

Army Recruiting Strategy Includes Employers

The Army has been looking for a few good men (and women) for years. Companies seeking the same can partner with the Army to help both meet their needs.

The PaYS (Partnership for Youth Success®) program has been in place for five years. Corporate partners – there are now 111 nationwide – agree to hire recruits once their military service is complete. The Army vows to equip the soldiers/future employees with specific job skills requested by the companies. The program is promoted as an incentive for recruits to join the Army with a future job waiting for them.

Bob Qualls, PaYS program manager at the U.S. Army Recruiting Command in Fort Knox, Kentucky, says that originally companies were interested in the specific skills (from the Army's 200 occupational specialties) that matched their job requirements. Those skills are important, but are being overshadowed.

“Companies are saying, ‘We want soldiers. We can teach them our business practices. We want people who are drug free, people who work hard, people who work long, people who

don't quit until the mission is over,’ ” Qualls contends. “That's what the Army does.”

Another change is that the program was initially focused on the private sector. Now, the nation's oldest fire department in Boston, a number of police departments and other public sector groups are part of the mix.

Qualls says 30,000 soldiers and 2,500 members of the Army Reserves are part of the program. All but a few hundred are still on active duty, but a significant number is scheduled to transition to their jobs in the coming months. A PaYS Information Exchange system allows companies and future employees to remain in contact while the soldiers are serving throughout the world.

The effort continues to try and attract Indiana companies, Qualls reports, with some showing interest but none officially part of the program as of July.

Resource: Army PaYS program at www.armypays.com

Vincennes Adds LINK Between High School and College

It's no secret that educational opportunities must come in various forms. Vincennes University is adding to the mix with its introduction of the Project LINK program.

With Indiana school districts facing budget shortfalls and eliminating some upper-level courses, Project LINK allows students to take college courses without leaving their high school. Through two-way interactive video, high school juniors or seniors join college students in taking college courses from college professors. They earn college credit and a grade. The anticipation is that participating high schools will also award credit to their students.

Fall 2005 courses include Survey of Criminal Justice, American History 1, Principles of Sociology, English Composition 1 and a variety of foreign language classes. The classes will change in the spring semester, with American History 2 and English Composition 2 among the offerings.

Karen Sutton, director of the program for Vincennes, says North Central High School in Farmersburg and Blue River Career Center in Shelbyville were the first two schools to join the program. An early drawback for some, she reports, is that the high schools must adjust to the university schedule. The history class, for example, is offered on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m.

Sutton says Vincennes has offered a Project EXCEL program, in which college courses are taught by qualified high school instructors during the school day, for 30 years. It served more than 1,800 students in 64 high schools in 39 counties in the 2004-2005 school year.

Resource: Karen Sutton at (812) 888-4120 or www.vinu.edu

If at First You Don't Succeed ...

No one ever said that consolidating local government operations would be easy. The failure of the Indianapolis Works proposal to pass in its original form garnered the attention of *Governing* magazine, a national publication devoted to state and local government operations.

The advice for Indianapolis and others seeking greater government efficiency – be positive. Louisville, the most recent poster child for consolidation, was successful on its third attempt in 2000 by utilizing a constant message that combining the local entities would place the city among the top 25 in population and help make it a stronger economic player.

A strategy recommended for others is to move forward in piecemeal fashion. Authors advise to avoid political firestorms like police and fire protection, and focus first on sharing of services. A Des Moines and Polk County, Iowa merger failed in 2004, but officials are working to set uniform building codes, share computer maintenance and road salt purchases, as well as combine some housing programs.

Consolidation Efforts

Area	Year	# of Attempts
Tallahassee/Leon County, Florida	Continuing	3
Sacramento, Sacramento County, CA	Unsuccessful	2
Athens/Clark County, Georgia	1990	3
Des Moines/Polk County, Iowa	Continuing	2
Augusta/Richmond County, Georgia	1995	5
Wilmington/New Hanover County, NC	Continuing	4
Knoxville, Knox County, Tennessee	Unsuccessful	1
Kansas City/Wyandotte County, Kansas	1997	1
Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky	2000	3

States Form Bond to Boost Energy Supply

Ensuring the continuance of a reliable, low-cost supply of electricity is the major energy initiative of the Indiana Chamber. Development of clean coal technology, a diverse energy mix and a strong transmission infrastructure are among the ingredients needed for success.

