LANE COUNTY TECH COLLABORATIVE

Lane County Sector Strategy Team

The Lane County Sector Strategy Team is focused on economic and workforce development for Lane County, Oregon. The Team was launched and convened in November 2014 by Lane Workforce Partnership, the local Workforce Board for Lane County Oregon and is made up of regional workforce development, economic development, City and business leaders. The team is led by business champions from the Lane Workforce Partnership Board of Directors. Kristina Payne, lead convener and Executive Director of Lane Workforce Partnership, said that in order to bring community support and workforce development leaders together it was important to frame this effort as "working better together" and to give recognition to everyone's efforts. "It is good for our community as a whole when people collaborate. It is all about collective impact" said Payne.

Regional Leaders from: Cities of Eugene, Springfield, Florence, the Eugene Chamber, RAIN Eugene, the University of Oregon, Lane County, Lane Community College, Travel Lane County, WorkSource Oregon, Business Oregon, The Lane Council of Governments, Local Elected Officials from Eugene and Springfield, and the Eugene Water & Electric Board and the Technology Association of Oregon.

Opportunity in Lane County's Tech Industry

After careful review of labor market data, the Team identified the technology industry as the first sector to target. Lane County is home to over 400 tech companies which employ nearly 5,000 people, bringing over $350 million dollars in wages to the area. Software publishing in Lane County is projected to grow by 1,105 jobs by the year 2020 and an additional 1,258 jobs will need to be replaced by

that time- in order for Lane County to keep pace with this industry's demand for skilled workers, the community recognized that it would have to work together to strengthen the local talent pipeline. It is a vital industry for the region and a critical opportunity for community support members to collaborate to promote the growth of an industry which will bolster the local economy and create more high-wage jobs in the area.

Tackling Real Objectives with Tech Collaborative Response Teams

In February 2015, the Lane County Sector Strategy Team reached out to Tech Company Executives and CEO's and invited them to convene to discuss opportunities for expansion and to identify issues that inhibit the growth and/or stability of the tech industry in the city of Eugene and in the greater county of Lane. The invitation highlighted all of the community support members that are committed to this effort and over 30 local leaders attended the event. The group decided to form six 'Tech Collaborative Response Teams' to identify and address a series of objectives. The Response Teams have accomplished many goals related to the group's employer driven objectives. "I think a lot of people had the will and it was about getting the people together to find the way" said Todd Edman (CEO of Lunar Logic).[1] In June of 2015, the Lane County Tech Collaborative (which has grown to 80 members) and all of the Response Teams convened again to share success stories amongst members and welcome 12 new tech companies to the group. "The industry leaders now know who is leading this work, how they can plug into it, how they can participate as it moves forward, and they have seen demonstrated success" said Payne.

1. McDonald, Sherri. *"Business & Education: Tech Industry Undertakes Effort to Improve Schools."* The Register-Guard 4 May 2015,

CREATING BUSINESS-DRIVEN COMPUTER SCIENCE CURRICULUM IN LOCAL COLLEGES

At the initial convening of partners in February, the members identified computer science education and workforce development in the Eugene and Springfield area as the top priority for software publishing firms and tech startups. "The biggest problem across the board is hiring qualified folks in tech", said Todd Edman (CEO of Lunar Logic), "Eugene/Springfield has over 4,700 tech positions with an average wage of $66, 620 and all of us sitting around the table would hire more people if we could find more qualified people. I have four positions open right now."[2] The Response team, which includes leaders from higher education, is working to address this urgent need by creating a business driven curriculum in the local colleges and universities that would strengthen the pipeline of tech workers. The University of Oregon is spearheading this effort and is developing new courses and career pathways in their computer science program in response to industry demands. For the last two years, UO has piloted an 'Intro to Software Engineering' course that is designed to introduce students to industry needs and is now partnering with the Response Team to expand this effort.

