

**In The  
Spotlight**

## BOARD MEMBER ADVOCATES FOR BUSINESS

Paul Arsenault of Marquette County is the Chairman of the Six County Employment Alliance. The Six County Employment Alliance (SCEA) is a board comprised of two County Commissioners from each of the central six counties of the Upper Peninsula. The SCEA makes regional policy for business and workforce development in the Six-County area in partnership with Michigan Works! The Job Force Board.

"Paul Arsenault is doing a great job, this organization and it's customers are benefiting from his leadership," said Will Carne who is the President of Michigan Works! The Job Force Board. "Paul not only serves on the Six County Employment Alliance, he is also a Job Force Board member. He knows and is very active in our area's business and workforce development system. This combined with his knowledge and background are sure to direct the SCEA to success."

The U.S. Small Business Administration granted Paul Arsenault the 2003 Michigan Small Business Administration Financial Services Advocate of the Year. Paul is also the SBA's 2003 Midwest Regional Advocate award winner and was nominated for the national award.



Paul Arsenault, chairman of Six County Employment Alliance and a Michigan Works! The Job Force Board member.

Paul Arsenault is President and owner of Concepts Consulting, Inc., a company that specializes in assisting small business owners to obtain financing for "difficult-to-place" loans. Paul's "can-do" attitude, loan structuring expertise, and his partnerships with government loan programs have been instrumental in his success. This success can be directly measured through the economic benefit to local communities as a result of the \$60 million in loan funds that his clients have received over the past 10 years.

Paul's motto "Success is failing forward" can be seen through his instrumental efforts in the re-development of the K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base, his involvement with Michigan Works, and his leadership on the Michigan Small Business and Technology Centers State Board.

Arsenault has served on the Marquette County Board of Commissioners since 1988. He is the Past Chairman of the K.I. Sawyer EDC, currently serves as a Director for Argonics, Inc., First Step, and Michigan Works! The Job Force Board. He is

also a member of U.P. REAL Entrepreneurship, The Keweenaw Industrial Council, The National Ski Hall, and The Elks. Paul was named the 2003 Michigan U.S. Small Business Administration Financial Services Advocate of the Year. Paul is also the SBA's 2003 Midwest Regional Advocate award winner.

Arsenault currently resides in Ishpeming Township with his wife, Sandra.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

**July 1**  
**25th Year Anniversary Celebration**  
Garceau, Wenick-Kutz, Magowan Insurance Agency Inc.  
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information  
(906) 786-2192

**July 12**  
**Business Showcase (5:00-7:00)**  
Sawyer International Airport  
Call the Lake Superior Community Partnership for more information  
(906) 226-6591

**July 21**  
**Business After Hours (5:30-7:30)**  
UPCars.com  
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information  
(906) 786-2192

**July 22**  
**LSCP Annual Golf Outing**  
Marquette Golf & Country Club  
Call Cheryl for more information  
(906) 486-4841

**August 20**  
**Business After Hours (5:00-7:00)**  
Select Realty  
Call Select Realty for more information  
(906) 228-2772

**August 20**  
**Lunch with the Governor**  
U.P. State Fairgrounds  
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information  
(906) 786-2192

**August 25**  
**Business After Hours (5:30-7:30)**  
Gelina and Associates  
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information  
(906) 786-2192

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## JOB FORCE BOARD GROUP GETS AN INSIDE LOOK AT MEADWESTVACO

**MeadWestvaco** As part of its strategy to strengthen business and education partnerships, members of the Job Force Board's Career Connection Group and Youth Committee, workgroups that support career development activities, toured MeadWestvaco to learn what occupational skills are required in the Escanaba paper mill.

Kel Smyth, MeadWestvaco Community Relations Director and Job Force Board member, hosted the tour providing an historical perspective on the paper mill. The Escanaba based mill began operations in 1891 as the Escanaba Electric Street Railway Company and became the Escanaba Pulp and Paper Company in 1911. Mead Pulp and Paper leased the facility in 1922 purchasing controlling interest in the mill twenty years later. In 1948, the Escanaba Paper Company was a wholly owned operation of Mead Corporation that merged in 2002 to become MeadWestvaco.

