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Mary Busher (l), director of operations, and Pam Lewis, administrative assistant, of Celerity Staffing Solutions discuss a client's staffing needs.

## OUTSOURCE HR

### Partnering With Human Resource Professionals Could Save You Time and Money

BY JUDY DAHL

When you recruit for a position, especially online, how long does it take you to review and screen all the resumes received in response? How much time do you spend processing payroll? What about administering employee benefits? Consider using third parties to handle any and all of these functions for you, so you can concentrate on running your business.

#### Convenience And Accessibility

Take payroll and employee tracking. As its name implies, Payroll Data Services provides online payroll processing for clients, including tax withholding and deductions. "We take on the legal tax liability," says Chris Hansen, district sales manager.

The company also offers time labor management—time and attendance systems that collect data on employees'

time worked, personal time off, vacations, and on businesses' labor allocation. With manufacturing facilities this usually involves time clocks; with other organizations employees usually clock in as they log in to their computers. "A lot of employers are turning to that type of system," Hansen says.

"We offer human resources tracking as well," he continues. "Our database can track every aspect of employees in the work environment, including performance reviews and future review dates, training and certifications completed, and other background information."

Businesses can generate a wide variety of reports, and all data resides in the system, so clients don't have to store confidential information on site. Only authorized users can access the database.

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# HR

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Payroll Data Services uses a single platform database with one sign-on for all its systems, so the data are integrated for customers. "There's no need for redundant entry into different systems, so there's generally greater accuracy," says Hansen.

"We're probably the only one in the state with a single platform," he adds. "We provide businesses with convenience and easy accessibility. Research shows as much as 40% of a small business' time is eaten up by HR functions, and we can save them a lot of that time."

## Efficiently And Economically

Third parties can facilitate the staffing process as well. "Sorting through resumes takes an enormous amount of time, especially if it's something you don't do often," says Jim Emerick, president and owner of Celerity Staffing Solutions. "We do it all the time, and can do it more efficiently and economically. If companies outsource HR, they may not need to dedicate a staff person to it."

Celerity can provide temporary staff, temp-to-hire, and direct-hire staff. "Temp-to-hire is the most popular," Emerick says. "A business can try out a candidate, and if there's a fit, hire them on. Otherwise we can find that candidate another position and provide a different candidate for the company."

Companies tend to use temporary staff for projects or seasonal work. "Any time where they need a lot of talent but they don't want to hire people permanently," says Emerick.

More clients are starting to use the company's recruiting and screening services. "Depending on the nature of the job, 95% of the resumes you receive may not fit the requirements," Emerick says. "We can sort through and find the ones you really want to pursue. Or companies may outsource the initial interviews, background checks, and any assessments they want done before they bring people in face to face."

The whole process of hiring and maintaining employees on companies' payrolls will continue to become more complex, he believes. "That's what we specialize in;

businesses like ours are in a position to help companies succeed," says Emerick.

## More Qualified Talent, Faster

Aerotek also provides recruiting and staffing services. "We consult and execute simple to elaborate strategies for companies of all sizes," notes Brooks Berg, director of business operations for the Madison office of this national organization. "The solution might include temporary, temp-to-hire, or direct hires; it depends on the needs of each client."

Every engagement with a customer is unique, Berg indicates. "Businesses should contact us as soon as they know they need talent, and our first step is asking questions to find out if and how we can help."

His organization can help expedite the sourcing and interviewing of candidates. "We have seven niche divisions (industries his business specializes in) in Madison: engineering, energy, environmental, professional services, commercial, scientific and architecture," he explains. "We can dive into those pools of candidates to get the best expertise. We can recruit more qualified talent faster than companies can in-house."

Many companies use Aerotek to provide a flexible workforce when they need to get more products out the door short term. "We can use different models to provide short-term or permanent staff," Berg says. "One model would be our vendor-on-premise program, where one of our staffing experts works on-site at a business, alleviating time spent managing attendance, performance and disciplinary issues."

## Economical For Small Companies

The QTI Group is a full-service human resources provider, offering businesses several support options. "Most client partners use our full HR partnership, also called a PEO (professional employer organization) in the industry," says Jane Clark, COO.

"The employees work for both companies; we're co-employers and QTI assumes some liability for employees," she adds. "We take care of the administrative HR functions and the client takes care

of operations. The client partner directs employees' work and sets the direction of the business; we handle HR needs to the extent they want in keeping with their corporate culture."

That includes payroll administration and benefits plans, along with worker's compensation and unemployment insurance. "That's where clients save the most time and money; they don't have to work with an external benefits broker," says Clark. "We hold employee orientation meetings on the benefits plans, and we handle employee status changes. As employment ends, we dis-enroll them from their benefits and administer COBRA (limited-term continued group health insurance available to employees losing benefits)."

The PEO relationship is economical for very small companies, Clark notes. "We're working with a new nonprofit that has two employees. By partnering with us they immediately have an external payroll provider, a full suite of benefits, and Fortune 500-level HR administration. They couldn't afford that on their budget."

Her organization also offers administrative services outsourcing (ASO). "There's no co-employment—clients retain full responsibility and accountability for employees—but we provide full HR administration," says Clark. That includes payroll, benefits, worker's compensation and risk management.

With HR outsourcing, QTI provides clients just its HR suite of services. "That includes reviewing employee handbooks and policies, working with employers on employee relations, advising on staffing—we embed to the extent the employer is comfortable," Clark says.

## Trends

Currently, Berg is seeing many clients use Aerotek's temporary, or flexible, staffing services.

