



# Workforce Board

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## WIRED Nominees Announced

Governor Christine Gregorie has forwarded two Washington proposals to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) for its Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative. A third proposal was jointly submitted by the Governor and her counterpart in Oregon, Governor Theodore Kulongoski.

The two Washington applications were from Centralia College, working together with the Satsop Park Energy Coalition, and the Prosperity Partnership for its Central Puget Sound proposal. The joint submittal was from a Vancouver/Portland/Salem metro area partnership.

In February, DOL and the U.S. Department of Commerce will announce up to ten national winners of WIRED grants, each of whom will receive up to \$5 million annually over the next three years.

The Governor's office received a total of five proposals which were reviewed by several state agency partners. The other two were from Kitsap Economic Development and Edmonds Community College partnerships.

“It was not an easy decision, nor one taken lightly,” said Workforce Board Associate Director Pam Lund. “We felt these three offered the best opportunity for the selected partners to help their regions move to the next level of system innovation and transformation.”

### **Legislative Update Available Each Friday**

Keep on top of what’s happening ‘on the hill’. Check out the Workforce Board’s website ([www.wtb.wa.gov](http://www.wtb.wa.gov)) each Friday to find out what is on the Legislature’s agenda for the coming week. The website will also carry information about workforce-related bills, work sessions, and the Workforce Board’s position on a variety of issues ranging from career and technical education funding to the high school dropout rate, skill panels, the health care shortage, and the skills gap.

Key workforce-related issues to be addressed in the 2006 session include career guidance, private career school reform, the critical need for data on health care personnel, the budget, and a bill to ultimately provide each Washington resident with 14 years of education.

For more information on specific issues, contact Wes Pruitt at 360.586.1672, [wpruitt@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:wpruitt@wtb.wa.gov) or Madeleine Thompson at 360.753.5653, [mthompson@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:mthompson@wtb.wa.gov).

### **Joint Agency Report Shows Washington Employers Needs Mid-level Completers**

Washington employers need workers who have completed mid-level preparation; i.e. more than one year but less than four years of postsecondary training.

According to “A Skilled and Educated Workforce,” a joint report issued by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Workforce Board, the state’s current supply of mid-level workers will meet only 83 percent of employers’ demand from 2007-2012.

Quoting from 2002-2003 statistics, the report noted that community/technical colleges produced 10,000 newly prepared workers through their workforce education programs and a further 8,700 through their academic programs. Private career schools provided almost 5,000 workers, and apprenticeship almost 1,800 for a total of just over 25,000. Employers, however, will have an average of 30,400 annual job openings at this level.

Even if mid-level preparation were to increase at the same rate as the age-specific population, the supply will fall short of demand. Bryan Wilson, Associate Director of the Workforce Board, said “it will take policy changes to sufficiently increase sub-baccalaureate capacity. Relying solely on population growth will not close the gap.”

In reporting on the state’s colleges and universities, the report noted that although Washington was supplying enough baccalaureate degrees to meet employer demand in the aggregate, a mismatch existed between students’ majors and the job market. Specifically, it said, Washington State does not produce enough graduates in the health, computer science, and engineering fields.

The report was requested by the Legislature in 2004 to improve the quality of information available to help policymakers assess the needs of Washington employers compared with the output of the state's higher education system.

Contact Bryan Wilson at 360.753.0891, [bwilson@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:bwilson@wtb.wa.gov) or Madeleine Thompson at 360.753.5653, [mthompson@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:mthompson@wtb.wa.gov). A copy of the report is available on our website at <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/SEW.DOC>.

### **Developing *High Skills, High Wages 2006*: Update**

Stakeholder participation rates are high and work is well underway in developing *High Skills, High Wages 2006*. Three work groups have had their first meetings, and a fourth work group on service integration, chaired by Employment Security Commissioner Karen Lee, will meet on February 7.

The Youth work group is concentrating on issues such as career and technical education, dropouts, career guidance, and diversity issues. The group is co-chaired by Beth Thew and Mike Hudson. At their first meeting on December 14, the group heard presentations from staff to provide context, and from a dropout prevention and apprenticeship preparation program which served as springboards for a group discussion. Their next meeting is February 17.

Meanwhile, the Low-Income and Target Populations work group is concentrating on improving wage progression for low-income adults, and improving education and employment outcomes for people of color, individuals with disabilities, and women. The group is co-chaired by Tony Lee and Deborah Marley. At the first meeting in mid December, the group heard from Tina Bloomer and David Prince on the Ford Foundation project, *Bridges to Opportunity*. The Low-Income and Target Populations work group meets next on February 24.

