

Development Matters

Volume 3, Issue 1—January 2014

**Pike County**
Economic Development Corporation

Pike County
Economic Development Corporation
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Welcome to the January 2014 edition of *Development Matters*, a monthly newsletter of the Pike County Economic Development Corporation. As a valued member and supporter of PCEDC, you will receive this monthly newsletter to help keep you informed of our activities and possible opportunities for businesses and area organizations. We hope that you will find the information useful and beneficial.

PCEDC is dedicated to our mission to support and expand business and employment by improving the quality of life, utilizing our human and natural resources, and by promoting communication and partnerships throughout Pike County.

Important Reminder!

Set up your Email Spam Filter to accept:

gsheurman@pikeedc.org

This will ensure timely delivery of any email correspondence you may receive from PCEDC.

2013-2014

PCEDC Board of Directors

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Kaye Iftner
Lance Kendrick
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Chris Shotts
Jim Sheppard
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Chairman: Jim Brown
Vice-Chair: Craig Gengler
Secretary: Kaye Iftner
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Gina Sheurman,
Executive Director

Executive Director's Corner

2014 has certainly come in with a bang when you consider the weather that we have been experiencing! Sub-zero weather has not only meant schools closing and winter weather advisories, but it has also brought to light the unfortunate reality that we have aging infrastructure throughout Pike County. While extreme cold weather unfortunately brings frozen pipes and in some cases broken pipes, our municipalities are faced with broken water mains and other issues brought on by mother nature. It is important for all of us to realize that many responsibilities lie within the hands of our elected officials, and, at times, that job becomes one of the most thankless jobs. So, if you get the chance, thank your elected officials the next time you see them for the job that they are doing, or, better yet, attend a city council meeting, a county board meeting, a school board meeting. As citizens, we vote these leaders into their position and it is important to stay engaged even after you have cast your vote.

2014 looks to be an exciting year for Pike County. Just in the last few weeks, there have been several ribbon cuttings of new businesses in the area, and there are plans for even more new businesses to open within the next year. We are excited to be a part of this growth, and we encourage anyone interested in starting a business in Pike County to contact us to assist you in your planning and development phases. We have great connections with individuals who can assist with business planning, financing and marketing. In just a few months, we will be hosting our 2nd Annual Inventor & Product Fair at JWCC for Entrepreneurs, Inventors, and Small Businesses. This is just one of the many events and workshops that we have planned for the next year, and we invite you to join us as we work to make Pike County the best it can be.

We have scheduled our 2014 Annual Meeting for March 31st, 2014, and I hope to see all of you there. We have a great program in the works, along with some special announcements that we cannot wait to share with all of you. Look for more information next month on the Annual Meeting, as well as other upcoming events and workshops. As always, we invite you to join us as a member of PCEDC if you are not already. We have great representation from throughout the county, but we always welcome new members and new perspectives.

Here is to a great 2014...we hope that it brings success, growth and prosperity for all of you!



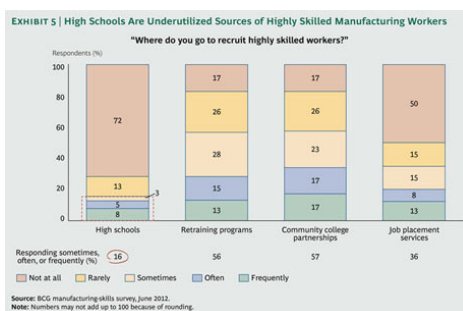


The U.S. Skills Gap: Could It Threaten a Manufacturing Renaissance?

Excerpt taken from the bcg.perspectives of the Boston Consulting Group
by Harold L. Sirkin, Michael Zinser, and Justin Rose

Filling current gaps in the U.S. skilled manufacturing workforce—and preventing those shortages from developing into a real national crisis in the years ahead—requires aggressive action now. Companies, schools, governments, and nonprofit agencies must collaborate to expand the training and recruitment of the next generation of manufacturing talent and to build public awareness of the attractiveness of skilled manufacturing professions.

