

GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM

Friday, December 2, 2005

Hello, this is Dave Hollister, Director of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth.

In order to build a strong economy in Michigan, we need to build a skilled, 21st century workforce. That means training citizens today for careers in high-demand industries and helping employers find highly skilled workers to meet their needs now.

Last year, Governor Granholm created a network of Regional Skill Alliances to do just that. Today, we are pleased to announce that the administration is investing an additional 650 thousand dollars to expand this effort.

These Regional Skill Alliances, or RSAs for short, focus on the real needs of employers in a community and the real need of citizens who are looking for work.

In Michigan today, there are literally tens of thousands of job openings and employers who are clamoring for skilled workers. The RSAs provide targeted training, which helps those who are unemployed or those who are looking for a new career path to learn the relevant skills needed for a new job – and not just any job, but a job that’s in demand; a job with a business that’s rooted in their community; a great job with a great future.

Right now, there are 17 of Regional Skill Alliances statewide, serving citizens and businesses in major cities and rural communities. Our new investment will provide a new opportunity for targeted training in whole new regions, and new industries, too, by growing this job training network to 25 RSAs across the state.

For example, in the UP, two new Regional Skill Alliances in Marquette will help train citizens in that community for jobs in forestry and the timber industry and support the broader manufacturing base in Northern Michigan.

In Wayne County, where there is enormous demand for skilled health care workers and two additional RSAs will help meet the need for registered nurses and community health workers, who can immediately step into existing job opportunities.

RSAs in Escanaba, Pontiac, National City and Traverse City will also target training to meet the needs of local employers.

Michigan families depend on the stability of a good paying job to meet their needs – and our employers depend on the stability of a highly skilled and qualified workforce to keep them rooted and growing here in Michigan.

That’s why Governor Granholm is implementing an economic plan to meet Michigan’s economic challenge – from a new, 2 billion dollar initiative to create thousands of new, high-tech jobs, to Regional Skill Alliances that are building our 21st century workforce.

Thank you for listening.