

Labor department honors local workforce board

By **ANTHONY CRONIN**
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Norwich — The federal Department of Labor on Wednesday awarded the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board with its first Recognition of Excellence award for the board's programs to boost employment in the emerging biosciences field.

The award, one of five presented nationally, was presented to workforce investment board members during the Labor Department's Workforce Innovations 2004 conference in San Antonio, Texas.

John Beauregard, executive director of the Norwich-based workforce board, said he was honored to be one

of five agencies selected nationally for its efforts to develop and oversee innovative workforce training programs for this region. The Norwich agency oversees a number of programs, from youth development initiatives to retraining of dislocated workers and overseeing four Connecticut Works East career centers in New London, Norwich, Willimantic and Danielson.

The federal agency honored the Norwich group for working to improve opportunities for the local workforce in higher-paying high

technology jobs, including those in the biosciences field. The local board organized a group of employers, educators, industry leaders, economic development agencies and local, state and regional government officials to develop and gain funding for a training program for clinical data managers, who are employed by drug companies, insurance companies and other health-care firms.

The Labor Department said the Norwich board received national recognition for the training program and has a patent pending. In addition,

the local board plans to sell the clinical data manager program to a leading training firm in the clinical data management field.

Beauregard said the Labor Department award is a recognition that the workforce board is working to develop the right programs that meet the employment opportunities arising in eastern Connecticut. "It says to the rest of the country that eastern Connecticut is on the same page as far as these key (employment) categories go," he said.

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