

Beshear awards Work Ready Community in Progress to Adair

From Columbia-Adair Chamber of Commerce

Frankfort, KY (September 6, 2012) - Governor Steve Beshear announced today that Adair County has been certified as a Work Ready Community in Progress. The new Work Ready Communities Certification program from the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) and the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet assures employers that a local workforce has the talent and skills necessary to staff existing jobs and to master the innovative technologies new jobs will require.

"We are excited that Adair County has achieved Work Ready Community in Progress status and we look forward to certifying many others in the future. Work Ready Community in Progress status is not an easy accomplishment. Adair County leaders are to be commended for working together to achieve this goal," said Crystal Gibson, Chair of the Kentucky Work Ready Communities Review Panel and vice president of Communications and Public Affairs at Citigroup.

County Judge Executive Ann Melton said, "I am extremely happy that the Columbia-Adair County Economic Development Authority took the initiative to do this project. It required a lot of hard work, was very time consuming and I commend them on their efforts. This designation is a beginning which shows that our Community is committed to prepare our workforce for the jobs of today and to have skilled workers for the jobs in the future."

Mark Harris, Mayor of the City of Columbia said, "Congratulations to our local Economic Development Authority on working to achieve the Work Ready Community in Progress Award. It's a beginning to aid in impacting the quality of life and sustainability for future generations. We must continue to work on becoming a Certified Work Ready Community."

Adair County was designated as a Work Ready Community in Progress because it is close to meeting the criteria to be certified as a Work Ready Community. To achieve this level, a county must present a viable plan to meet all of the criteria within three years. The designation shows that a community is making strides and working with its business, education, workforce and economic development leaders to set and meet common goals that will give the county an economic edge.

"Adair County is a role model for other communities that want to demonstrate a commitment to reaching education, workforce and economic development goals that make their communities a desirable place for business," said Joseph U. Meyer, Secretary of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. Kentucky is the third state to begin certifying counties as Work Ready Communities based on the quality of their labor force. To become certified, communities must gather local support and commitment and apply for the Work Ready Community designation. Counties have to meet criteria in six areas including high school graduation rates, National Career Readiness Certificate holders, demonstrated community commitment, educational attainment, soft-skills development and digital literacy.

Applications for the certification were reviewed by a panel appointed by the KWIB. The panel recommended certification by the board for the counties that met the criteria. The panel will meet three times a year to review applications, which can be submitted at any time.

For more information about the Work Ready Communities program, go to <http://kwib.kygov/workreadycommunity.htm> or contact Sue Stivers, Executive Director, Columbia-Adair County Economic Development Authority, Inc. & Chamber of Commerce at 201 Burkesville Street, in Columbia or call 270-384-4401.

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2012-09-11 - Frankfort, KY - Photo from Columbia/Adair Chamber of Commerce. **Sue C. Stivers, Executive Director, Columbia-Adair County Economic Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce, center, foreground,** and Crystal Gibson, Chairman Work Ready Communities Review Panel, *gray suit, to Ms. Stivers' left* hold the prestigious "Work Ready Community in Progress Certificate" awarded to Columbia/Adair County by Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear on Thursday, September 6, 2012 in Frankfort, KY. At Ms. Stivers' right, foreground, is Ron Heath, past President of C/AC Chamber of Commerce and the man who was instrumental in writing an all important "Soft Skills" section of the application. Others are, *back row, from left* Darel McGaha, Associate Director Workforce Development; Doug McCammish, Chairman of Columbia Adair County Economic Development Authority; Columbia Mayor Mark D. Harris; Principal Troy Young of Adair County High School; Adair County Judge Executive Ann Melton; Robert Curry, Kentucky Economic Development Cabinet. Joseph U. Meyer, Secretary, Kentucky Education & Workforce Investment Board; Ed Holmes, Chairman, Kentucky Workforce Investment Board; and Tom West, Executive Director, Kentucky Workforce Investment Board.
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