

JOB FORCE BOARD AND REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS CONVENE TO ADDRESS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Great things happen when people come together to align for action and achievement. This was the underlying theme as the Job Force Board convened over 60 community stake holders to begin the Board's comprehensive strategic planning process. "Aligning for Action and Achievement" was the first of three sessions that set the foundation of the continued leadership role of the Job Force Board in developing a regional comprehensive workforce development plan. Attendees represented healthcare, manufacturing, utilities, paper, service industries, economic development, information technology, government, education, organized labor, chamber of commerce and community based organizations.

The session stressed the Job Force Board's mission to not merely place people in jobs, but to empower a vibrant workforce and business community for ultimate



Dennis West, Executive Director of Northern Initiatives, facilitates the Strategic Planning process. (Photo courtesy Northern Waters Photography/Sean Depuydt.)

economic growth. The Job Force Board is striving to strengthen partnerships and create a workforce development system that responds to local and regional needs.

"The strategic role for the Job Force Board is defining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in our region. We focus on desired economic and workforce development results in all segments of the community, develop short and long term goals for workforce development and encourage broad community involvement," stated Paul Arsenault, Chairman of the Six County Employment Alliance Board and Job Force Board member.

At the planning session the Job Force Board shared its current strategic goals and activities to obtain feedback and to spread enthusiasm.

GOAL 1: Increase employer satisfaction with jobseekers' academic and employability skills.

GOAL 2: Implement career contextual learning curriculums within a seamless education system that promotes life-long learning.

GOAL 3: Implement a labor market information exchange system that tracks local, current and future workforce trends and needs.

GOAL 4: Recruit and provide an adequate supply of jobseekers whose knowledge skills and abilities match employer demands.

GOAL 5: Enhance the skills of

incumbent workers to enhance the competitiveness of business and industry.

Prior to the region wide comprehensive strategic planning process, the Job Force Board will offer two sessions focused on "Ten Human Resource Challenges" and what the Job Force Board and community stakeholders can do to make a difference and "Partnering with Economic Development: Creating the Workforce Advantage" which will assist in further developing partnerships in aligning activities with the economic development community.



From L to R: Rod Miller, Job Force Board member; Stacy Welling, Governor's U.P. Representative; and Darlene Smith, Pinecrest Medical Care Facility, participate in the Strategic Planning Process held at the Danforth Place in Escanaba on December 10th. (Photo courtesy Northern Waters Photography/Sean Depuydt.)

"The Job Force Board is now in its final year of its first five year strategic plan and has now begun its next planning phase," adds Will Carne, Job Force Board President.

If your business is interested in more information about the Job Force Board's Strategic Plan or would like to be invited to the next session, please contact the Job Force Board at 906.789.0558, extension 223.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

February 7th
Bay Area Economic Club Meeting
(6:00 PM EST)
Location: Bay College's Heirman Center
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information
(906) 786-2192

February 16th
Airport Open House
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information
(906) 786-2192

February 21st
Economic Club Meeting
Location: Ramada Inn of Marquette
Call Carrie Dubord for more information
(906) 228-6000

February 23rd
Business After Hours
AAA of Michigan (5:00-7:00 EST)
Location: TBD
Call Cheryl Shuty for more information
(906) 448-4841

Feb 24th
Business Showcase (5:00-7:00 EST)
BAH & Meet the Skiers
Location: Pine Mountain Resort
To RSVP or for more information call the Dickinson Area Partnership at
(906) 774-2002

March 4th
LSCP Annual Dinner (5:30PM EST)
Location: NMU Great Lakes Room
Call Cheryl Shuty for more information
(906) 448-4841

March 12th
Dickinson Area Partnership Dinner
Puttin' on da Ritz (6:00-12:00AM EST)
Location: Pine Grove Country Club
Call the Dickinson Area Partnership for more information (906) 774-2002

March 14th
Business After Hours (5:00-7:00 EST)
United Way
Location: TBD
Call Cheryl Shuty for more information
(906) 448-4841

March 21st
Economic Club Meeting (6:00PM EST)
Location: Ramada Inn of Marquette
Call Carrie Dubord for more information
(906) 228-6000

March 23rd
Business After Hours (5:00-7:00 EST)
Marquette Co. Convention & Visitors' Bureau
Location: TBD
Call the Lake Superior Community Partnership for more information
(906) 226-6591

U.S. MANUFACTURING MOBILIZES TO MEET URGENT CHALLENGES



Will Carne, President Job Force Board

U.S. manufacturing, the engine that drives the American economy, is facing serious challenges to its international preeminence – challenges that affect Upper Peninsula manufacturers prospects for future long-term growth.

