



**PRESS RELEASE  
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## **CPWDC Receives \$3.045 Million to Grow Technical Skills in Central Pennsylvania**

The Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC) received a \$3,045,533 grant to execute a cross-industry strategy to grow STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) talent in support of the region's key economic drivers -- advanced manufacturing, health care and natural gas industries. The grant program will train regional workers in five sectors: Nursing, Allied Health, Engineering, Information Technology and Management.

Chairperson Jamie Aurand publicly announced the award during the November 18, 2011 quarterly Central Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board meeting. "This grant represents a major accomplishment for CPWDC to be one of 36 organizations across the country competitively selected to participate in a four-year project to build the capacity of the workforce in Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union Counties."

The funding was received under the US Department of Labor's H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant Competition to support high-growth fields in which employers are currently using the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program to hire foreign workers.

In the October 3 announcement awarding \$159 million, U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Hilda Solis said, "These grants are an important part of the administration's efforts to help ensure that our workers have the chance to succeed in new and emerging fields, and that growing businesses have access to the skilled American workforce they need."

Even amidst unprecedented unemployment in Central Pennsylvania over the past 24 months, employers repeatedly cite difficulty finding qualified technical workers. "We are thrilled about this unique opportunity to work with our partners -- the region's colleges and universities, Chambers of Commerce and the employer community -- to respond directly to the needs of the region's economy" said Shannon Munro, CPWDC's Executive Director. "Through the awarding of scholarships and intensive career coaching, this grant will help at least 200 individuals acquire additional credentials or degrees beyond their current post-secondary education. The grant program will target long-term unemployed workers who are most in need of skill upgrades to compete in the labor market."

The grant will allow CPWDC and Dr. David DeLong, a nationally recognized workforce researcher and consultant, to work alongside local companies to manage internal talent through skill training and knowledge acquisition for current employees.

Grant activities are expected to begin in early 2012. Employers and job seekers interested in learning more about this program should contact their local PA CareerLink® office or visit [www.cpwdc.org](http://www.cpwdc.org).

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