

Central Ohio WORKS!



News from the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation

New Year, New Approach:

A message from the President & CEO

OUR MISSION

MEETING
the **employment**
NEEDS
of **BUSINESSES**
and **JOB**
SEEKERS
to **support economic**
DEVELOPMENT
in **central Ohio.**

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AS WE SETTLE INTO THE NEW YEAR, the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC) and OhioMeansJobs- Columbus- Franklin County (OMJ-CFC) are excited to welcome a fresh approach to workforce services in central Ohio. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which was signed into law last year, will be implemented in 2015. WIOA replaces the outdated Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and sets the stage for an improved service delivery model for local businesses and job seekers.

While our local economy has finally turned a corner, there are still pockets of our community with double-digit unemployment and businesses faced with a skills gap and the challenges of attracting and retaining talent. They are realities that we are facing together with our educational, community, business and government partners, forging a collective impact that will help central Ohio's economy continue to grow.

The enactment of WIOA brings renewed energy, and we are encouraged by the possibilities ahead and the progress we have made this past year. As we charge ahead, we look forward to working with you to fulfill our mission of meeting the employment needs of businesses and job seekers to support economic development in central Ohio!



Senator Sherrod Brown's State Director John Ryan, Suzanne Coleman Tolbert, and Brown's Central Ohio Regional Representative Chadd Smith at the High Growth Industry Job Expo.

Training Opportunities

Programs for job seekers to develop new skills.

WIOA: WHAT THE NEW LAW WILL MEAN FOR YOU

by Andrew Smith, COWIC Community Relations Coordinator

IN DECEMBER, COWIC/OMJ-CFC held a series of briefings for central Ohio's workforce development stakeholders on the implementation of the new *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* and how it will improve the delivery of employment and training services here in central Ohio. In the meantime, we encourage you to take a look at the summary below.

On July 22nd of 2014, President Barack Obama signed into law the *Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act*. This law, with great bi-partisan support from Congress, supersedes the *Workforce Investment Act* of 1998 and makes amendments to the *Adult Education and Literacy Act* (Title II), *Wagner-Peyser Act* (Title III) and the *Rehabilitation Act* (Title IV). It is set to take effect on July 1st of 2015. Both laws are intended to enhance the skills and development of our workforce by teaching 21st century skills for today and tomorrow's jobs. While the *Workforce Investment Act* has most certainly served its purpose in helping to elevate millions of unemployed and underemployed Americans into the

middle-class, the *Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act* will fix the unintended consequences of the law passed in 1998.

Among other things, the *Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act* will:

- Support access to services
- Target workforce services to better serve job seekers
- Foster regional collaborations to meet the needs of regional economies
- Help employers find workers with the necessary skills
- Align federal investments to support job seekers and employers
- Strengthen the governing bodies that establish area priorities
- Align goals, increase accountability and information for job seekers and the public

In addition, reforms in the *Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act* call for a greater Youth Services component, now requiring that 75% of its earmarked funding be spent on the job-skills development of out of school youth. These changes will put COWIC on par to

emulate its professional job and skills-training program for youth over the summer and year-round. As career pathways and work-based learning are proven to be successful alternatives to the traditional four-year college experience, the new law intends to aggressively promote it. While the entire bill is important, this piece of the legislation is considered highly critical, given the state of youth growing up in urban communities across America.

Across the country, individuals with disabilities are amongst the highest of those unemployed. The *Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act* seeks to improve those statistics by creating an advisory committee that will strategically work to increase competitive integrated employment for those job seekers.

The new law requires better employer engagement and promotes physical and programmatic accessibility to employment training services. We look forward to WIOA and how it will help us in continuing to serve businesses and job seekers in central Ohio!

NEW WORKREADY WORKSHOP SERIES!

WORK EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT, but employers say essential skills are critical to retaining talent. The OhioMeansJobs – Columbus-Franklin County WorkReady Workshop Series helps job seekers improve their resumes, computer skills, and interview skills, while also focusing on the “people” skills that make good employees. Employers can also encourage their current employees to attend the workshops. The WorkReady Workshop Series is offered every week

at the main COWIC/OMJ-CFC location, 1111 E. Broad Street.

- **Resume Development**
- **Interview like a S.T.A.R.**
- **Basic Computer Literacy**
- **Communication Skills**
- **Conflict Management**
- **Teamwork: Benefits and Challenges**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Ethics in the Workplace**
- **The Personal Path to Success**

Learn more at:

ohiomeansjobs.com/franklin

To register for a class, contact Wendy Taylor at wtaylor@cowic.org

Talk to your Career Advisor or call 614-559-4786

[Click here to link to pdf flyer](#)

Youth Workforce Services

Programs for job seekers to develop new skills.

