



Connects students, parents and educators to career opportunities through business partnerships, training and resources.

MEBA Board Meeting Highlights Successful Investments

Attendees at MEBA's January board meeting learned about the success of their investment in MEBA. Whether the contribution is time, expertise or financial support, investments in MEBA are getting results.



Pictured from l to r: Jim Gambrell, Dr. Kaye Shaw, Dana Turner, Mayor Bob Coble, Steve Benjamin and Holly Cummings

The board meeting opened with a salute to MEBA's most recent investors. Representatives from the **City of Columbia**, including Columbia **Mayor Bob Coble**; **Jim Gambrell**, Economic Development Director and MEBA board member; and **Dana Turner**, Assistant City Manager, were on hand to present MEBA with a gift of \$100,000 in support of a five-year partnership between MEBA and the

City of Columbia. **Fairfield County** presented MEBA with a gift of \$5,000. Representing Fairfield County were **Phil Hinley**, Fairfield County Administrator; **Mary Lynn Kinley**, Fairfield County Council member and MEBA board member; **Kamau Marcharia**, Fairfield County Council; **Robert Sharpe**, Fairfield Career and Technology Center; and **Dr. Phil Flynn**, Fairfield County Schools.

Ron Ellis, Human Resources Director for Siemens Diesel Systems



Pictured from l to r: Holly Cummings, Dr. Kaye Shaw, Ron Ellis and Steve Benjamin

Technology and a MEBA board member, presented MEBA with a gift of \$15,000 on behalf of Siemens Diesel Systems Technology. The gift is part of a three-year commitment in which MEBA will receive \$5,000 annually for three years. "I don't call this a charitable contribution," said Ellis of Siemen's gift. "I call this an investment in our future."

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Pictured from l to r: Dr. Kaye Shaw, Rick Grooms, Holly Cummings, Donna Plunkett, Katrina Spigner, Thomas Keith and Steve Benjamin



Pictured from l to r: Dr. Kaye Shaw, Holly Cummings, Dr. Phil Flynn, Phil Hinley, Kamau Marcharia, Mary Lynn Kinley, Robert Sharpe and Steve Benjamin

February 5: Groundhog Job Shadow Day

For the tenth consecutive year, thousands of workers representing various professions in South Carolina will devote a portion of their workday to give young people a chance to explore their futures by "shadowing" them on **National Groundhog Job Shadow Day**.

This annual event was started in 1997 by a coalition of business organiza-

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MEBA Provides A Framework for Understanding Poverty Training to Midlands Educators

Numerous studies have documented the correlation between low socioeconomic status and low education achievement. But true to our mission, MEBA believes it does not have to be this way. In all efforts, MEBA seeks to decrease poverty levels in its service areas of Richland, Lexington and Fairfield Counties, by promoting the most important components of fighting the War on Poverty - Education, Job and Life Skills Awareness and Economic and Workforce Development. MEBA is proud to provide a new tool in our efforts to diminish the relationship between poverty and low achievement.



MEBA's Kay Barlow talks with educators at Arden Elementary in Richland School District One.

MEBA now offers *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* training to teachers, guidance counselors and administrators working at schools in low-to-moderate income communities in the Midlands. The training is based on the book by the same name by **Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D.**, and provides an in-depth study of information and issues that will increase educators' knowledge and understanding of the culture of poverty. Armed with this training, educators will be better able to relate to children of poverty and the significant challenges they face. The end result will be improved student achievement and, ultimately, a better workforce and community.

MEBA is the only organization offering this training in the Midlands. We are grateful to **Bank of America** and the **Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina (Providence Hospitals)** for support of this program.

Check out MEBA's website at
www.mebasc.com

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tions interested in education and youth causes. Groundhog Job Shadow Day will be celebrated on February 5, 2007, and throughout the month of February. The goal of Groundhog Job Shadow Day is to help young people explore firsthand the skills and education needed to be successful in today's job market.

More than 100,000 businesses and one million young people are expected to participate nationwide. The program grows every year, and last year nearly 40,000 kindergarten through post-secondary students shadowed nearly 12,000 employers in South Carolina.

