

THE GARDNER NEWS

Heywood Library to host job fair

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Posted **Jan 21, 2020** at 12:30 PM

GARDNER — It's a chance for job-seekers to write the next chapter in their careers. Levi Heywood Memorial Library will host a "mini" job fair on Jan. 22 from 9:30 a.m. to noon.

The event, sponsored by MassHire North Central Career Center, will give residents an opportunity to meet with hiring managers from several local employers, including the 2020 census, the Arc of Opportunity, GAAHMA, Great Wolf Lodge, Heywood Wakefield Commons and Recovery Centers of America.

It's a good time to be looking for a job, according to MassHire Business Service Representative Scott Perciful, who said job fairs are an effective way for prospective employees to meet with local employers.

"I hear this from both sides, both job-seekers and employers, that (a job fair) is a great way for hiring managers to not only see a resume but also to get a chance to see how a person would fit in with their company," Perciful said. "And job-seekers tell us the same thing — that they're glad they can actually go in and meet a hiring manager before they get to an interview."

Perciful added, "I hear from employers all the time that they're having a hard time finding people, so it's a great time to be looking for a job. Every company I know is expanding and they need people."

A job fair represents something of a no-pressure situation for would-be employees to chat with prospective employers, Percival said.

"If either party doesn't feel comfortable during the encounter, it's easier to walk away when you realize that (the job) isn't for you," Perciful said.

The goal of each MassHire fair is to give prospective employees a representative overview of what kind of companies are currently hiring in the local area, according to officials.

"Our region stretches as far west as Templeton and Gardner, and as far east as Harvard and Devens and Ayer and everywhere in between," Perciful explained. "We try to get companies that are fairly nearby (in each region), so that job-seekers that attend can look at the employers list and find companies that are close to them. We try to make it easier for both the job-seeker and the employer to get a good match of job and worker."

In addition to dressing professionally and showing up to the job fair early, Perciful recommends that job seekers bring along lots of copies of their resume and to make sure that the document has been edited down to its basics.

“We tell people to try and have (their resume) down to a single page, and highlight the most important aspects of their experience and background,” Perciful said. “And just be ready to talk to an employer about anything on your resume. Be ready with a sort of ‘elevator pitch,’ I guess.”

Some employers like to take part in local job fairs as a way to see what kind of talent is available in the community, according Perciful.

“Even if they don’t have a job opening that day or that week, these job fairs are a good way for employers to remind everyone that they’re out there and may have positions available down the road,” he said.

The event is one of four held locally each year, said Perciful, who added that it is considered a “mini” job fair because of the size of the library facility.

“We typically get between 60 and 70 companies, but for this particular one we couldn’t find a space large enough in Gardner, so we have about a dozen companies because of the available space at the library,” he said.