

BRADLEY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Growing a Local Workforce

At the combined BCEDC Board of Directors Meeting and Existing Business & Industry Meeting Jonalyn Reep and Coleman Dowda presented SEACBEC's findings from their November 2014 visit to local businesses and industries. Ms. Reep explained that their presentation would identify some of the expressed concerns of the businesses and industries and offer SEACBEC's strategies to address the concerns.

Ms. Reep stated that SEACBEC's staff asked the same three questions at all visited businesses; 1.) What are your concerns? 2.) What Skills are necessary to preform job tasks in your industry? 3.) What skills are your employees lacking?

Ms. Reep explained that the four main issues employers identified were; punctuality, poor math and literacy skills, lack of professionalism and cell phone usage. She noted that all of these issues are taught at SEACBEC. Every class is required to incorporate math and literacy in their curriculum. .

Ms. Reep stated that SEACBEC looks at this as having 2 goals. One is a Secondary Educational goal, which is to prepare the students to be college and career ready. The other goal is for Adult Ed students, which is to prepare a skilled workforce for industry.

SEACBEC's programs of studies include the Career Readiness Certificate program and Internship program. Ms. Reep also explained that SEACBEC offers the Mentoring & More program, which teaches students what industry requires of their employees. She advised that SEACBEC is considering installing and requiring students to use time clocks in classrooms. This would familiarize students with time clocks before entering the workforce. Marty Reep, from Armstrong, stated that requiring the use of time clocks would be a good idea. Ms. Reep explained other ways SEACBEC prepares students for employment, such as, money counting activities within some classes. SEACBEC teaches SCAN Skills, which includes things like phone etiquette, professional dress, problem solving, creative thinking and time management.

Steve Ellis, from Armstrong, asked if students are assessed on their strength and weaknesses. Ms. Reep explained that students are assessed from the 8th grade. Begin-

ning in the 8th grade students begin a career action plan that carries through the 12th grade. The students also develop a digital portfolio through the 12th grade. Both are given to the students upon graduation. Ms. Reep advised that SEACBEC also, has assessments that can be done at the workplace to assess current employees.

Coleman Dowda discussed the information he gathered from reading and reviewing minutes and documentation from all of the previous Existing Business and Industry Meetings. Mr. Dowda advised that he has felt frustration upon leaving the meetings because things are discussed but no action taken to address the issues. Mr. Dowda discussed a possible solution to the disconnect and inaction. After reading all of the previous minutes he found reoccurring problems being discussed by the industries. The industries expressed a need to promote and improve the image of Warren and manufacturing as a career, a need for leadership training, and how to attract talent and build a workforce. The industries also discussed the need for a public relations campaign, a need to inform students and parents of high tech opportunities and good salaries within manufacturing, and the need to start changing these attitudes' as early as middle school. Mr. Dowda advised that all of these things go toward 3 things; image, perception and attitude.

SEACBEC has come up with a long term solution. The first thing to do is to initiate change. Mr. Dowda suggested developing a mediator or consultant to bring together industry and SEACBEC. He explained that the consultant would need to become familiar with all activities within the different businesses and industries. He or she would need to understand the current and future activities of the businesses, so it can be related to the students. The consultant would be able to explain to students the future benefits of preparing for a career in the different industries.

Mr. Dowda stated that the second part of the solution is to cast a vision. The primary function of the consultant is communication. Mr. Dowda expressed the need for the consultant to communicate with the leaders of business and industry so that SEACBEC will be able to initiate change, which will accommodate the companies' needs. **Continued**

HOW CAN BCEDC HELP LOCAL BUSINESSES?

BCEDC can help your business in such areas as:

- Land and building acquisitions
- Financial packaging
- Demographic and economic data
- Incentive packaging
- Workforce training
- Plant expansions
- Entrepreneurial and small business development

BCEDC Is Affiliated With:

- Southeast Arkansas Cornerstone Coalition
- Southeast Arkansas Regional Intermodal Authority
- Arkansas Heavy Equipment Training Program
- Southeast Arkansas Community Based Education Center
- Arkansas Small Business and Technology Dev. Ctr. @UAM
- Bradley County Chamber of Commerce

March 2015— Jobs Update		
Bradley Co. Employers	# Emp.	Openings
AR Superior Federal CU	13	0
Armstrong Flooring	248	1+
Ashcraft Wood Products	20	0
Bradley Brand Furniture	5	3
Bradley County	68	0
Bradley Co. Medical Ctr.	259	6
Chapel Woods Health & Rehab	unavailable	unavailable
City of Hermitage	6	0
City of Warren	42	2
First Presbyterian Childcare Ctr	20	0*
First State Bank of Warren	31	0
Fulghum Fibers	10	0
Hermitage Schools	82	1
New Beginnings, CASA	16	0
Oasis Trading	44	0
OK Foods	15	2
Ouachita Hardwood	41	0*
Ozark Mountain Poultry	269	1
Potlatch	161	1
SE AR Community Action Corp.	82	3
SE AR Human Dev. Ctr.	280	18
Super Valu Foods	58	1**
The Mad Butcher	63	4***
Townsend Flooring	31	0*
UAMS/KIDS FIRST—Warren	19	0
Union Bank	8	0
Warren Bank & Trust	37	0
Warren School Dist.	286	8
TOTAL	2214	51

