



## **Leahy Secures \$4 Million For Vermont Workforce Development Projects**

### *Specialized Training, Targeted Workforce Development and Worker-Business Matchmaking During a Rocky Economy*

(TUESDAY, March 31, 2009) -- U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) announced Tuesday that Vermont will receive \$4,068,000 for several adult and youth workforce development programs across the state. Leahy, a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, secured the funds in the annual appropriations bill passed by the Congress signed into law by President Obama earlier this month.

Leahy said, "Training and practical experience can turn the liability of unemployment and underemployment into assets, turning lives around and planting the seeds for the economic future we want for our state. With the economy in peril and joblessness on the rise, there is even greater urgency in training Vermont's youth and retraining underemployed workers for the jobs of tomorrow. These investments will support organizations around Vermont that have been forward thinking about our state's workforce development needs, training Vermonters for solid job opportunities right here at home."

[Project details and local contacts, below]

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### **Burlington Technical Center to expand the aviation training program -- \$1 million**

This project will upgrade and improve the post-secondary aviation program at the Burlington Technical Center. The program, which currently leads to FAA Airframe and Powerplant licenses for the tech center students, is only able to serve 12 students at a time. Since these high-skills, high-wage jobs are in great demand in Vermont and across the nation, additional funding would allow the tech center to expand its current curriculum, faculty, training equipment, and facilities.

Over the next 20 years, an estimated \$225 million in new federal, state, local, and private investment is expected to be made at the Burlington International Airport, creating 365 new

jobs at the airport and 500 indirect jobs elsewhere in the Vermont. Since this tech center program is the only one of its type in Vermont, the center's expansion project will increase its capacity to train Vermonters for high-skill, high-wage jobs, which will help keep Vermont's bright, young technicians contributing to the Vermont economy.

- Contact: Richard Sylvester, Director of Aviation Technology, 802-864-8447

### **Vermont HITEC to conduct health care and advanced manufacturing job training -- \$951,000**

Vermont HITEC will train Vermonters with aptitudes and strong interest in information technology positions in the healthcare and advanced manufacturing fields. Vermont HITEC will identify a pool of unemployed and underemployed Vermonters and develop education and training curricula leading directly to filling vacant positions with pre-selected employers. This is an ongoing collaborative project among educators, employers and economic development partners at the federal, state, and local levels of Vermont. Employers providing strong support include Fletcher Allen Health Care of Burlington; NSA Industries of Lyndonville; Weidmann Electrical Technology of St. Johnsbury; Vermont Mold & Tool of Barnet; Precision Composites of Vermont in Lyndon Center; North East Precision of St. Johnsbury; and North Hartland Tool of North Hartland.

- Contact: Gerry Ghazi, President, 802-872-0660

### **Vermont Agency of Human Services to develop a comprehensive employment-focused neuro-resource facilitation system -- \$951,000**

The Vermont Agency of Human Services will establish a statewide Neuro-Resource Facilitation (NRF) System to support the employment and independence of Vermont's veterans with Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Neuro-Resource Facilitation is an approach that will help veterans with TBI/PTSD and their families access information, community resources and benefits. With oversight provided by the Brain Injury Association of Vermont (BIA-VT), Vermont's NRF system will include partnerships with the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the State TBI program, the Aging Disability and Resource Centers (ADRC), and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Services will also be established in collaboration with a wide variety of veterans services including the National Guard and the Veterans Administration. Vermont's NRF system is unique in its focus on employment and will provide education and support to Vermont businesses on the issues facing veterans with disabilities and about the valuable human resource they represent. Education, as well as placement support, will be provided by the Vermont Association for Business, Industry, and Rehabilitation (VABIR).

- Contact: Glen McClintock, Vermont Agency of Human Services, 802-241-3719

## **Linking Learning to Life to provide job training and internship opportunities to Vermont youth -- \$500,000**

This project will help Linking Learning to Life expand and replicate two vital programs that encourage at-risk, high school age Vermont youths to stay in school and prepare for successful employment and post-secondary education. Linking Learning to Life will be working with schools, communities and Workforce Investment Boards throughout Vermont on these programs.

The Training Interns and Partnering for Success (TIPS) Program is designed to transition students with limited employability skills through three stages of preparation leading to successful unsubsidized employment: (1) 20 hours of pre-employment skills training; (2) 40 hours of on-site internship training; and (3) competitive employment with the internship host employer during the summer following the internship.

The College Connections Program offers at-risk sophomores, juniors, and seniors from high schools and young people from alternative programs options for exploring post-secondary education prior to graduation. Students can take classes at any of six area colleges and earn both high school and college credit for successful completion. The program targets students meeting one or more of the following criteria: first generation college goers, English as a Second Language learners, minority students, those from low-income families, and students with identified disabilities.

- Contact: Rich Tulikangas, Executive Director, 802-951-8850

## **ReCycle North to expand its green construction training and expand its weatherization program -- \$476,000**

ReCycle North's YouthBuild program trains 16- to 24-year-old youths who are economically disadvantaged, have dropped out of high school, and need comprehensive development and job training opportunities. To meet the growing demand for workers trained in green construction and weatherization and provide weatherization services to low- and moderate-income Vermonters, ReCycle North will expand its apprentice-style, green construction and weatherization training.

ReCycle North's weatherization service contracts currently with Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity to complete weatherization services in Chittenden County and expects to begin contracting with Central Vermont Community Action to complete weatherization work in Central Vermont.

Through training in Energy Star construction and weatherization techniques, several students each year will be able to fill the growing demand for professionals in the weatherization field. Through ReCycle North's new Green Construction Training and Weatherization Service Program, at least 15 buildings in year one, 18 buildings in year two, and 30 buildings in year three will become significantly more comfortable, affordable, and efficient in terms of energy consumed and carbon emitted.

In addition, ReCycle North will expand its YouthBuild and apprentice-style training programs to include HVAC services and apprentice-style training in deconstruction and Waste-Not-Products. The Deconstruction Service is a viable alternative to traditional demolition methods and creates jobs and training opportunities, harvests reusable building materials, and diverts from the waste stream unusable but recyclable materials such as metal and concrete into environmentally friendly channels. Waste-Not-Products is a growing enterprise that creates social and financial value from material resources that are otherwise wasted. Training people to design, manufacture, and market attractive new products from construction waste leverages existing assets, relationships, and capabilities and prepares students for skilled jobs.

- Contact: Thomas Longstreth, Executive Director, 802-658-4143 x14

### **Vermont Association of Business, Industry & Rehabilitation to support youth and offender reentry employment programs -- \$190,000**

The Vermont Association of Business, Industry & Rehabilitation (VABIR) is a statewide non-profit agency that provides employment services to people with barriers to employment including persons with disabilities, youths and other at-risk workforce populations. VABIR also provides free consultation services to businesses. Since studies have shown that finding a job is often the key to a person's ability to maintain a place in the community, the VABIR project will support youth and offender reentry workers in locating, obtaining, and maintaining employment, by providing direct and support services that will network with local businesses to secure employment opportunities. VABIR will partner with local and state agencies to work together in this project, including VocRehab Vermont, the Vermont Department of Corrections, and local community justice centers. Participants in the program will gain work experience through VABIR direct job placement and support in a variety of areas, including mentoring opportunities, job shadows, job tours, short-term work experiences, volunteer work, and ultimately in successfully obtaining employment.

- Contact: Christine McCarthy, Executive Director, 802-878-1107