

Greater Springfield Employment Challenges: Findings of Employer Survey and Interviews

David Plasse and the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Springfield Project Team – Marques Benton, Lynn Browne, Prabal Chakrabarti, DeAnna Green, Yolanda Kodrzycki, Ana Patricia Muñoz, Richard Walker, Bo Zhao

Greater Springfield Employment Challenges: Findings of Employer Survey and Interviews

David Plasse and the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Springfield Project Team – Marques Benton, Lynn Browne, Prabal Chakrabarti, DeAnna Green, Yolanda Kodrzycki, Ana Patricia Muñoz, Richard Walker, Bo Zhao

November 2009

Abstract: This paper presents the findings from in-depth interviews and a survey of employers in the Greater Springfield area regarding (a) employment opportunities for entry-level workers with limited skills and (b) barriers that residents of Springfield's low-income neighborhoods face in accessing these jobs. The survey and interviews indicate that entry-level jobs that do not require college are available in the Springfield area. However, even entry-level jobs require the ability to perform a variety of tasks, and many applicants lack the skills needed to perform these jobs or have work readiness problems. Lack of prior experience and the absence of referral networks limit access to these jobs for residents of Springfield's low-income neighborhoods.

This paper focuses on the employment opportunities available to residents of Springfield's poor neighborhoods and the barriers to accessing these jobs.

As part of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's project to contribute to the revitalization of Springfield and, specifically, to identify strategies that will help residents of Springfield's low-income neighborhoods participate more fully in the Springfield economy and its revitalization, this paper focuses on the employment opportunities available to these residents and the barriers that residents face in accessing and retaining these jobs.¹ If poverty rates in these neighborhoods are to be reduced, prospects for increased workforce participation and more productive employment must be improved.

This discussion paper details the findings from employer interviews and a survey of firms in the Springfield area about their experience hiring non-college entry-level workers. In-depth interviews were conducted in-person and over the phone with a dozen employers offering the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs likely to be most relevant to residents of Springfield's poor neighborhoods. The paper also presents the results of a survey of mid-sized to large employers in Greater Springfield. The Reserve Bank partnered with the Human Resource Management Association of Western New England (HRMA) to undertake a collaborative survey of HRMA members.² The detailed survey results appear in the Appendices.

The views and experiences of private sector employers are critical to crafting workforce development strategies. Private sector input is essential to ensuring that strategies are aligned with employers' needs and effective in enabling entry-level workers to find and retain employment.

¹ For a fuller description of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's objectives in Springfield, see *Towards a More Prosperous Springfield, Massachusetts: Introduction and Motivation*, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Community Affairs Discussion Paper No. 2009-01 April 2009 at <http://www.bos.frb.org/commdev/pcadp/2009/pcadp0901.pdf>. (Springfield Project, *Introduction and Motivation*.)

² HRMA is a local chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management, a national association of human resource professionals.

Additional perspectives must also be considered in designing workforce development strategies. To that end, members of the project team spoke with members of the Springfield workforce development community, including representatives of the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, area One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, the Jobs Corps and various community-based training programs. These interviews were supplemented with several focus group sessions with residents of Springfield's Latino neighborhoods; participants discussed their employment aspirations and the barriers they encounter. Observations from both sets of discussions will be published in a subsequent paper.

Yet another consideration is how future labor market trends compare with the current situation. In a separate paper, the Project Team looked at projections of job openings in Massachusetts over the period 2006-2016 and compared employment patterns in the Springfield area to those statewide. That paper concludes that job opportunities with relatively low skill requirements are not likely to be in short supply.³ However, wage levels tend to be low. Achieving higher wages requires meaningful training, on-the-job if not in a formal educational program.

The focus of the current paper is the employer viewpoint. According to both the interviews and the survey, most of the employers contacted have openings for entry-level workers. However, many applicants for these positions cannot meet the requirements of the job. Even entry-level non-college jobs require, on a daily basis, the ability to read documents, write, use a computer, and work in teams. Most employers require a high

³ *Towards a More Prosperous Springfield, MA: What Jobs Exist for People without a College Education*, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Community Affairs Discussion Paper No. 2009-02, September 2009 at <http://www.bos.frb.org/commdev/pcadp/2009.pcadp0902.pdf>.

Low labor force participation rates in these neighborhoods mean that many residents do not have a consistent work history and also lack relatives and friends who can give them referrals.

school degree or a GED certificate. Employers often require drug tests and check for a criminal record. Once a worker is hired, poor attendance is a frequently encountered problem, particularly on second and third shifts. Some workers are unable to follow directions. Some are disillusioned by the reality of entry-level work, which can be demanding and tedious.

Employers consider employee referrals to be a valuable recruiting and screening tool, and a history of success in prior employment is regarded as a good indicator of future success. In both cases, residents of Springfield's downtown neighborhoods appear to be at a disadvantage, as low labor force participation rates in these neighborhoods mean that many residents do not have a consistent work history and also lack relatives and friends who can give them referrals.⁴ Latino residents of Springfield's poor neighborhoods may be further disadvantaged by widespread use of newspaper ads as a recruiting tool, since such ads are almost exclusively in English.

Many of the findings from the interviews and survey are consistent with the Urban Institute's 2008 study of the low-wage labor market nationally.⁵ Greater Springfield employers seem to be looking for similar qualities in workers as their national counterparts and the jobs offered have similar characteristics. However, Greater Springfield employers seem to report a more abundant supply of applicants, but also more workforce readiness issues.

⁴ Springfield Project, *Introduction and Motivation*, discusses the low employment ratios in Springfield's poor neighborhoods on pages 10 and 22.

⁵ Gregory Acs and Pamela Loprest, *Understanding the Demand Side of the Low-Wage Labor Market, Final Report*, The Urban Institute, April 10, 2008 as found at http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411680_low-wage_labor.pdf as of September 22, 2009.

Greater Springfield Employer Interviews

The authors conducted in-depth interviews with twelve local employers during the spring of 2009. The firms were selected to be representative of companies employing at least some unskilled and low-skilled entry-level workers; and they included firms in light manufacturing, food production and distribution, warehouse/distribution, materials handling and service industries. The interviewed firms were located in Springfield or within 5 miles of the city.

The interviews were generally held with the human resource managers and staff most familiar with the entry-level hiring experience. In selecting and interviewing firms, the primary author drew on experience in hiring and managing entry-level workers at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's check processing operations in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, and on his knowledge as a resident of the Springfield area. The following summarizes key findings from these interviews.

Hiring entry-level workers

Most employers reported on-going recruitment of entry-level staff, although recession conditions in 2009 had limited most firms' activity to replacement hiring to compensate for normal attrition, hiring to meet short-term peak production needs, and other hiring of a seasonal nature. Employers generally reported good availability of entry-level applicants, but a high prevalence of workforce readiness issues. As a result, employers have to process and screen out large numbers of candidates relative to the number of positions being filled. Incomplete employment

applications are rejected. The majority of employers perform pre-employment drug testing and/or criminal background checks.

Employers generally advertise in newspapers and on company web sites, but many also reported word-of-mouth employee referrals as a significant source of candidates. Employers also reported using on-site job fairs and working with the One-Stop Career Centers, as well as with various community-based organizations.

Employers almost universally reported a strong preference for candidates with consistent work experience and proven records of employment success. The general belief among local employers is that a demonstrated track record of success on the job is the best predictor of future employment success.

Deficiencies on the job

Deficiencies in applicants' workforce readiness were reported by most of the employers interviewed. Issues surfaced in both the application/interview process and on the job. On-the-job issues include poor attendance, tardiness, lack of ability to follow directions, lack of ability to work independently and general deficiencies in basic literacy and numeracy skills. Several employers referred to the sum total of these issues as a lack of "work ethic" that inhibits employee retention, success, and advancement. Some employers reported a higher prevalence of these issues among candidates from the city of Springfield itself, with one human resource manager stating frankly that candidates from the suburbs are "better prepared."

Employers were almost unanimous in reporting higher than desired turnover. The principal drivers of high turnover are unacceptable attendance and the lack of ability to follow directions. These problems lead directly to a high rate of terminations and a requirement to fill at least some positions on a continual basis to replace workers lost to quits and employer-initiated terminations. A prominent local manufacturer termed poor attendance a “huge issue.”

