

2007 Progress Report



Wired for Growth

Background

Finger Lakes Wired is a partnership of 23 economic development, educational, workforce development, and business organizations from the nine-county Finger Lakes region surrounding Rochester, NY.

This collaborative effort is led by the chief executive officers of our partner organizations, who have met regularly since May 2006 to support a strategic approach to regional economic development. They have adopted a mission and vision, and have agreed to guiding principles, a strategic direction, and actions in support of this effort.

Mission

Increase the region's capacity to support talent development for sustained economic growth.

Vision

The Finger Lakes region is a premier place in which to innovate, investing in entrepreneurial operations and educating workers, empowering them to be agile, adaptable and aligned with global opportunities through an integrated system.

Strategic Direction

1. Energize the region's entrepreneurial economy;
2. Catalyze regional innovation and convert orphan or under-utilized technology into vibrant business ventures;
3. Educate and empower workers to successfully compete in the changing global economy;
4. Build a collaborative regional education, workforce and economic development system.

Strategic Outcomes – Completion of WIRED

1. Increase private sector job growth relative to national average.
2. Increase average wages relative to national average.
3. Increase retention of 20 to 34 year old workers in region.
4. Adoption of a regional identity resulting in collaborative networking and communication in support of regional economic strategies.

Implementing our Plan for Economic Growth

An implementation plan was developed to provide an early stage roadmap for the Wired Initiative. Now in 2008, the plan is well underway.

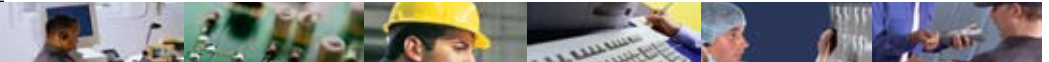
Partners have utilized feedback from our National Advisory Panel to refine activities and identify other opportunities for improvement.

Finger Lakes Wired, which builds on the success of the national Wired (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) brand, encourages collaboration and connectivity in the Finger Lakes region to show how we can be 'wired together' for growth.

Partners are working to align resources and assets to support the growth of entrepreneurs and existing businesses throughout the region.



continued



Project Outcomes

The projects noted below are strengthening talent development in the region and are supported by United State department of Labor WIRED funds as well as other resources. Additional projects may be considered by Finger Lakes Wired in 2008.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Predictive Analysis – Business Attraction - GRE

Helps identify high-growth opportunities, perform in-depth research on identified companies, and set up mission trips for leaders to visit target companies.

- Have identified more than 65 companies that could benefit by connections to local Optics/Imaging, Biotech/ Life Sciences, Food/Agriculture, Advanced Manufacturing and Alternative Energy companies. Planning an executive level outreach campaign to inform decision makers and provide leads for attraction efforts.
- Zoom Prospector has been added to the Greater Rochester Enterprise website to allow corporate site locators to identify potential sites in the region.

Predictive Analysis – Retention & Expansion - GRE

Develops and utilizes predictive analysis tools to identify companies likely to expand or contract so that economic development resources can be focused where necessary.

- The model has been adjusted to produce a list of over 1,100 companies for economic developers to utilize within the region.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Masters of Science Degree in Science and Technology Commercialization – U of R

Increases skills of technology assessment and possible commercialization by utilizing curriculum from University of Texas at Austin.

- Six students assessed 22 technologies. One was selected for a full commercialization plan, leading to company creation and the infusion of \$581,000 from an equity investment and NYSTAR TTIP grant.

Strategic Growth through Innovation Program – RIT

Targets potential high-growth small enterprises seeking to expand. It emphasizes growth through innovation and technology commercialization.

- Company executives helped tailor course curriculum to meet business needs. The initial class of 40 executives began in October 2007 with great reviews.

The Entrepreneurs Network - TEN

This six-month program includes a boot camp, work shops, and panel events and optimizes interaction with leading entrepreneurial experts to introduce entrepreneurs to new ideas and attract capital.

- 70 company executives have participated to date. Three sessions completed since 2006 with a fourth to begin soon with 20 high tech business leaders.
- Members have created more than 50 jobs, increased revenue by more than \$5.7 million and secured \$7.2 million in angel and venture capital investments.

Winery and Grape Grower Education Program – ROI

Develops business skill sets of winery and vineyard owners and key staff to increase growth and investment.

- 23 business owners have benefited from individual coaching and classroom training designed to improve business development since summer 2007.

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy – U of R, Geneseo

High School students start and run a real business, pitch investors, manage sales and service. Business leaders provide mentoring and advise based on real-world experience.

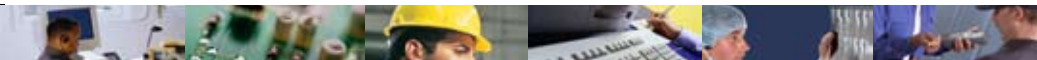
- 24 students are starting businesses based on an expansion of the YEA Academy at SUNY Geneseo.

INNOVATION

Pre-Seed Workshops - HTR

Assesses the potential for a specific invention, and fosters a collaboration of technologists and/or inventors knowledgeable about business.

continued



- Workshops in Geneva in 2006 with 50 participants with another in Rochester in 2007 with 52 participants investigating commercialization options.

