



*A partner in* **CTWORKS**

HELLO, I AM THOMAS PHILLIPS, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF **CAPITAL WORKFORCE PARTNERS** ONE OF THE **FIVE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS** IN THE CONNECTICUT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, THE WORKFORCE BOARDS ARE RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE FOR INVESTMENTS IN JOB TRAINING, JOB PLACEMENT, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES. THE MAJORITY OF OUR FUNDING IS FROM FEDERAL OR STATE GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, AND IS THEN LEVERAGED WITH AS MUCH MUNICIPAL AND PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FOUNDATION FUNDS AS CAN BE SECURED. I WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT ON THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGETS FOR BOTH THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) AND OFFICE FOR WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS (OWC).

FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS, THE STATE, THROUGH D.O.L.'S BUDGET, PROVIDED \$4-\$5 MILLION ANNUALLY FOR A ROBUST STATEWIDE SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM, WITH SOME YEAR ROUND COMPONENTS. LAST YEAR, A SIMILAR PROGRAM WAS FUNDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ARRA (AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT) "STIMULUS" FUNDS THAT COMBINED WITH LEVERAGED FUNDS TOTALED OVER \$10 MILLION STATEWIDE FOR SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS BENEFITTING **5,982 AT-RISK YOUTHS**, AGES 14 – 24 INCLUDING THE **RECONNECTION OF 380 DISLOCATED "OUT-OF-SCHOOL" OLDER YOUTHS** TO EDUCATION, JOBS AND CAREERS.

**NEARLY 6,000 YOUTHS HAD WORK OPPORTUNITIES IN A VARIETY OF INDUSTRIES ACROSS THE STATE – IN** MANUFACTURING, CONSERVATION CORPS, HEALTH CARE, INSURANCE, RETAIL, AUTOMOTIVE, NON-PROFIT ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, HOSPITALITY, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES, ETC. WHO OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE HAD NOTHING TO DO LAST SUMMER. THEY ALSO GENERATED SIGNIFICANT WAGES THAT HELPED STIMULATE LOCAL ECONOMIES THROUGH THE PURCHASE OF GOODS AND SERVICES.

**COINCIDING WITH THE INCREASE IN FUNDING, HOWEVER, WAS AN INCREASE IN DEMAND.** AFTERALL, THE NATION'S TEEN EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN NOVEMBER 2009 AND JANUARY 2010 WAS ONLY 26%, DOWN 19 PERCENTAGE POINTS SINCE 2000, MARKING A NEW POST-WORLD WAR II HISTORIC LOW. IN CONNECTICUT, VERY SIMILAR PATTERNS IN EMPLOYMENT RATES PREVAILED. AS IN THE U.S., CONNECTICUT TEENS EXPERIENCED THE LARGEST DECLINE IN THEIR E/P (EMPLOYMENT-TO-POPULATION) RATIO, FALLING BY 12.5 PERCENTAGE POINTS BY 2009. YOUNG ADULTS (20-29) INCURRED STEEP DECLINES AS WELL WHILE OLDER ADULTS (55+) IN CONNECTICUT WERE THE ONLY MAJOR AGE GROUP TO BE MORE LIKELY TO BE EMPLOYED IN 2009 THAN THEY WERE IN 2000. EVEN WITH THE SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FUNDED THROUGH THE FEDERAL ARRA STIMULUS BILL, THE 2009 SUMMER EMPLOYMENT RATE FOR TEENS WAS ONLY 28.9% COMPARED TO 45% DURING THE SUMMER OF 2000.

**THIS PAST SUMMER, THE BOARDS STILL HAD TO TURN AWAY 6,971 YOUTHS AS THERE WERE NO ADDITIONAL FUNDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEM. SIX THOUSAND (6,000) SERVED. SEVEN (7,000) THOUSAND TURNED AWAY. WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THIS.**

**SO WHY ARE THESE WORK EXPERIENCES SO IMPORTANT YOU MAY ASK?**

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT THE MORE A TEEN WORKS THIS YEAR, THE MORE LIKELY HE OR SHE IS TO WORK IN FOLLOWING YEARS. EARLY WORK EXPERIENCE ALSO HELPS BUILD THE SOFT SKILLS HIGHLY DESIRED BY MANY EMPLOYERS (ATTENDANCE, DRESS, ABILITY TO WORK WITH OTHERS, GOOD CUSTOMER RELATIONS). CUMULATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE TEEN AND YOUNG ADULT YEARS ALSO RAISES THE WAGES AND EARNINGS OF YOUNG ADULTS IN THEIR EARLY TO MID 20S AND INCREASES THEIR ACCESS TO FORMAL TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.

