



Strength In Members

December 12, 2012

Dear Members of the Special Committee on Improving Educational Opportunities in High School:

I am writing today in response to the request for an audit of Wisconsin's school-based work experience programs, specifically in regard to Manitowoc County's Youth Apprenticeship Program. UnitedOne Credit Union has been a supporter and participant in this program for 17 years and has hired approximately 36 students to work for us during that time. Of those students, 21 have continued to work for us after high school graduation, and seven of them are employees today – returning to us after they finished college.

This program has been a great value to us in terms of developing a skilled workforce. The benefits we have seen with this program include:

- Taking an active role in mentoring youth in our community to help them prepare for the working world.
- Augmenting our workforce with employees who are able to work the early morning and late afternoon hours. Students are also very willing to work during breaks, over the summer and weekends which provides flexibility in scheduling for our workforce.
- Helping build strong relationships between UnitedOne and our local schools.
- This program allows students to make the connection between what they learn in the classroom and what they will experience as a part of the workforce. I sit on many community committees and boards and hear employers say they struggle with finding workers. Programs like this one help the entire community on that front because these students come with "real world" experience and most have had the opportunity to develop soft skills that are very important in today's work environment.
- Our employees benefit from the program as well because it gives them the opportunity to work one-on-one with youth in our community. It gives our employees the feeling that they are "giving back" to our community.

This program is vital to our community and I would certainly hope that any audit will be able to accurately measure its importance and impact.

Sincerely,

Kim Rooney  
CEO  
UnitedOne Credit Union



This credit union is federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration.



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