



# This Labor Day, Honor Workers of Every Generation

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Whether you carry a briefcase or a lunch pail to work or are age 16 or 86, we pay tribute to you – the Berkshire County worker – who are contributing to the power and prosperity of our nation. This year's Labor Day celebrations give rise to parades, speeches, picnics, and back-yard barbecues throughout the nation. The holiday provides an opportunity for people to relax and honor the American worker. Labor Day represent the culmination of efforts by the labor movement to establish a day in recognition of the comprehensive and vital achievements of American workers.

The first observance of Labor Day is believed to have been a parade on Sept. 5, 1882, in New York City, probably organized by Peter J. McGuire, a Carpenters and Joiners Union secretary. By 1893, more than half the states were observing a "Labor Day" on one day or another, and a bill to establish a federal holiday was passed by Congress in 1894. President Grover Cleveland signed the bill soon afterward, designating the first Monday in September as Labor Day.

## Who are we Celebrating?

- 138.9 million people age 16 or older in the nation's labor force (54% men and 46% women);
- 3.47 million in Massachusetts; and
- 68,417 in Berkshire County.
- 7.3 million workers hold down **more than one job**
- 10.3 million **self-employed workers**
- 20.3 million **Female workers** in educational, health and social services
- 11.3 million **Male workers** in manufacturing
- 28% of workers work more than **40 hours a week**; 8% work 60 or more hours a week
- 15.8 million **Labor union** members nationwide
- 4.5 million people **work at home**
- 24.3 minutes – the average time it takes to **commute to work** (all stats from 2010 US Bureau of Labor Statistics)



On Labor Day we pay tribute to the generations of men and women who built America — workers who made this country the hope of the world and the land of opportunity for millions of people. The nation's workers continue to reinvent themselves as we leave the industrial age behind and enter the 21st century workplace of service and information technology jobs. Not surprisingly, more people today work with a mouse than a hammer.

Happy Labor Day!

## Honor the Contributions of Older Workers, September, 20-25

Did you know that seniors age 55 and older are one of the fastest growing labor groups in the U.S.? By 2014, 41% of Americans 55 or older will be employed, making up over 21% of the U.S. labor force. Did you also know that 18% of the Berkshire County workforce is age 55 or older? **National Employ Older Workers Week** aims to increase awareness of this labor segment, develops innovative strategies to tap it, and showcases the Senior Community Service Employment Program, which provides on-the-job skills training to individuals 55 or older with limited financial resources.

One way to introduce employers to the benefits of employing older workers is by joining Elder Services of Berkshire County, the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Berkshire Works, and the U.S. Department of Labor in celebrating **National Employ Older Workers Week, September 20-25**. Both Mayor James Ruberto and Mayor Richard Alcombright will be signing proclamations encouraging employers to participate in activities that recognize the important contributions that older workers make to the Berkshire labor market.



2009 Pittsfield Event

## Please join

**Mayor James Ruberto** on  
Monday, September 20th at 10:00 PM at  
Ralph Fiori Senior Center, Pittsfield

**Mayor Richard Alcombright** on  
Thursday, September 23rd at 10:00 AM at  
Mary Spitzer Senior Center, North Adams

To witness the signing of a proclamation declaring September 20-25th, 2010 as National Employ Older Worker Week

Those ages 55 and older bring enthusiasm, experience and knowledge to the work place, and many employers have discovered that their work ethic is an asset and inspiration. Employers continuously rate mature workers high on factors such as judgment, commitment to quality, attendance and punctuality. These qualities, coupled with their "old fashioned employer loyalty", make older workers an attractive resource for employers seeking workers and possibly mentors for younger workers.

*Pittsfield City  
Councilor  
Peter White  
presenting  
Youth Works  
certificate to  
Caroline who  
worked at the  
Senior Center*



*Students and  
Teachers in  
the Lenox  
ARRA Youth  
Program this  
summer*

