

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

www.stlworks.com

March 2013 Issue

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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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SONYA CRIDER: FROM COACH TO CUSTOMER TO CLIENT

The economic upheavals in recent years have affected millions of individuals from all backgrounds. As employers in almost every sector have cut back, even jobseekers with extraordinary talent and established reputations can find themselves making a mid-career transition, a difficult process even in the best of circumstances.



Sonya Crider, Senior Program Director at YMCA, knows the value of effective career coaching.

One such story is Sonya Crider, recently Assistant Athletic Director for a local community college. Herself a former professional player, she coached their women's basketball team to a winning record before the position was eliminated. When she first contacted SLATE, she had applied to numerous jobs with little headway, not even a return call, and told us she hadn't "found her groove." Looking for support and options, she visited SLATE's

downtown Missouri Career Center (SLATE MCC) on Market Street for someone to review her resume and offer positive, constructive suggestions. As any good athlete knows, a skilled coach can make small adjustments and success will often follow.

With the assistance of an Employment and Training Advisor, Crider created a viable, targeted job search plan. She learned to emphasize her numerous strengths, and updated and revised her resume. After applying for a program manager position

with the new *YMCA O'Fallon Park Recreational Complex*, she was selected and interviewed. Crider was pleasantly surprised when she was not only called into the game with a job offer, but was also, in basketball terms, moved to a point guard position. Crider was hired as the new Senior Director of Programs.

After settling in to her new job at *YMCA*, she followed up with SLATE hoping to replicate her positive experience for others. Sonya asked for experienced help to assist her in filling the **150** job openings her location needed to staff up, with a tight window of less than 18 days. With the cooperation of the Business Development department and Jobs Team, SLATE rapidly arranged job fairs on three separate days, resulting in nearly **120** complete applications and interviews. Of this number, nearly **50** quality candidates were hired for such positions as membership service representatives, lifeguards, custodians and child care workers by the time the Recreational Complex opened in January of this year.

SLATE looks forward to a continued relationship with Sonya and the *YMCA*. Her example demonstrated that anyone, regardless of past successes or cur-

rent difficulties, can benefit from the no-cost services provided at our Missouri Career Centers.

SLATE HELPS ST. LOUIS PARKING COMPANY AND AMBASSADOR VALET FILL 50 OPENINGS

On February 28, SLATE MCC Downtown hosted a recruitment event for the *St. Louis Parking Company* and *Ambassador Valet*. They needed to fill **50** positions with a short turnaround, a much greater number than they typically handle, and turned to SLATE for assistance. SLATE promoted and coordinated this one-day special event with Jason Kelley, their Director of HR, Darren Egan, Clint Auxier, Brian Clark, Andrew Cummins and Eddie Pohrer.

Six staff from both SLATE's Business Development and Adult Services departments prepared to handle the **59** job candidates who attended. All of the candi-

dates were pre-screened, and **50** were provided with preliminary interviews; up to **23** have been offered positions contingent on a background check. The openings in question were for Valet Drivers and Garage Attendants/Cashiers.

"Our entire team was extremely impressed. The whole process exceeded my expectations. The quantity and quality of candidates was superb, and your facilities are outstanding," Eddie Pohrer remarked on his experience with SLATE.

St. Louis Parking Company, which manages over 100 facilities, is a third generation, privately owned company celebrating 80 years in business. The process of screening and interviewing this many job candidates would have cost them at least a full day's worth of staff time; instead St. Louis Parking Company and Ambassador Valet took advantage of the no-cost services available to all businesses here at SLATE.

Photo (from left): **Beverly Parks Halls**, jobseeker, **shakes hands during her interview with Eddie Pohrer**, employer, at the St. Louis Parking Company Job Fair in February.



JOB CORPS PARTNERS WITH SLATE TO TRAIN YOUTH FOR CAREERS

Job Corps was initiated nearly 50 years ago as part of the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty. Administered by the Department of Labor (DOL), the nationwide program's mission is to "help young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training." SLATE MCC recently took advantage of the opportunity to discuss this important workforce development resource with **Jeffrey Taylor**, the St. Louis *Job Corps* Business Community Liaison.

