



## Workforce Connection - Region 10 American Recovery and Reinvestment



Workforce Connection joins frontlines of economic recovery

### Preparing for the storm

Even before the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was finalized in February 2009, Workforce Connection began to ready their ship for a rocky and challenging year.

#### Positioning the Troops for Dislocated Workers

With major plant closings and downsizings occurring beginning in September, Chief Executive Officer Rusty Skinner and Chief Operating Officer Kathleen Woodring initiated efforts to secure additional federal funding to address the increasing numbers of unemployed workers. Skinner was able to initially obtain a \$200,000 Rapid Response Grant to address downsizing at Emergency One, Merillat, Fluid Routing Systems and Universal Forest Products. Woodring explored whether a single workforce board could receive a National Emergency Grant, an approach that is very unique. The research and perseverance paid off and Workforce Connection was awarded an \$860,000 National Emergency Grant to serve dislocated workers for 12 manufacturing companies.

The two grants gave the Workforce team a head start on developing approaches to successfully assist dislocated workers to transition from areas such as manufacturing to growth areas such as healthcare. Innovative strategies such as a healthcare bridge program to help better prepare people for certificate programs and intensive career planning workshops were implemented.

#### Healthcare IT Funding

Prior to Christmas, Workforce wrote for and received an \$186,000 grant to help launch Healthy Ocala's Healthcare IT Training Project. This project will enable the sharing of healthcare records throughout Marion County. The advance planning has set the stage for our community to be a leader for ARRA opportunities in the future.

#### Leading the Charge in Summer Youth

As signs appeared that the Summer Youth Programs of the past might be included in ARRA, the team at Workforce Connection began laying the groundwork for a model program. When the funds became reality, the program was shovel-ready with a few adjustments to meet the goals of ARRA.

#### Readying Our Staff

In addition, staff had to become prepared on how to refocus efforts on retraining, not just aggressive placement. With a scarce job market and extended unemployment benefits, frustrated job candidates are being given the opportunity to retrain through a Workforce scholarship and/or a Pell Grant through local education providers, whichever is appropriate. Advance research was done on which training areas might lead to good job opportunities or areas that are emerging over the next two years. Staff was in position when stimulus training dollars arrived to focus job candidates on strategic areas for training.

#### Facility Preparedness

With an enormous increase in walk-in traffic, Workforce Connection staged its facilities to stem the increasing tide of unemployed workers. The Inverness Workforce Center was expanded and training space added. The Ocala Workforce Center was reconfigured with innovative workforce communities focused on growing fields to improve work flow and service. Most recently, an additional facility was added in the Paddock Park Business Center focusing on retraining and

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### Workforce Online

#### Website

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

#### YouTube

[www.youtube.com/WorkforceCLM](http://www.youtube.com/WorkforceCLM)

#### Twitter

<http://twitter.com/WorkforceCLM>

#### Online Column

[www.clmworkforce.com/news.asp](http://www.clmworkforce.com/news.asp)

### Performance Snapshot

Region 10 – Citrus, Levy and Marion Counties



### Past two fiscal years

- ✓ Visitors increased 38 percent
- ✓ Online Customers increased by 56 percent

### Total customers in skills training

971

## Projects at a Glance



### Green Business Summit Features National Expert

Central Florida Community College (CFCC) took the lead on a Green Business Summit on June 4, 2009 at the Ocala Campus with 186 people attending the event. Workforce Connection, a major partner on this initiative, sponsored the keynote speaker, as well as organized three of the breakout sessions. Featured speaker Joel Makower, Executive Editor of GreenBiz.com, also known as the "Green Guru", suggested creating partnerships to solve problems for cities, schools and regions. He challenged the participants with the question, "What is the story we get to tell if we do it right?" Live blog-reporting from Workforce Connection's Twitter site <http://twitter.com/WorkforceCLM>, along with a summary video of [Makower](#) was available to those unable to attend the event.

**"Green Guru" Joel Makower, Executive Editor of GreenBiz.com, delivered the keynote address on June 4, 2009, for the Green Business Summit, CFCC, Ocala, Florida.** (Photos by Jannet Walsh/Workforce Connection ©)



### Unique Training Expos for Unemployed

Workforce Connection implemented a unique approach in Florida to help unemployed workers access available training dollars for Dislocated Worker Training Funds through the ARRA of 2009. Stimulus Training Expos were held in Citrus, Levy and Marion Counties.

The concept for the Expos was created by Kathleen Woodring, COO for Workforce Connection to help reach unemployed residents and let them know about high growth training areas, such as health care, law enforcement and welding. Participants met with training providers and registered for workforce training scholarships made available by the Department of Labor's National Emergency Grant and stimulus funding. The total attendance records for the three counties included 750 to 800 people with 510 unemployed workers registering for scholarships and 66 U.S. Veterans in attendance.

