

# The Commercial Record

## State's Labor Market Calls For 'Middle-Skill' Workers, But They're In Short Supply

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Almost half of all Connecticut job openings by 2016 will be so-called "middle-skill" posts, jobs that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree, a potential problem given that the state currently does not have enough skilled laborers to meet the demand, according to a new report.

The study, conducted by The Workforce Alliance and the Skills2Compete-Connecticut campaign, found that 43 percent of all jobs in the state by 2016 will be middle-skill jobs, but only 37 percent of Connecticut workers likely have the credentials to fill them. That gap will return as jobs are created, stifling current recovery efforts, and widen as more workers retire and if Connecticut's middle-skill educational attainment continues to decline, the report concluded.

Low- and high-skill jobs will account for 24 percent and 33 percent of new jobs by 2016, respectively.

"We've experienced shortages in skilled workers for years," said Paul Hoffman, president of the New Haven Manufacturers Association. "And while the recession certainly limits our current ability to grow, we know that when the economy bounces back we are going to need a robust, skilled workforce at the ready to move our industry ahead."