

## SW Washington Workforce Development Council News

June 2008

### New member joins SWWDC Board of Directors

Vancouver native Chuck Miller is the newest member of the SWWDC Board of Directors. He joined the 34 member board in May and is a member of the finance committee.

"I joined the board in order to give back to the community that I have lived in all my life," Chuck Miller said. "I also joined to learn more about workforce issues and the local economy."

For the past four years, Chuck has enjoyed a position with Bay Bank, a division of Cowlitz Bank. He has lent over \$70 million to the local business community for land development, home building, working capital and equipment financing. Previously, he was employed by Wells Fargo Bank.

Chuck graduated from Mountain View High School, Vancouver, WA and received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration/Management from Portland State University.

Chuck is an avid salmon fisherman and is an active member of the Coastal Conservation Association.

### Mentoring Advanced Programs for Students loses grant but continues to mentor AP students



*Jeff Vigil from Sharp Labs of America working with AP students to build a trebuchet, a kind of catapult.*

Mentoring Advanced Programs for Students (MAPS) recently lost a \$13.2 million grant that would have expanded Advanced Placement courses in math, science and English for high school students across Washington State. The grant was rescinded due to conflict around direct payments to AP teachers.

The loss of the NMSI grant is considered a tragedy by Scott Keeney, chairman of the board and founder of MAPS. "I believe this is an enormous loss to the young people in our state who would have benefited from the \$13.2 million. I firmly believe that enhancing rigorous classes is critical for the future competitiveness of Washington State. Unfortunately, we have lost a large opportunity for students and teachers," he said.

Despite the loss, MAPS will continue to provide mentors to AP teachers and students in Clark County. They currently have 30 mentors working with 28 teachers and nearly 200 students. Next year, MAPS will pilot a new program for AP students that provides monthly writing workshops hosted by local businesses. It is also recruiting mentors to work with calculus, chemistry, physics, economics, English, biology, environmental sciences, comparative government, US

### Increase in annual allocations means an increase in services for SW Washington residents and employers

After several years of steadily declining Workforce Investment Act (WIA) federal allocations, SWWDC received an increase this year of approximately \$469,000. Its total allocation is approximately \$5,250,000 for the coming year and makes up about 98 percent of SWWDC's budget. WIA funding supports SWWDC's broad array of services for youth, adults, and dislocated workers.

Funding levels change year to year based on a state's economic climate (unemployment, poverty, etc.) relative to the nation. The SWWDC saw an increase in funds due to the relatively high unemployment rate compared to the rest of the state and the growing population in Clark County.

SWWDC also experienced a "rescission" in this current year and had to give back \$179,000, all of which was taken from the

He is also a football lover and has held season tickets to the Seattle Seahawks for 17 years.

## **SWWDC recipient of funds to be raised at YPOV event in November**

The Young Professionals of Vancouver selected the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council's youth program as the recipient of funds to be raised at its first annual fundraiser.

The Reach for the Stars scholarship dinner and silent auction aims to raise \$10,000 to fund two college scholarships to low-income youth enrolled in the Youth Workforce Program which is funded by SWWDC and administered by Educational Service District 112. The scholarships are designed to provide assistance to Clark County youth who may not otherwise have adequate resources to attend college.

YPOV President Tina Vlachos said, "As young professionals and future business leaders of Southwest Washington, our organization is committed to continued growth and development of the Vancouver workforce. We see youth scholarships as a way to do this"

"The SWWDC is extremely honored to be the recipient of YPOV's 2008 fundraising efforts," said Kay Dalke, SWWDC Youth Council Chair. "These scholarships will open doors for two young people for whom college may not ever have seemed like a real

government and politics and statistics.

Anyone interested in learning more about MAPS, or in becoming involved contact Natalie Pacholl, Mentoring Coordinator at 360-718-1603 or [natalie.pacholl@apmentoring.org](mailto:natalie.pacholl@apmentoring.org).

## **Employer-based training provides more than 60 employees with new skills**

Early this year, the SWWDC contracted with Clark College to provide customized "train-the-trainer" training focused on teaching adult learning principles, multi-cultural awareness and training delivery skills.

