

Annual Report 2005



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Our Vision

To be a leader in developing people, businesses, and communities for a globally competitive region.

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.



From the Chairman



Dear Friends,

Over the past year I have enjoyed serving as the Chairman of the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission. I would like to recognize the staff of the NTRPDC for the professionalism, enthusiasm, and dedication they employed in carrying out various programs that support our five county region.

The Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission manages and maintains two governmental funds classified as governmental activities and five enterprise funds classified as business-type activities for our five county region. They operate on a fiscal year commencing from July 1st to June 30th.

The governmental funds are short term in nature and consist of workforce development funds and community and economic development funds. The revenues generated in each fund are made up of federal and state grants, county appropriations, and in-kind service income. The expenses paid out from each fund consist of contracted services, staff salaries and wages, staff fringe benefits, in-kind service expenditures, building rental, and other allowable expenses.

The enterprise funds are long term in nature and encompass the four revolving loan programs maintained by the NTRPDC and the Northern Tier Foundation. The commission closed five new loans in the last fiscal year totaling \$235,000. In addition to these five loans, eight more loans were closed through the Small Business First Fund. The total impact of all of these loans resulted in 192 jobs retained, 222 jobs created, and over \$8 million in private funds leveraged. For the first time ever, two of these loans were agricultural.

The Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission ended 2005 with total assets of \$5,526,561, total liabilities of \$1,726,189, and total net assets of \$3,800,372. Total revenues for 2005 were \$6,209,266 minus total expenses of \$6,204,036 leaving an increase in net assets for 2005 of \$5,230. All of this information is included in Parente and Randolph's independent auditor's report for the year ending June 30, 2005 which is on file for public inspection at NTRPDC.

It has been my pleasure to work cooperatively with my fellow commissioners and the staff from Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission to perpetuate the programs that allow our five rural counties to grow and thrive. I look forward to working with everyone in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Loomis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Jeff Loomis
Chairman

From the Director



Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to present the 2005 Annual Report. The year 2005 was, indeed, comprised of a variety of activities. On a positive note, we engaged in a high level of activity in agricultural and tourism lending. Although sometimes overlooked, these two sectors are a major contributor to the region's economy. Other positive areas included downtown beautification projects, feasibility studies to proposed business parks, road improvement projects and infrastructure upgrades.

The year of 2005 was a challenging year as well. As in previous years, proposed budget reductions jeopardized the services that we provide and once again, a sincere thanks to the region's legislators for their efforts in maintaining these services. Equally as challenging were our efforts to offset the employment loss resulting from plant closures in the western part of the region. Every effort was made by numerous entities to reemploy those affected as well as upgrade their skills.

As 2005 concluded, NTRPDC conducted a needs assessment survey with our stakeholders and the outcome of the survey will be evaluated in the upcoming year. A special thanks to those that participated in this process.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the staff, Executive Committee, Advisory Committees and to each of you for your contribution in making the Northern Tier Region a great place to live.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Kevin D. Abrams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin D. Abrams



Full Commission

Bradford

Brian Canfield
Janet Lewis
William Farley
Sharon Kaminsky
Doug McLinko
Fred Robinson
Nancy Schrader
Ray Stolinas
Paul Sweitzer

Sullivan

Pamela Arthur
Fred Fiester
Wayne Gavitt
Craig Harting
Mike Hufnagel
Norman Miller
Betty Reibson
James Rogers
Philip Snyder

Susquehanna

Roberta Kelly
Jeff Loomis
William Ord
Dennis Phelps
Tom Swan
Robert Templeton
Maryann Warren

Tioga

Bob Blair
Erick Coolidge
Mark Hamilton
Fred LaVancher
Lindsey Sikorski
Sue Vogler
James Weaver
George Wheeler
Jeff Wilson

Wyoming

Stark Bartron
Peter Butler
Mike Castellano
Anthony Litwin
Thomas McCullough
Judy Mead
Richard Schwoebel
Paul Weilage

2005 Advisory Committees

Economic Development

Pamela Arthur	Robert J. Blair
Eric Brown	Brian Canfield
Dan Close	Fred Fiester
Mike Hufnagel	Sharon Kaminsky
Jacqueline Lawrence	Jeff Loomis
Charles O'Hara	Jack Ord
Betty Reibson	Lindsey Sikorski
Chris Smith	Robert Templeton
Anthony Ventello	Mary Worthington

Rural Area Transportation

Mike Castellano	Wayne Gavitt
Mark Hamilton	Michael Hufnagel
Roberta Kelly	Fred LaVancher
Anthony Litwin	Norman Miller
William Ord	Clyde Robbins
Nancy Schrader	Raymond Stolinas, Jr.
Tom Swan	James Weaver
Paul Weilage	