Attendance issues are especially prevalent on second and third shifts. A leading service provider reported needing to take in 400 employees annually to account for turnover and maintain a three-shift workforce of 175 active employees. A local distributor of retail store products reported 157 percent turnover on the second shift.

Employers report a gap between the realities of entry-level unskilled and semi-skilled work and new employees’ expectations of the experience in these jobs. As a result, employees become disillusioned and may quit, aggravating turnover. Consequently, some employers favor employee referrals and on-site job fairs as recruiting methods, because they allow prospective employees to gain a better understanding of the work environment in advance of being hired. Several employers also report better workforce readiness, more realistic expectations, and a stronger work ethic in graduates of local vocational education high schools or similar job training programs.

Other barriers to employment

A number of potential barriers to employment surfaced during our employer interviews. These include the educational, background, and

workforce readiness deficiencies discussed above, as well as other issues such as lack of transportation, lack of child care, a lack of working role models and the absence of a network of relatives, friends and acquaintances already in the workforce.

Several employers observed that significant numbers of entry-level openings are on second and third shifts. Public transportation is more limited or unavailable during those hours.

Several employers observed that significant numbers of entry-level openings are on second and third shifts. Public transportation is more limited or unavailable during those hours, a situation that places workers without dependable personal transportation at a disadvantage in accessing and maintaining these jobs. For residents of Springfield, this situation is aggravated by the fact that many employers of entry-level workers have moved out of the city proper to industrial parks in the neighboring communities of Agawam, East Longmeadow and Chicopee.

Inexperienced, entry-level applicants are further hampered in competing for and succeeding in jobs on second and third shifts, which are more lightly supervised, by employers' concerns that they may lack the ability to work independently.

Lack of child care was identified as an issue of some importance in the employer interviews. New employees may be challenged to meet employer attendance standards by the demands of child care. The fact that many entry-level openings are on off shifts is a further complication.

The high reliance on and high prevalence of employee referrals as a recruiting method may well place residents of Springfield's low income neighborhoods at a disadvantage, as the low workforce participation rates in these neighborhoods mean that many residents lack a robust

network of working relatives and acquaintances. For the same reason, the often expressed employer preference for candidates with a consistent and successful work history places many Springfield residents at a disadvantage.

Employer Programs

A leading human resources training organization in the area reports strong demand from employers for orientation programs to address the workforce readiness issues they see in new employees. This organization recommends that Springfield place more emphasis on workforce readiness in the schools and that community organizations devote more programming to these issues. They also recommend increased employer involvement, perhaps supported by public funding to allow employers to provide more comprehensive work opportunities.

A representative of one employer with a strong commitment to youth education and youth employment described that company's programs. These programs are intended to improve the employment prospects, as well as the educational and professional development, of Springfield's young people. They include summer work and learning programs, as well as an intensive work-scholarship program during the school year. The work-scholarship program provides part-time jobs and a strong emphasis on education and life skills with the goal of addressing the combination of educational, workforce readiness and lack-of-experience issues that handicaps job-seekers from the city. This employer believes that the comprehensive and focused approach of their program is more effective than most other programming. The approach is analogous to the Job Corps' model, which includes basic education, vocational training

and life skills to develop the total person, but in a residential setting.

This employer would like to see more workforce development funding channeled to comprehensive programs like theirs.

Federal Reserve Bank of Boston / Human Resource Management Association - Greater Springfield Employment Survey

The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston partnered with the Human Resource Management Association of Western New England (HRMA) to conduct a survey of HRMA's members. The survey was conducted electronically from June 4 to June 19, 2009. The survey was sent to 81 HRMA member firms, 90 percent of which are in Greater Springfield. Forty-one firms, just over 50 percent, responded.

The survey gathered information on the demand for entry-level employees, recruiting and hiring practices, and skill requirements. The survey also looked at the overall experience of employers seeking to hire and retain entry level employees; and it sought to identify barriers to hiring and employment success. The results are consistent with the findings from the interviews.

The individual survey questions and responses appear in three appendices. Responses are presented for all employers and also for employers within and outside of a 10-mile radius of Springfield. Key findings follow. The corresponding questions in the appendices are referenced in parentheses.

Employer characteristics: Two-thirds of the responding firms have major facilities within 10 miles of the city. They represent a variety of industries.

- 68 percent of respondents have major facilities in or within 10 miles of the city (Question #27)

- 29 percent of respondents characterize their industry as manufacturing, 20 percent as healthcare/social services, 14 percent as finance/insurance and 11 percent as retail (#28)
- 78 percent of respondents report having at least 100 employees in the Greater Springfield area (#29)
- over 80 percent of employees at responding firms are full-time (#14)

Entry-level opportunities: Most responding employers have some entry-level non-college openings. Most such hiring is to replace workers who did not work out. Most employers require a high school degree or GDE.

- 85 percent of responding employers identified a high school degree as a requirement in hiring for entry-level positions that do not require college (Question #2)
- roughly three-quarters also report they accept entry-level candidates with a GED (#2)
- over a third require some prior work experience (#2)
- almost three-quarters of respondents report entry-level pay between \$8.50 and \$12.00 per hour (#3)
- three-quarters plan to hire for entry-level (non-college degree) positions in the next 12 months (#17)
- three-quarters report plans to hire primarily to replace quits and fired workers and about a third report hiring to expand their work force (#18)

Recruiting: Traditional recruiting methods of newspaper ads and referrals from current employees are widely prevalent, but supplemented by on-line recruiting. Advertising is almost entirely in English.

- over 90 percent of firms responding report using referrals from current employees (Question #4)
- 90 percent report using newspaper ads to recruit for entry-level positions (#4)
- 80 percent report recruiting via company website; 60.0 percent via other websites (#4)
- 45 percent report using One-Stop Career Center referrals, a similar fraction report using referrals from the state employment service, and 35 percent report using referrals from community agencies (#4)
- over 90 percent do not advertise available positions in a language other than English (#5)
- use of job fairs and college recruiting were also noted

Conditions of employment: Employers value candidates with a consistent work history. Criminal record checks and drug tests are widely used.

- over 80 percent of responding firms require a consistent work history as a condition of employment (Question #6)
- about 70 percent require a criminal record check, although over 80 percent either do or might consider an applicant with a criminal record (#6 and #7)
- 60 percent require a drug test (#6)
- 36 percent require a basic skills test (#6)

Skills needed in entry-level positions that do not require a college degree: Basic educational proficiency and computer literacy are required in the vast majority of entry-level positions. Soft skills – the ability to work in teams and talk to customers – are also important.

- Reading documents is required on a daily basis by 90 percent of responding employers (Question #1)
- Writing is required daily by 85 percent of employers (#1)
- Computer use is required daily by 85 percent of employers (#1)
- Working in teams is required daily by 85 percent of employers (#1)
- Basic arithmetic is required daily by almost 70 percent of employers (#1)
- Speaking with customers is required daily by almost 70 percent of employers (#1)

Workforce readiness deficiencies as barriers to success: Workforce readiness issues are commonly encountered by responding employers, with poor attendance the most important issue, followed by “poor work ethic” and the inability to follow directions.

- 30 percent of employers responding to the question reported that a lack of workforce readiness is a significant barrier to employee success and retention; 60 percent reported that it is a moderate barrier. (Question #8)
- among workforce readiness issues, poor attendance was ranked first in importance by 40 percent of employers, followed by “poor work ethic” and inability to follow directions, each of which was ranked first by 24 percent of respondents. Poor work ethic received the most second place votes, followed by inability to follow directions. The inability to work independently was also ranked first or second by some employers. (#9)
- over 60 percent of respondents report that they frequently encounter poor attendance and 50 percent report they frequently encounter tardiness. Over 90 percent of employers encounter these issues at least occasionally. (#10)
- 40 percent of employers report that they frequently encounter “poor work ethic” (#10)
- 34 percent frequently encounter inappropriate use of cell phones or texting (#10)

Employer techniques to improve workforce readiness and increase retention: Most employers have formal new employee orientation programs; a significant number provide mentors or coaches.

- 97 percent of responding employers have formal new employee orientation (Question #11)
- almost 60 percent of employers report providing mentors/coaches; a similar fraction reports formal classroom training (#11)
- over 70 percent of responding employers report that they use professional development opportunities and tuition reimbursement as techniques to encourage retention (#15)
- 60 percent report programmed salary increases as retention techniques; over a third provide performance incentive bonuses (#15)
- about 20 percent provide attendance/on-time bonus payments (#15)
- computerized training/learning, regularly scheduled training and department meetings, and peer interviewing were also reported.

