

Ohio Insurance Industry Launches *Insuring Ohio Futures* Career Awareness Program

- Faced with an unprecedented talent gap, the Ohio-based insurance industry is forming a coalition of partners to launch a career awareness program – *Insuring Ohio Futures* – and launching a website InsuringOhioFutures.com.
- *Insuring Ohio Futures* will reach students, career-changers and military veterans to raise awareness of educational and career opportunities in the insurance industry.
- A June 2011 study by Columbus State Community College's Center for Workforce Development anticipated that there will be approximately 17,000 jobs available in the industry from 2013 to 2018.

COLUMBUS, Ohio, March 13, 2013 – Insurance companies in Ohio face a dramatic shortage of career professionals, a talent gap that could harm the industry's standing as an economic engine for the state. Ohio is the first state to address the problem with the launch of *Insuring Ohio Futures*.

A study conducted by Columbus State Community College's (CSCC) Center for Workforce Development found that more than 17,000 new jobs in the insurance sector will need to be filled in the next five years as baby boomers begin to retire, leaving behind a critical shortage of skilled workers. The study also points to career openings at nearly every level of Ohio's 256 insurance companies.

"Thanks to Gov. Kasich's leadership, insurance industry leaders developed a comprehensive plan to increase awareness, provide more training opportunities, and ensure these high-paid, high-skilled positions are filled by a new generation of trained professionals," said Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor, Director of the Ohio Department of Insurance.

Ohio is the seventh largest insurance state in the nation with more than 100,000 employees and an annual statewide economic impact of nearly \$6 billion.

The launch of *Insuring Ohio Futures* program and the InsuringOhioFutures.com website will begin the process of recruiting the next generation of insurance employees to the industry and help maintain Ohio's place as a leader in insurance.

“Closing this talent gap is vital to Ohio’s economy and job creation,” said Taylor. “I support the efforts of *Insuring Ohio’s Future* to strengthen Ohio’s competitive and growing insurance industry.”

“While there is not a quick fix to the talent gap, an awareness program is an important first step,” said John Bishop, Chairman, President and CEO of The Motorists Insurance Group and co-chair of the Insurance Industry Resource Council (IIRC), the consortium of 13 Ohio insurance companies that have aligned to fund this program. “*Insuring Ohio Futures* will serve as a catalyst to attract talent to the industry and the website is a fantastic resource for anyone, especially those that have never considered a career in insurance.”

“Baby boomers formed the foundation for our industry’s success,” said Jim Clay, leader of the Westfield Group and co-chair of the IIRC. “Today we need to solidify those gains by giving a new generation the skills needed for this industry to thrive in the future.”

In the coming weeks Lt. Gov. Taylor and key program partners will hold a series of regional events around Ohio to highlight aspects of the *Insuring Ohio Futures* program, such as the launch of higher education programs, opportunities for career-changers and outreach to Ohio veterans.

Filling the Talent Gap

The IIRC has identified three key target audiences that will have a lasting impact on the insurance talent gap. Students, career-change professionals and military veterans each bring a unique ability to address the industry’s talent shortage.

A common misconception about insurance careers is the majority of opportunities are agent or sales positions. While the industry always needs new agents, many of the opportunities identified in the CSCC Center for Workforce Development study include positions such as claims adjuster and investigator, underwriter, actuary, customer service, IT specialist and other infrastructure positions.

InsuringOhioFutures.com is live and stands ready as a vital and inclusive resource for those interested in exploring career opportunities in the insurance industry. The website offers the following information and tools:

- Ask a Pro: Allows job seekers to ask questions and connect with seasoned insurance professionals.
- Career Survey: Offers job seekers a tool to learn more about possible insurance career paths, which align with their goals, interests and skills.
- Career Paths: Offers insight on popular insurance careers including details on each profession, daily responsibilities, educational requirements, important skills, average salaries and projected job outlook for the Ohio industry.
- Resources: Provides information for students, veterans and career-changers to make informed decisions on an insurance career.
- Videos: Offers the ability to hear firsthand testimonials from insurance professionals regarding the wide range of opportunities in insurance.
- Ohio Insurance Industry Information Bank: Provides company listings by one of five Ohio regions, as well as direct links to the companies career resources to and to available insurance jobs in Ohio.

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About Insurance Industry Resource Council

The Insurance Industry Resource Council (IIRC) is collaboration of 13 Ohio insurance companies that have aligned for a statewide career awareness initiative to address the coming industry talent gap. Formed in 2012 after Governor John Kasich challenged the industry to develop a long-term strategy to combat the talent shortage, the IIRC has overseen the building of a public-private coalition consisting of insurance companies, insurance trade associations, institutions of higher learning and public officials all focused on attracting new talent to Ohio's insurance industry.

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