

# YouthNews

A quarterly publication  
of the Youth Council  
of the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.



Luzerne/Schuylkill  
**WORKFORCE**  
Investment Board, Inc.

Volume 4 Issue 1

PA CareerLink® Wilkes-Barre is  
GED Test Site

## WIA Youth Success Stories

2

## Community Service

3

## Schuylkill County Career Fair

3

## Youth Services Providers

4

## YES Northeast

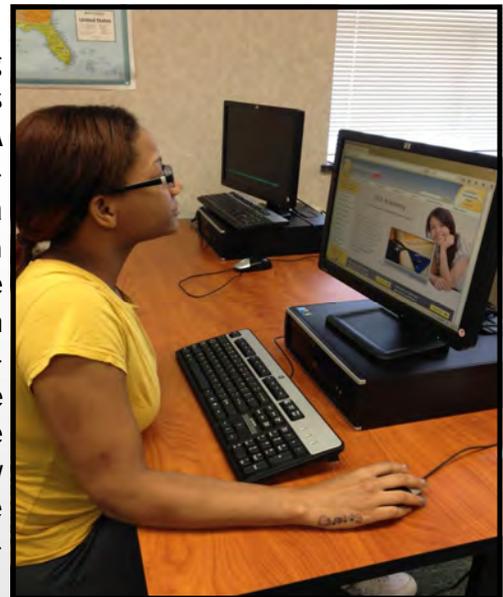
5

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In January 2014 *Pearson Vue* became the new and accepted test provider for GED (General Educational Development) in the Commonwealth of PA. Instead of taking the test with pencil and paper as in the past, individuals sitting for the exam are required to conduct their testing completely online.

In order to provide the testing service to youth and adults seeking to get their GED the PA CareerLink® Wilkes-Barre completed the process to become a certified testing center. Youth and adults in the region are now able to take the GED exam onsite. Currently the PA CareerLink® Wilkes-Barre is the only public test site in Luzerne County. In Schuylkill County the test site is located at the Schuylkill Intermediate Unit 29-Lifelong Learning Center .



*Airris Coleman , Out of school youth participant*

Even though the exam format has changed, participants in GED classes at all three of the PA CareerLinks® (Hazleton, Pottsville, Wilkes-Barre) have been very successful in obtaining their GED. Taking the four component exam completely online was an obstacle for many; however they persevered and were able to pass the exam and receive their credential.

## Youth Success Stories

Carrie Koval began classes at the PA CareerLink® Wilkes-Barre on April 16, 2014. She started, as most students do, with a little uncertainty, but she did have a plan. Carrie is very interested in finding a career in Human Services – specifically in the mental health / psychology field. Remarkably, Carrie possessed very high mathematical skills, and after a few weeks of Math preparation, was able to take the exam, and pass with ease. Somewhere in the middle of her preparation, she also managed to secure a job at Subway. She then set her sights on the other three exams. It only took her a few more weeks to prepare and on June 13, 2014 she successfully completed her GED exam.

Now, as a graduate, Carrie plans to utilize her hard-earned GED credential to land a job in the human services field and to enroll in college. Throughout her time in the program, Carrie posted an accumulated attendance rate of 92%. She was a model student. She continually displayed a strong work ethic along with a willingness to meet and work with new people. Carrie's GED instructor shared his thoughts on her character and desire to serve others. During instruction students learned about the importance of eating breakfast or lunch prior to taking a test. A few hours prior to the GED exam Carrie appeared with a bag full of snacks and drinks to share with her fellow test takers. She is an intelligent and thoughtful young woman, whom we expect to hear many great things about in the near future. Congratulations Carrie!

Bert Strickland is a no-nonsense kind of guy. His GED instructor tried very hard to make him laugh. With that said, Bert is also a very determined young man. Bert began classes on May 2014 (at the Wilkes-Barre PA CareerLink®), and immediately the instructor knew Bert was going to encounter very little trouble succeeding on the exam. For a while, he would barely offer a "hello" as he walked in the door and sat right down in his seat and got to work. Bert eventually started to turn around in his seat and join in class discussions, and often the class would find that he had some terrific insights and occasionally a few funny jokes.

***Continued on page 6***

## GED Students Reaching Out to Their Community at Pottsville PA CareerLink®

Students participating in the Out of School youth program in the PA CareerLink® Pottsville recently took on a Team Building project and chose to help those less fortunate in their community. Despite many of these young people having their own barriers, they identified the need to help others in the community and took action.



Youth program participants decided to help support CARE NET Pregnancy Center of Schuylkill County, which provides free and confidential educational services that empowers women in a crisis pregnancy.

*Pictured first row, l to r: Yovany Arias, Anthony Seiger, Dylan Jones, Tiffany Hauck (holding bottle), Mandy Jones, Dominic French*

The charitable plan they selected was to fill a baby bottle with extra change over a period of time. These young men and women collected \$16.15 to help support CARE NET. A charitable donation of any amount helps those in need and every penny collected was done with a desire to help others.

