

FSWI Quarterly

A publication updating the activities of the **Financial Services Workforce Initiative**
in Pittsburgh and Southwestern Pennsylvania.

May 2006

In March 2006, the FSWI partnered with AT&T to conduct a job fair for the 225+ workers who were being displaced from the AT&T Call Center in the Strip District. Fourteen regional FSWI employers came together to offer potential employment opportunities for these regional workers who were losing their jobs. The good news is that Governor Rendell saved these workers from displacement by keeping the call center from closing. The better news is that when regional FSWI employers identified a financial services workplace challenge, they collaborated to address the challenge in a proactive manner. These FSWI employers cared enough about the industry, the region, and these displaced workers to participate in an effort to retain experienced talent in our region. This effort to address an identified workplace challenge speaks volumes about the employers that participate in the FSWI and the commitment to identifying and addressing workplace needs and challenges in financial services. **Thank you** to all those participating employers who demonstrated their commitment to the financial services industry and the southwestern Pennsylvania region. Our industry and region is stronger because of your commitment and that benefits everyone that works and lives in Southwestern Pennsylvania!

Major Initiatives...Update

Industry Partnership/Incumbent Worker Training

In March 2006, the PA Department of Labor and Industry awarded the Financial Services Workforce Initiative Industry Partnership an Incumbent Worker Training Grant. The goal of the Incumbent Worker Training Program is to define skill gaps in the financial services employee workforce and develop training and development solutions to address the gaps within the financial services cluster organizations in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region.

The FSWI and Duquesne University's Center for Corporate and Executive Education, are working with the member organizations of the FSWI Advisory Board to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to better understand the workforce training needs of the financial services cluster. Through the assessment, we will gain a better understanding of the industry challenges, and gather ideas that will improve the capacity of the organizations to be innovative and lead an organization to higher levels of productivity and revenue.

Training will be initially piloted with the FSWI Advisory Board member organizations. Organizations will identify the most effective and efficient training methods that will result in a positive impact on the organization, and the employees. Training will be designed and delivered in the following two ways:

- **Training Plans** – individual workshops and/or programs to address specific needs identified through the needs assessment.
- **Training Packages** – a more comprehensive program to include multiple training workshops to address a greater number of workforce training needs across the organization.

Incumbent worker training needs that have been identified through initial assessments include: Senior Women's Leadership, Diversity and Business Ethics, Developing a Sales Culture, Project Management,

Organizational Leadership and Business Analysts Training Strategy. Additional needs will be identified as the assessments are conducted with more organizations.

Industry Partnership Expansion Activities

On April 4th, the initial meeting of the Lawrence-Mercer Counties Industry Partnership expansion was held at the Radisson Hotel of Sharon in West Middlesex, PA. The purpose of this meeting was to explore the interest and willingness of financial services organizations in Lawrence and Mercer Counties to engage in a partnership to identify and address workforce needs, issues and challenges in the region. Representatives of the following organizations were invited to attend this initial meeting at the recommendation of Sam Giannetti, West Central Job Partnership, Eileen Borrelli, Lawrence County Career Link and Angie Palumbo, Mercer County Career Link: Baltimore Life, ESB Bank, First Commonwealth, First Merit Mortgage Corporation, First National Bank, JFS Wealth Advisors, National City and Sky Financial.

The representatives participating in the meeting were asked to make a decision regarding the benefits to the region of engaging in the FSWI industry partnership expansion. In order to make this critical decision, an overview based on the success of the FSWI in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County as a model was provided. The overview reviewed the partnership process, the advisory board role and responsibilities, the development and implementation of workforce initiatives, and the necessary commitment to ensure the success of the FSWI.

Based on the overview and a discussion concerning the workforce needs of the Lawrence-Mercer Counties region, the representatives decided to move forward with the industry partnership expansion and the first official Lawrence-Mercer Counties FSWI Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for May 24th. The agenda for this first Lawrence-Mercer Counties FSWI Advisory Board meeting will include a more thorough discussion to identify workforce issues, needs and challenges specific to the region.

Pittsburgh Regional Internship Collaborative Enterprise (PRICE)

This summer will be the third year for the PRICE post secondary internship program and the second year for the PRICE high school internship program. Since the PRICE initiative was designed, developed and implemented in 2004 to meet the financial services workforce needs of the future by attracting, developing and retaining young adults in the region, the PRICE Program has expanded each year. Since 2004, the PRICE program has grown in many directions including:

- the number of participating employers providing internships (2 in 2004 and 7 in 2005);
- the number of high school and post secondary interns participating (4 high school interns in 2004; 22 post secondary interns in 2004 and 34 in 2005);
- the career development emphasis initiated in 2005;
- the intern summer project evolving to a major statement from the interns to the region;
- and, the evolving of PRICE Recognition Event to be a celebration of opportunity and experiences attended by business and political leaders of our community.