Workforce Investment

Brenda Abplanalp	Sam Anderson
Robert J. Blair	Lori Bogadin
Pete Butler	Judy Cooper
Vance Coover	Karen Cosner
William Farley	Craig Harting
Elaine Herstek	Fred Jackson
Jeannie Kaplar	Paul Kreischer
Tom Kurosky	Janet Kovalich
Josh McGroarty	Jody Neary
Brenda Roberts	Fred Robinson
Karen Russell	Gerald Schaffer
Dick Stetz	Loren Stone
Charles Stringham	Sherry Spencer

Local Loan Review

Donald Abrey	Robert J. Blair
Carl Chambers	Bob Champion
Thomas Chesnick	Fred Fiester
Max Little	Anthony Litwin
Thomas McCullough	Sheryl Potocek
James Rogers	Richard Schwoebel
Richard Soden	Mary Ann Waddington
Jeffery Wilson	

2005 Funding Sources

Federal

Appalachian Regional Commission	
Enterprise Development	\$285,000
Local Development District	88,000
U.S. Department of Commerce	
Economic Development Administration	52,000
U.S. Department of Defense	
Procurement Technical Assistance	50,000
U.S. Department of Transportation	
Federal Highway Administration	311,000
U.S. Department of Labor	
Workforce Investment Act	2,331,000
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<u>1,855,000</u>
Total	\$4,972,000

State

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	
Rural Transportation Program	16,000
Transportation Studies	40,000
Department of Community and Economic Development	
Enterprise Development	674,000
Business Retention and Expansion Program	63,000
Export Development	67,000
KOEZ	<u>56,000</u>
Total	\$916,000

Local

County Contributions	60,000
Local Contributions	<u>54,000</u>
Total	<u>\$114,000</u>

Total Program Funds \$6,002,000

Loan Program Fosters Economic Development

Transcending the boundaries of traditional economic development, 2005 was the year of diversity for commercial lending. New opportunities for projects in the agriculture and tourism industries became available through Governor Rendell's economic stimulus package. After many successful years of working with the wood industry, 2005 found us forging ahead in the stone industry, as well. At the same time, our commitment towards manu-

facturing and commercial businesses continued.

Of the twenty five loans closed this year, project sizes ranged from a \$25,000 micro loan for a graphic art studio in Wyoming County; to the coordination of a multi-million dollar expansion project for a manufacturer in Susquehanna County. NTRPDC's revolving loan program provided a \$100,000 loan to a foster care facility in Bradford County; and with the assistance of state funding, was involved in a multi

million dollar farm expansion in Tioga County.

As activity levels soared, we found ourselves meeting with large hotel developers and small pizza shop owners; from laser manufacturers to a homemade soap maker; from small start up dairy herds to thousand head sow operations. As economic development expands the focus for financing, NTRPDC will continue to be the mechanism for connecting this region's business needs to available capital.

"The Montrose Area Industrial Development Agency would like to offer a big 'thank you' to the Northern Tier for the recent work on the PIDA loan for B&S Quarries. It is very difficult for organizations such as ours, which consists of part time members, to stay current with the procedures and paper work involved to truly help local businesses get the help that they truly need. These programs are so important to the local economy and your knowledge and work ethic are to be commended. You have renewed interest in our group and we look forward to working with you again."

- James B. Considine, Secretary, MAIDA

"It has been a very pleasant experience working with NTRPDC. We appreciate the kindness showed to us and our cause. House of Light and NTRPDC have helped make it possible to touch many young lives for years to come."

- Duane and Lori Castle, House of Light

"The involvement of NTRPDC's commitment to agricultural lending in the Northern Tier has allowed individuals to purchase existing operations, expand current operations or update facilities to become more efficient and competitive in their respective industries. Agricultural lending has increased, in part, due to the availability of these state funded programs."

- Blaine Fessler, Branch Manager, AgChoice Farm Credit, ACA, Towanda



◀ NTRPDC's loan program helps businesses such as Lizza Computer Graphics, Inc. to stay current with new equipment and technology.

“AgChoice Farm Credit, ACA is pleased to have NTRPDC participating in agricultural lending in the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania. Their low-interest loan programs have helped to enhance our credit packages and provide additional savings to our agricultural customers.....we are glad they understand the value of the agricultural industry in our area.”

– Kirk Schucker, Loan Officer, AgChoice Farm Credit, ACA Towanda

“I cannot say enough about the efficiency and ease of doing business with NTRPDC. Lizza Studios is a small local business servicing the very specialized national market of digital fine art reproduction. There are constant advancements in the technology we use to stay ahead of the competition.... Thanks to the great staff at NTRPDC we were informed of an opportunity for financing through their Small Business Loan Program....The timing was perfect and allowed us to quickly capitalize on several pieces of key equipment to improve our capabilities. We are very grateful for all their help.

