

Telamon—Virginia

November 2008

Empowering Individuals, Improving Communities

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Message from the State Director -
Sharon L. Saldarriaga

After a warm start, it seems as temperatures are finally moving toward a true Fall season. Many exciting events are taking off in our state. The Cameron Foundation has awarded us funding to provide workforce development services to limited English speakers through our ¡*Conexiones!* program. We received funding from HUD to continue our homeownership counseling program in Gretna and the Virginia Housing Development Authority awarded us funding for foreclosure prevention counseling. The Virginia Department of Agriculture renewed our grant to provide Pesticide and Workplace Safety Training to farmworkers. Many of our farmworker customers are actively engaged in training for a variety of occupations and education credentials. Our weatherization programs are in full swing. And finally, we have a number of staff transitions and proposals going out for new endeavors that are adding new dimensions to our work. §

The Cameron Foundation Awards Funding for Telamon's ¡*Conexiones!* Program

We are very pleased to announce that at a meeting on October 16, 2008 the Board of Directors of The Cameron Foundation approved a grant of \$27,246 to Telamon Corporation. Sharon Saldarriaga was presented with the award at a reception honoring the Foundation's 13th group of grantees.

This grant enables us to continue our ¡*Conexiones!* Job Resource and Technology Center, which provides limited English speakers with access to workforce development services. The services will be offered to residents in the Foundation's target area. This includes the cities of Hopewell, Petersburg and Colonial Heights, the counties of Dinwiddie, Prince George and Sussex, and the portion of Chesterfield County lying south of Route 10. The program will operate two days per week every Thursday and Friday out of the Virginia Employment Commission in Hopewell.

The services to be offered include: computerized job search instruction; assistance with application, resume, and interview preparation; job referrals; online ESL/GED training; referrals to educational and training providers and community resources; and customized sector training in coordination with a community or business college. A small grant from BB&T enables us to continue to offer our Workplace Literacy Skills workshops. We expect to serve between 500 and 550 resi-

dents, beginning December 1, 2008.

Previously, with discretionary funding from the Governor's Office of Workforce Development, the program operated within the Richmond Career Advancement Center on Broad Street, including its satellite location in Southside Plaza, and the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. However, lack of funding made it impossible to continue services for residents in the Richmond Metro Area. According to Telamon's State Director, Sharon Saldarriaga, "The inability to provide these services to those with limited English means that an important segment of the Richmond area's working residents and those seeking work are unable to access many of the workforce development services available to the general population. In today's economy, these services are more important than ever and this population is being left out."

The Cameron Foundation has been instrumental in helping the program expand to its current scope. Three years ago, the Foundation was the first to fund the Workplace Literacy Skills workshops. These provided the basis upon which we developed a proposal and secured funding to provide the additional workforce development services outlined above. We are grateful to The Cameron Foundation for the opportunity to offer these services in the Tri-Cities area. For more information, contact Marlene Larios at 804.355.4676. §

Update on Beverly Heights Housing Project

By Lynita Falls
Housing Counselor
Gretna

Telamon received a two year grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development in July 2007 to construct six affordable housing units in Pittsylvania County. This application was prepared by our Gretna staff and will be operated out of the Gretna office. The first phase (two houses) has been constructed and one home has been sold to an eligible buyer. The second home is under contract and is expected to transfer by the middle of October. The next four houses have started construction.

Phase Two will be the construction of a home on Weal Road and a home on Hollywood Road. Long Meadows, Inc. (LMI) of Lynchburg will be constructing these two homes. LMI is a certified Earth-Craft/Energy Star Builder. They will construct these two homes using several of these standards to provide energy efficient houses; however, the homes will not be certified as energy star rated. The two homes are 1112 square feet on crawl-spaces. These homes feature three bedrooms and 2 full baths with living room and kitchen. They also have a one-car carport with a storage room.

