

WorkNet PINELLAS Chairman's Report

July 2008

Employment Statistics Pinellas County May 2008*

3,011 Initial Unemployment
Compensation Claims

↓ 10% April 2008
↑ 25% May 2007

Unemployment Rate

- 5.2% Pinellas, May '08
- 5.6% Tampa Bay MSA, May '08
- 5.3% Florida, May '08
- 5.2% U.S., May '08

* Source: Agency for Workforce
Innovation; Numbers Not Seasonally
Adjusted

Florida's May '08 unemployment rate is the highest since January 2003. The May '08 job growth rate of -0.9% continues the trend of negative over-the-year growth that began in September 2007, primarily due to declines in construction. The Tampa Bay MSA has seen the largest annual decline in jobs in the state, the highest being in professional & business services (-12,500 jobs). The Tampa Bay MSA did see gains in education & health services (+4,000 jobs); followed by government (+2,200 jobs); and leisure & hospitality (+1,100 jobs).

Pinellas Civilian Labor Force
473,731

Unemployed Pinellas Citizens
24,512

Over-the-Year Job Growth
Tampa Bay MSA
-20,300 jobs in 2008



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Connecting Business & Education Teach for Excellence Career Education Grants

In October of 2007, WorkNet Pinellas awarded four Pinellas County teachers each up to \$5,000 for Career Education Grants at the Pinellas Education Foundation's Teach for Excellence Awards ceremony. The purpose of the grant was to engage students in the area of career education. During the year, the teachers worked with students on independent projects with this mission in mind. At the last Youth Economic Opportunity Committee meeting in March 2008, each teacher presented their results and highlighted the success of their programs.

Debra Panico of Lakeview Fundamental Elementary School helped to increase the number of females interested in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) as careers. 104 female students were involved in the project that built confidence in girls' abilities in the math and sciences by exposing them to engineering through girls-only engineering activities.

Gary Shepard of Osceola High School established a pre-engineering and manufacturing program to prepare students for post-secondary education and technical careers in high growth industries through skills-based, hands-on, interactive learning modules that use industry standard equipment and software. The goal was to train 25-30 9th graders the first year and grow into a four year program. Working closely with local businesses and industries, learning modules were developed and tailored to meet their employability standards and needs. At the end of the program, students were able to sit for various certification exams while earning post-secondary education credit.



From L-R: Bob McIntyre, Gary Shepard, Daniel Smith, Leslie Pohley, Susan Bennett, Fred Ulrich, Ed Peachey and Clayton Wilcox.

Daniel Smith of Countryside High School implemented CougarTech with funding from the grant. CougarTech has enabled high school students to combine their academic knowledge with hands-on experience and vocational expertise in a computer certification field. The outcome has been seniors who graduated with both a high school diploma and industry certifications leading toward possible careers as PC Technicians, Internet Helpdesk, or Network Administrators. Nearly 100 students have taken the first step toward a promising career path or gained skills which make them marketable in a higher paying job.

Leslie Pohley of Largo Middle School worked with 144 low-achieving, unmotivated, frequently truant students and a class of highly motivated honors students as mentors to explore the wide variety of careers through a program called *Career Explorations...A Look at My Future*. Students learned the skills, attitudes, training and values needed for a number of different careers.

Regional Job Fair Targets Bay Area Job Seekers

Congressman Gus Bilirakis has asked the area Workforce Boards and the Upper Tampa Bay Chamber to conduct a career fair for District 9 on Friday, **July 18, 2008**. Florida's 9th Congressional District spans parts of suburban Hillsborough, western Pasco and northern Pinellas counties.

The career fair will take place from 11:30 AM to 3:30 PM at the newly dedicated TECO Hall of the Oldsmar Library located at 400 St. Petersburg Drive East in Oldsmar. Employer participation has been limited due to the size of the venue, with a total of **40 employers** from around the Bay Area set to be in attendance. It will be promoted to all job seekers of Tampa Bay.

Congressman Bilirakis and his staff will be present during the event. The Upper Tampa Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Workforce Boards covering Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco and Hernando Counties will be present. In addition, Career Central (Pasco/Hernando Workforce Board) will have their Mobile One Stop ready with Internet and job search terminals available onsite.



Upcoming Events & Meetings

- **July 9, 12:00-4:00 PM**
WorkNet Wednesday Job Fair
Radisson Hotel & Conference Center in St. Petersburg
- **July 18, 11:30 AM-3:30 PM**
Regional Job Fair
TECO Hall of the Oldsmar Library
- **July 25, 9:00 AM**
Finance Committee Meeting
EpiCenter—WorkNet Admin
- **August 6, 11:45 AM**
Executive Committee Meeting
EpiCenter—WorkNet Admin
- **August 7, 7:30-9:00 AM**
Business Seminar
Auto Industry Forum
EpiCenter

Youth Job Fair Makes Virtual Connection

WorkNet's first ever virtual job fair kicked off June 2-6, 2008, targeting youth ages 14-22. More than **60 employers** signed up for the week-long event including Sweetbay Supermarket, TSE Industries, Cox Radio and Caspers Corporation/McDonalds. Participating businesses listed over **500 job openings**, many being professional based positions offering a wage higher than the \$6.79 minimum. With job openings scarce this summer, nearly 1,000 students registered on worknetwednesday.com to look for employment. Most opportunities focused on individuals over the age of 16, however, positive guidance and alternative work options were provided for students under 16. "I was amazed at the number of employers and young job seekers that signed up for this event," stated Jacqueline Skryd, WorkNet's Marketing Coordinator. "I would say it was very successful in helping place some of our local youth in jobs, whether for the summer, full-time or part-time."



Better Outlook!

"I just wanted to thank each and every member of the WorkNet Pinellas teams in Downtown St. Petersburg and 49th St. One Stop. It hasn't been easy, and as long as I had a positive attitude, I seemed to come out of the offices with a better outlook knowing I had help from these caring and committed individuals. It's a very stressful thing when you're unemployed and sometimes give up. If you go to WorkNet Pinellas and apply yourself and ask for help, your prospects improve 10 fold. Thanks again WorkNet Pinellas for all of your help."

- Paul C.

Collaborative Automotive Industry Forum

In the last of its business forum series, WorkNet Pinellas brings you a **collaborative automotive industry forum** that will focus on current and emerging workforce needs. On **August 7th**, WorkNet will host an automotive industry-specific forum that will offer businesses a chance to learn about training funding opportunities for their companies and have their voices heard by educators regarding curriculum development and class offerings. The forum will be held at the EpiCenter (13805 58th Street North) in Clearwater from 7:30 - 8:30 AM.

Please join us for a chance to help shape the future of the automotive workforce in Pinellas County! Contact Kristin Dailey, WorkNet's Director of Employer Relations, at (727) 507-4300 x3004 or kdailey@worknetpinellas.org for details and reservations.