– Bob Lizza, President, Lizza Computer Graphics, Inc.



Businesses of all sizes benefit from NTRPDC's loan program.

Loan Program Impact

<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Jobs Retained</u>	<u>Jobs Created</u>	<u>Loan Amount</u>	<u>Leveraged Amount</u>
Singh Realty LLC	0	25	\$100,000	\$3,900,000
Halsey Inc.	5	4	200,000	113,888
Bishcroft LLC	5	10	200,000	3,610,000
Snake Creek Lasers LLC	3	75	200,000	400,000
B.S. Quarries Inc.	72	122	100,000	2,500,000
Uncle Charlies Pizza	2	4	25,000	25,000
Leona Meat Plant Inc.	10	3	25,000	33,000
Paul and Mary Fetter Farm Partnership	2	0	43,000	
Final Flight Taxidermy	1	0	10,000	
Metadyne	43	10	200,000	1,400,000
Bruce Family Corporation	3	2	25,000	80,400
Sea Hag Antiques & Soaps	2	2	25,000	29,000
Johnson Machine and Production, Inc.	5	10	95,000	
Across Country Real Estate	0	10	25,000	
Memories in the Making	1	0	25,000	
Wyalusing Ace Hardware, Inc.	8	0	100,000	300,000
All Styles, Creations by Michelle	4	8	12,000	3,000
Montrose Laundromat	2	0	16,000	
The Black Swan Cafe'	2	4	25,000	
Pure Pennsylvania	3	0	25,000	
Windows by Sandy	2	2	25,000	11,629
House of Light Youth Group Foster Home, Inc.	23	0	100,000	150,000
R&T Technologies, Inc.	25	4	95,000	102,900
Lizza Computer Graphics, Inc.	4	0	25,000	
The Log Cabin Restaurant	4	0	25,000	
TOTAL	231	295	\$1,746,000	\$12,658,817
Total jobs retained and created	526			



▶ Doug Cummings with Oak Hill Veneer examines products of a potential customer.



◀ Northern Tier Companies tour Vietnamese veneer manufacturer.

▶ Oak Hill Veneer representatives meet with a Vietnamese furniture manufacturer.



Northern Tier Hardwoods Companies Explore Opportunities in Vietnam

With its rapidly expanding wood processing industry, Vietnam offers new market opportunities for Northern Tier hardwoods suppliers. Oak Hill Veneer, located in Troy, and Bennett Hardwoods, from Forksville, joined NTRPDC's Export Development program for a trade mission to Vietnam

in January.

NTRPDC and the North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning & Development Commission jointly organized the mission and successfully recruited seven participating companies. Together, they obtained additional grants from the Northern Tier Hardwood Association, Allegheny Hard-

wood Utilization Group and Pennsylvania Hardwoods Development Council to help cover expenses and facilitate the publishing of a regional marketing guide in English and Vietnamese.

The mission included two days of factory tours in the region around Ho Chi Minh City followed by pre-arranged business appointments over



➤ Cao Dai Temple



➤ L-R : Tommy Thieu, Rossi American Hardwoods; Chris Perneski, North Central; Chad Rimbey, NTRPDC; Terry Bennett, Bennett Hardwoods; Julie Brunstetter, Bennett Hardwoods; Tran Q. Manh, Saigon-Kaklak Co; Paul Vrielyk, PV Trading; Dean Harman, PV Trading; Bob Kelly, Matson Lumber; Dao Truong, U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service.

several days with over twenty potential customers from throughout Vietnam. These arrangements were only possible with the assistance of the U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service staff in Ho Chi Minh City and the Pennsylvania's Southeast Asia Trade Office.

With Northern Tier and North Central assuming responsibility for transporta-

tion arrangements, interpreters, translating company literature, and setting up appointments, the participating companies were able to reduce their market entry costs and explore uncharted opportunities. More importantly, the participants could focus on nurturing new export business without being distracted by logistical concerns.

Exports not only support our local manufacturing base, they also bring external capital to the region that would not find its way into the local economy otherwise.

Local Technical Assistance Program

The PennDOT Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) is dedicated to helping municipalities by providing training and technical assistance to help them make the best use of their roadway maintenance dollars.

LTAP has provided this service to Pennsylvania's 2,600 municipal governments since 1983, but this is the first year that NTRPDC has coordinated LTAP training sessions in our region, as a joint effort with PennDOT and Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors. In 2005, three classes were held; two in Bradford County and one in Wyoming County. More training sessions are scheduled for early January 2006 through April 2006.



► The Pennsylvania Welcome Center at Endless Mountains welcomes visitors traveling south along I-81 into Pennsylvania.

Susquehanna County Welcome Center

After years of anticipation, the new Pennsylvania Welcome Center in Susquehanna County was finally opened on November 9, 2005. PennDOT Deputy Secretary, Rina Cutler was on hand to provide remarks and welcome visitors.

