

NEWS


 SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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February 2015

Welcome to **News** from the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), featuring information about the region's workforce system.

Constructing a New Future with YouthBuild



YouthBuild Vancouver launched February 2 with its first group of 24 students. In addition to obtaining a GED, participants will learn job skills and earn two nationally-recognized construction certificates. They'll also help build two homes for families being served by Habitat for Humanity.

YouthBuild is seeking community assistance and donations, including: materials and tools for build projects, classroom supplies, gift cards (i.e., coffee, movies, etc.) to celebrate participant success, construction and exercise clothing for men/women. We'd also like to speak with home builders and construction companies about partnering to host site tours and assist with trainings, mentoring, job shadows and mock interviews.

For ways you can participate, contact Dave Cole at Partners in Career (PIC) at 360-696-8417 or dave@swwpic.org for specific information.

Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt spoke with the class on the first day and took a half-mile jog with them. Read more about the program at <http://www.columbian.com/news/2015/feb/02/youthbuild-vancouver-ged-construction-worksource/>

Like us on Facebook at **YouthBuild Vancouver**

IN OTHER NEWS

Council Meeting

March 11, 2015

4-6 p.m. at Cowlitz County Administrative Bldg., Kelso. [Click for details.](#)

Strategic Plan 2014-17

[Read SWWDC's Strategic Plan](#)

Workforce 101 Website

Resources to help job seekers, youth and veterans improve skills to get a job.

Mission

To prepare and promote a skilled and adaptive workforce for a thriving economy in Southwest Washington.

Our Partners



IT/software/digital technology Worker Training Funds Available

Our region is expected to add 10,000 new jobs in IT/software/digital technology sectors in the next eight years. Nationally, training and education institutions will be able to fill only 29 percent of those new jobs.

SWWDC has funds available to offset employers' training costs for employees in high-growth, high-demand IT/software occupations that they may currently be filling with visiting H1-B workers. Funds have enabled companies to implement robust, customized trainings that increase employee skills and job satisfaction and help to improve systems and productivity.

More than 600 workers at 15 local companies have benefited from these trainings. [Click here to learn more about the program.](#)

To see if your company qualifies, contact Lee Ann Lawrence, Employer Services Manager, at llawrence@swwdc.org.

Youth Registration Closes Feb. 10 for Business After School: Engineering Week



Business After School Engineering Week Sponsors



Supporters

Kiewit Infrastructure West Co.

Silicon Forest Electronics

Vancouver Energy

Business After School Partners





Questions/Comments?

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SWWDC

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www.swwdc.org

Young adults, ages 16-21, interested in learning about careers surrounding engineering can speak with local industry professionals and visit companies that employ a variety of positions in the engineering field during Business After School: Engineering Week February 16-18.

Sponsoring companies: GeoDesign, Columbia Machine, MacKay Sposito, Elkhart Plastics, Kiewit Infrastructure West and Silicon Forest Electronics are hosting two-hour events from 3-5 p.m. or 4-6 p.m. on one of the three days and will be providing company tours, hands-on activities and discussions of the necessary education, training, skills and job prospects.

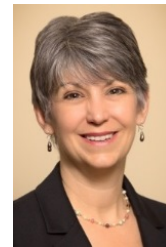
Click this link to Register to attend a Business After School Event or go to www.business-after-school.webs.com and click the "Events & Registration" tab.

There is no cost to attend, but registration is required (no drop-ins) and space is limited. Youth under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult, with a maximum 10 students to one chaperone. Participants will arrange their own transportation.

Contact: Chelsea Chunn, Youth Initiatives Manager, at 360-567-1066 or cchunn@swwdc.org.

Jeanne Bennett, Chief Executive Officer

As CEO of SWWDC, Jeanne Bennett directs the organization that manages federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds in Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties.



SWWDC oversees the WorkSource centers in Kelso and Vancouver that aid individuals with employment searches and job placement and provide hiring services and training funds to local businesses to help them improve the skills and productivity of their employees.

In addition, SWWDC administers state and federal grants that fund on-the-job training, youth services and programs that assist individuals living in subsidized housing to gain skills and work experience.

Prior to joining SWWDC in 2012, Jeanne was Executive Director of the Mount St. Helens Institute where she created science education and conservation opportunities throughout the region.

For five years, Jeanne served as the Director of Workforce Programs for ESD 112's Youth Workforce Program, managing an \$8 million, multi-year grant to prepare students for the working world.

Her eight years of congressional work includes being District Director for U.S. Representative Brian Baird and constituent services for former Oregon U.S. Representative Elizabeth Furse.

Jeanne currently serves on the Columbia River Economic Development Council, the Cowlitz Economic Development Council and the STEM Network Governance committee. She is also on the boards of the Mt. Adams Institute, Discover Your Northwest and the Mount St. Helens Institute.

