



BUSINESS

Diana's Fashion Boutique to Remain Open

Diana McKnight, owner of Diana's Fashion Boutique located at 2808 N.E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. in Portland says that she will remain open through the summer due to popular demand. Although McKnight intended to close her doors at the end of March because of poor sales, she says that the economy has picked up and she is now getting strong support from the community.

"The last few months were really difficult due to 9/11, but people are regaining confidence in the economy and are celebrating the turnaround with new clothing," said McKnight.

Although her boutique will remain open, McKnight explained that she is still looking for a new buyer. "I've been in business for over 8 years and I need a break. My husband and I intend to do some traveling during the next few years, so I'm looking for someone to take over. We've survived the worst, so this is a great opportunity for anyone wanting to own a successful business," she explained.

For more information on Diana's Fashion Boutique, call 503-249-3790.

Turbine Maker Moves to Rivergate

(AP)—One of the world's leading wind turbine manufacturers will shift its headquarters to the Rivergate District of north Portland, a move that will create about 1,200 jobs and at least \$150 million in local investment, city officials said last week.

Mayor Vera Katz said Denmark-based Vestas Wind Systems negotiated with the city for a year before sealing the deal to move its facilities to Portland from Palm Springs, Calif.

Vestas plans to break ground immediately and start production by July.

"To dig our way out of this recession, we needed to become one of the most economically innovating places on earth," Katz said. "Vestas will serve as the vanguard of a new, clean-energy industry, putting Portland clearly on the map."

Vestas was motivated to choose Portland because of the growing popularity of wind power in the Pacific Northwest, particularly in the Columbia River Gorge.

The region saw the second-largest growth in wind power last year, after Texas, and at least 15 wind farms are planned in Oregon and Washington in the next few years. The American Wind Energy Association will hold its annual conference on wind technology in Portland in June.

Many of the wind turbines produced in Portland will be shipped to sites throughout the Pacific Northwest for use on wind farms.

The facility in Portland will create up to 400 administrative jobs, 200 science and engineering positions and numerous jobs in welding and skilled manufacturing. The state will provide \$750,000 for training new employees.

The company would not have moved ahead with the deal without a two-year extension of the federal energy tax credit, which was included in the economic stimulus package signed by President Bush last month.

The tax credit benefits companies involved in developing alternative technologies, such as wind power.

"The ripple effect from this wind energy tax credit is tremendous," said Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Ore.

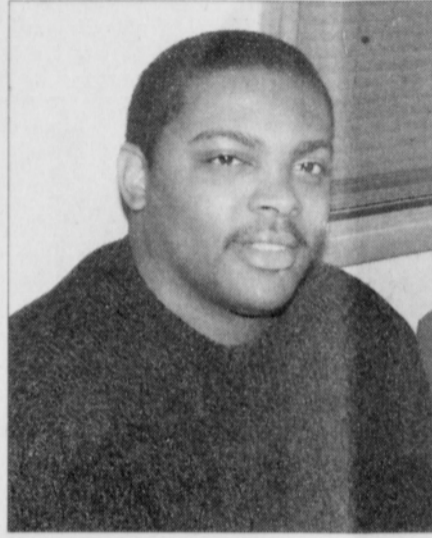
Through Jobs Plus, Unemployed and Employers Gain

BY JOY RAMOS
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Since the start of the recession, it's been a tough market out there for job seekers. On the flipside, employers have to choose among a glut of applicants for every job made available. By design, the Jobs Plus program offers a win-win solution for both sides. It has been an almost untapped resource that will remain available through the Oregon Employment department for another year and a half.

The Jobs Plus program has helped thousands of Oregon residents on unemployment insurance gain meaningful job experience and pay through companies affiliated with it. Many find that there's less competition for available jobs through the program. Money is even set aside for the Jobs Plus employee through an educational fund if more schooling is needed. The average amount is usually \$500.

One success story involves a woman who was hired as a kitchen helper through Jobs Plus last year.



Gerry Coleman is a Jobs Plus representative that works as a liaison between individuals on unemployment and companies hiring through the Oregon Employment Department.

After completing her Jobs Plus training, she was hired for regular employment with the same company. She used her scholarship monies from the program to attend night classes at Portland Community College, learning how to use the programs Excel and Quick book. By getting advanced office education, she was promoted to Office Manager with a significant

increase in responsibility and income.

The monthly reimbursement from the Jobs Plus program helps employers by reducing their financial burden when they are hiring a new employee. The most qualified candidate receives full-time or part-time, paid training for a trial period of thirteen weeks. Businesses participating receive

a subsidy: the wages are reimbursed at \$5 per hour for the first 30 days and then reduced to \$4 per hour for the balance of the 13 week contract. This also allows the employer to fully screen the Jobs Plus employee before making a hiring decision.

A large steel distribution and processing shop recently moved into a larger facility on Swan Island. They needed to fill new positions and requested the help of Jobs Plus for prospective employees. The company was willing to offer one-on-one specialized training to the new hires in the operation of their machinery. For the owner of the company, the wage reimbursement program through Jobs Plus had significantly helped offset the cost of the training. The company currently has six Jobs Plus employees—two of which will be completing their training opportunity and will be hired on as permanent employees. The other four are doing well and will also be offered permanent positions.

Employment Specialist Garry B. Coleman does extensive outreach work promoting Jobs Plus to companies who may be interested in saving labor costs. Up to 10% of a company's regular staff can be Jobs Plus workers. This in turn helps the unemployed choose from many of the job opportunities available from different industries.

"We are able to potentially save the employer time and money by pre-screening the job applicants and verifying their work history. Jobs Plus tries to effectively refer the candidates whose skills best match the employer's needs," explained Coleman.

Everyone benefits. Coleman added that the Jobs Plus program has been a good match-up because the unemployed can go back to work; the employer saves time and money; and the economy gets a boost.

For more information on the Jobs Plus program, call Garry Coleman of the Oregon Employment Department at 503-731-3044.



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