



1616 S. Voss, Ste 700
Houston, Texas 77057
713.975.7576
800.701.4014

eNewsletter

The Independent Recruiter's Resource for Temporary and Contract Placements

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Judy Collins Wins TAPC Award



At the 2009 Texas Association of Personnel Consultants annual conference, Judy Collins was awarded the President's Award – a prestigious honor awarded annually by the TAPC for the hard work and dedication of one of its members. The award is formal recognition for a TAPC member who has made a significant contribution to the success of the organization. TFI is proud of her accomplishments and appreciates the acknowledgement by the TAPC for the tireless work and effort that she has contributed to the association. Judy will continue to devote time and energy to the organization in 2010 as a member of the Board of Directors. She will also be organizing the Second Annual TAPC tennis tournament to be held in Houston on April 15th.

Status of Industry

According to the latest job numbers released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, temporary help employment increased by 2.5%, seasonally adjusted, from November to December. While several sectors of the economy continued to lose jobs, although at a slower pace, temporary help services was one of the few industries that continued to add jobs during this period. Steady employment gains have occurred in temporary help since a low point in July of 2009. In December, there were 7% fewer temporary help jobs than in the same period last year. However, this is a marked improvement from the double digit year-to-year employment declines that the industry experienced on a monthly basis from August 2008 to November 2009. (Source: American Staffing Association, January 11, 2010)

The latest 10 year U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' employment projections predict that job growth in the employment services industry is expected to be nearly twice the rate of overall job growth in the economy. Released in December 2009, the 2008-18 projections anticipate job growth in the employment services industry to increase by almost 600,000, or 19.1%, over this period. By comparison, BLS forecasts job growth for all industries in the U.S. economy will be 10.1%.

The temporary help industry is the largest segment of employment services, comprising almost 75% of the broader industrial classification. BLS research cites growing demand among employers for more flexible work arrangements as a driving force behind this expected growth in temporary help jobs. (Source: American Staffing Association, January 25, 2010)

On the Horizon

- **Congress Extends Unemployment Benefits** – In November, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives passed an unemployment benefits extension package. The bill extends benefits by up to 14 additional weeks in all 50 states. It will further extend unemployment benefits for up to 20 weeks in states with a three month average unemployment rate of at least 8.5%. In order to pay for the additional weeks of emergency unemployment compensation, which has an estimated cost of \$2.4 billion, the bill extends the .2% FUTA surtax on employers through all of 2010 and the first six months of 2011. All employers can expect SUI taxes to increase significantly in 2010!
- **Paid Sick Leave Bill Introduced in Congress** – While not receiving the press coverage of the health care reform bill, a Senate subcommittee is currently hearing testimony on several bills that would mandate paid sick leave for U.S. workers. While opponents have argued that mandated employer paid sick leave would undermine recovery efforts, others argue that workers who go to work when sick actually cost the national economy more than what it would cost to provide paid sick leave. The bill would allow workers one hour of paid sick leave for every thirty hours worked. Accrual of sick leave would be from the first day of employment and could be used anytime after 60 days of employment.
- **Health Insurance Employer Mandate May Extend to Temporaries** – Under the bill that was being negotiated between House and Senate leaders, businesses that do not offer health coverage to their full-time employees would

face an annual penalty of \$750 per employee. The bill defines a full-time employee as anyone who is employed, on average, thirty hours a week or more for more than a full calendar quarter. It is likely to be assessed on a monthly basis, i.e., \$62.50 per month, and will have a significant effect on the cost of employing long term temporary or contract workers. With the recent election of Scott Brown as the new senator from Massachusetts, the fate of the bill, as well as specific provisions, remains uncertain.

State News:

- **New York:** A new law was recently enacted in New York regarding **wage notification** rules. The new requirements took effect on October 26, 2009, for all subsequent new hires. The new law requires that employers must notify employees of their regular and overtime hourly wage rates, in writing, at the time of hire and must obtain written acknowledgement of receipt of such notice.
- **California:** Recently, a California court issued a ruling involving **interview pay** that has many staffing firms reviewing interviewing policies. In the case of Sullivan v. Kelly Services, a federal district court held that California wage and hour law required that a temporary employee be paid for time spent interviewing with potential client companies. The court ruled that interview time was compensable because Kelly controlled the interview process by arranging the interviews, putting the Kelly name and logo on the employee's resume, and directed the employee in how to prepare for the interview. However, the court did reject the employee's claims for preparation and travel time.
- **Delaware:** Delaware has joined Colorado and Maryland in passing Worker Misclassification bills by enacting new legislation that provides a series of penalties for **misclassifying** workers as "**independent contractors.**" The Workplace Fraud Act defines "independent contractor" as a worker who is not under the direction and control of the employer for whom the work is performed, who is engaged in an independently established trade, and whose services are outside the usual course of business of the employer.

