

Michigan Works! is considered a valuable ingredient by area bakery

Taystee Bakery, a well known local business, is located in Marquette, Michigan and is a large scale area employer with 250 employees, including individuals in; sales, retail, distribution, production, transportation, sanitation, maintenance, administration, and clerical. The sales area covers the entire Upper Peninsula of Michigan and extends into some parts of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Taystee Bakery is one of our areas major producers of hamburger buns, hot dog buns, white breads and wheat breads. Some name brands



produced are; Roman Meal, D'Italiano, Burger King buns and Wendy's buns. This is also the only plant that makes Gerber Baby Toast.

Taystee Bakery is owned by the Sara Lee Corporation. The bakery division of Sara Lee is the second largest in the world, and consists of 28,000 employees while the entire Sara Lee Corporation has 150,000 employees. Other divisions owned by Sara Lee are; Platex, Haines, Champion, and Jimmy Dean's Sausage.

"I really enjoy working with Michigan Works!" recently interviewed Human Resources Manager, Trina Ruokola says, "I am often in situations that need immediate attention. Michigan Works! has dropped off employment applications when I have been unable to get away to collect them."

She continued, "Before, we had people seeking employment fill out applications at our plant. Now we have interested parties fill out applications at The Michigan Works! Service Center. This has saved time for our support staff as well as myself and decreased phone calls from applicants checking on employment status and hiring updates."

Another service Michigan Works! offers that Trina finds very valuable is placing employment opportunities (Job openings) on the Michigan Talent Bank website, reaching potential employees across the Upper Peninsula, as well as across the country.

"Michigan Works! has services to meet our Human Resource needs; employee handbooks, job description support, and employee training to name just a few. When I am looking for information on employee issues they have provided me with materials and websites where I can get the answers I need."

In The Spotlight



Trina Ruokola HR manager and Don Stewart Plant Manager

"I appreciate the quality of their services and value the time that they have been able to provide to me by taking over employment recruiting and screening. I would highly recommend any business or agency currently not using their services to make an appointment and see what Michigan Works has to offer them!" Trina Ruokola of Taystee Bakery.

Taystee Bakery is one of the many area businesses who Michigan Works! is proud to be able to provide services. From posting job openings to screening applications, and from providing skill assessments of applicants, to providing rooms for interviewing, Michigan Works! is here to do everything possible to fill your job openings with the best possible candidates.

If you would like to know more about the services that Michigan Works! can offer to area businesses, please contact your nearest Michigan Works! Service Center. Their Addresses and phone numbers are listed on the back page of this issue.

Inside this issue:

In The Spotlight- Taystee Bakery	1
President's Corner- Strategic Planning	2
Featured System Member of the Month	2
Employment Summary	3
Business Dreams Come True	3
Summer Job Outlook Good	4
Career Readiness Certificate	4
Chamber of Commerce News	5
Educational Institution News	6
Guest Commentary by State Representative Doug Bovin, District 108	7

President's Corner: Strategic Planning

In the May 2002 issue of the *Michigan Works! Business is UP-Date*, I took a moment to share our actions and accomplishments with regards to one of the goals in our Strategic Plan, which is to create multiple opportunities for employers to access skill training for existing employees. This month, I would again like to take a look at some of our actions and accomplishments in regards to our Strategic Plan, but now in regards to our goal of having employers indicate that the academic and employability skills of jobseekers are at, or more ideally, above those desired by the employer.

To recap a little about our Strategic Plan, in March of 2000, Michigan Works! The Job Force Board (JFB) and its Career Connections Group (CCG) embarked upon an extensive community-based strategic planning process involving key community stakeholders. This initiative began in response to the Michigan Department of Career Development's challenge to local Michigan Works! Workforce Development Boards and their Education Advisory Groups to create a Career Development System that is effective and responsive to local and regional needs along with supporting the Mission of the Department of Career Development (MDCD) "To develop a system that produces a workforce with the required skills to maintain and enhance the Michigan Economy."