"But as consumer confidence picks up, we anticipate that many companies will be looking for more long-term employees," he says.

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Judy Dahl is a Madison-based freelance writer and editor specializing in the areas of business, finance and technology. Reach her at judydahl@charter.net.

[www.greatermadisonchamber.com](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com)

# GMCC CALENDAR

## MARCH

### GMCC Small Business Roundtable

Tuesday, March 15, 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

This new Chamber program offers small business owners the opportunity to have an open exchange about timely, critical issues in a facilitated forum. The program is ideal for micro-business owners with 5 or fewer employees, and is moderated by a trained facilitator.

**Topic:** It's Social Media, Not Social Medium

**Speaker:** Laura Gallagher, President of The Creative Company ([www.thecreativecompany.com](http://www.thecreativecompany.com))

**You Will Learn:** The current state of social media; Best practices for integration across platforms; How to define and measure success.

**Location:** The GMCC Board Room

**Address:** 615 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53701

**Registration:** No charge for GMCC members only

**Register:** [www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events)

### GMCC Small Business Roundtable

Wednesday, March 16, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Topic:** It's Social Media, Not Social Medium

**Speaker:** Laura Gallagher, President of The Creative Company ([www.thecreativecompany.com](http://www.thecreativecompany.com))

**Location:** The GMCC Board Room

**Address:** 615 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53701

**Registration:** No charge for GMCC members only

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# PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Valued GMCC Member:

This year is proving to be one of new opportunities for the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce. We're always looking for ways to enhance the benefits that the Chamber provides for you – *we've got your back while you move your business forward* - and in 2011, our staff is excited to keep pushing past what the GMCC has provided for

members in previous years.

We're busy this month building up to the 2011 GMCC Annual Business Expo. As the region's largest business-to-business event, this year's Expo returns to the Exhibition Hall of the Alliant Energy Center. I hope all of you have already circled Tuesday, May 3 on your calendars to attend the Chamber's Business Expo.

After several years of successful growth, the GMCC Annual Business Expo set new records in 2010. With the larger space of the Alliant Energy Center, the Expo expanded to 155 exhibitors - ten more than 2009's record-setting 144 (and 20 more than 2008). Further, exhibitors were pleased overall with the varied options for booth set-ups and creativity. Most important, overall general attendance climbed in 2010 to 1,500 – growing 20 percent from 2009's all-time high of 1,200. The crowd was notable during the mid-afternoon with steady traffic throughout the exhibitor aisles.

I am pleased to share that this year's Expo is expected to surpass these records again with more exhibitors and increased attendance. We'll also be hosting the Madison Small Business Conference, a bi-annual event featuring educational workshops and expert speakers on topics that will benefit many small business owners and employees across our region. You'll learn timely business information that can help grow your top line while enjoying breaks from the Conference with time exploring the Expo.

The Expo provides our business community with a great opportunity to connect with other business people to help your business succeed. You'll meet more people in one day that you will all month. In the current economy, it is opportunities to connect businesses and business people together like the Expo that will help us all thrive. The Expo also provides members with an event that builds awareness and earns new customers for your business. This year's Expo will again offer free parking to exhibitors and attendees, customizable booth layouts in the hall for maximum visibility for your business, and an even greater focus on marketing exposure for the Expo and its exhibitors.

This year's Annual Business Expo is truly shaping up to the GMCC's best yet. Visit our website – [www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events/annual\\_business\\_expo](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events/annual_business_expo) – for more information. And look for Chamber staff and Ambassadors at local business organizations promoting the Expo in the coming weeks.

As always, if you would like more information about this year's Annual Business Expo, or how the Chamber can help your business succeed, don't hesitate to give us a call at 608-256-8348. We're here for you!

Thank you,

Jennifer Alexander, GMCC President

# RESERVE YOUR 2011 BUSINESS EXPO BOOTH NOW!



## 2011 GMCC Annual Business Expo and Madison Small Business Conference Exhibition Hall at the Alliant Energy Center Tuesday, May 3 • 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### CONVENIENT LOCATION • FREE PARKING

Easy Load-in and Load-out With Help From Two Men & A Truck

Free 28K Wi-Fi with 256K Wi-Fi Available • 1000 or 2000 Watt Electrical Available

### Exhibition Booths are Offered at Two Levels and Three Sizes:

#### Single Booth – 10' X 10' Corner

GMCC Member Rate: \$535 / Non-Member: \$795  
Includes two Luncheon tickets

#### Single Booth– 10' X 10' Standard

GMCC Member Rate: \$425 / Non-Member: \$695  
Includes two Luncheon tickets

#### Double Booth- 20' X 10' Two Corners

GMCC Member Rate: \$965 / Non-member: \$1,445  
Includes four Luncheon tickets

#### Double Booth - 20' X 10' Corner & Standard

GMCC Member Rate: \$865 / Non-Member: \$1,295  
Includes four Luncheon tickets

#### Double Booth - 20' X 10' Two Standard

GMCC Member Rate: \$765 / Non-Member: \$1,145  
Includes four Luncheon tickets

#### Quad Booths – 20' X 20' Booth

GMCC Member Rate: \$1,275 / Non-Member: \$1,910  
Includes eight Luncheon tickets

Additional discounts are available to GMCC Gold and Silver Level members.  
15% added to exhibition booth rates after March 31, 2011

Reserve Your Booth Now! For More Information and to Register Contact:

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608-443-1945

[jbruhn@greatermadisonchamber.com](mailto:jbruhn@greatermadisonchamber.com)

MARILYN KOCIS

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[mkocis@greatermadisonchamber.com](mailto:mkocis@greatermadisonchamber.com)

[www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events/annual\\_business\\_expo](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events/annual_business_expo)



# MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

*Transforming the Fortunes of Business To Create A Better Quality of Life for Greater Madison*

## An Opportunity to Partner With GMCC Programming

BY BOB ANSHELES

GMCC Director of Membership & Marketing  
bansheles@greatermadisonchamber.com

Reach that key marketing demographic - Business Decision Makers - with your support of Chamber programs.

