



Quarterly
NTRPDC
update

JULY 2017

Strengthening our Region's:

Communities

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Photo: Robert J. Blair

Building our Communities

What we do to assist the Northern Tier's counties and municipalities:

- Provide grant-writing services
- Coordinate economic development resources
- Facilitate regional transportation planning
- Provide technical and website assistance to municipalities
- Assist with community, economic, and transportation development projects
- Provide training to municipal employees

The following pages highlight upcoming events and what we've been working on this past fiscal quarter.



Economic Development Advisory Committee Prioritizes Projects

In June, the Northern Tier Economic Development Advisory (EDA) Committee met and prioritized local and regional economic development projects for FY 2018. Each year, NTRPDC works with the community and economic development partners to gather information on current and potential future projects in the region. Examples of projects include, but are not limited to: infrastructure, trails planning and development, brown-field redevelopment, and other projects promoting a sustainable community, enhancing communications, and promoting economic development.

NTRPDC works with each project to help move it forward and can provide planning assistance, technical assistance, and grant-writing assistance. Projects that qualify are submitted to the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for potential funding. Other projects are connected with other funding sources if eligible. The project collection process is an importance aspect of working with the community to help promote sustainable economic development throughout the region.

The Economic Development Advisory (EDA) Committee is comprised of elected officials, economic developers, and stakeholders from each of the five counties in the Northern Tier region—each county’s commissioners appoint three members. The committee meets quarterly to discuss potential economic development projects, brainstorm ideas to move projects forward, and maintain an open line of communication on economic development initiatives in each county.

For more information on the project collection process, please contact Rachel Hauser, Economic Development Program Manager, at 570-265-1529 or hauser@northerntier.org.

Forest City Borough Awarded Grant

Forest City Borough was awarded a \$46,329 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Keystone Communities Program (KCP) to complete Phase 1 of downtown redevelopment efforts in Forest City. The work is part of a \$92,659 project to install sidewalk lighting along the 400-600 block of Main Street. The lighting project will be supplemented by replacing the sidewalk trees

with a species that has a shorter canopy and is therefore more compatible with the overhead utility lines and less obscuring of the business facades.

Forest City Borough has taken an active role in downtown redevelopment, seeking to make their town a friendlier place to live, do business, and visit. The Phase 1 project is part of a larger initiative of total Main Street redevelopment to help strengthen the character and friendly atmosphere of this community.

NTRPDC Leads Regional 'PennDOT Connects' Collaboration

As the Rural Planning Organization (RPO) for the Northern Tier region, NTRPDC is leading collaboration for PennDOT Connects, a statewide initiative promoting greater collaboration among state, regional, and local entities on transportation projects.

As part of this initiative, NTRPDC is meeting with communities across the region regarding community needs and transportation projects included in the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is coordinated by NTRPDC in conjunction with local and state partners and is a prioritized list of transportation projects expected to begin within the next four years in the Northern Tier region.

PennDOT Connects aims to transform capital and maintenance project development by ensuring that community collaboration happens early, and that each project is considered in a holistic way for opportunities to improve safety, mobility, access, and environmental outcomes for all modes and local contexts. Earlier collaboration will ensure that projects meet current and projected needs as much as possible, and can reduce costly changes further in the project development process.

PennDOT Connects particularly encourages discussion of safety issues, bicycle/pedestrian accommodation, transit access, stormwater management, utility issues, local and regional plans and studies, freight-generating land uses, and more in relation to transportation projects.





