

A Special Supplement to **Siuslaw News**

Careers & Employment

FLORENCE COMMUNITY JOB FAIR

FAIR DAY FOR FLORENCE

Thursday's job fair takes initiative for area employment opportunities

By CHANTELE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Several dozen jobs offered from several dozen employers will be on display at the Florence Community Job Fair tomorrow, March 24, from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., sponsored by Three Rivers Casino Resort, which is hosting the fair in its event center at 5647 Highway 126.

The Community Job Fair will also feature networking opportunities and resources. Tables from various local and regional employers will showcase jobs in healthcare, service industries, school districts, offices, youth opportunities and more.

"People should come expecting to meet with businesses who are actively seeking employees," said job fair

coordinator Pam Hickson, recruitment specialist for Three Rivers Casino Resort and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.

It is a free event. "Participants will find out hiring specifics for businesses, as well as learn about those businesses and what they are looking for," Hickson said.

She said to think of it as an interview, as some businesses will have applications ready at the event.

"Come prepared for people who are actively hiring," Hickson said. "That means dress appropriately, and bring a resumé if you have one available."

The job search and application process can be difficult for both job

seekers and employers; job fairs such as this one bring those elements into one space with a goal to form a network in the local community.

"We chose spring break so that visitors to the area, as well as young people, could attend. People are hiring now for the busy spring and summer seasons, and we want people to know the opportunities are available," Hickson said.

Job seekers of all ages are welcome to the fair. Vendors will be available throughout the day, including assistance with job search tools from Worksource Lane and its partners in the employment system.

The event will also feature some volunteer opportunities.

According to the Oregon Employment Department and the

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Oregon's unemployment rate dropped to 4.8 percent in February, from 5.1 percent in January. The last time Oregon's unemployment rate was this low was in April 1995.

The Florence area hopes to continue to increase employment statistics and improve lives in the community by putting on this first Community Job Fair.

"I'm hoping for a great turnout. We would love to make this an annual event," Hickson said.

The participating employers are: Angel Job Corps; Berkshire Hathaway Home Services NW Real Estate; City of Florence; Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians; Driftwood Shores Resort; Elderberry Square

Community; Florence Area Chamber of Commerce; Fred Meyer; Lane Community College; Native PTAC; New Horizons In-Home Care; NW Youth Corps; Oregon Department of Transportation; Oregon Pacific Bank; PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center; Regency Florence; Safeway; Shangri-La; Shorewood Retirement Residence; Siuslaw News; Siuslaw Public Library District; Siuslaw School District; Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue; Spruce Point Assisted Living and Memory Care; Three Rivers Casino Resort; U.S. Coast Guard; U.S. Forest Service Siuslaw National Forest and Worksource Lane.

For more information, contact Hickson at 541-902-6504 or stop by the event.

Job hunting tips for people over 50

Though the job market has improved in recent years, many men and women are still out of work. Perhaps most troubling, many of those people are age 55 and older who are fearful of an uncertain future and a job market where they are seemingly overlooked.

According to a 2012 study from the Government Accountability Office, the number of long-term unemployed people age 55 and older has more than doubled since the onset of the recession.

For many unemployed men and women over the age of 50, the harsh reality of a job market that does not value their experience or skill set is deeply disconcerting. But as difficult as the job market can be for older men and women, it's not impossible to find a job, though it might take some ingenuity and perseverance.

Don't limit yourself. Those who were victimized by layoffs should expand their job searches to more than just their previous fields.

While it's definitely a good idea to maintain contacts in your old field and routinely look for openings in that field, it's also a good idea to examine your skill set and experience and find a new field where these things apply.

Applicants who can demonstrate their skills in the latest technologies can put themselves above other applicants

Chances are your years of experience are transferable to many fields, and redirecting your job hunting efforts to a new line of work might yield opportunities you are not even aware existed.

Embrace the 21st century. Many companies or organizations mistakenly assume that the digital age has passed older workers by.

