

# Community Career Endowment job fair aims at diversification

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About 150 people are expected to attend a McCracken County Community Career Endowment job fair Saturday at Paducah Middle School, 342 Lone Oak Road, to try to expand and diversify the job pool for local businesses.

“Our message to everyone in the African-American community is this: If you want a job or if you want a better job, we’re here to help, regardless of your skill and education levels,” fair Chairman Herschel Dungey said. “There are companies in our area looking for good people at all levels.”

Endowment staff and local human resource personnel will do career assessments and give job tips from 10 a.m. to noon. One-on-one and small group sessions will help people link skills and interests with job opportunities, and identify and fill any skill gaps.

After a free lunch, a session from 12:30 to 2 p.m. will allow job seekers to hear from nurses, carpenters, welders and others in the area’s most in-demand jobs.

The fair is open to anyone seeking a job, including those employed but interested in pursuing other opportunities. Participants attending two workshops during the day will receive one credit hour from West Kentucky Community & Technical College.

The late Fred Paxton and his wife, Peggy, founded the endowment in January 2006 to give educational help to minorities and others in Paducah and McCracken County.

“We focus on the African-American community, but our primary mission is to level the playing field in Paducah,” said Linda Dungey, endowment interim executive director. “We will work with any person who needs to improve economic status, jobs, education, mentoring, tutoring and scholarship assistance.”

Dungey said employers tell her they have trouble diversifying because job seekers lack the necessary skills.

“This is not your traditional work fair,” she said. “This is designed to look at the issues keeping people from getting better-paying jobs.”

Endowment partners include Lourdes and Western Baptist hospitals, the West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board, Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce and City of Paducah, she said.

“The community response has been marvelous,” Linda Dungey said. “But we’re looking for other partners because we believe that one organization alone can’t address this issue.”

To register, call Linda Dungey at 444-6962, or come to the school Saturday morning. No one will be turned away. For free child care, call Dungey in advance.

Job fair

When: 10 a.m. Saturday.

Where: Paducah Middle School, 342 Lone Oak Road.

What: Help in finding employment, including career assessment, job tips and counseling.