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SWN Wins National Award

The Susquehanna (Cecil and Harford Counties) Workforce Investment Board (WIB), of the Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc. (SWN) is being awarded the **Theodore E. Small Workforce Partnership Award** by the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB). This prestigious award is presented annually by NAWB from selected Workforce Investment Board nominees across the United States who demonstrate innovative solutions to workforce issues through creative partnerships.

The Susquehanna WIB is being recognized for their management and operations of various BRAC Workforce Initiatives that have engaged and required numerous partnerships. These initiatives have marshaled the efforts and contributions of federal, state, regional and local organizations. Bruce England, Executive Director of SWN stated, "The ownership of this recognition belongs to all our partner organizations throughout this region that have taken the initiative and worked cooperatively to ensure a successful BRAC 2005 implementation and a ready and prepared workforce."

Mr. Barney Michel, President of the Susquehanna Workforce Investment Board, explained that "Traditionally the WIB has focused on creating solutions for the local business community and assisting residents with career and employment opportunities in the two county region. BRAC required an "add on" to the mission that resulted in broader regional collaborations and an array of new and enhanced services."

Among these efforts is the Maryland Transition Centers at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. The purpose of the Transition Centers is to increase the number of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) relocations to Maryland. The Centers provide timely information to New Jersey residents on all facets of life in Maryland and support the transitioning efforts of spouses/dependents and veterans effected by BRAC.

Initially the WIB conducted a workforce analysis and Labor Shed Study to ensure skill set compatibility between the existing workforce and the projected needs of BRAC. SWN developed and coordinated 2 BRAC/DoD Job Fairs and Industry specific Job Fairs such as the upcoming March 10th Defense Technology Intelligence Job Fair. These fairs are now annual events that assist DoD Contractors and others to attract the required workforce and expose residents to these new opportunities. Virtual Job Fairs have been utilized to assist with hard to fill positions and to attract specialty skilled workers. The regions three Workforce Centers conduct workshops on Applying for Federal Jobs, Working at APG, and Security Clearance Information to assist residents seeking BRAC related opportunities.

Mr. Barney Michel and Mr. Bruce England will accept the award on behalf of the Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc. at the National Association of Workforce Boards – Forum 2011, being held in Washington, D.C., in February.

The Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc. is a non-profit organization charged with the development and coordination of a workforce development system for Cecil and Harford Counties. The Network operates three Workforce Centers for job seekers, provides support services to the business community and facilitates the delivery of services to youth.