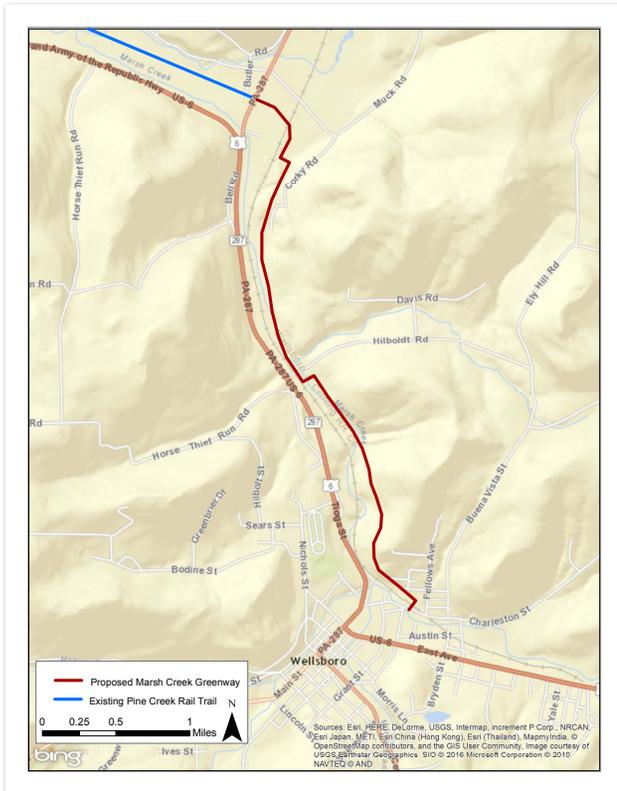
Municipal Employees Attend LTAP's Spring Training Sessions

The Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) held four trainings in April and May with more than 40 municipal employees in attendance.

- The Roadside Safety Features training on April 4 taught participants the importance of roadside safety; roadside hazard identification; hazard removal or relocation; low-cost improvements (pavement markings, delineators, chevrons) and higher-cost improvements (barriers); and guiderail warrants, types, and end treatments.
- The April 6 training on Intersection Safety Issues addressed common safety tasks and low-cost safety improvements that don't require an engineer. This training also provided background information on safety tasks that do require an engineer, and how non-engineers can assist traffic engineers in the safety process.
- On April 13, an Equipment and Worker Safety training was held at the Tunkhannock Township Building. It covered topics including common safety factors for public works road maintenance operations such as trench excavation, crack sealing with hot asphalt, mowing and chain saw use, and winter maintenance; using personal protective equipment; and workplace awareness of chemical safety, environmental hazards, and vehicle and equipment safety issues.
- The May 3 Signs and Safety Features for Bridges/Culverts was held in Montrose, discussing the importance of consistent signs, pavement markings, and delineation at bridges/culverts, as well as signage and pavement marking regulations and various safety features at bridges/culverts.

Flagger training is scheduled for July 21 at the Athens Township Building from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. For more information or to register, please contact Ethan Sexton, Community Development Program Manager, at 570-265-1511 or sexton@northerntier.org.





The Marsh Creek Greenway will connect the Pine Creek Rail Trail with the Borough of Wellsboro.

RTAC Receives Update on Marsh Creek Greenway Project

Aaron Crist, PennDOT District 3-0, provided an update on the Marsh Creek Greenway project at the Northern Tier Rural Planning Organization (RPO) Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) meeting in June.

The Marsh Creek Greenway project (Tioga County) is a planned three-mile trail connecting the Pine Creek Rail Trail to the Borough of Wellsboro. The project was awarded \$455,000 in 2015 from the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program to complete design and permitting. Wilson Consulting was selected as the prime consultant on the project and Work Order #1 has been executed. Work involved a November 2016 field view and data collection and an April 2017 stakeholder meeting. Work Order #2 is expected to be executed soon and will involve environmental studies, alignment studies, and environmental clearance. Work Order #3 will involve surveying and right-of-way. Estimated project completion is 2022.

The next RTAC meeting is scheduled for August 14, 2017, at 10 a.m. at Miller’s Picnic Grove in Sullivan County.

Open/Upcoming Grant Programs – Transportation

Green Light-Go (GLG) Program

It is anticipated that the application round for the GLG Program will begin on August 8 with a deadline of September 30, 2017.

The Green Light-Go: Pennsylvania’s Municipal Signal Partnership Program, also known as the “Green Light-Go Program,” provides state funds for the operation and maintenance of traffic signals along critical and designated corridors on state highways. The goal of the program is to improve safety and mobility by reducing congestion and improving efficiency of existing traffic signals on state and local highways. The program was recently updated and is now a competitive application and reimbursement grant program requiring a 20 percent match for municipalities, counties, or planning organizations. Click [here](#) for the program guidelines and application details.