In this role, Taylor reaches out to St. Louis employers, helping connect youth enrolled in *Job Corps* with a pipeline to jobs in such fields as healthcare, culinary arts and hospitality, construction trades such as welding, carpentry and masonry, and opportunities in retail, security and transportation. "This pipeline is the St. Louis *Job Corps* advantage," said Taylor. "We discover what a company needs, establish a relationship, train to these needs, [and] provide access to appropriate credentials... SLATE [MCC] is a big part of this pipeline and provides our students with additional access to services, information, and experiences while they are finishing up their training." Like SLATE MCC, *Job Corps* is authorized by the Workforce Investment Act. While SLATE MCC serves all kinds of jobseekers, *Job Corps* is a structured environment designed specifically to help model, mentor and monitor the develop-



ing professionalism of youth. Staff and participants jointly create a personal career development plan. "It is the role of the St. Louis *Job Corps* to help them become the professionals today that they dream of being tomorrow," said Taylor. The St. Louis *Job Corps* currently serves approximately **600** youth.

Taylor actively works with SLATE, both as a member of its Youth Advisory Council and as chairman for the St. Louis WIB Executive Board's subcommittee on training. He believes that development of the local economy, and matching job seekers with employers, are mutual goals shared by both organizations. "Working together to find out what employers need and connecting them to our local talent, or in the case of the St. Louis *Job Corps* helping to develop that talent, is the keystone of the SLATE-St. Louis *Job Corps* partnership...With skills comes advancement," he said. Originally a teacher specializing in students with reading comprehension and math performance



Photo top: Fred Williams, Welding Instructor, observes student welding on square tubular steel. Bottom: Homeland Security students learning to use fire extinguishers.



Photo: Jeffrey Taylor (right) and Job Corps' medical trades students touring Brown Mackie College.

issues, Jeffrey Taylor has been employed at the St. Louis Job Corps Center for 15 years. Helping youth become ready for the job market has been a central part of both his positions, and will continue to be a primary task for SLATE and the St. Louis Job Corps.

SLATE MCC ANNOUNCES FIRST HOSPITALITY VIRTUAL RECRUITMENT EVENT

Between March 18 - 29, 2013 SLATE MCC conducted its first Virtual Recruitment Event, a 2-week long session designed to connect qualified job seekers with open positions in the local hospitality industry. Reportedly, **200** people participated.

All job seekers registered with Missouri Career Centers were invited. Participants were able to apply online for a wide range of positions from participating employers, such as Lodging Hospitality Management, Lumiere Place, Drury Plaza, Embassy Suites and Four Seasons. There was no cost to participate.

SLATE Career Center asked job seekers to bring their resumes, cover letters in electronic format and two forms of ID. Once there, SLATE Career Center staff guided

participants through the recruitment process and helped them apply for jobs on employer websites.

"We received high quality applicants," said Joe Heck, HR Manager for Hilton St. Louis at the Ballpark. "In this [virtual] format, they [job seekers] were able to fill out multiple applications and attach a resume with the help of SLATE's team and technology."

SLATE Career Center staff assisted participants with completing and posting applications correctly. Employers participating in the Virtual Recruitment Event collected electronic copies of resumes and will schedule interviews in the near future.

Employers interested in learning how SLATE MCC can help them pre-screen and recruit qualified employees should call (314) 589-8000 and ask to speak to one of our Business Development Representatives.



YOUTH SUMMER JOBS IN ST. LOUIS CITY NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH MERS/GOODWILL

SLATE will not offer a Summer Jobs program for Youth this year. However, Mayor Slay has announced his plan to host a pilot program called *St. Louis Youth Jobs*, designed to help urban youth gain valuable work experience while earning some cash.

The program will be administered by MERS/Missouri Goodwill and the registration process begins on **April 1, 2013**. Youth interested in applying must fill out the online applications at www.mersgoodwill.org/stlyouthjobs or call the program at (314) 982-8890.

In addition to 8 weeks of paid employment (20 hours per week), qualified youth admitted to the program will be able to obtain references for future job applications and get help resolving barriers to successful employment. SLATE will help provide Job Readiness and Financial Literacy training to participants.

Additional info on the St. Louis Youth Jobs program and its qualification requirements is available at www.stlyouthjobs.org or by contacting Shekima Hunter, Case Manager at STL Youth, at (314) 982-8949.