

## Economic Growth Region 11

**Serving Dubois, Gibson, Knox, Perry, Posey, Pike, Spencer, Vanderburgh and Warrick Counties**

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### THE GREAT EMPLOYMENT SHIFT

The September jobs report released last month by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics showed a slight decline in the unemployment rate. The figure dropped from 7.3 % in August to 7.2% in September, the lowest since November 2008. At the same time, the labor force participation rate remained flat at 63.2%, which is the lowest two-month level since 1978.

In a national television appearance, Bob Funk, CEO and chairman of the board for Express Employment Professionals, offered some in depth analysis of the unemployment figures, and speculated that while the drop in the unemployment rate is welcome; it is hiding the real problem in the economy. And that underlying challenge is that too many people have quit looking for work.

"Our nation needs people who want to enter the workforce; it's not healthy when so many people have left the workforce," Funk said. When the report shows the total of number of people looking for jobs is stuck at 1970 levels, the economy is weaker than it appears and it's an ongoing tragedy that so many individuals have given up their search for employment,

Funk continued. Funk refers to the declining workforce challenge as "the great shift," which he contends predates the recent financial crisis. If the decline could be blamed largely on the aging workforce, it would be much less worrisome, but the initial wave of baby-boomer retirements plays only a small role in the drop, he believes. The labor force participation rate has fallen almost as sharply for people aged 25 to 54 as it has for the overall adult population.

While the slow growth in educational attainment in recent decades and the weak economic growth of the past 13 years are contributing factors, businesses can't wait for changes in the education system or the economy to help improve workforce readiness. With the threat of the Baby Boomer generation retiring, those boomers will create a Retirement Boom. Companies of all sizes will have to continue to find ways to train inexperienced employees to make up for the experience leaving their workforce. All factors considered, Funk notes, the decline in labor force participation certainly deserves more attention.

Governor Mike Pence has announced the Chairs and members of the Indiana Regional Works Councils. The Indiana Regional Works Councils were created with the unanimous passage of SEA 465, which the Governor signed into law on April 15, 2013. The legislation specifies each Council will bring educators and employers together to evaluate and develop career and technical education that meets the demands of employers in each region. Each Council is responsible for preparing and submitting a comprehensive evaluation of the available career, technical and vocational education opportunities for high school students in its region to the Governor and the Education Roundtable by November 1, 2013.

"Our administration remains committed to making career and vocational education a priority in every high school in Indiana," said the Governor. "I welcome the individuals named today to the Indiana Regional Works Councils, a key initiative in making this goal a reality. The caliber, leadership, and breadth of experience of the members, as well as the great Hoosier companies they represent speaks volumes about the interest, passion and tremendous need for increased collaboration among busi-

ness and education in order to best prepare Hoosiers for the demands of the workforce and to place them on a pathway to success." The Chairs will be joined by representatives from a number of Indiana companies including Caterpillar, Chrysler, Cook Pharmica, Cummins, ExactTarget, Apex Tool & Manufacturing, Hillenbrand, Inc., Honda, NiSource, Jasper Engines & Transmissions, Nucor-Steel, SABIC Innovative Plastics and Subaru. As the Indiana Regional Works Councils organize, additional members may be added.

Region 11 Works Council will be chaired by Sue Habig. Habig, of Jasper, currently serves as Human Resources Manager for Kimball Electronics Group. She has worked for Kimball International for 27 years in various human resources and operations management positions. Currently, she serves as Business Services Committee Member for the Grow Southwest Indiana Workforce, Vice-Chair of the Grow Southwest Indiana Workforce Investment Board and member of the Society for Human Resources Management Member. Habig holds a Professional in Human Resources Certification through HRCI/SHRM.

### Did you know....

- To view Express Employment's "Great Shift" report click [here](#).
- For a complete list of Regional Works Council members by Region visit [www.in.gov/ceci/2345.htm](http://www.in.gov/ceci/2345.htm).

### Upcoming Events:

#### Business Seminars: The Fair Labor Standards Act: Executive, Administrative and Professional Exemptions

- November 7, 2013  
WorkOne Southwest  
700 E. Walnut St.  
Evansville, IN 47710  
7:30am-9am CST  
To register please contact Gina Hertel  
[ghertel@dwd.in.gov](mailto:ghertel@dwd.in.gov)

- November 21, 2013  
VU Jasper Campus  
850 College Ave  
Jasper, IN 47546  
7:30am-9am EST  
To register please contact Nancy Schroering  
[nschroering@workonesouthwest.org](mailto:nschroering@workonesouthwest.org)

#### A Veterans Employment Summit

*Discussion about how your business or organization can benefit from hiring veterans*

- November 14, 2013  
Vincennes University  
Gibson Campus  
7:30am—9am CST  
To register please contact Tammy Slinker  
[office@gibsoncountychamber.org](mailto:office@gibsoncountychamber.org)

#### Contact:

For more information on mentioned programs please contact:

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