



Massachusetts' Forgotten Middle-Skills Jobs: Media Coverage Report

Report release: July 14, 2010



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New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are 'Middle Skill'

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National Skills Coalition: New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are 'Middle-Skill'

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Reliable Plant Magazine

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Sun Herald

New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are 'Middle Skill'

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Report: Growing need in Mass for workers with more than high school, less than 4-year college

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Ventura Country Star

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Worcester Business News

PhDs Need Not Apply: Middle-Skill Jobs In Demand

Livia Gershon

Wednesday, July 14

[Online](#)

NMEF News

Massachusetts' Forgotten Middle Skills Jobs

NMEF staff

Wednesday, July 14

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The Gardner News

State's future is 'middle skill' jobs, report says

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South Coast Today

Mass. unemployment falls to 9 percent

Associated Press

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The trend: More jobs take training

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Broadcast

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Middle Skills Jobs Could Usher in Recovery for Massachusetts

Charlie Deitz

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NECN

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- NECN Today
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WBZ

Interview with Anthony Silva

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- Morning Show (Thursday, July 15)

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WTKK-FM

Jim and Margery
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WCVB-TV

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WWLP-TV

- 22 News at 11 PM (Wednesday, July 14)
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ABC – KGUN

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Fox Business

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Boston Neighborhood Network News

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Training needed for mid-level jobs, study says

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Talking jobs and unemployment

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AllBusiness

The trend: More jobs take training. The advice: Don't stop at high school

Monday, July 19

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\$1.00

\$1.50 outside of
Metro Boston

*

The Boston Globe

WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2010

THE WATER'S ROAR

TODAY: Showers and T-storms.

High 80-85. Low 66-71.

TOMORROW: Partly sunny and humid.

High 82-87. Low 67-72.

HIGH TIDE: 1:23 a.m. 2:01 p.m.

SUNRISE: 5:20 a.m. SUNSET: 8:20 p.m.

FULL REPORT: PAGE B15

In the news

An armed robbery of a Dorchester store was thwarted with quick work by a police detective whose father and uncle were gunned down in the line of duty. **B1.**

An Iranian scientist surfaced at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington and asked to go home, the latest twist in what appeared to be a defection gone wrong. **A3.**

Demand for "middle skill" workers will soar in Massachusetts in the next six years, requiring a new emphasis on advanced training, a report found. **B7.**

Business

Training needed for mid-level jobs, study says

By Robert Gavin
GLOBE STAFF

Leading Massachusetts industries will need nearly 400,000 workers over the next six years to fill new and existing jobs for workers with mid-level skills, from technicians to licensed practical nurses to manufacturing operators, requiring the state to place greater emphasis on vocational training and education after high school, a study concludes.

These "middle skill" jobs will account for nearly four of 10 openings through 2016, with many paying above the \$60,000-a-year considered sufficient to support a family in Massachusetts, according to the study, to be released today by a coalition of busi-

ness, labor, and worker training groups.

The positions, which require post-secondary education and training, but not a four-year college degree, are critical to the state's economic growth, according to the study. Without middle skill workers, companies can't bring their innovations to market as products and services.

"We need engineers and research scientists," said Angelo F. Sabatalo,

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MIDDLE SKILL JOBS

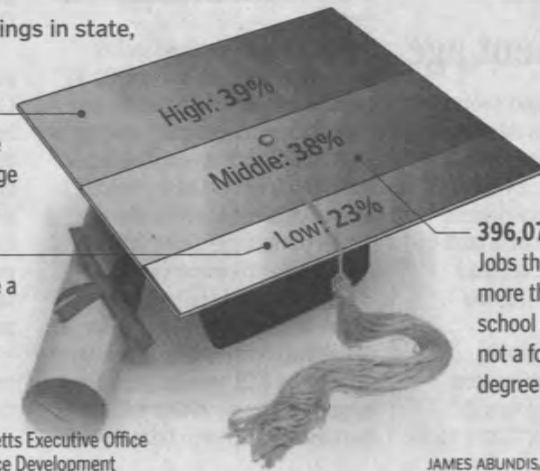
See some higher-paying jobs expected to be in demand in the state that don't require a bachelor's degree at www.boston.com/business.

JOBS IN 2016

Future job openings in state, by skill level

406,780
Jobs that require a four-year college degree or more.

245,150
Jobs that require a high school diploma, or less.



396,070
Jobs that require more than a high school diploma but not a four-year degree.

SOURCE: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

JAMES ABUNDIS/GLOBE STAFF

Training urged for mid-level jobs

SKILLS

Continued from Page B7

corporate director of organizational development and training at Nypro Inc., a Clinton plastics maker, "but as we move into the production environment, middle skill jobs are at the core of our business."

Middle skill jobs are found across industries and include occupations such as computer support specialists and engineering technicians; radiation therapists and surgical technologists; paralegals and claims adjusters; and carpenters, mechanics, and heavy truck drivers.

The need for such workers is expected to increase as the economy improves and baby boomers retire over the next decade, according to the study, which was based on data from the US Labor Department.

Before the recent recession, some industries were already experiencing shortages of middle skill workers, according to the study. Such positions account for

about 45 percent of employment in Massachusetts, but only about 32 percent of Massachusetts workers have the training and education to fill those jobs, according to the study.

Shire PLC, a biopharmaceutical firm expanding in Lexington, plans to hire about 600 workers, many of them positions such as manufacturing operators, quality control technicians, and maintenance mechanics, said Suzanne Bruhn, senior vice president for strategic planning and program management. About half of the jobs have been filled.

"Biotech and biopharmaceutical companies with products in development or commercialization have the kind of jobs that fit the middle skill definition," she said. "But historically, they have been challenging to fill."

Bruhn said part of the problem is there hasn't been public support for the training and education needed for these kind of jobs. The study calls on the state

to guarantee Massachusetts residents access to at least two years of education and training after high school, but does not estimate the cost of such a guarantee.

The state could increase its investment incrementally to achieve this goal, said Loh-Sze Leung, director of SkillWorks, which uses public and private money to fund workforce development programs in Greater Boston, and is a study cosponsor. Community colleges and other training providers also need to design programs that allow working adults to gain skills to qualify for these jobs — programs that are shorter in duration, held on nights and weekends, or taught online.

"These programs should be accessible and doable, and a worker should be able to say, 'I can finish the program, and it will have meaning in the labor market,'" Leung said. "It's really important that we send a message that not all jobs in our econ-



FORECASTING JOB TRENDS

'We have
to invest
where we

see consistent
demand for
workers,' says job
development official
Nancy Snyder.

omy are at the high or low end."

Nancy Snyder, president of Commonwealth Corporation, the state's quasipublic workforce development agency, said money alone is not enough. Business, government, and educators must collaborate to determine which jobs and skills are needed.

"It's not just throw money at post-secondary education and training," she said. "We have to invest where we see consistent demand for workers."

Robert Gavin can be reached at rgavin@globe.com.



Study by National Skills Coalition, SkillWorks and the Workforce Solutions Group shows shift toward "middle skill" jobs

Published: Monday, August 09, 2010, 3:20 PM Updated: Monday, August 09, 2010, 3:38 PM



Jim Kinney, The Republican



File photo by Don Treeger / The Republican

HOLYOKE - Joseph L. Peters, president of Universal Plastics.

HOLYOKE – Universal Plastics here has a new machine capable of making molds for its heat-formed plastic products in house so the company doesn't have to depend on an outside vendor.

The next step is getting people trained to work the machine and making sure there is a pool of potential workers capable of grasping the high-tech skills required to operate an increasingly sophisticated array of machinery in area factories, says Joseph L. Peters, Universal Plastics' president.

"Where it used to be that you could bring a guy in off the street who had no training whatsoever," he said, it's no longer the case.

More than 396,000 jobs requiring more training than a high-school diploma – but not a four-year college degree – are expected to open in Massachusetts between now and 2016, according to a recent study released by the National Skills Coalition, SkillWorks and the Workforce Solutions Group.

Such “middle-skill” jobs will make up about 38 percent of all job openings between now and 2016, according to the report.

Loh-Sze Leung, executive director for SkillWorks: Partners for a Productive WorkForce in Boston, said the National Skills Coalition is an organization of 14 public and private groups advocating for more job-skill training programs and more government investment in vocational training and community college programs.

For example, she said, the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund created in the 2006 stimulus bill needs \$18 million to \$21 million a year, but there is no money in the state’s current budget, she said.

She pointed to programs that help prepare low-skilled hospital employees for more highly-skilled jobs as an example of what the programs can accomplish.

Middle-skill jobs include medical-related jobs such as X-ray technicians as well as skilled building trades such as plumbers and electricians and machinists who work at today’s highly technical manufacturing industries.

Peters said the machines his employees use to trim excess plastic from finished thermoformed products are, for all intents and purposes, robots.

“We have to do more with less,” he said. “That’s what everybody sees as the future of manufacturing now,” said Peters, who also serves as chairman of the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County. “For the most part manufacturing is doing more with less.”

Universal Plastics had 75 employees in the summer of 2008, Peters said. But the recession forced him to cut back. He’s been able to hire back five employees thus far in 2010 for a new total of 55 employees.