Take this opportunity to connect with the greater Madison business community, receive exclusive marketing benefits and be a partner with the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce.

Several popular Chamber educational and networking programs are now available for your business to support.

### Business Card Exchange

GMCC member James Kademan, owner of Doc Jams Printer Repair says "The GMCC has been a huge benefit to Doc Jams through the strengthening of our contacts, support and knowledge. In addition it's a blast!"

The original Business Card Exchange is still the best as Chamber members and guests tour and network at a local business for a behind-the-scenes look at a business operation.

### Small Business Roundtables

This new Chamber program is moderated by a trained facilitator. Participants have access to an expert on that month's topic and learn from the other small business owners attending.

Rachel Blackmon, owner of Skye's the Limit Pet Care LLC comments, "The small group made the experience more personalized to our specific needs and questions. I definitely recommend the Roundtable to other business owners."

### SCORE Workshops

The workshops are a combination of large and small group discussions moderated by a SCORE business counselor on topics including business image, marketing and sales, operations, human resources, expenses and revenue, customer satisfaction, tactical planning, and leadership.

"The SCORE Workshop squeezed a week of business and marketing brilliance into three hours!" offers participant Cheri Schweitzer of CRedible Consulting.

### CONNECT @ LUNCH

This popular Chamber program connects attendees in a more personal way. Business people share lunch while building solid relationships in a more intimate round-table environment. Rotating three times (salad, entrée and dessert courses) to tables of four people, members make great new connections with lunch!



*Yahara Bay Distillery welcomed more than 125 Chamber members and guests at a 2010 Business Card Exchange.*


As a supporter of Chamber programming you choose any five GMCC program dates for just \$500 and receive these marketing benefits for your business each time:

- Display and distribute company material at program site
- Excel list of attendees' names, company name and street address
- Company logo on signage at program site (easel display)
- Company name in
  - GMCC Business Beat magazine Calendar
  - GMCC website program promotion including Program listing area
  - Online GMCC Event Calendar with link to your company website
  - Four GMCC e-Bulletin announcements with link to your company website
  - GMCC e-mail communications to program attendees

For more information on GMCC program benefits, please contact your Chamber Membership Development Executives:

Marilyn Kocis - 443-1951 - mkocis@greatermadisonchamber.com

Jennifer Bruhn - 443-1945 - jbruhn@greatermadisonchamber.com

Check out each week's GMCC e-Bulletin for upcoming events you don't want to miss or visit the GMCC event calendar at [www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events). 

# MyMenu!

## GROW WITH US!

**MyMenu is offering exciting franchise opportunities!**

Take advantage of a **limited-time MyMenu Franchise Pioneer Plan** for our existing locations in Madison, WI, which includes:

- Approximate \$100,000 upfront cost reduction, including:
  - Lower franchise fee – No construction fee
- Royalties as low as 3%
- Significant store and field support to offset operational costs
- MyMenu brand financing is available with approved credit

Contact us today to explore the many benefits of becoming a MyMenu franchisee. Email - [franchiseinfo@mymenu.com](mailto:franchiseinfo@mymenu.com), or call (630) 981-5801, ext 100.

Learn more by visiting

[www.MyMenu.com](http://www.MyMenu.com).

*MyMenu, is a delicious frozen food retail store that offers hundreds of easy-to-prepare foods along with restaurant-quality meal ideas in one easy-to-navigate aisle.*

This offering is made by prospectus only.




# HR

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Hansen foresees more businesses switching from their in-house HR databases to systems like his company's. "Studies show that by 2015 an additional 20% of businesses will outsource HR," he says. "And more companies will go to a single platform database—there's a trend to narrow the number of applications an employer needs."

And as regulatory changes come fast and furious, even the most astute HR person will have trouble keeping up, Clark indicates. "We have a whole team that analyzes employment regulations and can help businesses comply."

Regulatory compliance is an increasing burden, Emerick agrees. "Whether it's the new health care law or existing laws such as EEOC (discrimination laws), employers will look for someone to take care of it, and that's our business." 

## GMCC UPDATE

### March Roundtables Helps You Integrate Your Social Media

Don't miss the Chamber's next Small Business Roundtables held Tuesday, March 15 from 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and Wednesday, March 16 from 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Laura Gallagher, President of Madison's The Creative Company, will present "It's Social Media, Not Social Medium" where you'll learn about the current state of social media, best practices for integration across platforms and how to define and measure success.

The Roundtables provide the opportunity to have an open exchange about this timely critical issues in a facilitated forum. The program is ideal for micro-business owners with 5 or fewer employees, and is moderated by a trained facilitator.

Held in the GMCC's Board Room (615 E. Washington Ave., Madison), this event is for Chamber members only at no charge. Register: [www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com/events). Questions: [jwelnick@greatermadisonchamber.com](mailto:jwelnick@greatermadisonchamber.com).