The purpose of this strategic planning process is to identify strategies, actions, tasks and measurements to create and maintain a healthy and growing economy, with an equipped local workforce that has the knowledge and skills needed by business in a technological and competitive market place. The process will identify and strengthen

partnerships in which coordination of career development services will be enhanced, allocation of available resources will be optimized, and the career development system will successfully meet the needs of both business and workers.

Within the strategic plan, the Job Force Board and its Career Connections Group has developed goals that will be pursued in addition to existing career development initiatives under the MDCD Career Preparation System. The goals augment the strategic planning and implementation efforts already undertaken by the Career Connections Group.

Our goal of having employers indicate that the academic and employability skills of jobseekers are at, or more ideally, above those desired by the employer, is, like all of our goals, something that we take very seriously. One of the ways that we are attempting to reach our goal is to hold job skills workshops for local schools.

The Youth Works! initiative, which is an ongoing project by Michigan Works! is holding entry-level soft skills training for groups of students from Marquette County Schools. These events are intended to involve students in a series of workshops to improve their employability skills.

Topics of these workshops include:

- ◆ Customer service
- ◆ Community awareness
- ◆ Teamwork and work ethic
- ◆ Workplace standards
- ◆ How to dress, apply and interview for jobs
- ◆ Job retention

These events, which are a joint effort planned by Michigan Works!, The Lake Superior Partners in Education, and the Marquette Alger RESA, are in response to businesses stating that the entry level workforce is skill deficient, specifically lacking in soft skills. These workshops are intended to increase the soft skill levels, and help the students to be better prepared for what is expected in the workforce.

These opportunities to help provide soft skills workshops are appreciated because they help us to achieve our goal of having a skilled workforce that meets and exceeds the desired levels of employers. Hopefully, The Job Force Board's continued involvement in our region will help to ensure a quality workforce, and the economic well being of our area.

If you would like to know more about the services provided by Michigan Works!, please view our website at www.jobforce.org, or give us a call at 1-800-285-WORKS. The addresses and phone numbers of each of the service centers are listed on the back page of this issue.



Will Carne

Featured System Member of the Month: Steve Lieburn

Steven J. Lieburn, the Director of the Delta-Menominee Family Independence Agency (FIA), has been a member of The Job Force Board for four years, and has also been a member of the Career Connection Group for the past two years.

Steve originally became involved with The Job Force Board because he was seeking to partner services with key community agencies. During his tenure, Steve states that the restructuring of the Workforce Development Board, and the formulation of the Youth Committee are two Michigan Works! accomplishments that remain vivid in his memory.

In his position as the Director of the Delta-Menominee Family Independence Agency, Steve is tasked with dual management of all

FIA programs in both counties, and supervision of the FIA adoption program for the Upper Peninsula, as well as Mackinaw and Cheboygan counties.

Steve is proud that Menominee County was one of the original *Project Zero* Pilot Counties. Menominee was the second county to achieve the success of having all cash assistance customers employed.

Besides his professional endeavors, Steve is also an active outdoorsman and is involved in everything from sea kayaking and fishing to hiking and mountain biking. He even travels to Montana every spring to fish and to help friends round up and brand their beef cattle.

Michigan Works! The Job Force Board

wishes to thank Steve Lieburn for his dedication and helping to enhance the workforce of the central Upper Peninsula.



Steve Lieburn

Employment Summary, First Quarter 2002

Six County Employment Summary First Quarter 2002

As of the end of the 1st quarter of 2002, the Six County region has fared better than some had predicted from an employment level perspective. That is not to say that there are no areas of concern, but that in light of pressures from the recent recession and its effect across the country, coupled with the local mine situation, the area appears to be in fairly good shape.

Over the years the employment snapshot in the region has always shown that employment is at its lowest during the winter periods and peaks during the mid-year period. For this reason comparison of year-to-year monthly averages can be misinterpreted early in the year. The following statements on workforce and employment data address only first quarter information from 2001 and 2002 in order to provide meaningful comparisons.

Workforce

The reported workforce remained stable for the 1st quarter compared to the same period last year. There is a reported gain of 775 people, or 0.3% in this category. The biggest changes were a 1.3% gain in workforce in Marquette, and a 1.9% decrease in Menominee.