Goals

- Align industry needs with academia training programs.
- Design and launch a Professional Development Certificate in Data Science which will be produced and maintained by the Department of Computer Information Systems (CIS) at the University of Oregon. It will be delivered fully online, with a one year curriculum, and data sets and problems drawn from local companies.
- Rejuvenate internship programs with local employers (Master's and Bachelor's level).
- Link CIS research labs with industry/government pilot sites.

Achievements

Steve Fickas(University of Oregon, Professor of Computer Information and Science), with input from the Response Team, applied for a grant from the Engineering and Technology Industry Council which would disperse $699,000 over a three year period to fund tech program development at University of Oregon.

Next Steps

Once funding is secured, the University of Oregon plans to create a two year Master's Degree in Health Informatics and Data Science which will include an internship with industry partners (10 students per year) and a one year Minor Degree in Data Science which also includes an internship with industry partners (25 students a year).

Supported by Co-Chair Steve Fickas (Professor, U of O, Computer Science Department), Matt Sayre(Executive Director, TAO Eugene),, Dr. Larry Sullivan(Superintendent, Lane ESD), Chris McGaughy(Chief of Staff, Eugene 4J School District), Anne Fifield(Economic Development Planner, City of Eugene), Joe Maruschak(Director, RAIN Eugene), Shula Jaron(Executive Director, FertiLab), Brian Rooney (Regional Economist, OED), Julie Davidson(Manager, Oregon Employment Department/WorkSource Lane), Kim Thompson(Workforce Analyst OED)

IMPROVING QUALITY OF K-12 EDUCATION

Improving public K-12 education in Lane County is also a longer-term priority for the Lane County Tech Collaborative in order to develop the local tech workforce pipeline and to attract new tech industry members to the region. "Schools are becoming the weak link for recruiting", said Joe Maruschak (Chief Startup Officer and Director of Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network). "Good schools are critical. The type of people who are going to be attracted to this area are quality-of-life people, and if they've got kids, the first thing that they are going to look at is the quality of the schools", agreed Todd Edman (CEO of Lunar Logic).[3]

Goal

Strengthen the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) in Lane County Schools to create a foundation of knowledge and encourage more young people to pursue a career in computer science fields. A stronger STEM curriculum in K-12 education will also raise school ratings and elevate community perception of schools.

2. McDonald, Sherri. *"Business & Education: Tech Industry Undertakes Effort to Improve Schools."* The Register-Guard 4 May 2015
3. Ibid.

Achievements

Steve Fickas (University of Oregon, Professor of Computer Information and Science), with input from the Response Team, applied for a grant from the National Science Foundation which would award $2.5 million over a five year period to improve computer science courses in Lane County's K-12.

Next Steps

- Once funding is secured, launch two computer science courses at each of the five Eugene School District high schools over the next five years.
- Partner with education leaders, STEM educators and industry leaders to strengthen science and math programs in schools. "I believe that if we put an effort behind (STEM) curriculum that it really truly can make an impact," said Todd Edman(CEO of Lunar Logic). "I think there's a lot of hunger and people in underserved populations who see tech as a way to change the trajectory of their lives."[4]

Supported by: Chair Dr. Larry Sullivan(Superintendent, Lane Education Service District), Todd Edman(CEO, Lunar Logic), Steve Fickas (Professor, U of O, Computer Science Department), Angela Peacor (Vice President, Human Resources & Organizational Development, OCCU), Kelli Weese(City Recorder, Florence Oregon), Charis McGaughy (Chief of Staff, Eugene 4J School District),Shula Jaron(Executive Director, FertiLab),Dave Hauser(Director, Eugene Chamber), Joe Maruschak(Director, RAIN Eugene), Daron Fort(Director, LCC High School Connections), Anne Fifield(Economic Development Planner, City of Eugene), Susan Rieke-Smith (Assistant Superintendant of Instruction, Springfield HS)