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



### SVA Plumb Financial

SVA Plumb Financial, official as of March 1st, unites two exceptional financial organizations with decades of client-focused experience. SVA Plumb Financial offers clients a wide range of services, from investment management and trust administration to retirement and estate planning with a high level of localized service. Learn More: [www.svaplumb.com](http://www.svaplumb.com)

## Want to Shine the GMCC Spotlight on Your Company?

Call your GMCC Member Development Executives today to find out how!

**Jennifer Bruhn**  
608-443-1945

[jbruhn@greatermadisonchamber.com](mailto:jbruhn@greatermadisonchamber.com)

**Marilyn Kocis**  
608-443-1951

[mkocis@greatermadisonchamber.com](mailto:mkocis@greatermadisonchamber.com)

## GMCC STAFF SPOTLIGHT

### JAMIE WELNICK

Program And Events Manager

**Education & Prior Work Experience:** I earned my bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Wisconsin - Madison. My experience is planning and managing strategic marketing campaigns, including project coordination, brand management, special events, sponsorship development and fulfillment, e-marketing, and new media. Prior to joining the GMCC, I worked as Marketing and Promotions Director at Entercom Communications.



**What are your duties at the GMCC?** My responsibility at the GMCC is to develop and execute the logistical details for member programs and events. This year, the Chamber offers many programs including the Connect @ Lunch series, Small Business Roundtables, SCORE workshops, Eggs & Issues, and the Business Card Exchanges. In addition, we are adding the Small Business Conference in conjunction with the 2011 Business Expo. I will aim to provide the highest level of customer service for each program and look to add new ideas to the larger events.

**What do you enjoy most about working for the GMCC?** I enjoy the opportunity to connect businesses and build relationships with GMCC members.

**What is one GMCC member benefit you like to tell members about?** The Chamber hosts more than 40 programs and events each year - most of which are free for GMCC members. We are committed to helping your business grow by providing opportunities for you to develop partnerships. Maximize your membership by attending one of our upcoming events.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?** Gardening, competitive volleyball, volunteering with the Boys and Girls Club, and home improvement projects.

**What is something most people don't know about you?** I have climbed the Great Wall of China and been to Cuba.



*Businesses can contribute guest speakers, mentors, or even host summer interns for AVID/TOPS, which helps students succeed in high school and college.*

## AVID/TOPS HELPS MAKE COLLEGE SUCCESS A REALITY

**Partner With This Educational Program To Develop Your Future Workforce.**

**BY JUDY DAHL**

The AVID/TOPS program aims to create dreams for its high school participants. Most are low income and the first in their families to contemplate college, so are likely unaware of how to prepare — or that it's a realistic possibility for them — and of the job opportunities a post-secondary education makes possible.

The program teaches a rigorous elective curriculum in high school that prepares students to enter and handle college. It also exposes them to opportunities in the business community. "If you haven't seen something, you can't dream about it," says Jim Riordan, CEO of WPS Health Insur-

ance. "If you get involved and like it, you can develop your dream. Then it's a little easier to see how you'll get there."

Riordan has been involved with AVID/TOPS since its inception three years ago. "I believe strongly in businesses trying to do what we can to support students in getting the education they need to be available for jobs in our community," he says.

"Studies show the U.S. will be short close to 15 million people needed to fill jobs that require post-high school education in the coming years. And if we want to attract companies here and have them stay, we have to have people available."

His organization supports AVID/TOPS financially, employees mentor participating students, and WPS offers summer internships that give participants hands-on experience in the business world. He urges other area businesses to get involved as well.

"One way to get young people to consider careers in business is to get them in there and get them excited about it," he says. "As the economy improves, we'll need skilled employees — we'll need to identify every possible person with the ability to go forward."

The AVID program began 30 years ago and is now active in 4,000 schools na-

tionwide, including all four Madison high schools. "The founder identified — and it's still true today — that there are lots of programs for very good students; they're already on the college track," says Mary Burke, former Wisconsin secretary of commerce and an active volunteer with Boys & Girls Club, among other philanthropic activities.

She co-chairs AVID/TOPS' steering committee, which brings together people from the business, philanthropic, and educational community to provide oversight and expertise.

"There are also programs for students with grade point averages below 2.0," Burke continues. "Those who fall in the middle don't get as much academic support to be successful, and they're the students AVID/TOPS targets."

### A Model For Other Schools

A complementary program to AVID, TOPS was developed through a partnership between Boys & Girls Club of Dane County and the Madison Metropolitan School District. "We've created something we believe is unique in the country that can be a model for other schools using AVID," says Burke.

AVID's proven curriculum teaches students the skills needed to succeed in high school and prepare for college. Students receive counseling on what courses to take, how to research colleges, take preparatory tests, complete applications, and apply for financial aid.

TOPS provides mentors from the community who meet one-on-one with students monthly, and coordinates the summer internship program. It also offers college scholarships to students who meet financial and academic requirements.

Shared AVID/TOPS components include a guest speaker program, where business and community leaders discuss topics such as financial education, public speaking and career paths.

The field trip program takes students to visit colleges throughout the state. Boys & Girls Club recruits and trains tutors who are available periodically during AVID classes.

### Success Stories

The program already has success stories. "It started at East High School with 16 students," Burke explains. "All have graduated, 15 went on to college, and the 16th started at MATC in January. At the other Madison high schools, the first groups are now sophomores."

It's exciting to see the students graduate, enthuses Michael Johnson, CEO of Boys & Girls Club. "It's a huge accomplishment, especially when you look at kids who are the first generation in their families to go to college. I was a first-generation college student, and this program is part of what attracted me to Madison."

