



**High Country
Workforce Development Board Meeting
December 8, 2011, 3:00 PM**

Building an adaptive workforce system to meet the needs of a globally competitive economy



Meeting Agenda

Thursday, December 8, 2011, 3:00 PM
468 New Market Blvd., Boone, NC 28607

2:30 - 3:00 PM – ASU Interior Design Student Finalist Display

3:00 PM - Call to Order

Public Comment Period (5 minutes)

Consideration of Minutes: August 11, 2011 (pp. 2-3) and Special Meeting of September 8, 2011 (p. 4-5), Amended Notes of October 20th Joint Committees/Youth Council Meeting (p. 6)

Administration of Oath to New Member (p. 8)

Committee Reports

- Executive – Fonda Harris (p. 11)
- Youth Council – Marie Gwyn
- Business Services
- JobLink Services



Information

- Redesigning Local JobLink Centers – Tim Dolan, ASU Professor of Interior Design, with student finalist presenters
- “*Get **NOT** Out of Your Life*” Update – Lamar Mitchell, Champions of Education
- Strategic Planning Retreat Notes (pp. 11-16)
- Workforce Update – Adrian Tait, Workforce Development Board Director

Chair/Member Comments

General Announcements

Adjournment

DRAFT High Country Workforce Development Board Meeting **DRAFT**

August 11, 2011

MINUTES

Call to Order: by Chairman Peterson at 3:03 PM.

Members Present: Barbara Barlow, Anne Bowlin, Jason Carlton, Kim Cashatt, David Edwards, Marie Gwyn, Jenny Harpold, Fonda Harris, Clark Hunter, Bryan Peterson, Wanda Proffitt, Sam Ray, Sandy Reese, Earl Tipton, Sallie Woodring

Staff: Misty Bishop-Price, Rebecca Bloomquist, Jacob Clark, Heather Kersey, Don Sherrill, Adrian Tait, MaryAnn Urka

Guests: John Greene, Rick Herndon, Patrick McKemie, Mike Pierce, Ginger Shaffer, Pam Wilson

Consideration of Minutes: Earl Tipton moved to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2011 meeting as submitted. Seconded by Sam Ray. The Chairman announced that a statistical correction to the originally printed **High Country Labor Market Information**, under "Occupations with Most Want Ads" (p. 19, Board Book) had been made by MaryAnn Urka, and was reflected in the current electronic version on the WDB website.

Following approval of the June 9th, 2011 minutes, Mr. Peterson welcomed Jason Carlton, owner of GoWilkes, to the WDB and administered the Oath of Office. He then requested Board members to briefly review the **Code of Conduct** policy (August Board Book, p. 5) on disclosure of conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were reported.

Committee Reports

Executive (p. 7): The Chair reported that the Executive Committee met today at 1:00 PM, during which time the PY 2011 meeting schedule and committee assignments were approved. In place of the Adult Services/JobLink committee, two new committees have been formed; Business Services and JobLink Services. The JobLink Services Committee will address both adult and youth customer service issues.

Youth Council (p. 9): Marie Gwyn reported that Debbie Ewald succeeds Sherri Dees as the new Get REAL Youth Coach, upon Ms. Dees' acceptance of an offer of employment from Avante Group in Wilkes County. The Youth Council will also begin preparation for issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for PY 2012 Get REAL service providers.

Adult Services/JobLink: Board staff member Don Sherrill reported on 2010 WIA performance measures (p. 8).

Information

Workforce Update: Workforce Director Adrian Tait announced the upcoming 2011 Workforce Development Partnership Conference in Greensboro, Oct. 11-14, inviting interested Board members to contact him for further information. The Regional Innovation Grant (RIG), which funded the "Get **NOT** Out of Your Life" campaign, is approaching its end. Stating the need to investigate alternative funding sources, Tait announced that he and staff member Don Sherrill will be attending a Rural Center grant information session later in the month. Tait also reported that JobLink customer survey responses indicated a need to focus more on decision making that is based on accurate data.

Construction Industry Report (pp. 12-15): WD intern, **Heather Kersey**, presented a brief summary of her work on "*Potential Impacts of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy of a Declining Construction Industry*". The full report will form part of the revised **High Country State of the Workforce Report**.

