



Shaw Tapped to Lead Midlands Regional Education Center; Call Named MEBA's Interim Director

Leaders of the **Midlands Regional Education Center (REC)** have taken the first step to creating a better-trained workforce for South Carolina by hiring **Dr. Kaye Shaw** as Coordinator. **Mike Sisk**, Chairman of the center's advisory board, said Shaw was the ideal choice for coordinator because of her experience with educators and business professionals. "Kaye has developed a tremendous network of contacts across the region," he said. "She understands what it takes to build partnerships with our education system."



Lisa Call, MEBA's Workforce Development Director and Career Specialist, has been named Interim Executive Director.

The Regional Education Centers were established by local businesses, educators and workforce development leaders as part of Personal Pathways to Success, an education initiative was created in 2005 by the Education and Economic Development Act to help students define, then achieve their post-graduation goals. The initiative is designed to improve the state's workforce and to make South Carolina more globally competitive by connecting academic studies with preparation for entering the workforce. MEBA, along with OneStop shops, the Work Force Investment Board and Regional Instruction Technology Centers, serves as a partner to the Regional Education Center.

"I am excited to be facilitating the collaboration between educators and business leaders in the Midlands," Shaw said. "This collaboration will provide the framework for meaningful dialogues and other activities that bring the world of work into the classroom."

Steve Benjamin, Chair of **MEBA's Board of Directors**, explained that although Shaw will no longer serve as MEBA's Executive Director, MEBA's relationship with the Midlands Regional Education Center ensures that it will continue to benefit from her extraordinary vision and leadership.

MEBA's Board of Directors has named **Lisa Call**, MEBA's Workforce Development Director and Career Specialist, to serve as Interim Executive Director. Call has been with MEBA since 1999 and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge that will ensure MEBA's continued productivity and achievement.

"Most importantly, I want to assure you that this transition will in no way disrupt MEBA's activities and future success," emphasized Benjamin. "MEBA continues to be as strong as ever and as a board, we believe Dr. Shaw's leadership of the Regional Education Center and Ms. Call's direction of MEBA and the partnership between the two will enable us to make tremendous strides in furthering our mission to connect education and business and to promote a more vibrant and competitive workforce and community."

Midlands Students Participate in National Groundhog Job Shadow Day

For the tenth consecutive year, hundreds of Midlands students took a short leave from school to experience hands-on learning inside another type of classroom - the workplace. As part of **National Groundhog Job Shadow Day**, students nationwide had the opportunity to explore future careers and see how what they are learning in school connects to the world of work.



Swansea High School student Jordan Headon with Governor Mark Sanford

Ashleigh Rogers, a senior at **Swansea High School** in **Lexington School District Four**, had the unique opportunity to spend the day with **Lieutenant Governor Andre Bauer**. "This is my first shadowing experience so I'm both excited and a little nervous," said Rogers. "I can't wait to watch the Senate proceedings from the gallery and see how it all works, and my high school government teacher can't wait for me to share what I learn with the rest of the class." Rogers wants to attend Winthrop University next fall and study to become a high school history teacher. She is thankful for this shadowing experience and knows it will help her not only as a student, but as a future teacher.

"I've participated in National Groundhog Job Shadow Day since I was in the Senate," said Bauer. "I think providing our young people with the opportunity to see their government at work is wonderful. Given the low voter turnout we



Swansea High School student Ashleigh Rogers with Lieutenant Governor Andre Bauer

have seen over the past few years, it is of tremendous importance that we seize every opportunity to get our young people engaged, not only for their future careers but for the community as a whole."

In addition to Lieutenant Governor Andre Bauer,

Upcoming Events

White Knoll Middle School Career Fair
March 13, 2007

Business and Industry Symposium
March 13 - 14, 2007
Midlands Technical College Airport Campus

SC HOSA State Leadership Conference
March 14 - 16, 2007
Embassy Suites and Convention Center
North Charleston, NC

Career Connections Committee
March 15, 2007, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce

Manufacturing & Industrial Maintenance Field Study
March 21, 2007
Begins at Siemens Diesel Systems Technology

Fairfield Parents' Day
March 24, 2007
Winnsboro Women's Club

Engineering & Industrial Technology Alliance
March 27, 2007, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Midlands Technical College Airport Campus, Academic Center, Room 115

Arts & Humanities Alliance
March 28, 2007, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
EdVenture

Brookland-Cayce High School Career Fair
March 29, 2007, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Career Specialists Committee
March 30, 2007, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Midlands Technical College Airport Campus, Academic Center, Room 143

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Faces of MEBA -- Cedric Brown

Cedric Brown is a true example of what MEBA can do. At only 22 years old, his story paints a clear picture of just how far determination, self-motivation and MEBA connections can take you.