Governor Mark Sanford and **Lieutenant Governor Andre Bauer** will be participating in the event again this year, as well as business professionals from several Midlands businesses.

"We're glad to open our doors to young folks looking to make a difference and have an impact in the political process," said **Governor Mark Sanford**. "It's incredibly important for us to do what we can to encourage children to get involved and stay involved in working to improve the world around them."

MEBA works closely with other event coordinators to connect participating students to exciting job shadowing opportunities throughout the Midlands. "Groundhog Job Shadow Day highlights an essential part of our mission - to connect education and business in order to promote a more vibrant and productive workforce," said **Dr. Kaye Shaw**, MEBA's Executive Director.

Please look for complete coverage of National Groundhog Job Shadow Day activities in the next issue of *eConnections*.

Faces of MEBA -- Dena Feagin

Dena Feagin is driven for success. As the **Automotive Youth Educational Systems (AYES)** Manager for South Carolina, Feagin works hard every day to ensure quality students are prepared and focused for a successful career in the automotive industry. She is seeing results, and the beneficiaries are not only the students but also the retail automotive industry and the Midlands community.



As AYES Manager, Feagin manages the educational component of the **South Carolina Automobile Dealers Association (SCADA)** and works with 75 automotive service and 28 collision repair programs in high schools throughout the state. One of her main goals is to help these programs become nationally certified, which involves a rigorous and challenging evaluation and accreditation process. When Feagin began working as AYES manager in 2001, six high schools had a certified program. Since then, that number has increased by 200 percent, with a current total of 20 nationally certified programs.

"It's a time consuming and intense process," explains Feagin. "The schools must have a proper facility with adequate space for the students, a curriculum that can keep up with ever changing technology, sufficient tools for each student, equipment to teach the tasks, and 650 contact hours. The school programs must also be able to meet 10 certifying standards and pass an onsite evaluation." Feagin and her team work with the schools long before the evaluation process begins to ensure the schools have the support and tools necessary for success. "Our goal is to be proactive," says Feagin, "to make sure everyone succeeds."

But the road to success does not end with accredited programs and educated students. The ultimate goal and measure of success is to connect students to meaningful and rewarding careers in the automotive industry, where qualified professionals are in short supply. According to Feagin, high school automotive programs must provide

Upcoming Events

Southeastern WorkKeys Conference

January 31 - February 2, 2007
Embassy Suites Hotel Airport
Convention Center
North Charleston

National Groundhog Job Shadow Day

February 5, 2007

MEBA Executive Committee

February 9, 2007, 7:45 - 9:00 am
NAI Avant

Career Connections Committee

February 9, 2007, 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Richland One Career Quest

February 13, 2007
Heyward Career Center

Guidance Committee

February 13, 2007, 9:00 - 11:00 am
Lexington County Sheriff's Department

Arts & Humanities Alliance

February 14, 2007, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
TBD

Construction Field Study

February 22, 2007
Total Comfort Services Center, Inc.

Palmetto Health Career Carnival

February 22, 2007
Palmetto Health Baptist

Arden Elementary Career Kickoff

February 26, 2007

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In addition to these donations, MEBA also received two grant awards. **Bernadette Houghton** with the **South Carolina Department of Commerce** presented MEBA with a Workforce Development Grant Award in the amount of \$124,096. **Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina (Providence Hospitals)** presented MEBA with a grant of \$25,000.



Pictured from l to r: Holly Cummings, Dr. Kaye Shaw, Bernadette Houghton and Steve Benjamin

Representing the Foundation were **Rick Grooms**, Vice President of Human Resources for Providence Hospitals and a MEBA board member; **Thomas Keith**, Executive Director, Sisters of Charity Foundation; **Katrina Spigner**, Program Officer, Sisters of Charity Foundation; and **Donna Plunkett**, Work Force Development Coordinator, Providence Hospitals.