Patricia H. Crosby, executive director of the Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment in Greenfield, uses the example of a recent graduate of a manufacturing program at a vocational high school who got a job running a sophisticated German-built knife-making machine at Lamson & Goodnow in Shelburne Falls.

“You have got to be able to program that machine,” Crosby said. “In fact, dating back to 10 years ago, you could see this project emerging. Everybody was getting the message that you have to go on to college, but hey weren’t getting the message that it doesn’t necessarily have to be a four year degree.”

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Editorial: Middle-skill jobs offer opportunity for Western Massachusetts

Published: Wednesday, August 11, 2010, 12:31 AM

R The Republican Editorials

For nearly three years, Massachusetts has endured a string of dismal employment statistics, but on Monday we saw one number that presents the region with an opportunity and a challenge.

A recent study from by the National Skills Coalition, SkillWorks and the Workforce Solutions Group says that more than 396,000 jobs that require more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree are expected to open in Massachusetts over the next six years.

The opportunity is there because Massachusetts has the community colleges, vocational schools and training institutes where people can learn middle skill jobs in fields such as health care and manufacturing. Western Massachusetts is filled with high-tech industries whose leaders worry if they will ever find enough skilled workers.

And that presents a challenge, because those programs might not be enough. More money is needed for job training. For example, the state's Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, which seeks to boost the skills and salaries of it workers, lacks funding in the current state budget.

Although the debate over federal spending and the deficit has been heated, we think it is important to make every effort to fund job programs.

High-skilled workers earn more and they pay the taxes needed to cut the deficit. In business it's called return on investment. Unfortunately, what we see is too much rhetoric over unemployment and the deficit, but too little action.

Joseph L. Peters, president of Universal Plastics in Holyoke, gave a concise picture of how job skills have changed in recent years. "Where it used to be that you could bring a guy in off the street who had no training whatsoever, it's no longer the case," he said.

While it's true there are many programs in place to train workers, we think more can be done to train people.

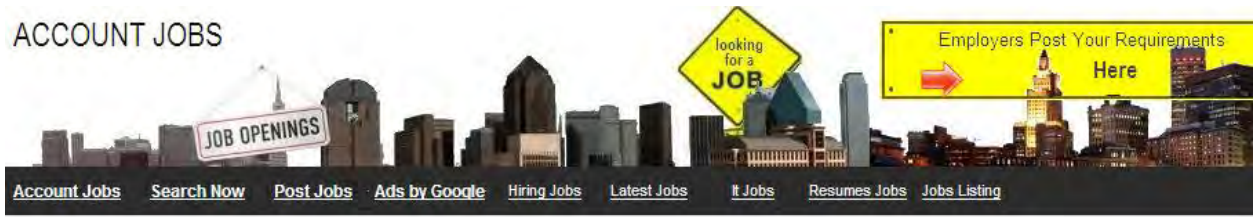
8/11/2010

Editorial: Middle-skill jobs offer opportu...

After all, there's nearly 400,000 jobs hanging in the balance, and, as Peters said, you can't grab workers off the street anymore.

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Report: More jobs in Mass. require 'middle skills' – Boston Herald

It's not necessarily highly-skilled workers that Massachusetts will need the most in the coming years, but those with so-called "middle skills." That's the conclusion of a report released today by the National ...

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The trend: More jobs take training. The advice: Don't stop at high school

By Erin Smith, esmith@lowellsun.com

Publication: Lowell Sun (Massachusetts)

Date: [Monday, July 19 2010](#)



LOWELL -- Local jobs experts say a new report only confirms the advice they've been giving all along: Get an education.

"There's fewer and fewer jobs available for people with only a high-school diploma," said Michael McQuaid, director of the Career Center of Lowell.

A report released last week by the National Skills Coalition finds that the largest portion of job openings projected for Massachusetts by 2016 are at the "middle-skill" level. These jobs require more than a high-school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree.

"Part of it is making people who only have high-school diplomas aware they should think about going back to school so they will be more job-ready when those positions open up," said McQuaid. "When the economy was stronger, there was a concern about a skills gap. There were job openings in those fields, but the people looking for work didn't have the skills for those jobs."

In 2007, about 45 percent of all jobs were classified as middle-skill, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers had the education and training required to fill those positions, according to the report.

Middle-skill workers include construction workers, high-tech manufacturing workers, nurses and health-care technicians, truckers, IT professionals, EMTs, paramedics, computer-support specialists and biotech workers.

McQuaid said advisers at the career center are constantly encouraging workers to go back to school and get more education.

"We always have people coming in and they just have a high-school diploma, so part of our advice to them is think about the future. Is it really in your best interest to keep taking an \$8- to \$9-an-hour job?" said McQuaid. "You could increase your skills and there will be more jobs available. Plus, they'll probably pay more."

But it's also a question of resources because education often costs money that prospective students do not have, according to McQuaid.

The report's authors urge Massachusetts to take advantage of the expected job growth -- more than 396,000 middle-skill openings are projected in the state by 2016 -- by making significant investments in programs to train more residents who are laid off or working in low-skill jobs and suggests all residents should have access to at least two years of education or training past high school.

"I think that's something everyone agrees on, but the problem is finding the money," said McQuaid.

Kathleen Sweeney, dean of Health Careers at Middlesex Community College, said the school is working to streamline training for entry-level health-care positions.

Sweeney oversees the newly opened Academy of Health Professions at the school, which hosts 27-week certificate programs for jobs as nursing assistants, medical receptionists, medical secretaries and phlebotomists, workers trained to draw blood from patients.

Sweeney said the programs are designed to help people not ready for college, those re-entering the work force or students who need to work a middle-skill job while continuing their education. The first class, which began in April, is expected to graduate in September, according to Sweeney.

"It's just really what a community college does -- help fill jobs in the work force and help students get into the work force," said Sweeney.

The Boston Globe

The Boston Globe

Training needed for mid-level jobs, study says

By Robert Gavin
Globe Staff / July 14, 2010

Leading Massachusetts industries will need nearly 400,000 workers over the next six years to fill new and existing jobs for workers with mid-level skills, from technicians to licensed practical nurses to manufacturing operators, requiring the state to place greater emphasis on vocational training and education after high school, a study concludes.

These “middle skill” jobs will account for nearly four of 10 openings through 2016, with many paying above the \$60,000-a-year considered sufficient to support a family in Massachusetts, according to the study, to be released today by a coalition of business, labor, and worker training groups.

The positions, which require post-secondary education and training, but not a four-year **college degree, are critical to the state’s economic growth**, according to the study. Without **middle skill workers, companies can’t bring their innovations to market as products and services.**

“We need engineers and research scientists,” said Angelo F. Sabatalo, corporate director of organizational development and training at Nypro Inc., a Clinton plastics maker, **“but as we move into the production environment, middle skill jobs are at the core of our business.”**

Middle skill jobs are found across industries and include occupations such as computer support specialists and engineering technicians; radiation therapists and surgical technologists; paralegals and claims adjusters; and carpenters, mechanics, and heavy truck drivers.

The need for such workers is expected to increase as the economy improves and baby boomers retire over the next decade, according to the study, which was based on data from the US Labor Department.

Before the recent recession, some industries were already experiencing shortages of middle skill workers, according to the study. Such positions account for about 45 percent of

employment in Massachusetts, but only about 32 percent of Massachusetts workers have the training and education to fill those jobs, according to the study.

Shire PLC, a biopharmaceutical firm expanding in Lexington, plans to hire about 600 workers, many of them positions such as manufacturing operators, quality control technicians, and maintenance mechanics, said Suzanne Bruhn, senior vice president for strategic planning and program management. About half of the jobs have been filled.

“Biotech and biopharmaceutical companies with products in development or commercialization have the kind of jobs that fit the middle skill definition,” she said. “But historically, they have been challenging to fill.”

Bruhn said part of the problem is **there hasn’t been public support for the training and education** needed for these kind of jobs. The study calls on the state to guarantee Massachusetts residents access to at least two years of education and training after high school, but does not estimate the cost of such a guarantee.

The state could increase its investment incrementally to achieve this goal, said Loh-Sze Leung, director of SkillWorks, which uses public and private money to fund workforce development programs in Greater Boston, and is a study cosponsor. Community colleges and other training providers also need to design programs that allow working adults to gain skills to qualify for these jobs — programs that are shorter in duration, held on nights and weekends, or taught online.

“These programs should be accessible and doable, and a worker should be able to say, ‘I can finish the program, and it will have meaning in the labor market,’” Leung said. “It’s really important that we send a message that not all jobs in our economy are at the high or low end.”

Nancy Snyder, president of Commonwealth Corporation, the state’s quasipublic workforce development agency, said money alone is not enough. Business, government, and educators must collaborate to determine which jobs and skills are needed.

“It’s not just throw money at post-secondary education and training,” she said. “We have to invest where we see consistent demand for workers.”

Robert Gavin can be reached at rgavin@globe.com. ■



Report: More jobs in Mass. require 'middle skills'

By Associated Press

Wednesday, July 14, 2010 - [Added 22 hours ago](#)

It's not necessarily highly-skilled workers that Massachusetts will need the most in the coming years, but those with so-called "middle skills."

