Our Mission
To help businesses expand their markets, generate employment, improve the local economy, and plan for the future development of the Northern Tier region.

Our Vision
To be a leader in developing people, businesses, and communities for a globally competitive region.
As is usually the case, 2014 had its share of both challenges and opportunities. Here at NTRPDC, we did our best to make the most of the opportunities—continuing to provide services and assistance that deliver the most value for the region’s residents and businesses. Partnerships, collaboration, and cooperation continue to be the hallmarks of our success.

NTRPDC, along with our partners, was fortunate to be awarded competitive grant dollars for three new initiatives that should pay dividends in the years to come:

• Partnering with the other Local Development Districts across the state, federal funding from the Make it in America Challenge grant was awarded to help bring businesses and jobs back to the United States. As part of this initiative, NTRPDC is partnering with a coalition focused on the Oil, Gas, and Mining industry sector as a target for Foreign Direct Investment and re-shoring efforts. This is a three-year project, with much of the first year devoted to education. Increasing jobs, as well as private investment in the region, is the ultimate goal.

• The Northern Tier Workforce Investment Board and the Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) partners secured a grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry to study the region’s manufacturing career pathways, establish local training opportunities, and ultimately fund training. During this initial year, the focus of the JOBS1st PA initiative has been to gather input and create an inventory of existing training programs—while looking to fill any gaps—and provide training dollars over the next several years.

• The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development awarded NTRPDC and our PREP partners funds through the Discovered and Developed in PA (D2PA) grant program to facilitate business growth networks—providing businesses and entrepreneurs with a venue to collaborate and share ideas and best practices. Established with the help of the grant, the aim is for these networks to continue to thrive on their own.

NTRPDC also continues to devote resources to promoting the utilization of our region’s rich natural gas resources for value-added business development. Vertical integration of the shale gas reserve is critical to our long-term economic growth. Natural gas utilization projects such as the Panda Liberty Power Plant and IMG Midstream’s multiple substation projects are proof that local natural gas utilization can and is becoming a reality. NTRPDC continues to work hard on these and other important economic and workforce development initiatives.

Thank you to our staff, Executive Board, Full Commission, and Advisory Committee members for their dedication and hard work during 2014. Their commitment to working together to see the Northern Tier Region move forward is what drives our success. We look forward to continuing this work together.

Kevin D. Abrams
Executive Director
Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission

Thomas Henry
Chair, NTRPDC Executive Board
Wyoming County Commissioner
2014 Executive Board

Chair
Thomas Henry
Wyoming County Commissioner

First Vice Chairperson
Alan Hall
Susquehanna County Commissioner

Second Vice Chairperson
Darla Bortz
Sullivan County Commissioner

Secretary
Roger Bunn
Tioga County Commissioner

Treasurer
Daryl Miller
Bradford County Commissioner

Doug McLinko
Bradford County Commissioner

Mark Smith
Bradford County Commissioner

Bob Getz
Sullivan County Commissioner

Wylie Norton
Sullivan County Commissioner

Mike Giangreco
Susquehanna County Commissioner

MaryAnn Warren
Susquehanna County Commissioner

Erick Coolidge
Tioga County Commissioner

Mark Hamilton
Tioga County Commissioner

Judy Mead
Wyoming County Commissioner

Ronald Williams
Wyoming County Commissioner

Staci Covey
President, Guthrie Troy Community Hospital

Tom Freeman
President, Betterment Organization of Mansfield, Inc.