Phase Three will be the construction of two additional properties on Beverly Heights Road. Poteat Construction, Inc. of Danville will be constructing the last two homes in this project. These two homes are 1141 and 1040 square feet on unfinished basements. These homes feature three bedrooms and 2 full baths with living room and kitchen with custom made cabinets.

We have several families expressing interest in the homes and they are working toward their goal of homeownership. The construction completion date is expected for late December 2008 on all four houses. Helping these families achieve homeownership has been a rewarding experience. §

The Theodore H. Barth Foundation, Inc. Program and Farmworker Children on the Eastern Shore of Virginia

By Soraya Buckner
Regional Manager
Exmore

I have been working with this program, funded by The Theodore H. Barth Foundation, Inc., for almost three years. Every year, more and more possibilities are open to the area's children of farmworkers: field trips, tutoring, and books were the activities that we provided to the children in the past two years. This year, as part of their activities, the children spent a morning at a children's museum, went to Tangier Island to have a fun day on the beach, and went to the nature park at Kiptopeake and Assateague to walk in the woods and learn about the forest. Tutoring classes helped children with homework and reading to improve their performance at school. They also went to the World Healing Institute and had a fun day doing different art activities. All of these activities would not be possible without the support from The Theodore H. Barth Foundation, Inc. because the farmworkers' income is not sufficient to pay dues and buy meals for these types of activities.

Because of this support, other opportunities for these kids have emerged. Since I became a member of the Eastern Shore's Own Art Center (ESO), I know more about their art activities and classes. I had

the idea to enroll farmworkers' children in courses at the center. My first fear involved transportation issues but I was overjoyed to see how the parents made the effort to take their children to the classes. As a result, for the first time at the ESO, there is more diversity at the center. The ballet classes are in love with one little girl, Karla, and the pottery instructor is very happy with the pottery expression of the three new students. Thanks to the Barth Program, farmworkers' children have the opportunity to engage in ballet classes, pottery classes, guitar lessons, and also karate classes.

For the next season, we are planning to enroll ten kids for the Arts Summer Camp at the ESO and five kids at Arts Enter Cape Charles. The second center is located in Northampton County so it will cover the farmworkers that are living in that area.



Children painting at Camp Barth

ESO offers classes to Accomack County residents but due to gasoline prices, it is better to look for locations close to their home.

The beauty of this program is that farmworkers' children, who never would have thought to have the possibility of such opportunities, have been part of the art centers on the Eastern Shore and the arts centers that never thought they would have so much cultural diversity in their centers now do. We are very grateful to the Foundation for making it possible for us to give them these opportunities and for providing the community with opportunities to interact with these children. These children are enjoying something so essential in the life of a child: nature, art and reading. §

The Job Market Corner

by Nelson Diaz
Employment Marketing
Specialist
Richmond

With the continuing financial crisis and rising unemployment, the decrease in the number of jobs advertised in the newspaper will make you think it is the end of the world but, it is not all bad news. According to Forbes' annual ranking of the Best States for Business, Virginia finished first for the third straight year. The American Electronics Association, the nation's largest high-technology trade association, cites Virginia as having the largest increase of any state in high-tech goods exports since 2006. The number of new companies moving to Virginia, such as AmeriPumps, LLC, a manufacturer of portable water pumps used in the construction and mining



industries, Metal Manufacturing and Processing, a division of Raleigh Mine & Industrial Supply Inc., Jennmar Corporation of East Virginia, Inc., a provider of quality roof and standing support products for the mining and tunneling industry, and CBN Secure Technologies Inc. makes us think that The Old Dominion State isn't just for lovers. In August, the Unemployment Rate for the state was 4.6% compared to 6.1% nationwide.

Our future for the Commonwealth still looks strong but it requires more preparation to enable us to be competitive. Whether you're unemployed or

you are a working adult looking for a career change, choosing the right job can be confusing and frustrating. During these economic times, it's challenging to select a career path that not only matches up with your personal interest, but also still puts food on the table. Understanding some of the trends that shape the job market can help narrow your search. If you're looking for job security and growth, you'll want to focus on the industries that are expected to add the most new jobs in the coming decade.