Following the check presentations, **Jim Reynolds**, President of **Total Comfort/Comfort Services** and a member of MEBA's board of directors, provided a statewide overview of **Personal Pathways to Success**, an education initiative created by the Education and Economic Development Act of 2005 (EEDA) and designed to connect academic studies with preparation for entering the workforce. For more information about the initiative, please visit www.teachscpathways.org.



Middle College Students Chandra Salley and Chris Brinson

Several individuals then provided firsthand accounts of the success of MEBA's many initiatives.

Chandra Salley and **Chris Brinson**, both students at **Midlands Middle College**, spoke to the group about the positive impact the program has had on their lives and on their futures.

Both credited the program with helping them find academic success and giving the knowledge, confidence and opportunity to pursue a college education.

"I read that only sixty percent of students will seek education or training after high school," said Brinson. "I know now that because of Midlands Middle

CAREER SPECIALIST COMMITTEE FORMED

The newly formed **Career Specialist Committee** met for the first time on January 29, 2007, at **Midlands Technical College Airport Campus**. The committee was created by MEBA in response to the legislation from the Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) which requires school districts to employ career specialists for all middle schools. MEBA wanted to give these educators an opportunity to come together to network and to learn about important resources available to assist and support them.

At the inaugural meeting, **Dr. Kaye Shaw**, MEBA's Executive Director, encouraged attendees to

"make MEBA work for you." Shaw outlined MEBA's mission and the wealth of resources available to them

such as the "*Be A Part Of*" series brochures,

Teachers in the Workplace course, field studies and the Speakers Guide. Shaw encouraged attendees to visit MEBA's website at www.mebasc.com as many of these resources may be downloaded from the website.



Kama Staton of Lexington Medical Center talks with career specialists about available resources.

Attendees also heard from several MEBA partners including **Kama Staton**, **Lexington Medical Center**; **Patrick Lengel**, **OneStop**; **Carol Dunlap**, **SCOIS**; and **Dianne Lee**, **Kuder**.

Bank of America Donation Provides Laptop Computers to Midlands Middle College Students

Midlands Middle College enrolls highly capable but low performing high school juniors and seniors in small classes with non-traditional instruction using the latest technology. Students transition into college courses to concurrently earn their high school diplomas and transferable college credits. Rigorous coursework involves extensive independent studies in 16 career clusters. To perform at this fast pace, students need personal laptop computers. Through a \$7,500 donation from **Bank of America**, all Middle College students will receive their very own laptop.



Melissa Drescher with Bank of America presents \$7,500 to Midlands Middle College Director, Sue McLeese.

"We are thrilled to be able to provide students with personal laptop computers," said **Kim Wilkerson**, South Carolina President for Bank of America. "We know our investment will help prepare these students for the 21st century workforce and will allow them to reach their full academic potential."

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College I will be part of that sixty percent. I know I can do it."

Kay Barlow, MEBA's Education and Community Coordinator, showed a video which provided a closer look at the *Your Child Is Job #1* program. The video showcased the program's mission to bring important and useful information directly to parents at their place of work and featured positive testimonials from program participants. **Marcella Wine Snyder**, an educator at the **Richland One Middle College**, and **Ron Ellis** of **Siemens Diesel Systems Technology**, spoke about the success and impact of **Teachers in the Workplace**. Rounding out the presenters were **Corey Chambers** of **UPS**, who spoke about MEBA's direct impact on jobs, and **David Highsmith** of **Midlands Technical College**, who spoke about the benefits of MEBA's **Career Development Facilitator** course. **Patrick Lengel** with **OneStop** also attended and distributed materials and information.

YOUR CHILD IS JOB # 1:

GOOD ATTENDANCE

This month parents at **Spirax Sarco** and the **City of Columbia Fire Station 3** learned about the importance of good attendance. MEBA's **Kay Barlow** spoke with parents at their respective places of work about helping their children understand the value of attending school. According to Barlow, parents must not only teach their children this value, but they also must model it. Parents should set a good example by attending work and by being on time. "You can be your child's strongest role model," explained Barlow, "and it is essential that the example you set is a good one."

