

SLATE Update

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. LOUIS AGENCY ON TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT



Francis G. Slay, Mayor



ST. LOUIS AGENCY ON TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

SLATE

MISSOURI CAREER CENTER

DOWNTOWN • CENTRAL WEST END

Michael K. Holmes, Executive Director

October 2012 Issue

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

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SLATE Update is a monthly newsletter produced by the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE), part of the City of St. Louis and funded by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). SLATE helps match area job seekers with businesses through a variety of no-cost services.

The purpose of this publication is to share the progress and outcomes of our many programs, and will be of special interest to legislators, Workforce Investment Board members, vendors, partners, educational institutions, other public agencies or anyone with an interest in workforce development.

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GEMMA BITZENBURG RECEIVES TRAINING AND FINDS EMPLOYMENT THROUGH SLATE

When she first came to SLATE, Gemma Bitzenburg's employment prospects appeared bleak. The Medical Technology training she had received in her native country, the Philippines, was not recognized in the U.S., presenting a major barrier to employment. At the same time, she was in the midst of some stressful personal issues as she cared for her toddler son while living in a protective

shelter. While she was able to work with a social service agency to find housing, she was not content to rely on social services and public benefits to secure her future. She came to the SLATE Career Center at Central West End seeking help, both in acquiring the training she needed and finding full-time employment in her chosen field.

Her first step was to develop her résumé by enrolling in SLATE's no-cost Workplace Readiness Workshop. After obtaining part-time employment, she successfully applied for a Pell Grant and completed the prerequisites necessary to

obtain admission to the Clinical Laboratory Technology Program at St. Louis Community College's Forest Park campus. SLATE continued to assist her, providing additional training funds through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Despite the juggling of part-time employment and car-



ing for her son with classes and the required practicum, she persisted, earning her Associates Degree, and attaining her certification as a Medical Laboratory Technician.

Soon after, Bitzenburg secured full-time employment at Missouri Baptist Hospital in Sullivan, MO. She was now faced with a long daily commute but she rose to the challenge as she had with so many others. SLATE was able to provide her with needed supportive services in the form of a gas card for transportation expenses and the acquisition of job-related attire. Bitzenburg plans to relocate to Sullivan to ease the pressure of her daily commute. SLATE was there for Gemma from the moment she walked through our doors through her post-secondary education, job placement

Welcome Area at SLATE Career Center Central West End Receives Steady Flow of Customers. This location serves close to 20,000 job seekers each year.



and beyond. By lending a helping hand, SLATE complemented her own tenacity, resolve and drive to succeed, resulting in a more secure future for her and her young son.

Thanks to Ray Gude, Career Specialist at SLATE CWE, for contributing to this story.

SLATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTED NAWDP COMMITTEE CHAIR

The St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE) Executive Director, Michael K. Holmes, has been appointed Chair of the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) Governance Committee.

NAWDP is a professional association for individuals that implement employment, training and related workforce development programs. It was created in 1989 by the National Job Training Partnership (now the Partnership Education Fund), with start-up funding from the U.S.

Department of Labor. With over 4,500 current members, NAWDP holds an Annual Conference and Youth Development Symposium, produces a professional journal, and offers numerous skill-building and networking opportunities.

As Chair of the Governance Committee, Michael Holmes will oversee, implement, and if necessary, revise the formal board and staff policies adopted by NAWDP in 2010. "I've been involved with NAWDP for several years," says Holmes," and welcome this expanded role. The Association helps workforce development professionals share practices to better serve job seekers in every state."

SLATE HIRES ON-THE-JOB TRAINING COORDINATOR

The St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE) has welcomed Joel Reinert to the Downtown SLATE Missouri Career Center (SLATE MCC). Reinert will serve as the new On-the-Job Training (OJT) Coordinator, helping job seekers re-skill in order to remain competitive, while providing area businesses with guidance in accessing wage reimbursement funds through such funding sources as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), National Emergency Grants and Governor Nixon's special Show-Me Heroes initiative.

