



Cullman Area Workforce Solutions



**A voluntary partnership dedicated to
Workforce Development in the
Cullman Area**

www.cullmancareers.com



Cullman Area Workforce Solutions (CAWS) began in the fall of 2006 as a partnership between business/industry, economic development, industrial relations, education and social services in an effort to enhance and improve workforce development outcomes in meeting the employment needs of the Cullman area.

Mission Statement:

Cullman area citizens committed to the development of a strong, qualified workforce to meet the current and future employment needs of our community.

Current Partners:

- **Business / Industry Partners:**
 - American Proteins
 - Axsys Technologies
 - Cullman Electric Cooperative
 - Cullman Power Board
 - Cullman Regional Medical Center
 - Louisiana Pacific
 - McGriff Industries
 - Rehau
 - Topre America
 - Wal-Mart Distribution

- **Community / Government Partners:**
 - Alabama Career Center System
 - Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce
 - Cullman County Economic Development
 - Cullman Economic Development Agency

- **Education Partners:**
 - Cullman City Schools
 - Cullman County Schools
 - Wallace State Community College

Focus Areas / Identified Projects:

1. The **Educator Focus Group** targets Educators, Counselors and other personnel in the K-12 school systems (both city and county) to help them understand the value of all career paths and give them opportunities to link what they teach in the classroom to practical applications in the work place.

Identified Projects:

- **Educator Exchange Program.** Area educators work for two weeks during the summer at a local industry. The purpose of the program is to help educators gain an understanding of the workplace outside of the educational arena as it relates to the knowledge and skills taught through the school curriculum and the further educational/learning requirements of the varied careers involved in business and industry. Teachers are required to keep daily logs and



submit 2 Lesson Plans based on their working experiences and how they relate to the classroom. **Cullman Employment Agency** is a Supporting Partner for this program.

- **Speaker's Bureau.** Established a Speaker's Bureau provides Educators with a source of personal contacts to assist them in communicating "real-life" career information to their students. Provides a network of individuals ready to come to a classroom and speak on a given topic.

2. The **Student Focus Group** works with area students to make them aware of career opportunities available to them in our area. This group has also identified opportunities to educate students about real life situations to help them be better prepared to enter the workforce and make sound life choice decisions. Programs will be put in place for all Cullman area students (city and county) in grades 8 thru 12.

Identified Projects:

- **9th Grade "Keeping it Real" Program** – Gives area 9th graders "real-world experience" in paying household bill and making financial decisions for their "mock" family. Students are assigned a family, job and income. During the exercise they visit 12 booths where they purchase everything from groceries to daycare. Students learn the value of budgeting and making sound decisions when faced with unexpected expenses.
- **High School Career Fairs** – Gives High School students the opportunity to network with representatives from the business community. Vendors participate

by setting up booths and sharing their career expertise with students. The business volunteers talk to students about college and job opportunities at their company as well as co-op opportunities and internships. Students will be given a Career Resource Guide that includes area opportunities for employment.

- **Other Programs** specifically targeted for Grades 8, 10, 11 & 12 have been identified and will be put in place when resources become available.

3. The **Employer Focus Group** will work with area business and industry to assist with any workforce development needs. This may involve worker skill gaps and helping to identify training resources to fill those gaps, targeting funding available for training and skill enhancement, and assistance with doing “whatever it takes” to provide them with a fully qualified workforce to meet their employment needs.

Identified Projects:

- **Resource and Training Manual.** Developed and published a comprehensive training and resource manual to give businesses and citizens of Cullman a booklet that contains all of the resources available regarding training, education, assistance, programs, etc. regarding employment in the area.
- **Apprenticeship / Training Programs.** Assisting industries in setting up job specific apprenticeship and/or training programs. Coordinating the efforts of the various entities that work together in the development of such programs (AIDT, DOL, ATN, Wallace State, etc.) and identifying resources available to help with the cost of implementation.

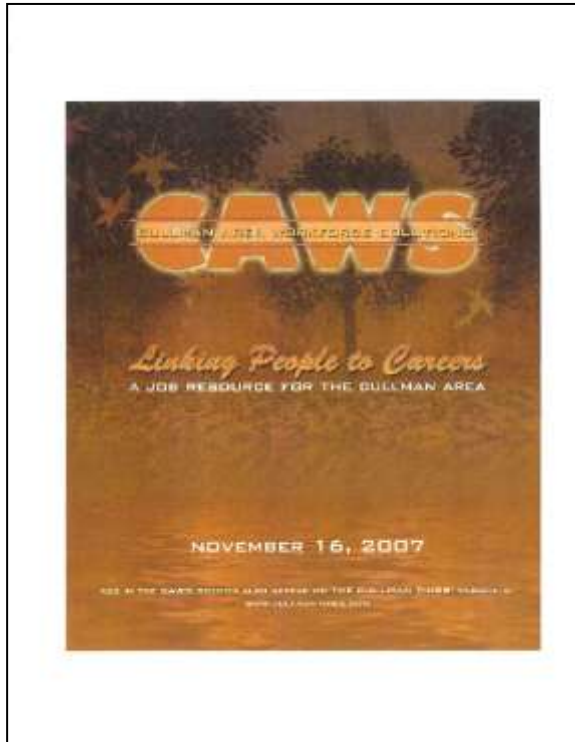
4. The **Under-Employed / Dislocated Worker Focus Group** will target those individuals who may be currently working in low paying jobs because they don’t have the skills needed to qualify for a better position and workers who may be affected by business closings. This group will also address the large number of Cullman County citizens who commute outside the area to work.

Identified Projects:

- **CAWS Cullman Area Career Awareness Expo.** Sponsor and coordinate an annual career expo for the citizens of the Cullman area so that they can become knowledgeable about the variety of business/industry located in our community and the career options available to them. Target anyone interested in job opportunities in the Cullman area (students, parents, educators, commuters, under-employed, dislocated workers, etc.)



5. The **Marketing / PR Focus Group** is responsible for developing methods of communication, informing the public of the CAWS partnership and targeting different promotional campaigns.



Identified Projects:

- **Supplement to the Cullman Times.** Quarterly publication dedicated to educating Cullman area citizens regarding employment opportunities in our area (and what it takes to qualify for those jobs).
- **Dedicated Website.** Developing a website to coordinate all aspects of the CAWS effort. www.cullmancareers.com is currently under development.
- **Numerous Marketing Campaigns;** including highway billboards, informational screensavers on high school computers, newspaper articles, TV/Radio spots, kiosks set

up in area gathering places (shopping areas, movie theaters, restaurants, etc.), posters, flyers, informational pamphlets, etc.

6. The **Income Development / Funding Focus Group** will work on identifying resources available to enable the CAWS group to fund current and future projects. This group will work toward assuring that the CAWS effort is sustainable by having resources needed for success.

Identified Projects:

- **Funding from Wallace State DOL Grant.** Used to help fund the 2007 Educator Exchange Program.
- **Funding from State of Alabama.** This money has been earmarked for the 2008 Educator Exchange Program.
- **Funding from State of Alabama.** Donated to the Cullman Area Career Center (Vocational School) for technical program upgrades.
- **Funding from State of Alabama (Rural Initiative Program).** To be used for current and future programs.



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