External barriers to successful employment: Roughly a third of employers report transportation difficulties are a problem for employee retention; a similar share report lack of dependable child care is an issue. Transportation is more frequently an issue for employers located further from the city; child care is a more prevalent issue near the city.

- a third of respondents report lack of dependable transportation is a problem in retaining workers (Question #12)
- over a third report lack of dependable child care is a problem in retaining workers (#13)
- 27 percent of respondents in or within 10 miles of Springfield report lack of transportation is an issue, compared to 50 percent beyond 10 miles of Springfield (#12)
- 44 percent of respondents in or within 10 miles of Springfield report lack of child care is an issue, compared to 18 percent located further out (#13)

Open comments by surveyed employers:

- Poor attendance and tardiness go hand-in-hand.
- Many entry-level applicants do not have a good understanding of their own strengths/marketable skills. One respondent commented that the firm had employees with good mechanical aptitude working in non-mechanical and often lower paying positions. These individuals seem to have had little guidance about the types of position for which they might be suited.
- Demanding work seems to be a major factor in turnover.

Applicant/employee characteristics:

- 42 percent of respondents reported that less than 25 percent of job applicants in the past year were from the city of Springfield; 24 percent reported 25 to 50 percent; 13 percent reported over half came from the city. The rest did not know. (Question #22)
- 45 percent reported more female job applicants; 40 percent reported more male applicants. (#23).
- 14 percent reported that 25 to 49 percent of their workforce is Black/African American; 27 percent reported between 10 and 25 percent and 54 percent reported less than 10 percent (#24)
- 21 percent reported that 25 to 49 percent of their workforce is Latino/Hispanic; 42 percent reported between 10 and 25 percent and 26 percent reported less than 10 percent (#25)

Themes from Interviews and Survey

Based on of the interviews and the survey, several themes emerged.

These are identified in bold below. A number of these themes and observations are consistent with the Urban Institute's recent study of the low-skill labor market nationally and an analysis of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of young adults in the Springfield area conducted by the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University for The Commonwealth Corporation.⁶

Experience in Sourcing Employees

1. The supply of applicants for entry-level positions is adequate.

Employers report that newspaper ads, employee referrals and on-line advertising of entry-level vacancies bring an adequate supply of candidates. Firms also make use of job fairs, One-Stop Career Centers, and community based organizations, but these other recruiting methods are reported far less frequently than newspapers and referrals. Most

⁶ Acs and Loprest, The Urban Institute. April 10, 2008 and *Demographic, Socio-Economic, Schooling, and Labor Market Indicators for 16-24 Year Olds in the Combined Berkshire, Franklin/Hampshire, and Hampden WIB Regions of Massachusetts in 2005-2007*. Prepared by the Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University for The Commonwealth Corporation, Boston, Massachusetts. March 2009. http://www.commcorp.org/youth/documents/CommCorp_WesternMass_Indicators_000.pdf as of September 8, 2009.

employers do not advertise in any language other than English, even though the Springfield area has a large Latino/Hispanic population.

Employers report that newspaper ads, employee referrals and on-line advertising of entry-level vacancies bring an adequate supply of candidates.

2. The quality of applicants for entry-level positions often does not meet employer needs.

Work readiness issues among applicants are common. These include lack of stable work experience, positive drug tests, criminal backgrounds and poor interview skills. These weaknesses require employers to screen more candidates than they would like.

3. Employers report extensive use of word-of-mouth recruiting via internal, mostly informal, employee referrals for entry-level positions.

Use of employee referrals of entry-level candidates was reported by over 90 percent of survey respondents. Interviews indicate that employers think referrals often attract better quality candidates and, thus, reduce the total number of candidates that must be screened to achieve hiring goals. Referred candidates are said to have more realistic expectations of the work environment. While use of referrals makes sense from the employers' perspective, it is likely to perpetuate the existing composition of the workforce.

4. Employers generally require a high school diploma or GED for entry-level non-college positions. A variety of skills are required in these "low-skill" jobs.

A high school diploma is required by better than 85 percent of survey respondents, with three-quarters indicating that a GED is acceptable.

These educational requirements represent a challenge for residents of Springfield's poor neighborhoods. Most entry-level positions require the ability to perform a variety of functions, including read documents, write notes or memos, do arithmetic, use a computer, work with others and speak to customers.

The one-stop career centers are a well recognized and important resource for employers.

5. Employers regularly screen for drug use and criminal background.

Employers report frequent issues in drug screening and criminal background checks. A local manufacturer interviewed reported routinely seeing a 50 percent failure rate in drug screening.

6. The majority of employers are familiar with the One-Stop Career Centers, and some employers work with the career centers in recruiting.

The one-stop career centers are a well recognized and important resource for employers, although employers report making greater use of newspaper ads and employee referrals. Some employers say they use the one-stop career centers more for publicizing requirements for specialized, higher skilled positions, such as industrial mechanics and electricians.

Workforce readiness of applicants

1. Employers report that lack of workforce readiness is a problem.

In both interviews and the survey, lack of workforce readiness was identified as a problem among candidates for unskilled and semi-skilled entry-level positions. Employers report encountering incomplete applications, spotty or non-existent work records, and lack of

interview/personal presentation skills. Once on the job, poor attendance, an inability to follow directions or work independently, and the combination of these traits – often characterized as a general lack of work ethic - are recurring issues. These issues lead to higher than desired turnover and limit employee advancement.

2. Employers cite successful prior work experience as the number one qualification and best predictor of employment success.

Employers strongly prefer experienced workers because they think that candidates with a consistent work history understand what it takes to be successful on the job. Prior success in the workplace is thought to be the best testimony to the overall readiness of the candidate. In interviews, some employers commented that employees whose vocational training has included a structured work environment, such as provided in vocational education high schools or job training programs, like the Job Corps, are more ready for success in the workplace.

Employer Workforce Development and Training Efforts

1. Employers use a number of techniques to improve the workforce readiness of new hires and to increase retention.

Almost all the respondents to the survey report having formal programs for new employee orientation. Over half indicated that they assign mentors or coaches to new employees. Employers also report offering professional development opportunities and tuition re-imburement. Salary increases at predefined milestones and increased eligibility for benefits are other approaches. Some offer attendance or on-time bonus payments to address attendance and tardiness problems; for example,

Employers also report offering professional development opportunities and tuition re-imburement.

one company pays \$20 per week for meeting monthly attendance and on-time standards.

In the interviews, a leading human resource training company confirmed that its clients commonly report workforce readiness issues. The training firm stresses rigorous screening of candidates for workforce readiness, in-depth new employee orientation processes, and strong “On-Boarding” programs as effective strategies for improved employee success and retention.⁷

Firms also mentioned promote-from-within policies as retention strategies. Some firms provide practical assistance to employees; for example, one firm offers company trucks for warehouse staff to obtain commercial drivers’ licenses and advance to truck driver positions.

As described in the interview section, one large employer has a very comprehensive program that combines summer work and learning programs with a work scholarship program in the school year to improve the employment prospects of Springfield youth.

2. Some employers use temporary entry-level employees to meet seasonal and peak demand. For some unskilled and semi-skilled workers, this is an opportunity to gain experience. However, with the recession, they face increased competition from more qualified candidates.

⁷ On-Boarding programs aim to integrate employees into the culture of an organization; they tend to be longer in duration, more interactive and less administrative than orientation programs.

A leading local temporary employment agency reports high demand for temporary work by unskilled and semi-skilled workers. The temporary employment firm reports candidates frequently exhibit low educational attainment, limited or no work experience, and substance abuse issues. Lack of workforce readiness sometimes causes temporary employees to abandon their assignments. The recession has resulted in an influx of better qualified, more experienced candidates, while reducing the overall demand for temporary workers. The result is fewer opportunities for less qualified applicants.

Conclusions

Overall, our work with employers, both from the interviews and the survey initiative, highlighted a number of barriers facing residents from Springfield's poor neighborhoods as they look for employment, as well as challenges to employers seeking to hire workers from these areas. Our findings also suggest some possible action items and issues that warrant further investigation.

The good news is that entry-level opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled employment do exist in the Springfield area.

