

April 3, 2013

Kim Parker
Chair
Workforce Investment
Council of Clackamas
County

Testimony presented to the Oregon Legislature before the Way and Means Education Sub-Committee

By Jordana Barclay, Executive Director, Oregon Workforce Partnership

Chuck Forster
Vice Chair
Lane Workforce
Partnership

Co-chairs Monroe and Komp and members of the committee,

I am Jordana Barclay, Executive Director of the Oregon Workforce Partnership. The Oregon Workforce Partnership (OWP) is a non-partisan, public/private partnership with a mission to create a more highly skilled workforce for Oregon's businesses. OWP members are Oregon's seven Local Workforce Investment Boards, driven by the leadership of more than 120 companies representing a cross-section of industries in each region.

Clay Martin
Treasurer
Linn/Benton/Lincoln
Workforce Investment
Board

I am here today to talk about H.B. 5019. While Oregon's economy is recovering as we are coming out of the recession, our 8.4% unemployment rate is still higher than the national rate of 7.7%. The \$10 million workforce development investment in H.B. 5019 is critical to getting unemployed Oregonians back to work sooner.

Jordana Barclay
Executive Director
Oregon Workforce
Partnership

This investment includes \$3.2 million to continue Back to Work Oregon, an initiative that *directly* addresses the need of businesses for skilled workers and the need for Oregonians to work and earn wages. Many companies, some who are in attendance today and others who have provided letters of support to the committee, have success stories about how Back to Work Oregon and the workforce development system has assisted them.

Liz Field
Job Growers
Incorporated

Jim Fong
Rogue Valley Workforce
Development
Council/The Job Council

The 1400 job seekers who became employed through the Back to Work program benefited as well. These individuals earned approximately \$41.7 million, resulting in an estimated \$3.8 million in additional tax revenue in a single year, not to mention the millions in UI cost savings from Oregonians returning to work.

Tim McGann
The Oregon
Consortium/Oregon
Workforce Alliance

Another critical piece of this investment is funding for Sector Strategies, in which we are able to align economic, education, and training systems to meet the needs of local and regional employment sectors. This investment for sector strategies allows for:

Andrew McGough
Worksystems, Inc.

- Building regional sector/cluster partnerships, and consortia of employers by sector (such as manufacturers and health care providers),
- The development of strategies to recruit youth into sectors with large skill gaps or looming workforce shortages,

- Help transitioning workers find training and employment in specific sectors, and
- Upgrading the skills of current workers.

Investing in Local Workforce Investment means:

- Support of workforce system in the face of sequestration and federal budget cuts,
- Workers and employers alike having access to the skills they need to compete, and
- **Local, effective, and targeted** employment and training strategies that directly benefit our communities.

Despite improvements in our economy, there remain over 170,000 Oregonians unemployed. If this budget proposal is not approved, there are thousands of Oregonians that will not be served. This investment provided under H.B. 5019 provides critical ways to build a stronger workforce to increase Oregon's competitiveness and to assure the success of its people.

The Governor's Recommended Budget

Investing in Jobs and Innovation: Workforce Training

Governor Kitzhaber has recommended a \$10 million workforce training investment to scale up efforts to get more Oregonians back to work, build the talent that industry needs, and help companies grow. This investment leverages Oregon's publicly funded workforce system, which is working to serve more Oregonians and businesses more effectively with the best possible results.

What is included...

- Expanding the highly successful *Back to Work Oregon* pilot. Governor Kitzhaber launched *Back to Work Oregon* in 2011 to match unemployed workers who had transferable skills to jobs that were going unfilled. The program consists of On-the-Job Training (OJT), a "hire-first" program that reimburses companies for the cost of training new employees, and Oregon's National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), which guarantees that newly hired employees have the skills to succeed in training and on the job. The pilot put more than 1,400 Oregonians into good jobs. On average, participants recouped 97% of their pre-lay-off earnings (17% more than is typical for dislocated workers), and repaid the state investment in one year via tax returns.
- Implementing *Certified Work Ready Communities*. *Certified Work Ready Communities* provide objective, independent verification of the availability of local talent to grow local businesses and attract new ones. This initiative helps businesses communicate the skills they need for a productive workforce and helps individuals better understand what employers require. This investment will bring the *Certified Work Ready Communities* initiative to scale.
- Supporting *Sector Strategies*. *Sector Strategies* are employer-driven partnerships to meet the needs of key industries within regional labor markets. Partners include business, labor, economic development, education and training providers. Sector partnerships remove bottlenecks that inhibit recruitment, hiring, training and worker advancement within an industry. They create formal career paths to good jobs, reducing barriers to employment, and sustaining or increasing middle-class jobs.
- Providing technical assistance and evaluation to assure successful implementation and document results.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

What \$10 million will do...

