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New Report Highlights Business/Education Partnerships As Key Factor in Improving Skilled Workforce

MBR's "Shaping the Future Workforce" Details Innovative Plans to Create a Talent Pipeline

Top Massachusetts employers have been addressing the skills gap by engaging in partnerships with local public schools, community colleges and universities to help stem a trend of companies having problems finding trained workers to fill high-wage jobs.

In a new report, "Shaping the Future Workforce," the Massachusetts Business Roundtable (MBR) reveals dozens of the Commonwealth's largest employers have created partnerships with educational institutions. This is partially in response to an earlier 2016 survey in which 75 percent of Massachusetts employers said it was difficult to find people with the right skills to hire in Massachusetts.

"To remain competitive, employers must be confident in their ability to find skilled and trained talent today and assured that the education and workforce pipeline is producing the workers of tomorrow," said Marcy Reed, the President of National Grid, Massachusetts, and the Chair of MBR's Board of Directors. "That is why they are reaching out in increasingly unique and targeted ways to schools from pre-K through graduate school to ensure the pipeline is producing the talent they need."

The report details numerous examples, including:

- National Grid, which has established an Engineering Pipeline Program for high school and college students that offers, among other things, paid internships, professional mentoring and job shadowing;
- Shire, which has partnered with Quincy College's Biotechnology Program to prepare students for entry-level position in biomanufacturing;
- Shawmut Design and Construction, which has partnered with the Wentworth Institute of Technology's College of Professional and Continuing Education to design and deliver a construction skills curriculum.

"The report illustrated to us that businesses from across different regions and different industries need to collaborate with schools – from elementary to colleges and universities – to develop talent that will meet their needs," said JD Chesloff, Executive Director of MBR. "These partnerships provide a window of best practices to key stakeholders who are planning and crafting a Massachusetts workforce which is second-to-none in the global economy."

To view the report, please visit www.maroundtable.com.

About the Massachusetts Business Roundtable

The Massachusetts Roundtable is a non-profit, non-partisan public policy organization comprised of CEOs and senior executives from major employers that collectively employ more than 250,000 people in diverse industry sectors across the state. The Roundtable works with business leaders and public officials to make Massachusetts a more competitive place to do business in the global economy.

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