CFA Multimodal

The Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) Multimodal Transportation Fund is accepting applications for funding through July 31, 2017. Eligible projects include those that coordinate local land use with transportation assets to enhance existing communities; streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, and pedestrian safety; improvements to the connectivity of transportation assets; and transit-oriented development.

There is a 30 percent match requirement for this program with a minimum project budget of \$100,000. Grant requests cannot exceed \$3,000,000. The CFA Board will meet at a future date to award projects.

Click [here](#) for project guidelines and details.

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Application Cycle Open

The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA Set-Aside) application cycle opened July 10 with project applications due September 22. Formerly known as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), TA Set-Aside provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including:

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Education (grades K-8 only)
- Conversion of Abandoned Railway Corridors to Trails
- Construction of Turnouts, Overlooks, and Viewing Areas
- Outdoor Advertising Management
- Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation of Historic Transportation Facilities
- Vegetation Management
- Archaeological Activities
- Stormwater Management
- Wildlife Mortality Mitigation
- Safe Routes to School – Infrastructure Projects



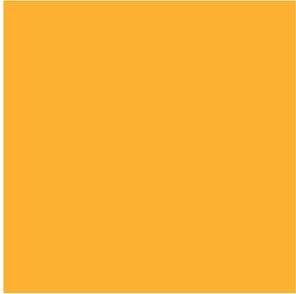
Communities

While the majority of TA Set-Aside projects involve the construction of infrastructure improvements, some projects do not involve any construction, such as right-of-way acquisition (rail-trails, turnouts, and overlook projects only) or Safe Routes to School (SRTS) non-infrastructure activities.

PennDOT does not require the sponsor (applicant) to provide a true local match. Instead, the sponsor pays all costs for pre-construction activities (design, environmental clearance, right-of-way, utilities, etc.) and PennDOT provides 100 percent cost reimbursement for the construction phase (including construction inspection) of selected TA Set-Aside projects. The project sponsor may be responsible for any costs exceeding the state-wide project award amount.

For complete details regarding sponsor and project eligibility, click [here](#) to view the TA-Set Aside guidelines. Before developing and submitting an application, interested sponsors in the Northern Tier are encouraged to contact Brian Baker, NTRPDC Transportation Program Manager, at baker@northerntier.org or 570-265-1540.





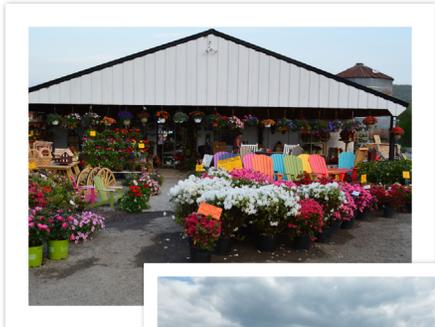
Building our Businesses

What we do to strengthen the Northern Tier's private sector:

- Guide businesses in exploring government contracting
- Facilitate business expansion into international markets
- Provide financing for local business development projects
- Provide website, technical assistance, and software training for small businesses
- Assist business development projects in utilizing state incentives and other business services
- Maintain a strong network of economic development partners to assist businesses

The following pages highlight upcoming events and what we've been working on this past fiscal quarter.





Three Loans Closed – Second Quarter 2017

In May, NTRPDC closed a \$100,000 loan—part of a \$425,000 project—to **Endless Mountains Veterinary Center, PC (Athens)**. The business is relocating from Walnut Street in Athens to a building on Pine Street that will provide increased visibility, better marketability, and significant cost savings. The loan funds will be utilized to purchase and remodel the new building and are expected to lead to the creation of 10 full-time jobs in the next three years. Currently, the business has 28 full-time employees. Endless Mountains Veterinary Center has been in business since the early 1940s and was incorporated in 1998. With a history of high quality service, this business is a staple in the Athens community and this move will position them to increase profitability for years to come.

NTRPDC closed an \$80,000 loan in June to **Farmer Fred's, LLC (Towanda)** as part of a \$350,000 expansion project to construct a new 122'x72' addition and a separate 40'x20' pavilion for their retail farmer's market and produce business. Farmer Fred's has been in business for five years, providing produce, meat, canned goods, furniture, plants, fertilizer, mulch, and much more to communities throughout Bradford and Sullivan counties. The expansion will create six full-time jobs and retain six full-time jobs.

