

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
Media Advisory

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PATRICK ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES \$4.5 MILLION IN
GRANTS TO IMPROVE SKILLS FOR JOB SEEKERS AND
EMPLOYED WORKERS

*15 grant partnerships, involving more than 100 businesses, to benefit 850
job seekers and incumbent employees*

BOSTON – Wednesday, July 17, 2013 – The Patrick Administration today announced the release of \$4.5 million through the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund to improve the skills of job seekers and incumbent employees in Massachusetts. This latest round of Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund grants is designed to address the gap between the skills held by workers and the skills needed by employers for jobs that require more than a high school diploma but less than the equivalent of a 4-year degree.

“If we address the skills gap, we strengthen our economy by putting people back to work and giving employers access to qualified employees,” said Governor Deval Patrick. “These grants forge public-private collaborations that will keep Massachusetts competitive in a 21st century global economy.”

In August 2012, Governor Patrick signed “An Act Relative to Infrastructure Investment, Enhanced Competitiveness, and Economic Growth in the Commonwealth,” which appropriated \$5 million to the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund to support partnerships between employers, educational institutions and workforce organizations to train and upgrade the skills of new and incumbent workers.

“From career centers to vocational technical schools, we are bringing together regional networks to develop programs that respond to the needs of both employers and job seekers,” said Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) Secretary Joanne F. Goldstein. “By addressing the specific needs within each region, the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund will help job seekers and existing workers obtain and retain sustainable, well-paid jobs while growing industries and businesses across the state.”

EOLWD Secretary Goldstein was joined by Senate President Therese Murray today for a visit to the Plymouth and Brockton Street Railway Company, a business partnering with the South Shore Community Action Council, one of the 15 announced grant recipients. South Shore Community Action Council was awarded a \$200,000 grant which will provide for Commercial Driver's License training that will place unemployed and underemployed participants in a range of occupations within the transportation industry, including passenger transportation jobs at employers like Plymouth and Brockton Street Railway Company.

"This Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund grant will help the South Shore Community Action Council in providing essential training and education required for high-demand, middle-skills jobs," said Senate President Therese Murray. "I look forward to working with the Department of Labor and Workforce to continue our focus on creating jobs and strengthening our economy."

"This Workforce Competitive Trust grant to the South Shore Community Action Council has had a strong and positive impact on our company, as well as others," said Christopher Anzuoni, Vice President of Plymouth & Brockton Street Railway Company. "This better helps us fulfill our workforce needs. It is imperative for our industry to be able to recruit skilled workers, and this is an excellent example of how the private and public sectors can work together for everyone's benefit."

"By including businesses in the partnerships that train workers we are ensuring that there are real jobs at the end of the training program, and that the skills of the graduates will help businesses to meet their talent needs," said Nancy Snyder, President of Commonwealth Corporation.

The Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund will support 15 partnerships between employers and education and workforce organizations ranging from community colleges and vocational technical schools to career centers and workforce investment boards. Together, these regional partnerships are dedicating resources to support initiatives that will train more than 850 individuals, mostly job seekers, in a variety of industries including healthcare, manufacturing, construction trades, hotel and hospitality, early education, and financial services.

Each grant is awarded to the lead grantee of the regional partnership. The following is a complete list of the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund lead grantees, totaling \$4.5 million:

Action for Boston Community Development, Inc.: \$200,000

Through the "Next STEPS" initiative, this partnership will prepare unemployed and underemployed participants for entry level early care and education work, including positions such as Assistant Teacher, Teacher Aide, or the equivalent.

South Shore Community Action Council: \$200,000

South Shore Community Action Council, Inc. will partner with employers and education and workforce organizations in the region to provide Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training to unemployed and underemployed participants in a range of occupations within the Transportation industry. This initiative will include CDL Permit Preparation Courses and Class B CDL Training Courses to prepare participants for jobs within a broad cross-section of industries in need of Class B CDL licensed drivers.

