



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Anthony Snyder, CEO
Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, Inc.
Text: 920-850-2032
asnyder@fvwdb.com
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Fox Valley Workforce Development Board Ready to Assist Aramark Fond du Lac Workers

The Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, a regional 501(c)3 not-for-profit directing local leadership for state and federal workforce investment programs, will lead the Rapid Response efforts for the recently announced layoff of 86 workers from Aramark, which provides food and concessions for the Fond du Lac School District. The Fond du Lac school district voted, at its June 12 meeting, to end its food service contract with Aramark ending employment for all workers effective June 30, 2023.

Aramark issued a Federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN Notice) on June 21 and the Fox Valley Workforce Board went into action to reach out to the impacted employees as part of its Rapid Response efforts.

The typical “Rapid Response” effort – depending on the size of the dislocation and the amount of notice provided to the Board – may include communication with impacted employees to discuss retraining and job search benefits under the Workforce Opportunity and Investment Act (WIOA), a private job fair with roles tailored to the experience of those being laid off,

resume writing sessions and other skills-building efforts at the area's job center or satellite location. When someone is laid off, all of the services are free and covered by the U.S. Department of Labor's WIOA funds.

After contacting the Aramark office, the FVWDB learned that nearly all impacted employees will be retained by the incoming food service provider, Chartwells. Chartwells expects 84 employees to accept roles offered with them. Two (2) management staff not offered roles with Chartwells indicated they would seek other roles within Aramark. In the end, anyone who is unable to move forward with Chartwells or Aramark will be served by the FVWDB.

FVWDB CEO Anthony Snyder said, "Losing a job can be a traumatic, life altering experience for anyone, but your workforce board and staff at the local job center are ready to assist you with this transition. Thankfully, a robust labor market means any worker laid off today will have lots of opportunities for future employment. We always encourage a dislocated worker – that's what we call someone laid off – to take some time to look into retraining. With us paying the tuition and fees and covering other expenses, such as rent, mileage to and from the classroom and child care, a recently dislocated worker may never have a better opportunity for upskilling. These new skills will make an individual more marketable and, in most cases, lead to higher wages at the next job."

Update on Ariens in Brillion and Elkay in Fond du Lac

In addition to the employees impacted at Aramark, the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board continues to remain in active contact with dislocated employees at Elkay Interior Systems in Fond du Lac, and AriensCo in Brillion.

Elkay Interior Systems, in its May 1 WARN notice, indicated 77 employees would be laid off between June 30 and October 6. Elkay manufactures faucets, water coolers, drinking fountains, water delivery systems as well as commercial kitchen fixtures. The FVWDB has been working with the employer to provide information to workers and has scheduled a private job fair for the employees from 4-7 pm Tuesday, July 18, at the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, 625 Rolling Meadows Drive, Fond du Lac. Employers wishing to recruit can sign up for free at <https://tinyurl.com/Elkayjf> or call/text Bobbi Miller at 920-470-0837.

AriensCo., a Brillion-based manufacturer of lawnmowers and snowblowers, did not file a WARN notice, but notified employees on June 6 that it would be eliminating second, third and weekend shifts at the Brillion campus. The total number of employees impacted is unknown, but Ariens indicated that all impacted employees would be eligible to apply for 100 expanded positions on its first shift. Without a WARN notice, the FVWDB had no idea how many employees were impacted, but did schedule a private job fair for Ariens workers on June 21 at Brillion High School with over 40 employers in attendance, along with Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. The FWBD reports that 30 job seekers attended. Meetings and mini-job fairs at the Fox Valley Job Center – Menasha on June 22 and 26 were sparsely attended by AriensCo workers, but did see decent interest by the general public.

“A WARN notice is not required in every layoff, but it can be incredibly helpful to the workforce board, the job center staff and other partners that serve the impacted workers,” said Snyder. “It allows us to know the exact number of workers affected by the layoffs, indicates when the layoffs begin, helps us to be prepared with translators when necessary and may aid in the filing of UI benefits by the employees. The good news is that not filing a WARN notice does not impact the workers’ benefits.”

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) requires that written notice be provided 60 days in advance of a dislocation event. In general, the federal notice requirements under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act apply to employers with 100 or more employees. The notice requirements under Wisconsin's Business Closing and Mass Layoff (WBCML) law apply to employers with 50 or more employees in Wisconsin. Violation of the federal and/or state notice laws may result in employer liability. Impacted employees may be eligible to recover up to 60 days of back pay and benefits for the period of time that notice was required but not provided. Additional monetary penalties may be assessed if the employer fails to provide timely notice to the required unit of local government. More details on WARN notices may be found on the DWD web site along with a list of filed WARN notices: [2023 WARN Notices and Updates \(wisconsin.gov\)](#).

Other Local Layoffs and Closures

As this story was being written, the FVWDB has been aware of other closures including Tricia's Treasures, 121 W. Wisconsin Avenue, a boutique clothing store in Neenah; and Gathered Roots, 15 N. Main St., a unique shopping location offering locally-sourced food, gifts and more. The biggest layoff news in the past week is that all Wisconsin-based Xperience Fitness gym locations were abruptly closed without notice late Thursday, June 8, including locations at 1701 Appleton Road in Menasha and 1280 N. Hard Drive in Appleton, with an unknown number of employees impacted locally and across the state.

Workers who are impacted by these or any closures or layoffs can reach out to the Fox Cities Job Center-Menasha, 1802 Appleton Road, Menasha, to schedule an appointment with a WIOA career planner either in person or virtually.

“People tend to think their local American Job Center and their workforce board are there to help ONLY with Unemployment Insurance filing or to assist people with barriers to employment,” said Snyder. “We are one of the state’s best kept secrets offering millions of dollars in tuition and support dollars to help individuals who are unemployed, underemployed or unhappily employed get into a career they love. If you are someone who is not looking forward to getting up on Monday as you face the prospect of another week at a job you hate or no job at all, please find your closest American Job Center and ask to speak to a career planner. We can help you find the career of your dreams!”

For more information or to get started in determining your best next step, complete the info form at www.foxvalleyjobcenters.com or call 920-997-3272. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program is available to anyone laid off or soon to be laid off from any employer.

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Fox Valley Workforce Development Board (FVWDB) is a not-for-profit working to build a world-class workforce in northeast Wisconsin. Serving six counties — Calumet, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago — FVWDB collaborates with a number of state and local agencies to help job seekers gain the skills needed to find employment, and to help businesses find the highly skilled workers they need.

The Fox Valley Workforce Development Board is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need assistance with this information, please dial 7-1-1 for Wisconsin Relay Service or at 800-947-3529. At no cost, you may request information in an alternate format, including language assistance or translation information to your preferred language by contacting us at (920) 594-3655.

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