

Muhlenberg Co. Gets ready for the Kentucky Work Ready Communities Program

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MUHLENBERG COUNTY, KY (3/9/12) - Did you know that Kentucky is taking dramatic steps to improve the quality of its workforce? A new program called the Kentucky Work Ready Communities initiative is quickly taking shape as counties throughout the Commonwealth are readying themselves to qualify for this new designation.

Muhlenberg County has established a taskforce to help pursue certification and wants to make students, employers and current employees aware of this effort. The taskforce is especially interested in encouraging local employers to join in and share their ideas on ways of improving the quality of the local workforce.

The Task Force is made up of key leaders involved in helping move Muhlenberg's economy forward, including the Muhlenberg Alliance for Progress, Greater Muhlenberg Chamber of Commerce, Muhlenberg County Schools, Madisonville Community College, West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board, Felix E. Martin Jr. Foundation and the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training.

Daviess County was the first location in the state to earn Work Ready Certification on February 16th. Other counties in the state including some in the West Kentucky region are working on their applications including Muhlenberg County. The goal is to present the plan to the Kentucky Work Ready Review Panel, who meets three time a year to approve applications.

Being designated a Work Ready Community takes the commitment and cooperation of the public and private sectors throughout Muhlenberg County. The Work Ready Community Planning Task Force is meeting regularly to complete the rigorous application, which involves providing a set of strategies and actions detailing how Muhlenberg County will meet the five criteria established by the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board and Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

The state review panel will assess the application on factors related to 1) high school graduation rates, 2) the number of National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC) issued within the county, 3) improvement of educational attainment rates, 4) improving soft skills for the secondary and post-secondary adult population and 5) how the county will increase broadband availability within the county.

Additional programs and efforts by the community can be added to the application that help to improve the quality of the local workforce. An example of this would be the new "Adult Education Program for Muhlenberg County" designed by the Madisonville Community College and funded by the Felix E. Martin Foundation. The goal of this cutting edge program is to increase the number of adult aged high