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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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The Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board conducted a briefing for public officials serving the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County on July 1, 2009, to learn how the SWORWIB is using stimulus funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to increase training to youths, adults and dislocated workers in the county.

Walter McLarty, Chairman of SWORWIB and Vice President of TriHealth, and Sherry Kelley Marshall, SWORWIB President/CEO, were joined by Tom Hutter, Chief, Office of Workforce Development, Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services; Wayde Smith, Director of the SuperJobs Center; Kevin Holt, Section Chief for Hamilton County's Jobs and Family Services, as resources for the tour and briefings.

Marshall reported that the SWORWIB received approximately \$5.2 million in funds as a result of ARRA. Of that, \$2.4 million is being spent on youth employment services, as directed by Congress. In addition, \$1.3 million is allocated toward services for dislocated workers, \$1 million is being spent on adult workforce services, and approximately \$500,000 will go toward administrative costs.

This funding is on top of SWORWIB's annual budget of about \$6.2 million, which is divided roughly into thirds for services aimed toward youths, dislocated workers and adults who face barriers to employment, Marshall said.

The SuperJobs Center, on Central Parkway where the Open House was held, is the central one-stop center for placement and training services. It is funded through SWORWIB by federal workforce dollars and is operated by Arbor E&T, as are two satellite locations, one in partnership with the Community Action Agency at Jordan Crossing, and another in partnership with Great Oaks at the ReturnToWork Center at Scarlet Oaks.

U.S. Rep. Steve Driehaus asked about the rate of stimulus expenditures, since the ARRA legislation puts strict timelines on how quickly the funds must be spent.



About a year ago, SWORWIB had to refund \$456,000 in job-training funds to the U.S. Department of Labor. This loss of funds was the result of statewide under-spending of these federal dollars. In the context of this broader under-spending, Hamilton County had fully spent available funds and this rescission created a hardship that was unique to this area.

The ARRA legislation requires that 70 percent of the funding for youth services be spent by Sept. 30, 2009, Marshall noted. "Hamilton County has been aggressive in spending its allocated funds," Holt noted.

The SWORWIB has directed stimulus funds toward services for more than 700 youths, according to Holt. Most of those youths have been identified, evaluated for eligibility and enrolled. The services are being provided by five agencies selected from a formal request for proposals process announced in March and determined by the beginning of May, specifically: Arbor Career Works, Easter Seals Work Resource Center, Great Oaks Joint Vocational School System, Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates and the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati.

Each youth participant is required to be trained in basic computer literacy and earn a Microsoft Digital Literacy certificate.

Ohio State Sen. Eric Kearney and Nan Cahall, Cincinnati district director for U.S. Sen. George Voinovich, asked how training sectors were selected to match the needs of employers. Sen. Voinovich, Cahall said, often hears employers say they can't get workers with the types of skills they need.

Marshall said that the SWORWIB'S board, composed of leaders from Cincinnati and Hamilton's County's employers and all the required partners noted in the Workforce Investment Act legislation, approves the sectors to be emphasized for training after presentation of the labor market information. Among them are health care, construction, professional and technical services, life sciences and educational services.

Additionally, "The SuperJobs Business Services Unit," Center Director Wayne Smith said, "works very closely with local businesses to identify industries where training pays off."

State Sen. Kearney expressed interest in and support of the SWORWIB for its leadership in identifying industry sectors to focus resources towards. Health care is the most robust industry now hiring in Greater Cincinnati, as well as the whole state of Ohio, according to Tom Hutter. To that end, SWORWIB is funding approximately \$200,000 in health care training for entry-level workers. According



to Smith, the SuperJobs Center Business Services Unit is currently helping with training and/or recruitment for Cincinnati Children's Medical Hospital Center, Tri-Health and the Health Alliance.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, signed into law in February 2009, provided almost \$787 billion in funds to help stimulate the U.S. economy. The Cincinnati-Middletown Metropolitan Area had an unemployment rate of 9.4 percent in May 2009, compared to 5.4 percent in May 2008, according to the June 2009 report of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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The Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board is a nonprofit organization serving the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County in workforce development. SWORWIB is comprised of leaders from business, education, labor, and government, with the majority of its board members representing the business sector. SWORWIB sets the vision, policy direction, and performance expectations for the regional workforce development system, including the SuperJobs Center at 1916 Central Parkway and all satellite locations. The purpose of the WIB's workforce system is to provide an educated and qualified workforce that meets the current and future needs of employers, with the vision of becoming the model workforce development system by satisfying its mission to create and develop a comprehensive workforce development system that engages the entire community towards ever increasing levels of self-sufficiency.

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