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Low 72°
Mostly sunny, hot,
winds 5-10 mph,
Weather 2A

SUNDAY

JUNE 3,
2012

DOTHAN EAGLE *Real people. Real news.*

\$1.50

Job market nerves



U.S. employers waiting,
watching before hiring **1B**



Grown for a purpose

Community
gardens making
a local impact

1E



Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail
celebrates its anniversary **1C**

All the right moves



MAX OSEN / DOTHAN EAGLE

Fred Howell works with a local high school baseball player Wednesday afternoon at Firehouse Gym in Dothan.

Determining the best way to look for work

BY JIMMY SAILORS
jsailors@dothan eagle.com

Fred Howell was at a crossroads.

He always worked a part-time job during his years with the Dothan Fire Department, but after he left the department in May 2007, he realized he needed an edge to be competitive in the job market, especially after the economic slowdown started.

He said age isn't supposed to matter, but "the way the work force is, there's a guy out there 30 or 40 years old they're probably going to pick up over

somebody who's 50."

In early 2010, when he was 54, Howell took a free eight-week course offered by Wallace Community College that teaches the entry-level skills required for employment with most businesses and industries.

He earned an Alabama Career Readiness Credential and an Alabama Certified Worker Certificate, which he said will help get their foot in the door at a lot of companies.

"It will get you an interview, because they know you are capable of being retrained," Howell said.

The Ready to Work classes provided by Wallace and 18 other colleges in Alabama provide a training curriculum set to standards cited by employers throughout the state.

The program is a great confidence builder, said Vincent Vincent, coordinator for non-credit training at Wallace.

"People do gain confidence going through the class because they accomplish milestones," Vincent said.

The course covers computer technology, time management, decision analysis,

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**Carnegie
Learning**

Online math program being cut

BY JIM COOK
jcook@dothan eagle.com

An online math tutoring program that educators say has gotten results may be phased out next year.

The Dothan City Schools have been using Carnegie Learning in its middle schools for about three years. The program has an online component that allows students to work on math skills at their own pace and on their own schedule.

However, the recently updated textbook accompanying the program does not meet state standards, and teachers in the city's magnet schools voted to go with another textbook rather than apply for a waiver to continue using the Carnegie program. The new textbook, published by Glencoe, has an online component, but it is not as developed as the Carnegie program, Allyson Morgan, secondary curriculum director, said.

That's unfortunate, according to Beverly Magnet School instructional coach Jeanie Solomon, who says the Carnegie program's online learning tool has been helpful.

Students can access the program at school, at home, at the library or anywhere else they have Internet access, and while the program has minimum standards of achievement, it allows more advanced students

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Work

From Page 1A

problem solving, teamwork, communication skills, conflict resolution, quality manufacturing, job search techniques, workplace ethics and behaviors, resume development and interviewing.

The program is offered four times per year in both Dothan and Eufaula. Vincent said 94 percent of the people who complete the program get jobs.

Taking the classes shows you are willing to invest time and effort to make yourself more marketable.

"It says that if you are willing to undertake a course like this, then you're motivated to seek employment and you're going to do whatever it takes to get employment," Vincent said.

Providing training that meets the needs of employers is part of Vincent's job with the Workforce Development division at Wallace.

"The way that these courses come to be is we ask people in the area, 'What are you interested in?'" Vincent said. The college doesn't want to create programs where there's no demand. "We want to offer programs and see people go to work," he said.

Vincent said the division has a three-pronged mission. First, it offers short-term certificate or non-credit programs that range from 20 days to eight months long.

Second, it does customized training for businesses and industry. "We work with area businesses and say, whatever your training needs are, why don't you partner with Wallace Community College and let us assist you in training, whether it be supervisory training, leadership training, team building, communication, specialized computer course, what have you," Vincent said.

The training can include foreign language courses.

"I've worked with several companies in doing Spanish for health care, Spanish for law enforcement," he said. "I'm working with a company right now, (on) conversational German."

Third, it offers continuing education, such as courses for nurses, counselors, physical therapists, nursing home administrators and assisted living administrators, "because every year there's a requirement with these professionals that they have to have a certain amount of continuing education, so we try to offer credits along through the year to help them keep



INSTRUCTOR RODNEY MYERS HELPS LAURA CRAWFORD DURING A READY TO WORK CLASS IN DOTHAN. (DOTHAN EAGLE)

their credentials up." Getting a job means it will be a win-win situation for both parties.

"The mentality of a lot of people is they don't want to toot their own horn," Vincent said. "But, when you're seeking a job, you have to do a little bit of that, and it's OK as long as you tell the truth."

