

Community Reinvestment Act Pilot focused on Workforce Development

NWPA Job Connect, the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) for Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Warren, Forest and Venango Counties, was selected as one of the projects in the nation's Local Workforce Development Board and Financial Institution Partnership Pilot program. The pilot comes from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) along with the National Disability Institute through their [LEAD Policy Development Center](#) focused on creating collaborations within the local workforce area and financial institution leaders. The initiative promotes the sharing of information about the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) to maximize its impact on the local workforce.

On October 29th NWPA Job Connect, PA CareerLink®, LEAD, local banks and federal regulators connected to discuss living-wage jobs and entry level career opportunities in banking for low- and moderate-income individuals. The event was also an opportunity to better understand the banking workforce needs now and, in the future, and how banks, NWPA Job Connect and PA CareerLink® can partner on supporting workforce development. This is essential to the region as five (5) of the six (6) counties in the Northwest region have poverty rates above the average for the Commonwealth. One of the Counties, Forest, has double the number of individuals living in poverty.

The event convened representatives from financial institutions, the Cleveland Federal Reserve Bank, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) as well as the LWDB and representatives of PA CareerLink®. Dr. Lisa Miller, Executive Director of NWPA Job Connect, moderated the event, and presented information on the Workforce Innovative and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA's landmark legislation was signed into law on July 22, 2014, to strengthen and improve the workforce system to help adults and youth, especially those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers through training and/or employment. The Act also helps employers through hiring and the retention of skilled workers for their businesses.

Keith Knauff and Janina Lee of PA CareerLink® presented as well as Genevieve Chow, Community Affairs Officer, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), Henry Pyatt, Community Affairs Specialist, Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Drew Pack, Regional Outreach Manager, Pittsburgh Branch, Federal Reserve Bank (FRB) of Cleveland and Kyle Fee, PhD, Policy Advisor of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland.

Dr. Miller presented about and facilitated discussion on how the funding is used locally to support businesses and job seekers through innovative partnerships and initiatives. The groups discussed how to put into action partnerships that would be mutually beneficial to meeting workforce needs along with promoting financial capability by offering budgeting, credit, financial management and literacy.

This open forum provided the opportunity for workforce and financial institutions to explore the ways they could share information on banking career pathways, along with workforce and

financial literacy needs. The groups would like to continue to work together in the future to strategically plan how to support and connect job seekers with local employment opportunities, particularly in the financial industry.

This event was sponsored by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC).

If you would like additional information on this Community Reinvestment Act Pilot focused on Workforce Development, please contact Drew Peck by visiting the link below.

<https://www.clevelandfed.org/community-development/pack-drew>

For NWPA Job Connect Stevens Amendment information please visit our website at <https://www.nwpajobconnect.org/resources/>