

CORD

=== Collaborative Organizations Responding to Dislocation

May 1, 2011

Inside This Issue

- 1 Chroming Business Takes Off
- 2 Show That You Have Transferable Skills
- 3 Job growth Inching Up
- 4 Variety of Classes Offered



Chad Brannon (at right) and Nate Martindale (left) stand in front of one their spray booths with samples of some of their smaller jobs in back at their new business in Beloit—Borderline Chroming.

E-HUB LEADS PARTICIPANT FROM NUTS (FOOD) TO BOLTS (CHROMING)

When Chad Brannon enrolled in the SWWDB's E-Hub program in May, 2010, he planned on starting a fast food business named 'Mad Dogs' across the street from Hononegah High School in Rockton, IL. When the six-week program was over, he knew building a business using an emerging product called Cosmic Chrome was a much better choice.

"It made sense, both financially and from the standpoint it is a fast-growing, potential-laden business that utilizes 'green' technologies," Brannon said. His business, called Borderline Chroming, is located in back of the Turtle Tap and ballpark at 1341 Marinoff Dr., Beloit and is just taking off.

Despite the fact the business has only started offering services since the beginning of March, 2011 (they began prepping their facility, located in a former storage building, in November, 2010), and that there has been virtually no advertising except by 'word of mouth,' Chad and his partner, long-time friend Nate Martindale, have enough business that it keeps them busy at least eight hours a day, plus it is growing. They also have part-time staff they can call in when needed. "We had work before we even opened up," Brannon stated. He said their variety allows them to handle many types of jobs and products that virtually no other business (or very few) can handle, plus according to Brannon they are the only such type of business in the Midwest, the closest he is aware of being in Cleveland, OH. "This newer process is now being incorporated by big business, but we can make this available and affordable to individuals and small businesses in need of plating," Brannon explained.

Traditional chromium, nickel, copper, and other metals, much of them coming from South America, contain cyanide. Brannon says his process is safe, durable, flexible, and much less expensive. Chromium is just the top coat—the base is a bluish paint but all coatings are extremely durable.

"E-Hub (Entrepreneurial) taught me how to research and learn techniques to start this business," Brannon said, indicating that while prepping he uses the same basic methods, although various metals need to be handled in specific ways. "It's like applying a layer of skin," he explained. "I can't say enough about how E-Hub helped me to get to this point," he added

(Continued on Next Page)

CHROMING BUSINESS OFF TO GOOD START (Continued)

"This is more like a skilled trade, where we can utilize five or six methods to coat not only traditional chroming but also copper, nickel, and painting."

--Chad Brannon

Borderline Chroming

The area's demographics, which include a large number of boats, motorcycles, recreational vehicles, etc. helped convince Chad there would be a good customer base. It also helped that that he had his own 2006 Grand Prix that he 'chromed.' He said a lot of people asked him if he could do the same to their vehicles. "I knew there was a good market for this," he said.

Whereas much of his initial business has been centered around smaller products and vehicular projects, Borderline Chroming has also expanded into areas such as tank plating, jewelry, and even gold plating. "This is more like a skilled trade, where we can utilize five or six methods to coat not only in traditional chroming but also copper, nickel and painting," he said, adding they have about 30 colors they can use. A simple project usually takes a few hours to complete. "We can complete a car in less than an hour, but need a couple of hours of drying," he added.

Both the 26-year-old Martindale, a Beloit Turner graduate and Army veteran who earned his culinary arts degree from Blackhawk Tech, and Brannon love food preparation. However, they both realize that business is very costly to get into and fluctuates greatly. "There's actually some similarities in both fields—you need to attend to details, measuring is very important, and you need consistency," Martindale said.

Still, getting into this new business was not inexpensive. The capital equipment and materials are quite costly. But if necessary, they have good re-sale value. "Just a small bottle of liquid can cost up to \$500," Brannon said.

But his commitment to the community helped him in obtaining his loan. "I have always supported the community and will continue to do so," Brannon said. He also has and will continue to offer jobs and opportunities to the 'underappreciated' in the community who need help. "I don't plan on moving—I will be in this community a long time," he emphasized. "I want to leave my mark. Ken Hendricks was like an idol to me." He was also assisted through a bequest from his grandfather's estate and his father's help on getting into the field initially.

But it was E-Hub that really set Brannon on this path. "Out of all the great things E-Hub has to offer, the biggest was the teacher's ability to teach you the true meaning of an entrepreneur and how to find the inner entrepreneur in yourself," he said. "I learned in class that to be successful, you must be ahead of the game and find your niche. I think we're on our way!"

WHAT IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE NEEDED EXPERIENCE

"Show that you can not only learn the required skills quickly, but that you can 'think on your feet'."

When you don't have the requirements for a certain job, offer them something similar. It shows that you can not only learn the required skills quickly, but that you can 'think on your feet.'

As an example, let's say you wanted a job selling advertising but didn't have that experience. But let's say you did solicit funds for a service club fund-raiser and have the samples to prove it was successful (solicitation letters, sample ads, donation totals, etc.) You coordinated (or even assisted), called on potential donors and advertisers, and collected and banked funds. Or perhaps you have been involved in increasing giving at your church. All of these things show people skills, organizational skills, initiative, etc.

These small substitutions show that you could quickly learn and adapt to the skills needed for that job. Transferable skills are important in seeking new employment.

