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GLOBE NORTH BUSINESS NOTEBOOK

Market underperforms, but not workforce board

By Kathy McCabe
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The North Shore Workforce Investment Board in Salem has been named a "High Performing WIB" - meaning it does a top job linking employers and industry - by the state Executive Office of Workforce Development.

The board was one of only two selected statewide for the designation. The other was in Springfield. The state has 22 such regional boards that administer state and federal job training funds and run career centers. The North Shore WIB does so in Gloucester, Lynn, and Salem. "The thing they were most interested in was our strategic plan," said **Mary Sarris**, executive director. "They looked at how we manage work, not only at the individual grants you receive. They wanted to see that we match the needs of the employment to the needs of the region."

The board administers \$6 million in funding each year. It serves 19 communities, from Saugus to Rockport. It is overseen by a board of directors, the majority of whom represent the private sector. **William Tinti**, a Salem lawyer, is the current chairman. The WIB has 35 employees, including job counselors, most of whom work at the career centers.

Major initiatives in recent years have included writing a labor market blueprint, identifying industries such as biotechnology, to map future employment growth. FirstJobs is an ongoing initiative to place teenagers in private sector jobs. It also handles retraining benefits for laid-off workers and develops training for local employers.

Suzanne Bump, the state's labor and workforce development secretary, was due in Salem last Thursday to announce the new "High Performing" designation. Bump announced two new worker training grants totaling \$810,000. North Shore Community College will work with Operation Bootstrap, a nonprofit in Lynn, to prepare low-income residents to get jobs in banking and finance. The college also received money to work with Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill and Middlesex Community College in Bedford to train workers for the hospitality industry.

The \$810,000 is from the state's Workforce Competitive Trust Fund, which was not hit by budget cuts made last month by Governor **Deval Patrick**.

Costello feted as he leaves the chamber

Thirty years ago, **Michael Costello** arrived in Gloucester to take the helm of the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce. Hundreds of fishing boats filled the storied seaport. There was not a cruise ship in sight.

How times change.

Gloucester is struggling to hang onto a depleted fishing fleet. Cruiseport Gloucester, a \$7 million terminal, draws ferries and passenger ships from around

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the Northeast. And now Costello is sailing into retirement. On Wednesday, a farewell fete will be held for him at the Cruiseport. It is one of two celebrations planned for him. The other will be a community open house at the chamber office on Rogers Street at a date still to be decided. [Continued...](#)

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