

Summer 2015

Inside the Network



A Proven Approach to Help Businesses Survive and Grow

The Business Resource Network (BRN) uses a unique approach to help businesses survive and grow. The BRN works closely with businesses to identify and access a host of business services with as little red tape as possible. The BRN currently operates in 16 counties in Ohio, including Ashtabula, Geauga and Portage Counties.

A collaboration of chambers of commerce, workforce and economic development organizations, universities, career & technical centers, state and local government agencies, the BRN partnership targets businesses with growth potential as well as those facing challenges. It then conducts in-depth interviews with the owners and managers of the businesses.

After learning a business's goals and the obstacles it may be facing, BRN Partners present the business with a package of suggested incentives, technical assistance, training and other programs designed specifically for that business.

This all happens through a single point of contact—the BRN Account Executive—assuring tight coordination of services and minimal bureaucracy. There is no charge for the interview and proposal and many services are available at no cost.

Once the business chooses the programs and services it wants to pursue, the BRN Account Executive continues to work with the business and participating BRN Partners over time to deliver quality services and identify new ways to assist the business.

BRN Partnership for Success: Molded Fiberglass and Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County

After first conducting a Business Resource Network (BRN) interview with Molded Fiberglass (MFG) in March of 2014, our Ashtabula County (BRN) Account Executive, Hattie Grubke-Barnard, project manager for Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County, recognized that MFG had an on-going need to hire good people with a positive work ethic. MFG has had a long standing relationship with BRN Partner OhioMeansJobs Ashtabula, who has helped fill positions through posting job orders and sponsoring on-the-job training. In June, 2015, Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County in partnership with the Elite Employment Center, hosted a job fair in hopes of filling 50 positions.

Andy Juhola, MFG vice president of corporate human resources, said that in the last two years MFG has doubled its workforce. Don Iannone, CEO of Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County, said the biggest take away from the job fair was that MFG “is really growing great gangbusters” and “to really support that growth they need to hire more people, which is a great story.”

Grubke– Barnard, account executive for the BRN and project manager for Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County, estimated over 230 job seekers attended the event and nearly 50 were offered positions.



The Area 19 BRN is pleased to welcome Roberta Stavole, the new BRN account executive for Geauga County, who will also be serving as the Business Services Representative for OhioMeansJobs Geauga. Roberta has over 20 years of experience in building business relationships through communication and collaboration. She is technology savvy, a Microsoft Office expert and labels herself a “go to” person. Her HR skills include workforce evaluation and attracting the right talent. Roberta’s goals are to educate our local employers of the valuable resources available to them through the Business Resource Network and OhioMeansJobs Geauga, and leverage appropriate resources for solutions to our local businesses’ challenges and opportunities. Roberta’s office is located at OhioMeansJobs Geauga, 12480 Ravenwood Dr., Chardon. She can be reached via phone at 440-285-1264 or via email at Roberta.stavole@jfs.ohio.com—WELCOME ROBERTA!!

New Industrial Maintenance Training Program: Maplewood Career Center and the Portage Development Board Partner with Local Industry to develop comprehensive training program

While conducting interviews for the BRN, Brad Ehrhart, account executive for the BRN in Portage County and President of the Portage Development Board, noted that many of the companies were expressing the need for an industrial maintenance training program in Portage County. In an effort to address this training need, the Portage Development Board partnered with Maplewood Career Center to develop a training curriculum to meet the local industries' needs.

Maplewood Career Center reached out to and has now partnered with six Portage County- based manufacturing employers in an effort to address their need to find/train reliable employees in industrial maintenance. Maplewood and the six companies formed a steering committee made up of [primarily] maintenance managers, Maplewood's superintendent and the Director of Adult Education. The committee was presented with an industrial maintenance training program through Buckeye Educational Systems and Amatrol.

The program is 18 months long and consists of three modules: Electrical, Mechanical and Fluid power (Hydro and Pneumatic), all of which are in huge demand in the area. While the companies have committed for three cycles of this program; ultimately, they envision an advanced maintenance program that will include Mechatronics, Robotics and other more advanced training. Again, all of which are in high demand in Portage county.....The program begins January 5th and will run two days a week in the evening until complete.

Elizabeth Barry, president of Delta Systems, a manufacturer in Streetsboro, said "Delta Systems is supporting this program because it is critical to our success to have people with the right skill sets to keep our machinery and equipment running at peak performance. We are excited to team up with Maplewood Career Center and five other Portage County manufacturers to make this necessary program a reality."

We also believe that once other companies see how successful this program is, they too will identify and send people through the program(s). Maplewood Career Center is dedicated to addressing the ever increasing demand for skilled labor trades in Portage and the surrounding counties, and will continue to work with area manufacturers to help them design specific training programs that will help them stay and grow in the community.

Area 19 BRN Partners

Goodwill Industries Ashtabula	Geauga Growth Partnership	ODOT Jobs and Commerce
Akron CNC Training Center	Goodwill Industries—Ashtabula	OhioMeansJobs Ashtabula
Ashtabula County 503 Corporation	Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County	OhioMeansJobs Geauga
Ashtabula County Commissioners	Kent State University at Ashtabula	OhioMeansJobs Portage
Ashtabula County Technical and Career Campus	Kent State University at Geauga	Ohio State Apprenticeship Council
Auburn Career Center	Kent State University Center for Corporate & Professional Development	Portage County Commissioners
Bureau of Workers' Compensation	Lakeland Community College	Portage Development Board
City of Chardon—Planning & Zoning	Mahoning Valley Economic Development Corp	PTAC
Dominion East Ohio	MAGNET	Team NEO/JobsOhio Network
Fortis College—Ravenna Campus	Manufacturing Extension Partnership	Veterans Business Services Center
Geauga County Commissioners	Maplewood Career Center	Village of Middlefield
Geauga County Community & Economic Development	Office of Governor John Kasich	