



TRAINING • CONNECTING • DEVELOPING ILLINOIS' WORKFORCE

Boone & Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board Annual Report PY2007 October, 2008



Illinois Department of Employment Security
Rock River Training Corporation
Rock Valley College
City of Rockford Dept. of Human Services
disabilityworks
Experience Works, Incorporated
Illinois Department of Human Services



Illinois Migrant Council
Job Corps
Northwestern Illinois Area Agency on Aging
Rockford Business College
Rockford Housing Authority
Rockford Public Schools
The Literacy Council

The mission of the **Boone and Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board** is to create a competitive, skilled and educated workforce by providing a system for the citizens of Boone and Winnebago Counties to gain meaningful employment responsive to the needs of business.

The **Workforce Investment Board** was created by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. By law, the local WIB must include representatives from area businesses, local business organizations, business trade associations, local educational entities, community-based organizations, economic development agencies and each of the one-stop partners.

The Workforce Connection, the local service delivery system, is a partnership of state and federally funded employment and training programs, economic development agencies and educational entities committed to providing a workforce that meets the needs of our business community, now and in the future. The partnership comprises multiple agencies representing 20 employment and training programs providing various workforce development services.



PY07 at-a-glance

In the last year, The Workforce Connection:

- Moved both the Rockford and Belvidere offices to new locations.
 - Launched Illinois workNet in this area (with official kick-off festivities at the Belvidere UAW Hall).
 - Set up 19 workNet partner sites in Boone and Winnebago Counties with 40 individuals completing Certified workNet Advisor (CIWA) training.
 - Launched our own new website at www.theworkforceconnection.org
 - Hosted 75 exhibitors and 800 people at the Belvidere Job Fair in January.
 - Had two classes graduate from TechWorks and go to work fulltime at Rockford Products using our *Customized Training* model.
 - Had 15 different manufacturers take advantage of Incumbent Worker Training (\$59,377).
 - Hosted 117 people for the *Cool Training for Hot Jobs* workshop.
 - Hosted meeting of 14 education and training providers to promote education and training to the local workforce and, as a result, produced an education and training guide for clients and encouraged schools to recruit at the workNet center.
 - Worked with business leaders and economic development agencies to minimize the impact of the third shift layoff at Chrysler by surveying employer needs and encouraging dislocated workers to consider additional job training programs.
 - Became the prototype for the Illinois workNet *Rapid Response* page and, with the AFL-CIO, established *Peer Counselors* from the UAW to assist dislocated workers.
 - Continued our involvement in the CSSI Health Care Initiative, which included the launch of NION, the Northern Illinois On-Line Nursing program.
 - Partnered with the Ellis Heights Weed and Seed initiative in Rockford. Rock River Training Corporation is working with the City, School District 205 and other organizations to improve the quality of life for area residents, bringing education, training and other services directly to the community at 1810 West State Street
 - Participated in the "Driving Transformation" workshop in Chicago to discuss new innovations in the workforce system and strategies to "transform" the local workforce structure.
 - Had staff and WIB board representatives participate in regional training in Dixon to discuss sector strategies for targeting training dollars and establishing demand driven leadership.
 - Saw the *Getting to Work in Rockford* committee become the *Rockford Area Transportation Study Mobility Subcommittee*.
 - Participated in the launch of RVC's Project Jumpstart and the City of Rockford's N-Center for high school-aged young people.
 - Sent an Individual Achievement Award Winner to the Springfield conference.
 - Hosted 135 people at our annual dinner in September 2007.
 - Participated in several career and education fairs, the Belvidere Chamber Chili Competition, Jobapalooza and Money Smart Week.
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Top Companies with Placements through The Workforce Connection (July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008)

NCO Customer Management
Wal-Mart
Servicom LLC
Evolution Staffing
West Telemarketing
RGIS Inventory
Stateline Staffing
K-Mart
Cadbury Adams
Furst Services
McDonald's
DialAmerica Marketing
Rockford Products
Lowe's Home Center
Saks Distribution Center
QPS Staffing
The Swiss Colony

Incumbent Worker Training in Manufacturing

The **incumbent worker training** program, available to businesses in manufacturing, healthcare and logistics and transportation, is designed to assist employers in upgrading the skills of their workforce in order to remain competitive in both regional and global markets. The training is **customized** to meet your needs in filling skill gaps within the incumbent workforce.

