

The Workforce Innovation Fund IT Cluster Competitiveness Project

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), recently awarded Orange County a \$3,000,000 Workforce Innovation Fund grant for the Information Technology Cluster Competitiveness Project. The “Information Technology Cluster Competitiveness Project” will implement a new approach for engaging business and education stakeholders in an intensive planning process concerning the education and training needs of companies in Information Technology (IT) across Orange County.

Project Overview

Goals

- Better results for job seekers and employers
- Stronger cooperation across programs

Objectives

Produce a “roadmap” that plots a course to address “just in time” training needs, those just around the bend and the long-range workforce needs of industries in which IT skills are a critical element to companies’ success, resulting in 5* pilot programs:

Pilot 1 - Development of New IT Programs

Pilot 2 - Retrofitting Existing IT Curricula

Pilot 3 - IT Pipeline Initiative

Pilot 4 - “Bridge the Digital Divide” Initiative

Pilot 5 - Allied IT Business Support System

*Pilot 6 – TBD: A sixth pilot may reveal itself based on industry feedback

Intended Outcomes

Short-Term: An increase in placements of new and returning workers into IT positions; skills upgrade of incumbent workers already in the Orange County IT industry; and prepare a greater number of high school students for entry-level IT jobs or advanced IT training.

Long Term: An Increase in the availability of a large pool of skilled IT workers; and increasing capacity of the workforce system partners to support a wide range of IT business needs.

The roadmap for the project activities will be steered by two stakeholder groups:

1. Business Stakeholder Group: representing both the IT vertical and the horizontal structures.
2. Education Stakeholder Group: representing the K-12 system, adult education, regional occupational programs, private post-secondary training agencies, community colleges, and public and private universities.

The grant is administered by Orange County’s Community Investment Division/OC Workforce Investment Board (CID/OCWIB). The Orange County Community Investment Division serves as the administrative support to the Orange County Workforce Investment Board (OCWIB) and is primarily responsible for administering programs and activities of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in Orange County. The WIA assists individuals who are employed, unemployed and underemployed, to increase their self-sufficiency and/or improve their ability to meet the demands of Orange County businesses and employers. Through WIA, the Community Investment Division seeks to meet the needs of businesses and employers by offering programs that focus on job matching, recruitment, and specialized business and employee assistance.

For more information, please visit:

www.ocwib.org

<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/ETA20121237.htm>

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