Governor’s Employer Awards

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Hershey Lodge and Convention Center
Hershey, PA
Surrey Services for Seniors

Surrey is the leader in providing solutions to seniors in communities across Southeastern Pennsylvania. With four branches in Devon, Broomall, Havertown, and Media, Surrey is a total solution with a breadth and scope of services that sets them apart. A non-profit organization serving local community members, regardless of income, Surrey focuses on the dignity and needs of the whole person and his or her individual situation using caring, family centered philosophy.

For more than 37 years, Surrey has consistently hired older adults as part of Surrey’s ‘Neighbor Helping Neighbor’ philosophy. Surrey works with its employees to accommodate their needs outside the workplace. Sixty-eight (68) of its 79 staff members are age 55 and older, and work part time. Most of these workers are attracted to part time positions due to family responsibilities, lifestyle choices, health or financial considerations. Surrey works with each employee to set up an optimal schedule that may include full days, half days or hourly assignments.

Surrey’s 55+ staff hold positions in senior management, as center directors for Surrey’s senior centers, in administrative positions, as caregivers and in member services. The average wage of the part time staff 55 and older is $14.86/hour. The average wage of the part time home care staff 55 and older is $12.73/hour. The average salary of the full-time staff 55 and older is $65,515.

Innovative re-training is fostered by Surrey leadership. In 2018, Surrey staff, at several centers, began training in the Aging Mastery program developed by the National Council on Aging in Washington. This training was made possible by grant funding that Surrey was awarded. Also, in 2018 Surrey staff participated in computer, caregiving and leadership training.

Surrey has also supported benefit plans that help its employees long-term. In 2019, Surrey will roll out a 401K plan that will provide employees with a company contribution of 3% of the employee’s compensation. The 3% will vest immediately. Always keeping in mind its mature workforce, Surrey designed the plan with an immediate vesting period.
Geisinger
Danville, PA

Nominated by Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC)
Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN)

Geisinger has partnered consistently and collaboratively with the EARN program yielding rewarding career opportunities that have ranged from Environmental Services to Nursing Assistants and Licensed Practical Nurses. Over the last program year, the partnership between Geisinger and the local workforce development system has resulted in the hiring of six (6) EARN participants with wages ranging from $11.44 to $28.28 per hour. All opportunities are full-time with comprehensive healthcare benefits, compensated vacation and holidays, a 401(k) plan and the ability to train and advance in rewarding long-term career pathways. Deeply rooted in the community, Geisinger believes success begins with their family of 30,000 employees, who share an unwavering commitment to kindness, excellence, innovation and learning. Geisinger is among the nation’s top 15 health systems by Truven Health Analytics and has been named as one of the 100 great places to work in healthcare by Becker’s Hospital Review.

Geisinger has demonstrated a strong interest in not only hiring EARN customers, but in working with EARN staff to understand the unique barriers that TANF customers often must overcome to be successful in the workplace. EARN staff communicates directly with Geisinger’s Human Resource Department whenever an EARN participant applies to a position. In turn, Geisinger pulls and reviews these resumes to help find the best fit within their current openings taking into consideration each participant’s skills, education, and career interest. With multiple regional locations, Geisinger works with EARN applicants to identify locations where they can be placed that are near their homes to alleviate barriers to employment such as transportation and childcare.

Demonstrating a commitment to understanding the challenges of EARN customers and lifting up its workforce, Geisinger will be sending staff to participate in Bridges Out of Poverty training. Expressing a desire to take an even more active role, Geisinger regularly participates in PA CareerLink® Job Fairs, Late Night Information Sessions, hosts recruitment events at multiple PA CareerLink® sites and utilizes The Link, a mobile PA CareerLink®, for outreach to remote and hard to serve communities. Geisinger believes that the EARN program is an essential partner in ensuring a diverse workforce that serves as their foundation for providing culturally competent care.
A collection of greenhouses amongst the farmlands of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania has become a noteworthy place of opportunity and growth for countless arriving refugees. Green Leaf Plants (GLP) is an international wholesaler of starter plants and finished plant products including perennials, herbs, and ornamental grasses. They are also an exemplar of how an employer can adapt to gainfully employ refugees arriving to the U.S. Green Leaf Plant staff, particularly HR Manager Cindy Myers, has become a significant partner in advocacy for Lancaster’s arriving refugees.

