

BCREB Honors 3 Exceptional Community Leaders

BY HEATHER BOULGER,
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Each year the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Inc. honors individuals and employers who exemplify professionalism, a strong commitment to the community, and who constantly strive to improve the workforce development system for our 32 communities in Berkshire County. Three such individuals were recognized by Mayor James Ruberto on June 3rd at Kimball Farms in Lenox as part of the BCREB's annual meeting.

people ages 14-21 succeed. Her efforts have impacted more than 2,500 youth in her 5 year tenure through advocacy, connecting youth to educational options, and finding internships and career opportunities for our young people. Heather is a leader in the community, is developing innovative youth programming, and is a wealth of information relating to youth issues. She is a consummate professional that always goes beyond the call of duty to help Berkshire County's young residents and employers connect.

Representative Daniel Bosley was acknowledged as "Workforce Advocate of the Year" for his leadership forging numerous adult basic education, career center,

youth, and workforce training efforts forward. During his 26 years in public policy, Representative Bosley was a workforce champion for Emerging Technologies, Economic Stimulus packages that included STEM an initiative to encourage students to pursue the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, as well as encouraged technology applications in classrooms and workforce



Representative
Daniel Bosley

training and development. In his tenure he lead policy change rewriting unemployment insurance laws twice, multiple stimulus bills, green jobs initiatives, expansion of broadband, and the creative economy council. He hosted student interns, advocated for our most vulnerable youth and adults, forged listening tours, and connected employers to training opportunities. As he pursues other ventures, he will always be greatly respected in the workforce community and will be greatly missed in the legislature. ■

The BCREB Board of Directors and staff are truly honored to have the privilege of working with these professionals.



Catherine A. Doherty, Chief Executive Officer for The Brien Center was honored as "Employer of the Year" for making a difference in workforce development in Berkshire County and for her commitment to excellence. For 90 years the Brien Center has provided comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services to Berkshire residents through community-based services that promote the highest possible degree of recovery, independence and quality of life of those served. Assisting more than 11,000 clients annually, the Brien Center goes above and beyond to recruit, train and retain quality staff. This tradition continues under Katie's leadership as the Brien Center works closely with Berkshire Works by forwarding job opportunities, participating in speed networking events and job/career fairs, and by hiring people from the BerkshireWorks Executive Roundtable.

Katie has a fantastic relationship with community partners and ultimately connects dislocated workers to employment possibilities.

Heather Shogry, Youth Director for the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board was recognized as "Workforce Professional of the Year" for her continued advocacy and leadership to help our young



Heather Shogry

Help Make A Difference For Youth This Summer

Why should you hire high school students? Remember your first job experience? Someone gave you an opportunity to begin your work life and now you have a great opportunity to return the favor by hiring an energetic, motivated young person for your workforce.

One of the greatest predictors of whether a person can keep a job as an adult is whether they had a job as a teenager. Summer jobs help teens make the connection to the workplace and help them understand the importance of staying in school and succeeding academically. A glance at the statistics shows that the participation of teens in our labor force is at an all-time low. The number slid from 57% among teenagers in 1999 to 39% in 2006.

Although most companies have already hired their summer help for this year, there are hundreds of youth ages 14-21 that would like to work but cannot find employment. If you are an employer and are interested in hiring a summer youth or providing paid internships, please contact the BCREB at (413) 442-7177 so we can help put these youth to work.

Youth Employment Resource - Berkshire Works

The region's one-stop career center - Berkshire Works assists young job seekers and has been hosting job fairs and workshops to help youth create a resume, know workplace basics, and how to make a good impression at a job interview. Berkshire Works has also created a youth friendly website with links to "youth-friendly" employers. www.berkshireworks.org has great employment information and their blog www.IwantAjobNow.org has great pointers for the job seeker on how to be prepared at the worksite.

Already Hired a Youth this Summer? Know the Child Labor Laws!

A summer job can be a great learning experience for both the high school student and the employer. Summer jobs teach youth valuable skills: responsibility, punctuality, following directions, get-

ting along with others, establishing a good work ethic and managing money. Summer jobs help employers by creating an opportunity to train your future workforce, reducing your recruitment costs, and reenergizing your current workforce. But before teens dive into the workforce, here are some ideas to help avoid occupational hazards.

Ages 13 and under - can work at the discretion of parents. *Good options include babysitting, delivering newspapers, pet sitting, helping with businesses owned by their parents, and doing yard work (but no power equipment).*

Ages 14 & 15: Work Permit Required. Working hours cannot coincide with school hours and must be between 7 AM and 9PM; up to 3 hours on school days; up to 18 hours in a school week; up to 8 hours on a non-school day; up to 40 hours during a non-school week. *Good options include clerking in a retail store, assisting in a library, general office work and computer work.*

Ages 16 & 17: Work Permit Required. Can work from 6 AM to 10 PM (exceptions with restaurants); up to 48 hours during the week. All positions are available except those declared hazardous by the Department of Labor (driving; roofing, demolition, logging, excavation - anything that uses power-driven machines). *Good options are jobs related to the teen's possible career choice, including the region's critical industries healthcare, social services, retail, finance, travel/tourism, etc.*

Ages 18 -21. No restrictions. No longer fall under the federal child employment laws.

Please be advised that the information above is being provided as a public service only, and the BCREB strongly encourages employers, parents and youth to familiarize themselves with all state and federal employment laws and to seek professional legal advice when necessary. Please visit the Attorney General's office website for more information at www.ago.state.ma.us or (617) 727-3465. ■