



The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

October 22, 2018

Program

Lion Phillip Viverito introduced our speaker tonight, Ms. Danielle Ferguson, a Cullman High School graduate, and a Business Development Manager for Onin Staffing. Although our Club was one of her first speaking engagements, Ms. Ferguson did an admirable job in explaining how her company functions, and what it is trying to establish in Cullman.



(L to R) Lion Phillip Viverito, Ms. Danielle Ferguson, and President Lion Mike Ponder.

Danielle explained that Onin's purpose is to create opportunity and empower people, which is why it is facilitating the Ready to Work program to provide a career pathway for young men and women entering the workforce. This program operates during the school year. It includes training along skilled training tracks of automotive, construction, hospitality, healthcare, manufacturing, personal finance, and distribution/logistics. The program begins with a kickoff at a school with area employers explaining job opportunities within their company, and who are looking for workers who are ready to work on their first day of employment. These jobs do not

require a college degree, yet can provide competitive-job wages. Next in the program comes a five-week period of soft training skills on such things as how to present yourself and polishing yourself up for potential employers, learning to write a resume, and emphasizing the need to be a dependable employee. The program is a great motivator for students to work and get jobs.



Lion Steve Cartee was paying close attention as Danielle explained the "Ready for Work" program. He looks like he may not be quite ready, himself.

Following the soft skills comes industry specific training with 12 to 13 weeks of employer-driven curriculum that is tailored by the employers to meet real hiring needs of their specific industry tracks along with tours of various work sites. In the last phase of the program students attend job fairs, go through interviews, and hopefully get a job. Most of the funding & teachers come from industries as they try to build a base of future employees, although some resources come through the school system. The ready-for-Work program is designed for students as young as the 8th grade, through High school and into Jr. College.



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There is a common misconception that if you don't go to college, you aren't going to be successful, but that misconception is not true, according to Ms. Ferguson. In today's highly technical and service-related market, workers are judged more by their skills than their degrees. With the national student debt average pushing towards \$1.4 trillion and the need for skilled workers increasing to more than 2 million over the next decade, the career path into a "new-collar" job is now. This program has been instituted in Tuscaloosa, and Onin is actively planning for it to start in Cullman in 2019. The program sounds like it could be a great resource for many of our students.

Other Business

Lion Wendell Copeland continues to improve following his heart operation. Lion Jim Walker should be able to join us again after 2 or 3 weeks of more physical therapy at the Hanceville Nursing Home. Lion Lummie Speakman reported that Lion Mariman Pope was sounding better this week.

On November 12th the Fair Board President will announce candidates for the 2019 Fair Board of Directors. On November 26th we will have a closed meeting (no guests) at which we will hear final Fair reports. We will also vote to re-elect or replace Fair Board members who are coming to the end of their 2-year terms. Some of the present members who could run for another 2-year term have declined to run again.

Upcoming Programs and Events



Lion Tim Sinyard, former Border Patrol Agent.

Oct 29: Lion Tim Sinyard will talk to us about his experiences as a U.S. Border Patrol Agent.

Nov 26: Closed meeting for final fair reports and vote on new Fair Board of Directors members.

Nov 29: Farm-City Dinner at the Civic Center.

Dec 3: Fair Appreciation Dinner at Stonebridge restaurant.

Tale Twister Input

If you need something special or to report a correction in the *Tale Twister*, see Lions Carey Thompson or Don Smith at the meetings. Lion Carey can be reached at 256-739-0580 (H) or 256-426-3207 (C). Lion Don can be reached at 256-737-7433 (H) or 256-426-7722 (C).