That's the conclusion of a report released today by the National Skills Coalition, which advocates for worker training.

The report projects that by 2016, Massachusetts will have nearly 400,000 job openings that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. The report says "middle-skill" jobs will account for 38 percent of all openings.

Ranging from licensed practical nurses to computer support specialists, the jobs have median annual incomes of about \$50,000 to \$55,000.

The report says the state faces challenges in meeting the demand for middle-skilled workers, with only 32 percent of current employees having the credentials.

Online: National Skills Coalition, www.nationalskillscoalition.org

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The Associated Press July 14, 2010, 4:14PM ET text size: [TT](#)

Report: More jobs in Mass. require 'middle skills'

BOSTON

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Report: Growing need in Mass. for workers with more than high school, less than 4-year college

Associated Press
07/14/10 4:26 PM EDT

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That's the conclusion of a report released on Wednesday by the National Skills Coalition, which advocates for worker training.

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Read more at the Washington Examiner: <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/economy/ap/report-growing-need-in-mass-for-workers-with-more-than-high-school-less-than-4-year-college-98447899.html#ixzz0tmVXU7Py>



New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are 'Middle-Skill'

07.14.10, 05:06 AM EDT



BOSTON, July 14 /PRNewswire/ -- More than 396,000 "middle-skill" job openings--those that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree--are projected for the state by 2016, concludes a new study released today by **National Skills Coalition** in partnership with *SkillWorks* and **The Workforce Solutions Group**. But to unleash the full economic benefits of these openings, Massachusetts will need to continue to invest in proper training and education for its workforce to make sure it has people ready for those jobs.

Though the recession has halted current employment growth, the report projects that middle-skill jobs (including new jobs and replacement) would account for 38 percent of all openings between 2006 and 2016.

"The biotech sector is growing rapidly, and finding qualified employees remains a challenge," said Suzanne Bruhn, Senior Vice President of Strategic Planning and Program Management for Shire Pharmaceutical. "As part of our manufacturing facility expansion here in Massachusetts, we plan to hire around 600 employees, many for positions that do not require four-year degrees. These include jobs such as Manufacturing Operator, Quality Control Technician, and Maintenance Mechanic; entry-level positions with benefits that offer potential for job growth and provide self-sufficient wages."

Despite Massachusetts' strong investments in post-secondary education and workforce training, preparation for middle-skill jobs has not kept up with demand. Prior to the national recession, Massachusetts was already experiencing shortages of middle-skill workers in crucial industries. About 45 percent of all jobs are classified as middle-skill, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers likely have the credentials to fill them. As Massachusetts, along with the rest of the country, moves from recession into recovery, employers will likely once again face the challenge of finding quality middle- and high-skill workers - slowing the pace of economic growth.

The report, which tracks Massachusetts' jobs at the middle-skill level, notes that as the economy picks up, the Commonwealth will see growth in these kinds of jobs.

"If Massachusetts seeks timely economic recovery and long-term prosperity, the state must ensure that its workforce has the necessary education and training to meet the labor demands of the future," urges Jessie Hogg Leslie of **National Skills Coalition**, the convening organization for the national Skills2Compete campaign. "The national recession provides a time frame for businesses and the state to be strategic, evaluate labor and skill needs, and train and prepare for the jobs that are expected to grow."



Talking jobs and unemployment

19 JUL 2010 [Leave a Comment](#)

by mhasegawa in 2010 Election, Congress, Economics, Obama Administration *Tags:* Paul Krugman, Economics, Republicans, President Obama, Unemployment

Today I went to a graduation for 58 men and women – almost all over 30 – who went to a program at the local YMCA to sharpen skills and make them more competitive in the job market. I shared an intern with several others in my agency. It was announced that 8 or 9 had found jobs. Not bad in this market, but not good either.

Last week the Boston *Globe* ran a story about the report by the National Skills Coalition.

The report projects that by 2016, Massachusetts will have nearly 400,000 job openings that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. The report says “middle-skill” jobs will account for 38 percent of all openings.

Ranging from licensed practical nurses to computer support specialists, the jobs have median annual incomes of about \$50,000 to \$55,000.

The report says the state faces challenges in meeting the demand for middle-skilled workers, with only 32 percent of current employees having the credentials.

The graduation I attended was designed to train people for these middle-skill jobs. But until the jobs are created, the graduates still need to pay the rent, the mortgage, buy food and clothes. These are men and women who are doing the right things and are still finding it tough to find a job. Some of them were unemployed before entering the program and some will be unemployed after graduation. Some may be eligible for unemployment benefits, but may have exhausted their time. Which brings me to the unemployment benefits issue.

Let's start with Paul Krugman.

There was a time when everyone took it for granted that unemployment insurance, which normally terminates after 26 weeks, would be extended in times of persistent joblessness. It was, most people agreed, the decent thing to do.

But that was then. Today, American workers face the worst job market since the Great Depression, with five job seekers for every job opening, with the average spell of unemployment now at 35 weeks. Yet the Senate went home for the holiday weekend without extending benefits. How was that possible?

The answer is that we're facing a coalition of the heartless, the clueless and the confused. Nothing can be done about the first group, and probably not much about the second. But maybe it's possible to clear up some of the confusion.

So who are the heartless? They are Republicans and some Democrats a tiny number of whom may be acting out of principle. They hide behind the deficit and statements from the clueless.

By the clueless I mean people like Sharron Angle, the Republican candidate for senator from Nevada, who has repeatedly insisted that the unemployed are deliberately choosing to stay jobless, so that they can keep collecting benefits. A sample remark: "You can make more money on unemployment than you can going down and getting one of those jobs that is an honest job but it doesn't pay as much. We've put in so much entitlement into our government that we really have spoiled our citizenry."

Now, I don't have the impression that unemployed Americans are spoiled; desperate seems more like it. One doubts, however, that any amount of evidence could change Ms. Angle's view of the world — and there are, unfortunately, a lot of people in our political class just like her.

And then Krugman tackles the misinformed.

But there are also, one hopes, at least a few political players who are honestly misinformed about what unemployment benefits do — who believe, for example, that Senator Jon Kyl, Republican of Arizona, was making sense when he declared that extending benefits would make unemployment worse, because "continuing to pay people unemployment compensation is a disincentive for them to seek new work." So let's talk about why that belief is dead wrong.

Do unemployment benefits reduce the incentive to seek work? Yes: workers receiving unemployment benefits aren't quite as desperate as workers without benefits, and are likely to

be slightly more choosy about accepting new jobs. The operative word here is “slightly”: recent economic research suggests that the effect of unemployment benefits on worker behavior is much weaker than was previously believed. Still, it’s a real effect when the economy is doing well.

But it’s an effect that is completely irrelevant to our current situation. When the economy is booming, and lack of sufficient willing workers is limiting growth, generous unemployment benefits may keep employment lower than it would have been otherwise. But as you may have noticed, right now the economy isn’t booming — again, there are five unemployed workers for every job opening. Cutting off benefits to the unemployed will make them even more desperate for work — but they can’t take jobs that aren’t there.

Will extending benefit add to the deficit? Krugman tackles this one also.

But won’t extending unemployment benefits worsen the budget deficit? Yes, slightly — but as I and others have been arguing at length, penny-pinching in the midst of a severely depressed economy is no way to deal with our long-run budget problems. And penny-pinching at the expense of the unemployed is cruel as well as misguided.

But is being against extending benefits a political plus? Not according to two new polls out today. According to the New York *Times* story in the Caucus both a CBS News and a ABC News/Washington Post poll found the majority of those surveyed believed that Congress should extend benefits.

In the CBS News survey, 52 percent of respondents said Congress should extend unemployment benefits for people currently out of work, even if it meant increasing the budget deficit. Thirty-nine percent disagreed, and the rest said “it depends” or gave no opinion.

Broken down by party affiliation, about 7 in 10 Democrats said they supported an extension, while most Republicans said they opposed it. Independents were more evenly divided, with 47 percent in favor and 42 percent opposed.

The ABC News/Washington Post poll asked the question a little differently, and found even more support for an extension of unemployment benefits. The question noted that Congress had previously extended benefits because of the economic downturn, and was considering extending them again. It also presented capsules of each side of the debate, noting that

supporters of the extension say it “will help those who can’t find work” while opponents say it “adds too much to the federal budget deficit.”

The result: 62 percent of respondents said Congress should approve another extension, while 36 percent said it should not. Those in favor included 80 percent of Democrats and 59 percent of independents, as well as 43 percent of Republicans.

So there doesn't seem to be a lot of gain in opposition.



The last word goes to the President.

Under pressure in an election year to reduce the unemployment rate, now at 9.5 percent, Mr. Obama also urged the Senate to approve a package of tax cuts and an expansion of lending to small businesses. “We all have to continue our efforts to do everything in our power to spur growth and hiring,” Mr. Obama said at the White House.

Mr. Obama, appearing before reporters in the Rose Garden flanked by three Americans who have had difficulty finding work, took aim at that argument. “That attitude reflects a lack of faith in the American people,” Mr. Obama said. “They’re not looking for a handout. They desperately want to work.”