Cedric Brown's story begins as a bright ninth grader at **Columbia High School** who had aspirations of becoming a computer programmer. Just as

he was beginning to learn more about this field, Brown learned that a major computer programming firm was being downsized and that more than 1500 workers had lost their jobs. It appeared the computer boom of the 1990s was slowing down, and Brown thought he should explore other career paths just in case.

The following year, Brown enrolled in a heating and air conditioning elective course. He gained great satisfaction from being able to apply what he was learning in math and science classes to solve actual problems. In eleventh grade, he enrolled in a higher level heating and air conditioning class which gave him the opportunity to participate in National Groundhog Job Shadow Day at **Total Comfort Service Center, Inc.** Although he did not know it at the time, Total Comfort was looking to hire one of the student shadows as a summer intern. They selected Brown. That summer, he worked along side senior service technicians, learning firsthand about their careers and assisting with problem solving and preventive maintenance for some of the company's largest industrial clients.

"Shadowing and working as an intern helped solidify my career interest in heating and air conditioning," explains Brown. "I am so grateful to MEBA for the opportunity and would encourage all students to take advantage of shadowing opportunities so they can experience a career firsthand to see if they will truly enjoy working in a particular field."

During his senior year, Brown participated in a cooperative learning program in which he attended school in the morning and gained paid work experience and school credit at Total Comfort in the afternoon. When he graduated from Columbia High School,



Jim Reynolds, President of Total Comfort/Comfort Services, with Cedric Brown

YOUR CHILD IS JOB # 1: IS THERE A STRANGER IN YOUR HOME?

Throughout the month of February, MEBA's **Kay Barlow** shared an important message with thousands of Midlands parents and caregivers at their places of work and through a television broadcast of the Fairfield County School District. Barlow's presentation, "Is There a Stranger in Your Home?" focused on the safe use of video games, cell phones and the Internet by our children. Barlow offered tips for how parents and caregivers can monitor the use of these items. Parents should make sure home computers are placed in the family room or kitchen instead of a child's bedroom. Children's access and use of these devices should be supervised and limited.

YOUR CHILD IS JOB # 1 IN NUMBERS

*A monthly look at the number of
parents reached:*

- ▶ 2000 Fairfield County residents
- ▶ 17 Dept of Public Works employees
- ▶ 18 SC Dept of Juvenile Justice employees
- ▶ 116 Spirax Sarco employees
- ▶ 100 Promoting Diversity in Health Care Summit attendees

February Total:
2251 People Reached!

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Donor Spotlight: City of Columbia



City of Columbia Mayor Bob Coble with MEBA Board Chairman Steve Benjamin

MEBA is pleased to announce a five-year partnership with the **City of Columbia** aimed at boosting economic and workforce development by exposing and connecting students, parents, educators and employers to education and career opportunities in the City of Columbia. Columbia **Mayor Bob Coble** attended the January MEBA Board of Directors meeting to present

\$100,000 to MEBA, the first installment of a five-year agreement.

"The Midlands Education and Business Alliance plays a vital role in helping people in Columbia make the connection between learning and earning," says Mayor Coble. "I believe this connection is a key to ensuring that City of Columbia residents are prepared for productive lives. The City of Columbia is pleased to support the efforts of MEBA, an important economic development partner."

MEBA's partnership with the City of Columbia is not new. Since the establishment of MEBA as a nonprofit, MEBA has benefited from the City's support and has reciprocated by providing *Your Child Is Job #1* workshops to several city agencies including municipal court, public works, utilities and engineering, emergency 911/311, development services, parks and recreation, and the police and fire departments.

"The City of Columbia is committed to providing ongoing education and training for our employees," says **Columbia City Manager Charles Austin**. "Our partnership with MEBA and the *Your Child Is Job #1* program provides those employees who are parents and caregivers with resources and information to better connect and support their child's education. We know that by encouraging a strong home life, we are also promoting a stronger workforce and community."

Save the Date!