Our research found that much more must be done to keep the U.S. competitive in the future. Responses to our 2012 manufacturing-skills survey showed that most U.S. companies vastly underutilize important external sources of highly skilled talent. Eighty-eight percent of respondents said they sometimes, often, or frequently rely on internal training when they have trouble filling a high-skill job, while only 48 percent said they turn to community colleges. Companies do not use U.S. high schools and community colleges enough for grooming new talent. (See Exhibit 5.) Only 13 percent of companies we surveyed reported that they often or frequently recruit in U.S. high schools. Seventy-two percent said that they don't recruit in high schools at all. Only 34 percent of respondents said that they often or frequently take advantage of community college partnerships to recruit skilled workers, and just 28 percent often or frequently make use of retraining programs. Some 65 percent of companies said that they use job placement services rarely or not at all.



By ramping up their activities in high schools, community colleges, and public-private training programs—rather than only recruiting among workers currently in the job market—corporations could considerably expand their pool of skilled workers. But for such efforts to be effective, it will be important to revitalize the interest of U.S. students in manufacturing careers. The U.S. education system must once again recognize the value of training students for these types of careers.

Fortunately, a diverse group of stakeholders in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in a number of U.S. states already are working to address such talent needs in order to capture the economic benefits of a globally competitive manufacturing base. Some programs are aimed at building manufacturing topics into high-school curricula. Other partnerships are developing training programs for the general public. State and municipal programs are working with employers to fill high-skill positions, while partnerships involving vocational schools provide classroom training.

There are also programs in which coalitions of companies share costs to teach targeted manufacturing skills to postsecondary students or to train manufacturing professionals on the job. For example, Hypertherm, a New Hampshire-based maker of advanced cutting systems, took the step of launching its own training institute when it faced the task of having to hire 180 skilled machinists over the course of three years. The program was so successful that Hypertherm has opened the institute to other U.S. employers that need trained machinists.

Here are a few other promising examples that we examined:

- Austin Polytechnical Academy.** Founded in 2007 by the Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council to revitalize the city's manufacturing industry, the Austin Polytechnical Academy represents an effort to redefine and modernize vocational education. The academy is part of the Chicago Public Schools and works with local manufacturers to teach students all aspects of industry, from skilled production and engineering to management and ownership. It has its own manufacturing-training center, but it also offers a college preparatory education. The academy's 60 industry partners, which include WaterSaver Faucet, Johnson Controls, Winzeler Gear, and Atlas Tool & Die Works, have provided more funding as well as field trips, speakers, mentoring, internships, and full-time employment for graduates. So far, 145 students have earned 206 credentials demonstrating competence in areas such as metal forming, measurement, and CNC operation and programming for mills and lathes.



- *Quick Start.* This program is part of the Technical College System of Georgia and provides free customized workforce training as an incentive for companies to move to or expand in Georgia. To qualify, a company has to create 15 of the same type of jobs in a 12-month period. Quick Start's operating budget of more than \$15 million is funded by the state. In 2011, Quick Start worked with manufacturing companies such as NCR, Kia Motors, and Mitsubishi Power Systems. The jobs created with Quick Start support have been credited with making an economic impact of \$417 million.
- *Custom Machine.* This program, offered by the Center for Manufacturing Technology in Woburn, Massachusetts, customizes training programs for employers and individual certificate programs. It trains machine tool operators, teaches general machine-shop and safety practices, and helps assess new hires. Up to one dozen students graduate from the program every eight weeks. Eighty percent of graduates are placed in manufacturing programs.
- *Manufacturing Works.* Based in Chicago and serving employers throughout Cook County, this organization works with manufacturers to assess and hire employees. It pools together job seekers and company job postings. In 2010, Manufacturing Works was credited with placing 440 manufacturing employees with 115 companies, saving those companies some \$5 million in hiring costs and more than 81,000 hours of HR time.

