

Workforce Policy Proceedings  
PNWER Annual Summit – Big Sky, Montana  
July 13, 2015

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*Public Sector Co-Chair Rep. Mike Cuffe, Montana State Legislature*

*Private Sector Co-Chair Shawna Argue, MBA, P.Eng., EP(CEA), EP(EMS), FEC, FCSSE, FGC(Hon) President/Principal Consultant, Argue and Associates Management Consultants, Inc., Past President of APEGS*

### **Speakers**

Mary Kaye Bredeson, Executive Director, Center of Excellence for Aerospace & Advanced Manufacturing, Everett Community College

Linda Crerar, Director, Center of Excellence Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Pierce College

Shana Peschek, Director, Construction Center of Excellence, Renton Technical College

Katy Brooke, Grant Coordinator, Rev Up Montana

Chris Parson, Project Director, Center for Manufacturing Advancement, Flathead Valley Community College

Kim Allen, FEC, P.Eng., MBA, Chief Executive Officer, Engineers Canada

Colin Smith, Past President APEG-BC

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Ways Education is influencing the Regional Economy and Identifying Workforce Development Opportunities That Can Enhance, Attract or Create More Businesses:

### **Best Practices from Centers of Excellence in Washington State**

Linda Crerar, Shana Peschek, and Mary Kaye Bredeson presented on the Centers of Excellence work in the State of Washington. Their three respective centers focus on Homeland Security, Construction and Manufacturing.

#### Homeland Security

- Building resilience in communities
- Supply change & cyber security - greatest threats to Dept.
- Maintain national security with trained personnel

#### Construction

- Addressing skill gaps: info tech. & leadership
- Industry experts collaboration on future leaders of technical industry
- Labor market data to back up education
- Skills and knowledge for running sophisticated systems
- Technology always changing

#### Advanced Manufacturing

- Translate roles between industry and education
- Set realistic expectations of the industry in an educational environment
- Created to access and enhance changing workforce
- Education work hand-in-hand with workforce development entities
- Technical skills changing rapidly
- Introducing career technical education
- Graduating students with job opportunities
- Common course curriculum & equivalencies in higher ed.

## **Montana Skilled Training Programs**

Katy Brooke spoke about RevUp Montana, a workforce project supported by a \$25 million dollar grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. RevUp Montana creates short-term degree, certificate and apprenticeship programs that lead students into high-wage, high-demand jobs in Montana. Filling these jobs with skilled, experienced workers will help increase employment, strengthen Montana businesses, and grow our economy. The goal is to making sure workers meet the needs of industry with a competency based education. The program also works to address the lack of access to education for rural area students using online platforms. The course embeds industry recognized credentials and works towards placement in apprenticeship. Dept. of Labor & Industry and 2-year Colleges partnership is a collaborative effort, students have direct access to a wider variety of financial and non-financial supports to help make training affordable.

Chris Parson, Flathead Valley Community College — Center for Manufacturing spoke about the importance of training in the manufacturing. Montana community colleges work with customized training and build relationships with community. Chris gave examples of the significant amount of leaving workforce higher wage not always the answer, workplace environment plays more of a role than the past.

## **Challenges & Opportunities For Professional License Mobility: Shortage of Engineers in Canada**

- Kim Allen spoke about the Trans-Pacific Partnerships as a game changer for professional labour mobility. Our current licensing systems are built for 20th Century. Labor changes are happening due in part to the transporting engineering talent. NAFTA signatories recognize reciprocal professional licenses in the states. Kim also highlighted the oversupply of new engineer grads and undersupply of mid-career engineers. Several engineering graduates move onto other careers and numbers of practicing engineers reduce over time because of attrition and other variables. Because of this time and investment in bringing new grad up to speed organizations have some reluctance to hire new graduates.

- Colin Smith gave an update on his work and he is currently gaining supporters of workforce development and professional mobility specific to cross broader labor mobility from Canada to USA.

Questions:

Participant asked about Chris and Katy's thoughts on shared curriculum? The state has taken up common course numbering and there has been a willingness to align programs. Also it was mentioned that industry partners give feedback on co-development and mobility issues.