

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**PROJECT HIRE JOB EXPO CONNECTS 800+ UNEMPLOYED RESIDENTS
WITH DOZENS OF LOCAL COMPANIES THAT ARE HIRING**

More than 800 County residents connected with dozens of hiring local employers at the Project Hire Job Expo held today at Veterans Memorial. This free job expo was the result of collaboration among the Franklin County Commissioners, Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services (FCDJFS) and the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC), and was held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Veterans Memorial.

“A focus of my term as board president this year is to connect the businesses in our community that have jobs available with the people that have been out of work, or have other barriers to gaining employment,” said Commission President Marilyn Brown. “This job expo was a positive start to the important work we have before us in making a better way for our residents that are still struggling.”

While the unemployment rate in Franklin County stands at 5.4-percent, many residents are still struggling to recover from the recession. Additionally, 3,000 county residents have recently lost or will lose their Emergency Unemployment Compensation benefit as a result of the program’s expiration on December 28, 2013.

“Our neighbors, friends, husbands, sisters, and cousins comprise the ranks of about 3,300 unemployed who have lost unemployment benefits recently,” said Commissioner Paula Brooks. Working together, we are providing access to good jobs which are readily available here in Franklin County. I am proud of this great public/private effort to get people the good jobs needed to support their families.”

Employers were recruiting qualified candidates for a variety of jobs at all skill levels, including interpreter positions paying \$16.25 an hour, as well as positions at a local call center with a starting rate of pay of \$14.00 an hour, plus commission.

“It is nearly impossible to live on the current minimum wage,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “I’m glad we were able to help connect people with reputable companies so they may strengthen their skill set and secure their place in the workforce.”

Companies present included Alliance Data, American Electric Power, FedEx Ground, Home Depot, Limited Brands, Teleperformance, Verizon Wireless, among others.

“Our corporate community really stepped,” said Suzanne Coleman-Tolbert, President and CEO of COWIC. “We had a fantastic turnout of employers, and we hope this is the beginning of something that continues.”

“This was a great one-day event,” said Anthony Trotman, Director of FCDJFS. “But our work doesn’t stop when a job fair is over. Tomorrow we will be hard at work connecting our unemployed residents with employers that are hiring, and providing job training to those that need it.”

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