Energy Sector Partnership Grant Update (pp. 16-17): Energy Sector Specialist **Jacob Clark** summarized recent activities, highlighting several initiatives underway. In addition to providing training for contractors, the SESP grant has provided funding for development of a "Green Valuation Specialist Program", and National Association of Realtors "Green Designation". To date, 32 local realtors have

received this designation, with another 40 expected to follow by the end of August. Local plumbers will soon begin training in North Carolina's new water conservation and efficiency standards, which become effective in January 2012. The Future Forward Workforce Alliance continues to streamline the collaborative process, and is in discussion of job creation within renewable energy markets.

JobLink Report Overview: Special Projects Coordinator **Rebecca Bloomquist** presented an overview of the comprehensive JobLink Report. Publication of the full report, **JobLink Career Centers: An Analysis**, is expected to be completed by October 2011.

Member Industry Sector Discussion: Members participated in an informal discussion of the current workforce climate, identifying various employer challenges and opportunities. At the forefront of discussion were issues such as finding qualified employees, making good employer/employee matches, use of social media in outreach, cost management, dialogue with school boards, and developing positive cultural regard for education.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was seconded at 4:20 PM.

The next meeting of the High Country Workforce Development Board will be a Strategic Planning Retreat, scheduled for Nov. 10th, from 11 AM-4 PM. More information to follow.



DRAFT Special Meeting Minutes DRAFT
September 8, 2011, 12:00 noon

Call to Order: by Youth Council Chair Marie Gwyn at 12:15 PM.

CEDS Report Overview: Phil Trew, COG Director of Planning

Following his summary of the 2011 CEDS Performance Report, Mr. Trew requested Board approval of the draft document.

A motion from the floor to accept the 2011 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Performance Report was unanimously approved.

Mr. Trew concluded his presentation with information on the "NC Tomorrow" initiative, now underway. A steering committee of representatives from all seven COG member counties is in the process of formation, to provide input for a complete revision of the CEDS plan for 2012.

Workforce Update: Director Adrian Tait provided a briefing on the progress of OJT/NEG (On-the-Job Training/National Emergency Grant) placements. Tait also announced the date of the Board's Strategic Planning Retreat, November 10, 2011.

Motion to adjourn was seconded at 1:32 PM.

High Country Workforce Development Board
Special Meeting Attendance - September 8, 2011

%	Name	Oct. 2010	Dec. 2010	Feb. 2011	Apr. 2011	Jun. 2011	Aug. 2011	Sept. 2011
72%	Barbara Barlow							
72%	Mike Birkmire							
86%	Anne Bowlin							
100%	Jason Carlton (Jamie Phillips (6/10 -6/11)							
43%	David Edwards							
72%	Skip Greene							
86%	Marie Gwyn							
	Alleghany County Vacancy (formerly Jim Halsey)							
57%	Fonda Harris							
57%	Dwayne Howell							
84%	Clark Hunter (11/10-) Scott Moncrief (6/06-9/10)							
43%	Joallen Lowder							
	Mitchell Co. Vacancy (formerly Dr. Charley Nash)							
86%	Bryan Peterson							
88%	Jayne Phipps-Boger							
50%	Wanda Proffitt (11/10-)							
86%	Sam Ray							
	Watauga Co. Vacancy (formerly Sandy Reese)							
57%	Truman Robbins							
86%	Stacy Sears							
100%	Earl Tipton							
57%	Don Williams							
86%	Sallie Woodring							
		58%	83%	69%	52%	83%	62%	65%

Youth Council Members Present:

Jennie Harpold

Present
Absent
Vacant

Present:

Business Services - Barbara Barlow, Jason Carlton, Skip Greene, Clark Hunter, Sam Ray, Earl Tipton

JobLink Services - Mike Birkmire

Youth Council - Jayne Phipps Boger, Anne Bowlin, John Boyd, Kim Cashatt, Marie Gwyn, Jennie Harpold, Carolyn McKinney, Stacy Sears, Sallie Woodring

Other Members/Staff - Bryan Peterson, Misty Bishop-Price, Rebecca Bloomquist, Jacob Clark, Don Sherrill, Adrian Tait, MaryAnn Urka

Key Subjects Under Consideration:

- Letters of Intent Update
- PY 2010 Performance Report
- JobLink Analysis and related issues
- Upcoming Strategic Planning Retreat

