

SLATE Update

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. LOUIS AGENCY ON TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT (SLATE)



Francis G. Slay, Mayor



ST. LOUIS AGENCY ON TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

SLATE

MESCHERI CAREER CENTER

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April 2014 Issue

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

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- 3 Entrepreneurial Assistance
- 3 WorkKeys Assessment and More.

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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GRADUATE! ST. LOUIS FINISHES ITS COURSE



The Graduate! St. Louis Workforce Development Consortium (GSL) was formed in the spring of 2010 through the efforts of local leaders in workforce development, from community colleges, and the Regional Chamber (then known as the Regional Commerce and Growth Association). This coalition successfully applied for a **\$4.4** million Department of Labor Community Based Job Training grant; the project period lasted from July 2010 to December 2013, or 42 months.

Administered by SLATE as lead agency, subcontracts were awarded to five community college systems throughout the region: St. Louis Community College (SLCC), St. Charles Community College (SCC), East Central College (ECC), Jefferson College (JeffCo), and Southwest Illinois Community College (SWIC). The proposed and actual training focus areas centered on three industry sectors with demonstrable growth within the greater St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA):

Healthcare and Allied Health; Information Systems; and Renewable Energy/Emerging Technology.

Over the course of GSL, approximately **4,500** potential participants were contacted and recruited through a combination of outreach by each college campus, through nearby Missouri Career Centers, and via mailings to former/lapsed students with some credit, prime candidates to complete a degree or certificate. Over **3,800** participants, primarily dislocated workers, unemployed adults and returning, non-traditional learners, entered training programs of some kind, and fully 86 percent of them attained a credential or certificate of professional value (a limited number attained 2-year degrees).

Review of wage credit reports revealed that an estimated 47 percent of training completers were employed in the health care industry; another 15 percent in Information Services/networking; and a small number (perhaps 3 percent) in energy efficiency/green positions, meeting the projected outcomes. The remaining 35 percent of completers were either in

Table: Graduate St. Louis Outcomes

OUTCOME	PROPOSED	ACTUAL
Potential participants recruited	3,400	c. 4,500
Number beginning training	2,800	3,846
Complete training, receive credential	2,250	3,325
Completers placed into unsubsidized employment	1,500	1,941
Placed in training related employment	975 (65% of placed)	1,262 (65% of placed)
Total placed who retained employment status in 1 st and 2 nd quarters	1,290 (86% of placed)	1,255 (65% of placed)

non-training related retail or customer service positions, or no data was available – the overall number of training-related job placements will likely be revised upwards as this information is obtained.

GSL met or exceeded almost all its outcomes, and SLATE thanks everyone who helped thousands of dislocated workers and returning learners throughout the region make a course correction in their careers!

SLATE IS PART OF NORTHSIDE REGENERATION

SLATE is participating in McEagle's NorthSide Regeneration urban community development, a sweeping revival of an historic area just north of downtown St. Louis. The New NorthSide will be a self-sustaining neighborhood that brings economic opportunity, a secure environment, educational facilities and an updated infrastructure. When completed,

Prince represented SLATE at the Youth Jobs conference, on March 31, at the United Way. A few weeks later, on April 9, Prince served as an honorary guest at the annual Better Family Life Role Model Reception where she received the *Champion for Youth* Award.



“I absolutely love my job because youth employment is so important and empowering.” ~ALICE

PRINCE, SLATE YOUTH SERVICES MANAGER

it will encompass over **1,500** acres in proximity to the newly completed Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge with a total estimated investment of over \$8 billion.

Specifically, SLATE is lead partner in the *NorthSide Regeneration Workforce Coalition (NSRWC)*, helping McEagle to meet participation goals, including the objective that 25 percent of the total construction workforce will be made up of NorthSide residents. Hundreds of construction jobs are anticipated over the next few years, and SLATE will both post all opportunities and help job seekers successfully apply through our Construction Intake Center process.

The NorthSide Regeneration anticipates that at least **50,000** total jobs and **22,000** permanent jobs will be generated over the next two decades. Other NSRWC partners include St. Patrick Center, Better Family Life, St. Louis Job Corps, Construction Prep Center, Construction Careers Center, and Ranken Technical College.

All updates will be posted on www.stlworks.com.



Photo Credit: Civitas, Inc.

