

employment • education • training**WORK CERTIFICATION FUNDING APPROVED!**

In June, 2003, the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (WIB) convened an employer roundtable of representatives from critical industries in the region.

What did they say? Employers were asking for employees with good work ethics that they can train.

Action!

The WIB researched numerous programs *nationwide* and selected one developed by a workforce board in Florida in collaboration with community colleges, the National Skills Standards Board and dozens of employers, titled, **Work Certified[®]**.

Creative Thinking

Traditional funding streams *would not* support this initiative. The WIB identified a potential funding source - the MA Department of Housing and Community Development.

However... WIB's did not qualify for these funds.

Solution

The WIB partnered with the Town of Dartmouth and the Towns of Fairhaven and Wareham to pursue a grant.

Result - \$350,000. Grant Awarded!

Work Certified[®] is business led and demand-driven.

► *It means... job seekers acquire the behaviors and skills employers demand: work readiness, strong work ethics, motivation and initiative!*

► *It means... businesses can hire good workers, keep them, and avoid the high cost of turnover.*

You'll be excited to know that we are the *first in Massachusetts to launch a Work Certification Program!*

A public-private partnership building tomorrow's workforce today.

A non-profit corporation serving
Acushnet - Dartmouth - Fairhaven - Freetown - Lakeville - Marion - Mattapoisett - New Bedford - Rochester - Wareham



WORK CERTIFIED[®] FACT SHEET

- The overall *Work Certified*[®] program goal is to teach and verify **skills and behaviors** that ensure the success of entry-level employees in the workplace.
- The approach is more like a business training program with certification only given to participants whom have demonstrated that they are truly ready to be responsible, productive employees.
- Within the classroom, business is conducted as “business does”. Students are “co-workers”. Teachers are “supervisors”. There is a strong emphasis on learning in a hands-on business context and the classroom functions as a business.
- Teachers in the *Work Certified*[®] program undergo a 30-hour training program and must obtain a score of at least 90% on the 75-question certification test. The performance of certified teachers is audited annually and all teachers must attend an annual meeting addressing program updates and changes.
- Businesses that hire these skilled and knowledgeable employees are more productive, have less turnover, spend fewer hours teaching basics and more time transacting business. Employees that are *Work Certified*[®] remain employed and are more likely to advance within a business.
- The *Work Certified*[®] curriculum includes nine modules combining core academic areas with soft skills or employability areas including:
 1. Reading comprehension
 2. Business tools (computers plus)
 3. Business writing
 4. Pre-employment
 5. Customer service
 6. Job skills I (Work Maturity)
 7. Job skills II (Employability)
 8. Business Math
 9. General Business Knowledge
- To become *Work Certified*[®], students must participate in a 90 hour program, master 50 competencies, and score 80% or better on a comprehensive examination.
- 92% of the graduates find employment within 30 days of graduation.
- 86% are still employed after six months.
- 27% of program graduates have received promotions and have greater potential to climb the corporate ladder.

The following employer group has agreed to serve on an advisory board and give hiring preference to Work Certified[®] graduates:

- Acushnet Company, Titleist/FootJoy/Cobra
- Domino’s Pizza
- Essex Management Group Corporation
 - Brandon Woods of Dartmouth
 - Brandon Woods of New Bedford
- First Citizen’s Federal Credit Union
- J.C. Penney Company, Inc.
- Joseph Abboud Manufacturing Corporation
- Julius Koch USA, Inc.
- Polaroid Corporation
- New England FenceWrights
- Southcoast Hospitals Group

Our Partners:

- Town of Dartmouth
- Town of Fairhaven
- Town of Wareham
- Bristol Community College
- Greater New Bedford One-Stop Career Center
- Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School
- Mayor Scott W. Lang, GNB WIA Chief Elected Official
- New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce
- New Bedford Economic Development Council
- Regional Competitiveness Council / Southeast
- Wareham One-Stop Career Center