The good news is that entry-level opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled employment do exist in the Springfield area. Further, some of these jobs provide professional development opportunities and opportunities for salary and benefit increases. The bad news is that many applicants lack the skills called for in these jobs, which commonly require reading, writing, use of a computer, and working with others. Employers typically look for a high school degree, although a GED may be sufficient. Testing for drugs and criminal background checks are common.

Many of the employers contacted report that many applicants are not ready to work. Some are not prepared for the reality of entry-level jobs and become disillusioned. Others have difficulty taking direction. Regular attendance is often a problem. Lack of reliable transportation and child care may be factors underlying attendance problems. Many entry-level positions are in off shifts when public transportation may not be available and formal childcare facilities may not be operating. Transportation and the availability of child care are issues that warrant investigation and that may be amenable to some form of intervention.

Employers rely heavily on newspaper advertising, as well as company web sites, in recruiting. Despite the large number of Latinos in the Springfield area, almost all companies advertise exclusively in English. Again, this may be a potential action opportunity.

A major stumbling block to connecting residents of Springfield's poor neighborhoods to jobs is residents' current low attachment to the workforce. Employers place a high value on a consistent work history as an indicator of future employment success. Applicants who have had success in the workforce in the past are thought to be more likely to know what work is about and to have the necessary skills to get by. Additionally, employers rely heavily on employee referrals in recruiting. Those who are referred by existing employees are likely to understand what the job entails and, in the employee's judgment at least, to have what it takes to be successful. Many residents of Springfield's poor neighborhoods do not have a consistent work history and they do not

have a circle of relatives and acquaintances who can provide referrals. Programs need to address both the lack of networks and the lack of experience. The positive side of this challenge is that once a worker has demonstrated the ability to perform satisfactorily in a job, this successful record will be a valuable asset in seeking future employment opportunities.

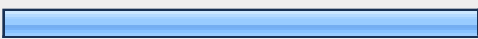
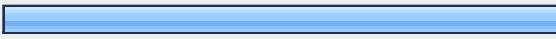

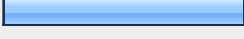
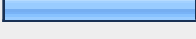
Results of a Survey of Greater Springfield Area Members of The Human Resource Management
Association of Western New England Conducted by The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston


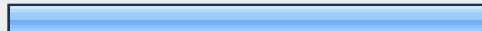
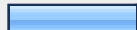

Appendix I: All Respondents

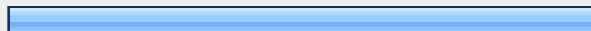


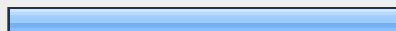

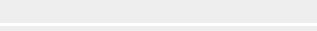
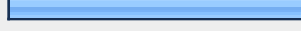

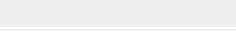

1. For each of following list of tasks, please select how often the task is performed in entry-level positions that do not require a college degree

	daily	weekly	monthly	Not Applicable	Response Count
Read documents	90.2% (37)	7.3% (3)	2.4% (1)	0.0% (0)	41
Write notes, memos, e-mails or fill out forms	85.4% (35)	7.3% (3)	4.9% (2)	2.4% (1)	41
Speak with customers	68.3% (28)	7.3% (3)	4.9% (2)	19.5% (8)	41
Do arithmetic or other computations	68.3% (28)	24.4% (10)	0.0% (0)	7.3% (3)	41
Use computer	85.0% (34)	7.5% (3)	2.5% (1)	5.0% (2)	40
Work in team or groups	85.4% (35)	9.8% (4)	0.0% (0)	4.9% (2)	41
Operate machinery	46.2% (18)	7.7% (3)	2.6% (1)	43.6% (17)	39
Driving/CDL	28.2% (11)	2.6% (1)	5.1% (2)	64.1% (25)	39
	<i>answered question</i>				41
	<i>skipped question</i>				0

2. What are the hiring requirements for entry-level positions that do not require college degree? Please select all that apply.



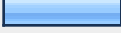
		Response Percent	Response Count
GED		73.2%	30
High school diploma		85.4%	35
Associates Degree		7.3%	3
General experience		36.6%	15
Specific experience		29.3%	12
	<i>answered question</i>		41
	<i>skipped question</i>		0


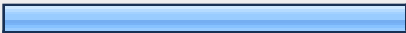

3. What is the typical hourly wage for entry-level positions that do not require a college degree?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 8.50		4.9%	2
\$8.50 to \$12		73.2%	30
\$12.01 to \$18		19.5%	8
More than \$18		2.4%	1
		answered question	41
		skipped question	0

4. Which of the following recruiting methods do you utilize? Please select all that apply.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Newspaper ads		90.0%	36
Help wanted signs		12.5%	5
Company website		80.0%	32
Third party website		60.0%	24
Referrals from current employees		92.5%	37
Referrals from state employment service		47.5%	19
Referrals from Future Works one-stop center		45.0%	18
Referrals from schools		27.5%	11
Referrals from community agency		35.0%	14
Referrals from Union		2.5%	1
		Other (please specify)	3
		answered question	40
		skipped question	1

5. Do you advertise available positions in a language other than English?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
yes		7.5%	3
no		92.5%	37
<i>answered question</i>			40
<i>skipped question</i>			1

6. Do you require the following as a condition of employment?			
	Yes	No	Response Count
Basic skill test	36.1% (13)	63.9% (23)	36
Personality test	12.1% (4)	87.9% (29)	33
Drug test	59.5% (22)	40.5% (15)	37
Criminal record check	72.5% (29)	27.5% (11)	40
Credit history check	12.1% (4)	87.9% (29)	33
Consistent Work History	83.3% (30)	16.7% (6)	36
Other (please specify)			7
<i>answered question</i>			40
<i>skipped question</i>			1

7. How important is criminal history in your hiring decision? Please select the statement that best describes your hiring decisions			
		Response Percent	Response Count
We would definitely consider hiring a person with a criminal record		10.3%	4
We might consider hiring a person with a criminal record		71.8%	28
We would definitely not hire applicants with a criminal record		17.9%	7
		<i>answered question</i>	39
		<i>skipped question</i>	2

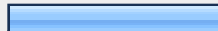
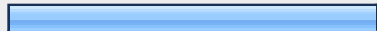

8. Is workforce readiness a barrier to new employee retention? Please select the statement that best describes the readiness of new hires			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Lack of work force readiness is an significant barrier to employee success and retention		32.4%	12
Lack of work force readiness is a moderate barrier to employee success and retention		62.2%	23
Lack of work force readiness is not a barrier to employee success and retention		5.4%	2
		<i>answered question</i>	37
		<i>skipped question</i>	4




9. Please rank the following work force readiness issues in order of importance from 1 to 6, where 1 is the most significant barrier to employee success.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Response Count
Poor attendance	40.5% (15)	13.5% (5)	13.5% (5)	18.9% (7)	10.8% (4)	2.7% (1)	37
Tardiness	0.0% (0)	25.0% (7)	10.7% (3)	28.6% (8)	25.0% (7)	10.7% (3)	28
Poor personal presentation	0.0% (0)	4.3% (1)	34.8% (8)	8.7% (2)	17.4% (4)	34.8% (8)	23
Poor work ethic	23.7% (9)	31.6% (12)	23.7% (9)	10.5% (4)	7.9% (3)	2.6% (1)	38
Inappropriate use of cell phone/texting	10.5% (2)	5.3% (1)	5.3% (1)	21.1% (4)	10.5% (2)	47.4% (9)	19
Lack of workplace etiquette	3.4% (1)	3.4% (1)	13.8% (4)	17.2% (5)	27.6% (8)	34.5% (10)	29
Inability to follow directions	23.5% (8)	20.6% (7)	17.6% (6)	14.7% (5)	14.7% (5)	8.8% (3)	34
Inability to work independently	15.0% (3)	20.0% (4)	10.0% (2)	15.0% (3)	25.0% (5)	15.0% (3)	20
	answered question						38
	skipped question						3

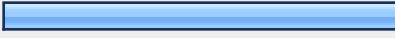
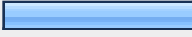

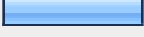

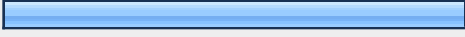
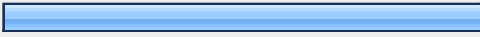

