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Governor Announces New Construction Collaborative

Governor O'Malley recently announced the creation of the Maryland Center for Construction Education and Innovation (MCCEI), an education and training clearinghouse which will work with four-year colleges and universities, community colleges, and the business and labor communities.

The center's vision is to increase the supply of qualified construction personnel and work collaboratively to improve the awareness and perception of Maryland's construction industry.

The Center will be housed at the Towson Global Incubator on the campus of Towson University. It will promote construction industry careers through a focus on education and training.

Construction provides jobs to 188,000 Marylanders, 7.4 % of the State's workforce.



National Leaders Address GWIB Construction- Energy Forum

In the first of its kind in Maryland, more than 250 leaders from Maryland's construction and energy industries, government, education, and the workforce and economic development communities joined forces for the GWIB's Construction and Energy Workforce Solutions Forum on July 21, 2009, at the BWI Marriott Hotel. Joining these two seemingly disparate industries reflects the growing green trend across the country.

Governor Martin O'Malley gave the keynote speech addressing Maryland's national leadership in smart, green, and growing initiatives, and his administration's commitment to growing jobs in the green economy. *"The synergy between our construction and energy sectors represents some of our greatest assets as we pursue our shared priorities,"* said Governor O'Malley. *"As we seek to address our challenges together, our State is facing a transformational moment. The investments and choices we make today – particularly in our emerging green economy – will have an impact in the choices we're able to make in the decades to follow."*

The featured program speaker, Bracken Hendricks, Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, described the potential areas for job growth in the construction and energy industries. Policies that reduce carbon emissions and public investments in clean technologies have helped fuel this growth. He noted that energy efficiency, particularly in residential and commercial building retrofits, will provide the greatest job growth with the highest return on investment. The Forum

also featured a panel discussion on technology and trends that drive workforce development. The Forum attendees also heard from panelists discussing similar issues, including national expert Kurt W. Roth, Ph.D., from the Building Energy Efficiency Fraunhofer Center for Sustainable Energy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

GWIB's Construction and Energy Steering Committees served as the Forum's co-hosts. Gino Gemignani, and Martin Knott, Jr. served as co-chairs of the Construction Committee, and James Rzepkowski, and Peter Lowenthal chaired the Energy Committee. Each committee released a draft report defining their respective workforce challenges and recommendations to improve the attraction, retention, education and training of a skilled workforce in Maryland. Final copies of the reports will be presented to the Governor's Workforce Investment Board in September, and available on the GWIB website.

At the close of the forum, attendees were asked to heed a call to action, noting the importance of focusing on a few critical and actionable recommendations aimed at addressing the industry's workforce issues. While a great deal more work is needed to implement them, industry leaders must step forward to work with state and local agencies, education and organizations to move from planning to implementation. For more information, please visit www.mdworkforce.com.

Job Corps Goes Green with The Electrical Contractors

This summer, the Woodland Job Corps Center and Anne Arundel Community College teamed up with local contractors from the Chesapeake Chapter of the Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) to provide 75 federal Job Corps students with cutting-edge training in solar panel installation.

The training prepared the students for a professional future, with a social and environmental conscience. Job Corps, an organization funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, specializes in assisting low-income young people ages 16 to 24 to earn their high school diploma or GED, acquire necessary

career skills to obtain and maintain employment. The students gained “green” expertise as they worked together developing hands-on skills over a two week period. They built a five-panel solar energy system at the Woodland Job Corps site, the first in the nation to facilitate the solar panel training.

“Working side-by-side with some of the Job Corps students on this project, I was extremely impressed by their work ethic and eagerness to learn these new skills,” said Hawkins Electric Service CEO Eric Shatzer, the recently appointed IEC representative on the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP).

The IEC Chesapeake Chapter has played a significant role in this project, donating 145 labor hours. In January, they were approved by NABCEP to administer its entry-level certificate of knowledge exam.