One of the goals of PRICE is to develop a pipeline of diversity talent for the regional business and financial services employers. To accomplish this goal, PRICE has recently partnered with Duquesne University's Career Literacy for African American Youth (CLAAY). Melissa Price, PRICE Program Manager/CLAAY Site Coordinator is working with Dr. Vernon Tipton, Director of CLAAY, and the CLAAY site coordinators (Megan Grabski, Nina Lynch, Nicole Felice, Jeremiah Jackson, and Chris Edmonds), to expand the impact of the PRICE Program and PRICE internship opportunities throughout the 15 regional high schools where CLAAY has a presence, therefore increasing the potential for the diversity pipeline.

Those high schools include Aliquippa, Ambridge, Beaver Falls, Brashear, CAPA, Carrick, Langley, McKeesport Area Technology Center, Oliver, Peabody, Perry Traditional Academy, Rochester Middle School, Schenley, Taylor-Allerdice and Westinghouse.

This year, PRICE will continue to expand and impact the industry and the region. The PRICE High School Program will more than double in size with a potential of 8-10 internship opportunities being provided by regional employers. As part of the internship selection process, 25-35 students from the Business and Finance Academy at Westinghouse High School and the Career Literacy for African American Youth (CLAAY) Program will be invited to participate in an Intern Preparation Day on May 10th. This part of the PRICE High School Program will include guest facilitator Karen Hinds, author of Teenagers in the Workplace. PRICE high school interns will also participate in a number of activities included in the PRICE post secondary program.

The PRICE Post Secondary Program for summer 2006 will include eleven potential employers and up to 50 post secondary interns. Currently the PRICE participating employers include: Allegheny County, Citizens Bank, Duquesne University, Fifth-Third Bank, First Commonwealth, First National Bank, The Fragasso Group, Hefren-Tillotson, Highmark, Mellon Financial, and Sky Bank. Additional organizations are pending.

The Summer 2006 program will include orientations on June 7th and 14th, a career development breakfast on June 16th that focuses on career marketing, a networking workshop on June 28th and the Networking Luncheon on July 12th at the Rivers Club to practice the networking skills learned with regional business professionals, a Community Outreach Activity on July 8th to promote community involvement, a PRICE Career Training Day on July 19th that includes workshops on financial literacy and business professionalism, a summer project focused on the development of teamwork, leadership and communication skills, and the Annual Recognition Event on August 11th.

If your organization would like to get involved in developing the future workforce for the industry and the region as a PRICE participating employer and provide internship opportunities for regional high school and/or post secondary students, please contact Melissa Price, PRICE Program Coordinator at 412-396-1401 or via email at pricem@duq.edu.

Current happenings...FSWI Initiatives

- **FSWI Job Vacancy Survey** - On April 21st, the Financial Services Job Vacancy Survey was distributed throughout the financial services cluster. The purpose of this survey is to collect financial services workforce job vacancy data to assist the FSWI Advisory Board in identifying needs, issues and challenges. The results of this survey will impact the strategic objectives established for the FSWI and the solutions developed to address the identified issues, needs and challenges. The results of the survey will be published in the August FSWI Quarterly.
- **FSWI Career Ladder Initiative** - progress continues on detailing of the career ladder tool. FSWI Advisory Board members are working on detailing the template at the monthly advisory board meetings. The target date for completion is Fall 2006. Our next steps include finalizing the career ladder information, conducting focus groups to review the tool, requesting bids from web-based application vendors, creating a web-based application, and piloting this tool with high school and post secondary students.
- **Customer Service Supply Chain (CSSC)** – Bill Freed, FREEdLANCE Group, is currently conducting phone-based surveys of all CSSC companies on Tier 1 needs and types of jobs. The

early results of the phone-based survey indicate that there is a need for the following positions: Admin Clerks, Assemblers, Claims Processors, Clerks, Data Entry, Filing Clerks, Mail Room, Processors and Tele-marketers. Based on these results, the CSSC will recruit individuals for enrollment into the current CSSC program to meet the needs of the Tier 1 employers.

Under its changed Industry Specific Initiatives (ISI) Grant with the State, so far this year, CSSC has placed all graduates (100%) at 40 hour per week jobs and average wages at placement of \$9.38 per hour.

On the Agenda....

- Working with FSWI Advisory Board member organizations to assess incumbent worker training needs and develop training plans to meet those needs.
 - Developing a new data base for PRICE and CLAAY to share student information and provide PRICE participating employers with potential intern resumes and program detail.
 - Partnering in the Fall 2006 with Duquesne University Professors Lackman and Geylani to create a labor supply model with teams of students from their Econometrics and Research in Marketing classes.
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www.iet.duq.edu/fswi

www.iet.duq.edu/price

www.careerwired.com/customerservice

If you would like to find out more about the activities of the Financial Services Workforce Initiative or have questions and comments, please contact:

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