10. How often do you encounter the following aspects of workforce readiness?					
	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Rating Average	Response Count
Poor attendance	5.3% (2)	31.6% (12)	63.2% (24)	2.58	38
Tardiness	5.3% (2)	44.7% (17)	50.0% (19)	2.45	38
Poor personal presentation	28.9% (11)	65.8% (25)	5.3% (2)	1.76	38
Poor work ethic	18.4% (7)	42.1% (16)	39.5% (15)	2.21	38
Inappropriate use of cell phone/texting	26.3% (10)	39.5% (15)	34.2% (13)	2.08	38
Lack of workplace etiquette	28.9% (11)	55.3% (21)	15.8% (6)	1.87	38
Inability to follow directions	13.2% (5)	68.4% (26)	18.4% (7)	2.05	38
Inability to work independently	21.1% (8)	68.4% (26)	10.5% (4)	1.89	38
	answered question				38
	skipped question				3

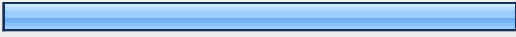


11. Which techniques do you employ to improve the work force readiness of new hires?			
	Yes	No	Response Count
Formal New Employee Orientation	97.4% (37)	2.6% (1)	38
Informal New Employee Orientation	54.8% (17)	45.2% (14)	31
Assigned Mentor/Coach	59.4% (19)	40.6% (13)	32
On the Job Training	100.0% (36)	0.0% (0)	36
Formal Classroom Training	60.6% (20)	39.4% (13)	33
		Other (please specify)	5
	answered question		38
	skipped question		3



12. Is lack of dependable transportation a problem in employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		32.4%	12
No		56.8%	21
Don't know		10.8%	4
answered question			37
skipped question			4

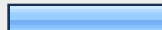
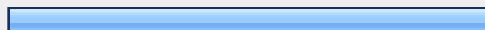


13. Is lack of dependable child care services a problem in employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		35.1%	13
No		51.4%	19
Don't know		13.5%	5
answered question			37
skipped question			4

14. What percentage (%) of your employees are (the sum should add up to 100%)				
		Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Full-time:		82.87	3,149	38
Part-time:		14.79	488	33
Temps:		7.56	136	18
Other:		4.50	27	6
answered question			38	
skipped question			3	

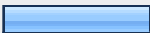


15. What techniques do you employ to encourage employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Salary increases at predefined milestones		60.5%	23
Increased benefit eligibility predefined milestones		28.9%	11
Increased employer contributions to benefit costs at predefined milestones		5.3%	2
Attendance/On-time bonus payments		21.1%	8
Performance incentive bonuses		36.8%	14
Professional development opportunities		71.1%	27
Tuition reimbursement		73.7%	28
None of the above		2.6%	1
		Other (please specify)	2
		answered question	38
		skipped question	3

16. Do you expect to hire in the next 12 months?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		78.9%	30
No		7.9%	3
Don't know		13.2%	5
		answered question	38
		skipped question	3

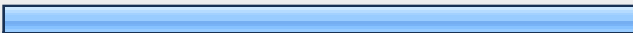

17. Do you plan to hire in the next 12 months for positions that <u>do not require a college degree</u> ?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		76.3%	29
No		10.5%	4
Don't know		13.2%	5
		answered question	38
		skipped question	3






18. Which of the following categories best describes your hiring plans?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Hiring to replace workers that have retired or will retire		23.7%	9
Hiring to replace workers that have quit or have been fired		73.7%	28
Hiring to replace workers that have been laid off		13.2%	5
Hiring to expand labor force		34.2%	13
		Other (please specify)	2
		answered question	38
		skipped question	3






19. What have been your annual hiring levels for entry-level positions that do not require a college degree in the last 5 years? This question refers to gross hires .

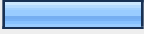

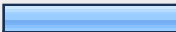

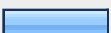
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 workers		22.2%	8
10 to 50 workers		36.1%	13
More than 50 workers		41.7%	15
		<i>answered question</i>	36
		<i>skipped question</i>	5





20. Have you had any job vacancies for entry-level positions in the last 12 months? This question refers both to positions that require and that do not require a college degree.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		97.4%	37
No		2.6%	1
		<i>answered question</i>	38
		<i>skipped question</i>	3

21. If yes, what kinds of jobs were they? Please select all that apply.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Professional or managerial positions		57.1%	20
Clerical positions		65.7%	23
Sales positions		28.6%	10
Skilled labor/trades jobs		45.7%	16
Unskilled manual jobs		62.9%	22
Other (please specify)			6
		answered question	35
		skipped question	6

22. In the past 12 months, what percent (%) of applicants has come from the city of Springfield?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25 percent		42.1%	16
25 to 49 percent		23.7%	9
50 to 74 percent		10.5%	4
75 percent or more		2.6%	1
Don't know		21.1%	8
		answered question	38
		skipped question	3

23. In the past 12 months, about what percent (%) of applicants were males?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25 percent		21.1%	8
25 to 49 percent		23.7%	9
50 to 74 percent		26.3%	10
75 percent or more		13.2%	5
Don't know		15.8%	6
		<i>answered question</i>	38
		<i>skipped question</i>	3

24. To the best of your knowledge, what percent (%) of your current workforce is Black/African American?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 percent		54.1%	20
10 to 25 percent		27.0%	10
25 to 49 percent		13.5%	5
50 to 74 percent		0.0%	0
75 percent or more		0.0%	0
Don't know		5.4%	2
		<i>answered question</i>	37
		<i>skipped question</i>	4



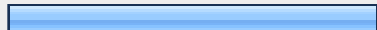
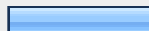
25. To the best of your knowledge, what percent (%) of your current workforce is Latino/Hispanic?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 percent		26.3%	10
10 to 25 percent		42.1%	16
25 to 49 percent		21.1%	8
50 to 75 percent		2.6%	1
75 percent or more		0.0%	0
Don't know		7.9%	3
		<i>answered question</i>	38
		<i>skipped question</i>	3

26. Does your company have an Affirmative Action Plan in place?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		65.8%	25
No		34.2%	13
		<i>answered question</i>	38
		<i>skipped question</i>	3

27. How close to the city of Springfield are your major facilities?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
In the city of Springfield		36.8%	14
1 to 10 miles from the city of Springfield		31.6%	12
More than 10 miles from the city of Springfield		31.6%	12
		answered question	38
		skipped question	3

28. What of the following industries best characterizes your firm activities?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Manufacturing		28.6%	10
Wholesale, warehousing, or transportation of goods for sale		5.7%	2
Retail trade		11.4%	4
Finance and Insurance		14.3%	5
Healthcare and social assistance services		20.0%	7
Accommodation and food services		0.0%	0
Education		8.6%	3
Other Services		8.6%	3
Government		2.9%	1
		Other (please specify)	4
		answered question	35
		skipped question	6

29. Approximately how many people are employed in your organization? This question refers to establishments located in the Greater Springfield Area.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25		0.0%	0
25 to 49		5.4%	2
50 to 99		16.2%	6
100 to 499		56.8%	21
500 or more		21.6%	8
		<i>answered question</i>	37
		<i>skipped question</i>	4

30. Is there anything else you would like to add? Any comments are appreciated.

		Response Count
		6
		<i>answered question</i>
		6
		<i>skipped question</i>
		35

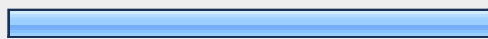
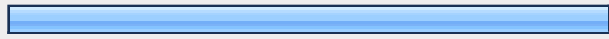

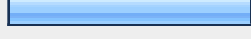
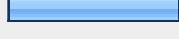
Results of a Survey of Greater Springfield Area Members of The Human Resource Management
Association of Western New England Conducted by The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston


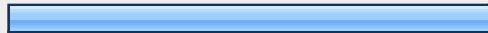
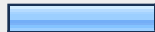
Appendix II: Respondents in City of Springfield or within 10 miles of City

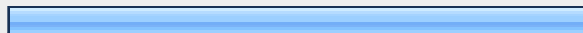

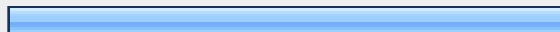
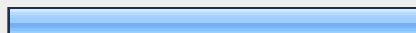



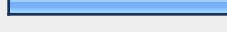


1. For each of following list of tasks, please select how often the task is performed in entry-level positions that do not require a college degree

	daily	weekly	monthly	Not Applicable	Response Count
Read documents	88.9% (24)	7.4% (2)	3.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	27
Write notes, memos, e-mails or fill out forms	81.5% (22)	11.1% (3)	7.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	27
Speak with customers	74.1% (20)	7.4% (2)	3.7% (1)	14.8% (4)	27
Do arithmetic or other computations	63.0% (17)	25.9% (7)	0.0% (0)	11.1% (3)	27
Use computer	88.5% (23)	7.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.8% (1)	26
Work in team or groups	81.5% (22)	11.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	7.4% (2)	27
Operate machinery	34.6% (9)	3.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	61.5% (16)	26
Driving/CDL	37.0% (10)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	63.0% (17)	27
	<i>answered question</i>				27
	<i>skipped question</i>				0

2. What are the hiring requirements for entry-level positions that do not require college degree? Please select all that apply.