The program now has over 350 participating students — which is ahead of forecasts — and is expected to grow to over 800 participants in the coming years. "That would be transformational in Madison's schools," Burke marvels. "We'd eliminate that gap between students of color and others who plan to go to college."

### Businesses Have A Vested Interest

Businesses have a vested interest in getting involved with AVID/TOPS to help their future workforce succeed. "Enrollment in Madison's public schools is nearly 50% low-income students, and that's typically a demographic that's not going on to post-secondary education," Burke notes. "That means nearly half your future workforce isn't prepared."

These students have very limited exposure to the kinds of careers they can have after college. "Nothing replaces hands-on experience," says Burke. "Research shows students have a greater chance of succeeding and getting a degree if they know what they'll do with it."

AVID/TOPS can always use more guest speakers and mentors from the business community, Johnson indicates. "Financial support is important too, but we really need businesspeople to connect with our young people," he says. "Those who need us most really need positive role models in their lives."

Businesses can also offer summer internships. Not only will you contribute directly to students' success, you'll promote your company's culture of giving back and

give employees opportunities to reach out to the community.

TOPS provides students with pre-internship training through Boys & Girls Club's Job Ready program, developed in partnership with CUNA Mutual Foundation. TOPS also helps businesses design meaningful, age-appropriate internship experiences, its coordinators are available to answer questions any time, and representatives check in with businesses and students weekly to ensure a successful experience.

### Requires Active Participation

Continued success will require active participation from the business and philanthropic communities. "When we set out to do this, we knew there was a need to do something on a large scale to turn our current situation around and make sure kids are prepared to succeed," says Burke.

"You read about how the U.S. is falling behind in how many students have post-secondary degrees. When we look at the scale of what we're trying to do, it's huge," she adds. "We knew we wouldn't succeed if it were just a school district and Boys & Girls Club program."

And there's an economic value to helping our young people become educated and learn career skills, Johnson observes. "We're preparing the next generation of workers to come and work at — and maybe lead — our companies. It's important to make that investment in young people's lives and keep them in Madison."

So many people from the business and philanthropic communities are already supporting AVID/TOPS. "We're seeing kids graduate and go to college because of all our supporters, staff and mentors," Johnson says. "Kids are succeeding, but we have a long way to go." ■

## Get Involved

Interested in providing guest speakers or student mentors for AVID/TOPS? Or in offering summer internships?

Contact Kate Tricker at  
ktricker@bgcdc.org  
or 204-9722, ext. 123.



# NOW HIRING

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## GET READY TO RAMP UP

As The Economy Improves, More Businesses Are Hiring —  
Make Sure You're Prepared For When The Time Is Right.

BY JUDY DAHL

We asked our experts to share their insights on trends and how to prepare before adding staff.

Stacey Riechers is owner of the Madison office of Express Employment Professionals and Jim Holwerda is franchise owner of Remedy Intelligent Staffing, both national organizations that provide temporary, temp-to-hire, and direct-hire staff.

**Business Beat (BB):** What trends are you seeing in terms of businesses hiring?

**Riechers:** As we come out of a recession historically the staffing industry experiences significant growth. Express as a whole—and our office in particular—has been seeing this growth pick up for about a year. As a leading indicator I see this as a great trend for the economy in general. I expect we'll continue to see significant growth continue for the next several years. The growth really cuts across all industry categories and sizes.

**Holwerda:** We've seen unemployment numbers drop over the past few months, and many companies are adding staff through firms like ours. We see companies adding staff across all levels—manufacturing, distribution, administrative and professional, accounting and finance, information technology. In the previous two years companies cut where they needed to, but with improved economic conditions, they need to put out more products and provide increased services.

**BB:** What are the biggest factors driving these trends?

**Holwerda:** A lot of organizations have large corporations as customers, for example, suppliers to the auto industry. The big auto manufacturers had depleted their inventories to contain costs, but now that sales are up they're asking their suppliers to meet the new demand and meet it now. There's Wal-Mart, too—it's amazing the number of smaller businesses in our area that may make one product for Wal-Mart. Everyone is in catch-up mode.

**Riechers:** One factor is simply the uncertainty in the economy. I believe the recovery is coming, but companies are still nervous. And with the many changes in the political landscape—things like the new health care laws—companies aren't sure what the next few years might bring. So using a staffing company can protect them from these uncertainties. Lastly, despite the high unemployment levels, companies are still struggling to find qualified applicants and are turning to the experts to find employees.

**BB:** What should a business consider when determining if the time is right to add staff?

**Holwerda:** Organizations need to evaluate what baseline staff is needed rather than adding full-time employees to meet peak periods and then doing layoffs. They should consider the cost of bringing people on permanently and offering benefits, and if they have layoffs, the costs of things like COBRA. If you jump too quickly to hire permanent staff and then have to [www.greatermadisonchamber.com](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com)

lay them off, that's an image you don't want. If you use temp-to-hire staff you have flexibility, and if you lose a customer you can adapt rather than react.

**Riechers:** First and foremost, of course, it would depend on your business needs and projections. Companies are asking employees to do more with less and are hesitant to add staff. But I encourage my clients to evaluate their needs and consider adding staff earlier, to keep staff from being burned out and to avoid using overtime as a means to get the work done.

**BB: What mistakes do businesses make when ramping up staffing?**

**Riechers:** Adding staff too late. Even in today's high unemployment climate it takes time to recruit, screen and place highly qualified employees. Clients should bring a staffing provider into the process early enough that they have time to find the best candidates. Another mistake is thinking all staffing firms are created equal. They're not; companies need to make sure they're working with a reputable and professional staffing firm. A good staffing firm should be an extension of your human resources department and should provide not only recruits, but human resource advice and counsel as well.