There are currently four paper machines within the mill. The number one machine has been in the mill since 1920, albeit with some refurbishing. It is the smallest of the machines and makes cover stock and paper for yearbooks.

The coated paper produced at the mill is utilized in catalogs for retailers such as Pottery Barn and Williams Sonoma. This mill is the single largest manufacturer of textbook paper.



Kel Smyth, MeadWestvaco Community Relations Director and Job Force Board member, hosted the tour providing an historical perspective on the paper mill.

With safety being a primary focus at the mill, the group viewed a safety film that provided information on the usage of hard hats and safety goggles to the instruction of safety procedures while touring the facility. The group was educated on the entire paper making process from cutting and delimiting trees, to reducing product to wood chips, to eliminating water content, to the final paper roll. MeadWestvaco

produces over 650,000 tons of coated paper a year. Railcars ship approximately 60% of the production while trucks transport the remaining products.

Respecting the regional environment, the mill practices sustainable forestry. The Escanaba facility has greenhouses that grow millions of seedlings for forestry replanting. The bark and waste wood from the harvested trees are recycled and used as fuel in the energy plant. Generating its own electricity, the mill encompasses over 1,450 acres. The water used in the paper making process is continually cleaned and recycled.

MeadWestvaco Escanaba employs approximately 1200 people. Occupational skills utilized in this environment are plentiful. While touring the facility, the group was able to see how relevant computer and math skills are to this industry. Computers are used in the automated delimiting/debarking machines, in the office settings and throughout the mill in the operation of the paper making machines. Craft mill operations use computer graphics; machine operators utilize lathes, grinders and winders. The mill's occupations include electri

(See MEADWESTVACO)

## U.S. OLYMPIC EDUCATION CENTER MAKES DOLLARS AND SENSE

The economic impact of the U.S. Olympic Education Center (USOEC) on Marquette County would best be measured by separating the three specific groups whose activities can be directly tied to the Center. This group would include the athletes/students, the coaches and staff, and those who visit Marquette County as spectators and/or fans of specific disciplines.

The full time student/athletes, who number approximately 75, spend roughly 44 weeks in Marquette County during an average year. Figures calculated by the Marketing Department and the College of Business at NMU indicate an economic impact of \$500 per week resulting in a per student impact of \$22,000 annually. This figure assumes a multiplier of 1.6399 based on Department of Commerce data tables. Of these 75 students, 6-10 attend Marquette Area Public Schools, which re-

sults in a per-pupil-funding allocation from the state of Michigan of \$6,700/student. In addition to the 75 full time student/athletes, there are approximately 400 athletes, coaches, and officials that participate in camps and competitions annually. The average stay in Marquette for these groups is 7 days. Michigan State Center for Tourism estimates that an individual will contribute between \$120 and \$150 per overnight stay to the local economy. Individuals whose plans do not include an overnight stay will contribute between \$40 and \$70 per day.

The USOEC directly employs 9.75 FTE (full time equivalents) and the United States Olympic Committee adds another 6.0 FTE. The combined salaries of these individuals is \$560,000. Again using industry multipliers of 1.7, the total economic impact of the staff is \$952,000. Specta-

tors who travel to Marquette for events at the Center are difficult to track but conservative estimates place that number at approximately 600 annually. The average length of stay is 3 to 4 days resulting in an impact of between \$360 and \$450 per attendee. Total days spent in Marquette by students, athletes, staff, coaches, and spectators in 2002 totaled 29,857.

The USOEC will begin a new women's wrestling resident program in August 2004 that will increase student/athlete counts by an estimated 20 student athletes and 2 staff. This will result in an increase in the scholarship monies to the university as well as the related spending within the community.

The Job Force Board believes that a sound economic base is essential to maintain the quality of life in the six county region it

serves. The U.S. Olympic Education Center at NMU certainly contributes to that economic base.

Travel Michigan, a department of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) uses tourism dollar multipliers of between 5 and 7. This indicates that \$1 spent within a community by a tourist will circulate 5 - 7 times within that community before being cycled out. These figures would indicate that the \$4.1 million spent directly by individuals tied to the Center would translate to total spending within Marquette County of \$20 - \$28 million annually.



