

*MIDDLESEX COUNTY BUSINESS OUTREACH TASK FORCE*

*MEETING OF APRIL 5, 2012*

Kathy Shaw, Department Head, Department of Economic Development and Education, was introduced to the members and spoke of her initial plans as seen in her fourth week in the position. She stressed the need for measurement of the success of activities and also spoke about implementing the newly endorsed Delta Economic Development Study for Middlesex County. Kathy noted that she wants to develop a database of businesses in our county and Jane noted we have already started one and that we can cooperate in that development. Dan mentioned again that the most accurate business lists are probably those used by the Fire Marshalls in each town and perhaps she could make contact with those folks to start her database. Kathy was reminded by members that transportation to industrial sites is a huge barrier in this county and needs to be considered in the planning process.

Nina reviewed the seminar activities of the SBDC representative in our location, as well as the one-on-one consultations he has been conducting as needed on Friday. We are working to expand the participants in both endeavors so more small businesses can take advantage of these free resources. The seminar in April will be in English and the ones in May and June will be in Spanish. We are also looking for other speakers for seminars to provide different topics of interest to small businesses.

The group discussed possible marketing activities to encourage more businesses to not only place job orders with the state system but to also hold positive recruitments in one of our two offices. Bernice suggested further distribution of the testimonial video, especially to movie theaters for showing before the main feature. She also suggested we have a drop-card of service information to give companies when we participate in the various Chamber walkabouts in towns in the County. Dan felt the town halls needed more education on our services so they can provide accurate information to companies seeking to locate within the various municipalities. Kathy agreed completely that the front line staff in the municipalities need this information as most people never see the Mayors or their specific staff, but they do see the front line staff daily. Jane noted we have previously sent information to the offices of the mayors to try to educate them to employer services. We discussed using whatever email databases of companies we can access (Carteret, possibly Old Bridge) to send information via that medium as well.

Baden noted that while face to face meetings with employers are valuable, we need to be cognizant of that fact that most of the job orders on our system are placed directly by the employer and not by One Stop Staff. Most companies want only resumes emailed to them or their own form completed on the computer. We need to educate more employers of ALL of our services and that is difficult if the employer is directly placing the job order without being aware of everything else we offer because they do not speak to a person or do not explore the entire website for such information.

Bob Crawford noted the Jobs4Jersey website for employers is probably still about 12 months away before being fully operational and populated.

Jane reviewed the recent job fairs and announced the May 15 job fair will be at the community center in Woodbridge.

*The next Business Outreach Task Force meeting will be on July 12, 2012 at 8:30 AM.* We will invite the remaining three Talent Network Coordinators to present at that meeting.

Prepared by Jane Brady