Current Situation:

- Committees reviewed meeting minutes of September 8, 2011, which were approved as written.
- Staff updated Board members on the status of Letters of Intent received for WIA Services to Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth for PY 2012. Letters of Intent were received from Wilkes Community College to provide services for youth and adult/dw in Ashe, Alleghany, and Wilkes Counties; Mayland Community College to provide services for youth and adult/dw for Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties; Caldwell Community College to provide services for youth and adult/dw for Watauga County. Staff will move forward with the procurement process so that organizations can submit proposed budgets and plans of service.
- Staff review of all workforce development policy documents is in progress, to insure currency and accuracy.
- Don Sherrill reviewed PY 2010 WIA Common Performance Measure Outcomes, emphasizing that High Country local area achieved its performance outcomes and is eligible for performance incentive funds. Staff and service providers will work to improve PY 2011 outcomes for those measures below expected performance. Mr. Sherrill also reported that High Country workforce service providers have served 37 customers with funding from the On-the-Job Training National Emergency Grant (OJT/NEG), and efforts continue toward the targeted goal of 70 participants.
- Suggestions for communicating and connecting eligible dislocated workers with local businesses for OJT included: using chambers of commerce to distribute information to employers, calling employers to inform them of the services, requirements, and expectations, and continued newspaper coverage of OJT activities.
- Rebecca Bloomquist presented a summary of the state-initiated customer survey and secret shopper visitations to local area JobLink Centers, and reviewed the completed JobLink Analysis Report.
- Adrian Tait updated the Board on potential adoption of the "Burning Glass" workforce application software for local JobLink Centers. ASU Department of Interior Design Students are currently working on their submissions for the potential redesign of the Wilkes JobLink Center. Ashe JobLink Center is searching for a more accessible location. Spruce Pine and Mayland Community College have partnered in the search for a new location.
- Jacob Clark was hired as permanent full time Energy Sector Specialist.

Next Steps: Staff will develop a response tool for interested bidders of WIA services.

The next meeting of the Business Services and JobLink Services Committees will be held on Thursday, January 12, 2012, at 10:30 AM. A casual luncheon will follow, with Youth Council scheduled to meet at 1:00 PM.



HIGH COUNTRY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

OATH OF OFFICE (Adopted October 2005)

I hereby affirm to faithfully execute my responsibilities as a member of the High Country Workforce Development Board, and to abide by the Board's philosophy and values statement.

I will uphold the Board's standards by representing the Board in the community-at-large, and by avoiding conflicts of interest both within and outside of Workforce Development Board meetings.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Verified by Board Clerk: _____

High Country Workforce Development Board

CODE OF CONDUCT

In an effort to maintain the high standard of conduct expected in the management of its affairs, the Region D Workforce Development Board adopts the following Code of Conduct applicable to all members:

No Board member shall:

1. Use the name, endorsement, or services of the Local area for the benefit of any person, or authorize such use, except in conformance with WDB policy;
2. Accept or seek for oneself or any other person any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value offered as a result of Board affiliation;
3. Disclose any confidential Workforce Development Board information to any person not authorized to receive such information or use such information to the disadvantage of the Local area;
4. Take part in any religious, anti-religious, or partisan political activities in the discharge of Board duties;
5. Take any action which results in a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in accordance with the Federal Uniform Administrative Requirements.
 - A. Conflict of Interest arises when any of the following may be positively or negatively affected by an action under consideration by the WDB:
 - (1) the business in which the member or one of the immediate family of the member has a financial interest,
 - (2) the public or non-profit agency which employs the member or one of the immediate family of the member, or
 - (3) the public or non-profit agency on whose Board the member or one of the immediate family of the member sits.
 - B. Members must declare any potential conflict of interest on the WDB Information Sheet completed upon joining the Board and thereafter at the first meeting of each Program Year. When a potential conflict of interest arises during the year, the member will immediately notify the Chairman and the Workforce Development Administrator in writing.
 - C. The Conflict of Interest provision applies equally to Board meetings, or personal contact with members outside of meetings for the purpose of influencing or affecting the member's thinking or decision-making.
 - D. WDB members must make a conflict declaration upon the introduction of any agenda item that raises a real or apparent conflict of interest and must abstain from discussion and voting after declaring the conflict. Meeting minutes must show all conflict declarations and abstentions.