He tells students to approach it from this point: "Tell an employer, look, I will be an asset to your company. Give me a chance to prove myself, and if you don't like what I'm doing after 60 or 90 days, let me go."

Earning a degree doesn't mean you will automatically get job offers.

"You've got to make the phone ring," he said.

"Especially in this economy, you have to think in terms of what can I do to separate myself to make myself look more appealing to a potential employer."

After you land a job, you have to work at keeping it.

"We hear from a lot of employers that some of the big problems with the barriers to employment are work ethics," Vincent said. "People have a hard time showing up to work on time, people get a job and then they decide to quit a job and they won't give a two-week notice, they just walk away."

There are right ways and wrong ways of doing things, he said, and people need to understand the protocol.

"When you go to work for an employer, they're paying you to do a job and they expect certain things and they expect you to act a certain way," Vincent said. "Somehow, as time has gone on, those finer points of job skills have been lost in translation."

Those expectations extend into cyberspace. Internet sites and social networks can help you find a job if utilized properly, but be wary of the pitfalls.

"As technology has evolved, so has the job search process," said Jenna Murphy, a public information specialist with the

one regardless of background or education, as are our online resources such as joblink.alabama.gov," said Murphy, who consulted one of the center managers on how people go about looking for work.

While there are still applications that can be filled out on paper, Murphy said nearly all job applications can now be found online.

"This is important to note for job seekers as it means a contact email address is usually necessary to complete the application," she said.

People can shy away from online applications because they do not have an email address or access to the Internet.

"Should a job seeker desire assistance with an online application they are welcome to visit their local Career Center where knowledgeable staff members are available to help them navigate their way through the online application process, helping them to make sure all parts of the application are complete," she said.

So what is the best way to go about looking for a job? Vincent recommends starting with an interest in

ventory to determine what type of work you would be passionate about, then figure out ways to make yourself more marketable.

Both Murphy and Vincent say networking is one of the best ways to job hunt. Most people have access to connections such as friends, faith groups and organizations they can use to find out about openings. Word of mouth can alert you to jobs you might not see advertised.

"The wider that you cast your net, the more contacts that you have," Vincent said.

Also take advantage of free services. Creating a Job Link account allows you to specify the type of work you are looking for, post your resume online and automatically connect to employers that are looking.

"That's the way the system was built, to try to match job seekers with employers that are seeking employees," Vincent said.

If you can work only specific hours, it might cut you out of some opportunities. The applicant should be willing to do whatever it takes to land a job.

"The more flexible you

are, the more valuable you would be to an employer," Vincent said.

For some kinds of jobs, Vincent recommended scheduling an appointment with the person who will be doing the hiring or with the company's human resources department.

Make it very professional. Come in with a prepared set of questions, ask for advice and tips and make a positive impression.

"It's free, it's proactive," Vincent said. "Put them in a position to help you, because people like to help people if they can, and you can turn it into a positive experience."

For Howell, the work program at Wallace taught him that employers want to hire somebody with a track record of being dependable.

Howell splits his time among three jobs, working at Firehouse Gym in Dothan and Rehoboth, driving a school bus for the Geneva County School System and coaching football at Houston Academy.

He likes doing a little bit of everything.

"I'm never bored from doing the same thing," Howell said.



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THE TURTLES (FEATURING FLO & EDDIE),
THE BUCKINGHAMS, THE GRASS ROOTS,
MICKY DOLANE (THE MONROE LEAD SINGER)
AND GARY PUCKETT & THE UNION GAP

PERFORMING ARTS SPECTRUM
DANCE RECITAL
JUNE 9TH - DOTHAN OPERA HOUSE - 6:00PM

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FEATURING A PERFORMANCE BY THE
DOTHAN POLICE DEPARTMENT'S APOSTLE!
JUNE 15TH - DOTHAN CIVIC CENTER - 7:00PM
TICKETS \$10

DANCING WITH THE STARS "DOTHAN STYLE"
JUNE 23RD - DOTHAN CIVIC CENTER - 7:30PM
BALCONY TICKETS \$15

LIVE LINE SCREENINGS
JUNE 26TH - DOTHAN CIVIC CENTER
MEETING ROOM "C"
PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED, CALL 1-800-324-1851

- FUTURE EVENTS -

PATTI RUTLAND JAZZ PRESENTS
"GRANNY AWARDS"
JULY 19TH - DOTHAN OPERA HOUSE

ALFRED SALIBA FOOTBALL FEST
AUGUST 11TH - DOTHAN CIVIC CENTER

SAMC PRESENTS "MEN'S HEALTH FAIR"
AUGUST 25TH - DOTHAN CIVIC CENTER

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