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Job Seekers Converge at Expo Event

Sept. 16, 2010 6:42 a.m.

By Maraline Kubik

Thousands of area residents turned out at the Oh-Penn Job Expo yesterday in search of employment. Some 80 employers with more than 1,600 job openings were on hand at the Covelli Centre, eagerly accepting resumes and applications.

"We've collected quite a few resumes," said Anthony Fusillo, sales manager/recruiter at Greenwood Chevrolet in Austintown, holding up a file folder more than an inch thick. The folder held dozens of resumes.



At V&M Star's expo booth, Megan Why reviews Dillion Vizi's resume.

Fusillo will sort through them looking for candidates to fill positions in the sales and parts departments, body shop and office. "Mostly, we're looking for sales people," he said.

At the First Energy table, LaMinda Nichols, a work force development representative, was telling job seekers about First Energy's Power Systems Institute. The two-year program, "that we pay for," she stressed, prepares those who complete the training to work at substations and on power lines.

Diane Kohler, a server at a local Bob Evans restaurant was among the captive listeners. Although Kohler is employed, "I'm looking for something different," she said.

Dozens of job seekers waited in line patiently for their turns at two of the most popular tables -- V&M Star, which is building a new rolling mill in Youngstown, and Patriot Special Metals in North Jackson which, according to HR director Victoria Neff, is looking to hire 13 workers by the end of this year and up to 50 more over the next three years.

Among those exploring opportunities at Patriot were Joe Spahr of Warren, Steve Davis of Cortland and Tyler Crider of Columbiana

Spahr has years of experience in a variety of fields and was looking for a position in manufacturing, purchasing or sales. He was put out of work in August 2009 when the company he worked for -- a supplier to

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Davis is a tow motor operator and production worker out of work since October 2007 when business dried up at the company he worked for -- Amweld, which produces steel doors and other products for the construction industry.

Crider, who is "between jobs," was looking for work as a project manager.

The V&M Star table was so crowded that it was barely visible most of the day.

"We collected one resume from everybody who attended," joked Ryan Hutchison, human resources information systems analyst, motioning to stacks of resumes spread across the table.

"Not really," said her co-worker, Mary Ann Decapita, human resources business partner. "We were selective in the resumes we took. We referred most people to our Web site."

V&M will hire job seekers who apply for positions via the Web site, Decapita explained.

Those who submitted paper resumes have already applied via the company's Web site but were asking for follow up. They want to make sure they are in the system, Decapita said. "We'll go through the resumes to make sure they're in the system and if they aren't, we'll send them a link to apply."

Despite reports about lackluster activity in the construction industry, Ken Zinz, human resources manager at Zinz Construction and Restoration Inc., Salem, said his company is "doing well." He attributes the growth and open positions to the diverse services in which the company specializes: remodeling, room additions, insurance claim repairs, and installation of new floors.

Home Depot, a source of information and materials for do-it-yourself home repairs, was looking to hire in-home sales representatives who will target the "do-it-for-me crowd," reported Ed Kesneck, branch manager for install services. Kesneck serves 56 Home Depot stores throughout northeastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

Other employers at the job expo included representatives from the banking and financial services, home health and health-care, communications, media, automotive, transportation, manufacturing, retail, service and information technology industries along with the U.S. Armed Forces.

Also participating in the event were also more than two dozen training providers distributing information about their programs.

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