We applaud the generous efforts of these young people in their Team Building project and **thank them** for thinking of others!

## Schuylkill County Career Fair Is an Overwhelming Success

This year marked the 6th Annual Schuylkill County Career Fair held at Pottsville School District's Martz Hall. The annual event is sponsored by the Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturers and Employers Council.

The career fair was extremely successful with over 850 students from 10 high schools in attendance. The diversity of exhibitors was evident with over 50 booths that included those from business and industry, post-secondary education, the military, industry partnerships, and the PA CareerLink®.

Students had an interactive experience with exhibitors that helped them to consider their respective plans for the future and opportunities available to them in the region.

New this year were quality of life exhibits from the Visitors' Bureau, Conservation District, Schuylkill Parks and Recreation, Schuylkill Chamber and Walk In Art Center, to name a few.

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**For more information on youth programs go to:**

<http://www.lswib.org/Services/youth-programs.html>

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**Youth Council**

The Youth Council of the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (LSWIB) is required under Title I of the WIA. Youth Council provides expertise in youth policy for the local workforce investment board. Youth Council members represent a diverse population of stakeholders from the private sector in the two county region. Youth Council plans, develops, and oversees efforts related to education and preparation of young people for successful careers and life-long learning.

**Responsibilities of the Youth Council include:**

- Coordinating youth activities in the workforce region;
- Developing portions of the local plan related to eligible youth, as determined by the WIB;
- Recommending eligible youth service providers in accordance with the WIA, to be awarded grants or contracts on a competitive basis by the local board;
- Conducting oversight with respect to eligible providers of youth activities in the local area, subject to the approval of the WIB;
- Carrying out other duties, as authorized by the WIB such as establishing linkages with education agencies and other youth entities.

**Youth Council assists the local WIB in:**

- Planning local youth training policies;
- Enlarging the communities' view of the youth employment and training system;
- Working with organizations that serve the youth in the area;
- Looking at issues that could have an impact upon the success of youth in the labor market.

The Youth Council of the Luzerne Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board meets quarterly; February, May, August, and November, at various locations in the two county area.

## YES Northeast®

The YES Northeast® Workshop Series is offered to out of school youth participants in the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board region. The workshop series provides youth with numerous offerings that pertain to leadership, communications, personal development, health and safety, quality and technology, and teamwork. The Youth Council of the Luzerne Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board has promoted and adopted YES Northeast® in an effort to work with school districts to get the program into every district in Luzerne and Schuylkill counties.

For businesses who are considering supporting this effort to help ensure and develop the workforce of tomorrow, they have the added benefit of contributing through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC).

The Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturers and Employers Council (facilitator of YES Northeast®) has been named to the list of approved organizations under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC). The YES Northeast® Certificate Program has been named an innovative educational program under EITC.

The EITC Program was established by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to award tax credits to businesses that make contributions to an approved educational improvement organization.

Businesses decide which EITC-approved organization will receive their tax dollars rather than making the payment to the state. This is a great way to keep your tax dollars local and help the local business economy to remain strong. Essentially, your company would receive a large tax break by contributing to the YES Northeast® Program, which is currently being offered in Schuylkill, Luzerne and Erie counties. You decide where your tax dollars go!

A business must submit a one-page application in order to be eligible for this program. It is easy to apply and tax credits are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications must be re-submitted each year.

Approved businesses have two options:

- Two year agreement—90% credit up to a maximum of \$300,000 per year.
- One year agreement—75% credit up to a maximum of \$300,000.

Taxes Eligible:

- Corporate Net Income
- Capital Stock Franchise
- Bank & Trust Company Shares
- Title Insurance Companies Shares
- Insurance Premiums
- Mutual Thrift Institutions

Take advantage of this opportunity and in doing so, help support the YES Northeast® Program in Northeastern Pennsylvania. For more information on how the EITC Program can benefit your company, or for assistance in filling out the application, please call Courtney at 570-622-0940.

*Continued from page 2*

Bert began taking the battery of four tests at the end of May, and by June 13, 2014 he had successfully completed the GED exam. During his time in class, he posted a 90% attendance rate. Bert was also the top designer in an unsanctioned and unofficial (yet highly educational) paper airplane contest. Bert plans to attend Luzerne County Community College, and to someday have a "big house with a happy family." His instructor Jonathan Davies states, "I would say with a fair degree of certainty that I'm confident this wonderful, young man will, in fact, achieve these things with relative ease."

We wish Bert all the best in the future!

*"Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before  
which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish."*

*-John Quincy Adams*



**Luzerne/Schuylkill  
WORKFORCE  
Investment Board, Inc.**

**Youth Council**

**Luzerne Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.**

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