



BAWD Newsletter / Issue #9 / Fall 2019

BAY AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Integrating New Workers Jim Golembeski

It is easy to write about the workforce challenges we face in northeast Wisconsin, but let's take a moment to remember a real success story: our Hmong and Lao friends and neighbors.

It doesn't take much effort to look around and appreciate how well those wonderful people have become an important part of our area workforce in just a few decades. Their young people have moved into professional careers, others have started businesses, and many are some of the hardest working people in our community. You can find them in finance, real estate, legal professions and healthcare to name a few occupational areas.

But it was not easy for them. The Hmong and Lao people lived in Laos, adjacent to Viet Nam during the terrible war years. They became vital partners with the American troops, often rescuing our pilots and even learning to fly missions themselves during the war. They provided supplies and protection and a wide range of services in support of our efforts there. When our military action in Viet Nam collapsed in the mid-1970s, many of these allies were left stranded and vulnerable. Many perished. Others made the dangerous trek into Thailand where they lived impoverished in refugee camps.

As several waves of Hmong and Lao refugees came to the United States beginning in the late 70s and into the 90s, there was culture shock. I doubt that you and I could have responded with more dignity and determination than these brave people. Their young people struggled, caught between two conflicting worlds. And a handful of truly hard-hearted, ignorant people called them names and abused them because of their Asian ancestry.

But we are certainly fortunate that so many came and settled in northeast Wisconsin! The Hmong and Lao people have become vital members of our workforce here. Their culture has enriched ours. Their children and grandchildren give us hope for sustaining that workforce into the future. They add much to our community and its culture.

I think we could already speak of the success of the more recent refugees who have come here: the Somalis. They are another wonderful addition to our community as well as to our workforce. It makes me wonder what other opportunities we might find if we open up our minds and broaden our perspective.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Success Story

Submitted by a WIOA Career Services Specialist



Name changed to protect identity of client

John came to me at the Sheboygan County Job Center after Dairy Farmers of America; a dairy manufacturer in Plymouth, Wisconsin closed its plant back in December of 2016. John did not waste any time and enrolled in the WIOA program in January of 2016. This Career Planner provided career assessments to John, but this client already knew what training he wanted to complete.

John's first term consisted of prevocational classes as client's skills were a bit rusty, but that did not deter John from completing his goal program, IT-Network Specialist with achieving a 4.0 GPA numerous times throughout the program AND graduated in 2 years! Throughout John's training, this Career Planner continued to support him and make sure that client knew that his Career Planner was there should he have any kind of questions, support, coaching, or need any kind of assistance.

John graduated December 21, 2018 and shortly afterwards, John and his Career Planner met to discuss job search strategy and work on a newly revised resume that would market John in a "new" light. It wasn't long and John was getting hits on his resume and getting interviews as well. It was March 2019, 3 months from graduation, and John had received a job offer from one of the most targeted companies in the Sheboygan area – ACUITY! John was over the moon excited and called his Career Planner about the good news.

John accepted the position and started April 1, 2019, full time as a Technical Systems Analyst, wages are substantial; definitely a sustainable wage and client's benefit package is one of the best in the area.

The Career Planner's last follow-up with client, "I am still at Acuity and loving it there! Lots of perks working here, I don't plan on leaving." Thank you for all you have done for me and my family. Best wishes to you and your family as well."



Quick Facts Ryan Long - Local Labor Market Specialist

- The Conference Board's Leading Economic Index most recent reading of 112.1 (2016 = 100) is a continuation of a flattening that started earlier this year. This measure, composed of elements such as average weekly hours in manufacturing, building permits, and consumer expectations for business conditions, is a widely-watched gauge of expected short-term movements in the economy. This is further evidence of an economy that continues to grow, albeit at a slower pace compared to this time last year.
- The latest U.S. jobs report is also consistent with the view that the economy is still expanding but could also be losing a little steam. The number of total nonfarm jobs increased by 136,000 in September, compared to average monthly gains of 161,000 so far in 2019 and 223,000 in 2018. It is unclear how the recent jobs data will influence the Federal Reserve's policy-making committee when it meets in late October.

Eighth Annual Manufacturing First Expo & Conference

Ann Franz



Representatives from leading manufacturers will descend Oct. 30 on the KI Convention Center in Green Bay for the eighth annual Manufacturing First Expo & Conference.

More than 1,500 people, including 500 high school students, are expected at the event, which is designed for Wisconsin manufacturers to showcase industry advances, highlight successes and announce their latest developments.

[Follow this link to read the news release.](#)

Apprenticeships in Wisconsin

Ryan Herber

Wisconsin launches new Broadband Service Technician Apprenticeship



[To learn more about this](#), or any of WI Apprenticeship Training Programs in Manufacturing or IT, please contact:

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Local Job Fairs

Menasha Job Center / Focus on Mfg. - October 29 from 2:00 - 4:00pm

Sheboygan County Job Center - November 7 from 1:00 - 3:00pm

Menasha Job Center - November 12 from 2:00 - 4:00pm

Brown County Job Center - November 21 from 1:00 - 3:00pm

DATES TO REMEMBER

Boss's Day - October 16

Halloween - October 31

Veteran's Day - November 11

Thanksgiving Day - November 28

Black Friday - November 29

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