FURTHER, OUR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING MODEL IS **COST EFFECTIVE** AND IT IS ALSO A MODEL OF **ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY**. WE WERE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THE HIRING OF THESE 6,000

YOUNGSTERS LAST YEAR **WITHIN 5-7 WEEKS OF THE FEDERAL ARRA FUNDS BEING ALLOCATED.** THIS WAS ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE THE INFRASTRUCTURE IS IN PLACE, AND THE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND EMPLOYERS EXIST.

**THIS YEAR, RIGHT NOW IS A BIG "QUESTION MARK."** ANOTHER ROUND OF JOB CREATION FUNDS IS BEING TALKED ABOUT BY CONGRESS, BUT ACTION WOULD NEED TO HAPPEN VERY QUICKLY IN ORDER FOR US TO EXECUTE A SUMMER PROGRAM AT ALL FOR 2010. FURTHER, THIS YEAR, THE STATE WAS SLATED TO PROVIDE \$3.5 MILLION TO THE PROGRAM. NOT ONLY WOULD THAT INVESTMENT ENSURE THERE WILL BE "ANY" PROGRAM THIS SUMMER – THIS YEAR, IT HAS THE UNIQUE BENEFIT OF BEING ABLE TO POTENTIALLY LEVERAGE AN ADDITIONAL \$4-MILLION IN ARRA TANF EMERGENCY FUNDS FROM THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE \$133 MILLION, THE STATE COULD RECEIVE, FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT FUNDING – ONLY IF THE \$3.5 MILLION IS COMMITTED – ALTOGETHER, THE INVESTMENT FOR THE SUMMER OF 2010 WOULD BE \$7.5 MILLION – STILL LESS THAN LAST YEAR, BUT ENOUGH TO CONTINUE BUILDING ON LAST YEAR'S MOMENTUM.

FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TEAM UP WITH THE OFFICE FOR WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN DEFINING OUTCOMES FROM OUR SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM. **THE RESULTS FOR 2008 AND 2009 SHOWED MODEST INCREASES IN SCHOOL RETENTION AND GRADUATION FOR THOSE IN THE PROGRAM STATEWIDE** – THE MOST TELLING STORY IS IN THE IMPORTANCE OF "CONTINUITY OF PROGRAM" – 88.6% OF 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS IN THE SUMMER PROGRAM WHO PARTICIPATED IN A PREVIOUS YEAR OF THE PROGRAM GRADUATED WHEREAS ONLY 71.3% OF NEWCOMERS TO THE PROGRAM GRADUATED AND STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN MORE THAN ONE YEAR OF THE SUMMER PROGRAM WERE HALF AS LIKELY TO DROP OUT THAN NON-REPEATERS.

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE A YEAR OFF. THE FUTURE OF OUR WORKFORCE, OUR BUSINESSES AND OUR STATE DEPEND ON IT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION.

**AN ADDITIONAL NOTE:** I WOULD BE REMISS IF I DIDN'T TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REINFORCE THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT – NOT ONLY FOR OUR YOUTH AND FUTURE WORKFORCE PIPELINE, BUT FOR OUR EXISTING “INCUMBENT” WORKFORCE THAT NEEDS TO ADVANCE ITS SKILLS FOR BOTH INCREASED FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY AS WELL AS TO BOOST THE REGION'S COMPETITIVENESS. LAST YEAR, IN OUR REGION ALONE, CAPITAL WORKFORCE PARTNERS ASSISTED 628 WORKERS IN GAINING SKILLS RANGING FROM SIX SIGMA, TO BLUEPRINT READING, TO HEALTH CARE SKILLS AT OUR REGION'S HOSPITALS AND LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES. 100% OF THE \$320,000 THAT WAS INVESTED WAS MATCHED BY BUSINESS CONTRIBUTIONS FOR A TOTAL OF \$640,000 IN TRAINING BENEFITTING THE STATE. FURTHER – OUR FLAGSHIP JOBS FUNNEL IN HARTFORD, WHICH IS CELEBRATING ITS 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF OPERATION, HAS TRAINED 2,000 PEOPLE MOSTLY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION TRADES AND CONTINUES TO EXCEED ITS TRAINING GOALS. THIS YEAR, IN THE 'GREENING' OF THE WORKFORCE, THE FUNNEL LAUNCHED ITS FIRST WEATHERIZATION TRAINING PROGRAM AS PART OF THE \$864 MILLION IN ARRA FUNDS TO THE STATE. IN THE PROGRAM'S FIRST CYCLE, OF 19 COMPLETERS, 12 WERE HIRED. THERE ARE 21 INDIVIDUALS IN THE 2<sup>ND</sup> CYCLE AND 3 OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS ARE CONSIDERED HIRES, EVEN BEFORE THE PROGRAM COMPLETION.

**IN CLOSING – WE ASK THE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TO 1) SUPPORT THE REINSTATEMENT OF \$3.5 MILLION IN SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT FUNDING AND 2) CONTINUE SUPPORT OF INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING AND 3) THE JOBS FUNNELS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.**

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