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Alaska Workforce Investment Board Newsletter

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Dear Reader,

In this issue we have the following articles: Alaska Faring Much Better Than Most States; Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) Update; Alaska Performance Scholarship: Training Opportunity for Postsecondary Institutions and Training Providers; CTE and Math Teachers Partner to Increase Student Achievement; Taking Alaska Tech Prep to the Next Step; and Apprenticeship Update.

The AWIB has developed this newsletter to connect schools, industry and stakeholders with the AWIB and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. We are publishing every other month and featuring opportunities, programs and information about State of Alaska initiatives aimed at helping youth and adults find meaningful employment and postsecondary training. Also, the newsletter will have articles from the Department of Education and Early Development related to Career and Technical Education.

Important Dates

February 1 - 2
RTC meeting in Anchorage

February 3 - 4
EED-CTE Meeting in Anchorage

February 4
Alaska Performance Scholarship
WebEx for Training Providers

February 4 - 5
2011 ASD CTE Conference in
Anchorage

February 22 - 23
AWIB meeting in Juneau

February 24 Gasline Steering
Committee meeting in Juneau

Please let me know if you have ideas for future articles. The next newsletter will be published in March 2011.



Sincerely,

Jeff Selvey
AWIB Career Technical Education Coordinator
(907) 269 - 3018
jeff.selvey@alaska.gov

Web Sites of Interest

- [Apprenticeship](#)
- [AVTEC](#)
- [AWIB CTE](#)
- [EED CTE](#)
- [UA Workforce Programs](#)

Alaska Faring Much Better Than Most States

Click Bishop, Commissioner



While Alaska felt the effects of the national economic recession, we fared much better than most states. Employment levels have recovered and for the second year in our history, Alaska's unemployment rate was lower than the nation's.

At this time last year, we reported a loss of 2,100 jobs in 2009 and predicted a loss of 1,400 jobs in 2010. What a difference a year makes. I am happy to report that although our unemployment rate has hovered around 8 percent, our economists estimate Alaska added 1,900 jobs between 2009 and 2010.

Our prediction for 2011 is similar to the 2010 estimate: modest growth of 1,800 jobs. Alaska, as we often say, is not like the Lower 48. That difference is particularly evident in the economic structure that has kept us in good shape - strong oil and commodity prices, rising fish prices, and recovering tourism, among others.

Growing our economy by accessing Alaska's natural resources will help create paths of opportunity for Alaskans. Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development staff are forging partnerships with industry and education to provide Alaska with workers for the future. We are connecting current job seekers with employers, and improving our services to prepare unemployed and underemployed workers. We are also working harder to close the gap by training Alaskans for the high-paying jobs that currently go to nonresidents.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program has helped retrain workers who have been displaced by trade-affected layoffs. Between 1997 and 2005, foreign trade affected more than 119 companies in Alaska, including those in the oil, timber, and fishing industries.

More than 10,000 Alaska workers are still eligible for TAA services to train for new jobs. The Department of Labor notifies workers of their eligibility; but even if layoffs are decades old, TAA benefits never expire.

Another successful program allows employers to work with the nearest job center specialist to create customized hands-on training that results in full-time permanent work. On-the-Job Training reimburses an employer for a significant percentage of a trainee's wages.

A business gets the benefits of wage reimbursement, training to meet specific needs, and lower employee turnover. The trainee becomes fully qualified for the job through the custom training.

We encourage all Alaskan job seekers to visit the Alaska Job Center Network at one of 23 statewide job centers or online at jobs.alaska.gov, or call (877) 724-2539. Alaska job centers offer comprehensive employment resources including [ALEXsys](#) (Alaska's free online job bank) for conducting local or statewide job searches, WorkKeys skills assessments to help determine job readiness, and reemployment services to help choose the best career path.

For the full article, see the January 2011 *Alaska Trends* Magazine at http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?llr=sj5ne5cab&et=1104385082016&s=-1&e=001GBukTEmBlxYji_xFyZgInrwinq00bKTpF3giIz8fs3VAGEs1vp53pQdRRpm2;7jff5qgzA4Sc8XcTgH79V0jG0_dtDUwK-yjw_TcNXfX9j1d43ITv39E7SReU3o6uch8

More Information Online

[Alaska Economic Trends](#)

[On the Job Training](#)

[Trade Adjustment Assistance](#)

AWIB Update

Greg Cashen, Executive Director



The next AWIB meeting is scheduled on February 22nd and 23rd, 2011 at Centennial Hall in Juneau. The agenda includes an update on the Gasline Training Plan, State CTE Plan and Implementation, Regional Training Centers, Regional Advisory Councils, Health Workforce Development Plan, Disability Employment Initiative training grant, and activities of the Alaska State Energy Sector Partnership (ASESP). Time has been allocated on the agenda for board discussion and an update from the Executive Committee on current initiatives. Awards will be presented for the Secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) Instructor/Administrator of the Year and Post-Secondary CTE Instructor/Administrator of the Year.

