

WorkNet Pinellas Chairman's Report

February 2005

President's Day



February 21st

Employment Statistics Pinellas County December 2004

2,160 Initial Unemployment Compensation Claims

- ↓ Down 5% from November 2004
- ↓ Down 18% from December 2003

Unemployment Rate

- 3.5% Pinellas County, Dec. 2004
Down .1 percentage point from November '04
- 3.5% MSA, Dec. 2004
No change from Nov. '04
- 4.5% Florida, Dec. 2004
- 5.1% U.S., Dec. 2004

Source: Agency for Workforce Innovation;
Numbers Not Seasonally Adjusted

Florida employment grew by 172,300 jobs over 2004, growing at a rate of 2.3%. By comparison, the national rate of growth was 1.3% for the same period.

Florida Civilian Labor Force
8,469,000

Employed Floridians
8,091,000

Unemployed Floridians
378,000

Job Growth
Tampa-St. Pete-Clearwater MSA
+26,200 new jobs over 2004
(16,200 in Professional
& Business Services)
(Most job gains in the State)

New "One Stop" Career Center Location Opening in Tarpon Springs

By February 15, 2005, WorkNet Pinellas will house a new One Stop Career Center at the St. Petersburg College Tarpon Springs Campus located at 38500 U.S. Hwy 19 North. The Tarpon Springs One Stop Center location marks the ninth area One Stop in Pinellas County, which have been conveniently located to provide employment, education, and training services all in one place.

WorkNet Pinellas' One Stops provide a wealth of information and assistance for employers, job seekers, education and training seekers. These centers include partner programs such as employer services, job services, veteran services, specialized services for persons with disabilities, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, and youth programs. There is never a fee charged for any of WorkNet Pinellas' services for employers or jobseekers.

"We are very excited about the opening of the new One Stop in Tarpon Springs," states Jerome Salatino, WorkNet Pinellas Director of Planning & Development. "We are grateful to St. Petersburg College for allowing us to utilize their facilities. We have seen a critical need to provide employment services in the area and this partnership allows us to meet our goal."

Direct mail flyers will be sent out to all system registered customers from the area to notify them of the opening. WorkNet will also be getting the word out through St. Petersburg College to its student body, Pinellas County Chambers of Commerce to its memberships, advertisements in the St. Petersburg Times, and the WorkNet Pinellas website.

S3 Mission Seeking Job Openings for Older Workers

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that 50% of the U.S. population will be over 50 years of age by 2006, creating one of the fastest growing segments of the workforce: the mature worker. These 76 million "Baby Boomers" in America, people aged 38-56, will have a significant impact on America's ability to remain economically competitive.

The good news is that "roughly two out of every three workers over age 50 will shun the traditional concept of retirement, where you stop working at age 62." (Wall Street Journal, March 25, 2004). The challenge now comes to employers who want to "keep" their older employees. They will need to implement a variety of work options such as flexible hours, telecommuting, and part-time employment, not to mention restructuring their retirement and health care benefits. WorkNet Pinellas has received a Department of Labor grant to place older workers

in on-the-job training positions, with partial wages subsidized by the grant. If you are a for-profit business in the area and are interested in hiring an older worker, please contact Wayne Feuer at (727) 507-4300, ext. 3100 or via email wfeuer@worknetpinellas.org.

Clearwater's Small Business Winner!

Congratulations to WorkNet Board Member and Clearwater Business Owner, Odalys Lara on her Small Business of the Year Award honor presented by the Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting in January. Ms. Lara's firm, **Perzel & Lara Forensic CPA's**, was acknowledged for its accomplishments and commitment to the Clearwater business community.

Awarded Honor for Veteran Voc Rehab Assistance

On Friday, January 28th, Bob Downey, Veterans Representative of Clearwater, was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation at the VA Regional Office for his outstanding efforts in assisting the Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Office in achieving a successful rehabilitation of a veteran. On more than one occasion Bob went out of his way to ensure the veteran was working suitably and to get necessary paperwork signed by the veteran in order for the case to be closed as a successful rehabilitation.