Grant funds **pay between 50% and 90% of the total training costs, depending upon the workforce size of your company.**

Your costs will be:

- 10% of the training costs for firms with **50 or fewer** workers;
- 25% of the training costs for firms with **51 to 100** workers; or
- 50% of the training costs for firms with **more than 100** workers

Participating Companies (year ending June 30, 2008)

Forest City Header Die and Machining
Rockford Process Control
Lunquist Mfg.
K-I Machine Tool & Production
North American Fabrication
Superior Joining Technologies
Greenlee Textron
Modern Metals Products

Atrona Material Testing
Bremner Food Group
TECm
D Machine
Zenith Cutter Co.
TAC Rockford
Woodward Governor

Health Care

48 incumbent workers received training in PY07 in health care. Employer companies included Rockford Health Systems, Swedish American Hospital, OSF St. Anthony Medical Center, Wesley Willows, FHN, Interim Health Care, Kelly Home Health Care, Silvercare, Rosewood Care Center and PRN Health Services. Training included MS, RN, BSN and Associates degrees.



Illinois DCEO Director Jack Lavin was joined by business and community leaders for the launch of Illinois workNet in this area. The event, held in June at the Belvidere UAW Hall, showcased the state's newly-transformed workforce development system.

Illinois workNet is a cooperative effort among economic development, workforce development and educational agencies, local workforce boards and their public and private partners.

The event in Belvidere also highlighted workNet's Rapid Response page, set up to help workers affected by the third shift layoffs at Chrysler and its suppliers.

LWIA3 has 19 Illinois workNet partner sites in Winnebago and Boone Counties, including the UAW Hall, where individuals can get access to the web portal and assistance from trained personnel. The coming year will see additional partner sites identified.

As the year came to an end, Illinois workNet was announcing its new High-Growth Industries Pathway, an additional service to jobseekers and employers in manufacturing, health care, high technology and transportation, distribution and logistics.



The last year also saw the development of a new Workforce Connection website at www.theworkforceconnection.org. The site includes the latest job postings and information about training programs and links to partner sites.



117 people attended the April 7th **Cool Training for Hot Jobs** workshop, an event designed to highlight the training programs available for high-demand jobs. Those attending heard from employers in health care, manufacturing and transportations about the job skills needed for employment. The workshop was in response to ongoing concerns from employers about a shortage of skilled workers.

Among the participating employers were: Gates, Illinois Machine Products, Rockford Linear Actuation, Rockford Products, SupplyCore, Woodward, OSF St. Anthony Medical Center, Rockford Memorial Hospital, FHN, Averitt Express, Roehl and Straight Shot Express.



Job Fairs & HotLine

The Workforce Connection hosted a Job Fair in January at the Community Building in Belvidere, coinciding with the Belvidere Chamber's BoCo Expo. An estimated 800 to 900 job-seekers attended the event, along with more than 55 employers and a dozen educational institutions and training organizations. The date and the location of the job fair were designed in response to the third-shift layoff at the Belvidere Chrysler plant and its suppliers.

The Workforce Connection Job HotLine, updated weekly with current job listings, is also a valuable resource for jobseekers in northern Illinois. The job listings are also available on the Workforce Connection website.



The Workforce Connection also started a new partnership this year with WIFR Channel 23. Job listings from Illinois Skills Match, the Business Services Team and our HotLine are included on the 6pm news as the *Job of the Day* and posted online.



Specialized Training & OJTs

Customized Training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or employers and is conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ an individual on successful completion of training. The program includes WIA funding to cover up to 50% of the cost of training. Through a training contact, the employer is able to select individuals to be included in the program, based on interviews and the company's existing policies.

