

## **“Life Coach” Employee Retention Program**

Butler County United Way is excited to announce the launch of the Life Coach pilot program in collaboration with LifeSpan and ThyssenKrupp Bilstein. This initiative is a united effort to attack a workforce issue from all angles. The purpose is not only to boost employee retention and satisfaction for both the employee and the employer, but to also offer continued support for the worker on a long-term basis.

The Life Coach project at ThyssenKrupp Bilstein was born from a study performed by The Workforce Investment Board of Butler, Clermont, and Warren Counties (WIBBCW) and is a Southwestern, Ohio regional organization comprised of leaders from business, education and training, and workforce organizations. The goal of WIBBCW is to provide an educated and qualified workforce that meets the current and future needs of employers. WIBBCW recently surveyed employers in the three counties, and identified the top two critical workforce development issues faced by businesses:

1. Personal/Social Barriers (medical issues including mental health, family issues, drug abuse, housing, transportation, childcare, etc.)
2. Lack of Soft Skills (work ethic professionalism, math/reading skills, financial literacy, etc.)

These barriers can have a significant impact on an employer’s ability to retain productive staff. Using financial literacy as an example, one can see how financial issues can impact an employee’s situation:

1. 47% of people list “the lack of financial skills or education” as the cause for their financial difficulties.
2. Businesses cite an increasing problem in hiring qualified people due to their low credit scores.
3. 23% of employees say they are experiencing financial problems. Of that 23%, they say they spend up to 12% of their work week dealing with their personal, financial problems.
4. 58% of employers say financial stress contributes to employee absences.

While support services are available in many communities, it is sometimes a difficult task to coordinate all these services, and it is often not effective to simply make a referral and assume an individual will follow through. The concept of a Life Coach addresses these issues. In addition, the Life Coach’s holistic approach to solving the issues of social and personal barriers along with soft skills is a unique solution necessary to the success of the individual.

Butler County United Way pursued this idea, collaborating with LifeSpan to place a Life Coach at ThyssenKrupp Bilstein. This Life Coach will be the dedicated service coordinator for staff on site. Utilizing the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) model, staff will have access to the best support tailored to their individual circumstances. The SBIRT model is a public health model developed by the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The Life Coach will continue to work with the employees to assure implementation of their action plan.

There are many possible outcome measures from having the Life Coach at ThyssenKrupp Bilstein. The Life Coach will help employees display more confidence, increase their annual income, use fewer public services, reduce their stress level, reduce absenteeism, develop a budget, and increase their personal savings. The collaborative also found benefits from the company’s viewpoint by increasing retention, decreasing turnover, and receiving fewer requests for payroll advances or retirement plan hardship withdrawals.

As an initiative of Butler County United Way, the collaborative Life Coach Model connects employees to needed resources, removing barriers to employment and aligning directly with our mission to connect and mobilize resources to improve lives. The results of this program will be closely monitored with the intention of providing this Life Coach expertise to other businesses throughout Butler County.

For more information on how you can support this initiative or implement this into your business, please contact Butler County United Way at 513.863.0800 or [www.liveunited@bc-unitedway.org](mailto:www.liveunited@bc-unitedway.org).