“For every hour that the sun shines on the project, it will generate 5,000 watts of electrical power. On average, that will be 20,000 watts a day or 600,000 watts of electricity a year. The amazing thing about it is that it will do it silently, without increasing green house gases and without using any fossil fuels,” said Derek Coen, of participating supplier Atlantic Electric Supply and Chair of the IEC Chesapeake Alternative Energy Committee.

For more information, please visit www.iec-chesapeake.com.



Job Corps participants installing solar panels.

Maryland Pushes to Be National Leader in Solar Industry

In Maryland, \$18 million of the \$54 million federal stimulus package is slated to spark economic recovery via alternative energy. Interest in solar energy spiked in the early 1970s, but faded when federal and state incentives dried up in the 1980s. Now, with Marylanders facing skyrocketing energy costs, and rolling brownouts as soon as 2011, many consumers are reconsidering their solar options.

Across the state, Maryland’s counties have also participated in aggressively pushing solar energy, including Anne Arundel, Harford, Montgomery and Howard counties. In these counties, participation has in a variety of programs has risen tremendously since their inception. In 2007, Maryland’s state lawmakers approved an initiative that would mandate two percent of the state’s power come from solar by 2022. In 2008, state lawmakers designated almost grant money for residential and small business solar installations, and increase the amount of the grant. Despite the recent budget crisis, the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) announced that sufficient funds have been added to the Maryland Solar Energy Grant Program to cover all applicants who had previously been placed on the waitlist. Additional funding is now available to Maryland residents and small businesses who intend to install qualified solar photovoltaic, or solar hot water systems. With the rapidly growing demand for solar energy in the state, MEA has implemented new guidelines in order to support funding through the end of Fiscal Year 2010.

According to Malcolm Woolf, the director of the Maryland Energy Administration, Maryland is poised to become a national leader in the solar industry if the state’s solar energy industry continues at its current pace. For more information, please visit the Solar section of the MEA website: www.energy.state.md.us.

Source: Maryland Energy Administration & Nathan Lew, Ezine articles.

Obama's *Great Course Giveaway* Promises Free Education

Community Colleges, Student and Incumbent Workers to Benefit

Last February, President Obama urged all Americans to pursue at least one year of post-high-school job training. In July he set a more specific goal: *by 2020, he wants 5 million more Americans to graduate from community colleges.* The plan calls for \$12 billion to be spent over a ten year span on the "American Graduation Initiative." \$9 billion will be set aside to create competitive grants for schools to develop new programs and expand job training and counseling.

The program, being touted by the Chronicle of Higher Education as "Obama's Great Course Giveaway," would offer training to millions of students who cannot afford four-year universities and opportunity to older workers who need new skills.

According to White House officials, the heart of the program is the grants which will require colleges to

compete by designing innovative new programs or revamping their existing curricula. These courses would be offered online for free, with community colleges having the option to offer additional services for a small fee. A "National Skills College" would support and develop final examinations for colleges, students, and employers to assess course results and retention.

This plan has the potential to help community colleges increase their course offerings, offer new degree packages, keep fees low, and level the playing field for low-income learners. In these difficult times, it's a bold investment that could impact learners across the country. Stay tuned as more details become available.

ARRA Funds Variety of Summer Youth Employment Projects

This summer, Maryland's Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) funded an array of summer youth employment experiences thanks to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Throughout the state, youth were employed at record numbers in a wide variety of work experiences.

Baltimore City's YouthWorks program hired over 6000 young people for jobs in the private sector, government agencies and community organizations. Prince George's County aimed to serve 500 young people in diverse settings, including a partnership program with the Civic Justice Corps and the Maryland National Capitol Parks and Planning. Western Maryland focused on economically disadvantaged youth with barriers (disabled, foster child, school dropout, offender, homeless, etc) and employed close to 300 young people. Baltimore County targeted 583 youth from a variety of backgrounds, and had great success, including placement of four college students as interns at Verizon. These young people earned their salaries updating data bases, conducting research and assisting with community outreach. The other local WIBs also experienced tremendous success with their summer youth employment.