Will Carne, President

### MEADWESTVACO (Cont'd from Page 1)

cians, engineers, computer aided designers, heavy equipment operators, repair and maintenance personnel, office clerical, sales and material recyclers.

Jim Zobel, of Emerson Tool and Career Connections Group Member stated, "I was impressed with their operation. Their facility appeared to be in very good shape, their employees were cooperative and courteous. Kel [Smyth] did a very good job of over viewing their business situation and their process flow". Judy Watson Olson, Marquette Alger Youth

Foundation and Job Force Board Youth Committee member added, "I thought the tour was great. They sure have a super video. I was impressed by how few people we really saw working. That makes me wonder about all the different types of jobs there must be there, as the video spoke about. What a huge plant! I knew it was big, but I always like to see it and feel how big things are. I am really interested in the renewable resource concept of education for our children and communities. We need to work on getting more teachers exposed to our businesses."

## DICKINSON AREA PARTNERSHIP LEADERSHIP ACADEMY NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS!



The Dickinson Area Partnership is launching its Leadership Academy. Known as LEAD, (Leadership Excellence to Advance Dickinson) this academy cultivates, develops and nurtures the leaders and emerging leaders within the Dickinson County community. It identifies, assembles and motivates its area leaders, following a model for leadership development used successfully in similar programs across the region and country.

Through a series of seminars and using the community itself for a classroom, the program allows emerging leaders to exchange information and ideas with established leaders and experts from many fields. Future leaders gain first-hand information about critical issues as they develop skills and resources necessary for effective roles in public affairs and business.

Key Objects of LEAD are:

- To identify potential leaders
- To educate participants about community needs and leadership opportunities
- To improve management and leadership skills
- To develop relationships of value when working together on community projects
- To create rapport among participants and present community leaders; and
- To assist in matching the talents of selected participants with leadership needs.

The LEADership Academy will conduct annual "classes." Both applicant and their employers must agree that each applicant will devote a least one week day per month for nine months from September to May to the program. The format is similar to successful programs in other communities. Attendance by participants in the LEADership Academy is mandatory.

Applications may be initiated individually or by nomination. Participants will be chosen from the written applications.

For more information, contact the Partnership at: 774-2002.

## LINE SCHOOL GRADUATES 28

It has taken over two years, hundreds of volunteer and staff hours, tens of thousands of dollars in donations, two highly qualified instructors and 28 incredible students to get to this point. The point? The first ever graduating class of the *Midwest Skills Development Center*.

As I stood watching the graduates cross the stage, I couldn't help but realize that all these combined efforts have made a difference in people's lives. Several of the graduates had already accepted job offers both in and out of the Upper Peninsula. Speaking with them and their families, you couldn't help but feel their excitement.

Part of the placement efforts at the *Skill Center* included a Student Showcase where headhunters and human resource managers from companies in a five state region were invited. A list of those invited was also provided in order for the students to send out resumes or to make follow up contacts. Michigan Works!

provided students training on how to build a resume and proper interview techniques and a computer lab and fax machine was provided for students to distribute their completed resumes. It is the goal of the *Skill Center's* Advisory Board to have 100% placement of the entire Class of 2004.

A special thank you to those who sponsored the graduation event:

- UPPCO
- We Energies
- Michigan Works! The Job Force Board
- ATC
- Champion, Inc.

To name everyone involved in supporting this effort would take a full page of the newsletter, and even then I may miss someone. To view a detailed list of the donors, volunteers and board members, please log onto [www.marquette.org](http://www.marquette.org) and click on the *Midwest Skills Development Center*.



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## NORTHERN INITIATIVES: PROFITABLE PARTNERSHIP FOR MICHIGAN'S UPPER PENINSULA

Founded in 1958, Jacquart Fabric Products started as a small family cut and sew business. Bob Jacquart bought the company from his father, and turned it into a successful upholstery firm. In the 1980s Jacquart landed several mass production projects, sewing such things custom boat covers, polar fleece hats and gun cases.

Jacquart Fabric is now a multi-million dollar business employing more than 200 people – with dog beds (in 95 styles and three sizes) as the primary product. The company was helped in part by expertise and loans from Northern Initiatives, a not-for-profit community development corporation.