A Leadership Clark County class of 2006 graduate, she received a Bachelor of Science degree in history from Portland State University.

Jeanne lives in Vancouver with her husband, Dave, and has four grown children and three grandchildren.

Reach Jeanne at jbennett@swwdc.org or 360.567.1073.

Preparing Young Adults for Careers

SWWDC has received more than \$210,000 for a new pilot program to improve career readiness among young adults.

In conjunction with WorkSource, SWWDC will launch a YouthWorks program to provide young adults, ages 16-24, a combination of career awareness, exploration, preparation and internship opportunities. Participants will receive hands-on learning opportunities in and out of the classroom, participate in mentoring activities, learn about post-secondary and vocational training pathways, connect directly to industry and gain real-world transferable skills through work-based learning experiences and internships.

To learn more or to sign your business up to participate, contact Chelsea Chunn at cchunn@swwdc.org or 360.567.1066.

Help for the Long-term Unemployed!

Who do you know that was working steadily before the recession in 2008 but since then has been struggling to find employment and has been out of work a total of 27 weeks or more? Please encourage them to contact WorkSource to learn about training and support services to help them get back to work!



Clark County residents: Attend an information session 1 p.m. Fridays or contact Noel Woods at 360.735.5034 or nwoods@esd.wa.gov.

Cowlitz and Wahkiakum residents: Contact Laura Vickers at 360.578.4211 or lvickers@esd.wa.gov.

Workforce Services Manager Job Opening

SWWDC is seeking an experienced manager and developer of federally-funded workforce development projects. The successful candidate will have strong contract management skills, grant administration experience and the creative networking skills necessary to continually enhance and broaden the reach of workforce development programs aimed at enriching people's lives and the economic strength of the counties we serve.

Applications are due by 5 p.m. Friday, March 6. View the job posting at www.swwdc.org.

Video Games as Innovation



Game Changers: Video Games as Innovation, a month-long exhibit of video games that have changed

cultural views and behaviors and impacted business, education, health and communication opens March 6.

Co-sponsored by Washington State University Vancouver, the Creative Media & Digital Culture Program, the Columbia River Economic Development Council, the Innovation Partnership Zone and GarageGames, this collaboration brings together community, business and education to highlight the industry's impacts and engage students in the field of digital technology.

The exhibit is at Nospace Gallery & Media Lounge in Vancouver. Also planned are a Hack-a-Thon, a game competition, a panel discussion by game specialists and guided tours for K-12 students. The exhibit will be featured at the Mayor's State of the City event and CREDC's 1st Quarter Luncheon on March 26.

For more information, visit <http://dte-wsuv.org/gamechangers>.

Sharing Holiday Cheer

During the holidays, SWWDC, CREDC and nConnect jointly adopted a family working with Share. Staff (and an SWWDC board member) donated clothing, shoes, books, toys, diapers, baby products, food and a \$200

grocery store gift card to a young mother and her three children, ages 6, 2 and 1. Continuing our giving back, SWWDC staff recently spent a few hours organizing Share's warehouse.



Career and Technical Education Month

February is a great time to promote career and technical education (CTE) programs that offer students a deeper understanding of STEM career pathways, build interest in STEM-related careers and help grow the STEM workforce pipeline by encouraging students to enter these career fields. **Learn more at the Association for Career & Technical Education.**

Economic Forecast Breakfast Recap



SWWDC board members and partners from economic development, education, business and employment security were panelists at the *Columbian's* recent economic

forecast breakfast. View event videos at

www.columbian.com/news/business/economic-forecast/2015/.

Disaster Preparedness Training for Nonprofits

The American Red Cross Cascades Region and NW Natural are launching a new program to help nonprofit organizations prepare for a natural disaster. *Get Ready Nonprofits* will train service groups in steps they can take to prepare for an earthquake, flood or tornado.



**American
Red Cross**

NW Natural will host the first event Friday, February 13 for nonprofits that serve families and children in need. Future sessions will be available for nonprofits that serve different audiences.

To learn more, contact mary.moerlins@nwnatural.com.

Philip A. Parker Memorial Scholarship Accepting Donations



Donations to the Philip A. Parker Memorial Scholarship Fund for scholarships for students interested in pursuing jobs in the trades can be sent to SWWDC at 805 Broadway, Suite 412, Vancouver, WA 98660. Attn: Accounting.

Please make checks payable to SWWDC and note "Parker Memorial Scholarship Fund" on your check.

Questions? Contact Chelsea Chunn at cchunn@swwdc.org.

In the News

See recent [coverage of the SWWDC and workforce projects](#).

SWWDC, a nonprofit organization founded in 2002, is the Workforce Investment Board for Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. SWWDC connects funding, state agencies, local service providers, colleges, economic development and community-based organizations to provide employment and training services to employers, job seekers and youth.

Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC) is an equal opportunity employer and provider of employment and training services. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. To place a relay call, dial 711.

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