Greetings,

Jobs and the economy - not an easy topic of conversation these days. But here in Harford County, we can be optimistic. From successful job fairs to new private sector enterprise, the County is poised for recovery sooner than most. Thanks to BRAC and its impact on both government and business opportunities, we are already seeing many new opportunities for prosperity. In this issue, read about how the County's resources can help both employers and job-seekers. Find out about new ways to increase business or make a career move.

To learn more about the resources mentioned in this newsletter or to become involved in EDAB activities, please visit the Harford County Office of Economic Development website at www.harfordbusiness.org/.

Sincerely,

Eric McLauchlin
Chairman, EDAB

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT:

Susquehanna Workforce Network

The Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc. (SWN) is a private, non-profit corporation that coordinates workforce development programs and services for businesses and individuals in Harford and Cecil Counties. Headquartered in Havre de Grace, SWN represents an affiliation of more than 50 local organizations. These businesses work to create education, training, employment, and outreach programs to meet the needs of businesses, workers, and youth.

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THE HARFORD COUNTY ADVANTAGE:

WORKERS, EMPLOYERS, GROWTH

If job fairs can be used as barometers of workforce health, Harford County can be optimistic. With over 800 attendees at the March 2010 Defense Technology Intelligence job fair, a sold-out capacity of more than 30 recruiting companies and a waiting list of even more interested businesses, the outlook is good for both employers and job-seekers.

Hiring businesses have a wide pool of skilled workers from which to choose. Qualified applicants in all types of engineering and analysis, database administration, microbiology, chemistry and business development vied for time with interviewers. Job-seekers also have strong choices. Companies like SAIC, Raytheon, Bowhead, Data Systems Analysts and many more are among those expanding or putting down roots in the County.

While the Defense Technology Intelligence job fair featured defense contractors, Harford County also boasts a diverse industry base in the private sector. In the latest employment reporting period of third quarter 2009, the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation showed approximately 80 percent of the total average employment in Harford County was in the private sector, and 20 percent in government jobs.

BRAC growth promises opportunities in both areas. The arrival of 8,200 government positions encourages expansion in services for these workers. These positions will induce jobs in the private sector and enhance opportunities in banking and finance, healthcare, education, entertainment and tourism. They create the environment that new grocery stores, retailers, restaurants and office-supply companies require to flourish. Local enterprise that has been adversely impacted by the recent economy has the chance to be rejuvenated.

The influx of employees transferring to the region will provide local businesses a forum in which to showcase services to new customers. Currently, 43 percent of workers in Harford County also live here. The other 57 percent commute from Cecil, Baltimore and other surrounding areas. The savvy business person will take advantage of these new
With three workforce centers throughout the region, SWN offers employment planning and career assessment services and job search assistance according to local occupations in demand. Individuals can use computers to look for jobs and prepare resumes, participate in educational sessions about resumes, interviewing and employability, research local businesses and labor market conditions, and talk with employment specialists about job goals and career plans. From job banks and job fairs to skill training and workforce training, SWN provides services to meet both employer and employee needs.

The workforce centers also provide specialized programs and services designed for veterans, displaced homemakers, senior workers, migrant farm workers and people with disabilities. Training assistance may also be available to specific populations such as dislocated workers. Labor market information such as trends and wages are also available. SWN’s board consists of a diverse group of company representatives from banking to human resources to education. To learn more about SWN’s services or to become involved as an affiliate organization, visit www.swnetwork.org.

EMPLOYMENT FACTS

- 43 percent of workers in the Susquehanna area (Harford and Cecil Counties) live in Harford County. 19 percent live in Cecil County and 9.5 percent in Baltimore County. The remaining 28.5 percent live in other surrounding areas, including Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania.

- 19.7 percent of workers commute from the Susquehanna area (Harford and Cecil Counties) to Baltimore County, 11.2% to Baltimore City and 31 percent to all other areas. 27.9 percent and 10.2 percent stay in Harford and Cecil Counties, respectively.

- Top demand occupations based on educational requirements for the Susquehanna Workforce Area through 2016:
  - Bachelor’s Degree or higher: elementary, secondary and middle school teachers, general and operations managers, construction managers, analysts, accountants and auditors.
  - Post-secondary or associate degree: registered nurses, hairdressers, stylists and cosmetologists, nursing aides, automotive service technicians and mechanics, fitness trainers and aerobics instructors and preschool teachers.
  - High school degree or less: cashiers, retail salespersons, waiters/waitresses, industrial truck and tractor operators, office clerks and stock clerks.

- In third quarter 2009, total private sector average employment for Harford County was 62,543. 9,884 were employed in goods-producing industries like construction and manufacturing. 52,659 were employed in service-providing professions like trade/transportation/utilities, financial activities, professional/business services, education/health services and leisure/hospitality.

*Occupations in addition to those provided by BRAC opportunities

Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Office of Workforce Information and Performance

The Economic Development Advisory Board consists of a number of subcommittees -- including technology, workforce development, finance, tourism and land use -- dedicated to the positive growth and economic development of Harford County.