



THE BIZZ BUZZ

EMPLOYER NEWSLETTER

2009—FALL EDITION

Contact The Bizz Team

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to help each customer secure employment and/or education to enhance his/her economic situation and to help employers find workers with skills and abilities who will be productive on the job.



A.R.R.A., the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, has enabled our career center to hire two new staff people. Carol Snyder, (on the left) in our Northampton office, comes to us with twenty years in the

staffing industry. Jen Lambert, (on the right) located in our Greenfield office, has many years in the human services field. Both will work on a program called the "**R.E.S.**" program, the Re-employment

Services Program. Both will be working closely in assisting unemployed people in getting back to work as quickly as possible. They will offer a variety of career center services.



What is STEM?

STEM refers to emerging careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. **STEM** careers span many sectors of the Science-based manufacturing and technological workforce, such as technicians, educators, scientists, engineers and consultants. Different **STEM** positions require varying levels of education and skill. **STEM** careers are on the cutting edge in changing

economic times. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects there will be 250,490 **STEM** job openings in Massachusetts between 2004 and 2014.



Connects job seekers and opportunities in industries such as:

- ◆ Biotechnology
- ◆ Renewable Energy
- ◆ Aerospace

◆ And More!

The Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board is proud to be a Principal Project Partner along with the Central MA R.E.B. and the North Central W.I.B.

Employers can link up with motivated job seekers and post **STEM** career openings. Ask how you can get involved by contacting Gary Howe, Lead STEM Coach, at 413-774-4361 x375, Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: R.E.S.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

WORKSHARE: A SMART ALTERNATIVE TO LAYOFFS

At some point, temporary business slowdowns affect most businesses and industries. This economy has proven challenging to almost every employer in western Massachusetts, resulting in creative strategies ranging from shutdowns, layoffs, furloughs, job sharing, changing shift schedules and WorkShare. In Massachusetts, employers that pay into the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and can do some advance planning may find WorkSharing Program an attractive alternative to layoffs and losing their skilled, trained workers. WorkShare can take 3 weeks to implement.

WorkSharing allows workers in an entire company, a company department, or even a small unit within the company to share reduced work hours while also collecting unemployment insurance benefits to

supplement their reduced wages. Under WorkSharing, employees collect a percentage of their unemployment insurance benefits equal to the percentage of the reduction in their wages and hours. The decrease in the normal weekly hours must be shared equally by all workers in the defined unit(s). The reduction in hours may range from 10 percent to 60 percent. Employees continue to receive regular wages for the hours they work in addition to their WorkSharing benefits.

If the workers are covered by collective bargaining, the union must agree to and sign off on the WorkSharing plan. Employers must also continue to provide the same health insurance benefits to the employees in the affected units. This means that their health insurance benefits

cannot be changed because of their reduced hours of work.

Key benefits of WorkSharing include staying prepared for your business's upswing because your workforce remains in place, avoiding time and expense of training new employees, and preserving workforce productivity by avoiding the insecurity and organizational disruption that are characteristic of layoffs.

For more information about WorkShare, contact the FHCC Business Services Team or the head of the State's Worksharing program, Bob Fitzgerald. Bob can be contacted at 617-626-6406.

EMPLOYER OPINION POLL

A lot of tax payer money goes to help pay for the cost of training for job seekers who are out of work. Our career center counselors discuss with people training options and programs. We'd like to hear from you about the types of training people should take that'll help them to get a job. Please send your opinion to: fhcc@detma.org.

THE BIZZ-BUZZ

is brought to you through the combined efforts of the Business Services Unit and the staff of F.H.C.C.

Editor: Ted Owczarski



Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board

The Local Workforce Investment Board

Mission Statement: To shape, nurture and sustain a regional workforce development system that promotes the economic wellbeing of business and workers.