

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS BIZ EFFORTS TO FILL TALENT GAP

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STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, OCT. 25, 2016.....Frustrated in their inability to secure skilled workers, Massachusetts employers have quietly forged partnerships with public schools, community colleges and universities in a pro-active effort to bolster their talent, according to a new report.

The Massachusetts Business Roundtable [report](#), "Shaping the Future Workforce," details programs and partnerships that dozens of large employers have created with educational institutions. Officials say the report explains the range of possibilities to address the state's skills gap and in the process provide benefits to both workers and employers.

National Grid has established an engineering pipeline program for high school and college students that offers paid internships, professional mentoring and job shadowing. To prepare students for entry level positions in biomanufacturing, Shire has partnered up with the biotechnology program at Quincy College. And Wentworth Institute of Technology's College of Professional and Continuing Education has teamed up with Shawmut Design and Construction to build a construction skills curriculum.

The report's release comes on the heels of a survey earlier this year that showed 75 percent of 400 employers surveyed said it was difficult to find people with the right skills to hire in Massachusetts where employees face higher cost of living considerations than in other states.

While employers are "generally happy with the education system in Massachusetts," they "consistently report that they find a large disconnect between the talent that is coming out of schools and the talent they seek," according to the 29-page report.

The report highlights collaborations in energy, health care, technology, financial and professional services, and real estate development and construction. Programs range from efforts to inspire younger students to pursue science, engineering, technology and math careers to a Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center training program that has helped more than 100 workers fill higher paying jobs where there's been a shortage of talent.

"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," National Grid President Marcy Reed, chair of the Business Roundtable board, said in a statement. "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."

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