Craig Harting
CEO, Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Mike Narcavage
Community Relations Manager, Southwestern Energy

Jody Place
Area Manager, Penelec (A First Energy Company)

Rick Soden
Vice President, Pennstar Bank

photo courtesy of Daniel Smith
## 2014 Advisory Committees

### Workforce Investment Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brenda Abplanalp</td>
<td>Jody Neary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Anderson</td>
<td>Heather Nelson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Blair</td>
<td>Brenda Roberts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pete Butler</td>
<td>Fred Robinson</td>
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<td>Colleen Engler</td>
<td>Karen Russell</td>
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<td>Bill Farley</td>
<td>Elaine Stalfa</td>
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<td>Charity Field</td>
<td>Loren Stone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craig Harting</td>
<td>Sandy Voda</td>
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<td>Elena Kilpatrick</td>
<td>Deb Wivell</td>
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<td>Paul Kreischer</td>
<td>Terri Zimmerman</td>
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<td>Mike Narcavage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peggy Black</td>
<td>Ryan Satalin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Blair</td>
<td>Richard Schwoebel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matt Dougherty</td>
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<td>Ronald Williams</td>
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<td>Sheryl Potocak</td>
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<td>James Rogers</td>
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### Rural Area Transportation

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<td>Rick Biery</td>
<td>Fred LaVancher</td>
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<td>Ray Stolinas</td>
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<td>Thomas Henry</td>
<td>Jim Weaver</td>
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<td>Donald Hottenstein</td>
<td>Leonard Wheatley</td>
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<td>Mike Hufnagel</td>
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### Economic Development

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<td>Lindsey Sikorski</td>
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<td>Gina Suydam</td>
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<td>William Dovin</td>
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<td>Mike Hufnagel</td>
<td>Cathy Voda</td>
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<td>Jackie Lawrence</td>
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## Funding Sources

**July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014**

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<td>Procurement Technical Assistance</td>
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<td><strong>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services</strong></td>
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<th><strong>Total Program Funds</strong></th>
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In 2014, NTRPDC helped create and retain jobs in the Northern Tier by providing low-interest loans to qualifying businesses seeking to expand their operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borrower</th>
<th>Jobs Retained</th>
<th>Jobs Created</th>
<th>NTRPDC Loan Amount</th>
<th>Private Funds Leveraged</th>
<th>Other Public Funds Leveraged</th>
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<td>That Damn Bar, LLC</td>
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<td>GNR Sporting Goods</td>
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<td>Cole and Burd Motors, Inc.</td>
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<td>The Murus Company, Inc.</td>
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Loan Success Story: The Murus Company

The Murus Company, Inc., based in Mansfield (Tioga County), manufactures polyurethane foam core insulating panels. Murus was established in 1987 and began by selling primarily to Woodhouse Post & Beam Homes (Tioga County). In 1994 the company began exporting to Canada, Japan, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, and other European countries. An additional manufacturing line was added as the business grew, opening the company to new and growing markets.

As part of its business growth, Murus decided to purchase the machinery and equipment assets of one of its largest competitors and move into a new 24,000-square-foot building at the Murus plant in Mansfield. NTRPDC worked in conjunction with the Tioga County Development Corporation (TCDC) and the Northeast Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC) to provide financing to assist the company in purchasing the machinery and equipment. The completion of this project has allowed the company to eliminate a bottleneck in its production process, thereby increasing manufacturing capacity and allowing Murus to meet customer needs in a timely manner.
Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP)

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

Henry Ford

Continuing to Work Together

Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) is Pennsylvania’s statewide network of economic development service providers working together to deliver vital business assistance services across 10 regions of the Commonwealth. The PREP network consists of hundreds of trained and experienced experts who offer assistance and resources. PREP’s one-on-one counseling, specialized workshops, online training, and financial incentives make it one of the most coordinated and respected networks in the nation. PREP makes it easier to learn what public and private sector resources can be quickly harnessed to meet individual and company needs.

In the Northern Tier, the PREP network of partners includes the Progress Authority, Tioga County Development Corporation, Sullivan County Planning and Development, the Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Centers from the University of Scranton and Wilkes University, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center, the Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program at Penn State, and NTRPDC, which serves as the PREP regional coordinator. Working together in a coordinated fashion, the Northern Tier PREP network continues to produce results in assisting our entrepreneurs and business clients with real-world problems.