Mr. Obama sharply criticized Republicans who have several times in the past month voted against bringing an unemployment extension bill to the Senate floor.

“After years of championing policies that turned a record surplus into a massive deficit, the same people who didn’t have any problem spending hundreds of billions of dollars on tax

breaks for the wealthiest Americans are now saying we shouldn't offer relief to middle-class Americans like Jim or Leslie or Denise, who really need help," Mr. Obama said, referring to the three people who stood with him in the Rose Garden, brought to Washington by the White House to help illustrate the president's point.

The Bill will pass this week, probably without Republican support, after we get the new temporary Senator from West Virginia, Carte Goodwin.



Wednesday, July 14, 2010

New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are 'Middle-Skill'

BOSTON, July 14, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ ----More than 396,000 "middle-skill" job openings--those that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree--are projected for the state by 2016, concludes a new study released today by National Skills Coalition in partnership with SkillWorks and The Workforce Solutions Group. But to unleash the full economic benefits of these openings, Massachusetts will need to continue to invest in proper training and education for its workforce to make sure it has people ready for those jobs.

Though the recession has halted current employment growth, the report projects that middle-skill jobs (including new jobs and replacement) would account for 38 percent of all openings between 2006 and 2016.

"The biotech sector is growing rapidly, and finding qualified employees remains a challenge," said Suzanne Bruhn, Senior Vice President of Strategic Planning and Program Management for Shire Pharmaceutical. "As part of our manufacturing facility expansion here in Massachusetts, we plan to hire around 600 employees, many for positions that do not require four-year degrees. These include jobs such as Manufacturing Operator, Quality Control Technician, and Maintenance Mechanic; entry-level positions with benefits that offer potential for job growth and provide self-sufficient wages."

Despite Massachusetts' strong investments in post-secondary education and workforce training, preparation for middle-skill jobs has not kept up with demand. Prior to the national recession, Massachusetts was already experiencing shortages of middle-skill workers in crucial industries. About 45 percent of all jobs are classified as middle-skill, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers likely have the credentials to fill them. As Massachusetts, along with the rest of the country, moves from recession into recovery, employers will likely once again face the challenge of finding quality middle- and high-skill workers - slowing the pace of economic growth.

The report, which tracks Massachusetts' jobs at the middle-skill level, notes that as the economy picks up, the Commonwealth will see growth in these kinds of jobs.

"If Massachusetts seeks timely economic recovery and long-term prosperity, the state must ensure that its workforce has the necessary education and training to meet the labor demands of the future," urges Jessie Hogg Leslie of National Skills Coalition, the convening organization for the national Skills2Compete campaign. "The national recession provides a time frame for

businesses and the state to be strategic, evaluate labor and skill needs, and train and prepare for the jobs that are expected to grow."

Massachusetts' Forgotten Middle-Skills Jobs also assesses the current and future middle-skill employment and education patterns in the state:

Massachusetts' health services and information technology industries show robust demand for middle-skill workers. The health care and social services industry posted more jobs in 2009 than any other industry in the Commonwealth. In addition, twelve out of the thirteen information technology occupations are expected to see job growth between 2006 and 2016.

Middle-skill jobs expected to grow by 2016 in Massachusetts include licensed practical nurses with a median annual earning of \$49,490; and computer support specialists with a median annual earning of \$54,810. The report includes a list of 30 high-demand middle-skill jobs in Massachusetts.

Massachusetts faces challenges when it comes to basic skill attainment. More than 400,000 Massachusetts residents do not have a high school diploma; and with much of the population growth occurring via foreign-born residents, more than 150,000 have limited or no English speaking ability. Only 5 percent of Massachusetts adults with less than a high school diploma are enrolled in basic education, and only 6 percent of residents with limited English proficiency are enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

The report also finds that close to two-thirds of the people who will be in Massachusetts' workforce in the year 2020 were already working adults in 2005--long past the traditional high school-to-college pipeline. National Skills Coalition says this finding underscores the need for Massachusetts to continue to [target](#) training and education to people who are working or who could be working today.

The analysis for the study was performed by National Skills Coalition using data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, American Community Survey and state labor market data from the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development. The analysis is based on the methodology developed for the national Skills2Compete report - America's Forgotten Middle-Skill Jobs - by labor economists Harry Holzer and Robert Lerman.

Echoing a vision put forward by the national Skills2Compete campaign, President Obama first challenged every American to commit to at least one year of postsecondary education or training in February 2009, and has continued to signal that investing in a range of skills for America's workforce--"be it at a technical college or a four-year school; vocational training or an apprenticeship"--will be a priority for his Administration.

Kicking off this week with a broad coalition of [business](#), labor and education leaders, the Skills2Compete-Massachusetts campaign is calling on state leaders to embrace a strong vision to guide an economic and education strategy that would allow residents to meet or exceed the President's challenge: Every Massachusetts resident should have access to the equivalent of at least two years of education or training past high school--leading to a vocational credential, industry certification, or one's first two years of college--to be pursued at whatever point and pace makes sense for individual workers and industries. Every person must also have access to the basic skills and support needed to pursue such education.

"An education and training strategy guided by the Skills2Compete vision would give Massachusetts a competitive edge for recovery and long-term growth," says Loh-Sze Leung, SkillWorks Director. "As Massachusetts looks to remain a strong competitor in the global economy, it's critical that we prepare workers for the jobs of the future. We look forward to developing and implementing this economic and education strategy that would better help Massachusetts residents to obtain higher skills and higher wages in middle- and high-skill jobs and careers, encouraging family economic success," added Alan Macdonald, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable.

"The City of Boston has been and continues to be committed to creating opportunities for all of its residents," said Mayor Thomas M. Menino. "We know Boston's most important asset is our workforce and we are proud to be a founding partner of SkillWorks and a number of other initiatives that are aimed at helping more youth and adults gain the kinds of middle-skill credentials that will position the city for growth in the years to come."

The state and national efforts of the Skills2Compete campaign are made possible, in part, by general support from National Skills Coalition's national funders including the Ford Foundation, Joyce Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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The Workforce Solutions Group is a statewide coalition led by the MA Workforce Board Association, the MA AFL-CIO, the Crittenton Women's Union, and the MA Communities Action Network, MA Business Roundtable, the Center for Labor Market Studies and the Workforce Investment Association of MA. This broad coalition brings together a diverse range of employers, unions, education and training providers, community colleges, immigrant advocates, workforce investment boards, and interfaith organizations to advocate for a strong and effective workforce development system. WSG efforts have lead to more than \$50M in additional funding for skills training for workers in Massachusetts. The Workforce Solutions Group hosts the annual MA Jobs and Workforce Summit, issues research reports on the labor economy, and advocates for post secondary training and education in high demand [industries](#). For more information about The Workforce Solutions Group please contact Sue Parsons at 617-259-2960 or visit www.workforcesolutionsgrp.org.

SOURCE National Skills Coalition

New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are 'Middle-Skill'

By admin

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Despite Massachusetts' strong investments in post-secondary education and workforce training, preparation for middle-skill jobs has not kept up with demand. Prior to the national recession, Massachusetts was already experiencing shortages of middle-skill workers in crucial industries. About 45 percent of all jobs are classified as middle-skill, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers likely have the credentials to fill them. As Massachusetts, along with the rest of the country, moves from recession into recovery, employers will likely once again face the challenge of finding quality middle- and high-skill workers - slowing the pace of economic growth.

The report, which tracks Massachusetts' jobs at the middle-skill level, notes that as the economy picks up, the Commonwealth will see growth in these kinds of jobs.

"If Massachusetts seeks timely economic recovery and long-term prosperity, the state must ensure that its workforce has the necessary education and training to meet the labor demands of the future," urges Jessie Hogg Leslie of National Skills Coalition, the convening organization for the national Skills2Compete campaign. "The national recession provides a time frame for businesses and the state to be strategic, evaluate labor and skill needs, and train and prepare for the jobs that are expected to grow."

Massachusetts' *Forgotten Middle-Skills Jobs* also assesses the current and future middle-skill employment and education patterns in the state:

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SOURCE National Skills Coalition

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THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2010

State's future is 'middle skill' jobs, report says

Groups recommend two years of post-high school education or training for all residents

By JORDAN DAVIS
NEWS STAFF WRITER

Nearly 400,000 "middle skill" job openings are projected for Massachusetts by 2016, according to a study released Wednesday, and steps are needed to ensure there are enough workers with the training and education to fill the growing need.

Middle skill jobs are known as positions that require education beyond high school, but not a four-year degree. According to the report — compiled by the National Skills Coalition in partnership with SkillWorks and The Workforce Solutions Group — middle skill jobs comprise 45 percent of jobs in Massachusetts throughout the health

*'We need to act now
and focus our training
dollars and efforts on where
the jobs are, which is right
in the middle.'*

— Loh-Sze Leung

care, construction and technical industries.

Turn to **JOBS**, Page 4

Unemployment rate falls to 9 percent

By GLEN JOHNSON
AP POLITICAL WRITER

BOSTON — The Massachusetts unemployment rate fell from 9.2 percent to 9 percent in June, figures obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press show.

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development also revealed the state added 500 jobs overall in June.

