



**WAKE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
WAKE AREA BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

ANNUAL REPORT
FY 07/08

The mission of the Wake Area Business Advisory Council is to develop and promote employment opportunities and resources for participants of Wake County's employment and training programs through partnering with area businesses.

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I. Overview

Mission

In 1997, the Wake Area Business Advisory Council (BAC) was created through a partnership with Wake County Human Services (WCHS) and private sector representatives. The BAC's mission is to develop and promote employment opportunities and resources for participants of Wake County employment and training programs through partnering with area businesses.

The BAC promotes employment as a means to economic self-sufficiency and personal responsibility. Membership in the BAC is comprised of local businesses and representatives from various employment and training programs within and outside Wake County Human Services.

Members enjoy many benefits:

- Access to a diverse, often untapped pool of potential employees
- An opportunity to network with other business representatives
- Education regarding services available through local, state, and federal governments
- A forum for business representatives to identify workforce needs and solutions
- An opportunity to contribute to those in the community through outreach such as job skills workshops.

Membership meetings are held the fourth Thursday of every month (except for the months of July, November and December) at 9:00 am. The BAC Executive Committee meets for annual goal setting in either July or August. The November and December meetings are combined and held the first week in December. This meeting serves as an Open House and membership drive. Each month, guest speakers are invited to speak with the membership on various employment and training issues including employment resources, legal updates and professional development topics.

The BAC is a part of Vocational Services, a division of Wake County Human Services, and is staffed by this division's Workforce Development Coordinator. Financial support for the BAC includes membership fees and Wake County general funds.

Membership

The BAC enjoys a membership comprised of private and public sector representatives from a variety of organizations and businesses. Members are actively involved in projects sponsored by the BAC and most consistently attend monthly meetings.

Annual membership fees are \$50.00. These fees are used to promote programs and activities sponsored by the BAC such as job fairs and workshops. Expenses include such items as printing (brochures; flyers), refreshments for vendors and participants, achievement awards, facility rental and other administrative costs.

Membership fees are due by July 31st of each year. Prospective members may attend three meetings prior to paying fees. For those joining after December, membership fees are prorated. The special "3-years for the price of 2" was continued and continues to be a popular choice for many members.

The following is a list of BAC members for FY 07/08 (bold denotes new member):

ACC Staffing

Adecco Employment

Applied Research Associates, Inc.

Career Pro of NC, Inc.

Clothing with a Purpose

Community Partnerships, Inc.

ECPI College of Technology

Express Employment Professionals

Family Resource Center

Gregory Poole

Luihn Food Systems

Marriott Employment Center

McLaurin Parking

NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

NC Division of Services for the Blind

NC Governor's Rapid Response Team

NC State University - HR - UTS

Prism Publishing/Carolina Job Finder

Raleigh Lion's Clinic for the Blind

Raleigh-Wake Human Resource

Management Association

Rescare, Inc. Community Alternatives-NC

Resource Accounting

Sento Corporation

Smith Debnam

the Human approach

Tradesmen International

United Energy

Unlocked Potential

Wake County Economic Development

Wake Technical Community College

Waste Industries

WCHS: JobLink Career Center at

Swinburne

WCHS: Northern Regional Center

WCHS: Supportive Employment Program

WCHS: Vocational Services - Workforce

Development Team

WCHS: Work First Program

Meeting Attendance

BAC meeting attendance averaged 25 attendees per meeting with over 83% representing business and community agencies.

II. Highlights

Committees

During the program year, BAC members carry out their work through committees including: Job Skills Workshops, Marketing and Membership, and Program. Committees conduct meetings and communication via e-mail or phone for planning purposes (depending on projects, deadlines, etc.) and chairs report their progress at monthly BAC meetings. The following is a brief explanation of each committee:

- Job Skills Workshops Committee – Initially this committee was responsible for organizing and presenting monthly workshops on a variety of topics at the Wake County Human Services Center–Swinburne. However, in 2007-2008 the mission and structure was changed to a more customer-driven approach. BAC members will respond to requests for speakers received through the JobLink Career Center speaker request process. Through partnering with the JobLink, the BAC is able to provide additional expertise and resources to support outreach efforts. The BAC provided speakers for two series of workshops offered through the Wake County Library – one at Cameron Village and one at the West Regional branch – including:
 - Job Search in the Triangle
 - Interviews
 - Resumes
 - Employer PanelThe BAC offered four workshops to support employment and job counselors, through a “Train-the-trainer” approach, including:
 - Interviews (Pam Higdon)
 - Job Search Strategies for Ex-Offenders (Janny Flynt)
 - Employment after the Military (Ann Conde)
 - Difficult Conversations (Kistina Freeman)
- Marketing and Membership Committee – The function of this committee is to develop strategies and tools for publicizing the BAC and to make private sector employers aware of the benefits of membership on the Council. This committee sponsors an annual Open House event. Additionally, this committee represents the Council at the Capital Area JobLink Career Fair and the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce Business Expo.

