

**Special points of interest:**

- *WIB Applies for STEM Grant*
- *Sussex County Workforce Consortium*
- *Local GED Test Centers Honored*

## WIB Submits S.T.E.M. Grant Application

In response to a United States Department of Labor Request for Proposals for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Opportunities in the Workforce System Initiative (STEM Initiative), the Morris • Sussex • Warren WIB submitted a proposal on March 11, 2008.

Proposal features include:

- An eight county STEM Academy for teachers and students,
- A summit of business, education and government leaders to develop a comprehensive approach to regional STEM training,
- A website containing information on STEM employment, training and careers, and
- Funds for STEM training through participating WIBs.

Proposal development brought together such diverse partners as Essex County College (ECC) and Arthur and Friends, a Sussex County non-profit that employs workers with disabilities to grow and market hydroponic lettuce.

As a result of the STEM partnership, the Morris • Sussex • Warren WIB has joined an ECC proposal for High Growth Job Training in the energy industry and the energy related construction industry that extends beyond the STEM proposal.

In preparing the proposal, it became apparent that there is great eagerness and enthusiasm for regional partnerships. It was

also obvious that the partnerships and cooperation initiated in the proposal process are very valuable in themselves and that the proposal is already an effective catalyst for sustained regional employment and training partnerships.

The WIB extends sincere gratitude to Wendie Blanchard of Arthur & Friends for preparing and writing the STEM proposal. The grant application would not have been possible without Wendie's expert assistance.

Grant awards are expected to be announced in May, 2008. Selected Phase I applicants will be invited to submit more detailed proposals for program implementation.



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## MCST Wins National Recognition

The Morris County School of Technology's Academy for Mathematics, Science & Engineering has been recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the highest performing high schools in the country.

The recognition comes in the magazine's recent issue highlighting America's Best High Schools for 2008. The Math, Science & Engineering Academy was selected among the top 1,500 from more than 18,000 American high schools.

*"The Academy serves some of the brightest and most promising students in the county. It's very exciting to nurture their talents and see them accepted at some of the finest colleges in the country."*

- Jim Rogers  
MCST Superintendent  
and WIB Member

The Academy for Mathematics, Science & Engineering, located at Morris Hills High School in Rockaway, is a rigorous, highly focused four-year program for Morris County high school students with career interests in math, science or engineering.

Students complete a challenging curriculum and participate in technical internships with partners from business and industry.

Founded in 2000, Academy graduates have gone on to pursue four-year degrees at some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the country, including Columbia University, Carnegie Mellon University, Swarthmore, Dartmouth and Princeton.

The Academy is a collaborative effort between the Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Morris County Vocational School District and the Morris Hills Regional District. Academy students are enrolled in the Morris County Vocational School District, which is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the Council on Occupational Education.

Additional information about the Morris County School of Technology in Denville or its various academies may be obtained by calling the school at (973) 627-4600, or by visiting the school's website, [www.mcvtc.org](http://www.mcvtc.org).



Next WIB  
Open Meeting:

May 29

Save the Date!

## Joe Berenguer Named "Employee of the Month"

Joe Berenguer, Manager of the Dover and Morristown One-Stop Career Centers, has been named "Employee of the Month" by the NJ Department of Labor/Workforce Development.

Joe was lauded for his success as a Manager. Among his achievements is the Dover One-Stop Center's success in meeting and exceeding the Entered Employment Rate performance metric. The Dover One-Stop is the only one in the North Region to do so.

In addition, he was praised for his statistical acumen in using and analyzing management reports. His diligence in this area has led to several adjustments in



Joe Berenguer (right) being congratulated by NJDOLWD Commissioner David Socolow.

reporting data and formats, reflecting increased performance.

Congratulations to Joe on this well-deserved recognition.

# Arthur & Friends

## The Greenhouse Project in Sussex County



**W**endie Blanchard, a long-time friend and supporter of the WIB, has founded a social entrepreneurial training and employment program called *Arthur & Friends*, also known as the Greenhouse Project in Sussex County.

*Arthur & Friends*, which is sponsored by NORWESCAP, will “provide meaningful community employment and training opportunities for individuals 18 years of age and older with disabilities so that they may live, work and fully participate in their communities.”