INCREASED INTERNET SPEED IN DOWNTOWN EUGENE

In April of 2015, this Response Team formed to address the issue of access to affordable and sufficient broadband internet. The Response Team was able to build on the City of Eugene's robust Strategic Broadband Plan from 2014 with a pilot program that involved installing a small municipal network downtown. This Response Team realized tangible success with this pilot program and paved the road for future improvement on this issue in the region. "We have businesses in the Eugene area that if they grow any more they're going to have to leave Eugene because they can't get the connectivity — the bandwidth that they need," said Milo Mecham, a planning services official at the Lane Council of Governments. "This project is designed to keep those businesses here and create a place where other businesses are going to locate."[5]

Goal

Acquire world class broadband network capability in Eugene's downtown along major corridors to accelerate high-tech business development.

Achievements

- Lane Workforce Partnership Board allocated funds to open and staff a chapter of the Technical Association of Oregon in Eugene. They recruited Matt Sayre who has spearheaded this effort.

- The Response Team supported City of Eugene, LCOG and EWEB in the Pilot effort to connect two buildings in downtown Eugene to "world class" broadband internet.
- Crafted a 'one pager' that effectively communicated economic benefits to non-technical community stakeholders.
- Leveraged private sector relationships to expedite building access agreements to complete network infrastructure.
- Courted Internet Service Providers (ISP) to participate on 'open access' network.
- Supported a community convening between ISP's and building tenants
- Funds were contributed from the City of Eugene, Lane Council of Governments, and Eugene Water and Electric Board to make this project possible.
- Introduced new ISP's directly to customers.
- Coordinated media outreach to help get the story out.
- Shaped the new Internet Service offerings from ISP's based on business feedback.

4. McDonald, Sherri. *"Business & Education: Tech Industry Undertakes Effort to Improve Schools."* The Register-Guard 4 May 2015,
5. Ibid.

	April 2015	'Open Access' Pre-Sector Strategy	'Open Access' Post-Sector Strategy
Speed	150Mbs upload / 20Mbs download	1000Mbs/1000Mbs	1000Mbs/1000Mbs
Price	$250/month	$3,200/month	$99/month
Contract Term	2-3 Years	Unknown	1 Year or month Annual or month-to-month

Source: Adapted from a presentation by Matt Sayre, 2015

Next Steps

- Grow the municipal broadband network which would bring world-class Internet products and services to all of downtown.
- The network needs to connect Eugene to competitive Internet markets that exist in Portland and San Jose.

Supported by: Chair Matt Sayre(Director, Technical Association of Oregon (TAO) Eugene),Todd Edman(CEO Lunar Logic),Kelli Weese (City Recorder, City of Florence), Milo Mecham (Principal Planner, LCOG),Denny Braud (Community Development Division Manager, City of Eugene), Anne Fifield (Economic Development Planner, City of Eugene), Dave Hauser(Director, Eugene Chamber), Daniele McCallum (Program Supervisor, Technology Services Lane ESD), Glenda Poling/Sarah Case(Lane County Economic Development),Dean Ahlsten (EWEB),Bill Schuetz (LCC – IT Dept/CIO), Dave Oatman (LCC – Tech Division),Chris Pryor (Eugene City Councilor), Sean Stevens (Business Oregon, Business Development Officer)

IMPROVING EUGENE/SPRINGFIELD DOWNTOWN IMAGE AND SAFETY

Goals

- Improve Eugene and Springfield Downtown Areas to be more attractive, better functioning and safer for tech industry people. The area has seen rapid growth, adding almost 2,000 new residents in 2014.
- Insuring that Downtown is mixed use space- retail, housing and office space. 24 hour presence= safety
- Event programming to enhance cultural diversity in the community- a need for more private participation
- Entertainment venues, attracts more residents

Achievements

- Downtown redevelopment that includes filling vacant spaces with new retail, housing and vibrant community hubs. Example: City purchased centrally located Broadway Commerce Center- creating space for organic connections between creative people, building vital community through city planning and fostering safer streets by promoting activity.

