



Volume 2, Issue 2  
July 2008

# Mercer County Workforce Investment Board

...Shaping Our Community's Workforce...

I'm pleased to announce that our Workforce Investment Board has recently formed the Early Childhood Literacy Committee, highlighted in this issue of the WIB's newsletter. The committee's goal is to ensure our youngest citizens – newborns to kindergarteners – are prepared for school by encouraging literacy at a very young age. The WIB aims to achieve that goal by working with community partners and families to encourage literacy and pre-reading skills. You can support this effort by reading to your own child, grandchild or a neighbor's child, and I encourage you to pay a visit to any of our Mercer County libraries this summer and partake of our vast library collection.



Mercer County  
Executive  
Brian M. Hughes

I'm also happy to mention that this is the second summer that Mercer County employers and local youth have been given the opportunity to participate in the Mercer EYES Job Training and Mentoring Program. This 10-week program introduces high school students to the professional world by placing them in appropriate organizations and pairing them with mentors who help them learn the ropes of the profession. More than 40 students from Mercer County high schools are currently participating in the EYES program, learning professional skills, challenging themselves on a daily basis, and building confidence. I applaud and thank the businesses that are giving our young people this great opportunity, and I commend the WIB and One-Stop Career Center staff on their efforts on behalf of these students.

Along with the EYES program, the WIB and One-Stop Career Center attracted more than 250 young people to our Youth Job Fair at The War Memorial. Many of the employers were able to hire qualified applicants right on the spot.

From early literacy to job preparation for local teens, Mercer County is dedicated to helping prepare a strong workforce for the future, and I'm so proud of these great initiatives and of the dedicated people who make it possible.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Hughes  
County Executive

### Special thanks to these employers who have their "EYES" on Mercer County's Youth!

*Boys/Girls Club of Trenton, Century 21/Melendez Realty, City of Trenton, Construction Project Management Services, Filene's Basement, Horizon NJ Health, Joyce Kilmer Elementary School, MCCC/Kelsey Theatre, MCCC, Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce, Mott Elementary School, Pennington/Ewing Athletic Center (PEAC), Princeton University, Rue Insurance, Trenton Board of Education, Trenton Central High School, Trenton Head Start*

### Success Story: Mercer County STARS

On June 5, 2008, the Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA) and its sponsors joined together to acknowledge youth and adults who have achieved personal and employment goals despite facing extraordinary barriers with the assistance of programs provided through the workforce system. Two individuals from Mercer County were honored as 2008 Sharon M. Dutra Memorial STARS (Student Training Achievement Recognition) at the GSETA Workforce Development Conference held in Atlantic City.

Yvonne Lebron graduated from Trenton Central High School with her two month old twins watching as she received her diploma. She knew life would be challenging, so she set a goal to obtain more training to support her children. Yvonne received TANF benefits and used the One-Stop educational funding to attend the Career Training Institute at Mercer County Community College. Yvonne completed the Office Automation program with a double major in Legal Secretary and Personal Computer Applications with a 93.2 average. Her job search lasted one week. Yvonne was hired as a legal secretary at the Law Offices of Gary Jodha.

Tashanna Wright is a single mother of four who came to the Mercer County One-Stop with little work experience and minimal social and family support. Tashanna was motivated to change her life. She attained her high school diploma and is now an employee of Catholic Charities. Tashanna has a home of her own and a job she enjoys. Although it has not always been easy, she has continually risen to the challenges presented to her. She now serves as an example to other women served by Catholic Charities and continues to strive towards a more positive future for herself and her children.

## Spotlight on the WIB...

**Nancy Thomson**  
**Executive Director, Child Care Connection**  
**Chair, WIB Early Literacy Committee**

As Executive Director of Child Care Connection, I have regular opportunities to be involved with the child care community. Previously, I was a child care center administrator and a preschool classroom teacher. Literacy is a major issue for today's workforce and for the future workforce in Mercer County, as well as the nation. The literacy levels of Mercer County's child care workforce are low for many teacher's assistants and teacher's aides. Adults working with young children need to be comfortable reading to and conversing with them, as well as helping them develop pre-writing skills.

*"It is our goal to encourage child care providers and parents to read to children daily, focus on the written word, have conversations with young children, and to ask open-ended, thought-provoking questions."*

Through supportive and targeted initiatives such as the recent *Early Trenton Reads Day*, we can provide resources and guidance to the child care community and families to assist them in creating a literacy-rich learning environment. It is our goal to encourage child care providers and

parents to read to children daily, focus on the written word, have conversations with young children, and to ask open-ended, thought-provoking questions.

Since the framework for early reading, writing, and comprehension are developed in the first years of a child's life, the Literacy Committee recognized the need to specifically target the early childhood years, and developed the Early Literacy Committee earlier this year.



Over 250 youth, ages 16-21, attended a Youth Job Fair hosted by the WIB and One-Stop Career Center on Wednesday, June 11 at Trenton's War Memorial. Jobseekers attended an employability seminar prior to the job fair to brush up on interviewing skills, dressing for success and resume writing.