The challenges, of course, are not limited to Indiana. Four Western states – California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming – have agreed to work together by building a 1,300-mile electricity “superhighway.” Dubbed the Frontier Line, the project would eventually carry enough electricity to power 12 million homes.

Why work together? Wyoming and Utah, with strong energy supplies, are in position to make millions of dollars by

sending electricity to Las Vegas, San Diego and other cities in need. Customers in Nevada and California could save millions on their electricity bills.

Clean coal and wind energy are both expected to be major power sources. The final mix will likely depend on how much Californians, as the largest consumers, are willing to pay for their electricity.

A major issue yet to be decided is who goes first. Generators are hesitant to build in Wyoming because transmission to the other states is not in place. Those who would build the transmission don't want to go first, preferring to wait for the generators. The project is expected to take as long as 10 years.

Future Leaders Give Community a Boost

If all goes well, a new business will be calling downtown Goshen home by January 1, 2006. That will be possible through the efforts of the Goshen Leadership Academy.

Seeking to make a difference in their community, the 21 students who are part of the leadership class decided to sponsor a business plan contest. As of July, they had raised nearly twice the original goal of \$5,000 from other area businesses to assist the company in its first year of operation.

Brent Randall, vice president of the Goshen Chamber of Commerce and a member of the leadership class, describes the impetus for the effort. “We wanted to not only improve the downtown business climate, which is already pretty good, but leave a legacy. We talked with a lot of small business lenders and people in higher education to find people already thinking about business plans.”

Applications were accepted through mid-July. The goal was for a steering committee to complete its review and select a winner or winners by early September. The money received will be used for rent assistance, with local companies and organizations also donating other items to help the new business get off the ground.

“We had a very good response. Support came from across the board,” summarizes Randall, who admits the idea to help start the new a business was one previously executed in Richmond.

Resource: Goshen Chamber of Commerce at (574) 533-2102

Census Numbers Tell Sad Tale

Even if you're a “glass is half full” type of person, it's hard to find much optimism for Indiana in U.S. Census Bureau population projections.

The rallying cry of “at least we're not going to lose people like North Dakota and West Virginia,” won't be appearing on any economic development promotions. Yes, Indiana is expected to have 12% more people in 2030 than in the year 2000 – 6.8 million in 25 years compared to 6.08 million five years ago. But 30 other states are expected to experience a larger percentage growth.

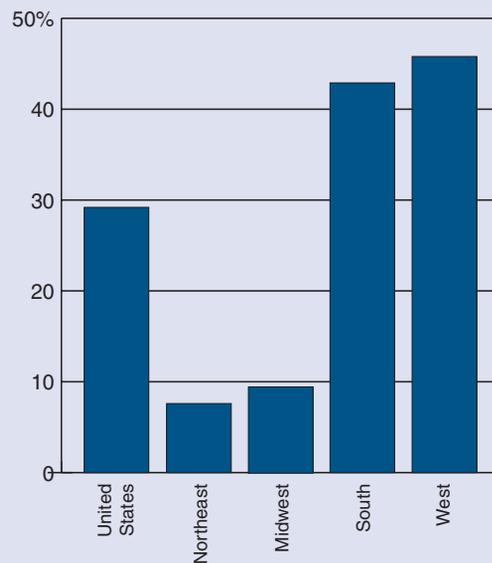
Indiana would fall from its current status as the 14th most populous state to 18th. Tennessee, Maryland, Washington and Arizona will pass Indiana, with Arizona moving from 20th to 10th by more than doubling its population from 5.1 million to 10.7 million.

For those who insist on good news, Indiana will fare better than most of its Midwest competitors. Illinois (39th in growth percentage), Michigan (40th) and Ohio (47th) will trail, while Kentucky is one spot ahead of Indiana in 30th place. The projected 9.5% growth in the Midwest will pale in comparison to the U.S. total of 29.2%.

For the really good news, projections are just that – forecasts, predictions, estimates. Indiana can, and must, become a more attractive place to live and work. It's up to all of us, particularly our government, community and private sector leaders.

Resource: U.S. Census Bureau at www.census.gov

Percent Change in Population by Region (2000 to 2030)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Interim State Population Projections, 2005