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Training funds available to local manufacturers — Information session June 23



SWWDC, Columbia River Economic Development Council (CREDC), and the Cowlitz Economic Development Council (CEDC) are seeking manufacturers interested in public funding to help them become more competitive in the renewable energy supply chain through implementation of “lean and green” practices or diversification.

An information session will be held on **June 23, 2010** for manufacturers to learn more about the eligibility requirements and program benefits. Vestas Americas, a leading global provider of high–tech wind power systems, will be featured as a keynote speaker. Vancouver–based RECS (Renewable Energy Composite Solutions), along with its sister company Christensen Shipyards Ltd., will also be speaking to showcase their successful diversification from traditional yacht–building into the wind energy market. The information session will include networking opportunities, as well as break–out sessions by regions for companies who want to partake in this grant.

The information session is hosted by Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) and Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP), in conjunction with SWWDC, CEDC, CREDC, and Impact Washington. **To register, click here.**

For more information, Clark County companies should contact Bonnie Moore at 360–567–1055 or bmoore@swwdc.org, and Cowlitz County companies should contact Mary Brown at 360–423–9921 or brown@cowlitzedc.com.

The project is part of a bi–state \$5 million green jobs grant under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) awarded to the Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP) and four SW Washington and Oregon workforce investment boards. SWWDC will administer \$959,000 in Southwest Washington in partnership with Clark College, CEDC, CREDC, Impact Washington, Lower Columbia College, and WorkSource with a goal of training 192 incumbent workers at participating companies.

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Pub Talk™ hosts investor panel on June 16

The next PubTalk™—to be held on June 16 from 5:15 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.—will feature a business pitch from start–up Ryno Motors and an investor panel featuring Mark Fleischauer from JH Kelly, Angela Jackson from AB Jackson Group, and Mike Reynoldson of InvestAmerica Venture Group. The pitch and panel will include a question and answer session for attendees, and as always there will be plenty of time for networking.



The event will be held at AHA!, located at 415 W. 6th Street, Suite 605, Vancouver, WA. Registration is \$15 for Oregon Entrepreneurs Network members and \$20 for non-OEN members. **Online registration is highly recommended. To register today, click here.**

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Clark County employers partner to sponsor High Tech U on June 15–17



Clark County students will have another chance to attend SEMI High Tech U. Hewlett–Packard, WaferTech and Clark College will host 40 local high school students for three amazing days from June 15–17.

The goal of the industry–driven, math and science–based career exploration program was to inspire students to be part of tomorrow's high tech workforce by energizing and exciting them about careers in these fields.

As part of the region's larger workforce development strategy to engage more youth in STEM education and careers, Lisa Nisenfeld, SWWDC executive director, said, "We see High Tech U as a way to excite kids about math and science and to help build a pipeline of STEM workers for our local area employers."

The Clark County program is produced and presented by the SEMI Foundation in partnership with SWWDC, Hewlett–Packard, WaferTech, the Clark County High Technology & Community Council, Columbia Machine, Employers Overload, Underwriters Laboratories, the SEMI Pacific NW Steering Committee, and Clark College, the program's higher–learning partner. The program is also funded in part with funds from a Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant administered by WorkSystems, Inc.

The three day program includes math and science activities at Hewlett–Packard, educational planning at Clark College, and mock interviews at WaferTech. The objective is to increase students' understanding of the pathways necessary to move on to a technology–based career.

For more information on High Tech U, [click here](#).



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SWWDC says goodbye to long time staff member Brandi Stewart–Wood

Brandi Stewart–Wood, SWWDC's Director of Strategic Initiatives, is moving on after six years of service at the SWWDC. She has accepted a position with Point B Inc., a Portland–based management consulting firm specializing in strategic execution.



During her tenure at the SWWDC, Brandi was responsible for finding innovative ways to implement the SWWDC's strategic goals for youth and education. She secured more than \$2 million in new funds for Southwest Washington youth and workers to support their skill development and for employers to upskill employees. She was a key team member in the development and growth of nConnect NW, a new non–profit that connects students, educators and business in a variety of creative ways. Brandi also led the SWWDC's Summer Youth Employment Program, putting together partners, resources and strategies that resulted in jobs for over 760 low–income youth last summer and fall.