Employment

Through March the cumulative employment level for the 1st quarter was 1.7% behind 2001, with Marquette reporting a 2.3% decline and Menominee declining 3.1%. The remaining counties of Alger, Delta, Dickinson and Schoolcraft saw comparable period declines ranging from 0.5% to 1.8%.

The Marquette employment decline is the result of the mine layoffs. Excluding this factor from the equation the county actually gained employment during the period at an average of 125 jobs per month.

Menominee has displayed a recent history of job declines in the manufacturing and trade areas. Since 1999 monthly employment in manufacturing is down 400 and trade at 350.

The employment opportunity picture of the region remains reasonably positive. The encouraging news is that the mine layoffs, while expected to take some toll, will not be as severe as originally projected. The recent recession did not impact the area as much as feared. While there has been some reduction in manufacturing employment, it generally has not been as bad as experienced in other parts of the country. For the most, part the area has held its own over the past year. We are also beginning to see more chain operation expansions, and while admittedly most are not of high pay levels, the door seems to be opening for increased attention from national and regional businesses.

Ordinary People Make Their Business Dreams Come True

Thinking of opening your own business? You are not alone. As a matter of fact, over 3 million people like you open businesses in the United States every year. On April 10th and 11th over 30 area residents joined in a meeting to identify the necessary first steps. Workshop participants shared ideas, concerns and questions with experienced facilitators who suggested that such items also be addressed in the business plan. Instruction in business plan creation followed accordingly. Cash flow projection worksheets, assessment instruments/resources, and a checklist of "Things to Remember When Going into Business" were

provided to assist participants as they test the feasibility of their own business concept.

Northern Initiatives partnered with Michigan Works! to offer the sessions. Northern Initiatives is a non-profit corporation whose mission is to support entrepreneurs, businesses, manufacturing firms, banks, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations in a common effort to strengthen the economy of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Northern Initiatives offers flexible loan programs designed to support start-ups and established businesses with loans ranging from \$2,000-\$500,000.

Northern Initiatives also supports its borrowers with financial management consulting services.

Michigan Works! publicized and hosted workshop sessions at their Marquette County Service Center facility. Participants found the comfortable furnishings, and fully equipped meeting space more than accommodating during their time together. It may not be widely known, but the Michigan Works! Service Center's conference room facility is available for use by area businesses for the conduct of meetings or training events. Besides the meeting facilities, Michigan Works! offers a wide variety of service to both large and small business.

Northern Initiatives facilitated the sessions. The one-hour overview workshops were a condensed version of the three-hour workshop series that is offered once a month at the Peter White Public Library. Workshops, like these, are excellent occasions for networking, a bonus added to the more obvious opportunity to learn and share ideas. For information on business start-up workshops contact Dar Shepherd, Northern Initiatives, at (906) 226-1669 or The Marquette County Michigan Works! Service Center at (906) 228-3075.

Sponsor a page in the Michigan Works! Business is UP-Date

The Michigan Works! Business is UP-Date is a respected area newsletter providing local business, economic, and educational information to over 3,500 business professionals throughout the Central Upper Peninsula.

There are various sponsorship opportunities for the Michigan Works Business is UP-Date Newsletter insuring that all businesses can find the publicity that they are looking for within our pages.

For sponsorship information contact Rob Carviou at:

- (906)-789-0558 extension 223
- Fax: (906)-789-9952
- rcarviou@jobforce.org

MICHIGAN WORKS!
business is UP-Date



The Michigan Career Readiness Certificate

The Michigan Career Readiness Certificate (MCRC) is a portable credential that signifies to a potential employer that an individual has achieved acceptable levels in the foundation skills necessary for success in the workplace. The Michigan Council on Technical Excellence, which is chaired by Lt. Governor Dick Posthumus, and whose members represent business, labor, and education, developed the Michigan Career Readiness Certificate based on the WorkKeys employability skills assessment system.

WorkKeys Assessments

WorkKeys is a comprehensive employability skills assessment tool designed to help employers and individuals develop better workplace skills. Thousands of companies in the United States and internationally use WorkKeys skill assessments, job profiles, training evaluations and research and reporting services to assess skills needs and measure progress.

