

Focus Macomb: A Partnership for Economic Development
Education and Workforce Development Committee Meeting
September 6, 2007 – Henry Ford Macomb Hospitals' Board Room
Meeting Summary

Members Present:

Dominic Abbate (Wakely Associates)
Frank Blowers (Lakeside Community Bank)
Michael Devault (MISD)
Judy Hartwell (Congressman Sander Levin)
Ursel Mayo (Mayo Real Estate Group)
John Nitz (O'Reilly & Rancilo)
Daniel Nowicki (Anderson Cook, Inc.)
DiAnne Pellerin (L'Anse Creuse Public Schools)
Donald Torline (Baker College)
Shirley West-Meeks (Nu-Legacy J.E.T.S., Inc.)

Members Missed:

Misty Delegato (Relevar Home Care)
Scott Goemmel (PMV Technologies)
Jim Jacobs (Macomb Community College)
Al Lorenzo (Macomb Community College)
Lou Moss (Unlimited Enterprises)
Barbara Rossmann (Henry Ford Macomb Hospitals)
Paul Saad (Signature Associates)
Scott Smith (Comcast)
Jon Switalski (Macomb County Board Commissioner)
Joe Wentrack (Plante & Moran, P.C.)
John White (TechWrite, Inc.)

Guests:

Victoria Corriveau, Associate Director, Workforce Development Institute (M-TEC)

Staff: Jeff Schroeder, Maria Zardis, Cheryl Bushbaker

Opening: Co-Chair Frank Blowers opened the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Mr. Don Torline, Co-Chair of Focus Macomb spoke to the members and noted that the Education Committee is moving forward as expected with their recommendations. The Executive Committee will have a meeting in a few weeks and will be formulating processes and thoughts as to the future of Focus Macomb.

Mr. Blowers introduced Victoria Corriveau, Workforce Development (M-TEC) how companies are identifying or determining what a market ready work-force is. All of the information gathered will assist this committee in making further recommendations to the County Commissioners and then the actual process of utilizing this data.

Recommendations 1, 3 and 6 were chosen by committee members to prioritize and focus on more in-depth, with #3 being the first. In doing so, we came up with the question, "What is a market-ready workforce? How do we define it?"

Review of Recommendation: Frank Blowers stated the committee members will be working on recommendation #3, which is *Dedicate Resources for Research and Forecasting to Project Future Workforce, Education and Retraining Needs for Both Existing and Emerging Businesses*. We will discuss the pyramid style of identifying some of the things we need to do. The rationale behind this was the result of the Intellitrends Study which reinforced the continuing need for vigilant forecasting, assessing and reassessing the economic climate of the county and the region to ensure we are proactive in developing and maintaining a "market ready" workforce. Our goal is finding a way to employ people and recognize that this will take attracting new businesses. We need to make sure our population is ready to work for new employers. The County role is to provide additional staff and funding so forecasts will align with the recommendations. We need to develop a survey of existing county businesses to leverage what labor market forecasting data may be available and provide an annual forecast to monitor the labor market needs identified in the emerging sectors sections of the Intellitrends Study. We also need to establish a virtual library of data resources and information that can be accessed as a collaborative planning tool by the business and education communities.

Pyramid Model approach to defining "Market Ready Workforce" Jeff Schroeder capsulated for Scott Smith (Comcast) who could not attend this meeting. Mr. Scott initially proposed a series of pyramids, or as a graphical representation, something that would show us the increasing need as an employee advances from the basic level skills to the highest skills needed for any type of job. We envisioned three different pyramids to observe:

- defining market ready workforce.**
- skills available in existing workforce**
- skills needed by business community.**

We were looking to frame these pyramids in four different areas, which would be defined in the Intellitrends Study (Advanced Manufacturing Sector, Defense and Homeland Security Sector, Health Care Sector and Technology and Advanced Automotive Manufacturing Sector). We realize there will be an overlap in some of these areas. Mr. Scott suggests looking at all four areas, but having one general pyramid that would allow us to be successful in marketing or having a workable market force for companies who are coming into Macomb County.

This meeting will discuss establishing what the basic needs/skills are, working toward advanced skills and then the highest skills needed in order to have people employable in these emerging businesses.

Pyramid is a good stepping stone, but not the final solution. The final solution is identifying a company coming into Macomb County and then identifying/creating the program to provide the skills necessary for that particular company.

Data has shown that Macomb County's youth are very understanding for the need of advanced education – 90% of high school seniors go on to some sort of higher training. 45-49% finish through the Bachelor's level (data from the past three years). Workers between the ages of 25-50 have a different outlook. These individuals need to be in the workforce for a significant amount of time, but their strategies are not as clear. The tendency for dislocated workers (post 50) is to have no retraining.

Mr. Lorenzo (Macomb Community College) stated the Governor announced two weeks ago "No Worker Left Behind Program" in which the State will pay up to \$10,000 for retraining. In the first week following the announcement, there were only three inquiries (this did not include data from Michigan Works).

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Mr. Lorenzo stated attempts have been made nationally within manufacturing for obtaining national skill standards. There has been a great deal of labor put into this by working with employers identifying skill sets. One of the educational units (ACT) has put an enormous amount of money in developing a product called "Work Keys". This product has the ability to cross seven different knowledge areas to access precisely where a person is relative to those skill sets needed (levels 1-5). The National Manufacturers Association has embraced this same concept.

Highlight:

The real issue on hand is the task of getting schools (both secondary and post-secondary) to have the necessary abilities in providing the learning. Unfortunately, one of the impediments in a larger area is the agreement on what needs to be learned and how to get employers to agree on this skill set.

Framework of Competencies by the Advanced Manufacturing Industry (Example): Mr. Ekanger, Associate Director, Workforce Development Institute (M-TEC) discussed an example of base skills for this industry which were developed by the Advanced Manufacturing Industry along with the U.S. Department of Labor, corporations and associations who have come up with what are common competency skills to use in attracting and training workers for careers across the industry. From any employer's perspective, they expect anyone entering the workforce to have work-ready skills (integrity, motivation, dependability & reliability and willingness to learn), academic competencies (math, logic/reasoning, business writing, basic computer skills), and a two-year Associate Degree. Top of range skills would include management competencies.

The Department of Labor will shortly announce a competition for funding under the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative for the advanced manufacturing industry. The initiative targets education and skills development resources toward helping workers gain the skills they need to build successful careers in growing industries.

Highlight:

Working for a healthy community with ethical, technical and personal skills for a ready-market workforce. This is the goal to convey to the Macomb County Board of Commissioners.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for September 6, 2007 from 2-4 p.m. – same location.