

## NCEDA job fair showed glimmer of hope

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The larger-than-expected turnout at last Wednesday's job fair was evidence of what all of us know: The economy has not rebounded to where it needs to be.

But it also pointed to something else. The simple fact that there was a job fair, coupled with the many companies that participated, shows a glimmer of hope that businesses are at least thinking about hiring now. The same couldn't have been said a year ago.

Several hundred job seekers attended the job fair, sharing stories that are all too common nowadays. Some had been laid off from factories that sent work overseas. Others were struggling to find work with only a high school diploma. But everyone had the same goal: gainful employment.

Aside from strong business participation at the job fair, there are other signs that the economy is improving. Automotive sales have picked up, signaling people are becoming more comfortable with their financial situation and deciding to spend a little money. That spending will boost companies' bottom line, which will cause the delightful trickle-down effect of new jobs.

The Base Realignment and Closure affecting Fort Knox and the surrounding area will also create more jobs as services previously offered elsewhere come to our neck of the woods.

When you get too far down, there's nowhere to go but up, and that's what we're seeing at events such as the job fair. The perseverance of the 570 hopefuls who attended is inspiring. They refuse to give up, and it's people like them who will eventually pull us out of this recession.

The 24 companies that participated are also to be commended. They are taking a positive step in improving not only their business, but also their community. The whole is only as strong as its parts, and when citizens are working and can put food on the table, all of us benefit.

With Nelson County's unemployment rate hovering stubbornly around 12 percent, the job fair, sponsored by the Nelson County Economic Development Agency with help from the Lincoln Trail Area Development District, was a godsend. NCEDA President Kim Huston said if the need remains, the job fair will be repeated next year.

We applaud NCEDA for taking the initiative to host the job fair. It was a good service to our business community and individual residents alike. Initiatives such as this, which joined together those needing employees with those wanting to work, are a big step forward out of this trying time.