Also in June, NTRPDC closed a \$27,850 loan to **CJ Spray Foam & Insulation (Sayre)** to purchase a trailer and accessories for the business. This new business will employ two full-time individuals. The loan is part of a \$69,615 project that will allow the company to begin providing service to Northeast Pennsylvania and into New York State.

Loan Funds Available

The Business Financing Program currently has funds available for land and building acquisition, construction and renovation projects, as well as new or used machinery and equipment purchases. Loan interest rates are fixed for the term of the loan and are currently as low as 3.25 percent. There is no application fee, no annual servicing fee, and no prepayment penalties. There is a 1 percent commitment fee on the business upon approval of the loan. By providing financing for up to half of a total project, NTRPDC loan staff works with a business's bank to make deals happen. For more information contact Stacey Urban, NTRPDC Loan Program Manager, at 570-265-1510 or urban@northerntier.org.

'Bringing the World to PA' Investment Reps Spring Visit

In May, NTRPDC participated in the Bringing the World to PA investment representatives (reps) visit to Pennsylvania at Penn State University in Centre County. The reps traveled throughout Pennsylvania during a two-week period to learn about potential opportunities within the state for future international investment. Additionally, they learned about properties, land, and companies with interest in potential joint ventures. Representatives of Taiwan, China, India, Australia, Japan, Canada, Italy, the UK, and Germany were in attendance along with the Regional Export Network (REN) Colleague, Tina Taylor from Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission.

Companies within the Northern Tier region who are interested in learning more about investment opportunities with international companies may contact Cynthia Traore at traore@northerntier.org.

Export/Import E-Commerce Webinar Offered August 9

NTRPDC's Regional Export Network (REN) partner, the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, is offering an e-commerce webinar on August 9, 2017, from 9:00–11:30 a.m.

Participants will learn:

- What e-commerce is and the various opportunities that exist for commercial companies related to e-commerce
- The export and import compliance issues related to e-commerce development and how to address them
- Who can assist a business in developing an e-commerce program

This learning opportunity is ideal for senior management, sales, marketing, corporate development, and export/import operations staff. E-commerce will continue to expand into the commercial marketplace, changing the way consumers and manufacturers purchase and market products. For businesses, the needed logistical support and increased regulatory issues triggered by e-commerce transactions can be complex. This webinar will provide guidance on best practices in the marketplace.



To register, visit this link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2184060384493581058>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the webinar.

This webinar is coordinated by REN partner Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAP&DC) and is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED's) Office of International Business. There are 10 Regional Export Networks in Pennsylvania, with NTRPDC acting in that capacity for the Northern Tier region. The REN provides manufacturers and service firms with export development services, including market research, market entry strategy development, technical support, and access to grants and financing programs.



Pennsylvania Hardwoods Export Project

The Port of Philadelphia—now known as PhilaPort—stands ready to serve the Commonwealth's log and lumber exporters. PhilaPort now offers two weekly ocean container export services to Europe providing access to key North European ports, including 10 days to Rotterdam and 11 days to Antwerp. PhilaPort has the ability to fumigate logs, and their team (port authority, marine terminal operator, fumigator, and steamship line) has visited log and lumber exporters across Pennsylvania to learn about industry needs.

PhilaPort is ramping up for log shipments in Fall 2017 and welcomes the opportunity to work directly with log and lumber exporters to ensure smooth transport of their product to customers around the globe. To learn more about this opportunity for Pennsylvania hardwood exports, please contact Sean Mahoney, Marketing Director of the Port of Philadelphia, at 215-426-2600.

PA Procurement Expo & Forum—September 6 & 7

The PA Procurement Expo & Forum will be held September 6–7, 2017, at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg. The expo is a premier networking and educational event; all public sector procurement decision-makers and suppliers are invited to attend. Exhibitors will include current and prospective suppliers showcasing their products and services to agencies of state government and to the more than 8,500 invited COSTARS members, including local governments, school districts, public authorities, educational and health non-profits, and more.