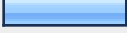
		Response Percent	Response Count
GED		74.1%	20
High school diploma		92.6%	25
Associates Degree		3.7%	1
General experience		37.0%	10
Specific experience		25.9%	7
	<i>answered question</i>		27
	<i>skipped question</i>		0


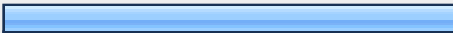

3. What is the typical hourly wage for entry-level positions that do not require a college degree?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 8.50		3.7%	1
\$8.50 to \$12		74.1%	20
\$12.01 to \$18		22.2%	6
More than \$18		0.0%	0
		answered question	27
		skipped question	0

4. Which of the following recruiting methods do you utilize? Please select all that apply.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Newspaper ads		88.9%	24
Help wanted signs		11.1%	3
Company website		85.2%	23
Third party website		63.0%	17
Referrals from current employees		92.6%	25
Referrals from state employment service		44.4%	12
Referrals from Future Works one-stop center		44.4%	12
Referrals from schools		33.3%	9
Referrals from community agency		40.7%	11
Referrals from Union		3.7%	1
		Other (please specify)	1
		answered question	27
		skipped question	0

5. Do you advertise available positions in a language other than English?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
yes		7.4%	2
no		92.6%	25
<i>answered question</i>			27
<i>skipped question</i>			0

6. Do you require the following as a condition of employment?			
	Yes	No	Response Count
Basic skill test	17.4% (4)	82.6% (19)	23
Personality test	13.6% (3)	86.4% (19)	22
Drug test	52.0% (13)	48.0% (12)	25
Criminal record check	74.1% (20)	25.9% (7)	27
Credit history check	13.6% (3)	86.4% (19)	22
Consistent Work History	83.3% (20)	16.7% (4)	24
Other (please specify)			3
<i>answered question</i>			27
<i>skipped question</i>			0

7. How important is criminal history in your hiring decision? Please select the statement that best describes your hiring decisions			
		Response Percent	Response Count
We would definitely consider hiring a person with a criminal record		11.1%	3
We might consider hiring a person with a criminal record		70.4%	19
We would definitely not hire applicants with a criminal record		18.5%	5
		<i>answered question</i>	27
		<i>skipped question</i>	0

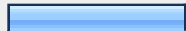
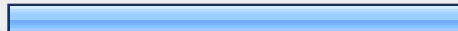

8. Is workforce readiness a barrier to new employee retention? Please select the statement that best describes the readiness of new hires			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Lack of work force readiness is an significant barrier to employee success and retention		23.1%	6
Lack of work force readiness is a moderate barrier to employee success and retention		69.2%	18
Lack of work force readiness is not a barrier to employee success and retention		7.7%	2
		<i>answered question</i>	26
		<i>skipped question</i>	1




9. Please rank the following work force readiness issues in order of importance from 1 to 6, where 1 is the most significant barrier to employee success.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Response Count
Poor attendance	37.0% (10)	18.5% (5)	11.1% (3)	22.2% (6)	7.4% (2)	3.7% (1)	27
Tardiness	0.0% (0)	31.6% (6)	5.3% (1)	15.8% (3)	36.8% (7)	10.5% (2)	19
Poor personal presentation	0.0% (0)	5.3% (1)	42.1% (8)	10.5% (2)	15.8% (3)	26.3% (5)	19
Poor work ethic	26.9% (7)	34.6% (9)	23.1% (6)	7.7% (2)	7.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	26
Inappropriate use of cell phone/texting	15.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	7.7% (1)	30.8% (4)	7.7% (1)	38.5% (5)	13
Lack of workplace etiquette	4.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	9.5% (2)	23.8% (5)	19.0% (4)	42.9% (9)	21
Inability to follow directions	21.7% (5)	17.4% (4)	21.7% (5)	8.7% (2)	17.4% (4)	13.0% (3)	23
Inability to work independently	14.3% (2)	14.3% (2)	7.1% (1)	21.4% (3)	28.6% (4)	14.3% (2)	14
	answered question						27
	skipped question						0




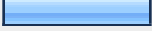


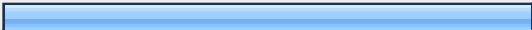

10. How often do you encounter the following aspects of workforce readiness?					
	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Rating Average	Response Count
Poor attendance	7.4% (2)	37.0% (10)	55.6% (15)	2.48	27
Tardiness	7.4% (2)	51.9% (14)	40.7% (11)	2.33	27
Poor personal presentation	37.0% (10)	55.6% (15)	7.4% (2)	1.70	27
Poor work ethic	22.2% (6)	37.0% (10)	40.7% (11)	2.19	27
Inappropriate use of cell phone/texting	18.5% (5)	40.7% (11)	40.7% (11)	2.22	27
Lack of workplace etiquette	29.6% (8)	51.9% (14)	18.5% (5)	1.89	27
Inability to follow directions	18.5% (5)	59.3% (16)	22.2% (6)	2.04	27
Inability to work independently	25.9% (7)	66.7% (18)	7.4% (2)	1.81	27
	answered question				27
	skipped question				0




11. Which techniques do you employ to improve the work force readiness of new hires?			
	Yes	No	Response Count
Formal New Employee Orientation	100.0% (27)	0.0% (0)	27
Informal New Employee Orientation	55.0% (11)	45.0% (9)	20
Assigned Mentor/Coach	59.1% (13)	40.9% (9)	22
On the Job Training	100.0% (25)	0.0% (0)	25
Formal Classroom Training	68.2% (15)	31.8% (7)	22
		Other (please specify)	3
	answered question		27
	skipped question		0

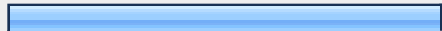
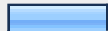
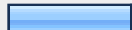
12. Is lack of dependable transportation a problem in employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		26.9%	7
No		69.2%	18
Don't know		3.8%	1
answered question			26
skipped question			1

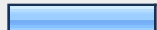
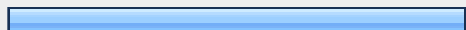

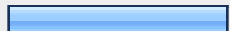
13. Is lack of dependable child care services a problem in employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		44.4%	12
No		44.4%	12
Don't know		11.1%	3
answered question			27
skipped question			0

14. What percentage (%) of your employees are (the sum should add up to 100%)				
		Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Full-time:		84.89	2,292	27
Part-time:		12.88	309	24
Temps:		5.67	85	15
Other:		2.80	14	5
answered question			27	
skipped question			0	

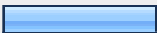


15. What techniques do you employ to encourage employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Salary increases at predefined milestones		66.7%	18
Increased benefit eligibility predefined milestones		33.3%	9
Increased employer contributions to benefit costs at predefined milestones		3.7%	1
Attendance/On-time bonus payments		22.2%	6
Performance incentive bonuses		37.0%	10
Professional development opportunities		77.8%	21
Tuition reimbursement		81.5%	22
None of the above		3.7%	1
	Other (please specify)		2
	answered question		27
	skipped question		0

16. Do you expect to hire in the next 12 months?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		77.8%	21
No		11.1%	3
Don't know		11.1%	3
	answered question		27
	skipped question		0

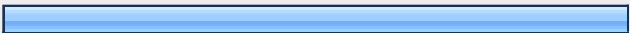

17. Do you plan to hire in the next 12 months for positions that <u>do not require a college degree</u> ?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		66.7%	18
No		14.8%	4
Don't know		18.5%	5
		<i>answered question</i>	27
		<i>skipped question</i>	0






18. Which of the following categories best describes your hiring plans?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Hiring to replace workers that have retired or will retire		22.2%	6
Hiring to replace workers that have quit or have been fired		70.4%	19
Hiring to replace workers that have been laid off		3.7%	1
Hiring to expand labor force		33.3%	9
		Other (please specify)	0
		<i>answered question</i>	27
		<i>skipped question</i>	0






19. What have been your annual hiring levels for entry-level positions that do not require a college degree in the last 5 years? This question refers to gross hires .

