

# The Business Informer



Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance Business Newsletter

February 2010

[www.tristateworkforce.com](http://www.tristateworkforce.com)

Mark  
your  
calendar

- ✓ Tri-State Meeting – February 25, 2010, 11:30 a.m. (Eastern), Cleveland/Bradley Public Library, Cleveland, Tennessee (RSVP Faye Robinson, 423.424.4240, [frobinson\(a\)sedev.org](mailto:frobinson(a)sedev.org))
- ✓ Youth Council Meeting – Noon, March 10, 2010, Calhoun Convention Center, Calhoun, GA
- ✓ WIB/CCEO Meeting – 12 Noon., March 17, 2010, Calhoun Convention Center, Calhoun, GA
- ✓ SETA – March 14-17, 2010, Chattanooga, TN

## VW Recruitment

The Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance not only contributed to the recruitment of Volkswagen to the region, but has provided significant assistance to the initial production staffing of the plant as well. VW made numerous site visits to locations that it was considering for its first production plant in the US in thirty years. During one of the site visits to Chattanooga, a presentation including the work of the Tri-State Alliance was made to the VW team responsible for determining the readiness and availability of the workforce. The company announced in July 2008 that they had chosen Chattanooga for their new plant, and soon after revealed that the work of the Tri-State Alliance played a part in that decision.

VW requested that the Alliance coordinate recruitment activities as they began the recruiting for the first 1,200 Production Team Members. The Alliance staffed 20 locations including career centers, community colleges, technical colleges, and four year universities throughout the region to ensure that everyone who wanted to apply for one of the openings had the opportunity to do so, regardless of whether or not they had computer access elsewhere and regardless of their ability to complete an online application. Staff provided extended hours including Saturdays.

Ron Pankratz, Manager of Recruiting and Planning for Volkswagen Group of America's Chattanooga Operations stated "The staffing procedure for the production team at our Chattanooga manufacturing facility was a complex process that involved the time-sensitive intake of tens of thousands of online applications. The coordination and assistance we received from Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance helped make the process fair and easy-to-navigate for the applicant while the results met all of our corporate goals."

## Tax Changes That Affect Small Businesses

- ☞ *First-Time Homebuyer Credit* - If you operate your small business from an office situated within a first-time home purchase, you may eligible for an \$8,000 credit .
- ☞ *Expensing Business Property and Equipment* - According to the IRS, many small businesses that invest in new property and equipment will be able to write off most of these purchases on their 2009 returns.
- ☞ *Cancellation of Business Debt* - The ARRA enables certain businesses to elect to delay recognition of income from the cancellation of business debt in 2009 or 2010.
- ☞ *Business Energy Credits* - Expected to expire after 2008, the business energy credit of \$4,000 for purchases of qualifying fuel cells property, micro turbine property, and solar energy property are now extended through 2016.

Visit [www.business.gov](http://www.business.gov) or [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for more info.

## Did you know....?

According to research conducted by the Direct Marketing Association, commercial e-mail returned a staggering \$43.62 for every dollar spent on it in 2009, outperforming all other direct marketing channels examined, such as print catalogs and direct mail. At a typical cost of only a few cents per message, email is a bargain compared to traditional direct mail at \$1 or more per piece. In addition, response rates on email marketing are strong, ranging from 5 to 35% depending on the industry and format. Response rates for traditional mail averages in the 1 to 3% range. For more information visit <http://business.gov/index.html>.

## **Work Ready Awards Honors Businesses, Partners, Individuals**

Governor Sonny Perdue and the Governor's Office of Workforce Development announced the second annual Work Ready Awards, which recognized and honored the partners, businesses and individuals who have supported Georgia Work Ready and made it a success.

"Work Ready is helping make our state a top destination for jobs and investment," said Governor Perdue.

"Through the Work Ready program, communities around Georgia have rallied together and committed to developing the talented workforce that business demands and the educational infrastructure to drive sustained economic growth and prosperity."

Northwest Georgia communities achieving the title of Certified Work Ready in the last year include: Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Floyd and Walker counties.

"Earning Certified Work Ready Community status shows that local leaders understand the importance of ensuring our citizens have the skills necessary to staff existing jobs and to master the innovative technologies new jobs will require in the future," said Governor Perdue.

The Work Ready Businesses of the Year included: EVCO Plastics, Parker Aerospace, Piolax Corporation, Golden State Foods, and ProCore Solutions.

Georgia's thriving technical college system is a key partner in the success of the Work Ready initiative. Each year, the Work Ready Awards also recognize the Work Ready Job Profiling Team of the Year and Work Ready Administrators of the Year from the technical college system. This year's winners are: Patty Hart, Georgia Northwestern Technical College; Ann Sechrist, Gwinnett Technical College; and Central Georgia Technical College's economic development team.

For more information on the Work Ready initiative please visit the Web site at [www.gaworkready.org](http://www.gaworkready.org).

## **Employment Law Guide Helps Employers**

The Department of Labor 's (DOL) newly updated Employment Law Guide, located at

<http://www.dol.gov/compliance/guide/index.htm> makes it easier for employers to understand and comply with U.S. labor and employment laws, including:

- \* Fair Wages and The Equal Pay Act
- \* Employing Young People in the Workforce
- \* 5 Things to Know About Hiring Independent Contractors
- \* Workplace Poster Requirements

## **Microsoft Elevate America**

As a part of the Work Ready initiative, the Georgia Governor's Office of Workforce Development in cooperation with Microsoft Elevate America announced the distribution of 11,500 e-learning vouchers, and 2,500 advanced IT vouchers throughout Georgia beginning on January 22, 2010 and lasting for 90 days. The vouchers will allow eligible individuals free access to on-line tutorial courses in one of the Microsoft Office Suite products (Word, Excel, Outlook, Access, Power Point), or a tutorial on Windows Vista. Advanced vouchers will provide IT professionals specialized networking courses.

In addition to the training vouchers, Microsoft is providing certification vouchers which will provide free access to on-line Certification Test in one of the e-learning courses.

The courses are self-guided and can be accessed from any computer that meets the necessary system requirements which is automatically determined as part of the initial registration process. The course does not have to be completed at one setting; rather individuals can work on various lessons and return as time allows. NW Georgia residents can receive more information regarding how to access vouchers and certification sites at [www.careerdepot.org](http://www.careerdepot.org).

To obtain a certificate, individuals must take the Certification Test at a Certiport testing site. The sites will be announced at a later date. Although the certification assessment is free with a certificate voucher, individuals who choose to take the certificate exam will likely incur a proctoring fee which ranges from \$25-\$60.

Further information is available at:

[www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica](http://www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica).



The Business Informer is a publication of the Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance. For more information about the Alliance contact Gwen Dellinger, Workforce Development Director, Northwest Georgia Regional Commission, 706.295.6485; Mike Kennemer, Director Workforce Development, Northeast Alabama Community College 256.228.6001, or Phyllis Casavant, Deputy Director, Southeast Tennessee Development District, 423.424.4251.

Suggestions or articles to contribute - contact Terri Morgan at 706.295.6485 or [tmorgan\(a\)nwgrc.org](mailto:tmorgan(a)nwgrc.org)

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Published by Northwest Georgia Regional Commission