



Piedmont Community College Presentation

Hearing on: China's Impact on the North Carolina Economy: Winners and Losers

**Panel VI: The Human Costs to North Carolina of China Trade
and Ameliorating Those Costs**

September 6, 2007



Rapid Response Activities Conducted for Collins & Aikman April 2006

State Rapid Response Meeting held at C&A on April 18, 2006.

Follow-up meetings held with the local team on April 24 at Person ESC and on April 26 at PCC.

May 2-4, 2006: 13 Orientation sessions held in which PCC and ESC staff made one hour presentations to all 545 employees. These sessions began at 6:00 am and were held at all three plants over a three day period to cover all shifts.

May 9-11, 2006: Workshops on Resumes held beginning at 6:00 am through 3:30 pm. Tuesday these 30-min workshops were held at the Cavel Plant, Wednesday at the Elm Plant and Thursday at the Sycamore Plant. Approximately 285 employees attended the workshops. In addition, HRD staff was stationed at each plant on the days when workshops were held from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm to answer any further questions about services, provide counseling and to review resumes already completed by employees. *Staffing of PCC personnel at Collins and Aikman occurred from May 9 through June 1, 2006.*

May 15-16, 2006: Steps to Starting your own Business Workshop was offered at the Business Development Center in Uptown Roxboro to those at C&A interested in entrepreneurship opportunities. 14 employees attended the May 15 session from 6:00-8:00 pm and 18 employees attended the session held on May 16 from 9:00-11:00am.

May 16-18, 2006: Workshops on Job Applications held at each plant as designated above. Staff provided workshops beginning at 6:00 am each day and continued throughout the day each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. 243 employees attended this series of workshops and staff remained onsite for questions and to provide counseling services from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

May 23-25, 2006: Workshops on Interviews were held each day during same time frames with 205 participating. Staff continued to be stationed at plants from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

May 30-June 1, 2006: Even though workshops requested by management had been completed, HRD staff was stationed at Cavel on Tuesday, Elm on Wednesday and Thursday morning and Sycamore on Thursday afternoon to answer any further questions prior to initial lay-off expected to occur June 6.

Beginning the week of June 5, College staff expanded the schedule at Person Joblink at ESC so that staff was available to provide counseling from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm from Monday through Thursday as workers are displaced from Collins and Aikman. This schedule continued through October 5, 2006.

On June 13, HRD began a special session of its NETWorks Class to meet the needs of those from Collins and Aikman that recently received their lay-off.

A special WIA grant was received for the amount of \$60, 000 in August from the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments to assist displaced workers with short-term training.



Rapid Response Activities and the Role of Piedmont Community College

Rapid Response Activities:

- Warn Notice**
- State Meeting sponsored by NC Dept. of Commerce**
- Local Team Organization**
- Employee Orientations on-site**
- Company requested workshops**
- Career Counseling**
- TRADE Act Designation**
- Joblink Career Center Workforce Delivery System**
 - Person Joblink at ESC**
 - Caswell Joblink at Caswell Campus of PCC**

Human Resources Development Classes-Fee Waived for those:

- Receiving notice of lay off or plant closing**
- Unemployed**
- Eligible for EIC**
- 200% of Poverty Income Guidelines**

Classes/Services to prepare individuals for further training:

- Career Exploration**
- Keyboarding for the Job Seeker**
- Computer Skills for the Job Seeker**
- Computer Empowerment for the Job Seeker**
- NETWorks-3 hr./week job/networking club**
 - Includes variety of assessments such as COPS, Keirse, College Success Scale Inventory and WorkKeys**
- KeyTrain-computer based, individualized training on nine identified employment skills**
 - Remediation for skill levels identified by WorkKeys**

Classes/Services to assist individuals with the Job Search Process:

- Creating your own Job Search Portfolio**
- NC Career Readiness Certificate**
- Resume Software**
- Resume paper**
- Free fax, telephone and copying services for job search activities**

