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What's the Buzz about National Work Readiness Credential?

**Did You Know?** Junior Achievement (JA) Worldwide is a founding partner of the National Work Readiness Credential? JA reaches more than seven million students through programs that prepare them for future economic and workforce issues they will face, as well as programs that teach how they can impact the world around them as individuals, workers and consumers.

## Dutchess County Education Demographics

It should come as no surprise that the county's population is continuing to diversify and is changing the composition of the labor force. The diversification of the population has deepened the already existing scarcity of highly-skilled, well-trained workers. It is not enough to know that change is occurring, it is crucial to plan and prepare for it.

One demographic change that may contribute to skill levels in the workforce is the racial/ethnic mix in the population. In a ten year period between 1993 and 2003 the [Current Population Survey](#) reported nationally that the number of minorities in the labor force grew dramatically. The total labor force grew by 11% in that period and of that growth 71% were Hispanic, 22% Black and 5% White. It is projected nationally that these changes will be noticeable by 2010 and clearly apparent by 2050 as shown in Table 1 above.

**Table 1: National Workforce Diversity**

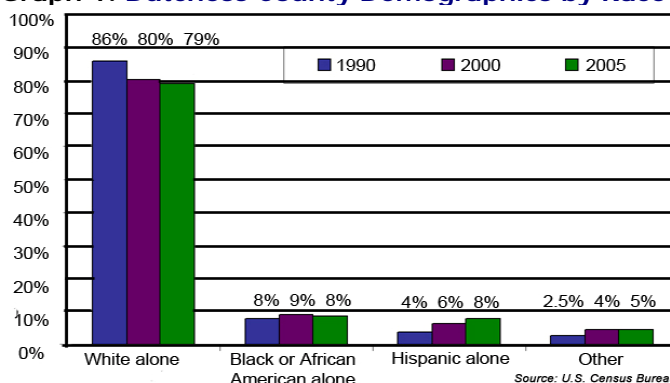
	2003	2010	2050
White (non-Hispanic)	73%	65%	53%
Hispanic	11%	16%	24%
Black	12%	13%	14%
Asians	5%	7.3%	11%

In Dutchess County, there has been a significant demographic shift as well. Between 1990 and 2000, as shown in Graph 1 below, the number of Hispanic residents increased 2% while more recently in just half that time, between 2000 and 2005 the number of Hispanic residents increased by another 2% for a total of 4% over a fifteen year period or in whole numbers from 9,359 to 21,395.

Naturally, this shift is also visible when looking at the enrollment statistics for our County's school districts. Collectively, as shown in Graph 2 on the following page, the number of White non-Hispanic students has steadily decreased over the past 6 years while the number of Hispanic students has steadily increased. Yet is only after looking at the performance statistics and reports that we can begin to understand the impact this will have on our workforce.

First, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 14% of New York's Hispanic student population is considered to have proficient or advanced grade 8 math skills while 49% are reported below the basic level. African American students are 11% and 54% respectively while White students are 41% and 17% respectively.

**Graph 1: Dutchess County Demographics by Race**



### January

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Youth Council Meeting
- 9<sup>th</sup> Business Services Committee Meeting
- 12<sup>th</sup> A&E Committee Meeting
- 17<sup>th</sup> Nominating Committee Meeting and Executive Committee Meeting
- 25<sup>th</sup> Full Board Meeting

### February

- 7<sup>th</sup> Youth Council Meeting
- 9<sup>th</sup> A&E Committee Meeting
- 13<sup>th</sup> Business Services Committee Meeting
- 21<sup>st</sup> Nominating Committee Meeting and Executive Committee Meeting

### March

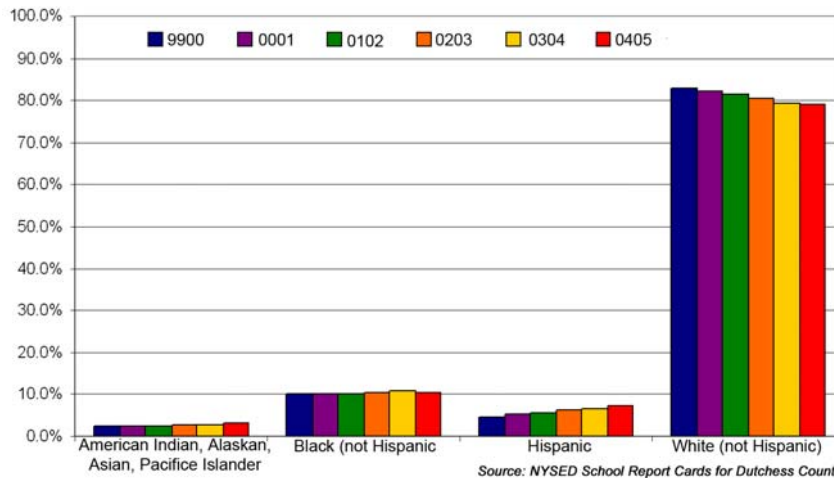
- 7<sup>th</sup> Youth Council Meeting
- 9<sup>th</sup> A&E Committee Meeting
- 13<sup>th</sup> Business Services Committee Meeting
- 21<sup>st</sup> Nominating Committee Meeting and Executive Committee Meeting
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Full Board Meeting