**Holwerda:** Not having a contingency plan. Always ask yourself the "what if" question. What if you land that big account? How will you bring people on, from "onboarding" (acclimating them to the company), to training, to getting them functional? What time would be required? If you're going to partner with a firm like ours, evaluate partners prior to having the need. There can be quite a learning curve in determining what kinds of positions will be needed and when they'll be needed, and your staffing firm needs to be ready to go.


**BB: What other preparations should a business make before adding staff?**

**Riechers:** When adding staff, companies need to make sure they have a good onboarding and orientation process. They need to make sure employees are welcomed and comfortable with the company and in their new jobs. Good employees will have choices about where they're going to work. A strong onboarding program



will help make employees successful from the beginning and will make sure they get off to a good start in their new jobs.

**Holwerda:** Companies haven't been in the hiring mode for a few years and may be out of practice, so preparation is key. Review your processes for onboarding and training, and develop a retention plan. Do

you have the office space, equipment, or capacity? If you're a manufacturer do you need additional shifts, and will you need to have some current staff switch shifts because you can't have a shift with all-new staff? It's best to have a plan in place before you need it, and to make sure your existing staff buys in. 

## Tips For Working With A Staffing Agency

**To make the most of your relationship with a staffing firm, take the time to fully communicate your needs.**

**Treat the agency as a valued business partner** — Make sure your staffing professionals understand your business and its culture so they can recruit appropriately.

**Notify the agency well in advance of when you need staff** — It takes time to recruit, sort through myriad resumes, and conduct initial screening.

You'll get better results if you allow sufficient time.

**Be clear about what skills candidates need to have** — Do a comprehensive assessment of job duties and translate them to specific skills so your agency can deliver the best candidates.

**Determine how long you'll need the additional employees** — Your agency can help you determine if tem-

porary, temp-to-hire, or direct-hire staff suits your situation.

**Provide constructive feedback** — If you let your staffing firm know what went well and what could have been improved during a hiring process, the agency can adjust for next time.

**Ask for feedback** — There may be additional information your staffing professionals would find helpful for future hiring processes, or timeline changes that would improve the process.

Your staffing agency should be an extension of your human resources department, and just like your employees, can do its best work for you if fully informed.

Keep the lines of communication open.



# INITIATIVES & INSIGHTS

Transforming the Fortunes of Business To Create A Better Quality of Life for Greater Madison.

## PUBLIC POLICY

### Madison Common Council Endorsements

BY KEVIN LITTLE

GMCC Director of Public Policy

[klittle@greatermadisonchamber.com](mailto:klittle@greatermadisonchamber.com)

We may sound like a broken record, but the results of the Spring Election on April 5 could have a significant impact on your business and the regional economy.

In addition to major mayoral races (including Madison, where the GMCC Board of Directors has endorsed David Cieslewicz for Mayor – see the February edition of *Business Beat* - [www.greatermadisonchamber.com/about/business\\_beat/43](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com/about/business_beat/43) - or the GMCC website - [www.greatermadisonchamber.com](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com) - for more information), and a special Dane County Executive race, all 20 seats on the Madison Common Council are up for election.

Taking a closer look at the aldermanic races, we could see some pretty dramatic changes on the Council.

Six of the 20 incumbent alders are not seeking re-election – four of whom were GMCC-endorsed candidates in previous elections.

Fortunately, there are several strong candidates running in these open districts.

Before getting to the decisions, here's a little background on our endorsement process.

We began by mailing questionnaires to all of the council candidates, seeking their views on important business issues.

Returned candidate responses were analyzed for consistency with GMCC positions and selected candidates were then invited to endorsement interviews.

Members of the GMCC Board of Directors, Small Business Advisory Council, Minority Business Advisory Council and Ambassador Program participated on the interview panels and forwarded endorsement recommendations to the GMCC Political Strategies Committee, who made the final endorsement decisions.

It should be noted that the GMCC does not endorse in every district.

In some cases – like Districts 16 and 20 – it is because there is more than one candidate who met the endorsement criteria.

In other districts, there were no candidates that qualified for endorsement.

A trait shared by all endorsed candidates was their commitment to enhance the business climate to help foster quality job creation.

The GMCC Board is proud to endorse the following candidates for Madison Common Council:

District 1 - Brian Driscoll

District 2 – Bridget Maniaci

District 3 – Lauren Cnare

District 5 – Shiva Bidar-Sielaff

District 7 – Steve King

District 9 – Paul Skidmore

District 11 – Chris Schmidt

District 14 – Tim Bruer

District 15 – Larry Palm

District 16 – Jill Johnson

District 17 – Joe Clausius

District 18 – Peng Her

District 19 – Mark Clear


District 20 – No endorsement – both candidates acceptable

To learn more about the candidates (including all completed questionnaires) visit the Elections Page on the GMCC website. Take some time to educate yourself on the candidates in your area and their positions on business-related issues. In some districts, you'll find some pretty stark differences.

We need your help to ensure that the candidates who understand business issues and who will work with and support GMCC's agenda are victorious on election night. Here are ways you can help!

1) Join the GMCC Direct Givers Conduit Program, which is a great way to financially support candidates and show your support for the chamber.

2) Help spread the message about GMCC's endorsements and the candidates who will be better for business.

3) Most important – and most obvious – don't forget to vote on April 5! 