For more than a century American manufacturers have had the primary responsibility for economic growth in our country. Innovation and produc-

tivity have led to new products and processes, faster production, transportation and communications, and to dramatically higher living standards. But serious concerns have arisen in recent years as manufacturers face rapidly escalating domestic costs and rising global competition that



places a cap on prices.

As more countries become manufacturing centers, competition for a share of the world's goods market increases. Not only do many countries have lower-wage, low-regulatory economies, some countries, like China, keep their currencies weak relative to the dollar – ensuring cheaper products for U.S. export. This practice prevents American companies from raising prices, even as their costs increase.

The recent recession affected manufacturing more than any other part of the U.S. economy. Between 2000 and

early 2004, business investment plummeted, exports sank and nearly 3 million jobs were lost. But since February 2004, we have turned the corner – new jobs have been created and output is growing. It is crucial to the economy and American workers that manufacturing continue to recover.

To this end, the National Association of Manufacturers is conducting an all-out effort to raise awareness of the long-term challenges to U.S. industry among policymakers. The NAM is working to develop an economic climate more conducive to manufacturing through a special manufacturing campaign.

One of the campaign's first goals was to gain recognition from the Bush Administration regarding the serious challenges manufacturers face. This was accomplished when Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans initiated two

dozen field hearings with manufacturers. Based on this unprecedented series of hearings, the Commerce Department released an in-depth report – *Manufacturing in America: A Comprehensive Strategy To Address the Challenges to U.S. Manufacturers* – declaring for the first time that manufacturing is a top federal priority and outlining more than 60 ways to address modern manufacturing challenges.

Manufacturers participating in the NAM's manufacturing campaign are reaching out to elected officials at all levels of government, urging them not to take manufacturing for granted.

Upper Peninsula manufacturers are part and parcel of U.S. manufacturing! To learn more about how you can support the manufacturing industry simply log on to the NAM's Web site at www.nam.org/contact. The NAM has made this easy for all of us with a special "Contact Congress" feature on its Web site.

To learn more about the National Association of Manufacturing, visit them at www.nam.org.

UPEDA ELECTS NEW BOARD MEMBERS AND RECOGNIZES OUTGOING MEMBERS



The Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance (UPEDA) held their annual meeting in Iron Mountain in December. The annual meeting is used as an event



Dennis West (Right), Executive Director of Northern Initiatives presents James Anderson (Left) from Michigan Works! The Job Force Board plaque recognizing the contributions of outgoing board members.



Dennis West (Right), Executive Director of Northern Initiatives presents Bob Anderson (Left) a plaque recognizing the contributions of outgoing board members.

to celebrate the years successes, profile special projects that members are involved in, elect new board members, and to honor outgoing members.

During the November meeting, the UPEDA received a presentation from WE Energies. WE Energies is beginning a multi-million project at their Presque Isle Power Plant. This project will integrate new technologies to remove mercury from the plants air

discharge. The build out will take two to three years, and upon completion the technology will be evaluated to determine its marketability and application in other settings.

During the meeting elections were also conducted to replace three outgoing board officers. Dennis West presented plaques recognizing the contributions of outgoing board members James Anderson from Michigan Works! The Job Force Board, Bob Anderson from Upper Peninsula Power Company, and David Gillis from the Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Committee.

To replace these outgoing members, the membership elected three new board members. Joining the UPEDA board in January 2005 will be Jeff Hagan, Western Upper Peninsula Planning Commission; Andrew Bek, UGLETI; and Pat Coleman, UP Engineers and Architects.

To learn more about the UPEDA visit their web-site at www.upeda.com.

Bring Your Profits UP

A quality labor force. Outstanding education and worker training opportunities. Available and affordable land. A connected infrastructure. And unlimited recreational opportunities. It's a dream business environment.

UPEDA Invest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula... Where Success Comes Naturally.

For free and confidential assistance, contact the Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance. 906.235.0108 www.superiormichigan.com

NORTHERN INITIATIVES OFFERS MANUFACTURERS BOTTOM LINE RESULTS!



Joe Boyle, Professional Business Advisor for Northern Initiatives.



Manufacturers play a pivotal role in the maintenance of the Upper Peninsula's

community health and wellness. When goods are exported they bring new money into communities, increase the local tax base, provide living wage jobs that support families and provide opportunities for Upper Peninsula residents to be employed at home.

For these and other good reasons, Northern Initiatives is devoted to high value training and consulting services that support the efforts of the Upper Peninsula manufacturers to stay competitive in the increasingly complex world in which they do business. These services are designed to increase productivity and therefore, profit. The pressures of the global market place and the need to remain competitive are felt by business and industry across our region. Northern Initiatives offers several proactive solutions that assist companies to be more productive, efficient and better able to face the challenges of the future.

