

ITAG expands services and changes name

Innovative Technology Action Group works with communication and information companies

EXTON _ The Innovative Technology Action Group, affiliated with the Chester County Economic Development Council, has changed its name, and expanded its services to serve Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Established in 1999, as the Information Technology Action Group, the original ITAG mission targeted the workforce of the future by promoting technology careers to local high school and college students

In 2006, ITAG expanded its vision to include communications technologies and was renamed the Innovative Technology Action Group. Currently, ITAG serves well over 100 communications and information technology companies with a mission *to create and sustain a regional partnership in Southeastern Pennsylvania that encourages technology companies and companies that use technology to grow their businesses in an increasingly sophisticated global marketplace. This is accomplished by working closely with participating companies, economic development agencies, and education/training partners to leverage workforce and business development resources on behalf of ITAG members.*

ITAG is now working with the Workforce Investment Boards of Chester and Montgomery counties and the Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center (DVIRC) along with the Economic Development Council. The organization has received \$650,000 in funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry to expand services to the region.

“Businesses in the region need trained workers in the fields of information technology,” said Gary Smith, President, and Chief Executive Officer of the Chester County Economic Development Council. “ITAG will help fill those jobs.”

ITAG partnership companies benefit from ITAG participation through access to regional grants, workforce training, education funds, and programs. Shared resources for business support, recruiting assistance, assistance in growing a pipeline of qualified workers, and opportunities to network with key policy makers and funding sources is offered.

ITAG sponsors past and present include A. Duie Pyle, Albright, Analytical Graphics, Bentley, Cabrini, Career Link, CB Technologies, CCIU, Cisco, Communications Test Design, Inc., DCCC, Full Circle Computing, IBM, Immaculata, IMS Health, Juniata, Kinsey Nash, LaSalle, Lockheed Martin, PSU, QVC, SAP America, SCT/Sunguard, Siemens, St. Joseph, Synthesis, Temple, Unisys, Vanguard Group, Vertex Inc., WAWA Inc., WCU, and Widener University.

ITAG's three major outreach projects are Girls Exploring Tomorrow's Technology (GETT), Techies Day, and TechTrek. In 2007, GETT will celebrate its seventh year as a proactive response to the under-representation of women in the technology workforce of the county, the nation, and the world. GETT invites Chester County Girls in grades 6-12 and their parents to consider the many career possibilities, as represented by successful women role models from varied professions that rely on computer technology. The 2007 event was held on March 24, 2007, at the Chester County Intermediate Unit. GETT was awarded the 2007 Gateway to Equity Award from the Chester County Chapter of the American Association of University Women.

2007 marks eight years of successful programming for the Techies Day event highlighted by opportunities for high school students interested in careers in technology and their school counselors to visit Chester County corporations, to observe real workplaces, and to learn about the career journeys of the technology professionals who support them.

College students appreciate the opportunities available to them through ITAG's TechTrek Program. In its 7th year, TechTrek is designed to expose students pursuing technology majors to the many career opportunities available in Chester County through the opportunity to network with representatives from business and industry. The TechTrek initiative is nationally recognized for its innovation.

The Economic Development Council is a private, non-profit economic development organization that has been nurturing economic growth in Chester County and the surrounding region for more than 40 years. The Council's portfolio of business growth services includes low-interest financing, small business lending, workforce training, retention and expansion, customized international business assistance, land and building site selection, brownfields consultation and remediation, urban redevelopment, and agricultural economic development. The Council also offers state-of-the art conference and training facilities at its facility in Eagleview. For more information, see www.cceconomicdevelopment.com.