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Alaska Workforce Investment Board Newsletter

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Dear Reader,

The beginning of the school year is off to a strong start and you have many students who are making plans for life after high school. Also, you have students who do not have an idea what they want to do once they graduate from high school.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) has developed this newsletter to connect schools, industry, and stakeholders with AWIB and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

This newsletter will be published every other month and will feature opportunities, programs, and insider information about State of Alaska initiatives aimed at helping youth and adults find meaningful employment and postsecondary training. Also, this newsletter will have articles from the Department of Education and Early Development.

Let me know if you have ideas for future articles.

Sincerely,

Jeff Selvey
AWIB CTE Coordinator

Preparing Alaska Youth for Alaskan Jobs

Click Bishop, Commissioner



The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development is building strong partnerships with industry, labor and education to develop our state's workforce to support Alaska hire and economic development - in other words to connect Alaskans with jobs in Alaska. We will succeed by working together.

Our partnership with Education Commissioner Larry LeDoux and his staff is critical to help high school students develop career pathways as they prepare

Labor Commissioner Click Bishop (left) and Education Commissioner Larry LeDoux signing the career and technical education agreement in Juneau.

for life after high school.

We are working with all stakeholders to develop a comprehensive Career and Technical Education Plan for Alaska. This will include career pathways that are supported through Career and Technical Education programs of study that lead to more than 170 apprenticeable occupations. For example, the Agriculture and Natural Resources Pathway includes a geospatial program of study, which supports surveying for multiple industries.

The leads on this project are Helen Mehrkens, the Department of Education and Early Development's CTE Administrator, and Jeff Selvey, the Department of Labor's AWIB CTE Coordinator.

As we implement our AGIA Training Strategic Plan, which will help us prepare Alaskans to build an Alaska gasline and other resource based projects, we will continue to work closely with training providers and Regional Training Centers to provide training for all Alaskans.

[Click here for the AGIA Training Strategic Plan](#)

Creating a Workforce Development Plan

Jim Lynch, Chair

The AWIB supports the AGIA Training Plan and the four strategies contained in the Plan, including the collaborative efforts of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Department of Education and Early Development to develop a comprehensive, integrated career and technical education system that aligns training institutions and coordinates program delivery. The AWIB supports efforts to develop a statewide system that incorporates career counseling and planning and career pathways from K-12 that lead to postsecondary education programs including registered apprenticeship, vocational education, and the University of Alaska system.



AWIB members Jim Lynch, Betty Jo Dibble, and Greg Cashen

This fall, AWIB will be reviewing two grant applications that will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Training Administration. If awarded, the grants will assist in training Alaskans for employment in high growth occupations related to healthcare and the renewable energy sectors.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board and its members have been involved with several initiatives this year related to education and employment training including the development of a healthcare workforce development plan. This workforce development plan will be reviewed at the 2009 Healthcare Workforce Development Conference on September 21st and 22nd in Anchorage and by the board at the next full AWIB meeting which is scheduled for October 26th and 27th at the University of Alaska Board of Regents Conference Room in Fairbanks. We hope that you will be able to attend.

AWIB: Guides Employment Training in Alaska

Greg Cashen, Executive Director

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board is the lead state planning and coordinating entity for employment training programs in Alaska. The board consists of up to 26 members appointed by the Governor from business and industry, education, organized labor, and government. The board provides oversight for the planning and coordination of employment-related education training

programs operated by the state and submits an annual performance and evaluation report of training programs to the legislature. The board facilitates the development of a statewide coordinated and effective employment training and education system in Alaska.

Jeff Selvey has joined the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's [Workforce Investment Board](#) as the [Career and Technical Education Coordinator](#). He had been director of NACTEC, the Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center, where he worked with stakeholders in the Nome and Bering Sea Region in developing and implementing programs that served both the Bering Strait School District and Nome Public Schools as a regional training center. Selvey has been an educator for 33 years, 30 of those years in Alaska, with the privilege of working in both urban and rural settings. He spent 17 years in K-12 classrooms as a special education, high school, reading specialist, and fifth grade teacher and 16 years as an administrator (elementary and middle school principal and director of a regional training center).

As CTE coordinator, Selvey is beginning to develop a comprehensive, integrated Career and Technical Education system for Alaska that aligns training institutions and coordinates program delivery. He will also focus on increasing opportunities for development of appropriate training programs for operations, technical and management workers. These are two goals in the Department of Labor's AGIA Training Strategic Plan.

With the recent addition of Helen Mehrkens as CTE Administrator for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the two departments are working as a team to develop and implement an Alaska Career and Technical Education plan.

Train and Retrain - Think Apprenticeship!

Gerry Andrews, Apprenticeship Coordinator

Registered Apprenticeship is a highly flexible training and workforce development model that combines on-the-job learning, related instruction and paid work experience. Apprenticeship allows employers to establish the standards of proficiency, while developing a local and loyal workforce.

The time requirements and substance of an apprenticeship training program are dependent on the occupation. Apprentices work and learn under the direction of qualified mentors. Apprentices are provided a diverse and complex training program that helps them become highly skilled in their chosen field.

School-to-Registered Apprenticeship is typically for high school juniors or seniors who have chosen to enter the workforce after the completion of high school. This program is designed to provide the flexibility high school students need to complete their education requirements for high school while working part-time in a structured on-the-job training environment. Upon graduation, the apprentice is employed full time and continues with on-the-job training and related instruction.

For more information, visit our web site at www.jobs.alaska.gov/apprentice or e-mail apprenticeship@alaska.gov.

Career and Technical Education at the Department of Education and Early Development

Helen Mehrkens, CTE Administrator



The Department of Education and Early Development has appointed Helen Mehrkens to the new position of Administrator for Career and Technical Education (CTE) to help the department fulfill the goals of the Alaska Education Plan, created in November 2008 by several hundred Alaskans as a blueprint for



Labor Commissioner Click Bishop (left) and 2009 Apprentice of the Year Deborah Kelly.

Helen Mehrkens 21st century schools. The plan's main goal is that all students will graduate prepared for careers or postsecondary training and education.

"When students are engaged in studies that are relevant to their dreams, they are more likely to graduate and become fulfilled and productive members of society. We will develop priorities in career and technical education and evaluate the effectiveness of programs, so that the state's and school districts' resources are used wisely to benefit students," Alaska Education Commissioner Larry LeDoux said. "The department will reach its goal by collaborating with other state agencies to serve the needs of Alaska's students in this critical field."

Mehrkens will collaborate with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development on workforce development projects such as those in the Alaska Gasline Inducement Act. She will work with the University of Alaska CTE programs to coordinate services, professional development and training for Alaska's school districts and vocational/technical centers.

The Alaska Education Plan is available at www.eed.state.ak.us. During September, 2009, additional progress was made by stakeholders to identify and prioritize the next implementation steps for CTE. Other members of the CTE Team are Marcia Olson, Don Levine, Felicia Swanson and Bernice Donnelly, who also provide program support for the Alaska Career Ready program and for the federal Carl Perkins CTE grant program which provides funds to school districts and postsecondary institutions.

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