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 workers		23.1%	6
10 to 50 workers		42.3%	11
More than 50 workers		34.6%	9
		<i>answered question</i>	26
		<i>skipped question</i>	1

20. Have you had any job vacancies for entry-level positions in the last 12 months? This question refers both to positions that require and that do not require a college degree.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		96.3%	26
No		3.7%	1
		<i>answered question</i>	27
		<i>skipped question</i>	0

21. If yes, what kinds of jobs were they? Please select all that apply.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Professional or managerial positions		56.0%	14
Clerical positions		68.0%	17
Sales positions		28.0%	7
Skilled labor/trades jobs		48.0%	12
Unskilled manual jobs		52.0%	13
Other (please specify)			4
		answered question	25
		skipped question	2

22. In the past 12 months, what percent (%) of applicants has come from the city of Springfield?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25 percent		37.0%	10
25 to 49 percent		25.9%	7
50 to 74 percent		14.8%	4
75 percent or more		3.7%	1
Don't know		18.5%	5
		answered question	27
		skipped question	0

23. In the past 12 months, about what percent (%) of applicants were males?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25 percent		25.9%	7
25 to 49 percent		22.2%	6
50 to 74 percent		29.6%	8
75 percent or more		7.4%	2
Don't know		14.8%	4
<i>answered question</i>			27
<i>skipped question</i>			0

24. To the best of your knowledge, what percent (%) of your current workforce is Black/African American?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 percent		42.3%	11
10 to 25 percent		38.5%	10
25 to 49 percent		15.4%	4
50 to 74 percent		0.0%	0
75 percent or more		0.0%	0
Don't know		3.8%	1
<i>answered question</i>			26
<i>skipped question</i>			1

25. To the best of your knowledge, what percent (%) of your current workforce is Latino/Hispanic?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 percent		14.8%	4
10 to 25 percent		48.1%	13
25 to 49 percent		25.9%	7
50 to 75 percent		3.7%	1
75 percent or more		0.0%	0
Don't know		7.4%	2
		answered question	27
		skipped question	0

26. Does your company have an Affirmative Action Plan in place?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		70.4%	19
No		29.6%	8
		answered question	27
		skipped question	0

27. How close to the city of Springfield are your major facilities?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
In the city of Springfield		55.6%	15
1 to 10 miles from the city of Springfield		44.4%	12
More than 10 miles from the city of Springfield		0.0%	0
		answered question	27
		skipped question	0

28. What of the following industries best characterizes your firm activities?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Manufacturing		25.0%	6
Wholesale, warehousing, or transportation of goods for sale		4.2%	1
Retail trade		8.3%	2
Finance and Insurance		20.8%	5
Healthcare and social assistance services		16.7%	4
Accommodation and food services		0.0%	0
Education		16.7%	4
Other Services		4.2%	1
Government		4.2%	1
		Other (please specify)	3
		answered question	24
		skipped question	3

29. Approximately how many people are employed in your organization? This question refers to establishments located in the Greater Springfield Area.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25		0.0%	0
25 to 49		7.4%	2
50 to 99		11.1%	3
100 to 499		59.3%	16
500 or more		22.2%	6
		<i>answered question</i>	27
		<i>skipped question</i>	0

30. Is there anything else you would like to add? Any comments are appreciated.

		Response Count
		2
		<i>answered question</i>
		2
		<i>skipped question</i>
		25

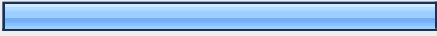
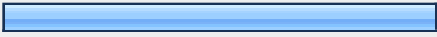
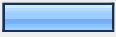

Results of a Survey of Greater Springfield Area Members of The Human Resource Management
Association of Western New England Conducted by The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

Appendix III: Respondents more than 10 miles from City of Springfield

1. For each of following list of tasks, please select how often the task is performed in entry-level positions that do not require a college degree

	daily	weekly	monthly	Not Applicable	Response Count
Read documents	91.7% (11)	8.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	12
Write notes, memos, e-mails or fill out forms	91.7% (11)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	8.3% (1)	12
Speak with customers	66.7% (8)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (4)	12
Do arithmetic or other computations	75.0% (9)	16.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	8.3% (1)	12
Use computer	75.0% (9)	8.3% (1)	8.3% (1)	8.3% (1)	12
Work in team or groups	91.7% (11)	8.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	12
Operate machinery	72.7% (8)	9.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	11
Driving/CDL	10.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	10.0% (1)	80.0% (8)	10
	<i>answered question</i>				12
	<i>skipped question</i>				0

2. What are the hiring requirements for entry-level positions that do not require college degree? Please select all that apply.



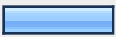
		Response Percent	Response Count
GED		66.7%	8
High school diploma		66.7%	8
Associates Degree		0.0%	0
General experience		16.7%	2
Specific experience		25.0%	3
	<i>answered question</i>		12
	<i>skipped question</i>		0


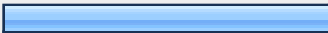
3. What is the typical hourly wage for entry-level positions that do not require a college degree?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 8.50		8.3%	1
\$8.50 to \$12		75.0%	9
\$12.01 to \$18		16.7%	2
More than \$18		0.0%	0
		answered question	12
		skipped question	0

4. Which of the following recruiting methods do you utilize? Please select all that apply.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Newspaper ads		100.0%	12
Help wanted signs		16.7%	2
Company website		66.7%	8
Third party website		50.0%	6
Referrals from current employees		91.7%	11
Referrals from state employment service		58.3%	7
Referrals from Future Works one-stop center		50.0%	6
Referrals from schools		16.7%	2
Referrals from community agency		25.0%	3
Referrals from Union		0.0%	0
		Other (please specify)	2
		answered question	12
		skipped question	0

5. Do you advertise available positions in a language other than English?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
yes		8.3%	1
no		91.7%	11
answered question			12
skipped question			0

6. Do you require the following as a condition of employment?			
	Yes	No	Response Count
Basic skill test	75.0% (9)	25.0% (3)	12
Personality test	10.0% (1)	90.0% (9)	10
Drug test	72.7% (8)	27.3% (3)	11
Criminal record check	66.7% (8)	33.3% (4)	12
Credit history check	0.0% (0)	100.0% (10)	10
Consistent Work History	75.0% (9)	25.0% (3)	12
Other (please specify)			4
answered question			12
skipped question			0

7. How important is criminal history in your hiring decision? Please select the statement that best describes your hiring decisions			
		Response Percent	Response Count
We would definitely consider hiring a person with a criminal record		8.3%	1
We might consider hiring a person with a criminal record		75.0%	9
We would definitely not hire applicants with a criminal record		16.7%	2
		<i>answered question</i>	12
		<i>skipped question</i>	0

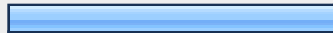
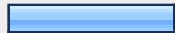
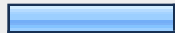
8. Is workforce readiness a barrier to new employee retention? Please select the statement that best describes the readiness of new hires			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Lack of work force readiness is an significant barrier to employee success and retention		50.0%	6
Lack of work force readiness is a moderate barrier to employee success and retention		50.0%	6
Lack of work force readiness is not a barrier to employee success and retention		0.0%	0
		<i>answered question</i>	12
		<i>skipped question</i>	0