Put people back to work

This additional *Back to Work Oregon* investment will help 2,350 job seekers get good jobs.

Help businesses thrive based on local talent

60,000 Oregonians will earn an NCRC, 4,000 Oregon businesses will use the NCRC in their hiring and 2/3 of Oregon counties will be working toward certification in the next two years.

Create innovation capacity

The investment into sector strategies will fund local coordination and support for industry identified training.

Additional support for innovation capacity will come via investments into technical assistance and evaluation of results.



BACK TO WORK OREGON

It Works!



Scott Raney – Designer, Arcimoto, Eugene

I found out about the On-the-Job Training Program (OJT) through *WorkSource Lane*. I was told to speak to one of their career advisors. Looking at my resume, the career advisor told me I was overlooking opportunities that I wasn't seeing myself. Knowing they were looking for someone with my experience, she referred me to Arcimoto.

After an hour interview with Arcimoto they hired me as a designer through the On-the-Job Training program. While I had previous training in the design program used by Arcimoto (*Solid Works*), I needed additional training in the program in order to have solid skills in the design program. Working with my mentor at Arcimoto, I received the training I needed in order to be successful at my job.

As a designer I create 3D CAD drawings and produce blueprints of the electric cars for the Production Department. I am very busy with helping to design the parts that go into the vehicle as we start production sometime next spring.

I think the OJT program is great! It helps you look at other opportunities that you might not see yourself. That's exactly what I did. I wasn't looking at exactly all the skills that I did have and what I needed to improve on. Because of this program I was able to get a job with Arcimoto."



BACK TO WORK OREGON

It Works!



Todd Edman, CEO of Lunar Logic, Eugene

“I am Todd Edman, CEO of Lunar Logic. Lunar Logic is a web software firm. We do everything from local web sites all the way up to software projects for large companies.

A representative from the Lane Workforce Partnership talked to me about the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program and it just seemed like a great fit for us. With the economy being what it is we were hesitant to hire, but knew we needed to grow.

There were three employees that we hired through the OJT program, a system administrator, senior programmer and junior programmer. The person we hired for the System Administrator position had experience with computers but not specifically in the role of doing deployment of websites and how we do it at Lunar Logic. We had tools to educate them and bring them up to speed.

The other two people were both programmers. One of them was a more senior level programmer. He had a lot of programming and development experience but not in the specific technologies that we were using. With his experience we could bring him on and give him two to three months to actually get up to speed instead of just throwing him into the mix.

The third person was more of a junior programmer; someone we instantly recognized had talent and the ability to be a programmer but just didn't have much professional experience doing it. We brought him on and taught him the basics from teaching him what it is to be a computer programmer to learning about source control and exposing him to all the tools he will need to learn in order to be a successful programmer. These are things that someone not working in a professional environment wouldn't learn.

The challenge that we were facing was that we knew we needed to grow. We were filled to capacity. But, because of the economy we were uncertain about hiring. A big chunk of my business relies on local companies. We weren't sure whether we could take the risk, bring someone on and train them for three months, and then run into a situation where we might have to lay them off again. It was a really nervous situation.

The OJT program basically helped us make the decision. We knew we could hire someone and really take the time to train them well and get them integrated into our company. At that point we could help meet demand. That was very helpful.

I have recommended the program to other employers. I hate paperwork. Filling out forms is just not my thing. But, Lane Workforce Partnership staff made it so easy by screening the applicants and helping with the forms. It has worked out so well for us. I absolutely recommend the OJT program to other business owners.”



BACK TO WORK OREGON

It Works!