**NOTICE to all Training Providers:** Subsequent Eligibility Review of all currently approved offerings will begin in January 2007.

*The mission of the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board is to foster a skilled and competitive workforce by promoting an understanding of workforce trends and issues in a dynamic economy and to facilitate lifelong learning for individuals and businesses*

Second, the New York State Department of Education reports that 9th graders graduating four years later (in 2004) with either a regents or local diploma overall averages 59.3% with an 81% graduation rate among White students, 68.8% among Asian, 45.4% among African American students and 42% among Hispanic students.

After taking a closer look at the national and New York State data we conclude that there is a percentage of emerging workers especially in the minority population that are not educationally equipped to meet the requirements to fill the inevitable vacancies.



**What does this mean for our local businesses?**

In order to remain competitive on any level: local, regional, national or international, employers need to be able to fill positions with qualified job-seekers. Unfortunately, we continuously hear that there are too few qualified candidates to select from. In 2004 the DCWIB conducted a series of focus groups which confirmed that:

- It is difficult to fill positions quickly with qualified employees because there is not always a pool of qualified people to choose from
- People need to know “how to be a good employee”
- Many people do not know how to communicate effectively
- There is a need for higher-skilled employees with all levels of literacy
- There is a need to find employees that can link theory to practice

Now in 2006 a national report released in collaboration between the Conference Board, Corporate Voices for Working Families, the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and the Society for Human Resource Management reveals an in-depth look at the corporate perspective on the readiness of new entrants into the U.S. workforce by level of educational attainment. The full report is available at [www.21stcenturyskills.org](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org) but the following excerpt from the Presidents’ Letter outlines the significance of the findings:

*“Young people need a range of skills, both basic academic skills as well as the ability to apply these skills and knowledge in the workplace. The survey results indicate that far too many young people are inadequately prepared to be successful in the workplace. At the high school level, well over one-half of new entrants are deficiently prepared in the most*

**important skills**—Oral and Written Communications, Professionalism / Work Ethic, and Critical Thinking / Problem Solving. College graduates are better prepared, with lower levels of deficiency on the most important skills, but too few are excelling. **Only about one-quarter of four-year college graduates are perceived to be excellent in many of the most important skills,** and

*more than one-quarter of four-year college graduates are perceived to be deficiently prepared in Written Communications.*

**How can the United States continue to compete in a global economy if the entering workforce is made up of high school graduates who lack the skills they need, and of**

**college graduates who are mostly “adequate” rather than “excellent”?** The quandary is particularly problematic because it comes just as the workforce is entering a period of realignment. As the baby-boomers retire—taking their skills and knowledge with them—America faces a shortage of available workers. This report indicates that the pool of talented workers available is even smaller.”

**Creating Opportunities for Skill Attainment**

As a community, it is increasingly more important that we educate students and help them to develop excellent hard and soft skills proficiency.

Currently, many of the growth occupations in the region require only some degree of on-the-job training. This indicates that there are a number of job opportunities for teenagers and young adults. For many emerging workers, this would be the first professional experience where foundation education is applied and foundation job skills are developed. Ultimately, as a business community we must step up and communicate the expectations and work with other organizations or institutions to identify and implement the effective learn and apply opportunities.

With a significant demographic shift occurring and the face of our future workforce changing, an investment in the emerging workforce needs to be made so that the future workforce is comprised of the highly-skilled, highly-qualified professionals employers demand.

In looking forward to the available labor pool the county, and the region as a whole, must make a commitment to proactively respond to the needs of employers and create a strong, flexible workforce that will aid in the growth and vitality of our county and region.

