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**Workforce Alliance and Area Chambers of Commerce**  
**Partner to Discover Employment Trends**

Employment trends can take off quickly in the marketplace, with companies adding or shedding employees, the demands of new technologies, and skill sets that are evolving every 18 months to 2 years. Workforce Alliance and the region's Chambers of Commerce are partnering on an extensive survey that should shed light on South Central Connecticut's employment picture for years to come.

Workforce Alliance, the regional workforce investment board, provides policy leadership and funding for worker training and education. The board membership is comprised of private business executives, elected officials, training providers and association executives, all of whom have a stake in the future of the workforce. Workforce Alliance has been publishing annual State of the Workforce reports for a number of years, based on economic data and workforce intelligence that is often national or statewide. The Employment Trend Survey will bring the data-crunching down to the regional and local level.

"It is more important than ever for employers, employees and the workforce investment system to ensure that skills are continuously renewed, upgraded and relevant," said William Villano, Executive Director of the Workforce Alliance. "Demographic shifts, aging populations, and declining birthrates over the next ten years will cause shortages in the overall availability of talent. With technology advances, many low skilled jobs are

being eliminated and once in-demand skills are rapidly becoming obsolete. Our partners in the Chambers of Commerce are providing their members a much-needed service by helping us get the most up-to-date local trend information.”

In its drive to contribute to the economic vitality and wealth creation of the region, the workforce investment system must accurately assess employer needs and foresee key labor market trends and indicators. Current labor market information and projections are often based on dated information that misses the rapid job churning which accompanies the structural change driving today’s economy.

“Staying one step ahead of change requires a current, real time understanding of the specific skills and competencies required for emerging jobs,” said Tony Rescigno, President of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce. “We are partnering with Workforce Alliance to complete a 2-part survey of hundreds of businesses in the 30-town region. Businesses will be surveyed both on-line and by telephone. We anticipate huge participation by our members, who share our concerns about the future of the workforce.”

“The information obtained from the survey will help planners identify jobs that are “at risk”, stable or emerging; the quality and quantity of employees needed; and give us a real time employers’ eye view of workforce availability,” said Doug Marsh of Organization Dynamics LLC, which will implement the survey.

“Understanding employment trends based on what employers tell us will give South Central Connecticut an advantage in terms of training design, and workforce preparedness,” said Joe Mirra, Chairman of the Workforce Alliance Board and President of the Business Resource Center, “We hope that employers make full use of this opportunity to influence their future workforce.”