That bumped the work force to 3.18 million, leading the administration to celebrate the fifth consecutive month of job gains in Massachusetts. "Year-to-date, 27 percent of the jobs lost during the recent economic downturn (March 2008 through December 2009)

have been regained," said a news release subsequently issued by the Labor department.

Yet a similar report in May showed the state gaining 30 times more jobs — more than 15,000. In addition, the report showed the overall workforce down by 7,500, as some people gave up seeking jobs.

Labor Secretary Joanne Goldstein said the new figures were dampened by 2,900 lost Census jobs but reflect job growth nonetheless. The state added 3,400 jobs in seven sectors, including leisure and hospitality; construction; and trade, transportation and utilities.

"It's certainly lower this month, but what I take away is the 3,400 jobs we

created in the private sector," Goldstein said during an interview. "The Census jobs were never going to be permanent," she added, saying they skewed the May numbers higher than normal and alternately affected the June figures.

Gov. Deval Patrick, who is seeking re-election, said in a statement: "Today's jobs numbers are another clear indication that Massachusetts is on the road to recovery."

The Labor department issued its report a day earlier than scheduled, following inquiries by the AP about a draft of the news release it shared Tuesday with a bevy of labor groups and employment lawyers.

Turn to **RATE**, Page 4

Report forecasts growth of 'middle skill' jobs in Mass.

From JOBS, Page 1

"The growing concern is there will not be adequately skilled workers to fill these positions," said Jessie Hogg Leslie during a media conference call Wednesday. She said only 32 percent of the state's work force has the education and training required to fulfill these roles.

Ms. Leslie, senior regional field director at East National Skills Coalition, said middle skill workers include medical technicians, nurses, electricians, computer support specialists and paramedics.

"These are local hands-on jobs, meaning they are unlikely to be outsourced to other countries," she said.

Ms. Leslie said the time for preparing people to meet these future labor demands is now.

"The national recession provides a timeframe for businesses and the state to be strategic, evaluate labor and skill needs, and train and prepare for the jobs that are expected to grow," she said.

SkillWorks Director Loh-Sze Leung espoused a similar viewpoint.

"The problem is, we aren't doing enough as a state to prepare people for those jobs," she said. "We need to act now and focus our training dollars and efforts on where the jobs are, which is right in the middle."

In addition to training the state's future workforce, the report said those who are working or could be working need to be targeted as well. Close to two-thirds of the people who will be in Massachusetts' workforce in the year 2020 were already working adults in 2005, according to the report.

To meet the realities of the changing economy, the report recommends that "every Massachusetts resident should have access to the equivalent of at least two years' of education or training past high school — leading to a vocational credential, industry certification, or one's first two years of college — to be pursued at whatever point and pace makes sense for individual workers and industries."

Dr. Daniel M. Asquino, president of Mount Wachusett Community College, said the

'The growing concern is there will not be adequately skilled workers to fill these positions.'

— Jessie Hogg Leslie

development of basic skills — which is a primary recommendation of the report — is paramount to ensuring the success of meeting middle skill job demands.

"We have a huge emigration coming into Massachusetts without basic skills," he said.

Offering fundamental support skills, such as English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, will ensure that individuals can pursue education paths leading to middle skill positions. To make this a reality, Dr. Asquino said additional funding is needed to support the programs — many of which are currently experiencing growing waiting lists.

Dr. Asquino added that he hopes the report is taken seriously by state officials and that education funding is viewed as an investment rather than an expenditure.

For its own part, Dr. Asquino said Mount Wachusett Community College offers training in a majority of the fields mentioned in the report.

"We're also the first college that I'm aware of that has been approved for green energy management," he said.

Dr. Asquino said recent follow-ups with the college's students have shown that roughly 87 percent of its graduates have headed directly into the field they were trained in.

The Massachusetts middle skill jobs report was written as part of the national Skills2Compete Campaign, a non-partisan campaign aimed at ensuring the U.S. workforce has the skills needed to meet business demand, fostering innovation and growing broadly shared prosperity.

jdavis@thegardnernews.com

State unemployment rate drops

From RATE, Page 1

In a mass e-mail, the department's communications director sought input and edits from nearly 50 recipients for the proposed release. They included representatives of the Utility Contractors Association of New England, the Associated Builders and Contractors of Massachusetts and the Laborers Union.

"Use this one to edit — and please remember — once you work on it, I have to have the secretary's approval too, so as soon as you can," Alison Harris wrote.

Goldstein said the release was mistakenly sent to the wrong distribution list.

"This was a simple mistake," the secretary said. "Someone was tired, it was the end of the day, and when they did their drop-down box (for addressing), they clicked the wrong box."

Goldstein also insisted the department never solicit outside input on public documents.

"We solicit no one's input outside the administration," she said. "Never have done it before; never will do it again."

Get Your Degree ASAP

New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are ‘Middle-Skill’

July 15, 2010 | By Degree ASAP In [education degrees](#) |

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Training needed for mid-level jobs, study says

Boston Globe

By Robert Gavin, Globe Staff | July 14, 2010

Leading Massachusetts industries will need nearly 400,000 workers over the next six years to fill new and existing jobs for workers with mid-level skills, from technicians to licensed practical nurses to manufacturing operators, requiring the state to place greater emphasis on vocational training and education after high school, a study concludes.

These "middle skill" jobs will account for nearly four of 10 openings through 2016, with many paying above the \$60,000-a-year considered sufficient to support a family in Massachusetts, according to the study, to be released today by a coalition of business, labor, and worker training groups.

The positions, which require post-secondary education and training, but not a four-year college degree, are critical to the state's economic growth, according to the study. Without middle skill workers, companies can't bring their innovations to market as products and services.

"We need engineers and research scientists," said Angelo F. Sabatalo, corporate director of organizational development and training at Nypro Inc., a Clinton plastics maker, "but as we move into the production environment, middle skill jobs are at the core of our business."

Middle skill jobs are found across industries and include occupations such as computer support specialists and engineering technicians; radiation therapists and surgical technologists; paralegals and claims adjusters; and carpenters, mechanics, and heavy truck drivers.

The need for such workers is expected to increase as the economy improves and baby boomers retire over the next decade, according to the study, which was based on data from the US Labor Department.

Before the recent recession, some industries were already experiencing shortages of middle skill workers, according to the study. Such positions account for about 45 percent of employment in Massachusetts, but only about 32 percent of Massachusetts workers have the training and education to fill those jobs, according to the study.

Shire PLC, a biopharmaceutical firm expanding in Lexington, plans to hire about 600 workers, many of them positions such as manufacturing operators, quality control technicians, and maintenance mechanics, said Suzanne Bruhn, senior vice president for strategic planning and program management. About half of the jobs have been filled.

"Biotech and biopharmaceutical companies with products in development or commercialization have the kind of jobs that fit the middle skill definition," she said. "But historically, they have been challenging to fill."

Bruhn said part of the problem is there hasn't been public support for the training and education needed for these kind of jobs. The study calls on the state to guarantee Massachusetts residents access to at least two years of education and training after high school, but does not estimate the cost of such a guarantee.

The state could increase its investment incrementally to achieve this goal, said Loh-Sze Leung, director of SkillWorks, which uses public and private money to fund workforce development programs

in Greater Boston, and is a study cosponsor. Community colleges and other training providers also need to design programs that allow working adults to gain skills to qualify for these jobs — programs that are shorter in duration, held on nights and weekends, or taught online.

“These programs should be accessible and doable, and a worker should be able to say, ‘I can finish the program, and it will have meaning in the labor market,’ ” Leung said. “It’s really important that we send a message that not all jobs in our economy are at the high or low end.”

Nancy Snyder, president of Commonwealth Corporation, the state’s quasipublic workforce development agency, said money alone is not enough. Business, government, and educators must collaborate to determine which jobs and skills are needed.

“It’s not just throw money at post-secondary education and training,” she said. “We have to invest where we see consistent demand for workers.”

Robert Gavin can be reached at rgavin@globe.com. ■

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New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are 'Middle-Skill'

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SOURCE National Skills Coalition

Massachusetts' Economic Recovery Tied to Preparing Workers for Jobs Requiring More than High School Diploma, Less Than a Four-Year Degree; Massachusetts Must Invest in Training Time Now To Meet Future Demand

Business, Labor, Education Leaders Launch New Skills2Compete-Massachusetts Campaign

BOSTON, July 14 /PRNewswire/ -- More than 396,000 "middle-skill" job openings--those that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree--are projected for the state by 2016, concludes a new study released today by National Skills Coalition in partnership with SkillWorks and The Workforce Solutions Group. But to unleash the full economic benefits of these openings, Massachusetts will need to continue to invest in proper training and education for its workforce to make sure it has people ready for those jobs.

Though the recession has halted current employment growth, the report projects that middle-skill jobs (including new jobs and replacement) would account for 38 percent of all openings between 2006 and 2016.

"The biotech sector is growing rapidly, and finding qualified employees remains a challenge," said Suzanne Bruhn, Senior Vice President of Strategic Planning and Program Management for Shire Pharmaceutical. "As part of our manufacturing facility expansion here in Massachusetts, we plan to hire around 600 employees, many for positions that do not require four-year degrees. These include jobs such as Manufacturing Operator, Quality Control Technician, and Maintenance Mechanic; entry-level positions with benefits that offer potential for job growth and provide self-sufficient wages."