The AWIB will be given an update on the \$150,000 planning grant received from the Department of Health and Human Services that is being utilized to complete further development of the Alaska Health Workforce Plan adopted by the AWIB in May 2010.

An update will be given to the AWIB on the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant received from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Training Administration in the amount of \$2,727,000 to improve education, training and employment opportunities and outcomes of youth and adults who are unemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits. To enhance coordination for the implementation of the DEI training grant, Rich Sanders from the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education will be working closely with Louise Dean in the AWIB Office, and the Employment Security Division to implement the training grant.

An update on the ASESP training grants awarded for training in RE/EE industries, including hydroelectric, wind turbine, biomass, geothermal, and weatherization will be provided to the AWIB. The first grant application review will be conducted soon for applications received by the January 18, 2011 deadline. The grant application process is open continuously until all funds available under the grant solicitation have been awarded. The next review will be conducted after the application deadline of April 18, 2011.

[Click here to read the entire article.](#)

Alaska Performance Scholarship: Training Opportunity for Postsecondary Institutions and Training Providers

Stephanie Butler, ACPE Director of Program Operations



The Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) proposed by the Parnell administration and approved by the Alaska Legislature in 2010, was created as an invitation to excellence, extended to Alaskan students and schools. As part of the invitation to excellence, APS goals include improving high school performance and better preparing Alaskans for postsecondary education and career success.

Subject to funds appropriation, qualified Alaska 2011 high school graduates may receive scholarships of up to \$4,755 annually for attendance at participating postsecondary institutions. Awards can be used at any regionally accredited college or university in Alaska, or for approved career and technical education programs in the state. To qualify, 2011 Alaska high school graduates must have completed a specified rigorous curriculum; earned a qualifying GPA; and earned a qualifying score on the SAT, ACT, or WorkKeys.

The Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) will manage the day-to-day program operations including disbursement of funds. Postsecondary institutions and training providers wishing to administer APS funds must be authorized to operate or exempted from authorization and career and technical educational programs must be approved by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The first step for interested institutions and training providers is to complete a Program Participation Agreement (PPA) and appropriate supplementary forms, in order to become eligible for their otherwise-eligible enrolled students to use their APS funds to pay for costs of attendance. The deadline to submit PPA forms for the 2011-2012 academic year is March 15, 2011.

Training for postsecondary education and training providers is scheduled for February 4, 2011, from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM. You may attend via WebEx audio conference or in person at ACPE's Juneau or Anchorage offices.

For more information about the APS program, please visit our website at http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?llr=sj5ne5cab&et=1104385082016&s=-1&e=001GBukTEmBlxbxCnpaxr-n7OrT5MPhQuR89iTv8Z_TbvitpUcemtI4s3w8oiQpiBX9Rm0YIwfn66rG2w6kRTlh6f5UxvvygOr and if you have not already done so, sign up for e-mail alerts regarding scholarship information updates. Postsecondary education and training providers with additional questions may contact ACPE by e-mail at EED.ACPE-IA@alaska.gov; toll free at 866-427-5638 and directly at 465-6741 or 269-7970.

CTE and Math Teachers Partner to Increase Student Achievement

Sally Spieker, UAA Career & Technical Education Department

Marcia Olson, EED Career & Technical Education Unit

What career today does not require math skills? Employers consistently say they need employees able to effectively apply math on the job. One would be hard-pressed to find a Career and Technical Education (CTE) course these days that does not require the use of math skills - oftentimes high-level math. Do students realize that the 3-4-5 triangle they use in construction class is the same concept as the Pythagorean Theorem they memorized in math class? Do they make the connection between the fraction multiplication process they learned in math and doubling a recipe in family and consumer science class? Many times students do not and when they see a math problem on a standardized test, they do not realize that they actually know the concept. Alaska teachers are participating in a program called "Math-in-CTE," which trains teams of math and CTE teachers to work together to enhance the math in the CTE curriculum so that students DO make the connection between what they have learned in math class and how it is applied in the real world.

The program was developed and researched by the National Center for Career and Technical Education (NRCCTE) and has shown to increase students' scores on standardized math tests, while retaining their technical skill attainment. In this model, a math teacher and a CTE teacher team up and look at the CTE curriculum to determine the inherent math concepts. The math teacher provides some background and suggestions for the CTE teacher to use so that math concepts will be enhanced. The CTE lesson is taught as usual but with a few "tweaks". The teacher: purposefully points out the math concept; incorporates standard math vocabulary; provides examples of how the concept is used in other situations; and relates the concept to a traditional test question that is written without a CTE context. It is a painless, but effective, way to integrate mathematics into the CTE curriculum and to ensure that students make those vital connections between math and how it is actually used.

About 20 Alaska teachers - teams of math and construction teachers and math and health sciences teachers - are participating in the program this year. They began with an intense week of training last August to map the CTE curriculum and develop math-enhanced lessons. They are delivering those lessons during this school year, as well as continuing their collaboration with each other.