“We helped Bob transform the way that he was producing,” said Dennis West, president of Northern Initiatives. “He’s adopted modern manufacturing and now serves international markets.”

Not bad for a small company started in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (U.P.) – an area known more for winter sports than business start-ups. But Northern Initiatives is working to change that stereotype and boost the economics and quality of life in northern Michigan.

### History of NI

In 1985, with an unemployment rate at 20 percent, Michigan’s Upper Peninsula was feeling the full effects of the recession. Making matters worse, this area depended largely on the whims of outside market forces as they were affecting the resource extraction industry.

Northern Initiatives was born during this time when then President of Northern Michigan University (NMU), Dr. James Appleberry, saw a direct connection between regional economic health and stable enrollment at his school. The organization first ran under a grant as the Northern Economic Initiatives Center (NEIC). It was established as an independent university department housed on campus.

NEIC provided professional services and capital to small enterprises with innovative products that could be made attractive to outside markets. But by the early 1990s, the organization decided to expand the scale of its lending program in addition to providing business development services. This shift required NEIC to move from being a department at NMU to a corporate, not-for-profit affiliated with NMU and ShoreBank Corporation of Chicago.

ShoreBank, a community development and environmental banking corporation, is responsible for rejuvenating Chicago’s inner-city neighborhoods by encouraging outside investments. The struggles in inner-city Chicago, often stemming from problems associated with outside ownership of key resources, mirrored problems in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. So seemingly strange bedfellows – a private bank and a university – partnered to form a private, not-for-profit corporation in 1992.

“It was a great situation because you had the vision of a university and the development expertise of a bank,” said West, who joined NI as president in 1997. An Indiana native working in community development for two decades, West moved to the U.P. for the opportunity at NI, but also for his family.

Northern Initiatives provides business development services to more than 200 companies annually. Following the lead of Jane Jacobs and her philosophy on rural areas, NI has created connections between their rural businesses and urban areas with access to capital, knowledge and markets.

West puts forth the example of Jacquart Fabrics, the cut and sew company. NI became a prime lender to the company, as well as helping Bob Jacquart find information he needed to improve manufacturing and open up international markets for his products.

Northern Initiatives has issued 13 million dollars in loan funds to customers in the last nine years. Amounts range from \$2,000 to \$500,000 and can be freestanding or in conjunction with funds from local banks to complete a larger financing package. Rates are typically comparable to or slightly higher than local banks.

“Largely what we see ourselves doing is being a secondary lender,” West said. “We are the better alternative to someone starting up a business with their credit card.”

Loans can be used for working capital, to build inventory, for expanding facilities, to upgrade equipment, for technology enhancements and for business acquisitions.

The organization does not compete with local banks, rather they complement their services and help customers get back to one of the 27 banking institutions in the U.P.

West said that 60 percent of recent loans have been to start-up businesses. Judging by

their low default rate, NI is successfully helping these ventures. But they also do extensive work with existing manufacturers, such as Jacquarts; family-owned small businesses; catalyst entrepreneurs and social and corporate entrepreneurs.

In addition to the technical assistance services that complement lending services, NI helps clients with accounting, financial statements, marketing and website development. These services are typically free for loan recipients.

### Information: Key to the Future

In working with businesses, West said, “Capital matters, but we need to make the case that information matters just as much.” West said NI is in the process of surveying clients about what information has been most helpful for entrepreneurs.

“We are trying to make a compelling case for information support services and why they are so important to people starting businesses,” West said. He likes his work at NI because, as he said, “We get a chance to see companies and individuals really stretch and be able to say they are extraordinarily competitive. It’s great to be able to grow and achieve.” And, West said, those individual achievements have high pay-offs for communities. For example, in Marquette, Michigan – the largest town in the U.P. – businesses have thrived, creating benefits such as a symphony, sports teams and other cultural events. Successful doctors in that town have banned together to donate their time for people without insurance. “Those things cannot occur when we don’t have economic stability and development,” West said. “What we are really looking to achieve is quality of life.”

## TWO BIG PROJECTS ON TAP FOR THE MARQUETTE COUNTRY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU THIS SUMMER

Excitement is the common feeling in the office at the Marquette Country Convention & Visitors Bureau these days. The Bureau is working on two major projects that will help the tourism industry in the county to attract more visitors.