Supporting Local Businesses

GNR Sporting Goods

NTRPDC and the Tioga County Development Corporation both provided funding in the form of a $25,000 Micro Loan to GNR Sporting Goods, LLC, in Tioga County. GNR is a start-up retail sporting goods business. The monies were used to renovate the former Fastenal building located in Richmond Township, just west of Mansfield. The 4,800-square-foot building has received a major facelift, both inside and out.

GNR carries several lines of products: archery, retail firearms, hunting apparel, trapping supplies, fishing equipment, kayaks, and paddle boats. The company also offers services including an indoor archery range; kayak and paddle board rental and delivery; hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses; and fur-buying. Nine jobs will be created as a result of the funding.

Watson Diesel

Watson Diesel was established more than 25 years ago, primarily as an engine rebuild shop. It has grown into a full-service diesel engine rebuild and repair facility. In addition, the company invented the WD Hot Block, a device that attaches to water truck valves to prevent them from freezing. This device is the first to efficiently and effectively address problems experienced by water haulers and septic tank operators during below-freezing temperatures.

In 2014 the company made a major investment in a former manufacturing plant in downtown Canton. With the help of a $100,000 RLF loan from the Progress Authority, they purchased and renovated the 12,000-square-foot building and are expanding their operations onto the site. The building had stood vacant for years and its condition was...
deteriorating. Although it would have been easier and less expensive for the Watsons to build a new structure outside of town, as lifelong residents of Canton, the Watsons are committed to investing in the downtown business community.

NTRPDC provided assistance by submitting a Job Creation Tax Credit application on behalf of the company. Watson Diesel will retain 14 jobs and create three in its first year of occupancy.

**Annual B2B Expo**

The fifth annual Marcellus Shale Business-to-Business Expo was held on the campus of Mansfield University on June 18, 2014. With nearly 100 businesses exhibiting, this year’s event provided the opportunity for networking among exhibitors as well as with visitors.


Each year, a dedicated Expo Planning Committee helps make the Expo a reality. The 2014 Planning Committee brought together NTRPDC, the Progress Authority, Mansfield University, Penn State Cooperative Extension, the University of Scranton Small Business Development Center, and the Tioga County Development Corporation. The Northern Tier PREP partners also shared a vendor exhibit space and helped cross-promote the services of the entire team.

**Governor’s Impact Awards**

For the second year, the Governor’s Impact Awards recognized companies from throughout the state for their role in creating jobs and making positive contributions to the state’s economy.

Twenty-five Northern Tier businesses were selected as finalists for the Governor’s Impact Awards. The five Northern Tier businesses selected as 2014 award winners were:

- Cabot Oil & Gas Corporation – Community Impact
- Soil Services Company, Inc. – Entrepreneur Impact
- MetalKraft Industries, Inc. – Export Impact
- Hoff Mechanical, Inc. – Jobs First
- Keck’s Food Service, Inc. – Small Business Impact

Above: Soil Services Company founder and president Laurel Mueller accepts an Entrepreneur Impact Award from Governor Tom Corbett.

Below: Nate Singer, Quality Manager for MetalKraft Industries, accepts an Export Impact Award.
The NTRPDC Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) builds relationships with interested area businesses to help connect them with government contracting opportunities at the state and federal levels. In 2014, the PTAC conducted 292 follow-up counseling sessions, and Northern Tier clients won a total of 255 government contracts.

The PTAC works with any business interested in the service, however, the majority of clients are small businesses as they typically lack the staff capacity and time to effectively navigate the government contracting world and identify potential opportunities. Smaller companies also tend to pursue subcontracts rather than serving as prime contractor—a role which often requires the personnel and other resources of a larger company.