Such programs are encouraging, but they are not nearly extensive enough to meet the long-term needs of U.S. manufacturing. They also fall well short of what nations such as Germany are doing to make sure their manufacturing sectors can compete in the future. Stakeholders at the state and local level must drive these collaborative skills-training initiatives on the basis of the needs of the most competitive industrial clusters in their regions.

Talk of a current manufacturing-skills crisis in the U.S. is overstated. But there are considerable shortages of specific skills at the local level in small manufacturing communities and in some job classifications. Severe shortages of highly skilled manufacturing professionals could develop into a national problem during this decade as U.S. manufacturing output expands and today's experienced machinists, engineers, CNC operators, and other skilled workers move into retirement. Companies big and small need to become more proactive in addressing manufacturing skills gaps and in planning for future HR needs. They should work with schools, government agencies, and nonprofits across the U.S. to keep a pipeline of new talent flowing. They need to take aggressive action now to ensure that there can be a U.S. manufacturing resurgence.

Manufacturing companies should begin by using demographic risk-management and workforce-planning tools to understand future manufacturing-skills challenges and to enlarge the pool of potential candidates. They should return to the historical practice of investing in internal training programs in order to build the capabilities they will require to remain competitive, as well as matching younger talent with experienced employees in an apprenticeship model. Because many high-skill manufacturing jobs require only a high-school education and some on-the-job training, companies should build up their visibility in high schools, create greater awareness of attractive manufacturing-career opportunities, and step up recruitment. Small manufacturers need to partner more actively with community colleges and vocational programs to assure that there is an ample pool of the right skills to meet future needs.

Corporations should also collaborate more with education partners and government on programs that focus on developing specific skills. If strong public-private partnerships do not exist in their regions, manufacturers should help build them, applying best practices of successful programs elsewhere in the U.S. Public agencies, including local governments, should also rigorously analyze the availability of specific key manufacturing skills in their regions. They should determine whether the skills pool is sufficient to support both the ongoing needs of existing production facilities and those of investments planned for the future. They should support needed training programs and offer financial aid or loan forgiveness to individuals who enter college programs in order to acquire specific manufacturing skills. Government agencies should also support the development of clusters in key advanced manufacturing industries for which their regions have a competitive advantage.

Educational and other supporting organizations should link the worker supply chain at colleges and vocational schools more tightly with the needs of manufacturers. They should create hybrid educational systems to teach technical skills in addition to teaching critical thinking.

By understanding the magnitude of the challenge and investing now to cultivate the next generation of professionals, all stakeholders can ensure that a skills crunch won't derail the U.S. manufacturing resurgence. Indeed, the availability of manufacturing talent could well become a major competitive advantage for the U.S.



Business Education Roundtable Scheduled for February 11th

On February 11th, Pike County Economic Development Corporation and the Workforce Investment Board of Western Illinois will host a Quarterly Business Education Roundtable at the Pike County Farm Bureau. The Workforce Investment Board of Western Illinois (WIB) has established as one of its priorities – to facilitate a stronger connection among the WIB, the business community, economic development, and secondary education. Throughout the nine counties the WIB is partnering with the economic development entities to host a dialogue among business and education leaders to address the “future” workforce and other related workforce matters. During this roundtable, an update will be given on the Workforce Readiness Program and where we stand in the implementation process.

The information and feedback that was received at the November 2013 Roundtable was taken to the PCEDC Business Retention and Workforce Development Committee to develop further action items and potential topics of conversation for future roundtables, and, based off of the evaluations received, the focus of the February 2014 Roundtable will be Mentoring and how to further develop programs for our younger students.

To plan accordingly for food and space, please RSVP by February 7th via email at gsheurman@pikeedc.org or by phone at 217-440-5101. We hope to see you there!

Please Join Us!!!