Please visit the event website at <http://www.paprocurementexpo.com/> for more information and to register, or contact Laurie Lentz, NTRPDC Procurement Program Manager, at lentz@northerntier.org.

UPS X-Port Challenge 2017 Open for Applications

The United Parcel Service (UPS) has announced the UPS X-Port Challenge, a promotion to help support small businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs in their export initiatives. To participate, businesses can apply to earn an opportunity to pitch their solutions/products with a potential to win up to \$10,000 in export shipping credits in each respective district.

A panel of judges will select finalists from regional competitions to participate in a Pitch-Off event. The Mid-Atlantic region will include participants from Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, and Northwest Maryland.

If selected as a finalist, applicants will pitch the judges on why their business is ready for the global marketplace. Three winners will be selected from each regional competition based on their international appeal and execution strategy. Regional winners will then go on to compete at the national level for additional prize opportunities.

Contest Highlights:

- Regional contest Prizes:
 - District Grand Prize: \$10,000 in export shipping from UPS

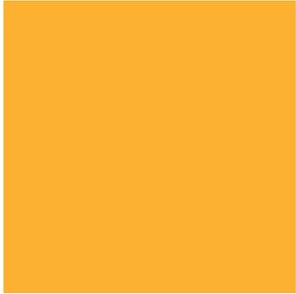


Businesses

- District 2nd Place: \$2,500 in export shipping from UPS
- District 3rd Place: \$1,000 in export shipping from UPS
- National award CASH prizes:
 - National Grand Prize: \$25,000 in cash
 - National 2nd Place: \$15,000 in cash
 - National 3rd Place: \$10,000 in cash

For more information or to register: <https://global.ups.com/x-portchallenge2017/>





Building our Workforce

What we do to assist the Northern Tier's employers, workers, and students:

- Provide area employers with labor market information, job fairs, and prospective employees
- Provide local youth with employment and training programs
- Coordinate industry-specific training for incumbent workers
- Facilitate programs that assist qualifying unemployed, underemployed, or displaced workers find employment
- Provide information and assistance to employees affected by a layoff
- Administer workplace-defined skills assessment testing for job seekers
- Conduct career planning and outreach in area high schools

The following pages highlight upcoming events and what we've been working on this past fiscal quarter.





Healthcare Industry Partnership Provides Training for Northern Tier

The Northeast Regional Healthcare Industry Partnership is comprised of the Northern Tier, Luzerne/Schuylkill, Lackawanna, and Pocono Counties Workforce Development Boards, covering 12 counties in all. The goal of the partnership is to strengthen healthcare facilities by providing assistance with staff training in areas that the healthcare facilities in the partnership deem most important. The partnership works as “one voice” in the industry to address common or overlapping needs. There are 60 healthcare employers that participate in the industry partnership, including every major healthcare facility in the Northern Tier. The partnership brings together healthcare employers for common training and education needs; acts as a channel for training curriculum development to address industry demand; and collaborates with secondary schools, parents, and career coaches to increase career awareness of the healthcare field.

On April 25-26, 2017, 27 nurses from Guthrie Towanda Memorial Hospital, Guthrie Troy Community Hospital, and Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital participated in a Medical-Surgical Nursing Examination review conducted by Med-Ed at Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre. This course is designed to provide nurses with the tools, confidence, and knowledge to successfully complete the Medical-Surgical Nursing Exam.

A Perfecting Patient Care training was held May 16-19, 2017, at Soldiers + Sailors Memorial Hospital in Well-sboro, PA. Twenty-one incumbent healthcare workers from Soldiers + Sailors, The Green Home, and Broad Acres were trained. This training, conducted by Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), is designed to address the challenges healthcare organizations are facing today, including patient safety, staffing shortages, and rising costs.

An Oncology Review Course was taken in May by 10 nurses at Robert Packer Hospital. This course prepared those trained to become oncology-certified nurses and to be recognized for their specialty knowledge in oncology nursing.

From September 2016 through June 2017, the Northeast Regional Healthcare Industry Partnership trained 105 healthcare workers. For more information or to become involved in the Northeast Regional Healthcare Industry Partnership, contact Jody McCarty at mccarty@northerntier.org.