Located on the southbound side of Interstate 81 between the New York state line and the first Pennsylvania exit in Great Bend, the "Pennsylvania Welcome Center at Endless Mountains" welcomes visitors traveling south along I-81 into Pennsylvania.

The 8,400 square foot building features a mural painted by local artists on locally donated barn wood. Bluestone donated by the Pennsylvania Bluestone Association is featured at the entrance. Facilities include Truck/RV and car parking areas along with a landscaped picnic area. The common lobby and restrooms will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, year round. The Traveler Information area will be open during day-time hours.

The cost of this beautiful building was \$6.5 million. With help from the Rural Transportation Advisory Committee this project was finally able to be constructed.

Government Contract Procurement Assistance Impact

The United States government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world. The procurement budget for both civilian and military entities is in excess of \$200 billion annually. Local and state governments also purchase millions of dollars of products and services each year. NTRPDC's Procurement Program continues its quest to help businesses in our region get involved and benefit from this significant marketplace.

NTRPDC's Procurement Clients attained \$8,771,953 in government sales with over two hundred (206) contracts awarded in calendar year 2005.

Procurement Clients awarded contracts during the year include:

- **Mark Whitehead Electrical Contractor, Inc.**
- **R&T Technologies, Inc.**
- **B&K Equipment Company**
- **Osram Sylvania, Inc.**
- **McCall Masonry**
- **Gladding Braided Products, LLC**
- **Nestor's Service Center**
- **HTM Precision Machining, Inc.**
- **Montrose Publishing Co., Inc.**
- **Nickels Tool & Model Shop**
- **Spectrum Electrical Services, Inc.**
- **Thomas Magnetix, Inc.**

NTRPDC Client Survey Results

Anually, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development asks our core business clients how satisfied they are with our services.

When asked about the timeliness of assistance, we received a **98%** approval rating. When asked about the quality and the value of the services received, clients responded with a **95%** approval rating.

In addition to our business clients surveyed through the state system, we have begun to survey our municipal and other clients to gauge their satisfaction with our other services. Thus far, the results have been overwhelmingly favorable, with **100%** satisfaction on the timeliness, quality and value of services provided.

While we are of course very proud of these results, we continue to try to improve our offerings and provide the region with the best value possible for every public dollar spent.

Business Retention Efforts

2005 Market Access Grants

Since January 2003, NTRPDC's Market Access Grant program has awarded \$29,820 across the region. This public investment has injected \$8,945,200 in international sales into the local economy from outside the United States. Market Access Grants fund trade events, global standards attainment and export training.

Bennett Hardwoods,
Forksville \$1,125
Vietnam Mission

Deer Park Lumber,
Tunkhannock \$1,200
Trade Show Participation

Towanda Metadyne,
Towanda \$1,000
Sales Mission to China

Liberty Enterprises,
Westfield \$1,000
Sales Mission to China & Japan

Hoffman-New Yorker,
Dushore \$2,000
Trade Show Participation

2005 marked the eighth year for the Commonwealth's Business Retention and Expansion Program. In the Northern Tier Region, a total of 1,187 visits with companies have been conducted, 173 in 2005.

was selected and now they have a brand new website to help market their business.

Another successful referral was made for Randy's Greenhouse in Athens. In this case, they already had a website and were looking for

Business retention is about growing relationships with businesses in the region and celebrating their success.

Business retention is about growing relationships with businesses in the region and celebrating their success. One-on-one visits are conducted by professional staff from NTRPDC and partners in each of our counties.

In 2005, the visits have resulted in industry-specific trainings, web page development, computer training, marketing skills, business financing, export and government contracting assistance. For example, a business interview was conducted with Leona Meat Plant, Inc. in Troy. It revealed that they were interested in developing a website. A referral was made to Northern Tier staff who met with the owners. After reviewing a request for proposal, their web developer

ways to improve hits on their site. A website assessment performed by PENNTAP revealed how certain adjustments to their website would help draw people to their site and make it more user friendly.

Ideal PMT Machine located in Great Bend needed employee training assistance. After their interview, a referral was made to a local WEDnetPA provider. As a result, Ideal received \$3,500 to train seven employees on their machining equipment.

With businesses doing their best to work from fixed budgets, the business retention process helps them save time and money by making them aware of technical assistance and business financing programs.