Pike County Elected Officials’ Meeting
Thursday, February 6th, 2014
6:00pm —8:00pm
Lower Courtroom of the Pike County Courthouse
Pittsfield, IL

Sponsored by the Pike County Economic Development Corporation
Please RSVP by February 4th to
gsheurman@pikeedc.org or 217-440-5101





PCEDC & Pike County Event Calendar

January Events:

JWCC Open Forum for President Candidate #2

Thursday, January 30th, 2014

11:00am

JWCC Pittsfield Campus

PCEDC Promotions/Marketing/Membership

Committee Meeting

Friday, January 31st, 2014

10:00AM

PCEDC / MECO Office

February Events:

PCEDC on WBBA Spotlight Show

Monday, February 3rd, 2014

1:00pm

FM 97.5 / www.wbbaradio.com

JWCC Open Forum for President Candidate #3

Tuesday, February 4th, 2014

11:00am

JWCC Pittsfield Campus

JWCC Open Forum for President Candidate #4

Thursday, February 6th, 2014

11:00am

JWCC Pittsfield Campus

PCEDC Business Retention & Workforce Development

Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 6th, 2014

1:30pm

Farm Bureau Conference Room

PCEDC Quarterly Elected Officials' Meeting

Thursday, February 6th, 2014

6:00pm-8:00pm

Pike County Courthouse—Lower Courtroom

Pittsfield, IL

February Events Continued:

PCEDC Renewable Energy Committee Meeting

Monday, February 10th, 2014

10:00AM

PCEDC / MECO Office

PCEDC Business Education Roundtable

Tuesday, February 11th, 2014

12:00pm-2:00pm

Farm Bureau Auditorium

PCEDC Small Business/Entrepreneurship

Committee Meeting

Friday, February 21st, 2014

1:00pm

Farm Bureau Conference Room

U of I Extension

2014 Youth Leadership Academy Graduation

Pike/Brown/Schuyler County

Monday, February 24th, 2014

12:00pm—1:00pm

JWCC Ag Education Center—Perry, IL

PCEDC Monthly Executive Meeting

Monday, February 24th, 2014

5:30pm

Farm Bureau Conference Room

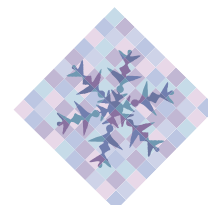
Pike County Board Meeting

Monday, February 24th, 2014

7:00pm

Pike County Courthouse—Upper Courtroom

Pittsfield, IL





Not a member of PCEDC...join us today!

It is because of the generosity of business and community partners that we are able to fulfill our mission to enhance the economic future and quality of life in Pike County by expanding employment opportunities through promoting the expansion and retention of business and industry, coordinating local and state resources to existing businesses, and by uniting Pike County community by coordinating economic development activities and cultivating partnerships. We are fortunate to have many great partnerships in the area that have helped us to promote economic development. If you are not part of our growing network, we invite you to become a member of PCEDC by simply filling out the information below and mail the form and payment to : **Pike County Economic Development Corporation, PO Box 214, Pittsfield, IL 62363.** We thank you for your continued support to the growth and development of Pike County!

Individual / Company Name: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Website (if applicable): _____

Please add me to the mailing list for future correspondence

Membership Level:

Contributor (\$1—\$99) Associate (\$100-\$499) Voting (\$500 +)

Local Government (Based on Per capita-Please contact office for more information)

More information on membership benefits is available by visiting www.pikeedc.org

A Few Reminders!!

Don't forget to tune in to 97.5FM WBBA Radio on the first Monday of every month for PCEDC on the Spotlight Show!

Upcoming Events—Please Save the Date!

**February 6th—PCEDC Quarterly Elected Officials' Meeting in Pittsfield
February 11th—PCEDC Business Education Roundtable
March 31st—PCEDC Quarterly Membership Meeting/2014 Annual Meeting**

Find us on Facebook and Follow us on Twitter!