The program is co-sponsored by EED and UAA Career and Technical Education Department. There is an opportunity for math teachers to be paired with transportation, construction, and health careers teachers. Applications are currently available for teacher teams to participate in the program, starting in August 2011. We cordially invite **high school and postsecondary teacher teams** (a team is one math teacher and one CTE teacher from the construction, health careers, or transportation area) to sign up for this awesome professional development opportunity. Application forms and details are on the EED CTE website at <http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?llr=sj5ne5cab&et=1104385082016&s=-1&e=001GBukTEmBlxZ-LP-fugfgO7NnVxtyIRPj97ATv5U8NwADc0u-ICt0v1uL2V2INQpED-uDh0HbK1Y1519x50CVhbGs-MUUDH H8VZ11WzRjGgm so84IWK8 PR LzdgZqg3MNdwtsohU=>.

Questions? Contact Sally Spieker at UAA (sally.spieker@uaa.alaska.edu) or Marcia Olson at EED (marcia.olson@alaska.gov). For more information on the Math-In-CTE model, please see the NRCCTE website at: 136.165.122.102/mambo/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=43&Itemid=56

Taking Alaska Tech Prep to the Next Step

Diane Maples, Alaska Tech Prep Consortium Statewide Coordinator



Success in today's workforce requires education and training beyond a high school diploma. In recent years, less than half of the state's high school graduates have made the transition to a postsecondary program. Making the transition is difficult and seems to be a major barrier for many of our graduates. Alaska Tech Prep was created in 2003 to address this barrier and has successfully assisted students in this transition. Although the number of students participating has increased, from 300 students in 2003 to 1750 in 2010, this number represents only eight percent of all 11th and 12th graders in Alaska.

Recognizing that it can play an expanded role in reaching more students and achieving a more comprehensive system, the Alaska Tech Prep Consortium Board recently entered into a planning process that focuses on three major strategies:

- increasing and strengthening the partnerships between secondary, postsecondary, business and industry for aligned and rigorous curriculum that leads to a high demand job;
- facilitating conversations that will generate opportunities to better prepare students for the college and career experience; and
- designing a comprehensive data collection and analysis process that will inform statewide key decision makers and stakeholders of the previous two strategies' potential impact.

In addition, the Board has determined the necessity for a name change that will better reflect the Board's intent to take Tech Prep to the next level of engagement to better serve students in this state. The board plans on revealing the new name by the end of February, 2011.

The role of the consortium will continue to follow the ideals that have successfully connected students to a broad range of career pathways. This includes an expanded focus on facilitating a program of study model where articulations will include math, science, communication and technology, promote student transition and transfer across educational systems, and increase accessibility for students regardless of their geographic location.

Taking the Alaska Tech Prep to this next level is an investment toward creating a seamless educational and workforce system that renders planned and accountable transitions for students into a career pathway. To find out how you can become more involved in supporting these efforts in Alaska visit our website at http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?llr=sj5ne5cab&et=1104385082016&s=-1&e=001GBukTEmBlxajc2i6j44pO4Ors9twWYP_M1GvIyX55SyRUKx2E2AViyy8fwWanWXjovL9QN5fpiS915FvCHSzi6s2FEgWf4RELY9nmN6B3eF9jyXL2hrBw==.

Apprenticeship Update

Gerry Andrews, Gasline Training Administrator and Apprenticeship Coordinator



My primary focus is on workforce development and careers for all Alaskans. We have worked to strengthen essential connections between Alaska's employers and education professionals to promote registered apprenticeship opportunities in a systemic education and workforce development system. It is exciting to see business, industry, private sector and education understand that apprenticeship is an integral piece of a well-connected Career and Technical Education (CTE) system.

In the August 2010 AWIB Newsletter, I mentioned that an Environmental Technician apprenticeship program was promoted by Lisa Pekich, Conoco Phillips. The Environmental Technician is an apprenticeship program that focuses on hiring local residents for employment on the gasline and other construction projects. Alaska Forum Inc., is the program sponsor and training provider for this multi-employer registered apprenticeship program. Kurt Eilo with Alaska Forum has worked closely with Alaskan employers to finalize the training and register the Standards of Apprenticeship with the federal apprenticeship office. This new apprenticeship program will create a career entry point for Alaskans who are interested in the occupation and technical duties associated with the job, as well as, earning technical credits towards an associate degree with the University of Alaska. In addition, employers will benefit from a more diverse workforce with broader skills sets and an increased knowledge of the occupation.

Please visit this website http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?llr=sj5ne5cab&et=1104385082016&s=-1&e=001GBukTEmBlxYHwXF6GCB1Q8JW-l8-4b77ADthifl07wWhQjosYAL886nN1_yCIartmg0pTL5nv2SPyzUzE2uenPtDUTjdiD0rQk-X9_bk68RdKDXQHq5y92jbrsGQemf_z6NxmotDpg to attain more information on apprenticeship. Please contact me at gerry.andrews@alaska.gov if you have questions pertaining to apprenticeship or gasline training.