Over the years, GLP has hired countless refugees including those facing some of the most difficult barriers — no work experience, no ability to communicate in English, and/or a physical limitation(s). Clients become self-sufficient working in production positions and find pride in learning how to correctly plant, harvest, trim, and perform other plant maintenance. In Fiscal Year 2018 alone, they hired 18 clients and seven of these clients were TANF recipients. These starting positions are full time at $8 per hour with benefits.

What sets GLP apart is the way in which they have intentionally grown to understand the diversity and needs of the arriving refugees and have adapted their workplace to empower them. They always allow Church World Service (CWS) interpreters to assist clients through the whole new hire process; interview, orientation, and on-boarding paperwork. Production Supervisors are patient and willing to work through language barriers. They have made their production system visual and utilize color coding. The company also translated workplace signs to refugee languages. As clients improve their levels of English and maintain good work performance, they can be promoted.

GLP has been working closely with the CWS/Lancaster Employment Program for over 15 years and their employment opportunities are indispensable.
Located in Exton, PA, PowerBack Rehabilitation, affiliated with Genesis HealthCare, is a rehabilitation facility conveniently located just two blocks from the PA CareerLink® Chester County. When PowerBack announced their plan to open the new facility in April 2018, staff at the PA CareerLink® were quick to connect and plans were made to assist with onboarding their managerial and direct care staff. The enthusiasm and commitment for on-site partnerships with the EARN and Work Ready programs has made PowerBack a premier example of the strong working relationships with employers in Chester County. Twelve EARN and Work Ready participants met with Ms. Georgia Marchionne, HR Manager at PowerBack and were hired to fill positions in nursing, direct care, housekeeping, and administration. All of these positions pay between $10.50 and $14.00 per hour and many are full time positions including medical benefits.

PowerBack has proven to be a great partner with PA CareerLink®. When an EARN participant with previous administrative assistant experience applied for a receptionist position, she was disappointed to learn that it was already filled. But, Ms. Marchionne saw value in the participant’s experience and ability to be trained and hired the participant as a bookkeeper. This was the participant’s first formal exposure to accounting and the new role has helped the former TANF recipient to learn and develop new skills to further her career path.

Since the grand opening of the PowerBack facility, the EARN and Work Ready programs have continued to work closely with Ms. Marchionne and her team and she is currently scheduled to participate in an employer panel. The event will provide participants with an opportunity to engage with employers and directly ask questions about the hiring process in a low risk-setting. She was quoted in a local paper saying, “I am excited to continue our partnership and would encourage other employers to partner with PA CareerLink® as well.”
St. Luke’s University Health Network (SLUHN), based in Bethlehem, PA, is a large integrated non-profit network of ten (10) hospitals and more than 315 outpatient facilities. As the Lehigh Valley’s second largest employer, SLUHN offers job seekers a wide variety of family-sustaining careers, from entry-level to highly skilled. They have been a valued employer partner of the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley for years and are continuously engaged with the workforce system by participating in PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley job fairs, employer roundtables, events and industry meetings.

SLUHN has provided EARN participants meaningful and rewarding career opportunities. During this program year, one EARN participant was hired as a full-time Medical Receptionist and is scheduled to continue her healthcare education by taking Registered Nursing classes. Another EARN customer recently was offered and accepted a full-time Medical Assistant position for $14.75 per hour, and a third was on-boarded as a full-time Personal Care Aide earning $16 per hour. St. Luke’s also provides its employees tuition assistance and incentives to upskill and develop rewarding career pathways, such as the EARN participant who started out as a Personal Care Assistant.

