

Commercial Design and Health Care Reap Results with NJBIA training in Toms River, NJ

By Robert F. Rosa, COO NJ Community College Workforce Consortium

Two Ocean County small employers have recently engaged in staff training with each reporting outstanding results.

Design Alternatives Inc. is a woman-owned, 30-year-old commercial interior design firm specializing in the hospitality and healthcare markets. The company projects entail all employees working together on computer spreadsheets.

After reading about professional development training in Ocean County College's Continuing Education catalog, Design Alternatives' Carrie Fusella contacted Michael Forcella, Manager of Business Engagement at the College.

Fusella was amazed at the flexibility and value the grant-funded program offered to her 12 employees. In fact, she noted, she was given as much time and attention as if she had a staff of 100. The program was set up over six months, at convenient times for her personnel, with college classrooms – as well as onsite learning in her workplace – as the training venues. One of the greatest benefits was the fact that Fusella did not have to close her office for days in order to complete the training.

According to Fusella, "Employees increased their knowledge and efficiency in their business tasks, including Microsoft Office 365, Excel, and Word." And, she added, "We are working together as a more cohesive unit with increased morale."

Denise VanTassel is the CEO of Alcoeur Gardens, Alzheimer's and Dementia Facilities. Similar to many business owners, VanTassel faced multiple challenges, and she believed proper training could help overcome these obstacles. The grant-funded professional training program at OCC was the answer.

Time management, team building, problem solving, and communication were at the foundation of Alcoeur's training. As a result of this program, the team created a new mission statement, and conceived and implemented wonderful ideas. The training was instrumental in achieving Alcoeur's goals for future growth.

"Our managers and staff have improved their skills in these areas," said VanTassel, who also pointed out that the



Left to Right, Front Row: Owner Carrie Fusella and Mary Gray. Back Row: Kristen LaDuca, Kelly Lipfert, Michelle Iacobucci, Mikaela Kozak

instructor was approachable, encouraging, and extremely knowledgeable. As she explained, he took the time to encourage all of the company's managers to talk about themselves in order to hone in on how to be more efficient, with useful techniques to help reach their daily goals, all tailored to each specific individual.

Sivaraman Anbarasan, CEO of the Community College Consortium (NJCCC) that manages Basic Skills, said the Consortium, and its 19 county colleges, owes its success to a close partnership with NJBIA and the NJ Department of Labor. "Working as a team," he said. "We have created a training program on which New Jersey employers have come to rely." It's fair to say that both Design Alternatives Inc and Alcoeur Gardens agree.

For additional information contact either Michael Forcella at Ocean County College, 732-255-0400 X2157 or Bob Rosa at the NJCCC , 609-498-7757.



To Get Grant-Funded Skills Training for Your Employees