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Worcester Regional Chamber Joins Massachusetts Apprenticeship Network to Expand Workforce Opportunities Across the Commonwealth

WORCESTER, MA -The Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce announced Wednesday morning that it is the newest member of the [Massachusetts Apprenticeship Network](#), an initiative of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce Foundation dedicated to helping employers develop and implement apprenticeship programs that create new pipelines for skilled talent.

Active across the Commonwealth, the Network works with employers, training and education providers, and community leaders to build structured apprenticeship programs that respond directly to industry needs and strengthen Massachusetts' 21st-century workforce.

The announcement was made at a standing-room-only event at Quinsigamond Community College, where business leaders, educators, Chapter 74 vocational schools, and workforce partners gathered to recognize the growing role of apprenticeships in building a more inclusive and competitive regional economy.

Speakers included Tim Murray, President & CEO of the Worcester Regional Chamber, James E. Rooney, President & CEO of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, and Mike Holland, Director of Workforce Development Strategy for the Greater Boston Chamber Foundation. State Senator Michael Moore, himself a graduate of Quinsigamond Community College, also addressed attendees, highlighting key legislation supporting workforce development and apprenticeship expansion.

"The Massachusetts Apprentice Network is proud to welcome the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce as an important business organization strengthening apprenticeship programs in Central Massachusetts. Strategic collaborations and partnerships like this are how we sharpen our competitive edge," said **James E. Rooney**, President & CEO of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce. "Thank you, Tim Murray and the Worcester County business community, for helping the Massachusetts

Apprentice Network continue to build momentum, strengthening apprenticeships in every industry throughout the Commonwealth. Every day, we hear from apprentices who are building meaningful skills and wealth building careers that unlock economic mobility for their families and communities while employers share how they are able expand their workforce, investing in talented workers who will take their companies to new heights."

"Apprenticeships are one of the most powerful economic development tools we have. When we invest in building talent locally, we strengthen our businesses, create opportunities for residents, and make our region more competitive. Workforce development isn't separate from economic development, it *is* economic development," said Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce **President Timothy P. Murray**. "By expanding apprenticeship pathways, we're ensuring that Worcester County has the skilled workforce necessary to attract, retain, and grow businesses in today's economy."

Throughout the program, leaders emphasized that the word *network* is intentional and essential. Building a sustainable workforce system requires collaboration beyond any single institution.

"That word 'network' is important," Rooney noted during the event. "It can't just be community colleges. It's about making sure employers have access to talent and that we're creating a workforce for the 21st century."

A Proven and Expanding Model

In 2022, the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Network expanded a transformative apprenticeship model long established in the construction industry into high-growth sectors such as healthcare, engineering, and advanced manufacturing. To date, the initiative has supported more than 800 apprentices statewide, with a goal of reaching 1,000 apprentices by 2027.

Apprenticeship programs offer participants paid, structured, on-the-job training combined with related instruction. The model delivers strong results: 91% of apprentices are hired by their employers after completing their training.

"It's good business," Rooney said. "If you're an employer looking for talent, you can go look for one, or you can make an employee."

Real-World Impact

Attendees heard firsthand from current apprentices about the transformative impact of these programs. Richard Gill of Tetra Medical, part of a medical manufacturing operation in Framingham, began his machining apprenticeship in June 2025 with no prior manufacturing experience.

"I was really green and really new," Gill shared. Now training as a CNC Swiss Machinist Level 3, Gill described how the opportunity to earn while learning initially seemed too good

to be true but quickly proved to be a life-changing pathway. While pursuing engineering and science coursework, he has been able to build a long-term relationship with his employer and gain valuable hands-on skills. Apprenticeships, speakers emphasized, are not only about filling jobs, they are about creating opportunity, strengthening businesses, and aligning education with industry needs.

“We’re excited to welcome the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce as the newest member of the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Network,” said Mike Holland, Director of Workforce Development Strategy at the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce Foundation. “The Network implements apprentice programs across industries, from banking and finance to healthcare and cyber security, that create new pipelines for skilled talent and strengthen our competitive workforce. These apprenticeships provide meaningful on-the-job learning and mentorship designed to help workers build in-demand skills, access wealth-building careers, and support our regional competitiveness.”

Strengthening the Regional Economy

By joining the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Network, the Worcester Regional Chamber will help connect local employers with the tools, best practices, and statewide partnerships needed to design and implement apprenticeship programs. Through engagement with current Network members, organizations can experience the benefits of participation and learn how to join.

The event underscored a shared commitment among business leaders, educators, and policymakers: expanding apprenticeship pathways is essential to ensuring that Worcester and the broader Massachusetts economy remain competitive, innovative, and inclusive. For more information about the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Network and how to participate, contact the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce.