

Friday, September 17, 2021



NEW MEDIA INC.

EMPLOYMENT CONNECTIONS

**A Northeast Wisconsin Guide
to Employment Opportunities**

WINNING THE WAR FOR TALENT

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Workshop aims to help 'win the war for talent'

Czarnik developed hiring process through 20 years of working with job seekers

By **WARREN BLUHM**
Editor-in-chief

It's a whole new world trying to find employees in this day and age, and the Shawano County business community has scheduled a guest speaker who has a whole new way of finding them.

Chris Czarnik, a hiring guru with more than 20 years of experience in human resources and training, is the featured speaker at "Winning the War for Talent," a workshop scheduled for 8-11 a.m. Sept. 30 at Boarders Inn and Suites, W7393 River Bend Road, Shawano.

Czarnik created and refined an innovative process approach to job search that he dubbed "The Human Search Engine" by working with thousands of job-seekers. The workshop bears the title of his third book, which was released in July 2018 and serves as a talent model to more than 2,500 organizations across the country.

The process is different from more traditional hiring practices, Czarnik said.

"It changes the way we recruit talent by looking at the job we are trying to fill as a product or service that we have to 'sell' to potential employees," he said. "In the past we just posted a job ad and a line of eager job seekers formed that we could make selections from. With the current demographic changes in the country, there are literally not enough breathing human beings to fill all of the open positions that are being created by 10-12,000 baby boomers retiring every day."

The Human Search Engine ap-



Chris Czarnik, author of "Winning the War for Talent," plans to lead a workshop Sept. 30 at the Boarders Inn and Suites in Shawano.

CONTRIBUTED

proach spends a good deal of time creating the persona of the person who needs the employer's job as the next logical aspirational role for them in their work life and then uses proven marketing strategies to speak directly to them.

"People who come to the workshop can expect four zero-cost ideas that they can implement the next day to generate interest in their jobs," Czarnik said. "While these are zero-cost solutions, they do require time

and work. The ideas will have little value to those organizations who are looking for a miracle cure or a magic pill. These ideas are all logical, process-oriented and are measurable, auditable and adaptable based on what feedback they get from the market."

Czarnik said his books and workshops emerged from 20 years working to understand why people came to and left organizations as he provided outplacement services to

thousands of job seekers.

"If you are going fishing for talent, I just spent the last two decades with the fish," he said.

The workshop is presented by Shawano County Economic Progress Inc. in partnership with the Shawano Country Chamber of Commerce, Presenting Sponsor AbbyBank and Supporting Sponsor KerberRose S.C. The cost is \$20 per person. To register, email chamber@shawanocountry.com or call 715-524-2139.

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ThedaCare names new VP, chief quality officer

ThedaCare has announced Mbonu Ikezuagu will be the new vice president and chief quality officer.

In this role, Ikezuagu will provide quality leadership across the health system in ThedaCare's Accountable Care Organization, employed physician group, acute care, post-acute care and other aspects of the continuum of care. He will lead the continued work of patient and team member safety. Ikezuagu will also partner with ThedaCare leaders to develop and implement solutions to ensure outstanding quality of care and cost-effective services to provide best outcomes for patients and families.

Ikezuagu comes to ThedaCare with broad clinical, quality and operational experience in accountable care, acute care and ambulatory set-

tings. For the past seven years, he has held leadership positions in utilization, quality, practice transformation and population health. As the medical director for a clinically integrated network in Toledo, Ohio, Ikezuagu oversaw quality, utilization, care coordination and network development as the system developed robust Population Health tools and invested in practice transformation.

He was the founder of the utilization review committee of a tertiary teaching hospital responsible for improving hospital length of stay and case mix index. As the clinical associate professor of the Internal Medicine residency program, he was instrumental in integrating its teaching service into the hospitalist program.

Ikezuagu is board-certified in in-

ternal medicine. His clinical practice focuses on prevention and wellness as well as medical education. Ikezuagu earned his medical degree from Ross University School of Medicine and completed his internal medicine residency training at Mercy Health-St. Vincent Medical Center in Toledo, Ohio.

Ikezuagu received his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of the District of Columbia and master's degree in health care administration from the George Washington University Medical Center in Washington, D.C. He is a fellow in the American College of Physicians and certified physician executive in the American Association of Physician Leadership.



DR. MBONU IKEZUAGU

Printco adds senior accountant to team



TINA BERGNER

Printco Industries, Inc. has announced the addition of a senior accountant to its team.

Tina Bergner was hired recently to assist with all facets of the accounting operations at the manufacturing/design facility located in Pulaski.

Bergner has a Bachelor of Science in accounting and business through Lakeland College. Bergner feels that having worked numerous years in accounting as well as other industries has provided her a solid foundation for the position.

"Having been in retail, hospital and manufacturing settings, my favorite is definitely manufacturing

because I have the opportunity to see products produced. I see what has been harvested, and that's a plus," said Bergner.

According to Bergner, another reason that she enjoys her current position at Printco Industries is the flexibility, and the balance between work and family.

"The culture at Printco is exceptional, and they understand the importance of balance between work and family, which is a definite benefit to employment with the organization," she said.

Challenges come with the position as well, simply because sometimes you need to "learn things on the fly,"

according to Bergner.

When she isn't working, Bergner enjoys camping, crafting, fishing, puzzles and gardening. She resides with her husband, Jim, and her dog, Gypsy Rose, in Sobieski.

Printco has designed and manufactured custom printing, coating and ancillary products for the flexographic, gravure and offset printing markets since 1983. The company is known for its innovative solutions to flexo printing. Printco is also known in the industry for renowned doctor blade systems.

For information, visit the website at www.printco-industries.com.