Small Business Training Grants

Matching grants provide valuable training to small business employees

In 2005, 48 Small Business Training Grants were awarded totaling \$36,290. Through this program, business owners with fifty or less employees are eligible for a matching grant up to \$1,500.00 for training. Expenses eligible for reimbursement include: registration, tuition fees,

Expenses eligible for reimbursement include registration, tuition fees, lodging, airfare and transportation costs.

lodging, airfare and transportation costs. Businesses participated in training events that allowed them to learn about emerging trends and technologies that affect

the way they do business. Funding is provided through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

“My appraisal business has been in operation for a little over ten years. As a sole proprietorship, it is hard to obtain good, competent help. Luckily, my son has agreed to seek a real estate appraisal general certificate. The Small Business Training Grant allowed him to enroll in introductory courses to help him begin his apprenticeship. This program helped continue our family business.”

Frank J. Bertrand, Certified General Appraiser, Towanda

“In today’s business environment, training your people is so critical to keep them up to date on new and innovative ideas. NTRPDC has helped us so much that we were actually able to train more employees than we could have afforded. We want to thank you for helping us accomplish this goal.”

Ray Petty, Ray’s Shursave Market, Factoryville

“We were awarded two Small Business Training Grants in 2004 and 2005. We used the funds to attend a Stream Stabilization Assessment and a Dam Safety and Evaluation Training Seminar. Both seminars provided excellent training that we will utilize in our future engineering projects. The grant application process was straight forward and reimbursement of our expenses was prompt. Our company looks forward to working with NTRPDC on future opportunities.”

Charles Woidt, Jr., Plan B! Consulting and Engineering, Hallstead

Supporting Local Governments through Technology Assistance

The Municipal Technology Assistance program provides assistance to local governments through technical assistance, training and technology grants for hardware/software, Internet access, and Web site development. Last year, 61 technical assistance sessions were provided, 100 people were trained, and 101 grants totaling \$38,056 were dispersed. Following are some comments received about the program:

“Thank you from Middletown Township, Susquehanna County. Through your grant we were able to purchase a computer to help modernize a very small rural township...”
Mary Long, Middletown Township

“The Software Incentive Grant is a great resource for boroughs to update their equipment and computers. This grant has encouraged our borough to look at the available technology to make our work smarter and more productive. Because of this grant, we have become more aware of the improvements in technology and what is possible if we purchase that technology with your assistance.” *Elizabeth Ratchford, Factoryville Borough*

“...Even though we’re a very small borough, we try and keep up with information technology for budgeting, financial recording, and record keeping; and with our limited resources, we wouldn’t have been able to accomplish this without the help of the Hardware/Software Incentive Grant...” *Charlie Fahringer, Little Meadows Borough*

“South Creek Township desperately needed an updated computer to be able to continue filing required state and federal paperwork and to keep our payroll and budgeting up to date. We did not have enough money in our budget to purchase a new system. A grant from NTRPDC helped a lot...”
Linda Leonard, South Creek Township



➤ This regional map highlights in green the 139 out of 166 municipalities that have received technical assistance, training or grants since the programs inception.

Internet Grants for Website Development



Technology assistance is available to small businesses in the form of Internet grants and technical assistance. In 2005, 29 Small Business Internet Business Grants were awarded in the total amount of \$15,485. The following is a list of websites that were developed or improved:

- www.ajaxfoundryinc.com
- www.atlatls-n-more.com
- www.bndstone.com
- www.berryfieldsfarm.net
- www.birdsongwinery.com
- www.thebrimarieinn.com
- www.thecallofthenorthgiftshop.com
- www.bbqez4u.com
- www.troyskateland.com
- www.fivegirlsproducts.com
- www.gwebsterinc.com
- www.gannonassociates.com
- www.godplansmyday.com
- www.hobbycrest.com
- www.howamazing.us
- www.robertottohypnosis.com
- www.jeffersfarms.com
- www.lhvsinc.com
- www.playcreatively.com
- www.mymemoriesinthemaking.com
- www.montrosecountrystore.com
- www.ncindustry.com
- www.troyvalve.com
- www.Bailysoriginal.com
- www.pickeringwinery.com
- www.rentdress.com
- www.soilsecret.com
- www.tcainc.com
- www.twintierhospitality.com



Achieving Results in the Northern Tier

NTRPDC continues to serve as an effective and efficient network to deliver business and community development services and programs to our five county region. Our board continues to recognize the value of working together regionally to maximize the use of our scarce federal and state resources.

During 2005, NTRPDC provided financial and/or technical assistance to **91** small and medium sized businesses. Sales for this core group of clients totaled just under **\$550 million**. Government sales for the year increased by **\$2.3 million**, up 14% over last year, and export sales showed a **\$14.3 million** increase, up 32%. All told, this impact resulted in support for over **3,750 jobs**.

Transportation Projects

Each summer, NTRPDC provides a venue for municipal personnel to view all different kinds of equipment used for improving or maintaining the communities they serve. The equipment shows also provide a forum for networking with each other and all of the vendors who attend.

Two events were held this year. In July, the event took place at Lazy Brook Park in Wyoming County and in August, the show was held at Alparon Park fairgrounds in Bradford County. Over 825 people attended the events with 80 vendors.