I'm really excited to see these young people exploring the professional world at an early age," said Mercer County Executive Brian M. Hughes. "The willingness of our business community to participate, especially considering the difficult economic climate, is also great to see. A lot of young people in our communities are facing a time in their lives where they are making decisions about their future. This job fair is crucially important to starting these teens on the path toward success."

Employers included Allied Barton, Babies R Us, Bricklayers & Allied Crafters, Burlington Coat Factory, Chick-fil-A, Chuck E. Cheese, Commerce Bank, CYO, Delta Sigma Theta, Destinta Theatres, Filene's Basement, Home Depot, Iron Workers Local 68, Kohl's, Joule Staffing, NJ National Guard, Premier Exteriors, Securitas, Six Flags Great Adventure, Taco Bell, TJMaxx, US Army, US Navy, UPS, and Verizon.

*Photo by Kendra Basnigh/MCOSCC*

## Hughes Promotes Mills to Director

Mercer County Executive Brian M. Hughes announced the appointment of Beverly Mills as Director of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) on May 30, 2008

Mills, who has been employed with the County since 2006, previously served as Deputy Director of the Mercer County Workforce Investment Board. During her time as the Deputy Director, Mills successfully met many challenges, including attracting and increasing private sector membership and restructuring WIB committees.

"I congratulate Beverly in her new position and am confident she will rise to the expectations placed upon her. She has the skills to continue to make the Workforce Investment Board a productive and valuable program," said Hughes.

Mercer County's Workforce Investment Board helps to develop, maintain, and implement a quality workforce, which is consumer-based and labor-market driven, by accessing the labor market and helping job seekers and employers meet their needs. To accomplish this, the WIB provides coordination, guidance, and oversight for all workforce readiness programs in Mercer County and efficiently makes use of state and federal resources to assist the workforce.

"I look forward to working with the Board and partnering with businesses to maximize the potential of the WIB," said Mills. "I thank the County Executive and my colleagues for putting their confidence in my ability."



## The Best Kept Secret in Mercer County



The Mercer County One-Stop Career Center provides job seekers and employers easy access to employment, training, and social services. Jobseekers are provided with access to job search tools in addition to various workshops and seminars designed to help them obtain steady employment.

***The Mercer County One-Stop Career Center is dedicated to:***

- Connecting employers to a well-prepared workforce
- Helping individuals improve their long-term employment outcome
- Promoting lifelong learning opportunities

The Business Resource Center (BRC) provides business solutions to small and mid-size employers. Located within the One-Stop, the BRC addresses workforce development requirements associated with recruitment and training. BRC staff can help navigate government agencies and non-profit organizations to find information about new business development, loan programs, child labor laws, general wage and hour information, labor market data, and permitting issues.

Facilities and support are available for Positive Recruitments to identify and interview qualified employees. BRC staff prescreens applicants and arranges for recruiting sessions at the center. Job Fairs are held throughout Mercer County to help businesses connect to jobseekers.

On the Job Training (OJT), a program offered through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), is an incentive to businesses to receive either up to 50% of an employee's wages for up to six months. Employers provide the training and assist the new hire to match the qualifications/skills necessary to satisfy the job requirements.

The Mercer County One-Stop Career Center is a partner of the Mercer County Office of Economic Development and Sustainability and the Workforce Investment Board. As a county agency, all services are free of charge.

**Employer Services**  
 Business Resource Center (BRC)  
 Positive Recruitments  
 Job Fairs  
 On The Job Training (OJT)  
 Job Postings  
 Applicant Screening  
 Employer Workshops & Seminars  
 Labor Market Data  
 Liaison to Government Agencies  
 & Programs

*For more information, contact Kassia Switlik Bukosky, Business Services Specialist  
 (609) 989-6201 ♦ kbukosky@mercercounty.org*