### We've Got Your Back!

Learn more about the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce's Public Policy efforts at [www.greatermadisonchamber.com/policy](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com/policy)

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## Thrive Partners With Grocers to Increase Sales of Local Foods

BY BETSY LUNDGREN  
MARKETING COORDINATOR, THRIVE  
blundgren@thrivehere.org

On average, locally purchased food products return 70 cents of every dollar to the local economy, while non-local products return only 40 cents.

Steve Deller, an economist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, states that for every \$100,000 of new sales of local food, 2.2 jobs are created and \$77,000 in income is brought back in.

In light of our region's strong agriculture base, Thrive recently partnered with the Wisconsin Grocers Association (WGA), Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, and the Agricultural Innovation Center on the WGA's Grocers Buy Local project.

This program, which works with local grocers to increase the visibility of Something Special from Wisconsin™ products, is designed to increase sales of Wisconsin food products in the Madison Region and to re-capture those dollars locally.

Throughout 2010, special events were held at regional grocery stores – Metcalfe's Market in Madison, Miller & Sons Market in Verona, Mountin's Piggly Wiggly in Mayville, and Daniels Sentry in Janesville.

Enhanced by collaborative marketing efforts and a concerted effort by each of the stores to carry more local products and promote them more heavily, these events were created to heighten the visibility and sales of Something Special from Wisconsin™ products.

"[This program] has done a wonderful job opening up new markets for us," notes Rufus Haucke of Keewaydin Organics, a Something Special from Wisconsin™ member.

"Their continued campaigning for the local food cause has helped us gain ground in grocery stores around the state."

Over the course of last year, the Grocers Buy Local initiative resulted in more local product choices for consumers, increased sales for local grocers and producers, and more dollars retained within the regional economy. Among the four stores involved



A special event at Metcalfe's Market in Madison as part of the Grocers Buy Local program.

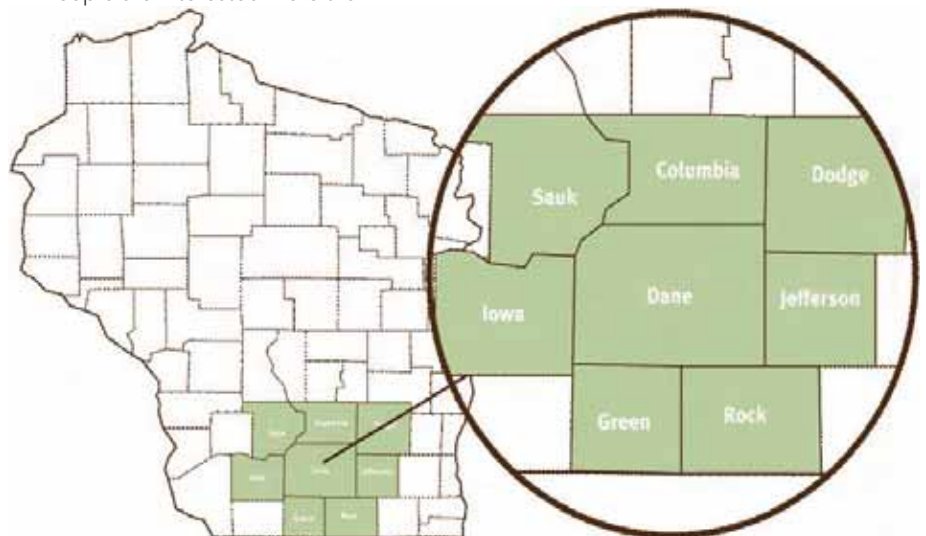
in the program, a total of \$3,246,816.25 in sales of Something Special from Wisconsin™ products was recorded in 2010, representing a 66% increase since 2009.

"I think that there is a lot more talk out there about Wisconsin products. It is working," reflects Dan Jacobson of L&L Foods, another Something Special from Wisconsin™ member.

"People are interested more than

ever in local products. The idea will not become mainstream overnight, but the program so far has definitely built some momentum and awareness – lots more than in the past."

Learn more about Thrive and its other work in sector development at [www.thrivehere.org](http://www.thrivehere.org).



# NEW MEMBERS

For a full listing, please visit the Member Directory on our website.

## Access Community Health Centers

Tammy Quall  
2901 W. Beltline Highway, Suite 120  
Madison WI 53713  
(608) 443-5500 Fax: (608) 441-2385  
www.accesscommunityhealthcenters.org  
*Non-Profit Organizations*

## Allen Kitchens & Bath

Gary Allen  
2727 W. Beltline Highway  
Madison WI 53713  
(608) 274-9933 Fax: (608) 274-9604  
gallen@allenkit.com  
www.allenkit.com  
*Retail*

## Ameritas Group Dental and Eye Care

Bob Gevelinger  
1110 Fourier Drive, Suite 300  
Madison WI 53711  
(608) 664-3812  
rgevelinger@ameritas.com  
www.ameritasgroup.com  
*Insurance*

## Bella Vita Italian Grille & Pizzeria

Jeff Hiveley  
420 Gammon Place  
Madison WI 53719  
(608) 836-5866  
info@bellavitaitaliangrille.com  
www.bellavitaitaliangrille.com  
*Food & Drink*

## Filbrandt Investments Advisers

Pat Filbrandt  
8401 Greenway Boulevard, Suite 212  
Middleton WI 53562  
(608) 836-3600  
patfilbrandt@filbrandtco.com  
*Financial Services & Banking*

## Fox Cleaning LLC

Brad & Karen Fox  
426 Rushmore Lane #4  
Madison WI 53711-1143  
(608) 232-0023  
bfox@myexcel.com  
*Business Services*

