



MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



Dec. 18, 2006

No. 07-22

For Immediate Release

For More Information: Joe Holbert, Special Assistant for Communications
907-465-5673 or 907-321-6071 (Cell)

\$1.1 million in grants awarded to train young Alaskans for energy and related jobs

(Juneau) – Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner Greg O’Claray today announced \$1.1 million in grants to help train more than 700 young Alaskans for good-paying jobs in growth industries including energy, construction, tourism and transportation.

“These grants will help prepare young Alaskans from age 16 to 24 for desirable jobs in high-growth sectors of the economy,” said O’Claray. The financial support is a combination of federal funding from the Denali Commission and state general fund support for the Alaska Youth First Initiative.

The department’s Division of Business Partnerships awarded the grants to 13 Alaska agencies and organizations. The grants range from \$20,000 to \$150,000.

“The grants will underwrite work force readiness training and apprenticeships,” said Employment Security Analyst Gerry McDonagh. The funding will also provide post-secondary education including improved reading and math skills.

“An outstanding program in Kenai called ‘TALENTS’ is an example of the training direction provided by the grant assistance,” said O’Claray.

The TALENTS program replicates a successful youth employability certificate program in Juneau. In Kenai, it will train 20 youth in “soft” and “hard” job skills through workshops and job-shadowing activities.

A Certificate of Employability is awarded to youth upon completing TALENTS. The Division of Business Partnerships coordinates the program with participating community partners including the Kenai Peninsula School District.

(MORE)

The Denali Commission and Alaska Youth First Initiative funding also helps support training programs in other professional disciplines.

In Fairbanks and other statewide locations, Alaska youth can complete training and internships in the hospitality field, with employment opportunities through partnerships with hotels and tourism companies.

In Dillingham, young Alaskans can pursue a small business certification with a school district-based business, providing business management and operational skills as well as job opportunities.

“These projects are examples of the community- and industry-based partnerships our department is building to ensure Alaska’s youth are ready for the jobs that are ready for them,” said O’Claray.

-End-