

Board maps area labor market blueprint

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SALEM — The North Shore Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and North Shore Career Centers, in conjunction with its local partners, released its newest Labor Market Blueprint and Economic Development Snapshot, detailing the critical and emerging industries on the North Shore and the steps needed to keep these industries strong and growing across the region.

Eastern Bank was the presenting sponsor for the blueprint research.

Nancy Huntington Stager, WIB chair, welcomed more than 100 people, including educational, political, businesses, and nonprofit leaders, who participated in discussions around these documents and how best to prepare the workforce to succeed in careers in the region.

“This research demonstrates that the North Shore has recovered from the recession and is now showing growth across health care, manufacturing, construction, financial services and life sciences,” Mary Sarris, executive director of the North Shore

WIB. “We are seeing some interesting trends across some smaller industries that deserve watching. These documents will help the North Shore focus education, training, and economic attention in a manner through which our economy can continue to strengthen and thrive well into the future.”

Presentations were made by the authors of the two reports — for the blueprint, Dr. Steve Quimby, and for the snapshot, North Shore Alliance for Economic Development’s Gary Barrett.

Quimby reviewed activity in the four critical industries, including:

Health care — largest employer in the region with continued growth in employment. Jobs require enhanced skill level due to the increase in technology use for both clinical services and for administrative functions, including maintaining medical records.

Manufacturing — stabilized industry showing signs of growth in aerospace, medical devices,



North Shore labor and economy report

From left, Steve Quimby, author of the North Shore Labor Market Blueprint; Nancy Stager, chair of the North Shore Workforce Investment Board; Mary Sarris, executive director of the North Shore Workforce Investment Board; and Gary Barrett, author of the North Shore Economic Development Snapshot.

computers and electronics, and many other sub-industries. Jobs are high-paying and at a multitude of educational levels, including vocational training, associate, bachelor, and graduate.

Construction — showing a resurgence from the recession with a growing demand for highly skilled employees within all of the trades

Financial services — where traditional jobs, such as tellers, are expanding to include many more skill needs, both technological and customer service focused.

In general, the skill level of all jobs has increased across the board, requiring continual education throughout careers in order to remain competitive and take advantage of the high-paying opportunities across the region, Quimby said.

Quimby reviewed the North Shore innovation sector, displaying a chart listing 25 North Shore companies each with more than 25 patents since 1976, reflecting on the need to continually innovate to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

Barrett reviewed the snapshot's scorecard for industries of interest, including the four discussed in the blueprint. In addition, from an economic development perspective, industries deserving attention include the creative economy, tourism and local food.

Other speakers included Salem State President Dr. Patricia Meservey, who discussed SSU activity relating to the blueprint. Projects include enhanced interdisciplinary health care education and preparing health care professionals to contribute more successfully to the complex business of health care.

Meservey also discussed the \$5 million grant received by the consortium of SSU, North Shore Community College, Endicott College and Gordon College, through which state-of-the-art lab equipment is being purchased to prepare the next generation of North Shore life science leaders.

Salem Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, chief elected official for the WIB, discussed the need for quality labor market information to drive local school systems as well as focusing economic development work. As an example, Driscoll discussed the city-supported growth of Jacqueline's Gourmet Cookies, a Salem company utilizing advanced manufacturing techniques to bring their product to more customers worldwide.

At the conclusion of the event, the WIB presented Blueprint in Action recognition awards to several partnerships already focused on projects called for in the documents. These awards included:

Health care:

Working Cities Career Gateway Program — through which 18 residents of the Salem Point neighborhood are receiving language and technology education as well as health care training leading to employment in the health care industry.

Healthcare Transformation Trust Fund — through which 50 medical assistants will receive training to prepare local physician practices for certification as Patient Centered Medical Homes. Partnership includes Northeast Health Systems/Lahey, Northeast Physician Hospital Organization, North Shore Community College, and Salem State University.

Manufacturing:

Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Coalition — through which 26 North Shore residents are receiving manufacturing training leading to jobs in machining or electronics companies. Partnership includes North Shore Community College, Essex Agricultural Technical School and North Shore Career Centers.

Construction:

North Shore YouthBuild — led by the North Shore Community Development Coalition and providing work-readiness, high school equivalency, and training in the construction industry to 64 Lynn and Salem youth. Partnership includes the North Shore CDC, North Shore Community College, North Shore Career Center, Habitat for Humanities, Catholic Charities North, Salem Community Charter School and the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters.

Summer employment for youth:

North Shore Medical Center summer jobs program – through which, over the past three summers, more than 60 North Shore teens have received employment experience in various parts of health care operations. Partnership includes North Shore Medical Center and the North Shore Youth Career Center.

The North Shore Labor Market Blueprint and Economic Development Snapshot are available on the North Shore WIB website at www.northshorewib.com.