

## More than band-aid approach sought to address needs of health care work force

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### **YOUNGSTOWN - Tuesday, Columbiana County's medical providers will join their counterparts in Mahoning and Trumbull counties at Youngstown State University's Kilcawley Center for the Mahoning Valley Regional Healthcare Workforce Summit.**

The event will allow area health care providers, universities and training agencies to meet face to face to identify the employment needs of the medical industry locally and to develop strategies for meeting those needs.

Jobs in the health care industry make up nearly half of the 30 fastest-growing jobs in the Youngstown-Warren area. While studies show more than 20,000 employees are working in health care in the three-county area, more than 8,000 new job postings for positions in hospitals, offices and clinics and nursing homes are expected by 2008.

According to Jessica Borza, One-Stop system manager for Columbiana County, the summit was conceived as a way for training agencies and universities to speak with employers to determine what skills are needed by employees in the medical field, then develop ways to meet those needs.

"It's really been a process of doing a little educating on both parts," she said. "Employers, tell us what your most critical needs are, then we'll figure out behind the scenes what services would be appropriate, for you to meet those needs."

The One-Stop system was a concept created out of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in which 19 different funding streams for state and local training and employment services were coordinated to eliminate duplication.

Borza said the local agency, one of the organizers of the Healthcare Workforce Summit, treats both employers and job seekers as customers to better evaluate the way services are offered. She said the Columbiana County agency has been recognized as one of the top in the state for assisting job seekers, and now turned its attention to employer needs.

To better manage the task, the organization decided to break employers down by industry, starting first with the medical profession.

The summit will open with a group discussion of the industry's needs, then participants will split off into seven work sessions focusing on "attracting, developing and retaining talent," the issues to arise most frequently in steering committee discussions as those which needed to be addressed.

Dr. Carolyn A. Martin, an expert on "generational differences in the workplace" and co-author of "Managing Generation Y" and "Managing the Generation Mix" will deliver the event's keynote address, discussing "outside-of-the-box thinking and action."

In addition to the Columbiana County One-Stop and Department of Job and Family Services

other local sponsors include Salem Community Hospital, East Liverpool City Hospital, and both the Salem and East Liverpool campuses of Kent State University.

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