Students explore options at Career Day, held at Towanda High School in March.



NTRPDC Business-Education Partnership 2016-17 School Year Highlights

During the 2016-17 school year, the Business Education Partnership (BEP) connected nearly 2,000 Northern Tier students with 135 businesses. Students learned about job offerings, career pathways, and the educational requirements of occupations in our region through career fairs, presentations, mock interview days, and job-shadowing opportunities. Working with school partners, the BEP assisted with seven career fairs throughout our five-county region, including the Career Day event held at Towanda High School on March 17, 2017. This event brought nearly 500 students from Sullivan and Bradford counties to meet with local employers. Employers and students alike provided positive feedback, and all businesses reported that it was a good opportunity for their company to connect with the future workforce.

The NTRPDC BEP program consists of five career coaches who work with students in 16 participating schools across the Northern Tier. They meet with students in their assigned schools both individually and in small-group settings for career education and exploration activities. This year, the coaches met with more than 2,000 students. Some schools have the coaches meet with students in specific grades, while other schools have sign-up sheets for students so coaches can meet with any student regardless of age. The career coaches offer small-group instruction on various topics including soft skills, post-secondary education, interest inventories, job searching, and many others. Career coaches are helping each school implement K-12 Comprehensive Counseling Plans. BEP career coaches work closely with guidance departments in each school to support effective career outreach to students.

NTRPDC and the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board have procured funding to continue the BEP program for the 2017-18 school year. For more information please contact Jody McCarty, NTRPDC Workforce Program Manager, at mccarty@northerntier.org.

Fit4Work Re-engagement Project Receives Funding

NTRPDC has been awarded a \$139,000 Strategic Innovation Grant funded by the PA Department of Labor and Industry. This grant will support the Fit4Work Re-engagement Project designed to assist individuals with barriers become productive and successful in employment and their community. The focus is on individuals who

have been disengaged from the workforce due to incarceration or other barriers contributing to long-term unemployment. For incarcerated individuals, components of the project include both pre- and post-release activities. In addition, Fit4Work classes focusing on foundational and work readiness skills are made available to anyone with barriers to employment. Additional features of the project include hands-on work opportunities and employer outreach and education. For further details of the project contact Melissa Fleming, NTRPDC Workforce Program Administrator, at fleming@northerntier.org.



NTRPDC Summer Intern Mackenzie Roof

NTRPDC Welcomes Summer Intern

NTRPDC welcomes Mackenzie Roof, a local college student interning with the NTRPDC workforce development team this summer. She has been gathering participant information for the Summer Youth Employment Program that Trehab and Bradford County Action operate each summer in our five-county region. The Summer Employment Program is comprised of an academic enrichment component along with paid work experiences for each participant. Mackenzie will monitor participants at each work site and during academic enrichment classes and activities. Read Mackenzie's review of the Summer Employment Program below.

Mackenzie, a native of Wysox and graduate of Towanda High School, is studying at Penn State Altoona toward a Bachelor of Science in Business Marketing and Management and will graduate in 2019. It is a pleasure to have Mackenzie working at NTRPDC this summer. She is an important asset to our work at NTRPDC.

2017 Summer Employment Program

NTRPDC's Summer Employment Program began in June, providing 29 young adults with academic enrichment and work experience for the summer. Coordinated through Bradford County Action and Trehab, this program is a pathway to careers and education while also teaching participants valuable job skills.

During the academic enrichment portion of the program, participants learn how to write a resume, refine interview skills, search for jobs, and excel in the workplace through "soft skill" development.

In addition to academic enrichment, participating youth will work at a variety of different worksites throughout the region. This is an important piece to connecting local youth with long-term job opportunities as well

Workforce

as educating them on what types of careers are available. They have the opportunity to observe good management and leadership skills first-hand in the workplace while also gaining paid work experience.

The government agencies, non-profits, and businesses that participate in this program as employers provide invaluable experience to young adults who otherwise may not have these opportunities. The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board encourages all area employers to become involved with this great program for young adults so we can continue to offer our unique summer work experience that will prepare them for the future. For more information please contact Jody McCarty, NTRPDC Workforce Program Manager, at mccarty@northerntier.org.