- E. Where there is a real or apparent conflict of interest, WDB members must refrain from participating in all stages of the procurement process, including:
- (1) participating in the planning process to the extent of advocating that a certain type of service be included or excluded;
 - (2) participating in the development, review, or approval of the procurement method and instrument which the member, one of the immediate family of the member, or the entity the member represents intends to respond to by submitting a proposal;
 - (3) participating in the provider selection process including discussing or voting on one's own or a rival proposal (one which competes for funding from the same source);
 - (4) attempting to influence a planning or funding decision by lobbying or advocating for or against a plan or proposal.
- F. No member who has a conflict of interest may serve as a WDB officer or committee chair.

NOTE: For purposes of this document, immediate family shall be defined as a member's spouse, parents, children, and siblings.

It is the responsibility of each member and alternate of the Workforce Development Board to govern the actions of all Board members in compliance with the Code of Conduct. If a member thinks there is a possibility of a conflict of interest, *real or apparent*, on the part of another member, it is his or her affirmative responsibility to immediately bring the matter to the attention of the Board or committee.

Upon the assertion of a possible violation of this policy, the Chairman will appoint an ad-hoc committee to review the circumstances; to report their findings to the Board for discussion and vote; and to recommend a course of action in the event a member is found to be in violation. Action may include, but is not limited to, a declaration that the member's seat is vacant and a request to the Chief Elected Official of the affected county to make a new appointment. In addition, civil penalties may be sought in the event the WDB incurs disallowed cost or damages due to violation of this Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct, which conforms to the Federal Uniform Administrative Requirements (Common Rule), becomes effective on January 23, 1992 and shall be referenced in the WDB By-Laws and other appropriate documents.

Present: Bryan Peterson, Fonda Harris, Clark Hunter; staff members Adrian Tait, MaryAnn Urka

Key Subjects Under Consideration:

- Strategic Planning Retreat preparation and implementation
- New Board member appointment
- Workforce Update

Background: The Executive Committee is composed of officers, committee chairs, and other members designated by the Chair. It is empowered to act on the Board's behalf between board meetings, subject to the Board's guidance.

Current Situation:

- Committee members approved proposed format of the Nov. 10th strategic planning retreat, and change of venue from Jackalope's Restaurant at Archer's Inn to the Meadowbrook Inn in Blowing Rock.
- Roundtable discussion topics: local innovations, small business and entrepreneurship, emerging industries, education and training, JobLink customer service, health care, and adding value to existing business
- Adrian Tait announced Trasa Jones' (Alleghany County) appointment to the WDB, and Clark Hunter's acceptance of the chairmanship of the Business Services Committee.
- On 11/15/11, the JobLink Center re-design portfolios of 18 ASU Interior Design students will be exhibited from 2-4 PM in the COG Board Room. Five finalists will be selected to present to the full Board at the December 8th meeting.
- The Wilkes and Spruce Pine JobLink Centers are considering new locations, or remodeling. Clark Hunter suggested the formation of an ad hoc committee to investigate potential sites.
- Tait reported a positive response for the "Burning Glass" application from members of the NC WD Directors Council.
- Response from the Rural Center to our local area grant application is expected in mid-November.

Next Steps: Development of goals and objectives based upon content and recommendations from the Strategic Planning Retreat.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held by teleconference on Thursday, December 1, 2011, at 4:00 PM.

HCWDB Strategic Planning Retreat Notes

On November 10, 2011, the High Country Workforce Development Board held its Strategic Planning Retreat at the Meadowbrook Inn in Blowing Rock. The goal of the retreat was the development of ideas for specific strategies the board would like to focus on in the coming year. The group broke up into roundtable discussions focusing on various topics beginning with a discussion of our current strategic plan.

In attendance: Mike Birkmire, Anne Bowlin, Jason Carlton, Kim Cashatt, Marie Gwyn, Jennie Harpold, Fonda Harris, Clark Hunter, Trasa Jones, Bryan Peterson, Jayne Phipps-Boger, Wanda Proffit, Sam Ray, Stacy Sears, Sallie Woodring; staff members Misty Bishop-Price, Rebecca Bloomquist, Jacob Clark, Don Sherrill, Adrian Tait, MaryAnn Urka

2008-2011 Strategic Plan:

It was suggested that our current strategic plan should continue to provide an overall framework for our actions and that many of the goals remain relevant. It was suggested that we review each item in committee and make any necessary changes.