Despite Massachusetts' strong investments in post-secondary education and workforce training, preparation for middle-skill jobs has not kept up with demand. Prior to the national recession, Massachusetts was already experiencing shortages of middle-skill workers in crucial industries. About 45 percent of all jobs are classified as middle-skill, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers likely have the credentials to fill them. As Massachusetts, along with the rest of the country, moves from recession into recovery, employers will likely once again face the challenge of finding quality middle- and high-skill workers -- slowing the pace of economic growth.

The report, which tracks Massachusetts' jobs at the middle-skill level, notes that as the economy picks up, the Commonwealth will see growth in these kinds of jobs.

"If Massachusetts seeks timely economic recovery and long-term prosperity, the state must ensure that its workforce has the necessary education and training to meet the labor demands of the future," urges Jessie Hogg Leslie of National Skills Coalition, the convening organization for the national Skills2Compete campaign. "The national recession provides a time frame for businesses and the state to be strategic, evaluate labor and skill needs, and train and prepare for the jobs that are expected to grow."

Massachusetts' Forgotten Middle-Skills Jobs also assesses the current and future middle-skill employment and education patterns in the state:

- **Massachusetts' health services and information technology industries show robust demand for middle-skill workers.** The health care and social services industry posted more jobs in 2009 than any other industry in the Commonwealth. In addition, twelve out of the thirteen information technology occupations are expected to see job growth between 2006 and 2016.
- Middle-skill jobs expected to grow by 2016 in Massachusetts include **licensed practical nurses with a median annual earning of \$49,490; and computer support specialists with a median annual earning of \$54,810.** The report includes a list of 30 high-demand middle-skill jobs in Massachusetts.

- **Massachusetts faces challenges when it comes to basic skill attainment.** More than 400,000 Massachusetts residents do not have a high school diploma; and with much of the population growth occurring via foreign-born residents, more than 150,000 have limited or no English speaking ability. Only 5 percent of Massachusetts adults with less than a high school diploma are enrolled in basic education, and only 6 percent of residents with limited English proficiency are enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

The report also finds that close to two-thirds of the people who will be in Massachusetts' workforce in the year 2020 were already working adults in 2005—long past the traditional high school-to-college pipeline. National Skills Coalition says this finding underscores the need for Massachusetts to continue to target training and education to people who are working or who could be working today.

The analysis for the study was performed by National Skills Coalition using data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, American Community Survey and state labor market data from the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development. The analysis is based on the methodology developed for the national Skills2Compete report – *America's Forgotten Middle-Skill Jobs* – by labor economists Harry Holzer and Robert Lerman.

Echoing a vision put forward by the national Skills2Compete campaign, President Obama first challenged every American to commit to at least one year of postsecondary education or training in February 2009, and has continued to signal that investing in a range of skills for America's workforce—"be it at a technical college or a four-year school; vocational training or an apprenticeship"—will be a priority for his Administration.

Kicking off this week with a broad coalition of business, labor and education leaders, the Skills2Compete-Massachusetts campaign is calling on state leaders to embrace a strong vision to guide an economic and education strategy that would allow residents to meet or exceed the President's challenge: Every Massachusetts resident should have access to the equivalent of at least two years of education or training past high school—leading to a vocational credential, industry certification, or one's first two years of college—to be pursued at whatever point and pace makes sense for individual workers and industries. Every person must also have access to the basic skills and support needed to pursue such education.

"An education and training strategy guided by the Skills2Compete vision would give Massachusetts a competitive edge for recovery and long-term growth," says Loh-Sze Leung, SkillWorks Director. "As Massachusetts looks to remain a strong competitor in the global economy, it's critical that we prepare workers for the jobs of the future. We look forward to developing and implementing this economic and education strategy that would better help Massachusetts residents to obtain higher skills and higher wages in middle- and high-skill jobs and careers, encouraging family economic success," added Alan Macdonald, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable.

"The City of Boston has been and continues to be committed to creating opportunities for all of its residents," said Mayor Thomas M. Menino. "We know Boston's most important asset is our workforce and we are proud to be a founding partner of SkillWorks and a number of other initiatives that are aimed at helping more youth and adults gain the kinds of middle-skill credentials that will position the city for growth in the years to come."

The state and national efforts of the Skills2Compete campaign are made possible, in part, by general support from National Skills Coalition's national funders including the Ford Foundation, Joyce Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and Annie E. Casey Foundation.

About Skills2Compete

Skills2Compete is a non-partisan campaign to ensure the U.S. workforce has the skills needed to meet business demand, foster innovation, and grow broadly shared prosperity. The campaign's diverse and growing list of endorsers include national and local leaders from business, labor, education and training, community and civil rights groups, and the public sector. The Skills2Compete Vision: Every U.S. worker should have access to the equivalent of at least two years of education or training past high school—leading to a vocational credential, industry certification, or one's first two years of college—to be pursued at whatever point and pace makes sense for individual workers and industries. Every person must also have the opportunity to obtain the basic skills needed to pursue such education. For more information and to download the full report, *Massachusetts' Forgotten Middle-Skills Jobs*, visit www.nationalskillscoalition.org/Skills2Compete and www.nationalskillscoalition.org/Massachusetts.

National Skills Coalition organizes broad-based coalitions seeking to raise the skills of America's workers across a range of industries. We advocate for public policies that invest in what works, as informed by our members' real-world expertise. And we communicate these goals to an American public seeking a vision for a strong U.S. economy that allows everyone to be part of its success. For more information, visit www.nationalskillscoalition.org.

About SkillWorks

SkillWorks is a ten-year \$25 million investment partnership, housed at the Boston Foundation and jointly supported by 14 funders, to improve workforce development in Boston and Massachusetts; bringing together philanthropy, government, community organizations and employers to address the twin goals of helping low income individuals attain family supporting jobs and businesses find skilled workers. Through SkillWorks partnerships, over 3,000 workers have received

skills training thus far, with over 500 workers placed in jobs, and more than 250 workers receiving promotions. SkillWorks continues to invest in workforce partnerships, public policy advocacy and capacity building. SkillWorks has become a model for cities across the country and for the [National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#). In 2010, SkillWorks launched the Green Jobs Initiative to ensure access to green collar career pathways by lower skilled, low-income adults. For more information please contact SkillWorks Director [Loh-Sze Leung](#) at 617-338-4377 or visit www.skill-works.org.

About The Workforce Solutions Group

The Workforce Solutions Group is a statewide coalition led by the MA Workforce Board Association, the MA AFL-CIO, the Crittenton Women's Union, and the MA Communities Action Network, MA Business Roundtable, the Center for Labor Market Studies and the Workforce Investment Association of MA. This broad coalition brings together a diverse range of employers, unions, education and training providers, community colleges, immigrant advocates, workforce investment boards, and interfaith organizations to advocate for a strong and effective workforce development system. WSG efforts have lead to more than \$50M in additional funding for skills training for workers in Massachusetts. The Workforce Solutions Group hosts the annual [MA Jobs and Workforce Summit](#), issues research reports on the labor economy, and advocates for post secondary training and education in high demand industries. For more information about The Workforce Solutions Group please contact [Sue Parsons](#) at 617-259-2960 or visit www.workforcesolutionsgrp.org.

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The trend: More jobs take training. The advice: Don't stop at high school

By Erin Smith, esmith@lowellsun.com
Updated: 07/19/2010 09:20:34 AM EDT



LOWELL -- Local jobs experts say a new report only confirms the advice they've been giving all along: Get an education.

"There's fewer and fewer jobs available for people with only a high-school diploma," said Michael McQuaid, director of the Career Center of Lowell.

A report released last week by the National Skills Coalition finds that the largest portion of job openings projected for Massachusetts by 2016 are at the "middle-skill" level. These jobs require more than a high-school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree.

"Part of it is making people who only have high-school diplomas aware they should think about going back to school so they will be more job-ready when those positions open up," said McQuaid. "When the economy was stronger, there was a concern about a skills gap. There were job openings in those fields, but the people looking for work didn't have the skills for those jobs."

In 2007, about 45 percent of all jobs were classified as middle-skill, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers had the education and training required to fill those positions, according to the report.

Middle-skill workers include construction workers, high-tech manufacturing workers, nurses and health-care technicians, truckers, IT professionals, EMTs, paramedics, computer-support specialists and biotech workers.

McQuaid said advisers at the career center are constantly encouraging workers to go back to school and get more education.

"We always have people coming in and they just have a high-school diploma, so part of our advice to them is think about the future. Is it really in your best interest to keep taking an \$8- to \$9-an-hour job?" said McQuaid. "You could increase your skills and there will be more jobs available. Plus, they'll probably pay more."

But it's also a question of resources because education often costs money that prospective students do not have, according to McQuaid.

The report's authors urge Massachusetts to take advantage of the expected job growth -- more than 396,000 middle-skill openings are projected in the state by 2016 -- by making significant investments in programs to train more residents who are laid off or working in low-skill jobs and suggests all residents should have access to at least two years of education or training past high school.