## JC Rose Associates, LLC

Barbara Schlaefer  
4710 E. Broadway, Suite 160  
Madison WI 53716  
(608) 310-7040 Fax: (608) 237-2085  
bschlaefer@jc-rose.com  
www.jc-rose.com  
*Insurance*

## Madison Area Urban Ministry

Linda Ketcham  
2300 S. Park Street, Suite 5  
Madison WI 53713  
(608) 256-0906  
linda@emum.org  
*Non-Profit Organizations*

## Mortenson Construction

Jonathan Koch  
10 E. Doty Street, Suite 513  
Madison WI 53703  
(608) 441-5551 Fax: (608) 441-5552  
www.mortenson.com  
*Construction & Building Trades*

## The Kammer Group

Peter Kammer  
44 E. Mifflin Street, Suite 305  
Madison WI 53703  
(608) 254-9293  
*Professional Services & Consulting*

## Virtual Properties

Jim Zellmer  
2979 Triverton Pike, Suite 100  
Madison WI 53711  
(608) 271-9601 Fax: (608) 271-2820  
zellmer@virtualproperties.com  
www.virtualproperties.com  
*Technology & Web Services*

## Wireless Zone-Verizon Wireless Premium Retailer

William Avery  
2990 Cahill Main, Suite 110  
Fitchburg WI 53711  
(608) 298-9002 Fax: (608) 298-9002  
*Telecommunications*

## Wisconsin ESGR Inc.

Tim Flatley  
2400 Wright Street  
Madison WI 53704  
(608) 242-3169 Fax: (608) 242-3726  
www.esgr.mil  
*Government Entities*

**Reach Out  
to New and  
Veteran Chamber  
Members Online!**

**Visit the GMCC's online  
Member Directory to  
search for new members  
& specific categories**

**[www.greatermadisonchamber.com](http://www.greatermadisonchamber.com)**

## Missed The Latest Chamber Programs and Ceremonies?



The Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce is now posting video of Chamber educational programs and business ceremonies online!

Now if you miss a Chamber event, you can catch up at any time through the latest postings to the GMCC's video site on Vimeo.com.

Check it out today at

**[www.vimeo.com/greatermadisonchamber](http://www.vimeo.com/greatermadisonchamber)**

## GMCC EVENTS & MEMBER CEREMONIES



East Towne Mall, United Way of Dane County and Kraft Foods/Oscar Meyer unveiled the first interactive Play and Learn site for area children and parents. The grand opening was held Friday, January 21 and welcomed Wisconsin First Lady Tonette Walker, Oscar Mayer President Nicholas Merigglioli and United Way of Dane County President Leslie Ann Howard. Area children celebrated the grand opening by cutting a ribbon of paper hot dogs. The play area was designed with the belief that educational play is critical to a healthy lifestyle and the development of children.



The Greater Madison Chamber helped celebrate the grand opening of a new Edward Jones office with Lisa Spadoni and Sara Smith on Wednesday, January 26. The new office is located at 6315 Odana Road on Madison's west side. GMCC ambassadors, staff and fellow Chamber members celebrated Lisa and Sara's ribbon cutting along with Edward Jones area staff.



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*Business Beat* provides a forum where members and partner organizations can share their views on a variety of topics. Opinions expressed are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect the views held by GMCC management, staff, or board members.

### OUR MISSION

The role of the GMCC is to support enlightened economic growth, positioning the greater Madison area as a globally competitive place to live, work, play and do business.

### GMCC 2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Imhoff, *First Weber Group* – Chair  
Marsha Lindsay, *Lindsay, Stone & Briggs* – Immediate Past Chair  
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James Garner, *Sergenian's Floor Coverings Inc.* – Secretary

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Diane Ballweg, *Endres Manufacturing*  
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Robert Dunn, *Hammes Company Sports Development Inc.*  
John Flad, *Flad Development & Investment Corporation*  
Jac Garner, *Webcrafters, Inc.*  
Ginny Gilbert, *Gilbert Cost Control Consultants*  
Jerard Jenson, *Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek S.C.*  
Bill Johnston, *The Wisconsin State Journal*  
Donna Katen-Bahensky, *Univ. of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics*  
John Larsen, *Wisconsin Power and Light Company*  
Paul Lenhart, *Krupp General Contractors*  
Jay Loewi, *The QTI Group*  
Rich Lynch, *J.H. Findorff & Son Inc.*  
Carolyn "Biddy" Martin, *University of Wisconsin – Madison*  
Nick Meriggoli, *Oscar Mayer / Kraft Foods*  
Tim Metcalfe, *Metcalfe Inc.*

Gary Molz, *EZ Office Products*  
Douglas Nelson, *M&I Bank*  
James Riordan, *Wisconsin Physicians Service Insurance Corp.*  
Frederick A. Robertson, M.D., *TomoTherapy, Inc.*  
Rebecca Ryan, *Next Generation Consulting*  
David Sanks, *WISC-TV3*  
Monty Schiro, *Food Fight Restaurant Group*  
Jay Smith, *Teel Plastics, Inc.*  
Lon Sprecher, *Dean Health Insurance*  
Mary Starmann-Harrison, *SSM Health Care of Wisconsin*  
Robert Tramburg, *Vita Plus Corporation*  
Bob Trunzo, *CUNA Mutual Group*  
Mike Victorson, *M3 Insurance Solutions for Business*  
David Walsh, *Foley & Lardner LLP*  
David Wittwer, *TDS Telecom*  
Gary Wolter, *Madison Gas & Electric Company*  
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