Assistance provided by the PTAC includes:

- Dun & Bradstreet registrations
- System for Award Management (SAM) registrations
- PA Supplier Portal registrations
- Marketing reports on prime contractors and government contracting officers
- Assistance with applications for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise certification
- Procurement histories and government forecasts for specific products
- Technical data packages for solicitations
- Technical training on specific contracting databases
- Free “bid-match” system to easily track relevant government solicitations for products and services

### 2014 Procurement Activities by the Numbers

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Follow-up Counseling Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outreach/Training Events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Prime Contract Awards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Subcontract Awards</td>
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<td>State &amp; Local Prime Contract Awards</td>
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<td>State &amp; Local Subcontract Awards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total 2014 Contract Awards</td>
<td>$11,549,874</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Government Contracting Success Story: DumpsterGard, LLC

Sayre-based DumpsterGard, LLC, was awarded a contract with the USDOT Volpe Center, a transportation research entity based in Cambridge, MA. DumpsterGard also won several contracts with local government entities. The company, formed in July 2010, manufactures lightweight rigid dumpster covers. The covers are comprised of 90% recycled content and assist end users in complying with local, state, and federal storm water pollution prevention regulations and other environmental concerns.

The company began working with the PTAC in May 2013. The PTAC assisted DumpsterGard with its System for Award Management (SAM) registration and preparing a Capability Statement. The PTAC also provided free bid matches and other information on potential government customers.
Make it in America Initiative

In 2014, “Make it in America,” a federal grant program, awarded funds to Pennsylvania to accelerate job creation in the state’s 52 rural counties, including the Northern Tier. Pennsylvania’s award was one of only 10 such grants nationwide. NTRPDC is participating in the program along with numerous partners across the state.

The Make it in America initiative is based on a comprehensive plan of “reverse investment,” encouraging foreign companies to expand into the U.S., as well as assisting domestic companies that have moved their production overseas to consider re-shoring their operations and/or supply chains. Pennsylvania’s effort is being carried out over three years, with much of the first year devoted to training and preparation. “Mining and Oil and Gas Field Machinery Manufacturing” has been identified as a strategic industry cluster in the Northern Tier. Early interest has been expressed in both Canada and Australia as potential market locations to target.

As additional market sectors and international partners are identified, NTRPDC will pursue the best opportunities for desirable economic growth in the Northern Tier region. The overall goal is to bring the rest of the world to rural Pennsylvania, resulting in more jobs, more business, and economic growth.

D2PA Business Networking

NTRPDC and its partners continue to communicate with businesses about their needs; many express a need for more opportunities for business networking. In 2014, the Northern Tier Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance partners applied for, and were awarded, $24,000 through the Discovered & Developed in Pennsylvania (D2PA) program to establish and conduct industry-focused Business Growth Networks in the Northern Tier. Prior to D2PA, the Northern Tier did not have any regional industry networks.

The Northern Tier PREP partnership has begun to establish six business networks—two in each of the categories below to provide strong geographical coverage:

- **Small Business Owner Network**, led by the University of Scranton Small Business Development Center.
- **Marcellus Shale Supplier Network**, led by the Tioga County Development Corporation and the Progress Authority.
- **Manufacturers Network**, led by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center.

Networks are meeting quarterly during the course of the grant, and are being facilitated by Northern Tier PREP representatives. Meeting formats are being determined by network participants based upon their shared needs and common business growth objectives.
The NTRPDC Export Program works with area businesses to help them market their products and services to customers in other countries. In 2014, the NTRPDC Export Program worked with 31 Northern Tier clients. The top countries the Northern Tier Region exported to were Canada, China, Mexico, Chile, Vietnam, Spain, and the Czech Republic.

Penn Troy Manufacturing (Troy, Bradford County) received a $3,000 Market Access Grant to help cover costs of a business trip to the Czech Republic. Penn-Troy is a leading manufacturer of water valves, wastewater valves, and explosion relief valves for the water/wastewater and marine industries. They traveled to the Czech Republic for their Bicera Valve’s certification by the International Association of Classification Societies for marine use. This certification allows Penn-Troy to sell to customers in the European Union—a critical step in building their business, since many of the large engine manufacturers are located in Europe.