Using data compiled from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Virginia Employment Commission, and Virginia.gov, the following information on the major careers and trends in the job market today can help you make career education decisions wisely. Below are the top ten careers with high growth potential:

1. Computer Programmer
2. Day Care Provider
3. Elder Care Specialist
4. Employment Specialist
5. Environmental Engineer
6. Home Health Aide
7. Management Consultant
8. Networking Specialist
9. Physician's Assistant
10. Social Services Coordinator

New hires by industry in Virginia.

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| 1. Retail | 111,988 |
| 2. Accommodations and food services | 95,370 |
| 3. Administrative and waste services | 78,294 |
| 4. Health care and social assistance | 47,172 |
| 5. Professional and technical services | 43,399 |
| 6. Construction | 37,224 |

Marlene Larios recognized for Outstanding Pesticide Safety Program

By Sharon Saldarriaga .
Richmond.

Marlene Larios and a group of Extension Agents from Virginia Tech received *First Place* awards during the Virginia Pesticide Educators 2008 Conference in Roanoke . The award comes from the Virginia Pesticide Control Board and The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

We asked Micah Raub from the Office of Pesticide, why nominating this program?



Andy Alvarez, Director of Consumer Division, presenting the Certificate of Recognition Award to Marlene Larios, Telamon Corporation. October 2008

“Typically farmworkers receive a one hour basic pesticide safety training to meet the minimum requirements of the Worker Protection Standard (WPS). This program gave farmworkers and handlers a more in depth understanding of pesticide safety by using a combination of training techniques both in the classroom and in the actual working environment. The inclusion of audio visual presentations, black light residue demonstrations and small group activities in the classroom made the presentation unique from the standard WPS training. In nominating this program, I realized that recognition of this type of training might encourage other extension agents to utilize the valuable resources of Telamon.”

Telamon works with Rappahannock Community College to achieve customer's success.

By Maria Roe
Regional Manager
Warsaw.

“Alvan Medina just passed, no smashed the GED test,” said Peggy Spivak, Director of the Middle College program at the Rappahannock Community College (RCC) in Warsaw, VA. “He is one of our first to graduate from our program.” Alvan is one of Telamon’s customers, a young adult in training, to transition from farmwork to other jobs, who is now studying at the local college.

According to Ms. Spivak, the newly instituted college program is going to include him on their brochure as a great success story and the first in their course. She has agreed to follow up with his academic progress and to support him in his college level progress. A couple of months earlier, Alvan was dropping out of high school to go to California without even a driver's license, in hopes of changing his destiny. He surpassed everyone's expectations by not only passing the test in less than 2 months, but also by “smashing” the test. He had not been able to access Financial Aid grants, even though he qualified under federal guidelines, because he didn't have a high school diploma or its' equivalent. He couldn't access other training for the same reasons, even though he was now considered an adult. Through Telamon's intervention, he was enrolled in a Middle College program to obtain his GED while attending a culinary college course full time, at the community college.

A few months earlier, at the end of the summer, Mrs. Roe, the local Telamon's Regional Manager,

met Alvan while talking with his mother at a local establishment. Alvan's mother was concerned about her son who had made the decision to drop out of school and who was planning to try his luck in California, where they had relatives. Although Alvan was 18 years old and had very much wanted to have graduated from secondary school with his class, he had not graduated with his class and didn't feel that attending the school another year would guaran-



Alvan with Ms. Peggy Spivak, Director of the Middle College Program at RCC

tee him to graduate this year either.

Mrs. Roe recognized the disheartened state of the young man right away and perceived his burning desire to succeed. It didn't take her long to convince him to remain at home for he didn't really want to leave the area. He had a good attitude toward education and agreed to make some changes, but he didn't know where or how to get started. Alvan was an intelligent young man who had reached adulthood without enough credits to graduate, mainly through no fault of his own, but because of the decisions made in his behalf in

regard to his education. Having missed school time due to his family's seasonal employment involving travel to Mexico during the school year, together with the lack of mentoring, and perhaps even inadequate management of his school's subjects, had landed him in his present situation. At the age of 18 he had received training and had several credits for elective subjects, but not enough credits in the core subjects necessary for graduation (Math, Science and English).