The new Coordinator position will be responsible for all OJT agreements at SLATE, a staff-intensive activity that oversees individual discussions with each employer and job seeker. In addition, the OJT Coordinator will reach out to area busi-



Holmes Speaking At The St. Louis Full WIB Meeting, October 2012

(center). Also pictured Lydia Padilla, Acting WIB Chair (left), Frank Lamm, new 2013 WIB member (right), and Herman Noah, WIB member.

nesses and recruit job seekers, especially veterans, dislocated workers and Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) recipients.

OJT is a proven, valuable product that reimburses companies up to 50 percent of a new hire's wages for up to 26 weeks, provided they are permanent, full-time positions with an hourly rate of at least \$9.50. "OJT is truly a win-win for employers and job seekers. Reimbursement

of training costs can be substantial, typically around \$5,000 to \$10,000 per employee over the six month initial period," Joel Reinert says. Reinert has worked in a variety of workforce development roles since 1998; most recently, he implemented the OJT process with the St. Louis County Division of Workforce Development. For further information on OJT, he can be reached at (314) 657-3503 or jreinert@stlworks.com.

"On-The-Job Training is truly a win-win for employers and job seekers. Reimbursement of training costs can be substantial..." ~JOEL REINERT, SLATE OJT COORDINATOR

ON-THE-JOB (OJT) ORIENTATIONS FOR JOB SEEKERS take place every Wednesday, 10 to 11 a.m. at SLATE Career Center, 1520 Market St., 3rd Floor, St. Louis, MO 63103.

OJT Orientation outlines the program's guidelines, terms and conditions for participation. Topics discussed will help job seekers transition their career into high demand occupations and become familiar with the industry-specific skills needed to get hired. Participants will become aware of their personal brand and will examine the tools available to reach out to the employers that are hiring.



Left: Habitata employee checks the quality of the product. *Bottom (left to right):* Francis G. Slay, Mayor, St. Louis City, Kevin Schaedler, Executive Vice-President of Sales, Habitata Building Products LLC, Jane Quartel, President, Habitata Halcyon Shades, Col. Alan Rohlfing, Director, Show-Me Heroes, at the Show-Me Heroes Press Conference hosted by SLATE.

SMALL EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP AWARD HONORS HABITATA AND SLATE

At the 2012 Missouri Association of Workforce Development (MAWD) Conference on June 8, Habitata Building Products/Halcyon Shades was presented with the *“Small Employer Partnership Award”* in honor of their productive and innovative working relationship with the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE). The Employer Partnership Award recognizes businesses that partner with Career Centers while demonstrating a commitment to their community and to Missouri’s workforce that results in skill upgrades or employment for job seekers.

In a special video presented at the MAWD award ceremony, Habitata/Halcyon Shades President Jane Quartel stated, “We worked very closely with SLATE in getting our employees hired, pre-screened, and trained, and to this day we have a very close and fundamental relationship...we love working with

them because they bring us qualified candidates.” Habitata relies on SLATE’s Business Development Department for its recruiting needs, resulting in the placement of a number of deserving job seekers, including veterans and ex-offenders. In addition, the company has hosted networking events to introduce SLATE’s no-cost services to numerous other area businesses. Earlier this year, Habitata was presented with a *Flag of Freedom Award* for their contributions to Governor Nixon’s Show-Me Heroes initiative, established to reach out to Missouri’s Veterans and National Guard members and help them reconnect with meaningful careers.

David Kenyon, Jane Quartel and Kevin Schaedler purchased Halcyon Shades from a corporate conglomerate in early 2009, and immediately moved the business to an

abandoned warehouse in the City of St. Louis, where they have rapidly become a vital asset to the St. Louis business community.

Habitata has been an active member of the City of St. Louis Workforce Investment Board (WIB) since 2009. Of Habitata’s 13-person staff, four are veterans, four are African-Americans, one is Hispanic, three are women, two are over 60 years old, and four are ex-offenders.



“We hire all our employees through SLATE...They know our company and the type of people we are looking for.” ~JANE QUARTEL, HABITATA