The Bureau has contracted with Northern Initiatives to implement a Vacation Package Program that will be available to every visitor to the website. Over thirty participants have agreed to come on board with the

hotels in the county to allow visitors to build their own vacation packages and book them on line. It’s easy one stop shopping which will hopefully sell more rooms and attractions.

Also on tap for this summer is marketing the arrival of the HMS Bounty. For Mutiny on the Bounty fans, this is the original ship that was used in both the Marlon Brando and Mel Gibson movies. The Bounty will be arriving into the lower harbor in Marquette on the evening of August

26, and tours will be available on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Also going on at the same time in the lower harbor park is Rotary’s Seafood Fest. What a great event weekend.

The Bounty is being brought in by the Marquette Maritime Museum in cooperation with the Marquette County Historical Museum. The Convention & Visitors Bureau has agreed to do the marketing for this event weekend. Anyone wanting to view the history or pictures of the

Bounty can do so on the Bureau’s web site at [www.marquettecountry.org](http://www.marquettecountry.org).

This promises to be a terrific summer for visitors to Marquette and inquiries are at a record 3,700 per week during the month of May. This keeps the staff busy answering each and every one, that will hopefully bring more visitors to the area. For more information, please call the Bureau toll free at 800-544-4321 or (906) 228-7749.

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## ABOUT NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY'S CENTER FOR ECONOMIC EDUCATION



NMU-CEE's mission includes educating K-12 educators, students and parents of students about the economic way of thinking and instilling in them an appreciation for this rational, life-long way of thinking and its applications. The Center seeks to accomplish this mission by providing a variety of services, programs and resources. K-12 educator training programs, professional development workshops, graduate courses, outcomes assessment, standards-based educational materials and peer-reviewed products help the NMU-CEE advance economic literacy across the region of the Upper Peninsula and the state of Michigan. NMU-CEE is a part of the Michigan Council on Economic Education which is, in turn, a member of the National Council on Economic Education. Dr. Tawni Ferrarini, an Assistant Professor of Economics at NMU, serves as the director.

### NMU-CEE Goals

Northern Michigan University's Center for Economic Education provides leadership promoting and strengthening economic education in our region and state, this regional, university/college based center for economic education:

- Provides in-service and pre-service training for teachers
- Develops and distributes curriculum materials
- Generates interest in learning economics through student competitions
- Offers guidance to school systems seeking advice on curriculum development
- Recognizes teachers and school systems for outstanding endeavors

### Programs

All NMU-CEE programs are designed to address a variety of Michigan standards and benchmarks in economics, social studies, language arts, math and personal finance.

#### *Michigan Stock Market Game" (SMG)*

This educational simulation teaches about the stock markets, the American economic system, and the global economy. Students in grades 4-12 are responsible for developing and managing hypothetical investment portfolios worth \$100,000. Over 1,000,000 Michigan students have participated since the beginning of the program in 1980. Visit the National Stock Market Game site.

#### *"A Picture is Worth a 1,000 Words" Poster Contest*

Students in grades 1-8 illustrate in poster from one of the following economic concepts: scarcity, productive resources, opportunity cost, specialization, producers and consumers, goods and services. Each of twelve winners receives a \$50 U.S. Savings

Bond. Three will appear in a school year color calendar published by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

#### *Econ & Me*

An award winning education series that teaches five basic economic concepts: scarcity, opportunity cost, consumption, production, and interdependence. The five 15-minute videos revolve around four children and their invisible friend, Jeremiah E. Connery (ECON). A teacher's guide who supports the videos for both students and teacher accompanies the program. These five concepts comprise the core of the Elementary Level Standards and Benchmarks.

#### *Virtual Economics CD-ROM*

This CD-ROM functions like a knowledgeable computer, providing teaching strategies, contents, and definitions for anyone teaching economics. The Virtual Econ CD-ROM offers everything needed to teach economics or incorporate economic units into lesson plans for every even from Kindergarten through Grade 12. The Resource Library contains 140 documents and 20,000 pages of the newest and best instructional material. All are categorized for K-2, 5-8, and 9-12. For more information about this program, check out the Virtual Economics page.

