	1,733
Construction	6,392
Manufacturing	19,810
Wholesale Trade	5,292
Retail Trade	15,298
Transportation/Warehousing	9,006
Information	1,252
Finance/Insurance	3,872
Real Estate/Rental and Leasing	1,405
Professional Science/Technical	3,162
Management	441
Administrative Support	5,100
Educational	10,545
Health Care/Social Assistance	15,515
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	1,704
Accommodation/Food Service	10,523
Other Services	5,576
Public Administration	7,253
Unclassified	162
Total All Industries	129,987
LWIA 4 Industry Employment Data/Source: Jobseq (2016Q4)	