Steve Cary, Vice President, Feeney Wireless, Eugene

“I’m Steve Cary, Vice President for Feeney Wireless. Feeney is involved in a high-tech industry called machine to machine technology. In other words, we connect things wirelessly to the internet. That could be a police car, an ambulance or it could even be an automated kiosk at your local grocery store.

Before we partnered with the Lane Workforce Partnership and their On-the-Job Training program, one of our biggest challenges was finding candidates for job openings with the right skill sets. Because of their prescreening we were able to identify people who had a high tech background, that could communicate effectively and understand our industry and where we were going. So when the candidates came in for job interviews they had the right requirements for the variety of jobs in our organization.

The types of positions that we have filled using this program range from shipping and receiving, warehouse technicians to engineering technicians and project management. And the list is getting bigger all the time.

We have hired over nine people so far. Because it’s been so successful for us, we plan to continue to use this program as long as we can. I would definitely recommend this program to other employers. It has been a big help for us in reducing our risk in the hiring process while enabling us to move faster than we could before.”



BACK TO WORK OREGON

It Works!



Lee Delorme, Video Surveillance Technician,
Feeney Wireless, Eugene

“My name is Lee Delorme and I am a video surveillance technician at Feeney Wireless. I had been unemployed for almost a year when I was enrolled in the Lane Workforce Partnership’s On-the-Job Training program.

I have many skills from working at a TV station, as a network administrator, electrical engineer and a broadcast engineer. Even with all my technical skills I, had not been able to find work. So, I was really excited to get hired by Feeney Wireless through the On-the-Job training program. They matched my skills with the skill sets Feeney was looking for.

My job at Feeney is very technical. Even with all my technical background, I could not be doing the job I’m in without a lot of training. The training has been very intense and demanding with a steep learning curve. But, I’m learning a lot and absolutely love my job.

I am so very grateful for the On-the-Job training program so that companies like Feeney Wireless are willing to take people like me and help us learn the skills that they need – so that I benefit and they benefit. It is an absolute fantastic program. I am really excited about what I do now. I get to work with all kinds of incredible technologies. It is just fun! Fantastic people to work with! I highly recommend this program.”

Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Job Seeker: Jo Randall
Tualatin, Oregon

Jo Randall was working as a construction project coordinator until she was laid off due to downsizing in the industry. Knowing that construction jobs would be hard to come by, Jo turned to WorkSource Oregon for help. While at WorkSource, Jo learned about the Back to Work Oregon Program, Governor Kitzhaber's program to provide financial assistance to companies in their efforts to create new jobs by offsetting some of their upfront training costs. Through the program, potential employees earn a portable, industry-recognized National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) while receiving on-the-job training in their new position.



Jo found her experience in obtaining the NCRC to be highly worthwhile as it gave her insight on her skill levels and where she might need to seek out help to brush-up on and improve upon certain skill areas. Jo also needed to find a job that would provide her with benefits and was pleased to find that most of the on-the-job training opportunities through the program were positions that did offer benefits. Through the program, Jo was hired to work as a shipping and receiving clerk for A-1 Coupling & Hose. The on-the-job training gave her a chance to learn the background for this job and while she is still learning to drive a forklift, she is enjoying the process and says the company is very willing to teach her the skills she needs while providing a great work environment. Jo also appreciated knowing that WorkSource staff serves as a liaison between employers and employees and that they screen employers interested in participating in the program as it "offers some protection for job seekers". Jo credits the staff at WorkSource for the high level of support that they provided to her as it has led her to where she is today.

The best part for Jo was getting a job, having a structured training program, and knowing that she's still capable of learning new skills in a job that she enjoys. Since the program, Jo has been enjoying her new job and is now confident in her shipping and receiving skills and willing and hopeful to take on more responsibility in the company. Her future plans include staying at A-1 Coupling & Hose long-term while looking into volunteering at a hospital in her free time. Jo would highly recommend this program to others looking for a job, and says that she does so often.

Contact Information:

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Employer: Mike Campbell, A-1 Coupling & Hose
Tualatin, Oregon



Mike Campbell from A-1 Coupling & Hose in Tualatin, Oregon was trying to fill an open position within the company and was willing to provide ample training to do so. Recognizing the considerable cost of hiring and training a new employee, he heard about the Back to Work Oregon Program from Worksource Oregon in Tualatin and was willing to try out the program to see if it would meet their needs. WorkSource staff worked with him to identify candidates who had earned the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and were interested in learning the job.

