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
MISSOURI CAREER CENTER
DOWNTOWN • CENTRAL WEST END

Michael K. Holmes, Executive Director

www.stlworks.com

September 2013 Issue

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

1. Financial Literacy Award
2. Advanced Jobseeker Search Engine
3. WIA Youth Success
4. Trade Act Deadline

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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ST. LOUIS CITY YOUTH WIN FINANCIAL LITERACY PRIZES

This year, SLATE has partnered with the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) to implement the *DollarWise* Financial Literacy Program in St. Louis City. *DollarWise* is a national program that helps individuals become more financially literate, contributes to stable families and educational attainment, encourages young people to become productive members of the workforce.

SLATE's Youth Services Department helped *DollarWise* participants in our community submit applications for special recognition from USCM and is pleased to announce that two were accepted.

Photo *(from left):* Mayor Francis G. Slay, Lonnie Orr, Alysha Bates, Michael K. Holmes, SLATE Executive Director, August 15, 2013.

"DollarWise taught me how to save my money and to budget. Budgeting is important because you can over spend." ~Lonnie Orr, Video Contest Winner

Alysha Bates, 18, and **Lonnie Orr,** 19, were presented with a free Mini iPad by Mayor Francis Slay on August 15. "The program is wonderful and our youth find great benefit in the financial lessons it offers," said Alice Prince, Youth Services Manager. Profiles of the participants are below.

Alysha Bates is a graduate of Beaumont Technical High School, where she enrolled in the WIA Youth program through the Family Workforce Centers of America and SLATE. Alysha participated in Job Readiness Training, a spring internship and summer employment at All About Children Daycare, along with DollarWise. Since her graduation in May of 2013, she has participated in Harris Stowe State University's Summer Math and Science Academy; Alysha plans to earn her bachelor's degree in education there and become a Math teacher.

Lonnie Orr graduated in May 2013 from Cleveland ROTC High School. He participated in the WIA program through one of SLATE's service providers, Alternative Opportunities/JESS. Through WIA, Lonnie gained valuable work experience at the Renaissance Grand Hotel in the Laundry Department, which led to employment with KBS Services. Through KBS, Lonnie now works at the Kohl's Department Store in Bridgeton performing Maintenance. Lonnie's future goals include attending Ranken Technical College in order to pursue training in Electrical Design; he has also expressed an interest in joining the National Guard.

To view Photo Gallery from the event at City Hall, click here.

SLATE STAFF MEMBER RECOGNIZED FOR WORK ON BEHALF OF VETERANS

On August 23, a special dinner was held to honor those individuals who have worked on behalf of the Missouri Committee Employer Support of the Guard, a Department of Defense office promoting an employer culture that values and supports the military duty of employees. SLATE's own **Frank Alaniz,** Missouri Workforce Liaison, was among those selected to receive an *Above and Beyond Award* in recognition of his outstanding work with both veterans and employers through the *Show-Me Heroes* statewide initiative.

SLATE PILOTS KIOSITE'S MISSOURI JOBSEEKER SEARCH ENGINE

Talify Missouri is a partnership between Kiosite and the Missouri Division of Workforce Development. Still in its early stages, the *Talify Missouri* online software package was opened to public use in the greater St. Louis region and northeast Missouri last fall. Kiosite, a company founded in St. Louis that launched its flagship HireTrue platform in 2005, strongly believes that the current method used by most companies to match applicants with jobs is backwards. Job seekers are expected to find all the opportunities in which they might fit, apply, and hope that they are matched in a job that they will enjoy and one in which they will be successful. Instead, *Talify* is based on the philosophy that job matching should be search-driven and add value to everyone involved. The process used by *Talify* makes qualified candidates available to a prospective employer through a unique Search function that allows recruiters to find candidates that will thrive in the positions they are seeking to fill. *Talify* also provides job-seekers with career guidance, personality insight, and interview coaching based on a unique assessment.

"SLATE is a fundamental part to the next step of the Talify Missouri expansion," states Kiosite's COO, Doris Lyons. "*Talify* Missouri is poised to expand to other areas of the state, and to begin spreading the message [to] Missouri employers and candidates." She went on to say that so far, the pilot process has demonstrated a shortening of the period of unemployment/underemployment among users.

Kiosite built *Talify* on a foundation of 50 years of behavioral and personality research, combined with job matching and search technology. When the pilot process is complete later this year, SLATE and other Career Centers across Missouri will have access to a powerful tool not only able to help job-seekers get back to work, but positively impact their career direction, retention rates and overall satisfaction.

A DREAM COMES CLOSER FOR A GIRL WITH A STRONG WILL

Noor Ahmed is a 2013 Roosevelt High School graduate. An honor student and Vice-President of her senior class, she held various leadership positions at Roosevelt, but to fully appreciate her accomplishments, one needs to know her beginnings.