Northern Initiatives assists regional manufacturers by assisting companies in assessing their strengths and weaknesses, helping them to identify improvement opportunities unique to company operations and to find solutions to real and specific problems. Moreover, Northern Initiatives helps companies to reverse negative business patterns/developments and to implement new work processes/technologies by supporting companies as they plan for and strive to reach higher levels of peak performance.

Under the expertise of Northern Initiative Business Development Consultants, Upper Peninsula companies are able to evaluate their operations and to plan for the future in the areas of competitiveness review, performance benchmarking and marketing assessments. Through its Industrial Marketing product line, companies can further learn how to identify and under-

stand markets and how to reach new ones, through Market Assessment, Market Planning, Market Competitive Analysis and Customer Satisfaction Monitoring services.

Northern Initiative's Manufacturing Systems also focus on assisting companies in efficiency areas, effective leadership, honing processes and skills. Through the Manufacturing Systems services, the Business Development Consultants connect, inform and train companies in areas of [Lean Coaching & Implementation](#), [Kaizen](#), [Team Facilitation](#), [Quality Manufacturing Systems \(ISO QS 9000,14000\)](#) [Six Sigma Leadership](#), [Team and Supervision Training](#) and [User Groups](#).

To learn more about Northern Initiatives Business Consulting Services contact Joe Boyle, Professional Business Advisor at 906.226.1658 or visit Northern Initiatives on the web at www.niupnorth.org.

NORTHERN INITIATIVES RECEIVES CDFI

The Northern Initiatives (NI), a not-for-profit community development organization based in Marquette Michigan, will receive a \$750,000 grant from the Treasury Department's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) fund for marketing and development.

The grant will fund Northern Initiative's capital loan program. The funding translates into about \$4 million in loans that the Marquette group will provide to small businesses and manufacturers in low-income areas throughout northern Michigan.

"The requests to the CDFI Fund in each round, greatly exceed the money that they have available to award. To receive a grant of this size is a tribute to the great job that our lenders and technical assistance providers have been doing in support of starting and growing UP businesses," stated Dennis West, Northern Initiatives President.

The Northern Initiatives loan fund is approaching \$8mm in capital. Northern Initiatives has made in excess of 300 loans, to U.P. businesses. To learn more about Northern Initiatives visit their website www.niupnorth.org



HOW TO KEEP YOUR BUSINESS FROM BEING SUCCESSFUL IN ONE EASY STEP

greatest resource is, and always will be, the people. In business this means our employees and the value of their contributions must be recognized, cared for and grown.

Who, me?

Much of the misunderstanding over training comes from the manager's perception of themselves and their employees. The vast majority of businesses in the UP (and the state of

(See SUCCESSFUL on Page 6)



By: Alan Yeck
Executive Director for Business/
Workforce Development M-TEC

Don't train your employees.

That's all you have to do to inhibit growth and make sure your business continues to just squeak by month after month. (I would have said "year after year" but odds are you probably won't make it that long). In the Upper Peninsula we think of our resources as our forests, lakes, and wildlife but our

WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL CREATES EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Looking for innovative approaches to address nursing shortages, War Memorial Hospital (WMH) offered ten Lake Superior State University graduating senior nursing students the ability to participate in the WMH Education Assistance Program.

This program offers these Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN) seniors a choice of two financial options for student loan and/or college expense repayment in return for a three year employment commitment as a Registered Nurse at WMH. These participating seniors received a check for the option they choose this January 2005.

WMH employees or community

members who are pursuing education to begin a career as an LPN or RN/BSN may be eligible for WMH's Educational Assistance Program. The hospital and student will enter into an Educational Assistance Agreement which offers student loan payment and/or educational expense reimbursement from the hospital. This agreement also requires an employment commitment at WMH post-graduation and licensure.

If you are a high school student or are thinking of returning to school to pursue a career in nursing, please contact WMH's recruiter, Jan Holt at 906-635-4652 to learn more about the Educational Assistance Program.



UPPER PENINSULA REPRESENTATIVES HELP KICK-OFF MICHIGAN \$1 MILLION REGIONAL SKILLS ALLIANCE INITIATIVE IN LANSING



David Hollister, Director of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth

Upper Peninsula representatives were in Lansing recently to kick-off the Michigan Regional Skills Alliance (MiRSASM) initiative, which is part of Gov. Granholm's economic and skilled workforce development plan for Michigan. Gov. Granholm has designated more than \$1 million in grants across the state to create 13 Regional Skills

Alliances (RSAs) to ensure that all job-seekers in industries ranging from construction to nanotechnology, will be trained to do the work that employers need now and in the future.