Through contacting new members and guest attendees to obtain feedback, the following BAC meeting enhancements were recommended and adopted:

- Created small group brainstorming/problem sessions during the meetings
- Developed a BAC informational business card to promote the BAC to prospective members
- Continued having a guest speaker for most monthly meetings

- Current members personally met with and invited new members to join the BAC
- Program Committee – This committee is responsible for scheduling guest speakers to conduct brief informational training sessions for the BAC. These sessions are scheduled for each monthly meeting and cover a variety of employment-related topics. The purpose of the sessions is to provide the members with opportunities to increase their knowledge and skill base as this relates to employment and training issues or to offer professional development for members. Each fall, this committee surveys the membership, requesting feedback on desired areas/topics of interest for training. Guest speakers covered the following topics:
 - Networking in the South
 - Business Panel (Fidelity Investments, Network Appliance and Butterball LLC)
 - Earned Income Tax Credit and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance
 - Wake Forest: Emerging Industries, Resources and Employment Outlook
 - Organizational Development (Creating WE: Change I-Thinking to We-Thinking and Build a Healthy Thriving Organization)
 - Legal Update on Interviewing (Dr. Davis, Associate Dean, NCSU)
 - 10-Yr Homeless Plan (Mutual Benefit-A Practical Approach to Hiring for Your Company and Your Community)
 - Interagency Employment Network (Capital Area Disability Program Navigator)

Business Days and JobLink Website

Each month at the Wake JobLink Career Center--Swinburne, employers are given an opportunity to conduct Business Days (on-site recruitment) to screen and/or select qualified candidates to fill their job vacancies.

Business and Organizations also have the opportunity to present “Information Sessions” which are group sessions providing employment related business overviews, educational topics or community resources.

During the program year, over 1000 job seekers attended 88 Business Days/Information Sessions. Twelve (12) of these were hosted by BAC members.

BAC members announced and shared 313 job leads during monthly BAC meetings and/or via the JobLink website (www.joblinkcc.com)

Business Expos/Job Fairs

The BAC and JobLink shared a booth at the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce Small Business Expo where benefits and services of the BAC and JobLink were shared with small and large business attendees.

BAC members continued to be active participants in bi-annual Capital Area JobLink Career Fairs held each fall and spring. These events averaged over 500 job seekers and featured over 50 business booths.

Business Advisory Council *Awards of Excellence Luncheon*

On November 1, 2007 the BAC was pleased to host the fourth annual *Awards of Excellence Luncheon* at the McKimmon Center. The purpose of the event was to recognize and honor excellence in workforce development. The event also served as a “signature project” for the BAC, offering an ideal opportunity to present the BAC to business colleagues and others who might have an interest in becoming involved with the Council.

BAC Chair, Robin Mathes, opened the Luncheon. Wake County Deputy Manager, Joe Durham provided welcoming remarks and encouraged business leaders who were not already involved with the BAC to consider joining. Following a delicious lunch was a special presentation by Ira David Wood, Founder and Executive Director, Theatre in the Park. Wake County Board of Commissioner Chair, Tony Gurley, presented the awards. Wake County Human Services Director, Ramon Rojano, provided closing remarks.

Nominations for the awards were solicited from the following programs:

- Community Partnerships, Inc.
- NC Division of Services for the Blind
- NC division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- NC Employment Security Commission
- JobLink Career Center – Swinburne
- Wake County Homeless Services
- Wake County PRO-Familia
- Wake County Work First – TANF
- Wake County Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- Wake County Working for Kids
- Wake Technical Community College

BAC members voted on the award nominations and made final selections.

Handsome engraved awards were presented in the following categories:

- Outstanding Employee—Ray Riordan (JobLink – Core Staff)
- Outstanding Partnership— Soroptimist International of Raleigh-Professional Clothing Closet
- Outstanding Businesses
 - Express Personnel (BAC Member)
 - Sento Corporation
- Outstanding Participants
 - Lychele Wilson (Workforce Investment Act)
 - Donald Pulley (Working for Kids)

Certificates of Merit were also awarded in each of the categories to persons who had received the second highest number of votes.

One hundred and twenty-five (125) BAC members, award winners and their guests, and staff representing employment and training programs attended the Luncheon. The response to the event was overwhelmingly positive and plans for the sixth annual event are already underway.

Communication

Job leads, workshops, Information Sessions and other events were promoted to the community, job seekers, employees, job/employment counselors, human resource professionals and other individuals. The full distribution represented over 700 individuals.

During the year, the email system "Constant Contact" became an available option for communication by Wake County Departments. Through this hi-tech email solution, email contacts were managed and professionally formatted emails were developed and distributed. This included 26 email communications that listed 657 job leads and other events.

BAC Leadership

The BAC is lead by community volunteers who provide their expertise and their time to contribute to the ongoing success of the BAC. The BAC could not achieve the results without the dedicated and skilled leadership found in the BAC Leadership Team.

BAC Officers for 2007-2008

Robin Mathes, NC Rescare/Community Alternatives - Chair

Kistina Freeman, McLaurin Parking Company - Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect

Christine Harrington, NC Division of Services for the Blind - Past-Chair

Committee Chairs for 2007-2008

Trina Simpson, Community Partnerships, Inc. – Job Skills Workshops

Victor Sanchez, Tradesmen International - Membership & Marketing

John O'Connor, Career Pro, NC – Programs