Small Business and Entrepreneurship:

Workforce Challenges:

- Need employees with multiple skills (Jack-of-all-trades)
- Lack of project leadership skills
- Soft skills and social skills (dress, etc) are often missing, and need to be addressed in high school with emphasis on how to plan for real life expectations.
- Does office/work culture need to adapt its expectations to accommodate under-utilized talent?
- The need for workers to earn a living wage
- Workers entering the job market often have unreal expectations with regard to salary.
- Commercial facility costs are often too high for small business budgets.

Small business needs:

- Access to capital
- Communication of resources for businesses
- Communication and access regarding programs that assist small business
- Assistance with ‘red tape’ and paperwork for grants, etc. especially with microbusinesses (up to 10 employees)
- Solutions need to be county-specific.
- Need to share success stories/best practices

Entrepreneurship needs:

- Workforce system needs to be able to assist entrepreneurs with tools, resources and a “helping hand”
 - Available services
 - Health insurance issues
 - Budgeting, planning, marketing
 - Business Plan Competition
- How do high school students find out how to put their business idea out there?
 - Job Clubs
 - Leadership Academy (similar to what Chambers do)
 - Mentorship Programs
 - SCORE
 - Senior Project
 - Business Plan Competition

- Revolving loan funds
- Leadership training
- Workers need more “critical skills” (referring to work readiness, HRD) training as opposed to specific skills.
- There was a lot of discussion about microbusinesses (microbusinesses are firms with fewer than 10 employees. The largest sector of the U.S. economy, *95.4% of all U.S. businesses are microbusinesses—25,948,800 of the total 27.2 million firms. 92% of all U.S. businesses are firms with fewer than five employees - from Wikipedia*). We should consider an accounting of the number of these businesses in our region. Jason Carlton provided a link for more information at <http://www.microbusinessstrategies.com/>.
- Need more centralized access to resources. The current array of small business tools are confusing and sometimes duplicative; e.g. Chambers; JobLinks; SBTDC; DES.
- Align “buy local” initiatives to drive more consumer spending to local businesses.
- Need increased membership in business organizations; e.g. Wilkes has 4500 microbusinesses but only 500 chamber members.
- EDCs seem to be pursuing large companies without much emphasis on “growing our own”.
- EDC incentives to bring new businesses can work against existing businesses.
- OJT with a focus on small/micro businesses
- We need better marketing and outreach to small businesses.
- Existing small businesses suffer from the digital divide.
- Existing businesses cannot be off-shored.
- Jobs in agriculture: current labor statistics do not report jobs in this field, but many local EDCs are discussing how to increase food production.
- Need better overall marketing efforts to promote the many programs available to businesses.
- Could we convene a workgroup of business service people in order to better align resources (maybe business after hours format)?
- Bring stakeholders together to design more effective overall solutions (chambers, workforce, small business centers, EDCs).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

- There is a disconnect in communicating to students about what their actual earnings will be after completing a baccalaureate degree.
- There is a need for more internships and apprenticeships.
- Mentoring programs
 - Begin mentoring/internships in high school, so students can develop ideas about real-life work.
 - Career Readiness Certification (CRC) programs exist in schools and are gaining popularity.
- There is a need for 3rd party verification of skills prior to applying to a company.
 - Standardization of skills assessments
 - Communication and marketing by businesses to individuals, so they can see what the real-life application of a job looks like.
- Need for Career and Technical Education (CTE) to be required for all incoming freshmen, or before high school graduation.
- Are there incentives for businesses to provide students with experiences of real-life employment, not necessarily leading to a job?
 - Can we re-define OJT's to meet this need?
 - Offset business expenses of hosting a student
 - 18 or older on manufacturing floor
- “JobsNow” Program

- Skills and SOCIAL SKILLS
- VERIFICATION of SKILLS
- “Career Days” in high Schools or “Regional Career Days “at Convocation Center
- Job Sharing/Temporary Employment
- Businesses rotate students through a variety of jobs, for different experiences.
- Increase in the living wage has added to the disconnect of individuals to employees.
- Most individuals will have 7-9 careers throughout their working life.
- Retraining
 - Education specifically for critical thinking skills
 - There is a great need for development of social and interpersonal skills.
- Existing communication structure between high school and secondary education is non-existent.
- Encourage companies to sponsor tours or internships for high school students
 - Utilize the Chambers of Commerce to promote this.

