

## **Introduction**

*Insights into Industry* is an employment awareness and recruitment program designed by the Belknap County Economic Development Council (BCEDC) and the Lakes Region office of New Hampshire Employment Security in 1994. The JC/J/WC Economic Development has taken the initiative to adopt the concept and change the format to work with our area school systems.

## **The Mission**

The mission of the *Employment Awareness Recruitment Program* is to heighten the awareness of students to career track employment that exists with industries in Johnson City, Washington and surrounding counties; opportunities which are available to entry-level workers as well as positions for those who complete further training or education.

## **Who's Involved**

JC/J/WC Economic Development Board, Businesses and Industries in the Washington and Greene County areas, school to work organizations and the City and County school systems in the region.

## **The Need**

Informal research has highlighted that a sufficient percent of students graduate into the workforce with no immediate interest, ability, and / or financial capacity for post-secondary education. These students need assistance by the school system to understand alternatives or options and should not be left to fend for themselves as they transition from school to the world (and work) or choose a career path toward graduation. Educators, guidance personnel and parents may be unaware of the diverse opportunities that exist with local companies. Discouraged by what they perceive as a region with no future, some of the young people migrate.

## **Development**

EDB personnel and Board members believe many of these young people could secure entry-level yet career track employment, which could provide a good standard of living. To achieve this, it is essential to explain to students what these opportunities mean so when the student seeks permanent employment they can evaluate the real standard of living that combined wages and benefits offer. Entry level workers, more often than not, concentrate on the hourly wage rather than benefits offered and do not have the background to evaluate the

financial value of benefits such as healthcare, profit sharing, paid leave, tuition

reimbursement, employee training, cafeteria plans, etc. Interpreting this information on behalf of participating companies is vital to attracting future employees.

## **How It Works**

During the school year representatives from participating companies make presentations to students at each participating school. The presentation is intended to get the students thinking about planning for their future after graduation. Students view the *Awareness* video, which captures a variety of interviews with younger employees in the work environment who share their initial fears and expectations. Through them, we explain what employment opportunities exist, and the real meaning behind terms such as "standard of living" and "employment benefits." Students receive a "View Book," which provides information about participating companies, entry-level positions, skill requirements, wages and benefits. The View Book also summarizes those qualities important to all employers, and offers information on searching, applying, and interviewing for employment as well as local resources for assistance. The students are encouraged to take a closer look at any of the participating companies that interest them by completing a card which is passed to the company. The students then get an invitation to tour that

company, meet some of the employees, and receive more information.

## **The Benefits**

The goal is to assist the students in not just capturing a job, but making a choice or decision by evaluating whether employment with a company can contribute to their personal and financial long-term growth and betterment. It will provide information that will allow students to better plan the course study path. The program offers participating companies not only a pool of applicants, but also the potential for better employer and employee matching. It also provides an opportunity to retain our young people by giving them "an edge" on quality opportunities and, thereby, keeping them as a vital part of a stable, well-trained and productive workforce.

### **For More Information**

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## **EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS RECRUITMENT PROGRAM For STUDENTS**

*An initiative of  
Johnson City  
Jonesborough/Washington County  
Economic Development Board*