26 individuals were enrolled in **on-the-job training** through the Workforce Connection during PY2007. OJT employers included Rockford Products, Reliable Machine, Rockford Housing Authority, Business Cards Tomorrow, Lombardozzi, Moses, Quimby & Company, CMM Calibration, Long Screw Machine Products and Camcar/Acument.



Success Story

Sandra Taylor's journey through the Dislocated Worker program offered by the Workforce Connection and Rock Valley College has been a long and tedious one. She first entered the program in October 2003 facing extreme personal obstacles and employment barriers. She was a single mother of two teen-aged children, and her daughter was in a battle to fight cancer, taking chemo-therapy treatments. She had been laid off from a position at a packaging company, which she had held for two years. She had not developed any real skills at this company to make her more marketable in today's workforce and moreover she did not have a high school diploma or GED.

Sandra started the program seeking her GED. She attended classes up to the point she was unable to do so, on a regular basis, due to the need to go to work. She had started her GED tests but was having difficulty passing the math portion of the exam after several attempts. After she had reached the maximum number of attempts to pass the test in a one year period, she was told that she would have to wait until the following year to re-test. Sandra did not let this hamper her desires to obtain her high school equivalency, but she decided to seek full-time employment, as she still had a family to care for.

Sandra worked for short stints, including some positions with temporary agencies, while obtaining her High School equivalency, but realized that she needed hard skills to be able to secure a position that would offer a future for her and her family.

Throughout her enrollment, she remained active in the Dislocated Worker Program, attending activities and pursuing every feasible option presented to her, when she was not working. When the opportunity to learn CNC skills through classroom training and On-the-Job training via Rockford Products presented itself, Sandra immediately took advantage.

Sandra successfully completed the CNC Lathe Operator program in September of 2007. She became a full-time, permanent employee of Rockford Products in August of 2007, and she remains an employee there today. With her newly acquired skills, she would like to branch out but realizes that she needs a record of employment stability to build on her marketability. Sandra recently stated that this was the most secure employment she had had since 2002. She credits her faith, her persistence and DWP with her success.

CSSI Health Care Initiative-Regional Nursing Collaboration

The purpose of the project is to increase the supply of new RN graduates by providing training slots for current CNAs and other front-line health care workers and increase the RN training capacity.

As a result of this collaboration, additional clinical sites and MSN instructors have been identified. Nine incumbent workers have been enrolled through CSSI with 8 more pending completion of their applications. 53 non-CSSI incumbent workers have been enrolled in nursing programs from WIA 3 & 4. The project expects to contribute 164 RN's by the end of its second year.

Participating organizations:

OSF St. Anthony Medical Center
FHN
Swedish-American Hospital
Rochelle Community Hospital
Rockford Health System
Rock Valley College
Highland Community College

Kishwaukee College
Sauk Valley College
University of Illinois College of Nursing
Northern Illinois University
Northwest Illinois Workforce Investment Bd.
Boone & Winnebago Workforce Investment Bd.



The first hybrid online RN nursing program in the area, the Northern Illinois Online Initiative for Nursing (NIOIN) was approved by the Illinois Board of Nursing this year (just after the end of PY07). Board approval allows for the start of a class in January, 2009.

Employment & Business Services

During program year 2007 (ending 6/30/08), 219 businesses utilized the services provided by the Workforce Connection, resulting in 1845 job placements.

7056 individuals registered for employment services through Illinois Skills Match.

Total Job Orders Received: 2320

Overall total active jobseekers: 21,527

Jobseekers provided service 13,612

Referred to training 803

UI (unemployment) Claims taken 38,443

Reemployment Eligibility Assessment Program interviews completed: 1221

WIA Programs

1622 individuals during PY2007, including

- 366 Youth
- 437 Adults
- 819 Dislocated Workers

437 Adults and Dislocated Workers entered employment upon completion of program services.



Resource Room Job Seeker Visits

Rockford—19,539
Belvidere—4159

The **Refugee and Immigrant Services Program** has been serving the northern ten counties of Illinois with services for newly arrived refugees since 1978. The program has grown in the last 10 years and now serves immigrants and refugees with a wide variety of services including citizenship application and education services, and youth services in addition to employment and adjustment programs.