Campbell was pleased to find that the NCRC takes a lot of the mystery out of the candidate selection process and provided him with the opportunity to know what the candidate's abilities were upfront and where they needed additional training and support.

A-1 Coupling & Hose continued on to provide their future employee with extensive training in pallet/skid freight shipping, vendors, company part numbers, logging in data, stocking and transfers, computer system training, forklift and pallet jack operations as well as inventory backup. The on-the-job training component of Back to Work Oregon made it more cost effective for A-1 Coupling & Hose to get a new employee up to speed. Mike says he would not hesitate to use the program again in the future and has recommended it to other businesses.

Contact Information:

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Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Employer: Gary Yates, Green Valley Diesel

Roseburg, Oregon

Gary Yates of Green Valley Diesel in Roseburg, Oregon was having difficulty in finding a diesel mechanic with the skill set and work ethic he desired for his business. Gary heard about the Back to Work Oregon Program from discussions with staff at his local WorkSource Oregon office and decided to use it to find a trainable employee with a strong work ethic. Through the program, Green Valley Diesel provided the new hire one-on-one training by experienced, skilled mechanics as part of the company's training plan. Gary stated that having applicants with an NCRC assured him that his new hire had the ability to learn. He reported that there was very little paperwork that was required and that program staff were readily available when questions did come up.

Using Back to Work Oregon to hire and train the right person for the job proved itself as a positive experience for Green Valley Diesel as the program provided the company with greater flexibility in hiring as well as assistance to alleviate training expenses. Today, the trainee that was hired on through the program remains a valuable and trusted member of the company. According to Gary, this is especially useful for small businesses and he would highly recommend Back to Work Oregon to other employers in need of qualified candidates.

Job Seeker: Robert (Bo) Currie

Roseburg, Oregon

Robert (Bo) Currie had previously worked for a mobile home set-up company until the company was required to downsize. Through talking with Gary Yates of Green Valley Diesel, Bo learned about the Back to Work Oregon Program and decided to get involved to build new skills in the diesel mechanic field.

The on the job training program offered through the program, provided Bo with the opportunity to obtain new skills, and allowed him to find the type of job he had always wanted. He also scored so well on the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) which gave him the confidence to get his GED with the assistance of Umpqua Training & Employment.

Since the program, Bo has been working as a mechanic for Green Valley Diesel. He plans to continue working for the company and hopes to continue to gain additional skills through his new position. The program has been a huge success for Bo and he would recommend it to anyone looking for a job.

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Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Job Seeker: Calder Karber

Clatskanie, Oregon

Calder Karber used to work as a belt technician for Transco Industries of Gresham, Oregon. With a two-hour commute to and from work, he often stayed at a co-workers house to avoid the long drive home each day from Gresham to Clatskanie. Despite the commute, he never complained because he was simply grateful to have a job and to be able to provide for his family. When he was notified that he had been laid off due to lack of work, Calder found himself on long-term unemployment and in need of additional skills in order to obtain a new job. He had heard that Columbia Pacific Bio-Refinery, a new Clatskanie-based company producing ethanol fuel, was hiring but unfortunately, he had no experience in this industry or the positions they were hiring for. Calder decided to take a chance and apply for the position anyway.

When Dan from Columbia Pacific Bio-Refinery interviewed Calder, he could see that while Calder lacked some of the necessary skills for the position, he appeared to be a hard worker who would be worth investing in. Dan contacted MTC Works and was pleased to learn that Calder qualified for on-the-job training through the Back to Work Oregon Program.

Calder was hired on at Columbia Pacific Bio-Refinery and obtained his National Career Readiness Certificate after MTC Works came out to Clatskanie to proctor the exam. After three months of on-the-job training, he was able to gain the skills necessary to excel in his new position. He now works as an assistant to the material handlers and has even received a raise prior to his completion of the ninety day, on-the-job training. Calder is grateful to have been given the opportunity to advance his skills and acquire a good job and would recommend this program to anyone looking for a job. "I work close to home, with people that I like and for a company that seems good to work for and is willing to train people to do the job the right way".

