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# WorkingNews

August 2009 — Premiere Issue

Welcome to the first edition of WorkingNews, our recently redesigned e-newsletter that provides you with up-to-date information on workforce development in Southwest Washington.

As in the past, we strive to help you understand workforce development and how it impacts your life and community. Our bimonthly issues will update you on Southwest Washington's dynamic regional system and the steps it is taking to put people to work, attract new businesses, and make sure workers have the skills that local employers need.

We hope you enjoy learning more about SWWDC and its partners' efforts to build a skilled workforce in SW Washington.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Nisenfeld

## Senator Murray applauds SWWDC's Summer Youth Employment

Senator Murray visited Vancouver in early August, speaking to a sold-out crowd at a luncheon hosted by First Independent Bank and the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce. Sixty young participants in the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) were invited to attend the luncheon to learn first hand about the Senator's views on important issues such as health care, transportation, workforce development, and the overall economic health of Southwest Washington

and to demonstrate their appreciation for her leadership in securing funds for the SYEP. For most participants, it was the first time they had ever attended a business function.

SYEP participant Logan Binder, a marketing intern at nConnect NW through the SYEP, spoke to the crowd about the SYEP and the difference it made in her life. *"It has been an amazing experience for me. I appreciate the opportunity to work in a job that challenges me. It has given me the opportunity to work in a professional environment and build my skills and resume. This program has truly changed my life as well as the lives of hundreds of youth in our community and country. Thank you, Senator Patty Murray!"*



SYEP participant Logan Binder with Senator Patty Murray

*The mission of SWWDC is to prepare and promote a highly skilled and adaptive workforce for a healthy, sustainable economy in Southwest Washington.*

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## Summer Youth Employment Program puts nearly 700 youths to work

Nearly 700 low-income youth were employed this summer by the Summer Youth Employment Program administered by SWWDC and its partners in Clark, Cowlitz, and Wahkiakum counties. The program provided youth who have barriers to employment and/or limited work experience an opportunity to attain work readiness skills, earn a paycheck, and develop a healthy work ethic.

Funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, the program offered low-income youth, ages 14-24, a total of 180 hours of paid work experience and training over a six-week period this summer. Jobs included administrative office duties, landscape, trail and building



SYEP youth ready retired C-TRAN buses for auction

maintenance, light construction, food service, events management, website development, child care and teaching, marketing, and data analysis.

Participants worked 24 hours per week at their job site and had six hours a week of classroom time focused on appropriate workplace attire and behaviors, communications and conflict resolution, team building, financial management, workplace rights and policies, building resumes, and learning specific business and professional skills.

Most youth were paid \$8.55 per hour and earned up to \$1,539. Some 71 youth served as supervisors and were paid \$10.00 per hour and earned up to \$2,000. Collectively, youth earned more than \$1.1 million this summer through the program.

Seven partner organizations were responsible for recruiting youth and worksites and managing the program. These partners include Educational Service District 112, Employers Overload, Longview Goodwill Vocations Unlimited, Lower Columbia Community Action Council, Pacific Northwest Chapter of the USDA Coalition of Minority Employees, Wahkiakum Port 2, and Washington State University Vancouver.

A special thanks to the 126 organizations that provided more than 197 different kinds of positions along with mentoring and guidance to these young workers. For more information on the SYEP, visit [www.swwdc.org/summeryouth](http://www.swwdc.org/summeryouth).

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## Funding available to train 300 low-income adults and dislocated workers

SWWDC received \$2.7 million funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to train low-income adults and dislocated workers in Clark, Cowlitz, and Wahkiakum counties for in-demand occupations in healthcare, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, and other targeted industries.

The programs will train an estimated 300 low-income, dislocated, and under-skilled adults that have been heavily impacted by the recession and have particular challenges in regaining employment. The goal is to provide participants with training in a career pathway that results in employment, career advancement, and self-sufficient wages. Clark College, Lower Columbia College, West Coast Training, and NECA/IBEW Electrical Training Program were selected through SWWDC's procurement process to deliver the training. WorkSource will provide the on-going case management and support services to participants.

Enrollment is currently underway for fall 2009 classes. Interested individuals should contact Dina Morris, 360-442-2335 at WorkSource Kelso or Nikki Weatherington, 360-735-5127 at WorkSource Vancouver for more information.

## SWWDC and partners commit to train workers for weatherization industry

SWWDC is working with community partners, including WorkSource, Vancouver Housing Authority, ESD112, Clark College, and the city of Vancouver, to implement the Weatherization Project, a program aimed at helping qualified Clark County low-income and dislocated workers get on-the-job training, employment, and advanced training in the emerging weatherization industry.

The program, a first in the region, is funded by federal stimulus dollars and will train up to 15 individuals. Rich Art, a local employer of weatherization specialists, has agreed to hire successful training completers to work on weatherizing the homes of low-income residents as part of its current contract with Clark County.

SWWDC will join Weatherization Project partners on Friday, August 21 at 10 a.m. at Skyline Crest Community Park to sign a "Declaration of Cooperation," a document stating the partners' intent and good faith in working together.

If you are interested in learning more about the Weatherization Project or attending the public signing event, please contact Megara Kastner, Project Coordinator at [mkastner@vhausa.com](mailto:mkastner@vhausa.com).

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## STEM coach hired to help build the STEM talent pipeline

**Manlio Castillo Rios** has been hired as SW Washington's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) coach. Based out of the WorkSource centers in Vancouver and Kelso in Washington, and St. Helens in Oregon, Manlio will provide intensive career counseling to laid-off workers and disadvantaged 16-24 year-old youth who want to pursue STEM education and training and secure employment in STEM-related jobs. He will also assist participants with identifying STEM education and training resources, and, in partnership with nConnect NW, link participants to mentors and other STEM professionals.



Manlio is one of three regional STEM coaches funded through the \$2 million dollar Department of Labor STEM grant awarded to SWWDC, its Oregon counterparts WorkSystems Inc, Enterprise for Employment and Education, and Management and Training Corporation, and Vancouver-based nConnect NW. The goal of the national pilot program is to bring more people into careers in science, technology, engineering, and math fields. Over the next three years, the three STEM coaches will serve nine counties in SW Washington and northern Oregon and work with more than 600 individuals.

Previously, Manlio was a mechanical engineer for both Hewlett Packard and Boeing. He holds a Master of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin. He has been a mentor for nConnect NW and he speaks three languages fluently: English, Spanish, and Italian.

For more information, including program eligibility, visit your local WorkSource center or contact Manlio Castillo, at [mcastillo@esd.wa.gov](mailto:mcastillo@esd.wa.gov) or 360.690.6654 or visit [www.swwdc.org/stem](http://www.swwdc.org/stem).

## Workforce Resource Guides now available

The SWWDC has published the Workforce Resource Guide for Job Seekers to provide information on organizations and programs aimed at helping individuals find education, training, and employment in Southwest Washington. More than three dozen organizations and programs are profiled in two guides, one for Clark County and one for Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties, along with contact information. The guides are intended to help service providers and job seekers alike identify resources to assist them with their career objectives. To download the guides, visit [www.swwdc.org](http://www.swwdc.org).

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