Cummings Lumber (Troy, Bradford County) also received partial funding to travel to China in 2014 to expand their sales of Pennsylvania hardwoods. Cummings Lumber ships lumber nationally and internationally and is expanding their market base into China. They specialize in hard maple, cherry, soft maple, red oak, white oak and ash.

The Export Program helps fund international marketing trips and also coordinates visits by representatives of international customers and investors.”

Cynthia Traore
NTRPDC Export Program Manager

Eleven clients reported export sales of more than $24.2 million to 25 countries.
In 2014, The Northern Tier Workforce Investment Board and the Northern Tier Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) partners secured a grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry to study the region’s manufacturing career pathways, establish local training opportunities, and fund training. This effort helps our local workers prepare for and advance in their careers, and helps ensure that area employers will have the qualified employees they need to remain competitive.

Beginning with the manufacturing sector, the grant team is gathering input from local partners to map our most common Northern Tier career pathways. Next they are identifying training needed along the pathways. By compiling an inventory of available trainings and comparing available training to training needs, they will be able to identify training gaps. The plan is to develop the needed career development training programs and make training available in 2015.

Ultimately, the Northern Tier Workforce Investment Board and the PREP partners plan to develop career pathways and associated training for several employment sectors in the Northern Tier.

What is a Career Pathway?

“Career pathways” are frameworks that help outline career options available to people who are preparing to enter the job market or are looking for work after a layoff. Career pathways use occupations as a type of career roadmap for jobseekers. Many are organized in “ladders” or “lattices” to indicate occupational progression.

Career pathways reflect the needs of employers and how employees typically progress through levels of the work environment within a particular industry. Understanding career pathways is just as important for incumbent workers as it is for entering workers. Industries such as manufacturing and construction, which rely more on on-the-job training, have very different pathways than industries such as health care, which requires more academic credentials and licensing. Career pathways need to be broad, flexible, and allow for transferrable skills.
Building the Local Workforce

In October 2014, the PA CareerLink® offices in Wellsboro commemorated the opening of their renovated office space. The offices are still located at Plaza Lane in Wellsboro, but moved into a more suitable space within the same building. The new space includes a career resource area for customers to conduct online job searches and access labor market information. There are two classrooms where workshops, GED classes, interviews, and employer recruitment sessions are held.

PA CareerLink® serves all five Northern Tier counties and provides services to both job seekers and employers from the facility as well as from JobGateway®, the Commonwealth’s online system. Staff can provide assistance with resume writing, job searches, and interview techniques, and they offer a range of workshops to interested job seekers. Employers are welcome to conduct interviews and host job fairs at the site. Employers may also use staff services to screen applicants, promote their job openings, and facilitate the hiring process.

In 2014, more than 12,000 residents and 1,200 employers in the Northern Tier region used PA CareerLink® services.
Dislocated Worker Training/ National Emergency Grant

In 2014, NTRPDC continued its workforce training efforts under a two-year, $150,000 National Emergency Grant that runs through June 30, 2015. The grant, awarded to the Northern Tier Workforce Investment Area by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, helps provide individual training and on-the-job training to unemployed workers, with a focus on three industries: Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, and Health Care. The trainings were aligned with in-demand occupations that provide family-sustaining wages and are on the High Priority Occupations list.

As of early 2015, 26 customers have been served—21 participated in Individual Training Accounts or short-term training at an educational institution, and the remaining five participated in on-the-job training (OJT) with an employer. Fourteen participants have been placed in jobs thus far.

Certificates that have been earned include:
- Commercial Driver’s License (CDL)
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
- Phlebotomy
- Heavy Equipment
- Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration

“The work-based training focuses on providing OJT opportunities that give the worker the ability to obtain credentials and ultimately earn family-sustaining wages.”

Frank Thompson
NTRPDC Deputy Director – Workforce Development

The program’s top priority are veterans and long-term unemployed (unemployed for 27 consecutive weeks or more), who are likely to exhaust their Unemployment Insurance benefits.

