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April 22, 2015

For Immediate Release:

SUMMER JOBS FOR NORTHAMPTON YOUTH!

With the help of the Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board and Career Centers, and Community Action Youth Programs, the Mayor of Northampton will once again host Northampton YouthWorks, a summer jobs program for eligible Northampton young people, age 14-21.

Governor Baker dedicated over \$9 million in this year's budget to support such city-sponsored programs across the Commonwealth, which must be matched 20% by contributions from the private sector to support youth employment.

The Northampton YouthWorks Program will put 25 Northampton youth age 14-21, to work in private or public sector employment during the summer months, in jobs 6 to 8 weeks in length. The program will pay for youth wages and for staff time to develop placements and counsel youth, including provision of 15 hours of workshops on Employment Readiness, Safety, and Career Exploration.

Eligible youth must be Northampton residents and low-income. They will earn \$9 an hour.

"We are very excited about this opportunity to put Northampton youth to work again in the community this summer," says Mayor David Narkewicz. "Last year they worked at such places as Casa Latina, Country Hyundai, Fitzgerald Fence, Northampton Schools, Northampton Council on Aging, and the Three County Fairgrounds. I heard that employers and youth were really happy with the program. But we do need participating businesses, especially private sector, to donate the equivalent of a youth's first two week's wages as 'match' to the project, so we can continue to qualify for this program every year."

"Teen employment has been at its lowest levels since the Depression," notes Jim Parcels, Director of Franklin Hampshire Career Center Youth Programs. "Young people really need help getting a foothold in this tough economy. We usually have funds to put a few dozen youth to work over the summer, but this project allows us to help additional youth secure jobs in greater Northampton and has been a great addition to our services."

The project will issue applications soon to businesses and organizations who are interested in being a youth worksite. Flyers inviting Northampton youth to apply for the jobs will be distributed through the schools, community and town partners.

Youth applications will soon be available at the Northampton Career Center and Community Action Youth Programs, as well as Northampton HS and Smith Vocational. Interested parties may call Community Action Youth Programs at 413-774-7028 Ext. 238 or Franklin Hampshire Career Center, Jim Parcels, Dir. of Youth Programs 413-774-4361 Ext. 306