The program consists of growing lettuce hydroponically in Sussex County for sale to local grocery stores and restaurants. Hydroponics is the science of growing plants without soil using a complete nutrient that is water-soluble and contains all the elements required for plant growth.

The program will create and expand employment opportunities, especially for people with disabilities and individuals with socio-economic disadvantages who have for many years been considered unemployable. These same individuals are often the poorest citizens and the most marginalized in society. Wendie has noted that disabled individuals want what we all want - “the chance to be educated, find rewarding work, lead worthwhile lives and be valued members of their community and in the world at large.”

The inspiration for *Arthur & Friends*, Wendie’s nephew Arthur Blanchard, is working with her to make *Arthur & Friends* a reality.

**Bill Weightman**, WIB member and One-Stop Administrator in Sussex County, noted, “*Arthur & Friends* offers people with disabilities a second chance to define themselves by the most salient of nuances - a job and a possible career.”

For more information on *Arthur & Friends*, contact Wendie Blanchard at [wendieblanchard@mac.com](mailto:wendieblanchard@mac.com).

The Morris Sussex Warren Workforce Investment Board is an equal opportunity employer with equal opportunity programs.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

### Ten Reasons to Eat Locally-Grown Sussex County Produce

1. **A dollar spent locally generates twice as much income for the local economy.**
2. **Locally grown produce is fresher.**
3. **Local food just plain tastes better.**
4. **Locally grown fruits and vegetables have longer to ripen.**
5. **Eating local is better for air quality and pollution than eating organic.**
6. **Buying local food keeps us in touch with the seasons.**
7. **Buying locally grown food is fodder for a wonderful story.**
8. **Eating local protects us from bio-terrorism.**
9. **Local food translates to more variety.**
10. **Supporting local providers supports responsible land development.**

## Sussex County Workforce Consortium SCEDP Spearheads Initiative

Starting or expanding a business or looking for first employment opportunities can be intimidating. A first time partnership is taking place through the Sussex County Economic Development Partnership (SCEDP) to provide seamless support to new college graduates, entrepreneurs and businesses looking to expand.

The consortium is a joint initiative of the SCEDP, Sussex County Chamber of Commerce, NJ Department of Labor in Sussex County, Warren County One-Stop Career Center, Sussex County Community College and the Centenary College Small Business Development Center. Personal assistance will soon be offered for any level of business and/or employment inquiries in Room F307 of the USDA Entrepreneurial Center at the College. Consultants will be available Tuesdays from 1-4 pm and Thursdays from 8:30 am-12:30 pm. A PowerPoint presentation identifying areas of available assistance

will be shown to all Center clients as well as to employers and job-seekers.

Services available under one roof will include: the Federal SBA program, State training and employment programs, College business courses, Chamber networking opportunities and SCEDP services for financing referrals, site location, demographics and new business start up counseling.

"The consortium will be a huge bonus to anyone looking for assistance in any facet of business growth," stated SCEDP President Tammie Horsfield.

*"This will be a turning point for the County and the development of small business in Sussex County. Micro-business is the core of our economy and this consortium will be able to answer and assist any small or micro-business in their search for understanding the complexities of operating a business in New Jersey."*

- Tammie Horsfield  
President of SCEDP

*"The mind, once expanded to the dimensions of larger ideas, never returns to its original size."*

- Oliver  
Wendell Holmes

## Local GED Test Centers Honored

The New Jersey Department of Education held their GED Examiners Annual Meeting at Mercer County Community College on Friday, November 16. At that meeting, awards were presented to test centers for the following categories:

- highest number of tests administered, and
- highest passing rates during 2006

Out of 39 GED test centers in the state of New Jersey, all three counties of the Morris/Sussex/Warren Workforce Investment Board received an award in the category of highest passing rates. Sussex County received First Place, Warren County received Third Place and Morris County received Honorable Mention.

Congratulations to all!

### Employment & Training Links

[www.careerinfonet.org](http://www.careerinfonet.org)

#### Career InfoNet

*For students, jobseekers, workforce professionals and employers who need to assess their options, find education and training, find a job or grow their business.*

Sponsored by the  
US Department of Labor