The Equipment Shows in Wyoming and Bradford Counties provided networking opportunities for potential equipment buyers and vendors.



Two Projects Receive ARC Funding

The Northern Tier Region received funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for two projects this past year. A \$200,000 grant was awarded to the Wellsboro Municipal Authority for a waterline extension project and a \$100,000 grant was awarded to the Susquehanna County Career

and Technology Center for a comprehensive upgrade.

The Wellsboro water system improvement project includes the construction of approximately 21,000 feet of waterline, a 370,000 gallon water tank with a re-chlorination facility, and an algal removal facility. The project also includes the development of a high-capacity well in the

Stokesdale Area. The new transmission line will convey the water from this new source to the Authority's existing service area, which will connect existing residential and commercial properties that currently rely on private wells for their water supply. The water storage tank will provide additional water for fire flow protection.

Fire hydrants will be provided where none currently exist. Along with many smaller beneficiaries, the major beneficiaries include OSRAM Sylvania and HNAI.

In addition to the \$200,000 ARC grant, the Authority also received a \$291,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration and \$2,587,612 loan from the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority.

The Susquehanna County Career & Technology Center (SCCTC) plans to conduct a comprehensive upgrade with emphasis on medical technology and nursing occupations. The overall intent of the project is to provide quality secondary and postsecondary educational opportunities, business and industry training programs, adult career education, and community enrichment in an affordable and accessible manner. This project is part of the overall five-year strategic plan for SCCTC and is designed not only to meet the needs of the SCCTC, but also those of the Susquehanna and Wyoming County business community for years to come.

There are a variety of funding sources supporting the project, including the \$100,000 grant from ARC, local funding (tax based), Pennsylvania Career & Technical Education / State Economic Development (CTE/SED) funding and Tech Prep funding.

enter postsecondary education will have received the advanced academics and high technical skills to succeed in a variety of health related programs. Since the programs will be approved for Tech Prep, students will benefit from Tech Prep postsecondary opportunities by guaranteed

The overall intent of the project is to provide quality secondary and postsecondary educational opportunities, business and industry training programs, adult career education, and community enrichment....

The goal of the project is to provide an adequate number of new, trained students entering the workforce and postsecondary education in fields where there is a proven demand. The associated reduction in training costs and training time will have a direct impact on local businesses. As a result, there will be improved retention of skilled workers in the region. Students completing the secondary portion of this program will be prepared to enter directly into the workforce as Certified Nurse Assistance or Dental Assistance. Students desiring to

placement, advanced college credit, and waiving of application fees at some local colleges.

The Susquehanna Career & Technology Center serves six school districts from Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties, serving approximately 275 high school students.



▶ The Sayre Library was one of many recipients of funding through the Community Development program.



Community Development

It was a very busy and successful year for the Community Development program, with over \$5 million in funding secured for projects in the region. Projects ranging from traditional multi-million dollar water and sewer infrastructure projects to a small equipment grant for a township police department were among the winners.

Attendance at over 120 meetings during the year kept the program in touch with the needs of communities throughout the region. There were also three workshops held, to help spread the word about a number of timely topics.

<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Use of Funds</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Spaulding Library	Building Improvements	\$30,000
Sayre Library	Building Improvements	\$20,980
Towanda Library	Handicapped Accessibility	\$33,000
Thompson Township	Truck Purchase	\$46,000 *
The Northern Tier Coalition of Committees	Equipment Purchase	\$488,000
Richmond Township	Bldg Code Enforcement Prg	\$79,000
Richmond Township Municipal Authority	Municipal Sewer System	\$772,900 **
Upper Pine Creek Council of Governments	Signage and Dry Hydrants	\$14,000
Wellsboro Borough	Municipal Water System	\$2,587,613 **
Blossburg Public Library	Building Improvements	\$15,000
Union and Ward Twps	Comprehensive Plan	\$31,000
Overfield/Northmoreland Police Department	Police Car	\$25,000
Towanda Borough	Community Park	\$50,000
So Creek Community Ctr	Building Rehabilitation	\$25,000
Laporte Township	Equipment Purchase	\$33,500
Dushore Borough	Municipal Sewer System	\$10,000
Susquehanna Depot Boro	Police Equipment	\$10,000
Lawrenceville Borough	Municipal Building Community Revitalization	\$50,000
Wellsboro Borough	Planning	\$175,470
Wellsboro Borough	Municipal Water System	\$10,000
Laceyville Borough	Police Car	\$23,000 *
Canton Municipal Auth	Municipal Water System	\$10,000
Susq Co Prothonotary Ofc	Hist Records Preservation	\$15,000
Brad Co Elections Office	Voting Machines	\$566,000
Sullivan County Elections	Voting Machines	\$140,000
Hallstead-Great Bend Municipal Authority	Municipal Water System	\$10,000
Osceola Police Dept	Equipment Purchase	\$5,000
Sullivan Township	Community Park	\$10,000
Mehoopany Township	Municipal Sewer System	\$10,000