Rendering depicts a green and safe Northside neighborhood.

ENTREPRENEURIAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO SLATE CUSTOMERS

Recently, SLATE entered into a new partnership with *Small Business Empowerment Centers (SBEC)* and the *St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC)* to help provide technical assistance to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs. The program will primarily serve dislocated or laid off workers within the City of St. Louis.

Through this collaborative effort, SLATE customers interested in becoming entrepreneurs can receive extensive on-site, one-on-one training and counseling to help assess the feasibility of their ideas and develop a sound business plan. They can also learn to successfully apply for loans, access a vast array of assistance in such areas as marketing, government procurement, international trade, accounting, and cash flow. Most of these services are provided at no cost.

Small Business Empowerment

Centers (SBEC) has long supported local and regional economic development, small business growth, sustainability, and the creation of new busi-

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR ENTREPRENEURS

- **May 1, 9 - 12 p.m.:**

Starting a Business in Missouri.

- **May 8, 9 - 12 p.m.:** *The Basics of Writing a Business Plan.*

We welcome entrepreneurs of all ages, backgrounds, education and experience, regardless of the type of business they want to start. Workers who have been laid off and are registered with Missouri Career Centers' network can attend at *no cost*.

To register, call **(314) 657-3547** or visit www.missouribusiness.net.



nesses. Backed by a unique collaboration between Small Business Administration (SBA) federal funds, state and local governments, and private sector resources, the SBEC remains one of the nation's largest small business assistance programs. The SBEC will work closely with SLATE and SLDC to more efficiently promote economic growth, fundraising and entrepreneurship throughout the City of St. Louis.

To learn more and for the SBEC Workshops Calendar, visit www.stlworks.com.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A WORKKEYS ASSESSMENT

SLATE continues to carefully examine every request for training assistance. Under WIA regulation, Job Centers must ensure that any expenditure on a training program is justified and will likely result in a successful job search fol-

lowed by employment. To ensure a high degree of employability, in addition to general eligibility requirements, SLATE issues WorkKeys® assessment to individuals applying for training dollars.

Developed by American College Testing (ACT), WorkKeys® is a national workforce development system that compares a worker's skills with the skills required to successfully perform a specific job. Scores are provided for three different core skill sets: *Reading Information, Locating Information and Applied Math.*



Ray Gude, SLATE Employment and Training Advisor, said that scores

for the most often requested types of training require scores of 4 and higher. Individuals must schedule WorkKeys ahead of time and take it at

Close to **1,300** WorkKeys assessments for training programs were conducted at SLATE last year, primarily in the healthcare industry.

SLATE or any other Career Center. They have three hours to complete the test, and those who don't make the scores they need, can re-take it at a later time, but at their own expense. "[We] can pay for one person to take the test one time, but if you have to re-pass than you're subject to paying that cost yourself."

To successfully prepare for WorkKeys, Gude further recommends using a series of pre-tests available to all co-enrolled job seekers through www.jobs.mo.gov, under the *Career*

OCCUPATION	WORKKEYS SCORES		
	Reading for Information	Locating Information	Applied Math
Truck Driver - Heavy	4	4	4
CADD (Computer Aided Drafting)	5	5	5
Culinary	3	4	4
Certified Medication Technician (CMT)	4	4	4
Dental Assistant	4	4	4
Medical Coding/Billing	4	4	4
Pharmacy Technician	5	5	5
Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)	4	4	4
LPN/RN	5	4	5
Paralegal	6	4	5
Accountant	5	5	6
HVAC Heating and Air Conditioning Mechanics	5	5	5
IT (A+ Certification)	5	5	5

Ready 101 tab. "By taking these additional tests, you can get a closer approximation of the score that you might actually make on the WorkKeys," said Gude. As one example, in Applied Math, the highest level one can make is 7, and, since many customers experience difficulty passing that module, they might need additional study. "Don't take the WorkKeys test unless you are pretty sure you are going to get the score you need," advises Gude.

SLATE can also assist individuals who are having difficulty deciding on the type of training they want to pursue. Whether

through jobs.mo.gov or a SLATE staff member, *Career Exploration* exercises can include a job analysis, labor market and salary information; analysis of area companies' occupational profiles and recommended WorkKeys levels; SLATE advisors can also help identify customers' skill gaps and develop a training or employment plan.