2008 WIB Meetings	2009 WIB Mini Conferences				
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>General Board Meetings</b>                      Tuesday, July 22, 12 noon ♦ Conference Center at Mercer                      Tuesday, October 28, 12 noon ♦ Conference Center at Mercer</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Healthcare Committee</b>                      Third Tuesday of each month, 8 a.m.                      Mercer County Vocational &amp; Technical School                      Old Trenton Road (across from MCCC), West Windsor, NJ</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Literacy Committee</b>                      Third Wednesday of each month, 8:30 a.m.                      Mercer County Community College, James Kerney Campus (1<sup>st</sup> floor)                      North Broad &amp; Academy Streets, Trenton, NJ</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Early Literacy Committee</b>                      Second Thursday of each month, 9 a.m.                      Children's Futures, 28 West State Street, Room 305, Trenton, NJ</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Marketing Committee</b>                      Second Monday of each month, 9 a.m. United Way of Greater Mercer County                      3131 Princeton Pike, Building 4, Lawrenceville, NJ</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>One-Stop Committee</b>                      First Tuesday <i>every other month</i>, 9 a.m. (may change due to holidays)                      March, May, July, September, November 2008 United Way of Greater Mercer County                      3131 Princeton Pike, Building 4, Lawrenceville, NJ</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Youth Investment Council</b>                      Fourth Wednesday of each month, 9 a.m.                      County Administration Building, Room 211, 640 South Broad Street, Trenton, NJ</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>For more information, or to attend a meeting, call 609-989-6827</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">January 16 ♦ Financial Literacy                      February 20 ♦ Health Literacy                      March 27 ♦ On-Line Technology                      (tutoring through technology)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>For more information, or to reserve a space, call 609-989-6827</i></p> <tr style="background-color: #ffff00;"> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Other Area Events for Employers &amp; Businesses</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Job Fair</b>  <b>Sponsored by the Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce</b>                      Tuesday, September 9, 2008                      10 am - 3 pm                      Colonial Firehouse Ballroom                      801 Kuser Road, Hamilton Twp.  <i>For more information, email: info@mercercchamber.org or call 609-689-9960</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Trenton Small Business Week</b>                      October 20-24, 2008                      www.smallbizweek.com</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"></td> </tr>	Other Area Events for Employers & Businesses		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Job Fair</b>  <b>Sponsored by the Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce</b>                      Tuesday, September 9, 2008                      10 am - 3 pm                      Colonial Firehouse Ballroom                      801 Kuser Road, Hamilton Twp.  <i>For more information, email: info@mercercchamber.org or call 609-689-9960</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Trenton Small Business Week</b>                      October 20-24, 2008                      www.smallbizweek.com</p>	
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**The County of Mercer**  
**www.mercercounty.org**  
**McDade Administration Building**  
**640 South Broad Street**  
**Trenton, NJ 08650**

**Brian M. Hughes**  
**County Executive**

**Board of Chosen Freeholders**  
 Lucille R.S. Walter  
 Anthony P. Carabelli  
 Dan Benson ◇ Ann M. Cannon  
 Pasquale "Pat" Colavita  
 Keith V. Hamilton ◇ Tony Mack

**Office of Economic Development  
 & Sustainability**

Elizabeth Maher Muoio, Director  
 609-989-6555  
 609-695-4943 fax

**Workforce Investment Board**

Beverly Mills, Director  
 609-989-6827  
 609-989-6882 fax

**WIB Newsletter Editor**

Kassia Switlik Bukosky

**WIB MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Mercer County Workforce Investment Board is an inclusive partnership of public and private employers and workforce related service agencies that contribute to the economic health of the community by addressing the employment and advancement needs of employers, job seekers and employees.*

**Mercer County Workforce Investment Board Members**

**Chair**—John Simone, John Simone Realty, Inc.  
 Mary Gay Abbott-Young, Rescue Mission of Trenton  
 Renee Altman, Personal Computer Training  
 Cheryl Dunn Badger, Dow Jones and Company  
 Mary Burks, Trenton Public Schools  
 Pat Cacacie, United Way of Greater Mercer County  
 Frank Cirillo, Mercer County Board of Social Services  
 Karen Clark, Horizon NJ Health  
 J. Scott Clemmensen, Capital Health System  
 Barry Cole, Mercer Street Friends  
 Melvin Crawford, NJDOL-DVRS  
 Pat Day, Cenlar FSB  
 Don Dileo, AFL-CIO  
 Patricia Donohue, MCCC  
 Al Edenzon, Firmenich, Inc.  
 Kenneth Faulkner, Joseph Jingoli & Sons, Inc.  
 Larry Finkelstein, Transition Management Associates  
 Sam Frisby, City of Trenton  
 Elise Gambino, Allies, Inc.  
 Gary Gray, Bromley Center  
 Todd Hyland, Smith & Solomon  
 Joan Kane Josephson, Parker McCay  
 Edward Kurocka, OnSight Advisors  
 Carolyn Lewis-Spruill, City of Trenton

Michele Recla Liebttag, CWA  
 Maureen Lucido, Hyatt Regency Princeton  
 Anna Lustenberg, Verizon  
 Connie Mercer, HomeFront  
 Eugene Marsh, Construction Project Management Services, Inc.  
 Nina Melker, The Bank of Princeton  
 Dennis Micai, Trenton Area Soup Kitchen  
 Beverly Mills, Mercer County Workforce Investment Board  
 John Mizin, Mercer County One-Stop Career Center  
 Elizabeth Maher Muoio, Office of Economic Development & Sustainability  
 Jim Purcell, Medina Consultants, PC  
 John Raines, Mercer County One-Stop Career Center  
 Beverly Richardson, MCCC-Kerney Campus  
 Bonny Ross, St. Francis Medical Center  
 Kimberly Schneider, Mercer County Technical School  
 Gary Schnerr, Healthcare Association of New Jersey  
 Nick Scozzari, Scozzari Builders, Inc.  
 Keith Secrest, Kinetics Industries, Inc.  
 Michele Siekerka, Esq., Mercer County Regional Chamber of Commerce  
 Susan Sternberg, Trenton Free Public Library  
 Anthony Stewart, Hewlett Packard  
 Nancy Thomson, Child Care Connection  
 Virgen Velez, Mercer County One-Stop Career Center  
 Kevin Zepp, Liberty Healthcare Services