



Haas Center presents educational requirements study at October meeting

The results of the much-anticipated and eagerly-awaited Educational Requirements Study from the Haas Center were at center-stage at the October TeCMEN with Dr. Melissa Neal, Associate Director at the Center, and Dr. Rod Lewis providing the presentation.

Initially designed as a compliment to the EDC's marketing efforts for the new Emerald Coast Technology and Research Center, the study provides "a comprehensive assessment of the components of the tri-county (Okaloosa, Escambia and Santa Rosa) higher education system that supports jobs in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) related fields." The study team feels "the data contained in this report will allow planners to more fully realize the potential benefits of the Emerald Coast Technology and Research Center (ECTRC) with respect to workforce needs and workforce training in certain high-wage,

high-skill engineering sectors of the economy."

One of the initial findings is each of the 5 stem related fields the tri-county region boasts some of the highest concentrations of employment (as a percentage of total employment) present in the state. Of overall population, Okaloosa County, which currently has under 200,000 people, is projected to have 267,731 people by 2030. However, the ages of those people is projected to rise. In other words, there will a larger portion of the population ages 60 and above (30 percent, a 7 percent increase from 2000) than in previous years. Also, the age groups from 20 to 59 show a decrease in total population (48 percent, a 15 percent decrease from 2000). That means that there will be fewer younger workers available to fill jobs in the local community.

Researchers feel this data should allow planners to reach the following goals:

- Design a series of courses that meet the needs of local industry and fulfill student interests
- Offer those courses at times that students are available to participate
- Provide the necessary funding schemes that allow a targeted broader base of the population to benefit from development of the ECTRC
- Work closely with local industry to provide employees with the time and additional financial resources necessary to further their training

To gather this data, researchers relied on student surveys and focus groups, plus business focus groups. A student telephone survey of 569 revealed 90 people who currently attend college or university in the area and 118 potential attendees, but do not currently attend. Of those respondents, 37 percent reported not

having adequate time with current work/family obligations as the biggest barrier to post-secondary enrollment. Twenty-nine percent reported not having sufficient financial resources for the additional expense, while 17 percent felt there was not adequate financial aid available to permit them to attend. As for interest in the STEM disciplines, 36 percent indicated an interest in Science, 30 percent in Technology, 20 percent in Engineering, and 14 percent in Mathematics. Of note is the fact that over half of these respondents report holding an Associates degree or higher. And, 84 percent of those currently attending classes report taking advantage of employer financial incentives to do so.

In terms of those wanting to stay in the local area, 40 percent of those responding (31 total respondents) say they want to get a job in this area after graduation, 82 percent want to get a

(Continued on page 2)

Boeing to host November TeCMEN; Haas Center to continue Oct Q&A

TeCMEN will go on-the-road for November as the meeting will be hosted by Boeing at their Fort Walton Beach facility. **We will meet on Tuesday, November 18, 7:30 a.m. (Note date & venue change).** The Special Operations Forces programs group is dedicated to modifying, testing, repairing

and servicing aircraft belonging to the United States Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). Major programs include the AC-130U Gunship with improvements to mission capability and the Integrated Weapon Systems Support Program (IWSSP) and the recently awarded Future Flexible Acqui-

sition and Sustainment Program (F2AST). It also supports the CV-22 tilt rotorcraft under the Interim Contract Support (ICS) program with future business opportunities geared toward life cycle sustainment for Process Based Logistics of this aircraft. Boeing has also teamed with Computer Sciences Corporation

to pursue the Special Operations Forces Support Activity (SOFSA) contract.

Also, Drs. Melissa Neal and Rod Lewis from the Haas Center will be on hand to take any additional questions as a continuation from last month's Educational Requirements Study briefing.



Economic Development
Council of Okaloosa County

Reminders:

- The presentation from the October meeting is available on line. To view go to www.tecmen.org.
- The next TeCMEN meeting is Tuesday, November 18, 7:30 a.m., at the main Boeing facility, 626 Anchors Street, Fort Walton Beach. **NOTE DATE AND VENUE CHANGE!**
- The December TeCMEN meeting will be held Tuesday, December 9, 2008, at the UWF-NFSC Emerald Coast Campus in FWB. Start time is 7:30 a.m.

Technology Coast Manufacturing & Engineering Network (TeCMEN) is comprised of EDC-member companies promoting growth and advancement within Okaloosa's technology-based business community through the association, collaboration, and contract-teaming of its manufacturing, engineering, technology and defense industry clusters. Using a collaborative concept, these companies join together to compete for and complete both defense-contracting and other substantial business opportunities that are too expansive for a single business to undertake.

TeCMEN member companies represent every major manufacturing and engineering discipline required to support requirements of both the military missions and the civilian community including:

- *Aerospace & Aviation*
- *Information Technology*
- *Micro-Electronics*
- *Biometric Technology*
- *Precision Machining & Metal Fabrication*

Assisting in the EDC's commitment are Okaloosa's learning institutions Northwest Florida State College, the University of West Florida, and the University of Florida Research & Engineering Education Facility.



For more information on TeCMEN,
contact Jeff Fanto at jeff@florida-edc.org

Educational requirements study results briefed (con't from page 1)

job in the area while continuing to seek additional education or training, and 12 percent want to continue their education, though not in the area. Of those who choose to leave the area, 25 percent of those can't find a job in the area that uses their college training, while nearly 26 percent want to live in another area. Those same respondents said that increasing the diversity of classes offered was of highest interest to them, followed by increasing the

availability of evening classes, on-line courses, and morning classes as well.

One of the more interesting and surprising portions of the presentation was the analysis of the supply-demand ratio for different engineering programs both locally and state-wide. We saw that, while the local area does not have an aerospace engineering program at the undergraduate level, other universities in the state do have

such programs, and the state as a whole is producing more aerospace engineers than the state is forecasted to need over the next five years. UWF's electrical engineering program is also meeting the current need for local electrical engineers, and the state is overproducing these engineers as well. However, computer engineers are not being produced locally or state-wide at the appropriate level to meet the needs of the future. In fact, locally, the

Haas Center staff forecasts that we will need 416 new computer engineers by 2013, but UWF will only produce 116 graduates over that same time period. The situation at the state level is even more critical. The state will need 10,573 new computer engineers over the next five years, but schools across the state will only produce 1,759 bachelor's level computer engineers. This information will be key to helping the ECTRC as well as the local colleges and universities strategically plan the degree plans they offer in order to best meet the area's needs for the future.

For more info, contact the EDC at 850-651-7374.

Coming events at the EDC

- "Vision of Progress" TV show for November features Dr. Melissa Neal, Associate Director, and Dr. Rod Lewis from UWF's Haas Center for Business Research and Economic Development, discussing their recently-completed Educational Requirements Study in support of the new Emerald Coast Technology and Research Center, next to the University of Florida REEF.