Contact Information:

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MTC Works – Astoria, Oregon

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Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Employer: Teresa Aasness, Families First Parent Resource Center
John Day, Oregon

The Families First Parent Resource Center in John Day, Oregon provides services to families through programs such as Healthy Start, as well as a variety of other parent education and youth services programs. Recently, the center was faced with the challenge of needing to hire additional staff to provide increased services throughout the community but with limited financial resources. Teresa Aasness, Executive Director of Families First, said “without the Training & Employment Consortium, and the Back to Work



Program, we would have a huge gap in the services we provide. We could not afford to hire and train anyone, and our programs were suffering.” Through working with the staff at the Training & Employment Consortium, Families First interviewed and hired Jackie Boyd.

Jackie already had basic office skills, but through the on-the-job training provided at Families First, Jackie was able to acquire additional skills needed in her new position. She was trained in all of the programs offered by Families First and how to implement each program. According to Families First, the program was easy to partake in and that the wage reimbursement was very fast, making it a convenient and highly valuable experience. Without WorkSource Oregon and the Back to Work Oregon Program, the center would have never been able to hire Jackie, leaving them unable to provide services to about 70 families monthly.

Since their success with the program, the center has secured funding that will allow them to keep Jackie employed full time of which she is grateful for. Had it not been for the on-the-job Training, Jackie says she would likely have remained on unemployment and living in public housing. “This has given me the opportunity to be self sufficient and provide a better life for my son and myself”.

Families First Parent Resource Center plans to use the Back to Work Oregon Program in the future and would highly recommend it to other companies as well.

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Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Job Seeker: Shawn Welch, Home Comfort Hearth & Patio

Grants Pass, Oregon

Shawn Welch had previously worked as a wholesale plumber, manager, purchasing agent and salesman. After getting laid off in 2008, he was forced to get by on odd jobs after an unsuccessful attempt to start his own business. After filling out over 200 applications in December of 2010 and not receiving a single phone call back, Welch began to feel as though he had exhausted nearly all of his resources in trying to find a new job. That was until he learned about the Back to Work Oregon Program through his employment specialist at The Job Council.

Welch began on-the-job training as a service technician for Home Comfort Hearth and Patio. He also obtained his National Career Readiness Certificate and was pleasantly surprised to learn he had scored gold on the exam. The Back to Work Oregon Program provided him with an opportunity to apply his skills in a different industry while acquiring hands-on experience and training to ensure his success in that process.

Welch has continued to have a great experience through his on-the-job-training and is now employed as a service technician for Home Comfort Hearth and Patio. Before starting the program he wasn't familiar with pulling apart, replacing and troubleshooting stoves, fireplaces and hot tubs; all of which he now performs on a daily basis. For him, the Back to Work Oregon Program was able to provide him with a permanent job and opportunities for future advancement. But most importantly, it provided him the ability to pay his bills and take care of his family. In the future Welch hopes to learn to estimate jobs and plans to continue to advance his career at Home Comfort Hearth and Patio.

Shawn says "he would absolutely recommend the program to anyone as it gives you an advantage over other job seekers". And as Welch says you never know, "you might just get that call you've been waiting for."

Contact Information:

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Employer Success: Mike Kohn, Home Comfort Hearth and Patio *Grants Pass, Oregon*

Mike Cohn works for Home Comfort Hearth and Patio. He wanted to be able to hire on additional technicians so he could provide better service for his customers. He believed it was necessary for any new employees to be uniquely trained from the ground up but also recognized that he couldn't afford to provide for the level of training that would be required. He found out about the Back to Work Oregon Program from another local business and decided to give it a try. Back to Work Oregon is Governor Kitzhaber's program to help companies create new jobs and hire on new employees by offsetting some of their upfront training costs. Potential employees earn a portable, industry recognized National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) as part of the program.



Back to Work Oregon sent him three qualified candidates so he could select the potential "best fit" for his company. One of those candidates was Shawn Welch, a former wholesale plumber, manager, purchasing agent and salesman who had been laid off for several years. And while Welch had previous sales and warehouse experience, he needed additional technical training necessary to perform the job. Thanks to Back to Work Oregon, Cohn was able to hire an

employee with the right skills to learn the job, and was able to provide that training at a reasonable cost.