CITY, COWIC JOIN NATIONAL INITIATIVE with Starbucks and U.S. Conference of Mayors *by Akil Cavin*

SOLUTIONS CITY IS A NEW NATIONAL PUBLIC-PRIVATE INITIATIVE conceived by Starbucks and the U.S. Conference of Mayors to unite local leaders, non-profit organizations and businesses in solving community challenges through a series of town hall meetings at Starbucks stores. Columbus is one of five cities in the U.S. chosen to participate in this initiative.

The inaugural town hall meeting brought together more than 40 stakeholders leading education, training and job placement opportunities for young people in Columbus, representing the Columbus Chamber, Columbus City Schools, Columbus Public Safety, COWIC/OhioMeansJobs- Columbus-Franklin County, and human services organizations, amongst many others.

Participants enjoyed a coffee tasting, discussed opportunities for at-risk youth in Columbus, and began setting an agenda and plan for the year ahead.

The November 6th Solutions City meeting included a panel of youth working jobs in our community. Community leaders and organizations were able to hear from the panel of youth first-hand regarding the major obstacles, hardships and challenges they face finding permanent employment. The event had a great turnout and really helped organizations figure out what pieces they may be missing to bridge the gap between young adults and self-sustaining employment.

Additional town halls are planned for January and March, 2015, and will be facilitated by Dr. Patricia Hicks of the Outcomes Management Group.



Youth Workforce Services team efforts featured at Chicago youth symposium *by Lawrence Jackson*

THE OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES OF COWIC/OMJ-CFC participated in the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) 2014 Youth Development Symposium in Chicago, Illinois in September. The presentation was based on creating a career pathways model for logistics – one of central Ohio’s high-demand, high-growth career fields.

Youth Provider Liaison Lawrence Jackson delivered the workshop, which featured Stephanie Jorgensen, a former youth program participant. Stephanie is currently a Customer Service Representative for COWIC/ OMJ-CFC, as well as a member of COWIC’s Youth Council. Tara Lamont rounded out the trio of staff sent to Chicago to present the Career Pathways model developed in central Ohio.

The workshop was well received by the audience of youth workforce administrators, directors, and case managers of agencies from different states. A huge issue with youth and young adults entering different career areas is the lack of knowledge associated with high-demand fields. Many of our youth have dismissed lucrative career opportunities because of what has been portrayed in media

or discussed amongst their peers. The basis of the workshop was to prepare agencies for this challenge with a plan of rebuttal: how to answer the questions with examples that matter to the millennial demographic and build programs that will generate and maintain their interest.

The COWIC/OMJ-CFC team was excited to join other presenters from around the country to discuss what we should be doing as service agencies to support young people in reaching their employment goals and share innovative ways to reach our youth and deliver services.



COWIC Staff (from l to r): Tara Lamont, Lawrence Jackson, Stephanie Jorgenson



Chicago Youth Symposium

Veterans Services

Veterans helping Veterans find employment.

ROBERT O'KEEFE WINS NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE AWARD

from News Today Newsletter



State Veterans Program Account Executive
Robert O'Keefe.

THE AMERICAN LEGION honored Office of Workforce Development Veterans Program account executive Robert O'Keefe with a 2013 Employment Service award. The annual award is given to one local veterans employment representative who exhibits outstanding customer service. O'Keefe was singled out for developing and implementing a regional outreach plan that, at the time of the award, helped 488 veterans find employment.

For O'Keefe, who is stationed at OhioMeansJobs - Columbus-Franklin

County, winning a prestigious national American Legion award is gratifying. But as a 20-year U.S. Army veteran, he said the work he does every day is the most rewarding of all.

"I spend my time going around, talking to employers and trying to match up jobs with veterans who are looking for work," he said. "When you leave the job for the day or the week and you think back on what you've been able to do, it just keeps you going."

We congratulate O'Keefe on his exceptional service!

STATE OF OHIO EXPANDS VETERAN EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

by John McClure, Veterans Program Manager, State of Ohio

OHIO IS PROUD TO BE CALLED HOME

to approximately 900,000 veterans and military service members—the 6th largest veteran population in the United States. Yet, too often, veterans have difficulty transitioning from the military to the civilian workforce due to obstacles and red tape. What's more, while many Ohio businesses are committed to hiring veterans, the translation of military education, training and experience is not always an easy process for employers. This disconnect has resulted in businesses being unable to connect with qualified veteran job seekers.

In July, the state launched the Veterans Business Support Center, Ohio's one-stop shop serving employers looking to hire veterans—accessible at OhioMeansJobs.com. Since then, more than 540 employers have requested resumes includes over 100,000 veteran resumes, on OhioMeansJobs. The state has also developed four key strategies to



Staff and job seekers celebrate the One Year Anniversary of the Veterans Employment Network.

further the goal of assisting military men and women in accessing the information and skills training they need to compete for in-demand jobs.