Health Care:

- What health care jobs are growing most rapidly?
 - Occupational Therapy/Rehabilitation jobs are in great demand
 - Physical Therapy Assistants, especially related to gerontology/eldercare
 - Home Health
 - Health/Wellness (UNCA has added this as a curriculum program)
- OJT for non-licensure/certification areas may be viable for cross training new staff. This need is usually determined by size of the institution.
- Impediments to having enough trained health care workers (especially nurses) include limited admissions, due to insufficient teaching staff for the curriculum, and the high cost to complete these programs.
- Need a regionally coordinated study of health care attrition, vacancies, and employer demand fluctuations, to assist in projecting future worker needs. There has never been such a study conducted.
- Hiring of registered nurses has remained relatively stable.
- Establishment of a mentoring program for new graduates would provide great benefit to these new workers and their workplaces.
- Sometimes rural areas have an oversupply of trained workers because they do not want to travel to areas outside our region.
- How can the WDB assist with the training needs for qualified health care workers?
 - Facilitate a dialogue with community colleges and universities regarding training and curriculum needs and job availability.
 - Involve K-12 administrators and teachers in local employment and career awareness events.
- Flexible health care training programs are needed especially for dislocated workers and others pursuing second and third careers.
- Willing health care employers are needed to invest in dislocated workers who have been retrained in health care sectors. These workers bring extensive experience and a strong work ethic from previous careers in other sectors of our economy.
- Though not as prevalent, there is a need for health care workers who are trained to setup and maintain all levels of health care equipment.
- Bilingual health care workers are needed and are in great demand.

- Reduced funding in CAP or other agencies is resulting in limited hiring of NAs; is there an over-training of NAs?
- Are we at the point of saturation?
- What is a realistic career ladder for NA's who can't find employment?
- Do we limit the number of NAs we train?
- Are NALLs and Phlebotomists really needed?
- What is a true career ladder for RNs?
- Are we over-training in the area of RN's?

Local Innovations:

- In Allegheny County, major concern is "just jobs."
- In Avery County, discussions continue about venturing into "Putt-Putt" golf courses.
- **Need for Employer Incentives:**
 - Could be newly defined jobs
 - Could be motel re-habbing
 - Could be financing packages
- **Make an asset inventory**
- **Create a summer "Craft Camp"** focusing on heritage crafts and music (Allegheny)
- **Under consideration:**
 - Re-purposing old Banner Elk School (Avery Co.) into a culinary school
 - Investigate alternative uses for "Three Mile" property (other than prisoners) in Avery Co.
 - Developing a viticulture program - Avery County
 - Expansion of solar project (Allegheny). The Allegheny Inn has gone solar.
- **"Coffee and a Job";** a career cafe
- Helping customers feel more "invited" at JobLink Centers. Greeters - improve socialization skills
- **Success story** videos (3-5 min. shorts) play in JobLink Centers.
- Sponsorship of **Job Clubs:** Contract/agreement required
Participation required: miss ___ meetings, out of club.
Business/Corporate discounts to job seekers?
Notice of free classes on real & virtual community bulletin boards
- Jobseekers post notices describing skills, e.g. "I cut grass, do taxes, repair vehicles", etc.
- How to adjust to the current temporary trend?
- In response, possibly develop **"Entrepreneurship 101" training**
- Need more insight into the new generation of jobseekers. Get more attuned to views/ideas of young people.
- **Digital Divide/Transition Training**
 - The Digital Divide is a major issue for both jobseekers and businesses.
 - Customers need assistance, from job searches to performance of basic job duties.
 - Customers who lack skills often don't see the value of attaining new skills.
 - Is there an agency working on these types of issues?
- Transportation continues to be an issue--lack of free/public transportation hinders many from receiving/accessing services.
- **Low Income Internet Assistance Program:**
 - What is this and what is currently available?
 - Where and what are "E" communities?
 - What counties received fiber optic ARRA funds?
 - Are there areas that lack internet availability?