Asbury Lockett chaired the first meeting on the Skills Gap work group on January 5. Janet Lewis will co-chair with Asbury at the next meeting. That group is examining educational capacity in workforce training, public-private partnerships, economic development, training for current and dislocated workers, and veterans' issues. Representative Phyllis Kenney and Rich Nafziger, Chief Clerk for the House, presented their Opportunity Grant proposal, and a discussion followed. A follow-up meeting is planned, with date, time and location to come.

For more information on High Skills, High Wages and the individual work groups, contact Madeleine Thompson at 360.753.5653, [mthompson@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:mthompson@wtb.wa.gov).

### **Closing Date for WAVE Applications is March 1**

The closing date for the Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) applications is March 1. Applications from both the student and the career and technical administrator must be submitted by then to the Workforce Board in order to be considered.

Created in 1984 by the Legislature, the WAVE program provides students with a grant, based on availability of funds, which pay undergraduate educational expenses for two years (six quarters or four semesters) at a Washington State institution of higher education, an accredited Washington State independent college or university, or a licensed private career school.

The Board sent application forms to each high school and community/technical college in late December. They can also be downloaded at <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/waP6.doc>.

For more information, contact Lee Williams at 360.586.3321, [lwilliams@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:lwilliams@wtb.wa.gov), or Diane Donahoo at 360.753.0892, [ddonahoo@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:ddonahoo@wtb.wa.gov).

### **Scores Up, but Still 1 in 20 U.S. Adults Illiterate**

American adults may only be able to read a prescription bottle or the newspaper as well as they could 10 years ago, but they have made some gains in quantitative literacy. According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy issued last month, the number of adults able to perform tasks involving math, such as calculating numbers on tax forms or bank statements, are up eight percent since 1992.

Also encouraging are the improved scores of African Americans. They increased 16 points in quantitative literacy, 8 points in document literacy (i.e. understanding the content and structure of documents such as prescription labels), and 6 points in prose literacy such as reading a book or newspaper. Asian/Pacific Islanders' scores also increased substantially in prose literacy, up 16 points.

Hispanic adult scores, however, declined in prose and document literacy, 18 and 14 points respectively, but were unchanged in quantitative literacy.

Despite the gains, overall, according to the report, about 1 in 20 adults in this country is still illiterate. Equally, some 30 million adults have 'below basic' skills in prose literacy, and a further 63 million have what researchers deem only 'basic' skills. Those who are considered 'below basic' tend not to have graduated from high school, did not speak English before starting school, aged over 65, had multiple disabilities, or were Hispanic or African American.

Only 28 million adult Americans, or 13 percent of the population, are proficient in prose literacy.

Moreover, the report shows, each educational attainment level was down in prose literacy since the survey 10 years ago. Scores of those with less than or some high school were down 9 points; high school graduates down 6 points; college graduates down 11 points; and graduate studies/degrees down 12 points. College graduates or those with graduate degrees were also down substantially in document literacy, 14 and 17 points respectively.

Read the full report at <http://nces.ed.gov/naal/>.

### **Briefly**

#### *Charlie Earl Takes Over Helm at State Board for Community and Technical Colleges*

Charlie Earl, president of Everett Community College, has been named the executive director of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), effective February 1. He will also be a member of the executive board of the Workforce Board. Earl has led Everett Community College since 1998. Prior to that, he served as deputy King County executive under Gary Locke, general manager of Snohomish County PUD, and chief administrative officer of

Thurston County. Earl replaces Earl Hale who has been the executive director at SBCTC for the past 19 years.

#### *More CTE, Less Dropouts*

The National Centers for Career and Technical Education recently issued a report on the association between a student's ratio of CTE to core academic courses and the likelihood of dropping out of high school. The report "Dropping Out of High School and the Place of Career and Technical Education: A Survival Analysis of Surviving High School" can be downloaded at <https://www.nccte.org/publications/infosynthesis/r&dreport/DroppingOut-Plank.pdf>. The report can also be purchased online for \$8.