"I think that's something everyone agrees on, but the problem is finding the money," said McQuaid.

Kathleen Sweeney, dean of Health Careers at Middlesex Community College, said the school is working to streamline training for entry-level health-care positions.

Sweeney oversees the newly opened Academy of Health Professions at the school, which hosts 27-week certificate programs for jobs as nursing assistants, medical receptionists, medical secretaries and phlebotomists, workers trained to draw blood from patients.

Sweeney said the programs are designed to help people not ready for college, those re-entering the work force or students who need to work a middle-skill job while continuing their education. The first class, which began in April, is expected to graduate in September, according to Sweeney.

"It's just really what a community college does -- help fill jobs in the work force and help students get into the work force," said Sweeney.

Read more: http://www.lowellsun.com/ci_15549471?IADID=Search-www.lowellsun.com-www.lowellsun.com#ixzz0uAQ0R03S



Report: More jobs in Mass. require 'middle skills'

AP Associated Press

updated 7/14/2010 4:15:09 PM ET

BOSTON — It's not necessarily highly-skilled workers that Massachusetts will need the most in the coming years, but those with so-called "middle skills."

That's the conclusion of a report released on Wednesday by the National Skills Coalition, which advocates for worker training.

The report projects that by 2016, Massachusetts will have nearly 400,000 job openings that require more than a high [school](#) diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. The report says "middle-skill" jobs will account for 38 percent of all openings.

Ranging from licensed practical nurses to [computer](#) support specialists, the jobs have median annual incomes of about \$50,000 to \$55,000.

The report says the state faces challenges in meeting the demand for middle-skilled workers, with only 32 percent of current employees having the credentials.

General News US

National Skills Coalition: New Report: Largest Portion of Job Openings Projected for Massachusetts by 2016 Are 'Middle-Skill'

Jul 14, 2010 13:04 CEST

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Despite Massachusetts' strong investments in post-secondary education and workforce training, preparation for middle-skill jobs has not kept up with demand. Prior to the national recession, Massachusetts was already experiencing shortages of middle-skill workers in crucial industries. About 45 percent of all jobs are classified as middle-skill, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers likely have the credentials to fill them. As Massachusetts, along with the rest of the country, moves from recession into recovery, employers will likely once again face the challenge of finding quality middle- and high-skill workers – slowing the pace of economic growth.

The report, which tracks Massachusetts' jobs at the middle-skill level, notes that as the economy picks up, the Commonwealth will see growth in these kinds of jobs.

"If Massachusetts seeks timely economic recovery and long-term prosperity, the state must ensure that its workforce has the necessary education and training to meet the labor demands of the future," urges Jessie Hogg Leslie of National Skills Coalition, the convening organization for the national Skills2Compete campaign. "The national recession provides a time frame for

businesses and the state to be strategic, evaluate labor and skill needs, and train and prepare for the jobs that are expected to grow."

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SOURCE National Skills Coalition



Report: More Mass. jobs will require 'middle skills'

(NECN: Boston, Mass.) - The jobs will range from licensed practical nurses to computer support specialists.

They're called "middle skills," jobs that require more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree.

The National Skills Coalition said that Massachusetts will have nearly 400,000 such job openings by 2016. The jobs have median annual incomes of \$50,000 to \$55,000 and will reportedly account for 38 percent of all openings.

The report says the state faces challenges meeting the demand for middle-skilled workers, with only 32 percent of current employees having proper credentials.

For more information go to www.nationalskillscoalition.org



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Massachusetts' Forgotten Middle Skills Jobs

Did you know that over the next 6 years, nearly 400,000 job openings in Massachusetts will require more than a high school education but not a four-year degree? These "middle-skill" jobs comprise 45 percent of the jobs in Massachusetts and are a vital part of our economy. Read more by downloading [Massachusetts' Forgotten Middle Skill Jobs](#), a report released today by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation-supported SkillWorks and the Workforce Solutions Group in partnership with the National Skills Coalition. [Click here to read the Boston Globe Story](#) on the report. And don't forget to visit the [SkillWorks web site](#).

For another look at the level of preparedness of our region, read our report, ["What it Takes to Succeed in the 21st Century – and How New Englanders Are Faring."](#)

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Report: Largest portion of job openings projected by 2016 are 'middle-skill'

Tags: [talent management](#), [manufacturing](#)

More than 396,000 "middle-skill" job openings – those that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree – are projected for the state by 2016, concludes a new study released July 14 by National Skills Coalition in partnership with SkillWorks and The Workforce Solutions Group. But to unleash the full economic benefits of these openings, Massachusetts will need to continue to invest in proper training and education for its workforce to make sure it has people ready for those jobs.

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The report, which tracks Massachusetts' jobs at the middle-skill level, notes that as the economy picks up, the Commonwealth will see growth in these kinds of jobs.

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Mass. unemployment falls to 9 percent

July 15, 2010 12:00 AM

The Associated Press

BOSTON — The Massachusetts unemployment rate fell from 9.2 percent to 9 percent in June, figures obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press show.

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development also revealed the state added 500 jobs overall in June.

That bumped the work force to 3.18 million, leading the administration to celebrate the fifth consecutive month of job gains in Massachusetts. "Year-to-date, 27 percent of the jobs lost during the recent economic downturn (March 2008 through December 2009) have been regained," said a news release subsequently issued by the Labor department.

Yet a similar report in May showed the state gaining 30 times more jobs — more than 15,000. In addition, the report showed the overall workforce down by 7,500, as some people gave up seeking jobs.

Labor Secretary Joanne Goldstein said the new figures were dampened by 2,900 lost Census jobs but reflect job growth nonetheless. The state added 3,400 jobs in seven sectors, including leisure and hospitality; construction; and trade, transportation and utilities.

"It's certainly lower this month, but what I take away is the 3,400 jobs we created in the private sector," Goldstein said during an interview. "The Census jobs were never going to be permanent," she added, saying they skewed the May numbers higher than normal and alternately affected the June figures.

Gov. Deval Patrick, who is seeking re-election, said in a statement: "Today's jobs numbers are another clear indication that Massachusetts is on the road to recovery."

Meanwhile, a report says it's not necessarily highly skilled workers that Massachusetts will need the most in the coming years, but those with so-called "middle skills."

The report, released on Wednesday by the National Skills Coalition, which advocates for worker training, projects that by 2016, Massachusetts will have nearly 400,000 job openings that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. The report says "middle-skill" jobs will account for 38 percent of all openings.

Ranging from licensed practical nurses to computer support specialists, the jobs have median annual incomes of about \$50,000 to \$55,000.

The report says the state faces challenges in meeting the demand for middle-skilled workers, with only 32 percent of current employees having the credentials.

The state Labor department issued its unemployment report a day earlier than scheduled, following inquiries by the AP about a draft of the news release it shared Tuesday with a bevy of labor groups and employment lawyers.

In a mass e-mail, the department's communications director sought input and edits from nearly 50 recipients for the proposed release. They included representatives of the Utility Contractors Association of New England, the Associated Builders and Contractors of Massachusetts and the Laborers Union.

"Use this one to edit — and please remember — once you work on it, I have to have the secretary's approval too, so as soon as you can," Alison Harris wrote.

Goldstein said the release was mistakenly sent to the wrong distribution list.

"This was a simple mistake," the secretary said. "Someone was tired, it was the end of the day, and when they did their drop-down box (for addressing), they clicked the wrong box."

Goldstein also insisted the department never solicits outside input on public documents.

"We solicit no one's input outside the administration," she said. "Never have done it before; never will do it again."

Wednesday, Jul. 14, 2010

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National Skills Coalition



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BOSTON, July 14 -- /PRNewswire/ -- More than 396,000 "middle-skill" job openings—those that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree—are projected for the state by 2016, concludes a new study released today by National Skills Coalition in partnership with SkillWorks and The Workforce Solutions Group. But to unleash the full economic benefits of these openings, Massachusetts will need to continue to invest in proper training and education for its workforce to make sure it has people ready for those jobs.

Though the recession has halted current employment growth, the report projects that middle-skill jobs (including new jobs and replacement) would account for 38 percent of all openings between 2006 and 2016.

"The biotech sector is growing rapidly, and finding qualified employees remains a challenge," said Suzanne Bruhn, Senior Vice President of Strategic Planning and Program Management for Shire Pharmaceutical. "As part of our manufacturing facility expansion here in Massachusetts, we plan to hire around 600 employees, many for positions that do not require four-year degrees. These include jobs such

as Manufacturing Operator, Quality Control Technician, and Maintenance Mechanic; entry-level positions with benefits that offer potential for job growth and provide self-sufficient wages."

Despite Massachusetts' strong investments in post-secondary education and workforce training, preparation for middle-skill jobs has not kept up with demand. Prior to the national recession, Massachusetts was already experiencing shortages of middle-skill workers in crucial industries. About 45 percent of all jobs are classified as middle-skill, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers likely have the credentials to fill them. As Massachusetts, along with the rest of the country, moves from recession into recovery, employers will likely once again face the challenge of finding quality middle- and high-skill workers – slowing the pace of economic growth.