Sharon Scheirer, St. Luke’s Senior Coordinator of College Relations and Employee Development, states that “PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley runs low-cost, high-volume events for organizations, large and small. The professional staffers at PA CareerLink® actually listen to an employer’s needs and suggest ways to meet those needs. We have taken quite a few referrals from PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley and they have turned out to be great employees.” As Lehigh Valley’s economy continues to grow, there is a steady need for qualified healthcare professionals. St. Luke’s continues to provide family-sustaining careers for Lehigh Valley’s EARN clients looking to develop a healthcare career path.
Students with disabilities in the Oxford School District have accessed real-life, work-based learning experiences resulting from collaboration of multiple OVR offices and Herr’s located in Nottingham, Pennsylvania. Herr’s expressed interest in collaborating with OVR to address its current and future workforce needs. As a result, OVR offices from Norristown and York joined representatives of the Oxford School District and a parent of a student with a disability – who happens to also be a Herr’s employee – to present Herr’s opportunities for collaboration.

Working closely with the school district, OVR staff identified student participants for the Work-Based Learning Experience, who then received training on interviewing and resume writing before applying and interviewing. OVR staff also provided training to Herr’s staff on disability etiquette and reasonable accommodations. Upon completion of the summer program, Stacy Zeager, Herr’s HR Business Partner, shared that the students were not the only ones who learned throughout the program: “I think this is a good experience for our supervisors,” she said, “in terms of understanding that this is something that we can do.”

This partnership did not just provide students with summer employment, though; it also led to permanent employment for two of the participants, who now earn $14/hour at Herr’s. Patrick, one of the students hired after the first year of the program, currently works in the re-packing department, where he assists with packaging small snack bags for bulk orders. His advice for other students with disabilities is to “just work hard, don’t slack off and keep a positive attitude.” Now in its third year, the multi-partnership across Herr’s, OVR and local education entities have expanded to include additional employment opportunities for students in warehousing, shipping and landscaping.
Clinton County Government

Nominated by Central PA Workforce Development Corporation

The Clinton County Government demonstrates exemplary support of workforce development through its engagement and partnership with PA CareerLink® Clinton County. Utilizing the PA CareerLink® as a go-to resource, the County posts hiring positions, provides tours of county departments, assists county clients prepare for and obtain employment, and prepares for the future workforce via involvement with youth programming – including a day long tour in the summer of 2018 for upcoming high school juniors who participated in Camp STEAM.

Clinton County Commissioners remain engaged and committed to making their community better! The County works closely with Lock Haven University and other schools to present to students, host internships and job shadow experiences. Many of the interns have been hired after completion of their internship. They support economic development by working closely with Clinton County Economic Partnerships to attract and recruit businesses to expand or relocate into Clinton County. In addition, the county takes a holistic approach to improving the lives of its citizens by hosting workshops and partnering with employers on addressing addiction in the workplace, identifying employment options for community citizens on probation, providing free-of-charge professional clothing options for individuals in need, participating with Keystone Cares that support and improve lives of children and families and so on.

Furthermore, county staff give their own time to participate on various nonprofit committees and boards. Clinton County Government is a sponsor of the annual Leadership Clinton County (LCC) Program, and several County employees are graduates of the program. As part of each leadership session, County staff spend a day with the LCC class for tours and presentations on county government and the Commissioners discuss running for office and serving the community.

The Central PA Workforce Development Corporation is proud to nominate Clinton County Government and commends its approach to a seamless delivery of services to ensure that Clinton County continues to prosper and grow.
FedEx Ground

FedEx Ground is a major package shipping company which is a subsidiary of the FedEx Corporation. In the Lehigh Valley, the company now operates a total of four different sites, with the most recent opening of a $335 million, 800,000 square foot distribution Hub located near the Lehigh Valley International Airport in Allen Township. To meet their significant workforce demands to operate this new Hub, FedEx Ground partnered with the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley who served as their workforce intermediary with PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley to develop a customized workforce development strategy to recruit, screen and hire more than 1,000 workers.

