

Region 2 Economic Development Meeting

Panel Discussion Notes

Rope Roberts, Community and Economic Development Regional Manager served as the Panel Moderator

Panel Members:

Georgia Apartment Industry Education Foundation. **Tracy Bowers, Managing Director**
Matrix Residential for Pollack Shores Real Estate Group

Georgia Apartment Industry Education Foundation **John Daniell, Vice President of Sales**
Chatwell Supply

Business and Industry Representative **Janet Lowrey, Senior Human Resource Manager**
Kubota Manufacturing of America Corporation

Business and Industry Representative **Jeff Gooch, Co-Owner**
Cleveland Tool & Design

Chamber of Commerce Representative **James McCoy, President**
Cumming-Forsyth Chamber of Commerce

Post-Secondary Representative **Rose Procter, Director**
BB&T Center for Ethical Business Leadership

General Questions

1. Are your Labor Force needs being met?

- a. Janet Lowrey- Manufacturing needs – two major challenges – semi skilled labor – welding, mechanical, machinists, etc. She is HR for Kubota in Hall County – workforce harder to find with lowest unemployment rate
- b. Basic Skills
 - i. Younger workforce don't have the skill sets and soft skills
- c. Tracey Bowers – Pollack group
 - i. 13,000 units – 50 properties Management, building and renovating properties
 1. Not necessary to have college degree – grounds, housekeeper and train up
 2. On the job training
 3. Needs trades taught HVAC, plumbing, electrical already taught in high school
 4. Soft skills – leadership and communication that could be taught in high school – like people and like to sell
- d. Jeff Gooch – Manufacturing - Cleveland Tool and Design Business owner – 24 employees – machinists, work-force needs are being met but challenges
 1. Not enough – TCSG works with us – needs for employees
 2. Employed before they graduate from technical college
 3. Skilled employees – why he is here to tell how important manufacturing jobs are –
- e. John Daniell – Chatwell Supply – Tampa FL – based
 - i. Growth in multi-family – explosion with new and renovated buildings
 - ii. Supply to multi-family – need drivers, warehousing, customer service, admin

- iii. Entry level – wonderful right out of high school – willing to learn and promote from within
- iv. Looking for potential and talented individuals

2. What is the biggest hiring issue?

- a. James McCoy– soft skills – critical thinking skills, problem solving skills
 - i. Education level is irrelevant – rather the maturity level – high school or college level
 - ii. Retention problem – employability skills – 2000 employees and turn over. 65% was attendance related. What does it mean to come to work every day – WBL and Goodwill – 17 years old welding student about coming to work
 - iii. 17 year old welder “3-7 Monday through Friday – student volunteered to be there on Saturday, but he didn’t show up. I woke up and it was 1:00 pm and why bother to come in.” Another team member had to be pulled in – but now he is making an effort to be better after he realized what it mean.
 - iv. Hire for attitude and work ethic – they can teach the skills – with a good work ethic. Frustrating managing this Gen X and Gen Y students. Merge the generations and encouraging efforts in order to be promoted.
- b. John Daniell – GAIEF – low hourly position in sales – need to look people in the eye – his wife said that otherwise they will starve to death. Communication and connectivity during dialog with others. Hard to do if students don’t look people in the eye.
- c. Jeff Gooch – small business owner – multi-tasks are necessary – wear different hats – soft skills are so necessary – teams and less supervision. Identify problems and communicate and be a team player.
- d. Rose Procter - BB&T Ethical leadership- soft skills lacking – not sure why we call them soft skills??? Harder to learn than skill sets. Bus Advisory councils – work directly with High schools and colleges. Why was it difficult to interview – lack of confidence – but hard to define integrity for a 22 year old. Defining what trust and honesty actually mean.

3. How do you partner with education?

- a. Rose Procter - CTAE classes – what has been done? BB&T – developed business education soft skills. Experiencing not just learning. Business Ethics – expose to college students and staff – organizational ethics, professionalism. Workshops of 150 students. Bring in from different schools Decision making, values, personal branding – social media. Interviews and what is out on the internet –
 - i. Business Ethics experience – let them Hall County piloted and Forsyth. Allowing students to go into businesses and see scenarios – ethical decisions – what would you do – what would be the right thing?
 - ii. After that – come together and present and defend a live business panel
 - iii. Student leaders in HS come together with College leaders – GDOL BEST programs – 160 schools in the state
- b. Janet Lowrey - Kubota - Partnering with WBL and apprenticeship – first three team members were hired after an apprenticeship. 30 days in Kubota – Goodwill paid then during 30 days – 3 were hired full time.