IT MAY BE SLOW, BUT JOB GROWTH IS PROGRESSING

According to Jim Buckmaster, CEO of Craigslist, the website that publishes millions of job listings, overall the U.S. job market is as strong now as we have seen since the onset of the recession. However, as always, there are some caveats with that statement.

Certain areas of the country seem to have higher job opening numbers than others. Also certain sectors of types of jobs have more openings and growth potential than others and most need trained workers. Still, after adding only 68,000 jobs in January, the economy added 194,000 in February and 216,000 in March. The unemployment rate dropped one-tenth of a percent to 8.8 percent, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

In Wisconsin, the unemployment rate (seasonably adjusted), which was consistently between the 4-6 percent range from 2001 through November, 2008, jumped above six percent in December, 2008 and remained between 8-10 percent from March, 2009 through September, 2010. Since then it has slowly been diminishing by about a tenth of a percent every month.

In Rock County, which recently has traditionally been higher than both the national and state rates, the 2010 rate (seasonably unadjusted) was 11.1 percent, while for January the rate was 10.7 and February 10.5 percent. This understandably does not include those who had dropped out of the job search process and were unaccounted for, but still the trend is positive.

In February, according to BLS, 27 states and D.C. experienced a drop in their unemployment rates, while only seven saw them rise (the remaining 16 states had no change).

Trends show this should continue. A February KPMG survey of 6,000 senior executives found that 41 percent of those involved in manufacturing expected to increase employment at their companies, up from 28 percent in October. Also a March survey of CFOs by Duke University/CFO Magazine found that hiring will be expanding in the transportation and particularly energy sectors.

The 'high tech' sector shows even more promise. Craigslist shows tech job offerings in March were up 30 percent compared to a year ago. Also Monster.com shows marketing jobs ranking fifth in terms of occupations where hiring has picked up. Several CEOs indicated that social media and Internet knowledge are important factors to improving market penetration.

With the rapidly increasing cost for gas and fuel, any energy-conservation type of business has extremely high growth potential. CFO Magazine deputy editor Kate O'Sullivan says there is a lot of dynamism now and space for more activity, such as that occurring at SolarCity, San Mateo, CA. They install solar panels on homes in 10 states. They've hired more than 500 last year and plan to add more this year, including salespeople, support staff, installers and administrators.

While the picture still shows many concerns, this uptick in job creation and ebbing unemployment figures points toward a slow but hopefully steady easing of unemployment and potential for those ready for the emerging types of occupations.



The energy sector is one of those areas where job growth is projected to be substantial.

CHECK OUT THESE OPPORTUNITIES

There are several **Dislocated Worker** workshops that may be of interest to you (even if you are not in the WIA program—these are open to all). Call the Rock County Job Center for information or to schedule a session (741-3578)—Julie Funk at (608) 741-3462, Carol Kohl at (608) 741-3418 or Jenn Coppennoll (for FutureTrac or DW Orientation workshops) at (608) 741-3511.

Interviewing 101	Mon., May 2, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
REE Boot	Tue., May 3, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Ability Profiler	Tue., May 3, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Rm. B
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Wed., May 4, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Wed., May 4, 1-3 p.m., Rm. J
REE Boot	Thu., May 5, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Success Skills Training I	Fri., May 6, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
Java & Jobs	Fri., May 6, 9:30 am-noon, Annex
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Mon., May 9, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Resume 101	Mon., May 9, 10 am-noon, Rm. C
REE Boot	Tue., May 10, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
FutureTrac	Wed., May 11, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., J
REE Boot	Thu., May 12, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., May 13, 9:30 am-noon, Annx
Interview 101	Mon., May 16, 10 am-noon, C
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Mon., May 16, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C
REE Boot	Tue., May 17, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Ability Profiler	Tue., May 17, 12:30-4:30 pm, B
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Wed., May 18, 9-11:30 am, Rm. H
Educational Options	Wed., May 18, 2-3 p.m., Rm. J
REE Boot	Thu., May 19, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Success Skills Training III	Fri., May 20, 8:30 am-noon, Rm. J
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Fri., May 20, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. K
Java & Jobs	Fri., May 20, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Anx
Resume 101	Mon., May 23, 10 am-noon, C
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Mon., May 23, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C
REE Boot	Tue., May 24, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Ability Profiler	Tue., May 24, 12:30-4:30 pm, B
REE Boot	Thu., May 26, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Success Skills Training II	Fri., May 27, 8:30 am-noon, Rm. J
Java & Jobs	Fri., May 27, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Anx
FutureTrac	Fri., May 27, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Rm K
Memorial Day	Job Center Closed
REE Boot	Tue., May 31, 9-11 a.m., Rm. B
Ability Profiler	Tue., May 31, 12:30-4:30 pm, B
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Tue., May 31, 1-4 p.m., Rm. J

Also, don't forget about the many computer workshops offered through the Arrowhead Library System in communities throughout Rock County. Call 758-6588 (Hedberg Public Library) to find out about these workshops.

REE Boot (among the classes listed above)—Re-employment for Everyone—limited to nine participants

MAY 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	17	28
29	30	31				

JUNE 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

“With self-discipline,
most anything is
possible.”

---Theodore Roosevelt

The CORD Newsletter is designed to provide helpful information and tips to area dislocated workers. Have comments or ideas for stories?

Contact the editor:

Gregg Bosak, SWWDB,
Rock County Job Center,
g.bosak@swwdb.org
or call (608) 741-3463