Clayton County Archway Partnership

Clayton County Aims to be a “Work Ready” Community
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In 2008, the Clayton County Department of Economic Development and the Clayton County Archway Partnership collaborated to create a Clayton Work Ready Team to begin the process of certifying Clayton County as a Georgia Work Ready Community.

The Georgia Work Ready program is an innovative strategy instated by the Governor’s Office of Workforce Development to improve job training and the marketability of Georgia’s work force, and drive future economic growth for the state. Created in 2006, the initiative works within communities across the state to help bolster a more effective and thriving local sector of labor and employment. Through the program, job seekers are given a skills assessment test and offered certification that can then properly match individuals to an appropriate workplace.

“By identifying both the needs of businesses and the available skills of Clayton County’s work force, the state can more effectively generate the right talent for the right jobs,” said Gail Webb, the Clayton County Archway Professional.

In their effort to attract new industries to Clayton County, the Department of Economic Development has been striving to identify programs that would address workforce development. The Georgia Work Ready program provided an excellent opportunity to increase the skills of Clayton County citizens and provide another valuable resource for Clayton County businesses.

Primarily, the Georgia Work Ready initiative profiles employment for white-collar professional jobs as well as employment in fields such as manufacturing, healthcare, customer service, law enforcement and hospitality. Since its inception, more than 10,000 unique job titles have been profiled through the program statewide.

Governor Purdue has consistently stressed the importance of workforce development for the fostering of healthy, productive communities. “We need a workforce development system that links workforce development and education together and aligns to the economic needs of the state, its regions and local communities,” Purdue stated in a presentation about the Georgia Work Ready campaign.

To highlight the achievements the program has brought to their community, the Clayton County Work Ready Week was held in November 2009, which included many ribbon-cutting ceremonies and community-wide celebrations led by invested business leaders and community officials.

The Clayton Work Ready Team includes representatives from Clayton County Government, Clayton County Public Schools, Georgia Power, Clayton Municipalities, Clayton Career Resource Center, Clayton State University and Clayton Department of Labor. Randall Toussaint of the Clayton County Department of Economic Development, serves as the Georgia Work Ready team leader for the county.

Advancing Community Priorities: The leaders and stakeholders in Clayton County understand the need for developing a skilled workforce and offering employers an opportunity to more effectively fill vacant positions. In December 2008, the Clayton Archway Partnership established Georgia Work Ready as a priority and gave their full support in establishing Clayton County as a Georgia Work Ready community.