Piedmont Community College

**Local Plant Closings and Layoffs
Person and Caswell Counties
1998-2007**

| Date | Company | Number Affected at Layoff or Final Closing* | Closing or Layoff | Product | Reason | TAA Eligibility |
|---------------------|------------------------------|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Oct. 1998 | Wolverine Tube | 140 | Closing | Copper tubing | Downsizing | no |
| Aug. 1999 | NCDOC-Blanch | 99 | Closing | Youth Corrections | Cost Cutting | no |
| Dec. 1999 | Tultex | 177 | Closing | Yarn | Bankruptcy | no |
| Dec. 2000 | Crown Crafts | 250 | Closing | Bedding | Outsourcing | yes |
| March 2001 | Fleetwood Homes | 186 | Closing | Mobile Homes | Overcapacity | no |
| March 2001 | Softex Finishing | 28 | Closing | Fabric Dyeing | Sale of Business | no |
| August 2001 | Irvin Aerospace | 57 | Closing | Parachutes | Consolidation | no |
| October 2001 | Dialight | 22 | Lay-off | Semi-conductors | Lost Contract | yes |
| Oct. 2003 | Burlington Industries | 79 | Lay-off | Textiles | Bankruptcy | yes |
| August 2002 | Bromma | 18 | Closing | Loading Equipment | Import Competition | yes |
| Dec. 2003 | Vector Tobacco | 123 | Closing | Cigarettes | Restructuring | no |
| Dec. 2005 | Eaton Corp. | 150 | Lay-off | Air Control Products | Competition | yes |
| Mar.2006 | Collins and Aikman | 65 | Lay-off | Automotive Fabrics | Downsizing | yes |
| May 2006 | ITG | 50 | Closing | Textiles | Competition | yes |
| Sept. 2006 | Collins and Aikman | 592 | Closing | Automotive Fabrics | Foreign Competition | yes |
| August 2007 | AlSCO Metals | 67 | Lay-off | Metal Fabrication | Consolidation | no |

***The 16 plant closing and lay-offs listed above represent 2,103 jobs; 58% or 1,226 individuals were eligible for TAA benefits.**

In addition to the above listing of manufacturing companies, many secondary businesses have closed or had staffing reductions due to economic downturns. These include the following businesses: Planters Tobacco Warehouse, Growers Tobacco Warehouse, Progress Energy, T&T Housing Center, Maxway, Winn-Dixie Stores, Lewis Furniture, Heileg-Meyers, Pizza Hearth, and City of Roxboro. These companies contributed to an additional 100+ jobs being lost.

ESC representatives and other partners reported the following:

- ◆ NC does not discriminate in regard to age in the determination of eligibility for Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) benefits and approving individuals' training plan**
- ◆ NC provides 130-weeks of income support, if remediation is needed for individuals (this is a federal requirement). This is particularly evident in allowing individuals to complete GEDs as part of their training plan. Other states only consider developmental classes as meeting the definition of approved remedial activities.**
- ◆ Nursing programs are ineligible for TAA because of the timing of course delivery. Most nursing program enrollment only occurs in the fall semester. This creates an enrollment problem for laid-off individuals because they are required to be enrolled in approved training within 13 weeks of the exhaustion of severance pay.**
- ◆ Another barrier for providing TAA services is the issue that Act is so complicated that program operators sometimes find it difficult to understand. This complexity inhibits clarity of communication of requirements and benefits of the program to those who are already upset and anxious about being dislocated from their livelihood.**
- ◆ Selection of appropriate medical insurance plan is another difficult decision dislocated workers must make. All their lives this determination has been made by accepting what the employer had to offer. Suddenly they have to make uninformed decisions quickly regarding the continuance of their insurance.**
- ◆ There is an unmet need for dislocated workers to get counseling and other specialized services if they are to transition back into the workforce effectively. This problem is compounded by staffing reductions at ESC. There has been a 50% staff reduction since NAFTA.**
- ◆ When NAFTA was first implemented, Congress promised that U.S. workers would receive adequate support to overcome any hardship as a result. Congress must continue to financially support those impacted by TAA by providing an adequate level of funding for retraining and reentry into the workforce.**
- ◆ Dislocation is a life-changing event. Most individuals don't really understand how life-changing.**

- ◆ **The U.S. economy and U.S. citizens are currently feeling the negative affect of NAFTA. This is evidenced by the decline in purchases of automobiles and homes. Some analysts indicate that this economic downturn is also affecting the number of people getting married due to the uncertainty of the economy.**
- ◆ **One suggestion for improvement is that more incentives should be given to companies that provide good incumbent worker training. If companies kept the skills levels of their employees' current, especially in regard to technology, then individuals would 1) add value to their organizations and 2) know how to use computers and other technology when searching for new employment.**
- ◆ **A final discrimination of services provided under TAA is that those working in the tobacco industry that have lost jobs do not receive any income support or training support. This is a group that is being left out and that has been impacted by foreign competition.**