Skills Measured by the MCRC

The WorkKeys assessments used to measure the foundation skills are applied math, reading for information, locating information, and writing. The skill levels that apply to the MCRC are applied math, (level 4), reading for information (level 5), locating information (level 4) and writing (level 3).

What the Skill Levels Mean

All WorkKeys tests are scored within a numerical range for each subject, which identifies varying levels of complexity.

Applied Math (Level 4) range = 3 to 7

A person with Level 4 skills can:

- Add, subtract, multiply and divide positive or negative numbers, including fraction, decimals, and percentages.
- Calculate averages, simple ratios, proportions, and rates.
- Read simple chart or graph to obtain information to solve a problem.

Reading for Information (Level 5) range = 3 to 6

A person with Level 5 skills can:

- Recognize the application of technical terms or jargon to stated situations.
- Identify the appropriate definition of a word with multiple meanings.
- Apply instructions to new situations.

Locating Information (Level 4) range 3 to 6

A person with Level 4 skills can:

- Summarize and/or compare information and trends in charts and graphs.

Writing (Level 3) range = 1 to 5

A person with Level 3 skills can:

- Write clear messages, which

may include incomplete sentences or minor errors in grammar and punctuation but do not compromise the message.

Why the MCRC Is Needed

All too often, the skills and abilities of students and employees simply aren't keeping up with the demands of the workplace. WorkKeys identifies the particular skills needed for particular jobs. Students and job applicants can use their WorkKeys scores to determine how their skills measure up to those requires in the workplace. The MCRC can quickly demonstrate to an employer that individuals are job-ready and have the foundation skills necessary for success, thereby distinguishing themselves from the competition.

How to Obtain the MCRC

An individual can qualify for and receive the Michigan Career Readiness Certificate by testing at the appropriate skill levels on the WorkKeys Assessments. WorkKeys assessments may be taken at one of 42 WorkKeys Service Centers throughout the state, or through participating schools and Michigan Works! Agencies. To get a list of the Michigan WorkKeys Service Centers, call 1-866-MY-GOALS or visit the Michigan Department of Career Development's Website at www.michigan.gov/mdcd.

Bringing Youth & Business Together

Imagine the Possibilities...

Youth Works! for BUSINESS

We provide your business with:

- ✓ Motivated Youth
- ✓ Applicant Screening
- ✓ Labor Market Information
- ✓ Employment Regulation Information
- ✓ Save your Business Time and Money
- ✓ Placement Services



Our Youth Applicant Pool:

- ✓ Attends a soft skills pre-employment workshop
- ✓ Are screened by a professional Michigan Works! staff member
- ✓ Are talented, motivated and responsible
- ✓ Possess a wide variety of skills

Youth Works! for YOUTH

We help youth with:

- ✓ Job Information
- ✓ Applications to local business
- ✓ Career Exploration
- ✓ Education Opportunities
- ✓ Access to Computer Lab
- ✓ Employment Career Resources
- ✓ Soft Skills Training

Contact your Nearest Michigan Works! Service Center- (Contact information is on the back) for more details. 1-800-285-WORKS

Michigan Teen Summer Job Outlook Good for 2002

Expected improvements in the state's overall economy this summer should be mirrored in the teen labor market situation, based on the state's recent employment trends, the national outlook, and normal seasonal patterns for June, July, and August. An anticipated increase in teen (ages 16-19) labor force participation should show a slightly higher employment level of 351,800.

Tips for a successful summer job search include:

- Start looking early.
- Keep looking.
- Visit establishments.
- Let friends/neighbors know you are looking.
- Think about self-employment such as lawn service, pet sitting, etc

The table below shows the actual data from summer 2001, the forecast for 2002, and the change:

	Teen Labor Force	Teen Employment	Teen Unemployment	Teen Unemployment Rate
Summer 2001 (Actual)	411,300	347,600	63,700	15.50%
Summer 2002 (Forecast)	418,100	351,800	66,300	15.90%
Change	6,800	4,200	2,600	0.40%

Source: Occupational Information & Research Section, Employment Service Agency, Michigan Department of Career Development