

Press Release

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Greater Wabash Regional Planning Commission

September 1, 2016

On August 9, 2016, Greater Wabash Regional Planning Commission, GWRPC, hosted a Business/Education Symposium at Carmi White County High School. The event was attended by the region's K-12 superintendents and principals, community college Presidents and representatives, workforce development representatives, elected officials, economic development directors and many area business professionals. The event featured speakers on workforce topics such as: soft skills, life skills, the region's workforce issues, and business/school partnerships. Delta Regional Authority Federal Co-Chairman, Chris Masingill, was the keynote speaker. Mr. Masingill spoke passionately about workforce issues in the Delta Region. In addition to Mr. Masingill, Jonathan Hallberg from Jefferson County Development in Mt. Vernon, IL spoke about the program that they are utilizing in the Mt. Vernon area called WorldClass Workforce. Stepheny McMahon presented the program, "No Job Left Behind" that has been implemented in Sullivan, IL. She brought Kurt Bunfill from AgriFab to talk about the work his company is doing with high school student internships as part of this program.

Many of the region's businesses and educators have met since the symposium to discuss the region's workforce issues. Some issues discussed have been: why do we have jobs that can't be filled and why do we have people who can't find jobs. GWRPC is hosting Partners in Employability, PIE, round table discussions at each of the local community colleges to discuss these questions and what can be done locally to address these issues.

GWRPC is proposing a different mindset to the region's workforce issue. We want our population to stop declining. We want to keep our youth in the region. We want to fill employment positions that are in the region with quality employees. If you would like to be a part of this group, contact GWRPC today at 618-445-3612 or [sarahmann@gwrpc.com](mailto:sarahmann@gwrpc.com).