The Lower Shore Workforce Alliance used their share of the ARRA funds for economically disadvantaged youth from Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester Counties. Employment for these young people was secured with over 50 different employers.

One of these successful programs was the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, in partnership with Delmarva Low-Impact Tourism Experiences (DLITE). They hired 11 high school and college students, representing four counties and five colleges, to participate in the Summer Coastal Stewards Program. Students were afforded the opportunity to learn about the culture and environment of the Lower Eastern Shore. Funded through a partnership with the National Park, the summer youth were paid wages while engaging in both environmental and cultural projects.

The students were exposed to cultural and environmental education, where outreach was a big emphasis. The organizers hope that this experience will increase the students' opportunities to pursue environmental careers, should they choose to do so.



Summer Coastal Stewards with first paychecks.

Future Meeting Dates

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
Arnold Campus
December 9, 2009
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
Arnold Campus
March 10, 2010
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
Arnold Campus
June 16, 2010
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
Arnold Campus
September 15, 2010
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
Arnold Campus
December 15, 2010
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Save The Date:
GWIB Retreat
November 3, 2009

QUARTERLY INDUSTRY UPDATE: MANUFACTURING

It was only a year ago that the GWIB's Manufacturing Steering Committee convened at Anne Arundel Community College to discuss the Committee's draft report, recommendations, and plan of action for addressing the critical workforce challenges facing the manufacturing industry. The output: manufacturing remains a viable in Maryland. However, promotion and visibility and a well-trained and prepared workforce are key to the industry's future competitiveness.

Since that time, representatives from the manufacturing business community, industry associations, and higher education have demonstrated their commitment to ensuring the industry remains vital to Maryland's economic future. Continuing with the theme of promotion and visibility, the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT) partnered with the Maryland Advisory Committee on Manufacturing Competitiveness (MACMC), and the GWIB to increase the number of manufacturing professionals participating in MBRT's Speakers Bureau as coaches and/or mentors in Maryland's K – 12 classrooms. The partnership was a success, and through continuous outreach, there was a 35 percent increase over 2008 participation by May 2009, with 147 manufacturers providing hands-on exposure and experiences to Maryland's young people to help them gain a better understanding of the industry and available career paths.

Two manufacturing training initiatives also resulted from the Steering Committee's recommendations. The Maryland State Department of Education is working with local school systems to pilot the first Career and Technology Education (CTE) course in the Manufacturing Engineering Technologies (MET). Work is also currently underway on the development of the second course, "Process Design and Development."

Next steps include teacher professional development, as well as a continued focus on the development of projects for the remaining courses within the program of study ~ "Lean Practices and Tools," "Integrated Manufacturing" and "Applied Production Systems." The MET cluster team has established preliminary articulation agreements with the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) and the College of Southern Maryland. It is anticipated that the program proposal will be released to local school systems for adoption in the 2009-2010 school-year.



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Microsoft Partners With DLLR to *Elevate America*

In an exciting new partnership, the Microsoft Corporation and the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation have joined forces to provide 13,500 training vouchers for Microsoft eLearning courses and select Microsoft certification exams. The first category of voucher is intended for workers looking to acquire basic computer skills in Windows XP, Office 2003, Windows Vista or Office 2007. The IT Professional vouchers are geared towards workers interested in acquiring more advanced skills. For those seeking certification, vouchers are available for Microsoft Certification Exams, which enable a user to take a free exam at a Microsoft certified testing partner location.

The vouchers are now available through the Local Workforce Investment Board, the community college system, and the Maryland Department of Disabilities and the Division of Rehabilitative Services. Allocation of the vouchers is based on anticipated usage, and 9,284 voucher requests have already been received. Information about the distribution of vouchers is available on the Maryland Workforce Exchange at www.mwejobs.com. For more information, please visit www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica.