



Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council

Region 9 News

OCTOBER 2010

"WORLDS" IN NUMBERS

- 8,700 8th graders from 66 schools in 8 counties
- 870 teachers, guidance counselors and parents
- 112 southwest Alabama companies providing 500 volunteers for the hands-on exhibits
- 210 volunteers
- 400 community leaders and guests from other areas



WORLD EXHIBITS

- Energy
- Construction
- Maritime
- Aerospace
- Healthcare
- Safety—OSHA
- Engineering/Architecture
- Automotive Technology
- Manufacturing
- Public Service
- Communications

Students Discover "Worlds of Opportunity" at Unique Career Expo

Nearly 9,000 area 8th graders attend two-day event to learn about local high-wage careers



On September 29th and 30th, more than 10,000 students, educators, business leaders, and volunteers from the eight counties of Southwest Alabama came together for the first annual SAWDC Worlds of Opportunity Career Expo. Worlds of Opportunity is a hands-on career exploration opportunity for 8th grade students that exposes them to high-wage, high-demand careers in their community.

The History

The expo culminates a year of planning and preparation by a mostly volunteer group of individuals including event co-chairs, Judy Graham of Alabama Power and Charlotte Kopf of Associated General Contractors. While the planning for Worlds of Opportunity took a little more than a year, the concept for the expo has been around for much longer. According to Al Etheridge, Field Director for SAWDC, the original idea for the event was discussed seriously at a series of workforce development round table discussions. From that point, the goal of SAWDC has been to strengthen the partnerships necessary to execute an event of this scale.



Why 8th graders?

Some have questioned the significance of hosting an event like this for 8th graders, rather than the traditional career events for high school juniors or seniors. The



www.worldsofopportunity.org

age group targeted with Worlds of Opportunity is strategic; eighth grade is an important decision point for students who will have to decide on a course pathway for the remainder of their high school years. SAWDC believes that this is a crucial time to reach children with the message that there are high-paying jobs in this area—many of which do not require a bachelor's degree from a four-year institution.

It is also important to know that Worlds of Opportunity is one piece within a larger set of education programs. SAWDC and the Mobile Area Education Foundation currently bring business leaders into 4th grade and 8th grade classrooms through the "Wouldn't it be Cool?" and "Choices" programs. SAWDC will also be rolling out a coloring book initiative this year for kindergarten children.

Worlds of Opportunity is long-term workforce development.

The mission of SAWDC is to develop strategic partnerships which attract, educate and train students and workers to better meet employer needs and foster economic growth in a global marketplace. At the heart of each of these education programs is the overwhelming need for an educated, highly-skilled, and drug-free workforce in southwest Alabama. Without a large pool of qualified and highly-capable potential employees, the industries of this region, and ultimately the local economy, will suffer.



How can I be a part of the 2011 Worlds of Opportunity event?

The 2010 Worlds of Opportunity event was tremendously successful, impacting nearly 9,000 8th graders in the region. The event has received attention through the state and the Southeast region. The impact of this event would not be possible without the tireless effort and financial support of volunteers and event sponsors. To volunteer or sponsor the 2011 Worlds of Opportunity event, please call (251) 445-2090 or email jedwards@sawdc.org.

What they're saying...

about the first annual Worlds of Opportunity event

“Worlds of Opportunity was an incredible opportunity for our students...

while walking through the Expo I could not help but overhear their excitement and enthusiasm. My very favorite was when I heard a student remark to his friend, can you believe they did all of this for us! “

-Melanie
Monroe Co. Public Schools

“There are no words for the wonderful event that you pulled off this past week! AMAZING & AWESOME are not close!”

-Cathy Mitchell
IMPACT Learning Center
Scottsboro, AL

“Seeing, listening and having the opportunity to speak to the exhibitors was inspiring and very informative. The expo was an awesome teaching opportunity and a remarkable learning experience. It was an experience that will help our students plan their future for a lifetime of success.

