

EVENT FOCUSES ON BUILDING WORKFORCE 'TALENT PIPELINE'

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BELOIT - Many with a stake in workforce development are excited about the upcoming Business Education Connection Event.

This year's event, titled "Building the Talent Pipeline," will be held from 8 - 11 a.m. on Sept. 13 at the Eclipse Center, 3 Eclipse Boulevard. It costs \$15. A portion of the proceeds will go to Project 16:49.

The goal of the event is to connect educators with businesses. More than 100 people have signed up to attend the event, according Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Amy Turner.

Turner said workforce development is an important issue in the area, and she's excited to have businesses learn about the great things educators are doing to build the talent pipeline.

The event is hosted by the Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce, Forward Janesville, Rock County 5.0 and the Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation. Sponsors are Blackhawk Technical College, Beloit College and the University of Wisconsin-Rock County.

The keynote speaker will be Jason Tyszko, executive director of the Center for Education and Workforce at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. He will talk about building a talent pipeline.

"Our main goal in planning this event was to create a venue for business representatives to connect with the education community, and for them to explore ways to tap into their resources to build their talent pipelines," said Andrew Janke, economic development director for the City of Beloit.

Right in line with the theme for this year's event, building the talent pipeline is the foundation of the Inspire Rock County initiative.

In past years, the Chamber held a business education summit. However, this event will feature a quick connections format on the following topics: mentoring; site visits and industry knowledge; training resources; internships, externships and youth apprenticeships.

Forward Janesville has been ramping up its efforts to focus on workforce development, according

to Forward Janesville Vice President of Government Relations Dan Cunningham.

He said as many as one in three Wisconsin businesses have trouble filling open positions. Some companies are resorting to putting up billboards in efforts to find employees. With unemployment low and the economy improving, businesses need help filling the positions.

"Events like this will give employers some solutions to workforce issues and some creative ideas," Cunningham said. "It will be a one-stop workforce shop for people to go there and learn how to solve their own workforce challenges."