Depending on their circumstances, customers may be provided with assistance in areas such as child care and transportation in order to make participating in training sessions feasible.

Customers in Individual Training Accounts may also apply for financial assistance to cover tuition, fees, books, tools, equipment, etc.

OJTs are limited to private non-profit and private industry employers; employers are reimbursed based on a sliding scale according to the size of the company.

Intensive job coaching, counseling, and placement assistance can be provided to a customer after training to ensure the best possible outcome.

Occupations that qualify for training under the targeted industries:

**Manufacturing**
- Mechanical Engineers
- Sales Representatives
- Customer Service Representatives
- Shipping & Receiving Clerks
- Maintenance Workers
- Machinists

**Energy**
- Office Clerks
- Roustabouts
- Welders
- Construction Trades & Extraction Workers
- Electrical Repairers
- Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- Power Plant Operators
- Wellhead Pumpers

**Health Care**
- Health Care Social Workers
- Pharmacists
- Registered Nurses
- Dietitians & Nutritionists
- Dental Hygienists
- Radiologic Technicians
The Northern Tier Workforce Investment Board (WIB) continues to assist area youth in preparing for satisfying careers. In 2014, 59 Northern Tier youth participated in the six-week Summer Employment Program.

The program provides a blend of classroom sessions, worksite tours, and on-the-job experience to introduce participants to potential careers and build skills needed for securing and retaining a job. Classroom sessions include workshops on interviewing techniques, how to write a resume, career exploration, finance and budgeting, and team-building.

For the hands-on portion of the program, participants were assigned paid positions at one of 28 worksites.

The Summer Employment Program is funded through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Participating employers:
- School districts
- Project Grow
- Sullivan County Library
- Susquehanna Borough
- Wheeland Lumber Company
- Tioga County YMCA
- Goodwill
- Canyon Country Cabs
- Wellsboro Pet Complex
- Wellsboro Borough
- Mansfield Borough
- TREHAB, Inc.
- Wyoming County Senior Center
- Interfaith Friends
- Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau
- Wyoming County Recycling
- Star Hill Rest Home

“Summer Employment Program participants had the opportunity to earn the National Retail Federation’s certification in customer service—a nationally recognized credential for those pursuing retail employment.”

Sherry Felten
NTRPDC Workforce Development Program Manager
Helping Health Care Professionals Progress in Their Careers

Throughout 2014, the NTRPDC Workforce Investment Board (WIB) utilized funding from the Northeast Regional Health Care Industry Partnership to subsidize training costs for 97 health care professionals throughout the Northern Tier. Trainings included:

- Certified Nurse’s Aide (CNA) Certification
- Medical-Surgical Certification Exam Prep for Nurses
- Perioperative Services Certification Exam Prep for Nurses
- Perfecting Patient Care
- Improving Health Care through Supervisory Development

Building the Next Generation of Health Care Professionals

In addition to training, Health Care Industry Partnership funding helps produce youth health career fairs. In November 2014, approximately 110 high school students from Tioga County attended a Health Career Fair where they learned about many health careers that offer rewarding benefits such as competitive pay and opportunity for advancement. The students participated in a variety of hands-on activities as they circulated among stations with different health care professionals and training providers. They were able to speak directly with professionals in various health fields to gain a better understanding of the training needs for specific careers as well as available employment opportunities. More than two dozen health careers were highlighted at the fair, including:

- Speech therapy
- Respiratory therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Radiology

The Northeast Regional Health Care Industry Partnership provided students with a “Career Exploration Guide” highlighting health occupations and training opportunities in our region. The students also received current health care employment information for the Northern Tier through a “Health Care Fast Facts Sheet” developed for the event by the Northern Tier Workforce Investment Board.

“Connecting health care professionals to training that will enhance their skills and qualifications is a critical aspect of developing this important industry in the Northern Tier.”