**The Stimulus Training Expo was filled to capacity in the conference room at CFCC Levy Center in Chiefland on Thursday, May 7, 2009. Participants collected information to start new careers to improve their futures.**



### Grand Opening

In response to the needs of displaced workers in Ocala, Workforce Connection opened a fourth location in June 2009 to provide services to job candidates and employers in response to the economy. The grand opening was attended by area job candidates, employers and media on June 23, 2009, at **Workforce Connection – Paddock Park**, located at 3300 SW 34th Ave., Suite 148, Ocala, FL 34474. The direct phone number for the new location is (352) 291-9555. [Click to view Goggle locator map.](#)

**CFCC Administrators Cheryl Fante, Mark Paugh and Stacy Dixon visit with Workforce Connection leaders Susan Roberts and Dr. Jo Clifford.**



### Stimulus Talks

The Ocala/Marion County Chamber of Commerce, Citrus County Economic Development Council, Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, Nature Coast Business Development Council, [University of North Florida Small Business Development Center](#) and Workforce Connection presented eight one-hour sessions in Citrus, Levy and Marion Counties geared towards small business opportunities in April 2009 and May 2009. The sessions generated workforce business leads for grants and summer youth sites. Several companies have identified leads for government proposals as a result of the sessions. Listen and learn about Recovery Act funds for small business. <http://www.youtube.com/user/WorkforceCLM>

**Paul Cash, of Inverness, with Woodruff, Wardlow, Nelson, & Cash PLC, discusses tax incentives with the Recovery Act.**

## Projects at a Glance



### DZ Atlantic Recruiting

Four orientation sessions related to a nuclear construction opportunity were hosted by Workforce Connection in Citrus and Levy Counties in June 2009. The 242 job candidates that attended included many laid-off construction and manufacturing workers. The recruitment, screening and training project assisted DZ Atlantic, a Day & Zimmermann company based in Norfolk, Virginia and a contractor with Progress Energy, to identify and train qualified candidates for Progress Energy's outage scheduled for this fall.

**Many came an hour early to check-in for nuclear construction positions in Citrus County. Almost 200 job candidates arrived for the orientation sessions at the Realtors Association of Citrus County, in Lecanto, Florida on Thursday, June 25, 2009.**



### Career Launches – Citrus, Levy and Marion Counties

Workforce Connection is offering five free workshops for professionals in the popular Career Launch Series in Marion County, July 10, 2009 to August 21, 2009. The workshops are presented in partnership with CFCC and the Marion County Library System, with funding in part by the U.S. Department of Labor and National Emergency Grant. Each session is loaded with tips and tools designed to improve job candidates' success in today's fierce job market. The short, no-cost workshops will be held at the Ocala Public Library, Ocala. This series was repeated due to overwhelming response earlier this spring.

**Jerry Flanders, left, Senior Human Resource Recruiter for Workforce Connection, in Ocala, reviews the resume of job seeker Dawn Tatar, of Floral City, at a Workforce Connection event in May 2009.**



### West Ocala Green Jobs Project

Workforce Connection brought together education, economic development and community leaders in one of Marion County's areas of highest unemployment in West Ocala. This coalition is collaborating on green jobs training and small business development to create a better economy and quality of life.

Twenty-nine business and community members from West Ocala received scholarships to the recent CFCC Green Business Summit, due to a community donation. A pilot training program for 35 people, funded by Workforce Connection, launches in August to train unemployed individuals from West Ocala in core green building practices, weatherization, building retrofitting and solar installation. The groundwork laid by this pilot is being used to write a federal *Pathways from Poverty Grant* to train and provide placement services for up to 500 people, including area youth.

**Jerone Gamble, Chairman of the West Ocala Green Jobs Coalition, addresses community leaders on May 28, 2009 on green jobs training and small businesses at the Hampton Center at CFCC, Ocala, Florida**



### Summer Youth Program

The Summer Youth Program for Region 10 is partnering with 132 business sites in three counties serving 300 youth from ages 14 to 24. The younger youth have participated in a simulated workplace where they built a computer, hydrogen powered car, experimented with solar energy models and participated in learning activities at related businesses. "The ARRA has given us the opportunity to impact the lives of many youth at a time when families everywhere can use a little assistance. We have made a concerted effort to provide internship opportunities that will broaden the career options for our youth and grow our workforce of tomorrow," said Workforce COO Kathleen Woodring.

**Summer Youth Employment Program participants explored careers using green energy, such as building a model car fueled by water.**

Workforce Connection is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers listed above may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment via the Florida Relay Service at 711. If you need accommodations, please call 352-840-5700, ext. 7878 or e-mail [accommodations@clmworkforce.com](mailto:accommodations@clmworkforce.com). Please make request at least three business days in advance.



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

## Preparing for the storm - continued

reemployment of laid off manufacturing and construction workers, as well as professional services.

### Shaping the Workforce of the Future

As day-to-day customer needs are being met, Workforce Connection continues to work with the local economic development and education partners to help attract and expand new and existing businesses.

Forward progress is occurring. The past few months have been encouraging as new business prospects have increased and small business start-up interest is on the rise. With our new candidate inventory and screening process, Workforce can more readily identify qualified applicants to meet employers' needs.

## WORKFORCE CONNECTION

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Summer Youth Employment Program participants Carter Twillie, age 21, left, and Ronald Thompson age 17, recording video and photos, are the Marketing Team for Workforce Connection's 2009 youth program. See them online at [www.youtube.com/WorkforceCLM](http://www.youtube.com/WorkforceCLM). (Photo by Jannet Walsh/Workforce Connection ©)

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