



BWIB Memberandum

Week of September 26, 2008

- **New Scholarship Program Will Help Create Job Connections**

Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) has announced plans to introduce a new \$500,000 scholarship program. Over 80 “workforce creation” scholarships will be made available for students pursuing careers in construction, allied health/nursing, bioscience, and teaching. High school graduates, as well as non-traditional students such as ex-offenders, veterans, and single parents are encouraged to apply for these opportunities. Also, to further increase the pool of prospective workers, GED scholarships combined with a one-year college scholarship will be awarded to those interested individuals who do not presently have a high school diploma.

BCCC is making these scholarships available as part of Governor Martin O’Malley’s challenge that additional efforts be made to recruit more students into high demand fields, as identified by both the Governor’s Workforce Investment Board and the BWIB. A ceremony to formally unveil this new initiative is scheduled for Monday, September the 29th.

- **MOED Offers Its Employment Outlook to Baltimore City Council**

Last week, MOED Director Karen Sitnick provided the members of the Baltimore City Council’s Budget and Appropriations Committee with an update regarding the City’s employment/unemployment outlook. This presentation noted that while Baltimore has begun to see an increase in unemployment filings, there are some signs of continued strength in the City’s local job market. For instance, during the most recent data reporting period, average new hire earnings grew by 35% in Baltimore City whereas in the state they decreased. Also, during the third quarter of 2007 the number of jobs created in the HealthCare industry in Baltimore City increased by 18%, as compared to only 3% in the State.

Additionally, there are a number of economic development activities under way in the City that are creating new job opportunities. Specific examples include: the redevelopment of Mondawmin Mall (553 jobs projected), new U.S. Census Bureau offices (300+ jobs projected), and the east/west bioparks (a total of nearly 6,000 jobs projected). The presentation also indicated that the continued Base Realignment and Closure process will also ultimately lead to another 4,000 new jobs for Baltimore City.

Notwithstanding these favorable developments, it was noted that MOED and the BWIB will actively seek to use their existing programs to connect those who are out-of-work with attractive job opportunities.

- **Prospects for Second Federal Stimulus Package Appear Dim**

The leadership of both the Senate and House Appropriations Committees had hoped to make progress on economic stimulus package, but the recent flurry of activity associated with the Administration's \$770 billion banking bailout legislation has effectively halted these discussions. With the House scheduled to adjourn by the end of September, and Republicans and the White House strongly opposed to a second stimulus measure, it has little chance of passage at this juncture. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (CA) has said that elements of this proposed second stimulus package could be added to a continuing resolution (CR), the appropriations measure that Congress must pass before the end of the month to keep the government funded.

Earlier this month, Democratic leaders in Congress had formally introduced a follow-up to the stimulus measure enacted in February. This legislation would provide up to \$50 billion in funding for infrastructure projects, a low-income energy and aid program, food stamps and Medicaid funding for states, an unemployment insurance extension, as well as \$500 million in additional WIA funding.

For now, Democratic leaders continue to search for the right combination of individual elements to include either in a CR or an economic stimulus measure. Republicans have indicated they are open to including some of the items from the stimulus package in the CR. The CR could be completed in time for a vote as early as next week.

- **Baltimore Regional Employer Awards Breakfast a Big Success**

Last week's second annual Baltimore Regional Employer Awards event was attended by over 200 individuals representing business, philanthropic, educational, and government interests from both Baltimore City and Baltimore County. Mayor Sheila Dixon opened the program by commending the six award-winning businesses for their efforts to attract and keep qualified workers. She concluded her remarks by noting that both Baltimore City and Baltimore County are committed to fostering opportunities for businesses to learn from each other, in order to strengthen their collective ability to compete in these economically-challenging times.

Representatives from each of the six honorees were in attendance to receive special recognition for their innovative programs for workforce development. Starting in January 2009, these winners will offer employer-to-employer seminars to offer other businesses the chance to learn more about their award-winning initiatives. Special thanks go to BWIB members Goodwill Industries, Verizon, and The Daily Record for their financial or in-kind sponsorships for the event. Also, please join us in congratulating BWIB members Johns Hopkins Health System and the University of Maryland Medical Center for being chosen as two of this year's award recipients.

- **Dates of Interest**

Monday, Sept. 29th (10:30 am) – BCCC Workforce Creation Scholarship Event
Thursday, Oct. 2nd (8:00 am) – BWIB Training and Postsecondary Education Meeting
Tuesday, Oct. 14th (12:30 pm) – BWIB Public Policy Committee Meeting
Wednesday, Oct. 15th (8:30 am) – BWIB Workforce System Effectiveness Committee Meeting
Wednesday, Dec. 10th (7:30 am) – BWIB Full Board Meeting

****If you would like additional information regarding any of the issues or events discussed throughout this publication, please feel free to contact Jeff Smith.****