1. **Credit for Military Education, Experience and Training**
2. **Linking Employers to Veterans**

3. **Attraction and Retention of Veterans from Out-of-State**
4. **Workforce Support for Transitioning Veterans and Current Veteran Residents**

Through these reforms, Ohio's workforce system is placing a greater priority on our veteran community. For individuals, the state is able to better connect Ohio's veterans with the job training and tools they need to compete for today's in-demand jobs. For employers, Ohio is better positioned to assist businesses in identifying and connecting with qualified, job-seeking veterans. Together, these reforms are helping more Ohio veterans find rewarding careers, providing for themselves and their families. If you are a Franklin County veteran or veteran's spouse, let us know when you come into the OMJ-CFC Job Center. We are here to help.

[Click here to link to pdf flyer](#)

Promotions and Congratulations

COWIC Board Chair honored by COYAP



Joy Bivens,
COWIC Board Chair

COWIC/OMJ-CFC Board Chair Joy Bivens has been selected as a 2015 Tribute to African Americans award recipient by the Central Ohio Youth Advocacy Program! Bivens was selected for her contributions to central Ohio youth in the area of business. She will join six other honorees at the awards program to be held February 28, 2015 at the J.H. Ross Family Life Center. The keynote speaker will be Michael J. Houser. Bivens is co-owner of Ambassador Home Health Services, sits on the

Whitehall City Schools Board of Education, and has always been a strong supporter of workforce development. Please join us in congratulating her on this achievement!

COWIC / OMJ-CFC is hiring!

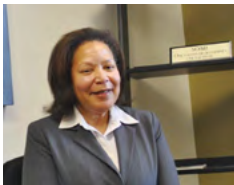
Following is a list of COWIC/OMJ-CFC job openings. To review current job openings with COWIC/OMJ-CFC, prospects can go to OhioMeansJobs.com/franklin. To apply, please send a cover letter, resume and salary expectation to resumes@ohiomeansjobs.com/franklin and place the job title on the subject line.

Contact Person: YoLanda Bailey at 614.559.5142.

- Job Developer (2) – *Reports to Director of Business Solutions*
- Administrative Assistant (1)- *Reports to Director of Business Solutions*
- Administrative Assistant (Fiscal) (1) – *Reports to Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operating Officer*
- Assistant Chief Financial Officer (1) – *Reports to Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operating Officer*
- Content Manager (1) – *Reports Administrator of Public Affairs*
- Program Monitor

[Click here to link to online versions](#)

New Appointments for COWIC/OMJ-CFC Staff



Jo Youngs, Director of
Business Solutions

Please join us in congratulating some of our staff as they move into new positions within the COWIC/OMJ-CFC family! Jo Youngs was recently promoted to Director of Business Solutions. Jo most recently held the title of Business Solutions Administrator. She will lead the Job Developers in our Business Solutions team as they continue to be the best source for a talented workforce for employers all across central Ohio.



Jose Feliciano, Director of
Workforce Innovations

Jose Feliciano was recently promoted to Director of Workforce Innovations, formerly Adult Workforce Services. In his new role, Jose will lead our team of Career Advisors and oversee the OhioMeansJobs Job Center operations. Feliciano joined COWIC in 2007 as a Career Advisor and most recently held the position of Training Administrator.



Teresa Ghee,
Project Manager

Teresa Ghee has been appointed to Project Manager over the Restoration Academy program. In her new role, Teresa will coordinate the successful job training initiative which, as of this year, has helped more than 75 ex-offenders secure permanent, self-sustaining employment with local employers.



Wayne Smith,
Career Advisor

COWIC/OMJ-CFC is excited to welcome Wayne Smith to the family as a Career Advisor. Wayne joined us earlier this year as an intern through the Restoration Academy program. He brings strong life and work experience to his new role and is eager to help us achieve the COWIC mission.

We also congratulate Lawrence Jackson and Ezra Johnson in their new roles as Project Managers for Youth Workforce Services and Carma Lacy, who is the new Contracts & Grants Administrator in the fiscal department.

Workforce Snapshots!

COWIC and OMJ-CFC Around Town



Restoration Academy 2014 Graduating Classes.



Whitehall City Schools Deputy Supt. Mark Trace, COWIC Board Chair Joy Bivens, WCS Supt. Brian Hamler, Whitehall Mayor Kim Maggard, and Suzanne Coleman Tolbert at the Whitehall Job Expo, October 16th.



SK Food Group Young Adult Hiring Events.