

## NEWS

*For immediate release*

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## **Finger Lakes Wired Awards \$329,000 to Regional Skills Alliances to Address Business and Workforce Development Needs**

*Rochester, NY-- December 12, 2008* – Finger Lakes Wired ([www.fingerlakeswired.com](http://www.fingerlakeswired.com)) today announced the award of \$329,000 to three local workforce investment boards for the implementation of two Regional Skills Alliances and the WorkKeys® Career Readiness Credential across the nine-county region.

The Finger Lakes, GLOW and Rochester/Monroe County workforce investment boards will partner to develop Regional Skills Alliances (RSAs), groups of public and private sector partners dedicated to supporting workforce development, in the health care/human services and advanced manufacturing sectors.

The project will broaden the efforts of the existing Finger Lakes Advanced Manufacturing Enterprise (FAME), a cluster-based initiative, which currently supports companies in Ontario, Seneca, Yates and Wayne County through networking and promotion of industry issues and solutions. In addition to the expansion of FAME the project will facilitate the creation of a health care/human services RSA using the FAME program model.

The goal of RSAs is to allow businesses to address industry-based skill shortages, thereby increasing or upgrading the skills of employed and unemployed workers, while simultaneously improving the competitiveness of local businesses and boosting the regional economy.

Leslie Bamann has been hired to oversee the Regional Skills Alliance Development.

Karen Springmeier, Executive Director of the Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board, said “Leslie brings a unique blend of corporate, educational and municipal experience to the position. Her expertise in strategic planning as well as economic and community development in the region are exactly what we need to make this project successful.”

Erica Baudisch-Bailey will serve as the Career Readiness Credential Coordinator to expand the program across the nine-county region. Over the past year she has helped oversee the CRC program and its implementation in the City of Rochester and Monroe County.

The WorkKeys © Career Readiness Credential (CRC) will also be used by companies participating in the Regional Skills Alliance to better identify talented workers. The CRC is a nationally recognized, portable credential which certifies that workers are trainable and possess core reading, math and locating information skills required by all industries and occupations.

The Regional Skills Alliance program is one of two projects chosen for funding by Finger Lakes Wired through the Transforming the Region Request for Proposals.

*Finger Lakes Wired is one of 13 designated WIRED regions in the country funded by the U. S. Department of Labor WIRED (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) Initiative to support economic development and transform regional economies. Finger Lakes Wired initiatives focus on a nine-county region surrounding Rochester N.Y., to increase entrepreneurship and innovation, expand employment, advance opportunities for workers, and enhance the talent of the workforce through the creation of high-skill and high-wage opportunities.*

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