*Taking Applications **Applications on Thur. ***Applications on Mon., 1-4 pm

Continued—Workforce

The last step of the solution is organizing a team, which is recruitment. Mr. Dowda advised that SEACBEC has three resources for recruitment. These resources are; Adult Ed students, individuals that have moved out of Warren and have a desire to return and finally to identify students as candidates for industry. He suggested placing the identified students in the workplace to gain firsthand knowledge about what employees are saying about your company and what opportunities are available. Mr. Dowda stated that the students could provide feedback to SEACBEC on what they have heard, seen and learned. SEACBEC could then relay the information back to the companies, which could begin to change the perception of industry from the inside-out.

Mr. Dowda discussed the need to develop leaders. Once you identify what a person's skills, gifts and talents are, it is easy to place them in the correct position where they can excel.

JOB OPENINGS AT:

Armstrong Flooring: Has Ongoing True Temp production worker positions. The positions are typically long term with the possibility of becoming perm. Interested candidates apply at ESA in Monticello. Permanent positions may be found at www.armstrong.com as they become available.

Bradley Co. Medical Center: Has openings for a Business Office Supervisor, RN Float Nurse for Labor & Delivery—Med Surg—SCU, a RN or LPN for ER, a RN for Labor & Delivery, a RN for SCU and a P/T RN for Labor & Delivery (7a-7p) and PRN positions in all departments.

For information on job openings and to apply go to —

www.bradleycountymedicalcenter.com/jobs

City of Warren: Has job openings for 2 Police Officers. Contact the Warren Police Dept. for additional information. 870-226-3701

Hermitage Schools: Has an opening for a Child Nutritionist Director. For information call 870-463-2246

OK Foods: Has job openings for Warehouse Laborers. For details and to apply visit <https://career8.successfactors.com/sfcareer/jobreqcareer?jobId=302&company=C0001099501p&username>

Ozark Mountain Poultry: Contact the Arkansas Workforce Center in Monticello, AR at 870-367-7105 for employment information.

Potlatch Corporation: Has openings for a fully qualified electrician. Apply at www.potlatchcorp.com. Potlatch is an EEO/AA /Veteran employer with competitive wages and benefits.

Steve Ellis and Marty Reep discussed the lack of future leaders. Mr. Ellis stated that industry needs to look long range, about 5 years out and develop leaders to fill long-range vacancies. Marty Reep advised that not enough people have the desire to step-up and lead. It was discussed how to develop and encourage leadership qualities.

The group discussed the necessity to communicate to students the opportunities within manufacturing. Mr. Ellis stated that industries need to look within themselves to find ways to entice and retain workers. The possibility of developing an industrial internship program for high school students was discussed.

HOW CAN BCEDC HELP

BCEDC

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Warren, AR 71671

Phone: 870-226-3760

Fax: 870-226-3770

websites:

www.bcedc.com

arkansassitesselection.com

E-mail:

bradleycountyidc@sbcglobal.net

SE AR Community Action

Corp.: Has openings for a Warehouse/Utilities Worker, a Mitchellville Head Start Teacher, and a Mitchellville Head Start Teacher Assistant. Qualifications and applications can be obtained by contacting Personnel at 870-226-2668 ext. 320. Deadline for Warehouse position will be March 11, 2015. Deadline for teacher and TA position will be available until the position is filled.

SE AR Human Development

Ctr.: Has job openings for 18 Residential Care Assistants. For job openings information go to www.ark.org/arstatejobs/index.php

The Mad Butcher: Has openings for a Cake Decorator, a part-time produce person and 2 additional part-time employees. Applications taken at The Mad Butcher on Mon. from 1-4 pm.

Warren School Dist.: For details on job openings and to apply contact the Warren School Dist at 870-226-6738 or online at www.edline.net/pages/warren_sd

These issues will be further discussed at the next Existing Business and Industry Meeting.

If your business or industry would like to attend the Existing Business and Industry Meetings, please call BCEDC at 870-226-3760.

Potlatch Corporation currently has a great opportunity for local students who are currently attending forestry school. Potlatch will have two forestry internship openings this summer for college students who would like hands-on experience in the field over the summer. Interested, college students should refer to www.potlatchcorp.com for details.