Sherry Felten
NTRPDC Workforce Development Program Manager
Throughout 2014, NTRPDC continued to work with local businesses and governments to help make their economic and community development projects a reality. Providing grant application preparation assistance as well as general project development planning has helped many communities move forward on needed projects.

Multiple communities in Athens and Sayre (Bradford County) were awarded funds through the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) for trail and outdoor recreational development. Athens Township was awarded funds for further development at Round Top Park, creating a site with multiple uses. Funds will be used to construct an entrance road, parking area, pavilions, walkways, a fishing pier, and a boardwalk, all accessible to people with disabilities. The work is Phase 1 of a larger project to include playground equipment, landscaping, enlarging the lower level picnic area by the pond, and improving the overall site and amenities. NTRPDC worked with Athens Township Parks and Recreation and assisted with project planning and development as well as grant application preparation.

“The grant of $100,000 will benefit our $814,000 project, enabling the Parks Commission to complete the first phase by the end of the 2015. We value DCNR’s support for our project, which will benefit not only the local residents who use the park, but also the visitors who frequent the park from outside our area. The focus of the project is to enhance the park and create more ways to serve a more diverse population by offering ways to assist those who have special challenges in their day-to-day lives, as well as offer healthy alternatives of outdoor exercise and recreation.”

Richard Bean
Athens Township Parks Commission Chairman
The Diahoga Trail project along the Susquehanna River in Athens and Sayre was awarded $241,000 by DCNR in 2014. The funds will assist in developing the trail from the Athens Bridge past Riverfront Park to the Hayden Higgins intersection in Sayre Borough. The project has been envisioned by the communities for several years, but gained momentum during rebuilding efforts following the 2011 floods. Residents sought ways to encourage positive and lasting development, and enable people to safely enjoy the river and understand its significance in local history. Currently, many residents already walk near or along the river, but do so either on South River Street, adjacent to the Athens Bridge, or by creating their own path through the woods. When complete, this trail will connect multiple other trails and area parks, further connecting these communities.

Futurescapes, a local nonprofit formed as part of the flood rebuilding efforts, is spearheading the trail project. Securing funding was truly a partnership as Bradford County, Sayre Borough, Athens Borough, Civil and Environmental Consultants, and Todd Babcock, PLS, all committed either cash funds or in-kind services to provide the funding match needed for the grant and assist in completing this project. NTRPDC assisted the boroughs in project planning and grant application preparation. Other project partners include the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, Bradford County Conservation District, and the Endless Mountains Heritage Region. Athens Borough, Sayre Borough, and the Valley Joint Sewer Authority all entered into an agreement to pursue the project, with Sayre Borough named as the grant applicant.

Many communities are considering enhancing their outdoor recreational opportunities as a means of attracting visitors and making their community a desirable place to both work and play. NTRPDC has welcomed the opportunity help communities understand the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors and implement actions to bring all three into their communities.

### 2014 Grant Preparation Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Grant Request</th>
<th>Total Project Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Westfield Business Park Demolition</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westfield Business Park Clean-up</td>
<td>$195,622</td>
<td>$295,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diahoga Trail</td>
<td>$80,986</td>
<td>$321,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round Top Park</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$814,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diahoga Trail</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
<td>$321,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towanda Borough Development Project</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westfield Business Park Final Clean-up</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$208,700</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Long-Range Transportation Plan Update

In 2014, NTRPDC completed the Northern Tier Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update. The plan aims to guide development and maintenance of the region’s transportation system and considers all modes of transportation—from highways and bridges to rail freight, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and airports. It includes a prioritized list of projects and planning activities to maintain, improve, and, where appropriate, expand the region’s transportation system over the next 25 years (2015-2040). The plan was shaped by input from the community, transportation stakeholders, the NTRPDC Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), local governments, economic development agencies, community organizations, businesses, and the region’s five conservation districts.

