

## 37 Eastern Connecticut businesses receive \$332,763 in grants

By GREG SMITH

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Thirty-seven Eastern Connecticut companies were awarded a total of \$332,763 in training grants Tuesday — money aimed at improving productivity and global competitiveness.

Recipients ranged from large companies, such as Frito-Lay in Danielson, to smaller businesses with fewer than 100 employees, such as Pautipaug Electric in Baltic. The state and federally funded grants are designed to improve skills of employees and allow companies to pay their workers while on-site training is conducted, said John Beauregard, director of the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board.

“We’ve pushed hard for programs like this, because for many years we’ve had a reactive position to unemployment,” Beauregard said. “It’s more and more important to have a prepared and skilled work force. This is an opportunity to keep our companies competitive so they can stay, grow and add good jobs here in Eastern Connecticut.”

When adding matching funds contributed by employers, the total investment in the region’s work force is more than \$739,000 and will reach more than 800 workers.

The recipients were chosen from a total of 50 Eastern Connecticut companies who applied for funding for 93 separate training programs totaling more than \$600,000, which is more than double the amount of funding available.

But John Markowicz, executive director of the Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise region, said nearly twice the funding was available this year because of stimulus funds.

A grant application review team was made up of representatives from the Department of Labor, Northeast Connecticut Economic Alliance, Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region, and the chairman of Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board’s Science, Technology, Engineering & Math Council. Companies were awarded up to \$20,000.

### At a glance

Businesses awarded funding under the Incumbent Worker Program:

Large businesses: Whitcraft, Eastford; Putnam Plastics Co., Dayville; Frito Lay, Dayville; Spirol International Corp., Danielson; Arc of Quinebaug Valley, Danielson; Delta Rubber Co., Danielson; Natchaug Hospital, Mansfield Center; St. Joseph Living Center, Windham; General Cable Corp., Willimantic; Savings Institute Bank & Trust, Willimantic; Willimantic Waste Paper Co., Willimantic; Camp Horizons, South Windham; Amgraph Packaging, Versailles; Plas-Pak Industries, Norwich; Dime Bank, Norwich; S&S Worldwide, Colchester; Sheffield Pharmaceuticals, New London.

Small businesses: Colorado Industries, Pomfret Center; Foster Corp., Putnam; Plastic Diversity Solutions, Dayville; Web Industries, Dayville; Bollore, Dayville; Hurme Radio, TV & Appliance, Danielson; Capitol Garage, Willimantic; Code One Training Solutions, Willimantic; Hydrofera, Willimantic; Hawk Integrated Plastics, Willimantic; Brooklyn General Repair, Plainfield; Westminster Tool, Plainfield; Pautipaug Electric, Baltic; Consumers Interstate Corp., Norwich; Hospice of Southeastern Connecticut, Norwich; Birk Manufacturing, East Lyme; Seconn Fabrication, Waterford; EasyWebCreations, Waterford; Tee’s Plus, Groton; Cable Components Group, Pawcatuck.