After a series of required assessments, Mrs. Roe learned that Alvan's real goal was to become a chef and to work as a cook. They entered into an agreement that would not only allow Alvan to finish his secondary education, but also would allow him to pursue his goal as well at the new Middle College Program at the Rappahannock Community College.

Through Telamon's partnership and relationship with the community college, Mrs. Roe learned that Alvan needed to adjust to the col-

lege's expectation. “I am trying to get students who are not used to the academic culture used to successful college behaviors,” said Ms. Spivak. Both Mrs. Roe and Ms. Spivak followed Alvan's progress closely. “I call them when they are absent, which is certainly not how college usually is. However, I want them to know that they must start now making that investment,” said Ms. Spivak about the students she counseled. She doesn't want to appear like she hand-holds them, but she understands the need to help and to

Continued on page 5

Alvan Medina, Continued from pg. 4

work closely with some students in order to guarantee their success.

Alvan chose Middle College to attain his secondary education and he succeeded within a couple of months. "I was hoping to get a change of scenery from what I was used to in high school. I also wanted to be able to move on to RCC more quickly than if I had stayed in high school." "In Alvan's case, if he had stayed in school, he would have had two more years to complete. At 18 years old, Alvan's strongest desire was to move on with his life at RCC for a culinary arts certificate. In the time it would have taken him to earn that diploma in high school, he will have earned his culinary certificate and be working in a field he loves!" said Ms. Spivak. She stated that Middle College is far more than a diploma or GED program. "For the student that is ready to commit a few months of their life for a lifetime of rewards, Middle College is a perfect fit. Alvan is our first graduate ever in the program." She also said there were two more students on his heels to finish that week. Their diploma students are set to finish their courses before the winter holiday. Several will be conferred high school diplomas from their school divisions soon after. "It is such a pleasure to get to know these students, many of whom have not experienced much success in school. They are highly capable, but just need extra encouragement and someone to hold them accountable," she declared.

While in Middle College,

Alvan learned some things about himself. "I am smarter than I thought I was. I got a boost in confidence." When asked what he liked about Middle College, he said "Classes are small, so it is easier to learn with less disruption. The staff of Middle College is very caring and they actually want to see you succeed."

For the Telamon office serving the Northern Neck area, Alvan is the first Hispanic student to have made the transition from farmwork and dropping out of high school, to graduating from Middle College and entering community college training in the same year. There are many more students who drop out of high school every year. Often, this problem is magnified for

"For the student that is ready to commit a few months of their life for a lifetime of rewards, Middle College is a perfect fit."

farmworker families who have cultural and linguistic barriers. Telamon Corporation's office in Warsaw tries to reach out and assist those who qualify for the program, as other educational and workforce development programs do.

"Alvan is doing very well now, Thank you God! He seems to be progressing nicely now, and his behavior has been great since you started to advise him," said Mrs. Rosa Medina, Alvan's mom, to Telamon's Regional Manager, Maria Roe. "We have noticed a tremendous change in him. He didn't used to talk much with us, but since you started talking with him, he takes all advice seriously and includes us in conversations. He has great plans to finish his culinary course, to get a job, and to even pursue further studies in the same field," she also said.

For further information about programs and services offered by Telamon Corporation, you may call 804-313 5018.§

Staff Notes:



By Sharon Saldarriaga.

Congratulations to **Richard Ruffin**, Telamon's Weatherization Supervisor in our South Hill office, on his 15th year anniversary with Telamon. Richard has been an important part of that program's success. Thank you, Richard, for your years of commitment to Telamon and the families served.

We also wish to congratulate **Tytiana Clark** on her promotion to a new position in our Gretna office. Her new title is Foreclosure Intervention Counselor. Tytiana will work with families for foreclosure prevention.