Federal relief expands NWTC's certificate offerings

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College is expanding its short-term credential offerings to the regional learning centers, helping to provide more opportunities for education and training to the entire northeast Wisconsin region.

Starting in October, NWTC's regional learning centers in Aurora, Crivitz, Luxemburg, Oconto Falls and Shawano will offer more ways to earn a certification or credential in

16-week programming, broken into two, eight-week class sessions.

"Bringing more courses to our regional learning centers aligns with the college's larger efforts to make education more accessible to our communities throughout northeast Wisconsin," said Jan Scoville, dean of regional learning. "We are excited for the opportunity to offer more classes to help students start their new career or expand their skills in

16 weeks."

Selected based on industry growth and local demand, the expanded course offerings will include business, manufacturing, health sciences, communications and public safety programs.

Each new certification or certificate will ladder into a technical diploma or associate degree. Courses will be offered through a blend of in-person or virtual setting, varied by

each program.

These new course offerings, funded in part by the federal COVID-19 relief, are part of the college's ongoing goal to make higher education more accessible to all in the region.

Students can sign up online or stop at their local regional center to speak with staff about the process. For information about NWTC's new local 16-week career credential programs, visit nwtc.edu/local.



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Jobless claims reach a pandemic low as economy recovers

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER**
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits fell last week to 310,000, a pandemic low and a sign that the surge in COVID-19 cases caused by the delta variant has yet to lead to widespread layoffs.

The Sept. 9 report from the Labor Department showed that jobless claims dropped from a revised total of 345,000 the week before. And at their current pace, weekly applications for benefits are edging toward their pre-pandemic figure of roughly 225,000.

But the spread of the delta variant this summer has put renewed pressure on the economy and the job market. On Sept. 8, the Federal Reserve reported that U.S. economic activity “downshifted” in July and August, in part because of a pullback in dining out, travel and tourism related to concerns about the delta variant.

Still, the ongoing drop in applications for unemployment aid — six declines in the past seven weeks — indicates that most companies are holding onto their workers despite the slowdown. That trend should help sustain the economic rebound through the current wave of infections.

The pace of hiring, though, has

weakened — at least for now. Last week, the government reported that hiring slowed dramatically in August, with employers adding just 235,000 jobs after having added roughly a million in both June and July. Hiring plummeted in industries that require face-to-face contact with the public, notably restaurants, hotels and retail. Still, some jobs were added in other areas, and the unemployment rate actually dropped to 5.2% from 5.4%.

“While the August jobs report showed employers may have hit the pause button on hiring amid renewed concerns about the pandemic, the claims data suggest a reluctance to lay off workers amid a record number of job openings,” said Nancy Vanden Houten, an economist at the consulting firm Oxford Economics.

The steady fall in weekly applications for unemployment benefits coincides with a scaling-back of aid for jobless Americans. This week, more than 8 million people lost all their unemployment benefits with the expiration of two federal programs that covered gig workers and people who have been jobless for more than six months. Those emergency programs were created in March 2020, when the pandemic first tore through the economy.

That cutoff isn’t yet reflected in the weekly jobless claims report. The report’s data on the emergency programs is delayed by two weeks.

As of Aug. 21, 8.8 million people were receiving benefits from these two programs.

An additional 2.6 million people were receiving regular state unemployment aid. These recipients have just lost a \$300-a-week federal unemployment supplement, which also expired this week.

Those cutoffs could also be a reason why applications for jobless aid are declining, said Eliza Forsythe, an economist at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: Many of the unemployed may now believe they aren’t eligible for aid.

Some business owners had complained that the federal supplement made it harder to fill open jobs. Those pleas led governors in about 25 states to cancel the \$300 payment early and to shut off the two emergency programs in most of those states as well. But academic research has found that so far, the early cut-offs in jobless benefits have led to only a small increase in hiring in those states.

Many economists express concern that the cut-off will lead to financial hardship because the resurgence of the pandemic will make it harder for some of the unemployed to find work.

After previous recessions, emergency expansions of jobless aid ended at a time when far fewer people were still receiving benefits.



GREG MELLIS

Producer prices jump unprecedented 8.3% in August

By **PAUL WISEMAN**
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inflation at the wholesale level climbed 8.3% last month from August 2020, the biggest annual gain since the Labor Department started calculating the 12-month number in 2010.

The Labor Department reported Friday that its producer price index — which measures inflationary pressures before they reach consumers — rose 0.7% last month from July after increasing 1% in both June and July. Inflation has been stirring as the

economy recovers from last year’s brief but intense coronavirus recession. Supply chain bottlenecks and a shortage of workers have pushed prices higher. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell has called the price spikes temporary and has warned of the dangers of the central bank raising its benchmark interest rate (now near zero) prematurely, potentially stalling the economy’s comeback.

“Since the pandemic, supply chains have never been the same and likely won’t normalize for at least six months,” said a report by Contingent Macro Advisors. “Only then will

we (and, more importantly, the Fed) get a true sense of the trend rate of producer inflation.”

Excluding volatile food and energy prices, so-called core producer prices rose 0.6% from July and 6.7% from a year earlier. Food prices were up 2.9% last month after falling in July. Over the past year, wholesale food prices have climbed 12.7%, including surges of 59.2% for beef and 43.5% for shortening and cooking oil. Energy prices rose 0.4% from July and are up 32.3% over the past year.

The economy’s brisk recovery appears to have hit a late summer

lull as COVID-19’s highly contagious delta variant discourages Americans from shopping in stores or going out to restaurants. Retail sales dropped in August, and employers added just 235,000 jobs last month, a third of what economists were expecting, and a sharp drop from June and July, when about 1 million jobs were added each month.

The Labor Department’s report on August consumer prices was due Sept. 14. Economists expect them to have moderated slightly from July’s 5.4% annual uptick, according to a survey by the data firm FactSet.



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