"The list of Brandi's accomplishments and contributions to the SWWDC is much too long to list here," commented Lisa Nisenfeld, SWWDC Executive Director. "She has been instrumental in our development and has provided tremendous leadership for us."

Says Stewart–Wood, "It was a tough decision as I have absolutely loved working at the SWWDC and with all of its workforce development, education, economic development, community, and business partners. My sincere thanks goes out to all of the people with whom I worked; I have learned something from each and everyone of you!"

Brandi's last day at the SWWDC will be June 17. All are invited to a reception/party from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Brick House Bar and Grill located at 109 West 15th Street, Vancouver, WA 98660.

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SWWDC hires Natalie Pacholl as Manager of Strategic Initiatives



The SWWDC is pleased to announce the hiring of Natalie Pacholl as Manager of Strategic Initiatives where she will develop and manage initiatives to support SWWDC's education and training goals for youth and adults.

Natalie is currently the Director of nConnect NW, a non-profit that links educators, students, and businesses to challenge students to succeed in more rigorous academic subjects and to prepare them to become future leaders and innovators in the global economy.

Under Natalie's leadership, nConnect has grown from a small non-profit serving only 25 students to a leading community-driven entity serving over 300 students per year from districts across

southwest Washington and the Portland Metro area.

"Natalie's track record and relationships in the education world are an excellent fit with the SWWDC's needs," commented Lisa Nisenfeld. "She's worked closely with educators, businesses, and other partners to build strong partnerships over the last four years; those connections will be significant assets to us."

"I'm so excited to continue to work with the community of Southwest Washington in this new capacity," said Pacholl.

Natalie has seven years of experience in program development and management in the educational arena. Previously she coordinated the Washington Reading Corps in multiple elementary schools throughout Southwest Washington. She also taught English in Benin (located in West Africa) with the Peace Corps. A native Minnesotan, Natalie graduated Magna Cum Laude from the College of St. Catherine with a French major and biology minor.

Natalie will formally begin work at the SWWDC on June 18th, but will continue working with nConnect until her replacement is hired.

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SWWDC and CREDC hire new Director of Business Services



Bonnie L. Moore, an experienced international business developer and project manager, has joined SWWDC and Columbia River Economic Development Council (CREDC) as Business Services Director to drive business expansion and retention efforts in Southwest Washington.

“We are very pleased to have Bonnie join our team,” said Lisa Nisenfeld, SWWDC’s Executive Director. “Bonnie brings with her a wealth of experience which will help businesses in our region grow and succeed, thereby creating and protecting jobs.”

Bonnie will be responsible for serving the needs of local businesses and assisting them with expansion and workforce issues. She will also oversee activities and programs related to business attraction and retention.

“I see it as my responsibility to get out there and make sure businesses know that we are here to support them in executing their strategic plans to grow,” she said.

The SWWDC and the CREDC jointly hired Bonnie because they share business outreach goals and strategies. “Businesses will benefit from learning about the full range of assistance available to them, whether it’s through our economic development partners or through various workforce programs,” remarked Bart Phillips, President of the CREDC.

Bonnie spent the last ten years working in the high-tech and consumer goods manufacturing industries and recently relocated to Camas, Washington. “Her experiences in economic development from a company’s point of view make her an invaluable asset,” commented Phillips. Bonnie has a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of California at Berkeley.

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nConnect NW seeks Executive Director

nConnect NW is seeking a dynamic individual to lead the non-profit organization as it continues to expand its business and education partnerships and services. For more information and to apply, refer to job order: WA2070012 at www.go2worksource.com or visit WorkSource at 5411 E Mill Plain Blvd, Suite 15, Vancouver, WA 98661.



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Learn what matters most to clean energy companies looking to expanding or relocate — June 30

Come learn how our local economic development partners work with a client on an expansion or relocation project. Dick Sheehy of CH2M Hill, one of the world’s leading architecture, planning, engineering, procurement, construction management, and facilities management firms, will provide insights into our region’s industrial competitiveness, especially as it relates to site selection for clean energy projects.

