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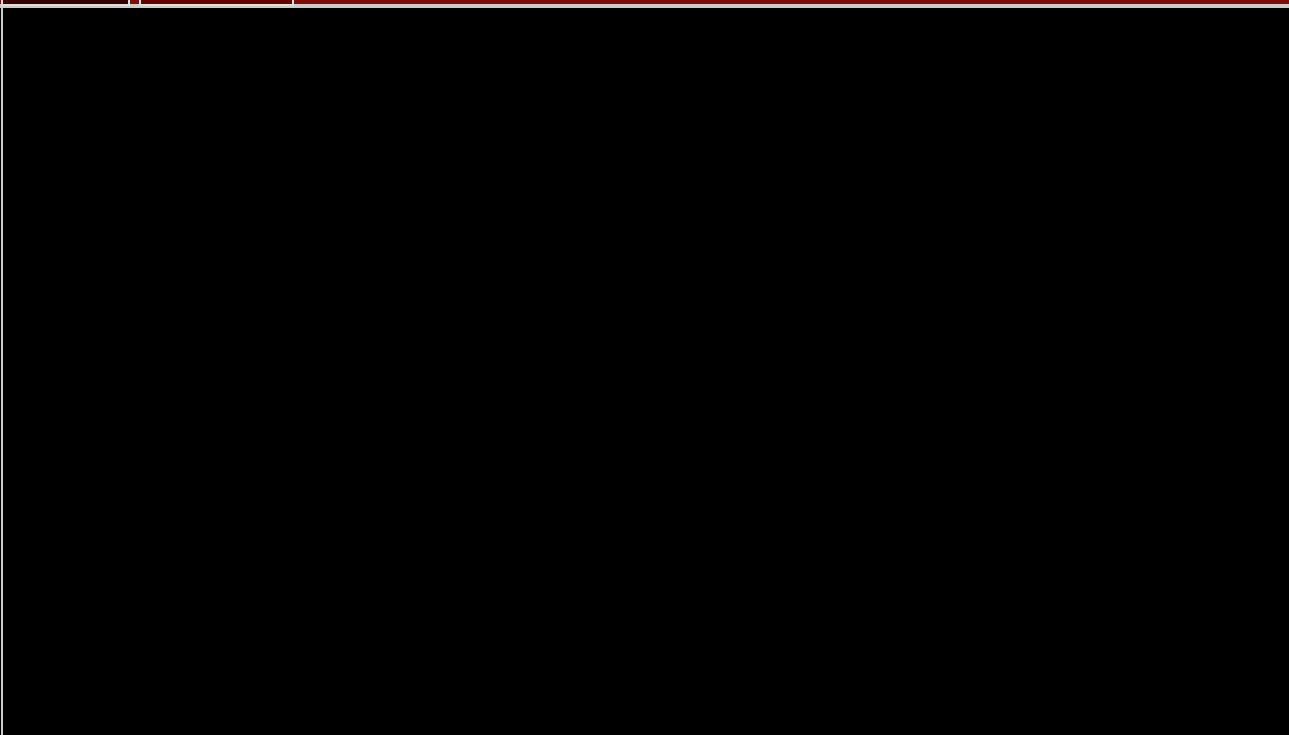
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## Job Expo Draws Hundreds to Covelli Centre

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 The Health Center, located at 77 E. Midlothian Blvd. was given a complete interior makeover. The client exam rooms also were expanded.



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It's billed as the biggest job fair of its kind in the area and hundreds turned out for it Thursday afternoon.

The Sixth Annual Penn-Ohio Regional Job Expo was held at the Covelli Centre. More than 70 businesses and agencies had representatives on hand to meet prospective candidates as well as nearly two dozen schools and training providers.

Job seekers started arriving more than an hour before the doors even opened, looking for that one opportunity that's been eluding them.

"I have been looking. There's not much out there. And being here, there's a lot of people," said Benena Rodriguez.

Within minutes of the Job Expo starting, more than 500 were already on the floor of the Covelli Centre asking questions, offering resumes and filling out applications. There were people of all ages and backgrounds, and some even had their children with them.

"Her father passed away like about four months ago and he was taking care of us. And right now it's just me and her and I just have to find a job," said Neatrice Lewis.

Many of the people looking for jobs on Thursday said the job hunt gets difficult, especially for those who can't find work in areas where they already have some skills or experience.

"You go to school, hoping, hoping you're gonna get a job. And soon as as you get out of school, you hope to get that job right away, but you don't and it tends to get a little frustrating 'cause you consistently have to go back to school to get more education and you still don't have that job when you get out," said Mike Grubbs of Niles.

"I went and got my undergrad at Michigan State and I got my master's at YSU and it's still hard to find something in the area," said Courtney Davidson.

Job experts said while there are jobs available, applicants need to be willing to learn to improve themselves on the job.

"The biggest thing is they really don't have a plan. Once they get their plan put together, then they come to the New Castle School of Trades and they say 'OK, I've got some skills' or 'I don't have the skills. I need

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Less than 6 months

the skills to be able to be value-added to that employer," said Noel Olinger of the New Castle School of Trades. "The employers will take entry level positions, that's not a problem. But you have to have certain basic skill sets to get there and then they refine those skill sets once you're on board."

There were a number of businesses and schools with connections to Utica and Marcellus shale exploration in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio. Experts at Thursday's event said that industry could mean job creation in this part of the country for decades to come.

- 6 months to a year
- More than a year
- I have never been unemployed

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