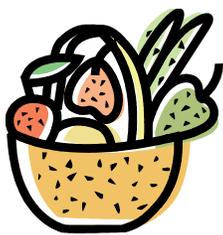
Marlene Larios was recently promoted to Special Projects Coordinator in our Richmond office. She will provide operational support to all our programs and coordinate our Pesticide and Workplace Safety Program. Congratulations Marlene!

We also want to extend a warm welcome to **Timothy Krawczel** as the new Case Manager in our Exmore Office. Tim will be working with our National Farmworker Jobs Program customers. Tim is replacing Sharleen Drummond who left in September to work as a counselor with children in the school system.§

Washing Pesticides from Fruits and Veggies

By Marlene Larios
Special Projects Coordinator

How to wash pesticides from fruits and vegetables is a very common question during our pesticide training classes. Washing with water reduces dirt, germs, and pesticide residues remaining on fruit and vegetable surfaces. Holding the fruit or vegetable under flowing water removes more than dunking the produce. Peeling or scrubbing produce like potatoes with a stiff clean brush or rubbing soft items like peaches



while holding them under running water works best to remove residues. However, pesticide residues can stick better to waxy or soft-skinned fruits. If the produce were treated with wax, pesticide residues may be trapped underneath the wax. There are also fruit and vegetable washing products. These can be effective at removing dirt or residues, but they have not been proven to be any more effective than water alone. This is because water alone is effective at removing some surface residues. No washing method is 100% effective for removing all pesticide residues.

Unlike dishes, fruits and vegetables have pores. Dish soap or bleach can get trapped or absorbed by the pores and become difficult to rinse off the fruit once they have been applied. By using cleaning products, you may actually add residues to produce and it could cause health effects if used on food.

If you decide to use more than water to wash fruits and vegetables, make sure that the product is meant for it.

Source: Adapted from the National Pesticide Information Center. <http://npic.orst.edu>

Telamon Assists Farmworker to Open Her Own Business

By Soraya Buckner
Regional Manager
Exmore.

Over the course of three months, Telamon Corporation in Exmore, helped Karla Flores achieve her goal of opening a small business. This new business will go a long way in improving her family's quality of life. The process involved many hours of work, flexibility with changes, and great attention to detail.

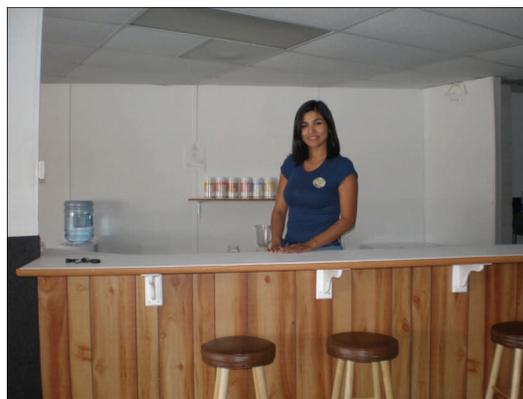
Karla came to Telamon looking for a way to provide a better life for her and her children. She had an idea of starting her own business

but needed assistance with how to go about pulling it all together. After deciding on a business that would help others become healthier and finding a great location, Telamon staff helped Karla with all facets of getting her business going. We attended appointments with Karla to aid in understanding town officials and other state required regulations,

helped her create a business plan, and assisted with initial startup costs. We also helped her troubleshoot as problems cropped up. We will continue to follow her progress in order to assist her in having a successful business.

The Nutrition Club is located at 3316 Main Street Exmore, VA.. Karla will be able to assist individuals with losing and maintaining their

weight. The business opened in July and is already showing signs of success. For a consultation or more



Karla showing off the beginnings of her new business.

information, contact Karla Flores at (757)442-4869. Her hours of operation are Monday through Saturday 7am to 11am and 3pm to 7pm. If you do not get an answer, please leave her a message. §