Ken Megginson
Commissioner
Mobile County School Board

“In my opinion, this is the best effort the area has made into making an

impact on student retention and graduation from high school.”

-Stephen Backman
Remington College

“I just wanted you to know how much we appreciate the efforts of everyone involved in the Career Expo. I feel the students really enjoyed the trip and got a lot out of it. Our 7th graders cannot wait to go.”

-Lynn Mitchem
Bay Minette Middle School

THANK YOU to all of the 2010 Worlds of Opportunity World Leaders!

Safety

Kurt Petermeyer—OSHA
Torrey Garrison—ASSE
Kevin Saucier—ASSE
Avis Beasley—ASSE

Energy

Susan Rossman—Alabama Power
Judy Graham—Alabama Power
Tom McNeal—Alabama Power

Construction & Transportation

Charlotte Kopf—AGC Mobile
Katherine Galanos—AGC Mobile
Susie Cleveland—Homebuilders Assoc.
Leroy Nicholson—AFL-CIO

Energy/Architecture

Chad Jordan—Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood
Green Suttles—GSE Engineering

Maritime

Byron Dunn—ATN
Audrey Smallwood—ATN

Aerospace

David Yarbrough—Mobile Airport Authority

Manufacturing

Rob Rice—ThyssenKrupp

Communications

Nancy Pierce—Mobile Co. Public Schools

Public Service

Steven Jarrett—Dept. of Public Safety
Chris McLean—Mobile Co. Sherriff Dept.
Greg Eubanks—City of Mobile
John Reese—Selma
Steve Dean—Mobile Fire Dept
Lester Hargrove—City of Mobile
Kay Taylor—City of Mobile

Healthcare

Carol Statter—Infirmary Health System
Carol Lambert—Mobile Area Chamber

A Special Thank You to the Sponsors who made the 2010 Worlds of Opportunity possible

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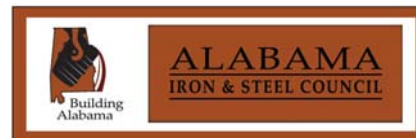


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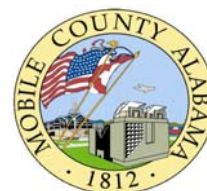
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2010 Worlds of Opportunity Steering Committee

Judy Graham, Co-chair—Alabama Power
Charlotte Kopf, Co-chair-AGC
Larry Mouton-Mobile Co. Public Schools
Laura Chandler—SAWDC
Al Etheridge-SAWDC
Sydney Raine-Mobile Works

Leroy Nicholson—AFL CIO
Linda Ingram-Mobile Area Education Foundation
Leida Javier-Ferrell-Mobile Area Chamber
Greg Cyprian-City of Mobile
Judy Miller-WESCO
Tom McNeal—Alabama Power

Please visit the Worlds of Opportunity website at www.worldsofopportunity.org

SAWDC would like to thank Marcy McNeal and Tracye Mathis with the Mobile County Public School Systems for their work in designing and constructing the site!

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WORLDS of OPPORTUNITY CAREER EXPO 2010

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Worlds of Opportunity Career Expo 2010

Eighth grade students, teachers, school administrators, industry leaders and volunteers will converge on the Fairgrounds in Mobile, Alabama on **September 29 - 30, 2010 for the first annual "Worlds of Opportunity" Career Expo**. This program is the first step toward selecting a career plan and beginning career preparation. Upon completion of the Expo participating eighth grade students will develop career portfolios and select "plans of study" for their 9-14 educational experience.

A project of the **Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council (SAWDC)**, the expo will be a fun, educational, **hands-on** opportunity for students to become familiar with a broad overview of jobs available in the area. Attendance to the expo will be available to students from eight county workforce development regions which includes Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, and Washington counties. In addition, students will be invited from the Pensacola, Florida and Pascagoula, Mississippi area.

DIRECTIONS

Worlds of Opportunity Career Expo

SAWDC
Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council Region 8, Inc.
Promoting Successful Employment
www.sawdc.com

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