**Announcement:** The New York State Department of Labor, Workforce Development and Training Division released a Request for Applications in response to the **Reemployment Services for Veterans Program**

[RFA](#)                      [FAQ](#)

## DCWIB Announces 2007 Officers of the Board



Dennis R. DeLong



Mark Kochanowski

The DCWIB is pleased to announce that **Dr. Dennis R. DeLong**, formerly Assistant Vice President and Dean at Marist College and currently operating, Going Places Consulting, has been nominated by DCWIB members to serve as Chairman of the Board in 2007. "I am pleased to have the opportunity to serve as Chairman of the DCWIB; honored to follow in the footsteps of previous Chairs, under who I have served, Tom Sipos and Phyllis Keenan; and excited to be able to apply ideas gleaned from my time in academic settings to the real life workforce development issues facing Dutchess County and the mid-Hudson region," said DeLong.

**Mark Kochanowski**, Vice President of Human Resources, Health Quest, **Michael McCormack**, Partner, Liscum McCormack, Vanvoorhis, **Linda Hannigan**, Partner, Sedore & Company, CPA's, PC, and **Anne Conroy**, President & CEO of the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation have also been elected to the 2007 slate of officers and will assume the responsibilities of First Vice Chair, Second Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

These officers will provide outstanding leadership and we welcome them to their new positions and know they will meet the challenge ahead of them, which according to DeLong is to "more completely implement the DCWIB's mission to foster a skilled and competitive workforce, and seek to attract new partners in the community and to extend lifelong learning opportunities for individuals and businesses."



Linda Hannigan



Anne N. Conroy

### Customized Training Funding Now Available Through the DCWIB

Have you found that available off-the-shelf training curriculums do not adequately meet the needs of your company? The DCWIB may be able to help you get closer to your staff development goals in 2007. We are pleased to announce the **availability of funding for Customized Training programs.**

Customized Training allows Dutchess County employers to offer a department, division or team of employees to participate in a company-specific training program. Often times the training introduces new technologies or production or service procedures. This is a great way to keep employees' skills up-to-date, improve productivity and enhance your competitive edge in the marketplace.

**Schedule**  
to accommodate  
varied work schedules

**Connect**  
company-specific  
topics in one  
curriculum

**Motivate**  
individuals by  
investing in their  
career development  
opportunities

Local workforce development is crucial to the county's continued economic growth so successful programs will increase wages and job retention for training participants as well as offer possible career advancement options.

Multiple employers may even work together to design a training that meets the requirements of a particular industry or sector.

Approved applications will be funded through the federal Workforce Investment Act to cover up to 50% of the training costs with a maximum of \$10,000 per company per year.

### Junior Achievement of Northeastern NY, Inc. Mid Hudson Region



This spring, Junior Achievement (JA) programs will be present in over 50 classrooms in Dutchess County. **Junior Achievement educates and inspires young people to value free enterprise, business, and economics to improve the quality of their lives.** They do this by using community volunteers to present business based lessons to school aged children. Last year, students in Sargent Elementary in Beacon, Chancellor Livinginston in Rhinebeck, Wingdale Elementary, Webetuck Elementary, Clinton, Krieger, and Columbus schools in Poughkeepsie, Overlook Primary, Noxon Road Elementary in Arlington, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel all participated in the program.

JA teaches students about the community. Each program is only 5 sessions long and theme based. For instance, in 3rd grade, the students learn about "The City." The students learn about zoning, how a city is built, and the types of business in the city. They go on to explore jobs in the newspaper, banking and restaurant business. They design their own restaurant, learn how to bank, and write a newspaper article. All lessons go hand-in-hand with the NY State curriculum. **Junior Achievement brings the real world to students, opening their minds to their potential.**

To **volunteer for the program or to sign your class up** for Junior Achievement, please contact District Manager Barbara Reer at (845) 331-3540 or [JABREER@aol.com](mailto:JABREER@aol.com).



# What Do You Know About Working in NYS?

Is your New Year's resolution to get a job? Maybe you need to earn money for college in the fall, to buy a new car, to pay for your cell phone or maybe you just want to save some money.

If you decide to seek and accept part time work there are some guidelines you should be familiar with. Each state has child labor laws that regulate when and where teens can work. The truth is many teens and even some employers don't know what these laws are. Following is a brief overview of New York's child labor laws for students who are in school:

## Working Papers

Did you know that there are seven different types of working papers? The three most common are the Student Non Factory Employment Certificate, Student General Employment Certificate and the Full Time Employment Certificate. Working papers are available at your school. A completed application will require a parent or guardian's signature, your birth certificate, and a doctor's certificate showing that you are physically fit to work.

