



COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION

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BayStateWorks Celebrates Its Successes

On Wednesday, June 21st at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center in Boston, the state-funded BayStateWorks Program celebrated the successful completion of this latest round of funding. BayStateWorks is an education and training initiatives that improves the economic well-being of Massachusetts employers while also improving the employment and wages of workers.

Eleven Workforce Investment Boards and nine community-based organizations received grants totalling more than \$5.7 million to lead partnerships that designed and delivered projects reflecting the needs of participating employers to increase the skills, education, and ability of workers to contribute to the economic vitality of their

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(Left to right) Jane C. Edmonds, Department of Workforce Development; Sylvia Beville, Metro South/West WIB; Tshalia Simmons, Dimmock Community Health Center; and Greig Elliott, Sealed Air Corporation, spoke at the BayStateWorks Showcase.

New Report Shows Steady Decline in Teen Employment

According to a new report released by Commonwealth Corporation, based on research done by Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies, the labor market fortunes of teenagers both in Massachusetts and nationally have deteriorated considerably since the labor market boom that ended in 2000.

At the time of the 2000 Census, just under 40% of all 16-19 year old high



school students across the state were employed, but by 2004, the employment rate had declined to 32% – a larger drop than that seen by any other age group during that period.

Employment rates for Massachusetts high school students were even lower for black students (20%), Hispanics (17%) and those living in poor and low-income households, meaning that those students in greatest need

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BayStateWorks

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communities. At the event, they had the opportunity to share what they had learned through an interactive showcase. Participants learned how Massachusetts employers have addressed their workforce needs and how thousands of workers have climbed the career ladder to increased skills and better wages.

Featured speakers included Jane C. Edmonds, Director of Workforce Development; Jack Mills, Director of the National Network of Sector Initiatives; Sylvia Beville, Executive Director of the Metro South/West Workforce Investment Board; Greig Elliott, Plant Manager of Sealer Air Corporation; and Tshalia Simmons, a BayStateWorks participant from Dimmock Community Health Center.

Jonathan Raymond, President of Commonwealth Corporation, spoke about the importance of partnerships to the success of BayStateWorks, "The BayStateWorks program model works because it brings the right people

together to work collaboratively, and is driven by the employers and local organizations that best understand their workforce challenges."



Freddy Gonzales (left) and Keila DeOliveira (right) from the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation participated in the BayStateWorks Showcase, sharing lessons learned. JPNDC was one of 19 projects featured in the Showcase, which drew more than 160 attendees.

Teen Employment

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of work experience during the high school years were actually the least likely to obtain it in the past few years.

While the employment rates for Massachusetts residents was better than the national average for teens that are in high school, in the case of high school dropouts, Massachusetts teens have lower employment rates than their national counterparts. In 2004, that rate was 31.4%, eight percentage points below the U. S. average.

Teens who work while in high school frequently benefit economically from their early work experience, acquiring skills that increase their employability and earnings into their adult years, but they have faced increased supply

competition for available jobs in retail, leisure and hospitality and service industries from new immigrants and older workers.

Jonathan Raymond, CommCorp President, said, "Education is clearly critical to success in our competitive economy, but a great deal of learning also must take place outside the classroom. Investment in programs that connect high school students to jobs and internships gives students a competitive edge, but also benefit our businesses and economy by providing skilled workers."

To see the full report please visit www.commcorp.org/researchandevaluation/briefs.html

Commonwealth Corporation is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids are available upon request to persons with disabilities. (617) 727-8158; TDD/TTY (800) 439-2370; www.commcorp.org; 529 Main Street, Boston, MA 02129

Mitt Romney, Governor; Kerry Healey, Lt. Governor; Jane C. Edmonds, Director, Mass. DWD; Jonathan Raymond, President, CommCorp