

Small Businesses Improve Workers' Skills Through No-Cost Workforce Training Program

Dr. Joann La Perla-Morales, President, Middlesex County College

Like many small business owners, Dotti Frye faced the challenge of training her store employees to use new computer programs at the Miracle Ear locations in East Brunswick and at the Woodbridge Center Mall.

Miracle Ear's corporate office required all its stores to switch to a computer database for scheduling hearing aid tests and appointments. Because the majority of Frye's workers are 55 years old or older, they lacked familiarity with computers and how to properly utilize these databases.

Frye learned about the NJ Basic Skills Workforce Training Program after a family member received training through the program. She took advantage of this rare opportunity to gain valuable training for her small workforce and enrolled 10 employees in Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word classes, tuition free, at Middlesex County College.

"The courses helped my employees build self esteem and become more comfortable with the computer applications," Frye said. "When our corporate office required us to stop using our appointment books, all of my employees were comfortable with the new databases and were able to provide the best quality customer service at our locations."

One of the attractive aspects of enrolling employees in the Workforce Training Program is the simplicity of the application process. Companies are not required to fill out complicated paperwork or make financial disclosures in order to enroll employees. Businesses are also not required to pay tuition or fees for the classes. They are, however, required to pay employees at regular hourly rates during training.

Frye said she was so pleased with the computer classes that she also enrolled her 10 employees in an effective customer service communications class through Middlesex County College. As a result of this additional training, Miracle Ear employees could better schedule visits and converse with customers on the phone.

"We are better able to schedule appointments and meet the needs of our customers as a result of these courses," Frye said. "I'm extremely satisfied with the results and would recommend the program to small businesses that are looking to enhance their operations and improve their workers' skills."

The Basic Skills Workforce Training Program, operating under the leadership of the NJ Department of Labor Commissioner Hal Wirths, is a unique tool for small businesses in New Jersey and hasn't been replicated by any other state, noted NJBIA President Phil Kirchner.

"Miracle Ear serves as a great example of how this training can help small businesses to sharpen their operations and help employees raise their skill levels," Kirchner said. "This program is a national model for other states and has been embraced by employers and employees alike."

To schedule a class, contact Bob Rosa at NJCCC Consortium on Economic and Workforce Development at rrosa@njworkforce.org or (609) 393-9000.

Sponsored by the NJ Community College Consortium



Get Training for Your Employees At No Charge to Your Company!

At your company or at any one of 65 college campuses closest to you, and at no extra charge to your company, your employees can get training in:

- Computer applications
- Communications
- Math and measurement
- English as a second language

The NJBIA Basic Skills Workforce Training Program is brought to you by the New Jersey Business & Industry Association, NJ Community College Consortium, and NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development.

To get started call
609-393-9000

NJBIA

Basic Skills Workforce Training Program

www.njbias.org/resources/training

To participate in the program, you must be a registered NJ business and in compliance with NJ tax law.