Please keep in mind that your age will determine the type of work that you are eligible to perform. For example, minors between the ages of 14 and 15 can not work in a factory but may perform delivery and clerical services in any enclosed office of a factory.

## Wages & Hours

All positions must pay at least the hourly minimum wage required by state and federal law. If you work more than 6 hours in a day you are entitled to a 30 minute break / meal period. Keep in mind that the state regulates the number of hours you can work. This is determined by whether or not school is in session. School is considered out of session during summer vacation and during the school year when there is a closing that lasts for at least a week. The table below shows the number of hours you can work per day and per week.

Fourteen & Fifteen Year Olds			
	School in Session	School out of Session	Time of Day
Mon – Fri	3 hrs per day	8 hrs per day	From Labor day – June 20 <sup>th</sup> 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sat, Sun & Holidays	8 hrs per day	8 hrs per day	From June 21 <sup>st</sup> – Labor Day 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
<b>Max hrs/per week</b>	<b>18 hours</b>	<b>40 hours</b>	
Sixteen & Seventeen Year Olds			
	School in Session	School out of Session	Time of Day
Mon – Fri	4 hrs per day	8 hrs per day	From Labor day – June 20 <sup>th</sup> 6:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Sat, Sun & Holidays	8 hrs per day	8 hrs per day	From June 21 <sup>st</sup> – Labor Day 6:00 a.m. – Midnight
<b>Max hrs/per week</b>	<b>28 hours</b>	<b>48 hours</b>	

This is just a brief overview of the laws and regulations so for a comprehensive look at the child labor laws and working paper guidelines please visit [New York State's Department of Labor](http://www.dol.state.ny.gov) website. Good luck with your job hunt! To read my previous columns please visit the [Resources](#) link at dcwib.org.

If you have questions or comments; contact me at [staff@dcwib.org](mailto:staff@dcwib.org). Names aren't necessary, but please include your city or town. I look forward to hearing from you. - Vee

**PT Job & Information Links**

Read About.com's [Job Search for Teens](#) article. Topics covered include labor laws and working papers, finding a job, and useful links for finding your first part-time job

Search for a job at [SnagAJob.com](#) It lists more than 50,000 part-time and hourly jobs in all industries across the country

Need ideas for work beyond babysitting and lemonade stands? Read Quintessential Careers article on [Job Ideas for Teens 15 Years Old and Younger](#)

**Reminder:**

Effective January 1, 2007 New York State's minimum wage will increase from \$6.75 per hour to \$7.15 per hour. For additional information visit the [New York State Department of Labor](http://www.dol.state.ny.gov)



## What's the Buzz about the National Work Readiness Credential?

The Dutchess County Workforce System is getting excited about the launch of the [National Workforce Readiness Credential](#) (WRC). The credential, which is based on the nationally validated [Equipped for the Future](#) applied learning standards, will certify the readiness for entry-level work as defined by the employers. It was developed through a national consensus-building process that included businesses, unions, chambers of commerce, education and training professionals, and state workforce investment boards in the founding states of Florida, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Washington, the District of Columbia, as well as JA Worldwide. The WRC expects to provide a universal, transferable, national standard for work readiness.

### 9 Skill Assessment Areas

1. Speak so others can understand
2. Listen actively
3. Solve problems and make decisions
4. Cooperate with others
5. Resolve conflicts and negotiate
6. Observe critically
7. Take responsibility for learning
8. Read with understanding
9. Use math to solve problems

According to the National Work Readiness Council the WRC will assess whether an individual can use particular skills well enough to perform expected entry-level responsibilities. The skills were identified by businesses from multiple industry sectors and deemed pivotal for success in today's workplace and global economy.

It is anticipated that this credential will satisfy employer expectations of entry-level workers and will reduce turnover rates. Michelle Kearns, a writer at the Buffalo News reported in November that *"the price of a single premature departure, which happens often in entry-level trades, ranges from \$2,000 to \$5,000 and more in training and recruiting costs, depending on a company's size. Entry-level jobs account for 51% of annual new openings in New York: from hospitality to retail, health care, manufacturing, temp agencies and government."*

Dutchess County is eager to utilize the assessment and credentialing tool in order to help connect employers to qualified entry-level workers.

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The Federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 created local business-led Boards of Directors called Workforce Investment Boards (WIB). Established to oversee the design and delivery of a locally tailored workforce development system, local WIBs work to meet the needs of local businesses and job seekers

The programs provided by this agency are partially funded by moneys received from the County of Dutchess and federal WIA funds. EOE/P Auxiliary Aids and Services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities