

# Youth Works

## Informational Brief

Mission: To promote a state of economic well being by helping to create a skilled, diverse, motivated and adaptable workforce.

### EMAA Youth Experiences

#### Madison County



Debi Hutson

Word is getting around in Madison County. And the word is that there is an agency who can give youth the extra assistance they may need to succeed.

One youth, we'll call her Lana, needed a little extra help in several ways. Lana enrolled in the youth program in Madison County as an In School youth with an individual education plan. She was very shy, "to the point of not speaking unless she was spoken to", but she eagerly participated in various activities offered by the East Missouri Action Agency's case managers. Lana learned about finances, budgeting, career planning, resume writing, job interviews, work ethics; as well as other job-related

activities offered at her work site.

She also gained confidence through her work experience and felt validated as her supervisor offered much needed job-related computer skills. Lana matured throughout her work experience and when it ended she was rewarded by being hired by the same medical center.

The constant encouragement and enrichment were a major help to Lana. She graduated from high school and now has employment. She has also been approved to take college courses through Vocational Rehabilitation.

Though these steps to success may seem small to some, they were giant leaps with substantial consequence for Lana. Case managers, Paul Mell & Debi Hutson's impact on Lana will last a life time—hers.

#### April 2008

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#### Iron County



Linda Bohannon

When it comes down to it, case managers are in the encouragement business. Sometimes, all that is needed to create momentum is a little encouragement. The momentum then propels the youth forward enough to help them realize personal success which gives them added incentive to carry on!

Encouragement is what Shannon needed in Iron County. Shannon was referred to East Missouri Action Agency's case manager, Linda Bohannon, by a friend. When Shannon enrolled in the youth program, she was a high school drop-out with little work experience who recognized this situation needed remedy. She was a single mother living on food stamps to provide for her baby son with no real prospects in sight; but she wasn't going to let it remain that way. Shannon began attending GED classes with her eyes focused on attending college.

After enrolling in the WIA youth program, Shannon attended a two-week Work Readiness class which provided the participants with the opportunity to learn valuable "soft skills" needed in employment. Shannon had perfect attendance in the class and finished by scoring at the highest possible level on the required WorKeys test.

#### Workforce Investment Board of Southeast Missouri- Providing Services for Our Youth

- East Missouri Action Agency
- MERS/Goodwill
- Pemiscot Co. Initiative Network
- Alternative Schools in Cape, Dunklin, Bollinger, and Stoddard Counties
- Jobs For Missouri's Graduates
- Susanna Wesley Family Learning Center

## MERS/Goodwill—Successes

According to MERS/Goodwill case manager, Sid Hemmann of Perry County, “It’s the little successes that keep case managers working”. Sid had been trying to locate a client for six weeks without success. It *is* hard for a youth to hide from Sid—she is tenacious. The client was no longer working at her last known work site and did not have a phone. So, Sid used snail mail. Sid mailed her newsletters, calendars and reminders for upcoming events. In a monthly mailing, the Quarterly MERS/Goodwill Youth Council was announced and this client showed up and participated. The client then scheduled and kept another appointment with Sid. During that appointment a GED test date was scheduled (she had previously missed three other GED test dates). The day of the test came, Sid was at the appointed meeting place and the client “no-showed” again. It is back to snail mail again. Thank goodness for the little successes along the way to sustain case managers during these frequent set-backs.

In Cape Girardeau County, the high school seniors in Kelly King’s youth program are gearing up for graduation. Graduation is not the only thing on the horizon for them. One graduated in December and began post secondary training in Building Trades. He will receive his high school diploma and his Certification of Completion this month. Another is already enrolled in Mineral Area College; while another begins job shadowing soon. Two other youth found employment this month and a single mom will take her GED in May. Kelly says, “case managers do a lot of one-on-one work with youth to meet their individual needs...I work hard at listening and encouraging them in each of their positive endeavors”.

## Pemiscot County Initiative Network News

Mississippi County case manager, Aaron Russell, is encouraged by the progress one out-of-school youth is making in securing a promising future. The youth enrolled as a 20 year old, single mother who was unemployed. Even though the youth had finished high school, she was still unfocused about her future but wanted something more than just paying the bills. Aaron entered this youth into a work experience with the East Prairie Nursing Home in December. She worked as a nurse’s aid, obtained her certification, and was offered full time employment before the work experience had ended. She is continuing to work hard on her education in Sikeston and would like to pursue a career as a Medical Technician. These things will help her create a promising future for herself and her child.

Last fall, a youth enrolled in the Pemiscot County youth program as a high school drop-out “looking for options to better her life”. Case Manager, Lynette Cruz, explains that “Darla” is a great example of a motivated youth. Within a month of her enrollment, “Darla” completed the Workplace Readiness Class and in March traveled to Poplar Bluff to complete her GED test. The weather in March was unpredictable, so “Darla” and her mother decided it was best for her to stay with her father who lives near Poplar Bluff in order to be sure and make the test. “Darla” felt she did well on the test and in April was notified she had passed. Lynette continues to encourage “Darla” to move forward towards her aspirations.

PIN, in conjunction with Missouri Mentoring Parent Program and the Career Education Program held a banquet to honor the achievements of their youth. It was an encouraging evening with motivational speaker, Jeff McGoy, closing the program.





Seeing how the pieces fit together in our region

These statistical slices are drawn from the Case Manager's Monthly Report & Toolbox (Missouri's data management system)

**Pemiscot County Initiative Network**

Youth Enrolled	Mississippi (26 active)	Dunklin (41 active)	New Madrid (21 active)	Pemiscot (22 active)	PIN (110 active)
In School Youth	13	32	13	18	76
Out of School Youth	13	9	8	4	34
Youth contacted	22 (85%)	37 (90%)	18 (86%)	18 (82%)	95 (86%)
Number of youth activities provided	2-in-school & out of school meetings	2-monthly & educational	4-monthly, Life Skills & 2 service projects	2-budgeting & recognition banquet	10 activities provided
Youth in "follow up" co-hort (exited)	26	27	46	47	146
Exited youth receiving required contact	2 (08%)	2 (07%)	4 (09%)	6 (13%)	14 (10%)

**MERS/Goodwill**

Youth Enrolled	Scott (13 active)	Perry (14 active)	Stoddard (10 active)	Cape (10 active)	MERS (47 active)
In School Youth	4	6	3	5	18
Out of School Youth	9	8	7	5	29
Youth contacted	10 (77%)	13 (93%)	9 (90%)	10 (100%)	42 (89%)
Number of youth activities provided	1-quarterly	10-quarterly meeting, workshops in decision making, budgeting, job interviews, resumes, goal setting, FAFSA, & college application	1-quarterly	4-quarterly, WRC, monthly, alternative school	16 activities provided
Youth in "follow up" co-hort (exited)	31	14	19	22	86
Exited youth receiving required contact	2 (06%)	4 (29%)	5 (26%)	6 (27%)	17 (20%)

**East Missouri Action Agency**

Youth Enrolled	Ste. Genevieve (32 active)	Iron (18 active)	Madison (7 active)	St. Francois (39 active)	Bollinger (13 active)	EMAA (109 active)
In School Youth	13	3	2	7	2	27
Out of School Youth	19	15	5	32	11	82
Youth contacted	30 (94%)	14 (78%)	2 (29%)	27 (69%)	13 (100%)	86 (79%)
Number of youth activities provided	7-workshops in budgeting, job interviews, resumes, goal setting, FAFSA, personal journaling, & college application	0	0	0	0	7 activities provided
Youth in "follow up" co-hort (exited)	7	9	9	33	6	64
Exited youth receiving required contact	1 (14%)	0 (0%)	1 (11%)	2 (06%)	3 (50%)	7 (11%)

## East Missouri Action Agency front page continued

Since December 2007, Shannon has completed the Work Readiness class, gained her GED, and has begun babysitting in her home to help provide for her son. The childcare job is only temporary though, Shannon plans to start the radiology program at Mineral Area College in the fall of this year.

Case manager, Linda Bohannon, has high hopes for this youth—she sees in Shannon the “right stuff” needed to excel. Linda adds the encouragement.

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## Youth Around the Southeast Region



Adopt a Grand-Friend in New Madrid Co.



Speaker-PIN Youth Recognition Banquet



Dunklin County Youth Meeting



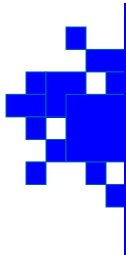
Several Malden WIA participants cheer



JAG Career Association Banner



PIN Youth Recognition Banquet 2008



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**We're on the WEB!**

For more stories about youth in our region  
or to read this newsletter online

**[www.job4you.org](http://www.job4you.org)**

