

## Jobs Coming Out of the Shadows

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Erik Wander/KMXT

The State of Alaska Kodiak Job Center has recently begun better promoting its Job Shadow program and youth employability skills initiative in collaboration with the Kodiak Island Borough School District. The two programs are designed to ensure that local and Alaskan youth have basic employability skills when they enter the workforce.

Kodiak Job Center youth career guide Nicola Belisle said the employability skills initiative, which is open to students and young adults ages 14-24, provides basic work skills youth need to be successful by matching them with participating employers for training and education. Although the program isn't new, Belisle said she is gratified to now be working with Kodiak High School and village schools in the Kodiak district, providing presentations and information for students.

-- (Belisle 1 35 sec &ldquo;Our job is to ... vocational education orientated.&rdquo;)

Belisle identified high growth industry jobs as those related to the gasoline, a major future source employment, such as construction and welding jobs, hospitality, teaching and day care. She also noted health care, information technology and architecture as areas of need. She said the first point of contact for individuals interested in the program is the Job Center.

-- (Belisle 2 17 sec "We just find that employer ... at the Job Center.")

Belisle said she has two employers committed to the project on a trial basis so far, Mack's Sports Shop and Java Flats, and she hopes to see greater participation on the part of local employers in the near future. She also hopes to make the initiative a for-credit program through the high school.

-- (Belisle 3 33 sec "We'll hopefully have the students ... activity for students.")

The Job Center is also currently promoting its Job Shadow program, in which employers take youth into their businesses in unpaid positions for anywhere from a day to a month, so they can experience what it's like to work in a given industry. Belisle said the program benefits employers by fostering a well-trained workforce and providing potential future employees, and benefits youth in the program by providing experience.

-- (Belisle 4 30 sec "They

can, number one, ... entry level job.&rdquo;)

#### Kodiak Job

Center Manager Maureen Butler said response from local employers to the Job Shadow program has been positive thus far.

-- (Butler 23 sec &ldquo;In general, employers seem ... people to hire.&rdquo;)

#### Belisle

said aside from providing the opportunity for better jobs, one of the major aims of both programs is to keep good-paying, growth industry and skilled jobs in Alaska.

-- (Belisle 5 18 sec &ldquo;We need to home grow ... filled by Alaskans.&rdquo;)

Potential employers or trainees who wish to participate in either program can contact Nicola Belisle at the Kodiak Job Center at 486-3105 for more information. l&rsquo;m Erik Wander.

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