- Need for up-to-date local labor market information
 - Use of Burning Glass will assist with this.

Emerging Industries:

- **What Industries Are Experiencing Growth/Development?**
 - Healthcare
 - Viticulture
 - Tourism (new to consideration: NASCAR theme park, re-opening Oz)
- Green Technologies/Construction
- Services to telecommunications companies; e.g. Altec's response
- Need to link training with emerging business needs
- Remote/distance learning programs
- Need for coordination between training/education and local business/employer needs
- Outreach to 8th grade students
- IT is becoming a large-scale "cottage industry".
- Educational efforts need to focus not only on careers, but on what skill sets are required for those careers.
- **"IV"- Introduction to Vocation** at an earlier age in school. Do we need to return to this concept in order to change a local, cultural resistance to additional training/higher education?
- **What can WDB members do to encourage growth and eliminate resistance to continuing education/training?**
 - Develop partnerships through technology
 - Talk with state & local legislators
- Problem coordinating Career Expos among regional schools because of infrastructural issues, such as transportation
- Advisory meeting annually between educators and industry leaders on workforce development
- TALK TO LEGISLATORS about gaps. Ex. *Career and College Promise*- community college legislation which does not allow students under the age of 18 to participate in continuing education. No high school involvement with ConEd is a problem.
- Address accessibility of education for new industries.
- Reinforcement of vocational training
- Annual gatherings examples
 - CEO Roadshow- Talk to students about the realities of working at a company
 - Career Day for 8th graders.

JobLink Customer Service:

- DES job search website is difficult
- Technology does not help us identify customers to refer to businesses
- Quality/level of customer service among staff is inconsistent.
- Standards of customer service
- "Service" agency
- Higher standards must come from the top.
- Use of customer survey
- How do we help move customers from UI to wanting to work?
- Legislative change
- If drawing UI, person should be doing community service or working toward getting GED/education.
 - Required resume development

- Draft resolution/outcomes/suggestions from WDB?
- “Circles of Care: Pathways Out of Poverty” - is this something we can do region-wide? (Currently only in Wilkes County.)
- Chick-Fil-A Customer Service - great example of customer service.

Adding Value to Existing Businesses:

- Link education to business
 - High school/Continuing Education
 - Career Days
 - Intro. to Vocation (IV)
 - Life skills
 - Customer service skills for Individuals
- Customer services for businesses
 - Developing staff/employee expectations
 - Hold staff/employees to expectations
- Develop customer service pilot program
 - Monitor customer service prior to training and after training and compare results.
- Offer training in dealing with difficult customers.
- Offer “lean type” training to streamline and improve business efficiency.
- Communicate opportunities for businesses:
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Newsletters
 - Chamber after-hours events
- Develop questionnaires/surveys for businesses to further explore needs.
 - Talk to Ricky Roten from WCC about what he has done with this.
- Send out short training videos by e-mail (30 seconds to several minutes), such as was done through the disability navigator program (Vocational Rehabilitation).
- Develop network of peer/mentor counselors to existing businesses.
- Offer series of training opportunities to include:
 - Interviewing skills training for HR duties
 - Leadership development training for supervisors (consider certification in this area).
Western Carolina Industries in Asheville is a training provider for these skills.
- Work with the local community colleges to develop a “Train the Trainer” program to meet local business needs.
- Familiarize businesses with the Career Readiness Certification program/process that is available in NC for workers and employers to better match workers to specific jobs.
- Supervisors need to learn the techniques of staff evaluation and how to conduct an employee evaluation.
- Need diversity training specific to serving customers and working with others.

Visit the High Country Workforce Development Board Website

Visit www.highcountrywdb.com and select **“About the HC WDB”** to access more information on the High Country Workforce Development Board and Consortium. Be sure to Check the **“Calendar of Events”** for current meeting/ events information, and **“Headlines”** for local area workforce development news articles.

For more information on local area JobLink Centers, click on www.highcountrywdb.com and select **“JobLink Career Centers”** from the menu at the left of the web page.

Contact information for **Staff to the Board** can be found on the **“About the HC WDB”** web page at www.highcountrywdb.com.

The High Country WDB now has a **Facebook** page:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/High-Country-Workforce-Development-Board/325705946320?ref=ts>.