SBIR Outreach and Access - HTR

Improve the region's small business tech transfer efforts to increase success under federal Small Business Innovation Research grant programs.

- Assisted 74 applicants with strategies and proposals leveraging other efforts such as NYSTAR and Insyte Consulting. Twelve proposals were submitted with funding decisions expected in late 2007.

Tech Commercialization- HTR, U of R, Technology Farm

Trains researchers, students, faculty and entrepreneurs to increase skills and success with technology commercialization. Creates a more integrated approach among partners to improve business development. Demonstrates how to integrate research and new product design with the benchmarks associated with key industries.

- Participants and technologies have been identified for assessment through a technology clearinghouse leveraging resources from Excell Partners, High Tech Rochester, RIT, U of R and the Technology Farm.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION

Scholarship Fund - RW, FLW, GLOW

Matches business investments to increase worker skills in key industry segments - Alternative Energy, Biotech & Life Sciences, Food & Agriculture, Optics & Imaging, Advanced Manufacturing, Information Technology, Engineering, Business Services and Health Care - leading to transferable skills and industry recognized credentials.



- Since beginning in September 2006, \$1.4 million has been allocated to more than 100 businesses to increase the skills of 2,671 workers with \$3.3 million in matching funds. Businesses are encouraged to apply.

Regional Apprentices System - MCC, FLCC, GCC

Develops industry-based apprentice system for the Finger Lakes Region with new training programs for Optics & Imaging, Biotech and Health Care companies.

- Optical fabricator apprentice program started with 21 workers from 4 businesses. Credit bearing coursework will begin in January 2008. 13 students are engaged in the program.

Educator Internships - FLW/RACEC

Places educator interns in industry and engages employers from Optics/Imaging, Biotech/Life Sciences, Alternative Energy, and Food and Agriculture to better connect education and industry.

- Sixteen educators completed projects with businesses and used the experience to inform more than 540 students and 184 colleagues about industry needs.

The Friendly Home Long Term Care Facility Career Pathway

Supported by members of the Senior Health Alliance of Greater Rochester, which includes nursing homes, hospitals and other regional healthcare facilities, this effort establishes career paths for people in the long-term care industry.



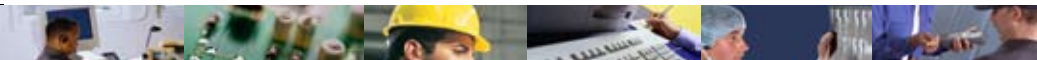
- Seven formerly unemployed adult workers completed a 90-hour training program and were employed by sponsor and partner organizations. A second class of eight graduated in October 2007. All were immediately employed by the sponsor and partners.

Expanding Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Camps

Encourages youth to explore the possibilities linked to studies in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and enhances the region's awareness as a premier locale for STEM career opportunities.

- 150 scholarships supported applied learning in biotechnology, physics, chemistry, geo-spatial technology, environmental protection, botany, mathematics, human-computer interaction and astronomy during the summer of 2007.

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- Efforts will be made to expand the camps' reach in 2008 to youth who age 16 and older to encourage career exploration and the post-secondary training related to the region's growth sectors of advanced manufacturing, alternative energy, biotechnology, food and agriculture, life sciences, information technology and optics and imaging.

Regional Cluster and Competency Networks – GRE
Connects key leaders among high tech industry clusters including biotechnology, information technology, life sciences and optics to facilitate the development of new opportunities.

- More than 50 business leaders were contacted and several events were held to connect leaders across industry segments and further understanding of available regional resources. More than 100 leaders attended the events and will be involved in the process.

The Essential Links – Technology Farm
Creates a formal network of food and agricultural business leaders to increase innovation and leverages assets throughout the region.

- More than 100 leaders from academic, scientific, imaging, agricultural and government organizations met for the first Photonics, Food and Agriculture conference in November 2007. Several collaborative initiatives arose to leverage agricultural and imaging technologies.

Finger Lakes Advanced Manufacturing Enterprise – FLW

Expand a formal network of advanced manufacturing business leaders to increase innovation and support the growth of high tech manufacturers in the region.

- Approximately 50 leaders from academic, advanced manufacturing and government organizations have connected to discuss opportunities to increase talent and leverage assets in the region to support business growth.

Partners

City of Rochester
County of Monroe
Empire State Development Corp
The Entrepreneurs Network
Finger Lakes Community College
Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board
Genesee Community College
Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council
Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, and Wyoming Workforce Investment Board
Greater Rochester Enterprise
High Tech Rochester
Infotonics Technology Center
Monroe Community College
Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Investment Board
Rochester Area Colleges
Rochester Area Community Foundation
Rochester Angel Network
Rochester Business Alliance
Rochester Institute of Technology
RochesterWorks, Inc.
Technology Farm
Trillium Group
University of Rochester



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Finger Lakes Wired

Finger Lakes Wired is one of the first regions across America to be awarded \$15 million over three years through the United States Department of Labor WIRED Initiative. Partners will leverage over \$22 million in regional resources devoted to supporting talent development strategies that increase economic growth in the region.

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Nine-County Finger Lakes Region

Genesee	Seneca
Livingston	Wayne
Monroe	Wyoming
Ontario	Yates
Orleans	