

Partners for Progress
Business Education Committee Meeting

June 19, 2009

In Attendance: Steven Kew-Goodale, Weatherly Robotics Institute; Dawn Ferrante, CCEDC; Doug Makofka, Comcast; George Wells, Good Shepherd Work Services

Following the general membership meeting, the committee was asked to meet for the remaining 15 minutes. It was noted that Cyndi Zimmerman will be assuming the role of Committee Chair. Due to the limited time available, the members offered their brief thoughts on potential goals and activities upon which to focus. In summary these were:

Dawn is in the process of developing a forum for manufacturers which will afford them the opportunity to express their needs and ideas for improving the manufacturing base and capabilities in the County. She expressed an interest in involving the MRC and reps from LCCC along with others in this initiative.

Doug would like to see more emphasis on developing training in more skilled occupational areas. This would afford Carbon residents the opportunity to compete for higher paying jobs as well as improve the perception of the area and attract businesses and has many implications for improving the overall economic health and vitality of the region. Steven seconded this idea.

George would like to see an effort to create employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Steven felt a thrust of this should focus on educating employers to help them understand the cost-benefits/advantages of hiring a person with a disability vs. a non-disabled individual. Stacy Kyle, Director of the PA Business Leadership Network is looking to develop and fund activity based initiatives, such as mentoring day, internships, etc to facilitate employers overcoming fears related to stereotypes through hands on interactions. The goal is to have employers then sell their successes to other employers, which has been a very effective model. Stacy will be reaching out to the PFP and the Carbon Chamber for assistance as resources.

In closing, Steven emphasized the importance of this committee developing and implementing a solid action plan where members stay connected to measurable and attainable goals. We agreed we need to meet with Cyndi present to further crystallize our thoughts and related goals and actions.