Noor is from Iraq, where she and her family lived a comfortable life of above modest means, until one day, terrorist factions and political upheaval forced them to leave their country and seek refuge in the U.S. Embassy in Syria. Later, the Ahmed family was granted permission to come to the United States and start a new life. Witnesses to the collapse of their whole world, the family arrived in St. Louis with no possessions, no cultural experience of the United States, and no fluency in English.

Four years later, Noor Ahmed was already well on her way to fulfilling her longtime dream of becoming a medical doctor and helping the sick and less fortunate in her homeland. The girl's indomitable spirit and drive helped her to adjust to her circumstances here. Noor used every means available to improve her chances and get closer to realizing her childhood dream.

Ahmed's search for post-secondary education and job readiness training brought her to the WIA Youth In-School program administered by the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE). Noor had never held a job before and needed help to secure employment. Through SLATE's youth services provider MERS/ Missouri Goodwill Industries, she was placed at Kingdom House to gain summer work experience as a daycare assistant.

Throughout the school year, the WIA program helped Noor with college and financial aid applications and scholarship essays, and provided academic tutoring.

As a result, Ahmed was awarded with two monetary scholarships of $500 each, one from the Roosevelt High School Alumni Association and the other from the Hampton-Kiwanis Club. Another scholarship was received from Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., awarding Noor with a laptop equipped with MS Office, a laptop backpack and a 16GB flash drive. The formal presentation of the laptop took place on August 9, 2013, at the Emerson YMCA.

Photo and story credit: Rosalind Mack, MERS/Goodwill Missouri Industries

Noor also received an Access Missouri Award grant from the Missouri Department of Higher Education, along with additional assistance in the form of an A+ Program Scholarship Award and a Youth Business Institute Scholarship.

After graduation, SLATE continued to support Noor's academic endeavors with WIA Youth funds, finally helping her to realize her dream. This summer, Noor Ahmed was accepted into the University of Missouri - St. Louis, with a major in pre-medicine. "It is a

dream come true for me. I am so happy!" she told her case manager at MERS/Missouri Goodwill.

TRADE ACT OFFERS MONETARY SUPPORT AND HELP WITH REEMPLOYMENT

The Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED) recently issued a listing of twelve companies whose workers are eligible for assistance under the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) *Trade Act*. The goal of *Trade Act* assistance is to help workers whose jobs have been hurt by foreign trade get back to work as soon as possible. If an eligible individual is approved, he or she can access the following services and benefits:

1. Reemployment Services – skills assessment, career counseling, job search strategies, help with resumes, cover letters and applications, referrals to jobs, training and job market information, interview preparation.

2. Training and Related Expense Reimbursement – up to **130** weeks of full-time or part-time job training, OJT, Occupational Training, Customized Training, and Remedial Training. Training-related expenses may also be included.

3. Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA), Additional Weekly Benefits – up to **130** weeks of income support which means additional weeks of Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits.

4. Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) – a tax credit covering **72.5** percent of the worker's monthly premium for qualified health insurance.

5. Job Search Allowance - reimbursement for job search costs outside the worker's local area.

6. Relocation Allowance- reimbursement for relocation costs for a job outside the worker's local area.

7. Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) - A wage subsidy for up to 2 years, available to workers age **50** or over who are reemployed at annual wages of $50,000 or less.

All Trade Act-related benefits and services can be accessed through SLATE or any other Career Center. Petitions are available on-line or may also be obtained at a local Career Center; where staff are always able to help with petition completion and filing.

Establishing and maintaining contact with Career Center staff will ensure that proper documentation and all required deadlines are understood and followed, avoiding any unnecessary delays.

SLATE is currently looking to assist former workers of **Hostess, CPI,** and **Yellow Pages** – companies approved for *Trade Act* assistance in St. Louis area. The deadline for filing a petition for Hostess workers laid off on or around **November 16, 2012,** is fast approaching. It is important that workers from these companies file a petition soon to receive access to the program's many services and benefits.

SLATE TO HOST INFORMATION SESSION FOR LABORERS

On September 23, SLATE's Downtown Career Center will host the second in a series of *Construction Information Sessions* in cooperation with **Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA).** Anyone with an interest in working with an array of power tools and equipment as part of a team that builds highways, bridges, stadiums, buildings, airports, etc., is encouraged to attend. For more info about Construction Craft Laborers' careers, visit www.laborers-highhill.org.

LIUNA representatives will be present to provide information on their journeyman training and apprenticeship programs.

Additional information on this session can be obtained by contacting **Stacey Fowler** at sfowler@stlworks.com.

FREE FINANCIAL PLANNING DAY SCHEDULED

On Saturday, October 19 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., the *2013 Financial Planning Day* will be held. Experienced, Certified financial planners will offer advice on surviving a job loss, saving for college or retirement, insurance, budgeting and more. **Mayor Francis G. Slay** is scheduled to make a special welcoming address. The event will be held at the STLCC Forest Park campus' Student Center Building. Space is limited so act now to reserve your spot; register at www.FinancialPlanningDays.org/SaintLouis or call 877-861-7826.