Locally Owned Bridge Database

An ongoing transportation initiative is NTPRDC’s work with PennDOT to gather data on locally owned bridges between 8 and 20 feet long. This effort is contributing to development of a database that will help prioritize and manage local bridge maintenance, repair, and reconstruction efforts.

Transportation Improvement Program

As the Northern Tier’s Rural Planning Organization, NTRPDC works with PennDOT, area partners, and stakeholders to prioritize and advance transportation maintenance and construction projects while planning for future transportation needs. The table below summarizes 2014 transportation investments by type and county implemented as part of the region’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement Type</th>
<th>Bradford County</th>
<th>Sullivan County</th>
<th>Susquehanna County</th>
<th>Tioga County</th>
<th>Wyoming County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridges</td>
<td>$3,059,916</td>
<td>$3,449,138</td>
<td>$2,531,565</td>
<td>$9,111,969</td>
<td>$9,873,402</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>$14,335,033</td>
<td>$9,379,440</td>
<td>$23,786,061</td>
<td>$12,866,772</td>
<td>$18,530,111</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic Signals</td>
<td>$390,909</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transportation Alternatives Program

Four Northern Tier projects were awarded funding in 2014 through the state (PennDOT) allocation of the Federal Highway Administration’s Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Project Scope</th>
<th>Amount Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D&amp;H Rail-Trail (Susquehanna County)</td>
<td>Construct seven miles of a 70-mile rail-trail in Herrick and Ararat townships.</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montrose Borough South Main Street Streetscape Project (Susquehanna County)</td>
<td>Assist in replacing sidewalks along South Main Street.</td>
<td>$189,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trolley Trail (Wyoming County) Project sponsored by Keystone College.</td>
<td>Construct a 1.2-mile non-motorized community-use pedestrian and bike trail between high-use community recreational and educational facilities in La Plume and Factoryville.</td>
<td>$755,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholson Tourism Center at Historic Delaware, Lackawanna and Western (DL&amp;W) Railroad Station (Wyoming County)</td>
<td>Revitalize the region by attracting tourists to the rehabilitated station and the Tunkhannock Viaduct (the Nicholson Bridge).</td>
<td>$821,276</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local Technical Assistance Program

The Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) is a Federal Highway Administration initiative that aims to relay critical transportation information and technology to local highway departments. It helps municipalities more effectively maintain and develop their transportation systems.

NTRPDC coordinated 11 LTAP classes in 2014, providing transportation-related training to 212 municipal employees across the Northern Tier. LTAP Classes:

- Full Depth Reclamation
- Bridge Maintenance and Inspection
- Liquid Bituminous Seal Coats
- Work Zone (Temporary) Traffic Control
- Warm Mix Asphalt
- Winter Maintenance
- Road Surface Management
- Traffic Safety Development Plan for Local Roads

Free customized technical assistance is available to municipalities by calling 1-800-FOR-LTAP.
Equipment Shows

NTRPDC’s 2014 regional equipment shows brought together municipalities and vendors to address municipal equipment needs in the Northern Tier. In July 2014, the Susquehanna/Wyoming Counties Equipment Show at Lazy Brook Park in Wyoming County drew 325 attendees and 50 vendors. In September 2014, the Tioga/Bradford Counties Equipment Show at Alparon Park in Troy attracted 300 visitors and 40 vendors.

“These annual events provide an opportunity for municipal officials and employees to meet vendors, discuss equipment needs one-on-one, and look over equipment in person so they can make more informed purchasing decisions.”
Brian Baker
NTRPDC Transportation Program Manager

Software Training for Municipal Employees

In 2014, NTRPDC coordinated two technical computer trainings for municipal employees. NTRPDC worked with Donna Yale of Penn State’s Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program (PennTAP) to provide instruction on Internet security and computer backup software. Additionally, Diana Patton, Certified QuickBooks ProAdvisor from DDQB Solutions, taught municipal employees how to use QuickBooks 2014, a popular software program for municipal accounting.
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photo courtesy of Mia Lisa Anderson
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