

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
January 9, 2019

Joseph Project Creates Opportunity for Sheboygan County Workforce

By Ray York, Business Counselor for the Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at UW-Green Bay

Sheboygan County, WI – A key mission of the Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) is to create proactive workforce recruitment campaigns in partnership with area firms. The SCEDC has partnered with the Pentecostals of Sheboygan County (POSC) to assist with the Joseph Project Sheboygan County, a faith-based workforce initiative that provides soft-skills training to help connect people to the career opportunities in Sheboygan County.

The Joseph Project started as a constituent service through the office of U.S. Senator Ron Johnson and became a collaboration with Pastor Jerome Smith of Greater Praise Church of God in Christ in Milwaukee, then grew through other partnerships throughout the state of Wisconsin. While traveling the state, the Senator found that manufacturers' primary concern was the lack of workers. The Sheboygan County Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has the third highest concentration of manufacturing in the United States accounting for 33.1% of employment in the area, and the MSA is the fastest-growing labor force in Wisconsin. Finding employees is a major challenge for area employers. Through this program, Johnson staffers and Joseph Project volunteers identify people ready for a life change based on their attitude and determination. These determined individuals participate in free week-long class sessions. The classes are taught by volunteers and cover the topics of teamwork, time management, financial management, conflict resolution, and spiritual fitness. Participants who persevere through the week of classes are given job interviews with employers who are hiring for well-paying manufacturing careers.

The Joseph Project Sheboygan County is spearheaded by POSC with the assistance of Senator Ron Johnson's office, Job Center of Wisconsin, Department of Workforce Development, Johnsonville Sausage, Nematik, Plymouth Foam, Consumer Credit Counseling Services, Sheboygan County Health and Human Services, and the SCEDC.

"We are absolutely thrilled to partner with all of our volunteers to offer the Joseph Project to Sheboygan County residents," stated Pastor John Putnam of POSC. "We believe that this project will change the lives of individuals and families within our community."

Transportation, the second largest spending category for a household in the U.S., is a key obstacle for low-income workers trying to find careers. Per the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average household spends \$9,004 on transportation costs per year, which is about 14% of the household's total budget. 20% of households regularly pay for some form of public transportation at an average cost of \$2,700 per year. The Joseph Project helps individuals overcome these obstacles by committing that every participant is offered the opportunity to get to work via a free, reliable shuttle for their first 30 days of employment.

The Joseph Project of Sheboygan County's first class will run January 27-30, 2020. Intake/sign-up for this class will be on January 14th, 2020 at Pentecostals of Sheboygan County Church located at 621 Broadway St, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085. Potential participants will need to arrive before the 10:00am start time.

"The success of the Joseph Project statewide is the result of a strong partnership between local and state-wide non-profit organizations, government agencies, and the business community," said Gary Dulmes, Chair of the SCEDC. "We have the most industrious workforce in the state, and the goal is to connect our workforce that wants a career to our high-quality open positions in Sheboygan County."

The Sheboygan County community will benefit from a local Joseph Project. Creative workforce development campaigns like the Joseph Project are an excellent resource for our community, providing soft skills training, filling transportation gaps for career seekers, and creating a positive environment that fosters the continued economic growth in our County. Opportunity is a landmark of economic success and when Sheboygan County works together, we drive more success in our communities!

If you are looking for a life-changing career opportunity, opportunities to volunteer, or would like more information regarding the Joseph Project Sheboygan County, please contact Russell Zimmerman with POSC at (920)467-9090 or email at russell@posc.life.

For more information about SCEDC services please email at info@SheboyganCountyEDC.com or call (920)452-2479.

##

Attachment: SCEDC logo, POSC logo

The Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) is a countywide private/public partnership, leading economic development efforts to improve the economic wellbeing and long-term prosperity of the businesses, residents and communities of Sheboygan County, through collaborative retention, expansion and attraction efforts for business and employment development. The SCEDC leverages a variety of tools available to encourage business growth and job creation. Key performance indicators tracked by SCEDC track and measure businesses assisted and resources leveraged. By applying many tools to assist businesses and communities and help them succeed, SCEDC achieves increased economic prosperity for Sheboygan County.