- i. CTAE partner schools – 9 different counties – welding classes – trying to get students ready but worked into more! Understanding benefits – total compensation – retirement benefits Educating – why you shouldn’t leave a job for a couple of dollars as the benefits are important.
- ii. Message to parents – that manufacturing is not dirty and no job security. Instilling that students would be working in a clean environment with robotics. 1.2 million square footage at Kubota 27 additional jobs will need to be filled who are currently in middle school
- c. James McCoy - Partnership between Siemens and South Forsyth HS – great partnership with CTAE. In Germany – I can tell you who in the 6th grade will be coming to work with Siemens. Learning both in school and on site about all of the job opportunities in Siemens. Big picture 20-30 years down the line. Business needs to think about the German model – identify those students in middle and high school
 - i. Technical College – is only for those who can’t make regular college. Tail wagging the dog – liberal arts is not where the long term economic jobs are available. Disservice when we tell students that has to go to college.
 - ii. German model – introduce early on about the possibilities – internship and apprenticeships. Learn how to manage products – turns in people
- d. Jeff Gooch – apprenticeship model N GA Technical College – business owner and employer – finding skilled people is difficult. Employment ads, DOL 1 out of 30 applicants are acceptable. Contacted the technical college and explained options – CNC 2 year program – after a year exposed to the field – and would be able to work with dangerous equipment and they knew what they would be facing. Offered those students who were there a year – were hired for the mornings to work and then allow them to go to school in the afternoon. “Try it before you buy it.” Soft skills available were evident strong and weak points. 2nd year in school and many are hired full time. Not just about hourly wage – sell the benefits – MOST SUCCESSFUL METHOD OF FINDING EMPLOYEES
 - i. Work with high school job shadowing – no awareness of what all there are available in manufacturing. Asst. principal White County – to come in – waiting too late in 9th grade. Introducing manufacturing options – strengths and weaknesses earlier than 9th grade. Exposing students to opportunities available – not just Plan B Technical College – but Plan A Technical College
 - ii. Three (3) groups – students, parents, administrators and counselors
 - iii. How can businesses help – industrial and commercial businesses pay taxes – pays teacher salaries. Real Estate 60% of tax digest goes to the school system FUNDING THE SCHOOLS AND THE SCHOOLS PROVIDE THE WORKFORCE
 - iv. Out of 10 students that start school, only 8 of the 10 will graduate. Three (3) will have postsecondary education. So – five (5) are the missing students – we need to be educating who will probably go straight into the workforce.
 - v. Start early in 6th grade – Technical College average age is 27

4. What can schools do to address the business and industry needs?

- a. Tracey Bowers- Apt Industry – no one grows up wanting to managing apartments. Make sure there are apt industry careers – by accident – educate parents and students that there are great careers in less glamorous careers.
- b. James McCoy – Apt Industry – live in apt. industry – social activities but disconnect with wanting that type of career Education and multi-family environment
- c. Janet Lowrey - Kubota – speaking to schools – seems to mean more when it comes from business and industry rep – rather than the teacher or parents. Last spring – instructor one minute before class to lock students out if tardy. Then unlock and the message of being on time – meant what to Kubota employer.
- d. Janet Lowrey - Kubota - Invite business and industry to come talk to the classes – would it be better to speak to larger or smaller groups? Kubota said smaller allows questions
 - i. Chamber of Commerce – 16 years never asked them to partner with education – never said NO – always YES – Educators – shouldn't be hesitant to ask bus. reps to communicate specific things.
 - ii. Hardest jobs to fill – both for hourly and salaried
 - iii. Engineers – UGA, Kennesaw, Clemson – but need engineers in middle years – get new and have retirement age– Currently need a Bilingual purchasing analyst and have been looking for this position for quite a while.
- e. Tracey Bowers – Apt. Industry - maintenance positions
 - i. Chamber of Commerce – engineering
 - ii. Jeff Gooch – 2 year associate's degree with 5-10 years' experience would be the most desirable hiring category, but is very hard to fill

Matthew Gambill – Asked question from the audience. How can we encourage school boards and superintendents to own this part of the process – rather than college only – to move past feeling that CTAE/Economic Development/workforce development is “not part of their jobs”

James McCoy - Chamber of Commerce – responded that we need to stand up and give school systems the ability to do that SIEMENS partnership and South Forsyth HS

- f. Need to highlight and giving administrators support – business stay quiet, but need to be louder and provide what is really demanded by the real world.
- g. Liaison – Chamber of Commerce – pay scales for 4 year Bachelors and 2 year Associates degree are not too different. Most school systems are very receptive to partnering with businesses. Political and REAL??
- h. Public perception – Businesses can tell the story and lead in a perception change. In the political arena, also.