* 2% Loan ** Loan/Grant

Welfare Funds Used to Help Youth

With the use of Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) funding, the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission, Bradford County Action (BCA) and the Trehab Center work together to fund projects to help students facing a barrier, financial or otherwise, that could prevent them from a success-

ful future. The students are chosen through a collaborative effort with school districts, county assistance offices, and Children and Youth Services and other agencies. The intent is to help remove barriers by providing work experience, exposure to career options and interaction. Many projects were completed across the region including some unique partnerships.

process of applying and interviewing for a job. They reviewed social skills, appropriate dress and basic skills necessary for successful employment. One group of boys learned how to build a computer and use software. Another group helped remodel a kitchen, which included painting, dry walling and spackling.

A unique collaboration

The intent is to help remove barriers by providing work experience, exposure to career options, and interaction.

between the Master Quilters Association and Trehab created The Amish Adventures Quilting Project, which assisted students in the development of social skills and team building. The goal of the project was to create a situation that would reduce at-risk behavior and apply art elements and principles to visual expression, while strengthening aesthetic thinking and behavior. Five young quilters worked side by side with five students to develop individual Amish

In Wyoming County, Trehab helped twenty-three students from St. Michael's School for Boys through the

quilt blocks with complete quilts as the final product.

Trehab and the HANDS Family Resource Center created the H.A.N.D.S. (Helping Area Needs for Diverse Early Child Care/Education Services) Day Camp project to expand the participation of special needs children in educational programming. The camp focused on character-building, socialization, career exploration, theater, art and singing. The kids were exposed to a wide variety of enriched experiences, diversity and positive behaviors. The youth expressed themselves in painting, sketching and experimenting with a variety of art materials. Special activities included character counts, career dress-up days, art/theatre classes and concluded with an outdoor cookout. Partners in this program were the Trehab Center and the HANDS Family Resource Center.

TANF funds also were used to support the Healthcare Awareness Week project by assisting in the transportation costs for the school districts.

Health Career Week Events

November 14-18, 2005

The goal of Health Careers Week is to promote career opportunities in health care, particularly those occupations in demand such as nursing, direct care, pharmacy, medical imaging, clinical laboratory sciences and respiratory therapy.

Essay Contest

Tenth Grade students in all 35 school districts in the region were encouraged to participate in the Health Career Heroes essay contest. The contest, "Celebrating Health Care Heroes of Today and Tomorrow," was sponsored by the Pennsylvania Center for Health Careers and encouraged tenth graders to write about an influential



➤ The Northeast Pennsylvania Area Health Education Booth.

➤ Guthrie Healthcare System booth at the Health Career Fair, Towanda Junior/Senior High School.



health care professional in their lives, and to describe what makes that person a hero. The focus of this contest was to increase youth awareness of the more than 200 health care career options available in the state. Heather Gostinski from Mansfield High School won first place in the State for her essay honoring her Health Care Hero, her mother Michelle Gostinski. Heather read her statewide contest-winning essay during a ceremony at the Capital on November 14th. Gostinski and four other regional winners were honored at a luncheon following the ceremony.

Heather was presented with an Apple iPOD for having the local wining essay and \$500 for taking top honors in the Northeast Region as well as the State. Representative Matt Baker introduced Heather on the House floor where she was awarded a citation by the Speaker of the House.

Janna Heyler from Cowanesque High School won second place honors in the Northern Tier Region for her essay honoring her Health Care Hero. Janna was presented with an Apple iPOD for having the second place winning essay.



◀ Pictured L-R: Acting Secretary Zahorchak from the Department of Education; Michelle Gostinski; Rosemarie Greco, Director of the Governor's Office of Health Care Reform; Heather Gostinski, Essay winner; Sally Dixon, President and CEO of Memorial Health System Corporation; Fred Dedrick, Executive Director of the State Workforce Investment Board.

Health Career Day

Health Career Day was held at the Elk Lake High School and Susquehanna County Career & Technology Center on November 15, 2005. Approximately 278 students in 7th-12th grades from Susquehanna and Wyoming counties attended this event. Health care professionals gave short presentations on their careers to the group in the morning session. In the afternoon, students did one-on-one "interviews" with the presenters.

Health Career Fair

A Health Career Fair for 7th-12th graders from Bradford and Sullivan Counties was held at the Towanda Junior/Senior High School on Novem-

ber 16, 2005. Exhibitors included a mix of health care employers and post-secondary educators. Students viewed demonstrations of different medical procedures and participated in hands-on activities. They were also able to speak with the presenters about their careers. Approximately 175 students from Bradford and Sullivan counties attended this event.