Refugees in northern Illinois have come from over 19 different countries since the program started. Our goal is to assist new arrivals during their first several years so that they can live in the community without assistance when going to work, helping their children in school, for medical appointments, etc.

The program served over 830 refugees, immigrants, and asylees last year with services from the seven grants that make up the program. Our mission is to educate and assist area refugees and immigrants in their adjustment to the United States so that they may become self-sufficient members of the community.

The Refugee and Immigrant Citizenship Initiative grant and the New Americans Initiative completed almost 300 citizenship applications with several hundred area residents receiving their citizenship.

**Financial Report
Program Year 2007 Expenditures**

WIA Expenditures

Admin	\$410,193.05
Adult	\$1,023,143.17
Dislocated Worker	\$1,463,789.97
Youth	\$1,038,508.92

Other Grants and Funding

Incentive Grant	\$165,936.00
State Reserve (1S)	\$56,713.19
High Speed Internet Access	\$13,173.00
TAA	\$111,886.79
CSSI	\$20,267.77
Staffing Grant	\$72,800.00
Illinois workNet Grant	\$39,179.07
Technical Assistance Grants	\$6,933.78

Total: \$4,422,524.71

Boone and Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board

Chief Elected Officials

Lawrence J. Morrissey, Mayor of Rockford
Catherine Ward, Boone County Board Chairman
Scott Christiansen, Winnebago County Board Chairman

Chairman—Richard Mowris, *Rockford Products Corporation*
Vice-Chair—Paul Callighan, *Commonwealth Edison*
Secretary— Elton Turner, *General Mills*

Steve Anderson, *Rockford Housing Authority*
Allan Barsema, *The Carpenter's Place*
Diana Barthelman, *Rock Valley College*
Jon Bates, *Community Foundation of Northern Illinois*
Dr. Jack Becherer, *Rock Valley College*
Karen C. Brown, *OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center*
Shirley Burks, *Illinois Department of Human Services*
Michele Caldwell, *Global Staffing*
Linda Campos, *Campos Construction*
Kevin Dulan, *UPS*
Janet Ellis, *NW Illinois Area Agency on Aging*
Pedro Enriquez, *Illinois Migrant Council*
Dr. Richard Fairgrievies, *Regional Office of Education*
James Fehlhaber, *Rockford School Dist. 205*
Steve Gibson, *Rockford Business College*
Lynn Godina, *Northwest Graphics*
Luanna Grimes, *The Home Depot*
Matthew Jones, *Gates Corporation*

Todd Kindred, *N. Ill. Joint Apprenticeship Training*
Harvey Lightbody, *Swedish American Health Systems*
Stephanie Lueder, *TDS Automotive*
Larry McKay, *Plumbers and Pipefitters Union*
Kate McMahon, *Servicom-LLC*
David Morgan, *Illinois Machine Products*
Dan Parod, *Rockford Health Systems*
John Phelps, *Rockford Local Development Corp.*
Owen Phelps, *The Durand Corporation*
James Pirages, *Hinshaw and Culbertson*
Mark Podemski, *RAEDC*
Maureen Rosenberg, *Northern Illinois University*
James Ryan, *City of Rockford*
Mary Beth Scholten, *IDHS-Div. Rehab. Services*
Mark Stefanic, *First Rockford Group*
Nord Swanstrom, *IDES*
Shirley Walker, *Carson Pirie Scott Div. of BON-TON Stores*
C. Mark Williams, *Growth Dimensions*

Youth Council

Richard Fairgrievies, *Regional Office of Education (chair)*
Steve Anderson, *Rockford Housing Authority*
Julia Berry, *parent*
Michael Cermak, *Rockford School District*
Lynn Godina, *Northwest Graphics*
Judge Patrick Heaslip, *17th Circuit Court*

Kerry Knodle, *CCS-YouthBuild Rockford*
Bonnie Mabie, *Job Corps*
Conni Schlupp, *IDES*
Mary Beth Scholten, *DHS-DRS*
David Valenti, *Retired*