MiRSA partners, representing business, education, and non-profit organizations met in Lansing for a two-day event in October to mark the opening of the MiRSA Learning Network. The MiRSA Learning Network is designed to offer valuable information and insight to help build a successful regional skills alliance. Sessions focused on creating programs to benefit employers and workers, providing financial tips for MiRSA success, and identifying

employment and labor force trends. The keynote speaker was David C. Hollister, director of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, which leads the MiRSA initiative.

The Lake Superior Community Partnership Foundation has received a grant to focus on the utilities field, particularly electrical line technician training. The applicant was Lake Superior Community Partnership Foundation in Marquette. The Job Force Board is the other Upper Peninsula organization to receive a MiRSA grant in support of the efforts of the Upper Peninsula Health Care Roundtable.

The state of Michigan, with assistance from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, is providing one-year startup grants totaling \$1,050,000 for the initial development of 12 Michigan Regional Skills Alliances. In addition, a 13th MiRSA, focusing on nanotechnology, is supported by Economic Development Job Training funds from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.



From L to R: Joe Esbrook, Job Force Board; Don Mourand, UP HCRT; Sandy Spoelstra, Lake State Community Partnership; Jim Husing, Dickinson Health Care System; Gerald Betters, Pinecrest Medical Care Facility; David Hollister, Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth; Peter Jennings, CEO OSF St. Francis Hospital; and Orrin Bailey, Gwen Wood and Jamie Applin, Job Force Board.

The Upper Peninsula Healthcare Roundtable, in conjunction with the three Michigan Works! agencies in the region, has received a grant to create one of 13 regional skills alliances in the state.

Earlier this year, Gov. Jennifer Granholm made plans to create several



Peter Jennings, CEO OSF St. Francis Hospital addresses Upper Peninsula Healthcare concerns to State policy makers in Lansing

David Hollister, Director of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth.

"The U.P. Healthcare Roundtable is a prime example of a successful, business-led partnership formed to address the work force issues of health care organizations in Michigan's Upper Peninsula," said Al Hendra, Assistant Administrator for Marquette General Hospital and Chairman of the Roundtable. Hendra also serves as a member of the Michigan Works! The Job Force Board. "The Roundtable is best positioned to help Gov. Jennifer Granholm achieve her goals."

Michigan Works! first convened the U.P. Healthcare Roundtable in 2002 as a partnership with business, labor, community leaders, economic developers, educators, work force development boards, business associations, chambers

UPPER PENINSULA HEALTHCARE ROUND TABLE LANDS STATE GRANT

Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSAs) as part of her seven point plan to make Michigan an economic powerhouse of the 21st century.

Grant funding for the alliances was announced by

of commerce and industry.

The primary goals of The U.P. Healthcare Roundtable are to attract, train and retain a high quality workforce to meet the Upper Peninsula health care industry needs. Just as the MiRSAs are designed to do, the U.P. Healthcare Roundtable set out to resolve worker shortages, skill shortages, training mismatches, employee recruitment and retention, and other work-force related issues in health care.

We have been able to make good progress towards these goals by working together with various U.P. business and industry partners, educational institutions and all three Michigan Works! offices across the Upper Peninsula." Hendra added.

Paul Arsenault, Chairman of the Six County Employment Alliance, said that leadership and efforts of The U.P. Healthcare Roundtable have not gone unnoticed.

"We were awarded a Business Excellence Award by Operation Action U.P., an Upper Peninsula-wide organization consisting of U.P. business and industry promoting economic and workforce development, at their annual meeting last January," Arsenault said. In addition, representatives of our Health Care Roundtable have been invited to make presentations around the State.

Orrin Bailey, Chief Executive Officer of The Job Force Board, said the grant will be used to leverage private

funds to further the efforts of the U.P. Healthcare Roundtable.

"This funding will allow incumbent worker training through programs like in-service Healthcare Knowledge Deployment Systems, nursing refresher courses, health care career pathways and progression models, employee recruitment, and other imaging, nursing and staffing development issues, public policy issues just to name a few." Bailey said.

Michigan Works! The Job Force Board is a public/private partnership led by Upper Peninsula business to address workforce and business community development. More information on Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSAs) and The Job Force Board can be found at: www.Michigan.gov/rsa and www.jobforce.org.



Peter Jennings, Administrator, OSF St. Francis, Joe Esbrook, Job Force Board and Sandy Spoelstra, Lake Superior Community Partnership discussing workforce and business community development issues.