The workforce strategy included the posting of available positions on the state’s PA CareerLink® online job matching system during the spring of 2018. During the summer months, FedEx Ground held 14 job fairs at PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley, with a total of 332 job seekers attending. In addition, the company participated in two larger targeted sector job fairs where another 189 job seekers were on hand. The company was also able to utilize the PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley computer lab to enable job seekers to directly apply via the FedEx website.

The Workforce Board Lehigh Valley provided FedEx Ground wage information and labor market data which resulted in the company negotiating with their corporate management to increase the base wages of their Lehigh Valley workforce. Many available positions were for package handlers with competitive starting wages as high as $15.25 for overnight shifts and $14.25 for day and evening shifts. All package handlers received an additional $1.00 per hour for the peak season. FedEx Ground offers package handlers multiple increases in their first year and, by their first work anniversary, they receive a wage increase to $16.25 or $15.25 depending on the shift.

The FedEx Ground Human Resources team partnered with the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley and PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley to facilitate discussions with LANTA leadership, resulting in increased bus services, expanded hours of service and the placement of a bus stop at the front door of their new Willowbrook Road Hub. In addition, Fed Ex Ground participates in Employer Spotlights that highlight their company and available career opportunities for job seekers. The Workforce Board Lehigh Valley is proud of its partnership with Fed Ex Ground and congratulates them on this award recognition!
Ford Business Machines, Inc. is Western Pennsylvania’s largest independent full-line authorized dealer of Canon, Konica Minolta and Lanier products for commercial copier, printer and multi-function product technology. They offer an array of business solutions such as data management, IT services and managed print services that assist companies to decrease cost and increase efficiency. Founded in 1991 by John Garlow, a former Navy Veteran, Ford Business Machines is a family owned and operated business. The Corporate office is located in Connellsville, PA and has grown considerably over the last 27 years, including expansion to Allegheny and Mercer Counties.

Ford Business Machines posted their first PA CareerLink® job opening in Fayette County in April of 2002. Partnering together for over 16 years, 133 openings were posted in Fayette and 62 individuals hired through the website. In 2018, 32 positions were posted, 10 which were newly created. There were 11 hires from the PA CareerLink® totaling 25 for the year. Ford Business Machines works closely with the PA CareerLink® to maximize their benefit of services.

In addition to recruitment and hiring, great advancement opportunities exist in Ford Business Machines. They provide training for new hires and utilize the On-the-Job Training Program. PA CareerLink® Fayette wrote six On-The-Job Training Contracts this past year. Ford Business Machines offers a competitive living wage and full benefits for health care, supplemental, life insurance, disability insurance, as well as a yearly profit sharing plan and matching 401(k).

In support of attracting the workforce of tomorrow, Ford Business Machines partners with local secondary and post-secondary schools to provide students with internships, job shadowing, and tours. They also participate in the Challenge Program, job fairs and present on careers in business and technology. Ford Business Machines promotes STEM careers via 3D printing and technology demonstrations with various K-12 and post-secondary education partners and community organizations.

Supporting workforce, community and economic development in Fayette County, Ford Business Machines serves on numerous Boards of Directors including the Westmoreland-Fayette Boy Scouts of America, Uniontown YMCA, Fayette Chamber of Commerce, FACT Bus, Twin Trees, The Challenge Program, Copier Dealers of America and the Redevelopment Authority. Ford Business Machines is a member of the Advisory Committee for Fayette County Career & Technical Institute, Uniontown Rotary Club, and the Greater Uniontown Imagination Library. The company is active in the Fay-Penn Leadership Academy, Junior Achievement and Big Brothers Big Sisters. They participated in International Literacy Day by donating books to the Albert Gallatin School District and gave presents to children at Pittsburgh’s Light Up Night.