The report, which tracks Massachusetts' jobs at the middle-skill level, notes that as the economy picks up, the Commonwealth will see growth in these kinds of jobs.

"If Massachusetts seeks timely economic recovery and long-term prosperity, the state must ensure that its workforce has the necessary education and training to meet the labor demands of the future," urges Jessie Hogg Leslie of National Skills Coalition, the convening organization for the national Skills2Compete campaign. "The national recession provides a time frame for businesses and the state to be strategic, evaluate labor and skill needs, and train and prepare for the jobs that are expected to grow."

Read more: <http://www.sunherald.com/2010/07/14/2329537/new-report-largest-portion-of.html#ixzz0tmljp2qO>

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

Report: More jobs in Mass. require 'middle skills'

The Associated Press

BOSTON — It's not necessarily highly-skilled workers that Massachusetts will need the most in the coming years, but those with so-called "middle skills."

That's the conclusion of a report released on Wednesday by the National Skills Coalition, which advocates for worker training.

The report projects that by 2016, Massachusetts will have nearly 400,000 job openings that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. The report says "middle-skill" jobs will account for 38 percent of all openings.

Ranging from licensed practical nurses to computer support specialists, the jobs have median annual incomes of about \$50,000 to \$55,000.

The report says the state faces challenges in meeting the demand for middle-skilled workers, with only 32 percent of current employees having the credentials.

Online: National Skills Coalition, <http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org>

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Staff Reports

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Online: National Skills Coalition, www.nationalskillscoalition.org



PhDs Need Not Apply: Middle-Skill Jobs In Demand

By Livia Gershon

Worcester Business Journal Staff Writer

Yesterday

Massachusetts may be known for its production of some of the most highly educated workers in the world, but what it really needs is people with a moderate amount of college education.

That's according to a new study by the [National Skills Coalition](#), which argues that jobs for people with more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree will make up 38 percent of openings between 2006 and 2016.

These "middle-skill" jobs make up 45 percent of the labor market, but only 32 percent of Massachusetts workers are qualified for them, the coalition said.

Among the industries with a growing need for middle-skill workers are health care, information technology and biomanufacturing.

The coalition conducted the study in partnership with the Massachusetts workforce development initiative [SkillWorks](#) and the recruitment firm The Workforce Solutions Group.



Jul 14, 2010 4:04 pm US/Eastern

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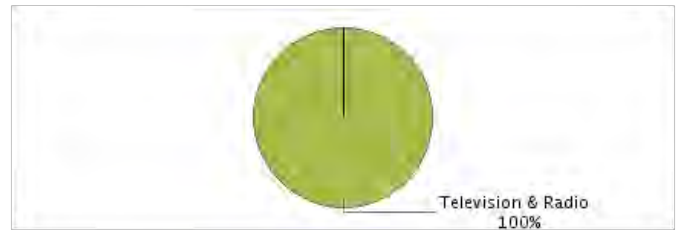
Online: National Skills Coalition, www.nationalskillscoalition.org

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% Total Hits**CG - National Skills Coalition**

07/14/2010 - 07/15/2010

Television and Radio

1. Business Day

NECN, Boston | DMA: 7
 07/14/2010, 08:30 PM - 09:00 PM

[CC] 00:14:49 We want them. We need them, but this recovering economy has been slow to generate them. Where to look for jobs in Massachusetts? A new report says look for growth in so-called middle **skill** jobs. It's from the **NationalSkillsCoalition** in partnership with **Skillworks** and the **WorkforceSolutionsGroup** ...00:19:56

2. NECN Business

NECN, Boston | DMA: 7
 07/14/2010, 06:30 PM - 07:00 PM

[EC] 00:12:43 We want them. We need them, but this recovering economy has been slow to generate them. Where to look for jobs in Massachusetts? A new report says look for growth in so-called middle **skill** jobs. It's from the **NationalSkillsCoalition** in partnership with **Skillworks** and the **WorkforceSolutionsGroup** ... 00:18:24

Keywords:TZ; Middle **Skilled Jobs** : **NationalSkills Coalition**; **Skill Works**; Shire Pharmaceutical; Community Colleges; Middlesex Community College; Crittendon Women's Union;

Visuals:MA Jobs; Job Openings; Middle **Skill Jobs** Definition; Global Markets; Gold; Silver;

Speakers:Loh-Sze Leung, Director, **Skillworks**; Suzanne Bruhn, Sr. VP Shire Pharmaceutical;

3. NECN Today

NECN, Boston | DMA: 7
 07/14/2010, 05:00 PM - 06:00 PM

[CC] 00:47:58 Coming up later on necn business, skill gap. How Massachusetts' shortage of middle **skill workers** could affect state's economic recovery and what's being done about it.00:50:58

4. WBZ News

WBZ-AM (CBS) Freq. 1030, Boston | DMA: 7
 07/14/2010, 06:00 PM - 07:00 PM

00:26:24 Those with mid-level skills may be the ones in highest demand in the job market in the Bay State. A study by **SkillWorks** and the **National SkillsCoalition** finds that close to 400 thousand middle skills will open in our state by 2016... 00:29:24

5. WBZ News

WBZ-AM (CBS) Freq. 1030, Boston | DMA: 7
 07/14/2010, 04:00 PM - 05:00 PM

00:27:06 Those with mid-level skills may be the ones in highest demand in the job market in the Bay State. A study by **SkillWorks** and the **National SkillsCoalition** finds that close to 400 thousand middle skills will open in our state by 2016... 00:30:06

6. Newscenter 5 Eyeopener

WCVB-TV (ABC) CH 5, Boston | DMA: 7
 07/14/2010, 05:00 AM - 06:00 AM

[EC] 00:53:52 Good news on the job front in Massachusetts the state could get 400,000 new jobs in the next six years according to the Boston globe, a study says jobs will include computer support specialists and radiation therapists, which typically won't require a four-year college degree

Clips and compilations are available in a variety of formats, including DVD, CD, Digital File Videotape, QuickViewTM, Transcript, and NewsBoardTM. To order, contact your VMS representative or click here to find the nearest VMS office.

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and can pay about 60,000 a year. 00:54:14

Keywords:MA Jobs: The Boston Globe; study; **Skill Works**;

7. 22 News At 11 PM

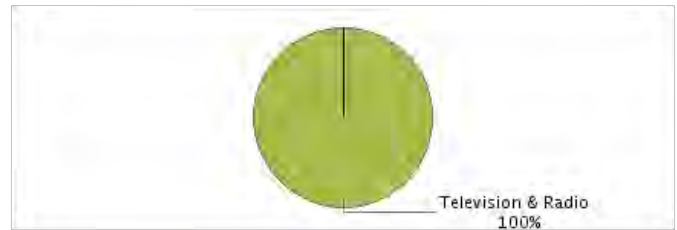
**WWLP-TV (NBC) CH 22, Springfield/Holyoke, MA | DMA: 111
07/14/2010, 11:00 PM - 11:35 PM**

[CC] 00:07:59 It's not necessarily highly-**skilled workers** Massachusetts will need most in the coming years, but those with so-called "middle **skills** ." A **NationalSkillsCoalition** report projects that by 2016, Massachusetts will have nearly 400-thousand job openings that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. The report says the state faces challenges in meeting the demand for middle- **skilled workers**, with only 32 percent of current employees having the credentials.00:10:59

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07/15/2010 - 07/16/2010

Television and Radio

1. 22 News At 5:30 PM

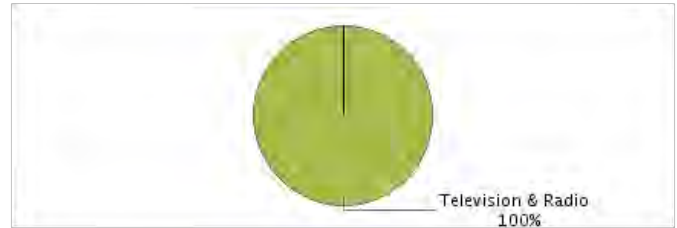
WWLP-TV (NBC) CH 22, Springfield/Holyoke, MA | DMA: 111
 07/15/2010, 05:30 PM - 06:00 PM

[CC] 00:04:03 Unemployment numbers may only be falling slowly, but a new report says that one category of worker may be in demand within a few years. 22News reporter Shane Symolon joins us live with the type of jobs employers will be filling. The new report calls them, middle **skills**. Things like computer technicians, and certain manufacturing jobs, may be a big factor in the states economic future. Its not a college degree, or special **skills** that may be the door into Massachusetts jobs over the next few years. But workers like Viviana Monroy. "I went to college for about two semesters and decided to start working and gaining **skills**." And there could be a shortage of workers like her. A new study by the **NationalSkillsCoalition** shows that by 2016, one third of Massachusetts job openings will require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree...00:07:03

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07/18/2010 - 07/19/2010

Television and Radio

1. Jim And Margery

WTKK-FM (CNN) Freq. 96.9, Boston | DMA: 7
 07/15/2010, 07:00 AM - 08:00 AM

00:31:47 The report says only thirty two percent of current employees have mid-level skills credentials. The report was issued by the **NationalSkillsCoalition** ... 00:34:47