South Carolina Education
& Business Summit

June 24 -28, 2007

Palmetto Expo Center
Greenville, SC

For more information, please
visit www.ebsummit.info

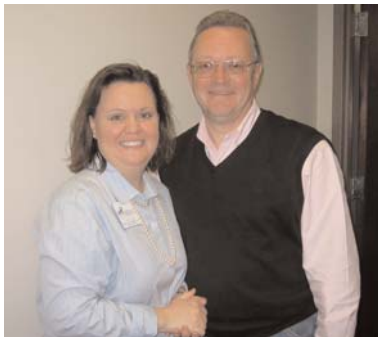
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Midlands businesses and professionals hosted student shadows including: **Governor Mark Sanford, Siemens Diesel Systems Technology, Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative, The R.L. Bryan Company, the South Carolina Department of Education, and the South Carolina Employment Security Commission.**

"This year's event was a great success," said **Lisa Call**, MEBA's Interim Executive Director. "We are very grateful to the businesses and schools who worked so hard to provide hundreds of students with the opportunity to truly experience the world of work and to get a jump start on their future careers. We look forward to even greater success next year and in the years to come."

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Midlands Educators Participate in Construction Technologies Field Study



MEBA's Lisa Call with Pete Williams, President of Atherm Remodeling

On February 22, 2007, more than 45 Midlands educators participated in **MEBA's Construction Technologies Field Study** hosted by the **Architecture & Construction Alliance**. The event began at **Total Comfort Service Center, Inc.**, with a welcome by **Lisa Call**, MEBA's Interim Executive Director. The event provided the opportunity for

participants to listen to presentations from several business leaders and engage in an information question and answer session.

Jim Reynolds, President of Total Comfort/Comfort Services, spoke with the group about careers in the heating and air conditioning industry, and introduced one of the company's service technicians, **Cedric Brown**. Brown's affiliation with Total Comfort began more than six years ago when he participated in National Groundhog Job Shadow Day as a student at Columbia High School. Brown shared his story with the field study attendees and talked about the importance of encouraging students to participate in job shadowing and internship opportunities. "Work place experiences help middle and high school students recognize their strengths and interests," said Brown. "It helps them truly understand what goes on in a particular field and gives them a true sense of what really goes on and assists them in making good career decisions."

Dave McCallister, General Manager of Total Comfort Service Center, Inc., also spoke with the group and stressed the industry's need for qualified employees. McCallister called on the educators to help prepare their students for the workforce by emphasizing the importance of good interview skills, a good attitude and self-motivation.

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he was immediately hired by Total Comfort as a full-time entry level service technician. As he entered the workforce, Brown also enrolled at Midlands Technical College where he earned his associates degree in heating and air conditioning.

"Total Comfort is very committed to education and to their employees," explains Brown. "They worked with me and provided the financial assistance I needed to achieve my educational goals. It is like a family. The turn over rate is low and the job satisfaction is high because they are committed to their employees' success."

While achieving his educational goals at Midlands Technical College, Brown also was able to progress professionally. As his experience and education levels increased, Brown received commensurate compensation. At age 20, Brown was able to purchase his own home. "I don't know many 20-year-olds who can say they own a home," says Brown. "The opportunities I have been given helped me to gain focus and become successful in my career, and now I am a homeowner. It is something of which I am very proud."

Brown is not the only one who is proud. **Jim Reynolds**, President of Total Comfort/Comfort Services, is also proud. "Cedric is a shining example of what job shadowing and self-motivation can do," says Reynolds. "During the past six years, I have watched him grow professionally and personally, and Total Comfort is grateful to have him as part of our team."

Brown is currently enrolled at the University of South Carolina where he is pursuing a degree in mechanical engineering with financial support from Total Comfort. He remains a full-time service technician at Total Comfort Service Center, Inc.

MEBA's ongoing partnership with the City of Columbia, will allow MEBA to continue providing programs and services to four key groups:

▶ Students benefit from job shadowing, internships and mentoring opportunities. They also have access to career tours, fairs and speakers. MEBA's *Newspapers in Education Series* creates career awareness information pages in *The State* newspaper and provides newspapers to a number of classrooms to infuse current events and career opportunities into the classroom.

▶ Parents benefit from MEBA's *Your Child Is Job #1* workshops offered at their place of work on topics such as understanding career clusters and communicating with your child's school.

▶ Educators benefit from career field studies, which bring together teachers, guidance counselors, administrators and business leaders for a day of in-depth learning about a specific cluster of study. Educators also benefit from job shadowing opportunities, career development graduate courses, workplace extended learning summer institutes and career fairs.

▶ Businesses benefit from membership to industry-focused alliances which provide an organized structure for business leaders to work closely with educators to increase awareness of career opportunities and to better direct students to the education they need to prepare for the world of work.