Health Careers CD, Blue Ridge High School

195 students in 7th-12th grade viewed a CD highlighting targeted health careers on November 17, 2005. Afterwards, health care professionals from Barnes Kasson hospital gave presentations on their various occupations.



▶ Essay winner Janna Heyler with Wayne Crawford, Guidance Counselor, on the left and her father, Mr. Heyler on the right.

Health Careers CD, Athens High School

203 tenth grade students viewed a CD highlighting targeted health careers on November 18, 2005. Other health career activities are being planned for later this year.

A total of 851 students in the Northern Tier Region participated in Health Careers Week activities.

Workforce Challenges

The closure of any business and the loss of jobs is always difficult. In 2005, two major manufacturing facilities, Westan and Eagle Family Foods closed in Tioga County, resulting in the dislocation of nearly three hundred employees. In a county with a population of 41,000, it can be devastating.

This coordinated effort to gather in one location provides instant training and employment information to those facing unemployment.

The system in place for helping laid-off employees is called a “Rapid Response,” which NTRPDC coordinates with guidance from the Workforce Investment Board. The team consists of representatives from agencies around the region who represent all of the partners and the multitude of services provided through the Pennsylvania CareerLink system. This coordinated effort to gather in one location provides instant

training and employment information to those facing unemployment.

Since both of the facilities closures could be in part, attributed to trade issues, the employees of both facilities were eligible for additional assistance through Trade Adjustment Assistance. Led by Terri Zimmerman of the Commonwealth’s Rapid Response Coordination Services, the team provided rapid responses, business rights interviews, and enrollment assessment and waivers for the employees of both companies. NTRPDC also secured additional rapid response funding to build capacity.

Integration does not come

easily when dealing with a multitude of sources. Service providers ranging from economic development organizations to the postsecondary school system came together to help all of the employees who lost their jobs.

In addition to NTRPDC and the Pennsylvania CareerLink staff, the Tioga County Development Corporation, was a vital partner. They helped lead the transition team and kept the local

community informed and provided an informational newsletter to everyone involved. Staff from the Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership and Trehab, Inc., both CareerLink partners, rotated into the county from other Pennsylvania CareerLink centers to assist with the multitude of cases.

Along with job fairs, the team promoted on-the-job training and the benefits of hiring the former employees of Westan and Eagle Family Foods to other employers in the area. A weekly coordination meeting was held each week and a database was created to track the progress of each employee. Each employee had direct contact and peer counseling through the entire process.

Career math review, basic reading and grammar skills, basic computer skills, literacy classes, stress management and “how to” classes on handling employment separations were also provided. Due to the rural nature of the county, specific training such as Commercial Drivers License training was provided locally to help with accessibility.

The team worked hard to help each and every worker obtain employment at a level at least comparable to their previous jobs while providing sufficient follow-up to ensure job retention.

Programs Funded Through the Workforce Investment Act

The federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) created a system designed to provide a path to family sustaining employment. There are three basic programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth. Each program is designed to help in different ways, but the ultimate goal is not just employment, but sustainable employment. The Northern Tier has two subcontractors, Bradford County Action and the Trehab

...the ultimate goal is not just employment, but sustainable employment.

Center, who provide direct services to our five counties. There are many services available, including On-the-Job Training (OJT) which helps pay a client's salary while they receive training at work. There are also paid work experiences for youth,

which provide a youth client a suitable work atmosphere and valuable work experience and skills.

The Workforce Investment Act also created a one-stop shop for workforce programs, called Pennsylvania CareerLink. Each Pennsylvania CareerLink Center consists of multiple partners and services ranging from the Department of Public Welfare training programs, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Veteran's Services, to local colleges and the Salvation Army, in addition to programs offered through the WIA. Case managers guide clients through the process and if they aren't prepared for training in their chosen career, they receive assistance with basic skills. For example, a client wishing to become a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) may not be able to pass the necessary basic math and science requirements. They would take classes to become proficient enough for a training account towards an LPN. The Pennsylvania CareerLink also provides services to employers. Pennsylvania CareerLink staff can assist an employer with job postings, recruitment and screening among other things.

Last Year:

- Overall more than 550 clients were served in WIA.
- There were 85 individual training accounts (ITA) written with 77% of those being written for healthcare or commercial driver's license training. The cost ranged from \$860 - \$7000 and can be used over a two-year period.
- More than 150 employers across the region utilized CareerLink, posting more than 1,400 job orders. More than 5,000 job seekers used CareerLink services as well.
- 182 youth participated in the program with 78 receiving paid work experience.
- Department of Public Welfare Programs served more than 300 clients putting almost 200 of them in new jobs.

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