YOUR CHILD IS JOB # 1

IN NUMBERS

A monthly look at the number of parents reached:

- ▶ 65 Spirax Sarco employees
- ▶ 16 City of Columbia Fire Department employees

January Total:
81 Parents Reached!

National Career Development Month Poster Poetry Contest: Midlands Winners Announced

Middle School Poster

Brittany Entzminger

EL Wright Middle
1st Place Winner

McKenzie Scott

EL Wright Middle
2nd Place Winner

Takeria Williams

EL Wright Middle
3rd Place Winner

Open Adult Poems

Susan Stafford

Summit Parkway Middle
1st Place Winner

Rodney Thompson

Summit Parkway Middle
2nd Place Winner

Intermediate Poems

Alexandria Caldwell

Lake Murray Elementary
1st Place Winner

Ryan King

Lake Murray Elementary
2nd Place Winner

Savannah Lesesne

Lake Murray Elementary
3rd Place Winner

Middle School Poems

Stephanie Boswell, Annie Bennett, Amelia Olsen, Megan Burch

Kelly Mill Middle
1st Place Winner

Casey Peach

EL Wright Middle
2nd Place Winner

Julian Nelson

EL Wright Middle
3rd Place Winner

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students with challenging courses that emphasize skills in math, science, computer technology, reading and writing for comprehension. "This industry is a lot more than simply tinkering with a car engine," explains Feagin. "We must have bright, qualified candidates to feed a growing number of jobs."

This need to connect education and industry is why Feagin and SCADA knew it was important to become involved with MEBA from the beginning. "As soon as SCADA decided to participate in the national AYES certification program, the first call we made was to **Lisa Call** (MEBA's Workforce Development Director and Career Specialist)," says Feagin. "MEBA is our direct lifeline to the schools and educators in the Midlands. Our numbers are up, and we feel very positive about what we are doing and know this has been possible largely because of MEBA. We are continually grateful to MEBA for its efforts and our results."

Faces of MEBA is a monthly feature designed to highlight those individuals who exemplify MEBA's mission. If you know of someone you think we should profile, please contact us at connect@mebasc.com.

Hospitality & Tourism Field Study



Douglas O'Flaherty,
Chair, Hospitality &
Tourism Alliance

The Hospitality & Tourism Field Study was held on December 13, 2006, and began with a welcome from **Douglas O'Flaherty**, Executive Director of the South Carolina Tourism and Hospitality Education Foundation and Director of Operations for the Hospitality Association of South Carolina, and a tour of **Blythewood High School's ProStart Program** led by Chef

William Turner. Following, a panel of industry professionals addressed the group and focused on the various areas of hospitality and tourism including foodservice, hotel, conference planning, attractions and research.



Educators tour Blythewood High School's ProStart Program.

Attendees then traveled to **Sesquicentennial State Park** where **Mary Ludlam** and **Eddie Richburg** of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism provided an overview of the department and industry careers. The group visited the **Plex Recreational Facility** and enjoyed a tour led by **Keith Osman**. After lunch and a tour of Carrabba's, hosted by **Geoff Turner**, the group made a final stop at **Embassy Suites** where they met with **Steve Graves**, General Manager, and enjoyed a tour led by **Susan Walters**.



Pictured from l to r: Linda McWhorter, State Museum; Dr. Rich Harrill, International Tourism Research Institute; Ken Ivey, Municipal Association of South Carolina; Ben Blackwell, Hampton Inn; Duanne Davis, SYSCO Foodservices

Quick Bytes

- ▶ **Building Homes of Our Own** is a free interactive teaching tool for middle and high school classrooms. Challenge students with this innovative simulation program that you can use for thematic instruction, cooperative learning or interdisciplinary teaching. For a preview or to order your free copy, please visit www.HomesOfOurOwn.org
- ▶ **Chapin Middle School** will host a Career Fair on February 28, 2007, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. If you would like to participate, please contact Kim Neely at 803.345.1466 or kneely@lex5.k12.sc.us.

eConnections is an electronic publication of Midlands Education and Business Alliance. For more information, please contact Ashley Thomas at (803) 733-1119 or ashleythomas@mebasc.com.



www.mebasc.com

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