YouthBuild Boston, Inc.: \$200,000

With the goal of bridging the gap between job seekers and employers seeking reliable and skilled entry level workers, YouthBuild Boston will prepare disconnected young adults for jobs in the building trades.

South Middlesex Opportunity Council: \$208,037

The South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) and its partners will prepare unemployed and underemployed individuals, with a special focus on veterans, for weatherization installer jobs and incumbent weatherization installers.

Additionally, SMOC and its partners will develop a middle skills gap workforce development priorities work plan focused on the Energy Efficiency Management industry sector that will stack and align coursework and certificates and degree programs among the area education and skills training institutions.

Franklin/Hampshire Regional Employment Board: \$239,751

The newly established "Franklin Hampshire Middle Skills Academy" is launching a manufacturing initiative to develop and implement a 13.5 week intensive training program for unemployed and underemployed adults throughout these two regions.

New Bedford Economic Development Council: \$250,000

Through this regional partnership, the grant will provide construction preparation and pre-apprenticeship training to prepare unemployed and underemployed individuals for construction jobs. The goal of this project is to provide well trained individuals that meet the needs of the construction trades industry which will support the build out of the Marine and Commerce Terminal in New Bedford.

UMass Amherst Labor/Management Workplace Education: \$262,250

"Community Works" is a state registered pre-apprenticeship program that strategically connects partners to open career opportunities and offers industry-recognized certifications for people historically underrepresented in the construction industry in Holyoke, Springfield, and surrounding communities.

Bristol Workforce Investment Board: \$291,153

The Bristol Manufacturing Partnership (BMP) will prepare unemployed and underemployed individuals for jobs as machinists and computer numerically controlled programmer jobs at local manufacturing business. As part of this initiative, the regional partnership will develop and deliver an adult evening machinist training program at the local vocational schools and deliver a lean improvement training provided by the local community college.

Cape & Islands Workforce Investment Board: \$348,824

This grant continues the work of a Regional Healthcare Partnership, formed over five years ago by the Cape and Islands Workforce Investment Board, which will now seek to provide a variety of training and student support services that address a range of healthcare employer needs for occupations including certified nursing assistants, licensed professional nurses, medical assistants, and medical coders throughout the region.

Boston Housing Authority: \$349,985

“Building Pathways,” sponsored by the Building & Construction Trades Council of the Metropolitan District (MBBTC) is a registered building trades pre-apprenticeship program serving the greater Boston area. Through this grant, Building Pathways will deliver high quality training cycles to prepare individuals for entry into apprenticeship programs, provide case management services and support for participants, provide job development and coaching services to participants, and offer group mentoring to ensure retention in the placed participants’ chosen trade.

Berkshire County Regional Employment Board: \$350,000

“Healthcare PACE,” a regional initiative designed to attract, retain, and promote quality healthcare workers pursuing a nursing career in the Berkshire County region.

Community Work Services: \$350,000

Through this regional partnership, Community Work Services in collaboration with the hospitality industry, workforce development system, and community partners will launch the “Careers in Hospitality Program,” incorporating new opportunities for career advancement within the lodging and culinary fields.

Regional Employment Board of Hampden County: \$350,000

“The Financial and Business Services Workforce Collaborative” is a new alliance formed to address the middle skills workforce gap in entry level positions including customer service representatives, call center operators, and bank tellers in Hampden County.

North Central MA Workforce Investment Board: \$400,000

This regional partnership will prepare unemployed and underemployed individuals for jobs as machine operators, machine inspectors, and computer numerical control machinists to support the advanced manufacturing industry in North Central and Central Massachusetts.

North Shore Workforce Investment Board: \$500,000

The Northeast Manufacturing Consortium” will partner with the region’s community colleges and others to provide training that will meet the business needs and assist participants in finding employment with local businesses and within the manufacturing industry.

To learn more about the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, visit <http://64.78.33.48/areas/int.cfm?ID=166&sub=166>.

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