Bob's guidance also contributed to the veteran being selected to start a Management Training program. Presenting the certificate was Ruth Fanning, VA VR&E Officer, and Peggi Stanford, the VR&E Case Manager. Also attending was Bill Griffiths, Vets Program Coordinator, Warren Maxon, Local Veterans Representative of Clearwater and Vern Leyde the Veterans Representative out-stationed with the Vocational Rehabilitation Office.



Pictured left to right: Vern Leyde, Barbara Booher, Peggi Stanford, Bob Downey and Ruth Fanning.

Dates to Remember

- February 10, 11:30 AM
Silver Hat Committee Meeting
WorkNet Board Room
- February 11, 9:00 AM
Legislative & PR Committee Meeting
WorkNet Board Room
- February 15**
Tarpon Springs One Stop Opening
St. Petersburg College—Tarpon
- February 23, 11:45 AM
Board Meeting
WorkNet Board Room
- March 2 - 5**
National Workforce Development
Board (NAWDB) Conference
Washington, DC
- March 10, 3:30 PM
Better Jobs/Better Wages
Committee Meeting
WorkNet Board Room
- March 16, 11:45 AM
Executive Board Meeting
WorkNet Board Room

DCF Pilot Project

WorkNet Pinellas continues to outreach and provide placement services to all "work ready" Department of Children & Families (DCF) applicants directly in the DCF lobbies of their various service sites. WorkNet began the partnership with the DCF local service centers in Pinellas County in June 2004. At the end of November, WorkNet expanded services to the new DCF Sebring location located at Mirror Lake in St Petersburg. The goal of the partnership is to provide information about WorkNet services, particularly placement services, to all customers applying for any type of DCF assistance if they are deemed work ready. WorkNet assesses the customer's barriers to employment and refers them to community-based resources when appropriate. In addition, registration and resume development assistance is also offered to work ready customers through the One Stop Management Information System. Appropriate job referrals are provided, linking applicants directly with job openings in Pinellas County.

Over 6,600 DCF applicants have been served since June 2004. 2,900 applicants applied for cash assistance or were on track to the Welfare Transition program, while 3,700 were applying for food stamps or medical coverage only. WorkNet continues to review and enhance the DCF Pilot project. Management from the Department of Children and Families and WorkNet's Intensive Services program meet once a month or more frequently as required to continue improvements. Customers appear to like the new services and recognize the WorkNet brand at each DCF office.



WorkNet Earns Program Income

WorkNet Pinellas received a **\$1,000.00** check from Wal-Mart during a gala open house ceremony January 24th celebrating Wal-Mart's new St. Petersburg store. Marti Wise, Community Coordinator for Wal-Mart, presented WorkNet with the commemorative check while Wal-Mart Store Manager, Mike Musumche, told those gathered "we could not have opened the store on time without the help of WorkNet who did an outstanding job in recruiting and referring quality candidates." "We've hired approximately 600 associates" stated Musumche, who personally thanked WorkNet's St. Petersburg One Stop Account Manager, James Martin, and his team of recruiters, Dave Langstaff, Matthew Losonczy and Mantina Pezos (all pictured above), for their superior customer service and quality referrals.



Home Depot Recruiting



"I wanted to let you know how appreciative we are for the time you have spent hosting the Home Depot job fairs on January 8th and 22nd. We have interviewed and are in the process of hiring 5 of the participants so far, just in my store. I have others from the 22nd that are set up for initial and/or final interviews this week. I expect we will be hiring many of them as well.... The ad that you placed for us enabled us to have 68 applicants which we were in dire need for. Thanks again for a very successful partnership. I am looking forward to doing it again soon. Please let me know if there is anything we can do to be of assistance to you."

Michele Cunningham
Human Resource Manager
Home Depot