Jim Gambrell, Director of Economic Development for the City of Columbia, emphasizes the necessity for educators and businesses to connect. "The most critical factor in a company's decision to locate or grow a business in Columbia is whether or not there is an abundant and qualified workforce," explains Gambrell. "If there aren't trained or trainable workers in the area, we are immediately dropped from further consideration. MEBA provides a critical 'link' between the business community and the educational community to make sure our young people are prepared to fill the jobs that will be available in the knowledge-based economy."

MEBA is enormously grateful to the City of Columbia for its continued support and involvement. "We are honored to partner with the City of Columbia," states MEBA's **Lisa Call**, "and we are jointly committed to fostering the collaboration and connections necessary to achieving a higher quality of life and more vibrant economy for our community."

Quick Bytes

▶ On February 6, 2007, **Cathy Pitts** with **Midlands Technical College** spoke to students at **Richland Two's Adult Education Center** about the importance of "dressing for success."

▶ On February 12, 2007, MEBA's **Lisa Call** and **Dena Feagin** with the **South Carolina Automobile Dealers Association** spoke to 19 women in transition at the **Killingsworth Home** about job skills basics and distributed copies of the **Business Management & Information Systems Alliance Job Skills** booklet.

▶ **Brookland-Cayce High School** is hosting a career fair on March 29, 2007, from 9:00 until 11:30 a.m. in their gym. For more details or to sign up, please contact **Debbie Manos** at 803-739-4132 or dmanos@lex2.org.

National Career Development Month Poster Poetry Contest: State Winners Announced

Congratulations to the following Midlands students who were recently named NCDA state winners:

Open Adult Poems

Susan Stafford

Summit Parkway Middle
2nd Place Winner

Intermediate Poems

Alexandria Caldwell

Lake Murray Elementary
1st Place Winner

Ryan King

Lake Murray Elementary
3rd Place Winner

Middle School Poems

Julian Nelson

E.L. Wright Middle
1st Place Winner

Richardson Receives Award

Val Richardson, Workforce Development Manager at **Palmetto Health**, received the **Governor and Mrs. Richard W. Riley Award for Excellence in Dropout Prevention** on February 20, 2007. The award was presented at the 19th Annual At-Risk Youth National Forum luncheon held at the Kingston Plantation in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. This program is sponsored by the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N) housed at Clemson University. Ms. Richardson is the first non-teacher to receive the award.

Students Participate in M.D. Career Day



On February 2, 2007, Midlands students participated in a career day designed to celebrate women in healthcare. The event, titled “Changing the Face of Medicine: Celebrating America’s Women Physicians,” was held at the **Richland County Public Library**, and allowed students to meet and learn from area physicians. The event was developed by the Exhibition Program of the History of Medicine Division of the National Library of Medicine in collaboration with the American Library Association Public Programs Office. The traveling exhibition was made possible by the National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health Office of Research on Women’s Health. The American Medical Women’s Association provided additional support.



Fred Millen with Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative addresses field study participants

Fred Millen, Vice President of Human Resources for **Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative**, explained a cooperative business model and delivered a presentation on "How to Bring a Subdivision Online." Millen walked the group through the series of complex steps and procedures that must be accomplished before the homes can even be built. Millen along with **Jean Tate**, Customer Service Coordinate for Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative, outlined the types of careers available at Mid-Carolina including clerical, technical and skilled and operative.

Pete Williams, President of **Atherm Remodeling**, as well as **Ted Chalgren** and **Randy Roberts** of **Cox and Dinkins**, provided an overview of the industry, emphasizing the careers available and the need for qualified candidates.

Following the presentation, the group boarded a bus and traveled to the **Construction Career Fair** on the grounds of the South Carolina State Fair. The group then had the opportunity to tour several home sites at **Lake Carolina**.

Butch Knight, a teacher at **Swansea High School**, thought the field study was a great success. "I gained valuable information and industry contacts that I can take back to the classroom," said Knight. "By sharing what I have learned with my students I can give them a realistic view of industry careers and help them to understand how what they are learning in school correlates with the world of work."

Carver Lyon Students Learn About Careers in Healthcare



During the month of February, fourth graders at **Carver Lyon Elementary School** in **Richland School District One** had two unique opportunities to learn about careers in healthcare. On February 8, 2007, EMT Services visited the

school and shared career information with the students. The students were able to go inside an actual ambulance and learn about different medical techniques firsthand.

On February 15, 2007, **Farrah Wigand**, a dietician with **Sisters of Charity Providence Hospitals**, shared information about her career and offered tips for healthy eating. MEBA's **Lisa Call** also spoke with students about smart nutrition and career decisions and presented each student with an apple for good health.

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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