The event, sponsored by Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt, and the Columbia River Economic Development Council, will be held at The Heathman Lodge on **Wednesday, June 30, 2010 between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.** Registration is \$35 per person or \$300 for a table of 10. [Click here to register today.](#)



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High Tech U helps 38 students discover careers using math and science

In May, SWWDC partnered with the SEMI Foundation, North Pacific Paper Corporation (NORPAC), Weyerhaeuser, the Weyerhaeuser Foundation, and Lower Columbia College (LCC) to offer the SEMI Foundation's High Tech U program to 38 students from seven districts and nine high schools in Cowlitz and Columbia County high schools.



Cowlitz High Tech U graduates

Through three fun, information-packed, activity-filled days of learning at Weyerhaeuser and NORPAC, taught by company employees, students participated in hands-on math and science experiments, learned about



HTU participants during Weyerhaeuser facility tour

automated process control, tried their hand at making paper, toured the companies' facilities, and participated in mock interviews. They were also introduced to electronics, semiconductor manufacturing concepts, and microchip logic. Post-secondary partner LCC presented information on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) related postsecondary education and training opportunities.

At the conclusion of the program, two students were selected by their peers to receive \$1,000 scholarships: 10th grader Joe

Barteluce and 11th grader Kristina Spain, both from Kelso High School.

Students loved the program and gave it rave reviews!

- *"The more I learned about the different fields the more I am determined to learn,"* said Travis Gilbert, 12th grader at Loowit High School.
- *"The Liquid Packaging tour of Weyerhaeuser was the best. I learned a lot about the inner workings of the plant,"* said Wayne Ogle, 10th grader at RA Long High School.
- *"The best part of the day was learning about Biofuel and green jobs,"* said Marina Mason, 12th grader at Castle Rock High School.

Student survey data corroborated the students' positive impressions of the program:

- 88% said that their perception of the pulp and paper industry has changed positively
- 124% increased their knowledge of microelectronics
- 100% said that they now know what classes are necessary to take in order to enter science or engineering careers
- 95% said that HTU met or exceeded their expectations

SWWDC hopes to bring SEMI High Tech U back to Cowlitz County again next year.



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New integrated service delivery model will improve customer service at WorkSource



WorkSource will implement a new integrated service delivery model in both the Vancouver and Kelso WorkSource offices starting July 1. The new model is based on lean principles that aim to improve customer service and reduce wait times.

“The actual services clients receive at WorkSource won’t be impacted, but their experience should be more efficient and customer friendly,” explained Jordana Barclay, SWWDC Program Manager. “The majority of changes being made will happen behind the scenes.”

In the new model, WorkSource staff will be arranged by function and the type of services they offer, rather than by program and funding. Customers will get easier access to whatever package of services and resources best fit their needs and eligibility.

“Previously, WorkSource was set up so that services and staff were siloed and separated by their various funding streams,” said Barclay. “If a client was eligible for multiple programs, they would bounce between different staff, making timely coordination and communication difficult to achieve. Our new model creates an environment that is more responsive and accessible to all customers.”

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SWWDC, ESD 112, and Clark College team up to offer 18 youth training in welding

SWWDC has teamed up with Clark College and ESD 112 to pilot a two-week concentrated welding “boot camp.” To date, Clark College has hosted two camps and given 18 young men and women in ESD 112’s Youth Workforce program, ages 18–21 years old, the opportunity to try their hand at welding without waiting to enroll in the regular 10 to 12 week welding classes.



Welding is a high-demand skill in our region with many individuals pursuing training in this field. As a result, classes at local community colleges and training schools are full with adults looking for a career change or to brush up on their own welding skills, making enrollment in these classes difficult for inexperienced youth.

For unemployed, 20 year-old Alex Gavilin, the program came at the “perfect time” and helped him determine that he liked welding. “A friend of mine who is in welding told me I should give it a try, but I wasn’t sure it was for me,” he said. “During the program, I put in over sixty hours in two weeks. It was hard, but I learned and tried a variety of welding techniques, learned what I was best at, and came away knowing it is something I like and can do all day as a job.”

Under the tutelage of Clark instructors, Alex and other youth worked six and a half hours a day for two weeks and earned four college credits. They also finished off with an OSHA 10 safety training and visited different companies that need or use welders. Many of the youth, Alex included, have decided to continue on in the welding sequence and work toward national certification.

The boot camp model has been so successful that the partners will be offering two different camps this summer at Clark College—one a technology workshop and the other an electricity workshop—and are working on a similar plan with Lower Columbia College in Longview.

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