

**New FairPay Overtime Rules**

Under the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) new **FairPay Overtime Rules**, workers earning less than \$23,660 per year - or \$455 per week - are guaranteed overtime protection. Approximately 1.3 million low-wage workers denied overtime under the old rules will have strengthened overtime rights. The effective date of the regulations is August 23, 2004.

The U.S. DOL Employment Standards Administration Wage and Hour Division (WHD) web site has detailed information to assist employers and workers in understanding and interpreting the new regulations. The fact sheets on the web site include:

**By Exemption:**

- ▶ Overtime for Executives, Administrative, Professional Outside Sales Employees
- ▶ Executive Employees
- ▶ Administrative Employees
- ▶ Professional Employees
- ▶ Employees in Computer-Related Occupations
- ▶ Outside Sales Employees
- ▶ Salary Basis Requirement and the Part-541 Exemption
- ▶ Highly-Compensated Workers and the Part-541 Exemption

**By Occupation:**

- ▶ Blue-Collar Workers
- ▶ First Responders
- ▶ Veterans
- ▶ Insurance Claims Adjusters
- ▶ Financial Services Industry Employees
- ▶ Nurses
- ▶ Technologists and Technicians

An online video is also available on the web site. DOL experts describe the new FairPay overtime rules, and the video is enhanced with a synchronized transcript and a slide presentation. In addition, it is searchable by topic. The U.S. Department of Labor Employment Standards Administration Wage & Hour Division web site is located at <http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/whd/fairpay/main.htm>.

Employers and employees wanting more information, may also call the toll-free help line Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1.866-487.9243 or TTY 1.877.889.5627.

**Drug Education in the Workplace**

The **North Georgia Employer Committee of Fannin, Gilmer & Pickens Counties** is working to spread the message that there is no place for drugs in the workplace in their counties. Their campaign against drugs and alcohol abuse began as a result of employers identifying drugs and alcohol abuse as key concerns that affect employment.

The Employer Committee, along with **Family Connections**, will be making no-cost information about drug and alcohol use available to businesses. If employers participate in the program called, *Educating your Employees to the Signs of Drug Use*, they will be provided information monthly that can be distributed to their employees and posted in break room areas.



North Georgia Employer Committee

*Educating your Employees to the Signs of Drug Use* can be used to meet some of the required criteria for businesses that participate in the *Drugs Don't Work Program*. This is a cost-effective program sponsored by the **State of Georgia Chamber of Commerce**. Participation reduces cost of workman's compensation premiums by 7.5%. **Susan Kiker, Whitepath Fab Tech's** Human Resource representative and an Executive Member of the Employer Committee, said the *Educating your Employees to the Signs of Drug Use* material will be used by Whitepath in conjunction with their *Drugs Don't Work* materials.

Employer Committee Chairperson, **Joyce Richards**, noted that they worked with Family & Children Services, Family Connections, the area Chamber of Commerce, and law enforcement representatives to identify an effective means of communication to get the word to our employees of just how serious a problem our counties are facing.

**Chuck Wade**, Coordinator of the State of Georgia, Chamber of Commerce's Drugs Don't Work Program will provide information to any employers or businesses that is interested in participating in the *Drugs Don't Work Program*. His telephone number is 404.223.2277. Businesses may also contact **Lisa Adkinsson**, Employment Marketing Representative for the Georgia DOL Career Center in Blue Ridge, at 706.632-2033 for information about the North Georgia Employer Committee's program.

## Successful Job Fair

by Sandy Ott

**Appalachian Technical College** and the **Blue Ridge Career Center** sponsored the North Georgia Career Expo/Job Fair on May 11, 2004 at Appalachian Technical College. Approximately 400 people attended, and 39 employers participated. Both large employers and several small business were represented. Plans are already underway for next year's event.



Representatives of ETC

**Sandy Ott**, Appalachian Technical College, will be glad to provide you with more information if you are interested in participating in next year's event. Her telephone number is 706.253.4591 or e-mail [sandyott@appalachiantech.edu](mailto:sandyott@appalachiantech.edu)

A committee is a group of people who individually can do nothing, but as a group decide that nothing can be done.

## Vets On-the-Job Training Program

by Harry Stumpf

The Georgia State Approving Agency wants to spread the word about an **On-the-Job Training (OJT)** benefit program. It seems that most people, including veterans, are not aware of this **GI Bill benefit**. Payments received by the veteran are intended to serve as a salary supplement during the training period.

Employers direct the training of the veterans, thereby ensuring that they become familiar with work processes as defined by the employer, equipment to be used upon completion of training, and company policies. The program is an excellent way for employers to attract and retain well-disciplined employees in hard to fill positions.

Recently hired - up to 36 months ago - public or private employees who are veterans may be eligible for the benefits. Veterans must have left the service with an honorable discharge no more than 10 years ago. Members of the Reserve Components may also be eligible. The GI Bill benefit can be as much as \$738.75 per month during the training period.

More information may be obtained by calling the Georgia Department of Veterans Services at 404.656.2306 / 2322 or email [saahds@mindspring.com](mailto:saahds@mindspring.com). A detailed description of the OJT program is available at the following web site: <http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,42195--,00.html>.

~ [www.CareerDepot.org](http://www.CareerDepot.org) ~  
~ [www.YouthSuccessAcademy.org](http://www.YouthSuccessAcademy.org) ~

## Business and Youth: How to Secure Profits

A regional summit, coordinated by **Community Action Partners (CAP)** of Northwest Georgia in partnership with the statewide **Comprehensive Youth Development System Initiative & After School Network**, was held May 13, 2004 at the Dalton Trade and Convention Center. One hundred fifteen (115) participants attended the summit with representation from all fifteen Northwest Georgia's counties.

The purpose of the summit was to engage the business community and the education and community partners in efforts for youth to be safe, healthy, educated, employable, and connected to their community. The goal of the summit was to enhance working partnerships among the four areas of community development, economic development, workforce development, and youth development.

The primary suggestion for the next event is to have more business leaders as presenters. A follow-up summit is tentatively scheduled for November 10, 2004 at the Dalton Trade Center. Anyone interested in being involved in the event or in being a presenter at the next summit may contact **Wanda Williams**, Coosa Valley Regional Development Center, 800.332.1965 or 706.295.6485, [wandaw@cvrdc.org](mailto:wandaw@cvrdc.org).

## Weaving Plant Closing

**Galey & Lord, Inc.**'s weaving plant in Shannon is shutting down on August 2. Galey & Lord attributes the closure to the impact of cheaper clothing producing in other counties. Approximately 450 employees will lose their jobs as a result of the closure.

The Georgia Department of Labor **Rapid Response Unit** and the **Rome Career Center** are helping the employees file claims for unemployment insurance and with services that will help them get back to work as quickly as possible. The **Northwest Georgia Workforce Investment Board** and **Coosa Valley Technical College** are assisting the workers with the retraining opportunities available to them.

Employers interested in hiring the workers, may contact the Rome Career Center, 462 Riverside Parkway, NE, telephone number 706.295.6051.

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a quarterly publication of the Northwest Georgia WIB and the Coosa Valley / North Georgia Council of Chief Elected Officials. For more information about our business services contact Gwen Dellinger, Workforce Development Director, 706.295.6485 or 800.332.1965 or Karen Howell, Workforce Development Coordinator, 706.277.7466, [Vandy88@aol.com](mailto:Vandy88@aol.com). Suggestions or articles to contribute - contact Karen..

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