To date, Clark College has conducted a total of fourteen hours of classroom training taken by more than 60 employees representing a variety of industries, from hospitality to semi-conductors, and a variety of occupations, from line operators to mid-level managers.

The training aims to strengthen the training delivery skills of local companies' employees and subject matter experts, all of whom have significant knowledge to impart but limited formal instructional expertise. These training skills are industry/job independent which will also enable the learner to use the skills throughout their career.

One training participant shared, "In my work I train lots of people who don't have English as their first language. I learned respectful, effective ways to make sure they understand what I have taught them (test for understanding). It makes our workplace safer and increases teamwork among employees."

The training was captured digitally and the content will be made available to the Vancouver and Kelso WorkSource offices via web stream for use in training job seekers.

"This project ushers in a new era in training capacity for Clark College enabling our region to enjoy more efficient, cost effective point-of-need employee training," said Jerry Petrick, SWWDC's Business and Industries Group Manager. "We are thrilled with the initial turnout and response from these trainings."

## **Ex-offender finds meaningful work through WorkSource**

Mandy relocated to Cowlitz County after fleeing a

SWWDC central budget without touching direct customer services.

"We feel extremely fortunate in comparison to other regions in the state which saw funding decreases," said Lisa Nisenfeld, Executive Director of SWWDC. "Due to our overall increase, funding levels for SWWDC service providers will be slightly enhanced for the coming year, resulting in more customers who receive services, participate in training and get jobs. This is especially important especially during these economic times."

## **WorkSource hosts "Hire-A-Vet" event**

WorkSource Vancouver is hosting its third annual Hire-A-Vet event. on **Saturday, June 14th at 10:00 a.m. at WorkSource Vancouver** to connect employers to qualified veterans. It also aims to honor local veterans, including those recently returning from war, and to pay tribute to veteran-friendly companies.

During the event veterans can visit with employers, submit resumes, and pick up job descriptions and applications. Job seekers can also ask questions of company representatives and discuss available positions.

At least 30 veteran-friendly employers will be present, representing government, transportation, law enforcement, security,

opportunity.”

The Reach for the Stars scholarship fundraiser will be held on Saturday, November 15, 2008 starting at 6:00 p.m. with a cocktail hour at the Downtown Vancouver Hilton. Tickets are \$50 a seat and may be purchased by contacting Tina Vlachos at (360) 241-3721.

domestic violence situation. She had no job and no income. The state provided housing assistance and referred her to WorkSource Cowlitz for job assistance.

As a recovering addict with little job experience, and a prison record against her, Mandy was assigned to the “Community Jobs” program offered at WorkSource. In the program, Mandy worked on an individual development plan, participated in training classes and job search activities, created a resume and even did some part time work to gain experience.

Donna an Account Representative from WorkSource’s Business Services Unit came across Mandy’s resume from the Community Jobs program and decided to pass it on to Ken Standing, the Vice President of Operations at Silicon and Solar, a high-tech silicon firm. He had previously hired two WorkSource clients and mentioned that he prefers to hire single moms or others who need a break.

Mandy was interested in the job at Silicon and Solar but was nervous about interviewing. She wasn’t sure how to explain her past and wasn’t sure anyone would give her work because of her prison record. Knowing this, Donna facilitated a practice interview session with Mandy. WorkSource also helped provide new clothing for the interview.

Though Mandy did not have the minimum requirements needed for a job at Silicon and Solar, Ken was still interested in hiring her after her interview. “I could see Mandy was a person who wanted to make something of herself,” he said. “All she needed was a chance and that’s something we could give to her.”

“I never thought things would get better for me,” Mandy said of that time in her life. And, while things are not “perfect” according to Mandy, they are getting much better. Today, Mandy is still working for Silicon & Solar, LLC and earning \$12.50 an hour. “I have a great job, earn above minimum wage, and support myself and my children. WorkSource gave me the skills I needed to interview and get where I am. Silicon and Solar gave me the opportunity.”

construction, production/assembly and healthcare, among others. Apprenticeship and other training programs will be on site to answer questions. Veterans should bring their resumes and be ready to interview.

Visit [www.go2worksource.com](http://www.go2worksource.com) for more details. Admission is free and open to the public.

[www.swwdc.org](http://www.swwdc.org)

[info@swwdc.org](mailto:info@swwdc.org) • Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council