9. Please rank the following work force readiness issues in order of importance from 1 to 6, where 1 is the most significant barrier to employee success.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Response Count
Poor attendance	45.5% (5)	0.0% (0)	27.3% (3)	9.1% (1)	18.2% (2)	0.0% (0)	11
Tardiness	0.0% (0)	20.0% (2)	20.0% (2)	50.0% (5)	0.0% (0)	10.0% (1)	10
Poor personal presentation	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	20.0% (1)	20.0% (1)	60.0% (3)	5
Poor work ethic	16.7% (2)	25.0% (3)	25.0% (3)	16.7% (2)	8.3% (1)	8.3% (1)	12
Inappropriate use of cell phone/texting	14.3% (1)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	57.1% (4)	7
Lack of workplace etiquette	0.0% (0)	12.5% (1)	25.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (4)	12.5% (1)	8
Inability to follow directions	25.0% (3)	25.0% (3)	8.3% (1)	25.0% (3)	8.3% (1)	8.3% (1)	12
Inability to work independently	14.3% (1)	28.6% (2)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	28.6% (2)	14.3% (1)	7
	answered question						12
	skipped question						0




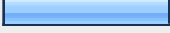


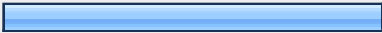
10. How often do you encounter the following aspects of workforce readiness?					
	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Rating Average	Response Count
Poor attendance	0.0% (0)	25.0% (3)	75.0% (9)	2.75	12
Tardiness	0.0% (0)	33.3% (4)	66.7% (8)	2.67	12
Poor personal presentation	8.3% (1)	91.7% (11)	0.0% (0)	1.92	12
Poor work ethic	8.3% (1)	58.3% (7)	33.3% (4)	2.25	12
Inappropriate use of cell phone/texting	41.7% (5)	33.3% (4)	25.0% (3)	1.83	12
Lack of workplace etiquette	25.0% (3)	66.7% (8)	8.3% (1)	1.83	12
Inability to follow directions	8.3% (1)	83.3% (10)	8.3% (1)	2.00	12
Inability to work independently	8.3% (1)	75.0% (9)	16.7% (2)	2.08	12
	answered question				12
	skipped question				0

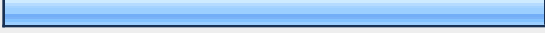

11. Which techniques do you employ to improve the work force readiness of new hires?			
	Yes	No	Response Count
Formal New Employee Orientation	91.7% (11)	8.3% (1)	12
Informal New Employee Orientation	58.3% (7)	41.7% (5)	12
Assigned Mentor/Coach	63.6% (7)	36.4% (4)	11
On the Job Training	100.0% (12)	0.0% (0)	12
Formal Classroom Training	41.7% (5)	58.3% (7)	12
	Other (please specify)		2
	answered question		12
	skipped question		0

12. Is lack of dependable transportation a problem in employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		50.0%	6
No		25.0%	3
Don't know		25.0%	3
answered question			12
skipped question			0


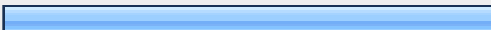
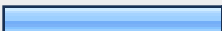
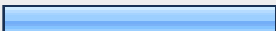
13. Is lack of dependable child care services a problem in employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		18.2%	2
No		63.6%	7
Don't know		18.2%	2
answered question			11
skipped question			1

14. What percentage (%) of your employees are (the sum should add up to 100%)				
		Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Full-time:		79.42	953	12
Part-time:		18.00	180	10
Temps:		12.75	51	4
Other:		8.00	16	2
answered question			12	
skipped question			0	

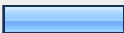


15. What techniques do you employ to encourage employee retention?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Salary increases at predefined milestones		50.0%	6
Increased benefit eligibility predefined milestones		25.0%	3
Increased employer contributions to benefit costs at predefined milestones		8.3%	1
Attendance/On-time bonus payments		25.0%	3
Performance incentive bonuses		33.3%	4
Professional development opportunities		58.3%	7
Tuition reimbursement		58.3%	7
None of the above		0.0%	0
	Other (please specify)		0
	answered question		12
	skipped question		0

16. Do you expect to hire in the next 12 months?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		83.3%	10
No		0.0%	0
Don't know		16.7%	2
	answered question		12
	skipped question		0

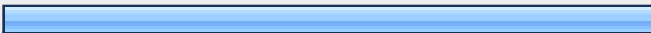
17. Do you plan to hire in the next 12 months for positions that <u>do not require a college degree</u> ?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	12
No		0.0%	0
Don't know		0.0%	0
		answered question	12
		skipped question	0

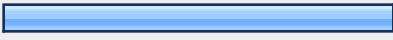
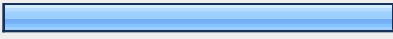
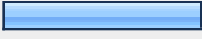
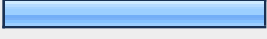
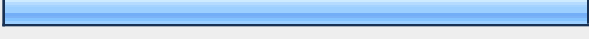
18. Which of the following categories best describes your hiring plans?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Hiring to replace workers that have retired or will retire		25.0%	3
Hiring to replace workers that have quit or have been fired		75.0%	9
Hiring to replace workers that have been laid off		33.3%	4
Hiring to expand labor force		41.7%	5
		Other (please specify)	2
		answered question	12
		skipped question	0

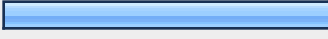
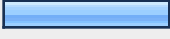
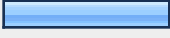
19. What have been your annual hiring levels for entry-level positions that do not require a college degree in the last 5 years? This question refers to gross hires .

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 workers		18.2%	2
10 to 50 workers		27.3%	3
More than 50 workers		54.5%	6
		<i>answered question</i>	11
		<i>skipped question</i>	1

20. Have you had any job vacancies for entry-level positions in the last 12 months? This question refers both to positions that require and that do not require a college degree.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	12
No		0.0%	0
		<i>answered question</i>	12
		<i>skipped question</i>	0

21. If yes, what kinds of jobs were they? Please select all that apply.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Professional or managerial positions		60.0%	6
Clerical positions		60.0%	6
Sales positions		30.0%	3
Skilled labor/trades jobs		40.0%	4
Unskilled manual jobs		90.0%	9
Other (please specify)			3
		answered question	10
		skipped question	2

22. In the past 12 months, what percent (%) of applicants has come from the city of Springfield?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25 percent		50.0%	6
25 to 49 percent		25.0%	3
50 to 74 percent		0.0%	0
75 percent or more		0.0%	0
Don't know		25.0%	3
		answered question	12
		skipped question	0

23. In the past 12 months, about what percent (%) of applicants were males?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25 percent		16.7%	2
25 to 49 percent		25.0%	3
50 to 74 percent		16.7%	2
75 percent or more		25.0%	3
Don't know		16.7%	2
<i>answered question</i>			12
<i>skipped question</i>			0

24. To the best of your knowledge, what percent (%) of your current workforce is Black/African American?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 percent		75.0%	9
10 to 25 percent		8.3%	1
25 to 49 percent		8.3%	1
50 to 74 percent		0.0%	0
75 percent or more		0.0%	0
Don't know		8.3%	1
<i>answered question</i>			12
<i>skipped question</i>			0

25. To the best of your knowledge, what percent (%) of your current workforce is Latino/Hispanic?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 10 percent		50.0%	6
10 to 25 percent		25.0%	3
25 to 49 percent		16.7%	2
50 to 75 percent		0.0%	0
75 percent or more		0.0%	0
Don't know		8.3%	1
		answered question	12
		skipped question	0

26. Does your company have an Affirmative Action Plan in place?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		58.3%	7
No		41.7%	5
		answered question	12
		skipped question	0

27. How close to the city of Springfield are your major facilities?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
In the city of Springfield		0.0%	0
1 to 10 miles from the city of Springfield		0.0%	0
More than 10 miles from the city of Springfield		100.0%	12
<i>answered question</i>			12
<i>skipped question</i>			0

28. What of the following industries best characterizes your firm activities?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Manufacturing		33.3%	4
Wholesale, warehousing, or transportation of goods for sale		8.3%	1
Retail trade		16.7%	2
Finance and Insurance		0.0%	0
Healthcare and social assistance services		25.0%	3
Accommodation and food services		0.0%	0
Education		0.0%	0
Other Services		16.7%	2
Government		0.0%	0
Other (please specify)			1
<i>answered question</i>			12
<i>skipped question</i>			0

29. Approximately how many people are employed in your organization? This question refers to establishments located in the Greater Springfield Area.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25		0.0%	0
25 to 49		0.0%	0
50 to 99		27.3%	3
100 to 499		54.5%	6
500 or more		18.2%	2
		<i>answered question</i>	11
		<i>skipped question</i>	1

30. Is there anything else you would like to add? Any comments are appreciated.

		Response Count
		4
		<i>answered question</i>
		4
		<i>skipped question</i>
		8