Cohn says the Back to Work Oregon Program was a great experience, simple process, and allowed him to hire on and train the right employee for the job. The business has not only been able to improve upon their ability to provide a higher level of customer service, they have also seen sales of service parts increase 35%.

And although his company didn't utilize the information provided by the NCRC in the hiring process, Cohn says that after learning how it demonstrates an individual's basic skills, the company will view the certificate as an added benefit for hiring of future employees. He believes that as a taxpayer, the on-the-job training program is a great investment in our economy and would definitely he would definitely recommend the Back to Work Oregon Program to other businesses.

Contact Information:

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Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Job Seeker: Sharon Read *Medford, Oregon*

Sharon Read has been working in the dental field as an office assistant since 1972, but was laid off in January of 2011 due to a slowdown in the industry. In the past, Sharon had never had difficulty in finding a job, but after distributing over 100 resumes without receiving a single response, she began to worry. She even applied for a position as a package carrier at UPS without any luck.



Luckily, Sharon heard about the Back to Work Oregon Program from her employment specialist at the Job Council. The Back to Work Oregon Program was created by Governor John Kitzhaber to help companies create new jobs and hire on new employees by offsetting some of their upfront training costs. Potential employees earn a portable, industry-recognized National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) as part of the program.

After taking the NCRC exam, Sharon passed with silver and believes that the process of receiving her certificate forced her to “think outside the box” about her skills and areas that she could focus on and improve upon. Sharon now works for Northwest Dental Solutions as an office assistant and values the on-the-job training that she has received as it has allowed her to brush-up on her computer and processing skills while also giving her the opportunity to improve upon her communication skills.

The program provided Sharon with a certificate to add to her resume and feels having it on your resume opens eyes to an employer that you are willing to take the initiative. She now feels great about the skills that she has gained and feels a lot better about herself in return. “When you feel better about yourself,” Sharon says, “you project yourself differently”.

Sharon had a great experience with the program and would recommend it to anyone looking for a job as it is “a great tool for presenting yourself to a business owner.”

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Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Employer Success: A.R.E. Manufacturing Inc.

Newberg, Oregon

A.R.E. Manufacturing was having difficulty in finding available experienced machinists and had an even harder time finding people that were interested in building a long-term career with the company. According to Karen Cook, the Training Coordinator at A.R.E., the company had established lean manufacturing principles and standard work best practices in order to help them focus on recruiting the type of employees that most likely succeed long-term within the company. They realized that they needed to seek out employees with math skills, aptitude, and a willingness to learn new skills.

A.R.E. learned about the Back to Work Oregon Program from Job Growers, Inc. and decided it would provide them with a good opportunity to assess a potential candidate's skills for the position and provide them with training to turn those skills into long-term success. The Back to Work Oregon Program was created by Governor John Kitzhaber to help companies create new jobs and hire on new employees by offsetting some of their upfront training costs. Potential employees earn a portable, industry recognized National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) as part of the program.

The company found that potential employees who scored gold or higher on the NCRC had the same success rate as those they had personally screened through other math and mechanical reasoning tests. Now candidates scoring high enough on the NCRC are exempt from further screening as the company feels it is a strong indicator of a person's skills and ability to succeed within certain positions. The on-the-job training portion of the program has also allowed them to supplement the company's in-house training, reducing the time needed to efficiently setup and train for repeat jobs from almost five years to less than two years. They have also found that when an employee or potential employee commits fully to a training program, such as is offered through the Back to Work Oregon Program, that it is an excellent indicator of that person's career commitment.

According to Cook, A.R.E. plans to recommend the Back to Work Oregon Program to other employers and says they "already do so frequently". She says it has allowed her company to hire and train new employees even during slow times for the company. "Actually, it's better and easier to train during slower production times," says Cook, "if we can fund the training."

Contact Information:

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Job Seeker: Jared Comfort
Newberg, Oregon

Jared Comfort lived in Corvallis, Oregon and had a job working with Trillium Family Services. His days consisted of working with up to 15 at risk children at a time. After experiencing conflict with one of his managers, he was terminated. Jared and his family then made the move to Newberg, Oregon in search of a career with advancement opportunities and a real future.

Jared had considered going back to school but recognized the challenges that would bring due to the overall costs and reduced ability and time to earn an income. Fortunately, the Back to Work Oregon Program was a great match for Jared because it still afforded him the opportunity to learn new skills while earning a paycheck through the on-the-job training portion of the program.