#### *Mini-Society*

An experience-based program that teaches youngsters about economics, government, entrepreneurship, consumer issues, and responsibility. Mini-Society also incorporates math, literature, law, and citizenship. Students in grades 4-7 design and implement a working economic system in their classroom. MCEE and the Kauffmann Foundation offer workshops that train teachers to create a Mini-Society within their own classrooms. The Mini-Society is endorsed by the Michigan Council for the Social Studies and the Michigan Department of Education.

#### *Financial Fitness for Life (FFFL)*

The FFFL teaches younger students the ABC's of how to manage money and make smart choices while they learn to read, add and subtract. It enhances the middle school child's growing awareness of the world by imparting knowledge of how the world works while helping high school students consider the future, set goals and make realistic plans for their futures. Students are given many opportunities to learn by doing through the FFFL program. Web links and a CD-ROM are used for interactive and learning-by-doing, technology-

based experiences. The overall program is comprehensive, rewarding and enjoyable, and involves the whole classes, families, organizations, and groups.

#### *Mathematics and Economics*

In today's era of interdisciplinary studies, this program shows math teachers how mathematics concepts and knowledge can be used to develop economic and personal financial understandings. Mathematics teachers need not have a background in economics in order to implement the curriculum. The state and nationwide network economic educators can be called upon to provide K-12 educator support with any questions that may arise.

#### *Entrepreneurship and Economics*

This curriculum combines learning economics with understanding entrepreneurship. It provides materials that focus on explaining how entrepreneurs influence our economy, innovation, profits, markets, lending and borrowing, and how government and our economy affect entrepreneurs.

#### *Michigan Awards for Excellence in Teaching Economics*

This awards program recognizes teachers for excellence in teaching economics, entrepreneurship, and personal finance concepts in their classroom. The program acknowledges Michigan teachers who creatively integrate economic education into their classrooms, while fostering a continued sharing of successful teaching experiences in economics among teachers at every level.

#### *Economics Challenge*

Co-sponsored with NCEE, Goldman Sachs, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago this program is an opportunity for teams of four high school students to demonstrate their knowledge on a broad array of economic topics and subjects. The Challenge is divided into two categories: Adam Smith for Advanced Placement Economics and David Ricardo for standard economics classes. The state champions will go to Chicago for the Regional Competition with an opportunity to qualify for the National Championship in New York City.

#### *Educator Associates*

Economic educators who are enthusiastic about improving the way economics is taught in Michigan. These individuals work in the network of Regional Center for Economic Education and Professor Associates. EA's support educators by providing creative and effective teaching strategies. They conduct workshops introducing new approaches for teaching economic concepts and benchmarks.

#### *Developmental Econ Ed Partners (DEEP)*

Helps schools set standards, train teachers, align curriculum, and evaluate results so that

every student has the opportunity to leave twelfth grade with a basic level of economic and personal financial literacy. Through the statewide network of Centers for Economic Education, the Council offers professional development courses and workshops to enable teachers to assess and implement quality, standards-based economic education materials effectively in their classroom.

## Emerson Tool Menominee Plant Receives State's Highest Ergonomics Award

*Congratulations are in order for the Menominee plant of Emerson Tool Company, a division of Emerson, for its receipt of the Ergonomic Success Award from the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) on April 6. This is the first Ergonomic Success Award issued to an employer since 2000.*

The ergonomic improvements at the Menominee facility have significantly reduced the number of repetitive motion injuries for its employees. MIOSHA's Consultation Education & Training (CET) Division issues the Ergonomic Success Award to employers for instituting ergonomic improvements and substantially reducing traumatic strain and sprain injuries and cumulative trauma disorder illnesses.

The Menominee plant's ergonomic improvements resulted from a total revision of its assembly processes. Ideas for these revisions came from several sources, including employees who worked in the assembly areas, injury reports, safety committee suggestions, and the company's engineering department. Emerson Tool Company is a division of Emerson focused on the manufacturing of Craftsman utility vacuums for Sears. Jim Zobel, Human Resource Manager, of Emerson Tool serves on the Job Force Board's Career Connections Group.