

Armstrong County Manufacturing Consortium

Thursday, March 05, 2009

Attending: Alex Stockmal (Mid-Atlantic District Labs), Kate Hall (Clarion University Small Business Development Center), Vickie DeThomas (OmniTech Partners), Rich Muth (IUP Northpointe), Mary Salony, (Tri-County WIB) Chuck Slagle (CES Die Design), Ken Raybuck (Tri-County WIB), David English (AET), Joanne Petras (Fuzion Technologies), Lori Harvey (Penn State Electro-Optics Center), Jeff Fullerton (DRS Technologies), Jim Pish (Dielectric Solutions)

Interim Chair Alex Stockmal opened the meeting at 7:36 AM. He welcomed members and resource partners.

There were a number of folks missing due to company issues and training.

Minutes

Motion to approve by Vickie and second by Chuck, passed by voice vote.

Member Dues

Joanne will send out invoices for annual dues next week.

Current balance is \$2078.51 in the consortium's checking account and we do not have much in the way of upcoming expenses. Discussion on amount of dues - suggestion of new member dues for first year is \$50 with moving up to \$100 after the first year. We will stay with \$100 for current members.

Marketing Materials

Should we update the consortium brochure with information on initiatives and plans? Since company members come and go, should company names come off the printed materials? This piece could include information on the funds secured by the consortium for training and partnership.

A page for Female Alliance for STEM Excellence (FASE) has been added to the ACMC website. The page includes five links for girls to explore along with the pamphlet prepared for the program. The pamphlet will be sent to all sixth-grade girls in the Armstrong School District.

Updated the government information on the webpage as well.

ARMTech

The dates are a week later this year - August 19 through 21. Those needing hotel space should secure it as soon as possible with the lack of local rooms, since the Comfort Inn is not rebuilt yet.

A sign up sheet for coverage in the consortium booth will be prepared and circulated over the next few months. There are several other events for participation - reception and dinner on Thursday, breakfast on Friday.

Consortium Strategic Plan

Alex asked for comments on the plans. Vickie mentioned that the tri-county manufacturing consortia plan ends in 2009. She suggested that the chairs should get together to update the plan. On the question of how well the plan meshes with the TCWIB strategic plan, there are common activities on both plans. The economic situation has changed dramatically as well and we need to keep this in mind as we adjust and update our plans.

2008-2009 Industry Partnership Funding

Mary reported that the IP funding is now in place. She and Ken will work with the three county chairs on spending these funds. Vickie is helping with this and by next month, we should have an outline to review. Total is about \$10,800 per county.

Training funds are partially in place. We have not received many applications for the tuition reimbursement to date. The deadline is March 15 for returning these to Mary.

Committee Reports and Plans

Public Awareness - Dave was the guest on the radio program in February. Jeff announced that DRS is moving the operation to Johnstown. Everyone who wants to go is welcome to move their job to Cambria County. This will be happening in April/May. As a result, Jeff will be stepping down from this chair position. Other possibilities for the program are Electro-Optics Camp and workforce statistics. Lori Harvey will coordinate this over the next few months.

Preferred Vendors - Joanne reported that they have not had many responses to our requests to be preferred vendors. Vickie suggested speaking to Natures Blend about the new focus on custom kitchens for member employees, etc. We will prepare an insert on this option to use in the Chamber newsletter as well as to hand out.

Training - Joe was not at the meeting to report. We already covered the material in the IP discussion earlier.

Educational Awareness - The group discussed the activities under way, including the recent career fair for ninth-graders from the county. Jeff recommended more pre-work to prep the students. Lori recommended using the career assessment approach with the students to get them thinking about options and questions in advance of the program. The members discussed methods of bringing parents into the process.

New Members - Ready to proceed. Letters, packets, and prospect names are available. Member company representatives are needed to make peer-to-peer contacts.

Old Business

In May or June, we are planning a tri-county manufacturing meeting open to all company representatives.

New Business

Small Business Energy Efficiency Grant Program - a piece on the program was shared. We need to educate our companies about green issues.

Vickie had forwarded through Dave an opportunity to work with Czech and Ukrainian companies.

Member Updates

Vickie shared a positive - a thank you from a team of snipers overseas.

Partner Updates

Penn State New Kensington provided a handout on upcoming classes.

PA CareerLink is adding a CareerLink Specialist position to help with the additional need.

Question of changing meeting time to 8:00 AM. Members agreed to this change.

Interim Chair Alex Stockmal adjourned the meeting at 8:55 AM.

Next meeting: Thursday, April 2 at 8:00 AM.