Jared was hired by A.R.E. Manufacturing, Inc. as a Machinist Level 2 where he now operates machines as is learning to set-up CNC mills and lathes to make high quality machined components. His experience with the Back to Work Oregon Program allowed for him to build new skills in a team environment. "I learned that in a team environment the members of the team play off of each other's successes," says Jared. In previous employment Jared had struggled with knowing exact expectations, after using this program he now feels that the plan has helped clarify what is expected of him on the job. The most valuable thing he gained from the program was confidence which had developed through seeing his measurable successes. He also says he wishes he would have taken the National Career Readiness Certificate exam sooner as it further added to his confidence and provided a way to document his abilities.

Back to Work Oregon allowed Jared to find a company that believes in and applies the principles of on-the-job training and making an investment in their employees. The program helped him turn his general skills and aptitude into a real career. Looking toward the future, Jared plans to continue to build his skills and learn all that he can. He wants to develop his skills in precision machining. Through the Back to Work Oregon Program, Jared created a better life for himself and his family and attributes that to the program and specifically the on-job-training. When asked if he would recommend this program to others looking for a job, he replied "absolutely."

Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Job Seeker: Aimee Lawson

Salem, Oregon

Aimee Lawson was previously employed as an administrative/contract liaison when she became too ill for work. She needed an opportunity to get on her feet again and refresh her skills to find a job. Fortunately, the Back to Work Oregon Program gave Aimee the help she needed. The Program, which was created by Governor John Kitzhaber, helps companies create new jobs and hire on new employees by offsetting some of their upfront training costs. The program consists of an on-the-job training subsidy for qualifying businesses and assists in the screening of candidates through the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC).

For Aimee, the NCRC not only provided her with a portable skills certificate that she could use for in the future, it also served as a positive reinforcement of her skills, giving her confidence in her abilities in the workplace.

Through the program, Aimee was able to find a job working for Robert L. Armstrong P.C. as an office assistant. The on-the-job training allowed her to brush-up on her job skills after years being unable to work. Aimee says she would recommend the program to other job seekers. She hopes to continue her education in the field in which she now works.

Employer Success Story: Robert L. Armstrong, P.C.

Salem, Oregon

Robert L. Armstrong, P.C. provides taxes, accounting and public relations services in Salem, Oregon. Recently they were experiencing challenges in trying hire on an office assistant as it was difficult to find an employee with the right skills for. The company was willing to provided training, but also recognized the considerable costs to do so.

A business representative from Job Grower's Inc. encouraged the company to use the Back to Work Oregon Program to hire on a new employee. The Program was created by Governor John Kitzhaber to help companies create new jobs and hire on new employees by offsetting some of their upfront training costs.

The program helped connect the company to Aimee Lawson who is now an integral part of the team and their accounts collections department.

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Back to Work Oregon...It Works

Employer Success Story: Agate Health Care

Eugene, Oregon

Agate Health Care, based out of Eugene, Oregon, is a third party administrator of insurance funds with roughly 135 current employees. Recently they were challenged with the task of filling two auditor positions and had conducted over 60 interviews without success. Finally, they turned to the Back to Work Oregon Program for help. Back to Work Oregon is Governor Kitzhaber's program to get Oregonians back to work faster by helping companies with their hiring and training of new employees. The program helps companies create new jobs and hire on new employees by offsetting some of their upfront training costs. The program consists of an on-the-job training subsidy for qualifying businesses and assists in the screening of candidates through the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC).

By joining the program, Agate Health Care was able to work with the Lane Workforce Partnership, who provided them with five qualified candidates to interview. Within two weeks, both auditor positions were filled. The company provided their new hires with on-the-job training that focused on the complex rules of Medicare and Medicaid claims. As a result of hiring the right candidates for the job combined with the on-the-job training, both employees have since excelled in their positions and the company is delighted with their performance. The on-the-job-training program was a good fit for Agate Health Care because it provided them with the opportunity to have their employees trained to the company's preference and it provided the structure and guidance for new hires to really learn the job.

The company says it plans to continue using the program for future hires and would certainly recommend Back to Work Oregon to other employees.

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