Workers in their 50s might be unfairly categorized as dinosaurs with no grasp of mobile technology or the latest software programs. But those applicants who can demonstrate their proficiency in the latest technologies, including mobile technologies like smartphones, tablets and social media, can put themselves above fellow applicants.

Start working. If you are mired in long-term unemployment and spend every day at home, get out and start working. Volunteering is a great way to lift your spirits, network with other professionals and maybe even learn of employment opportunities you won't hear about on the couch at home. And volunteering, be it with a charity or a professional organization, is a great way to revive your resumé and continue to add accomplishments despite your unemployment.

Emphasize your age. Many unemployed men and women over 50 tend to look at their age as a hindrance that is preventing them from finding gainful employment. But your age can be an advantage, as many organizations find older applicants are more reliable and need less time to adapt than younger applicants with less experience.

When emphasizing your age as a positive, don't focus on job titles, which many other unemployed men and women your age likely highlight on their resúmes.

Instead, focus on specific achievements and accomplishments and reduce the emphasis you place on job tasks. Achievements tend to stand out above titles, and men and women over 50 likely have achieved more than younger, less experienced applicants.

Think small. Smaller companies wherein employees tend to wear many hats are more likely to value experience than a larger company.

By the age of 50, many professionals have vast experience in a host of different positions, and that versatility is likely to appeal to a small company looking for employees who can multitask.

Finding a job after the age of 50 isn't easy. But taking a broad approach and emphasizing as opposed to downplaying your experience might help you stand out among a crowded pool of applicants. —Metro



COURTESY PHOTOS

Social media can either positively or negatively affect your employment prospects, depending on what is shared. It is a networking tool for people of all ages and walks of life.

Careful choice of posts, photos and friends best represents online presence

Social media has become an integral part of modern society. Millions of people around the world — and of all ages — use social media to connect with one another. But this valuable tool also can be a detriment, particularly to men and women seeking employment.

What a person says or does on social media can come back to haunt them with regard to the impression they create with prospective employers. Questionable antics and comments may reflect negatively on a person without him or her even realizing it.

According to a study by Reppler, a social media monitoring service, 91 percent of employers use social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to screen prospective employees.

Many people are completely unaware how others view

them through their social media profiles and usage, but social media profiles give away more information about a person's character and personality than many people would ever imagine. Even seemingly innocent remarks and observations can be misconstrued.

Use of profanity or offering commentary on controversial subjects may be a person's right. However, such comments may not sit well with prospective employers.

Some may think the solution is not to have profiles on the popular social media sites. But avoiding social media entirely can send the wrong message to prospective employers. It may suggest that you are not a person who is current with the latest trends in technology and may give employers the impression that you are not adept at keeping up with the changing times.

The key is finding the right balance with social media. The following are a few tips to ensure your social media usage does not do more harm than good.

- Do not post or tweet information that should be kept private. If you would not tell inti-

mate secrets to another person, especially an employer, do not convey these details to your group of "friends."

- Recognize that it's not always your comments that can affect perceptions of you. The friends you choose to accept and socialize with via social media can impact how others view you. If friends are prone to vulgarity and off-color commentary, employers may surmise that this type of behavior is acceptable to you. Screen friends and block those who do not meet your standards.

- Know that security features on social media applications change frequently. It's important to know just how private your information may be. For example, if you are tagged in another person's photo, people outside of your friends' list may be able to see that image. You have to police your sites and lock down the information as you see fit, only posting what is appropriate for the general public.

- Do not complain about a job or boss publicly. Even if your boss is not on your list of friends, he or she may still learn about your comments through gossip. While verbal complaints with others may not be accurately tracked back to you, text is hard evidence to discredit.

Social media profiles give away more information about a person's character and personality than many people would ever imagine.

- Use social media as a networking tool to find other like-minded individuals in the same fields. Join industry-based groups and organizations so that you can share your ideas. Further expanding your reach through blogs and websites can also help your job hunt.

Social media is here to stay, making many details of people's lives more public, so exercise caution with social media so your career is not negatively affected. —Metro

BLACK
YELLOW
MAGENTA
CYAN