Ladysmith Community & Business Leaders Forum Notes
October 23, 2008

Attendance - 20
Bd Mbr: James Schultz
Admin: Bob Meyer, John Will, Craig Fowler, Kim Olson, Jerilyn Dunlap
WITC Staff
Community & Business Leaders

- James Schultz introduced Bob Meyer.
- The open community forum was informal.
- Input was given by community members in response to the following questions:
  1. What are you willing to share about your business or community plans for the future (that might impact WITC’s planning)?
  2. What educational, training, or recruitment issues do you face in accomplishing those plans?
  3. In your view, how can WITC best serve your business/community?
     a. Recruiting/retaining employees for serving an aging population – personal home care is needed (WITC offers a Personal Care Worker Certificate). One company noted that the numbers should double in two years (500 right now, will need 400 more).
     b. There is a need for nurses and health care workers.
     c. Training for low income individuals is needed, with access to local programming to help with the transportation issue. Low income people need to be able to go back to school to gain skills that will make them employable.
     d. Local law enforcement training is needed - 24 hours for certification (3 – 8 hours of classroom/training). The police department will let WITC know what they need.
     e. Improve the reading/math/computer skills of WITC Automotive Collision graduates. They have to be ready to succeed. This may need to be emphasized in the high schools.
     f. Impress upon younger students the importance of basic skills.
     g. A Certified Dental Assistant program (16 weeks) is needed. These are full-time positions that work to assist the dentist. There are usually two dental assistants for every dentist. Dental clinics currently have to do on-the-job training.
     h. Possible partnerships with Northland & Silver Lake.
     i. English as a Second Language (ELL) classes: There is a dramatic need in Rusk County. In the agriculture industry there are Hispanic farm hands. Barron County is heavy into a Somalian population.
     j. There is a need for a Medical Interpreter for patients who speak Spanish.
     k. International student program at Ladysmith High School (J-1 VISA) to WITC.
     l. Provide workers for the health care consortium.
     m. One gentleman noted that he is very proud of WITC as it is great for their community, and to keep up the great work.