TFI Co-Location Facility Completed in Austin

TFI recently completed construction of the new, expanded co-location facility in Austin, Texas. While the Austin-based co-location facility in existence prior to Hurricane Ike was adequate, the staff felt that the quarters were somewhat cramped and that a larger, more complete office was warranted. While there were no delays in processing payroll for the week that our Houston office had no electricity, support services such as email and phone service were limited. The new facility will provide uninterrupted email service and additional phone lines in the event of another emergency deployment. While we are optimistic that Houston will not see another hurricane like Ike for many years, we are again prepared to relocate if necessary!

New Services Coming Soon!

Within the next several weeks, TFI will begin implementation of several new modules to our software adding functionality and efficiency for recruiters and employees. Basic information flow, reporting, and flexibility will continue, but added services will provide new web based options for recruiters and employees.

- On-line time sheets with on-line approval capability by supervisors
- On-line on-boarding as an option to conventional new employee paperwork
- On-line employee self service allowing workers to view current pay information and paycheck history
- On-line W-2 reprints

Also, additional on-line reports will be added to those currently available for recruiters allowing more comprehensive reporting of employee history, assignment history, and company summaries. While no significant changes are expected in current processes, we are optimistic that these enhancements will provide additional value in the delivery of our services!

Upcoming Events

Within the next several months, TFI will be attending the following events. Let us know if we're in your area!

- March 4-6 National Personnel Associates (NPA) Annual Conference; The Peabody Memphis Hotel; Memphis, Tennessee.
- Mar 18-19 Intercity Personnel Association (IPA) Annual Conference; Westin Hotel; New Orleans, Louisiana.
- April 15-17 Texas Association of Personnel Consultants (TAPC) State Conference; Omni Riverway; Houston, Texas.

- April 22-24 California Staffing Professionals (CSP) Annual Conference; Pacific Palms Resort; Industry Hills, California.
- May 6-8 New England Association of Personnel Services (NEAPS) Annual Conference; Water's Edge Resort & Spa; Westbrook, Connecticut.
- June 6-11 Fordyce Forum; The M Resort; Las Vegas, Nevada.
- Sept 29-Oct 2 National Association of Personnel Services (NAPS) Annual Conference; Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch; St. Louis, Missouri.
- Oct 26-29 Staffing World; Venetian Resort Hotel Casino; Las Vegas, Nevada.

TFI Tidbits

- From our accounting department, **Christy Downs** gave birth to her second child, a baby boy, in December. Also from accounting, **Stephanie Gee** announced her engagement and plans for a June wedding. From our administrative support area, **Rebecca Nimigean** announced that she is expecting a new addition in August! TFI said farewell to **Patrick Blackwell** and **Jason Nichols** recently. Patrick moved back to his home town, Baton Rouge, with his new wife, and Jason relocated to Dallas to continue his education. Congratulations to **Misti Elder**, **Colleen Ashford**, and **Pat Bowser** as they celebrated their 10 year anniversaries with TFI in 2009!
- TFI appreciated the opportunity to partner with Sendouts in the recent **2009 Recruiter Makeover** contest. Participating service providers included Careerbuilder, Broadlook, and several others. Program sponsors offered discounted fees and services for the winner – the staffing firm who convinced the sponsors that their firm was the most deserving recipient of a “recruiter makeover.”

Featured TFI Employee



Stephanie Gee

Stephanie has been with the TFI family since August 2007. She started as a payroll processor and moved to the accounting department in April. Stephanie received a bachelor's degree in Accounting from the University of Houston. She completed an internship at Walt Disney World in 2004. She plans on getting her Master's in Accounting and sitting for the CPA Exams. With her background in accounting and customer service, Stephanie proves to be an asset to TFI.

Welcome.....



Bonnie Ferguson

Bonnie is a native Houstonian who comes to us with 13 years experience in the mortgage lending industry where her background in finances has prepared her for her present job as a payroll processor. Outside of work, she likes to spend her time riding horses and attending bible studies. Bonnie recently returned from a two week mission trip to Africa where she worked with children living in an orphanage.



Kristin Gunderson

Kristin joined the TFI team in August of 2008 as the Assistant Controller. She graduated with a MBA in Accounting from the University of Phoenix and is currently studying for the CPA exam. Kristin is originally from Wisconsin and enjoys the occasional visits back home during the summer months.