#### *Sector Skills Academy Now Accepting Applications*

The Sector Skills Academy is taking applications through March 24 for its year-long program designed to build the next generation of leaders in sectoral workforce development. The program kicks off with three 3-day workshops in June during which participants will hear from leading sectoral practitioners, share ideas, and network. As an integral part of the Academy, each participant will design and begin implementing a new or enhanced sectoral initiative compatible with their own organization's vision and goals. Applicants for the Skills Academy should be involved in a current sector initiative or undertaking a new initiative and have the authority within their organization to lead such an effort. The Academy can take up to 24 participants. For more details, go to <http://www.sectorskillsacademy.org/>.

#### **Job Opportunity**

CORD, the nonprofit organization which proposes and advocates for education reform in both secondary and postsecondary technical education and workforce education, is looking for a Chief Executive Officer. Based in Waco, TX, the new CEO will have experience in career and technical education, be committed to the principles of Tech-Prep, and have a strong track record in generating external funding through business and industry partnerships. His or her focus will be on the external affairs of CORD rather than the day-to-day running of the organization. Compensation, benefits, length of contract, etc. are negotiable and will be competitive. For more details, contact Dr. David Ponitz at 936.434.6640, [dponitzsinclair@woh.rr.com](mailto:dponitzsinclair@woh.rr.com).

#### **Upcoming Events**

Mark **February 6-7**. Those are the dates for *Workforce 2006: Future by Design* conference and workshops taking place at the Doubletree Guest Suites at South Center near SeaTac. The conference is especially targeted at educators or workforce practitioners in one-stops, counseling organizations, or human resources. For more information, contact Jan Palmer, 206.870.5912, or go to [www.learningconnections.org/Workforce/2006/](http://www.learningconnections.org/Workforce/2006/).

Don't forget! National Career and Technical Education Week is **February 12-18**. For promotional materials and general information go to [www.acteonline.org/career\\_tech/tech\\_week/index.cfm](http://www.acteonline.org/career_tech/tech_week/index.cfm).

The *National Association of Workforce Boards* is holding its annual conference **February 25-28** at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington D.C. Guest speakers are Ted Fishmen, author of "China, Inc.: How the Rise of the Next Superpower Challenges America and the World," and Pamela Passman, Vice President of Global Corporate Affairs at Microsoft. More details at [www.nawb.org/forum2006/index.htm](http://www.nawb.org/forum2006/index.htm).

The *Construction Center of Excellence* is holding its second annual construction workforce conference **March 1-2** at Renton Technical College. For more details, costs, and online registration, go to [www.rtc.edu/CommunityResources/CCE/Conferences/](http://www.rtc.edu/CommunityResources/CCE/Conferences/). And there still is time to submit entries for the Future of Construction Scholars Directory, and nominations for the Excellence in Construction Education awards.

This year's *Washington Association of Occupational Educators'* annual Tech-Prep Conference takes place on **March 2-3** at the Pasco Red Lion. Details at [www.wa-acte.org/pdf\\_files/06%20WAOE%20Brochure.pdf](http://www.wa-acte.org/pdf_files/06%20WAOE%20Brochure.pdf).

"Strengthening Linkages for Student Success" is the theme of the *Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's* 2006 Collaboration Conference being held **March 22-24** at the DoubleTree Hotel, SeaTac. More details at [www.k12.wa.us/conferences/Collaboration2006/default.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/conferences/Collaboration2006/default.aspx).

The dates are **March 23-24**, and the venue the Red Lion Hotel at the Park in Spokane for the *Washington Rural Health Association's* Northwest Regional Rural Health Conference. Check out details by contacting Kaarin Appel at 509.358.7509, [kappel@wsu.edu](mailto:kappel@wsu.edu).

The *National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium* will hold its annual spring meeting in Washington D.C at the Hilton Hotel **April 8-12**. For more details, watch NASDCTEC's website at [www.careertech.org/](http://www.careertech.org/)

Mark **May 31 - June 3** for a conference in Minneapolis, MN sponsored by *Community-Campus Partnerships for Health*. The conference is geared for those interested in community-based participatory research, in service-learning, community and economic development, and partnership development. Learn more at <http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/conf-overview.html>

### **Funding Resources**

Still almost a month left to apply for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Northwest Health Foundation's *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future Initiative*. The initiative, which must address local nursing issues, will provide two-year grants of up to \$250,000. Grant monies are available to local or regional private, family, or community 501(c)(3) foundations and public charities. Government entities, corporations, or corporate grantmakers may participate, but may not serve as the applicant organization. More details at [www.partnersinnursing.org/](http://www.partnersinnursing.org/). Deadline is February 16.