- Downtown lighting project
- Pedestrian activities, Café Seating
- Walk your Wheels campaign
- Increased police presence
- New merchant association

Supported by: Co-Chairs Denny Braud(Community Development Division Manager, City of Eugene) and Dave Hauser(Director, Eugene Chamber), Jon Ruiz(City Manager, City of Eugene), Anne Fifield(Economic Development Planner, City of Eugene), John Tamalonis(Community & Economic Development Manager, City of Springfield)Courtney Griesel (Senior Economic Development Analyst, City of Springfield) Garrett Dunlavey(Downtown Eugene Economic Development (DEED) and Founder, Third Ocean)

IMPROVING AIR TRAVEL OPTIONS IN AND OUT OF THE REGION

Goal

Arrange for a non-stop flight from Eugene, Oregon to San Jose, California. This initiative was identified as a key logistical concern by tech industry employers early on. Because the Silicon Valley in California is still a central hub for tech employers, it was deemed necessary to make air travel between Eugene and San Jose easier and quicker for commuters.

Achievements

Thanks to efforts by the Response Team, Dave Hauser engaged in negotiations with Alaska Airlines to secure a regular flight that could fill this need. Starting on November 5th 2015, non-stop air service between these two key tech destinations was made available by Alaska Airline's sister company, Horizon Airlines. This logistical solution has strengthened Lane County's position as a convenient location for tech companies to locate.

Supported by: Chair Dave Hauser(Director, Eugene Chamber), Cathryn Stephens (Director of Eugene Airport), City of Eugene

BRANDING AND MARKETING OF LANE COUNTY

Goals

- Promote greater awareness of Lane County's tech industry locally, regionally and nationally in an effort to support business retention and expansion by creating a framework of media tools that can be shared internally and publicly about the successes of regional companies.

- This Collaborative Response Team will utilize and support efforts through social media, local writers/ media outlets, and local companies with PR outlets, to share the county's unique community and geographic resources which support employee quality of life and employer goals for success and growth.

- Strategies include; highlighting local companies in the context of tech trends nationally, approaching media and advertisers to encourage paid/unpaid coverage of local accomplishments, produce testimonials and case studies to be used by the City, Chamber and other organizations as community outreach tools, and develop a website to be used as a central site to share information publicly.

Achievements

At the time of this summary in June of 2015, Lane County Tech Collaborative has already been featured in two major media stories ('Tech Industry Undertakes Effort to Improve Schools' May 2015 and 'Faster Fiber' June 14th 2015 -The Register Guard articles).

Supported by: Chair Kari Westlund (Executive Director, Travel Lane County), Joe Maruschak(Director, RAIN Eugene), Matt Sayre(Executive Director, TAO Eugene), Dave Hauser (Director, Eugene Chamber), Todd Edman(CEO Lunar Logic), Anne Fifield (Economic Development Planner, City of Eugene), Denny Braud (Community Development Division Manager, City of Eugene), Jon Ruiz (City Manager, City of Eugene), John Tamalonis (Community & Economic Development Manager, City of Springfield), Courtney Griesel (Senior Economic Development Analyst, City of Springfield), Kim Thompson(Workforce Analyst OED), Brian Rooney(Regional Economist, OED)

LANE COUNTY SECTOR STRATEGY TEAM AWARDED LARGE GRANT

Because of these notable achievements and because of collective effort, in June 2015 Lane County Sector Strategy Team was awarded a share of the federal 'Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant Program'. Oregon was granted over 6 million dollars to use sector strategies to strengthen their regional workforce and Lane County was one of four counties to receive a share of these funds. "Together, we are more competitive with grant proposals. When our proposals are reviewed they see that we already have the teams, we have the industry leaders, we have the boots on the ground, ready to use funds to achieve real objectives", said Payne, "Our accomplishments were recognized and now we can use these funds as we move forward." The Lane County Tech Collaborative and its Response Teams have proven to be an effect method to achieve tangible goals and the Sector Strategy Team is already planning to replicate this model with other important industries in Lane County.