

**NH Economic Development Association
10/23/15 Fall Meeting**

Retaining Young Talent: A Conversation with NH High School & College Students

The following is a summary of several small group discussions that took place over the course of the morning about young people's thoughts and concerns about their futures.

Communities

- Some of us prefer a small-town atmosphere – strong relationships, seeing the same people.
- We want to live close to where we work.
- Many of us move away to urban areas because we think we have to in order to earn money – are we promoting what we have here in NH?
- We don't know the total cost of living in CA or Boston vs. NH and how to compare the quality of life we can afford in a city vs. in NH.
- We need commons spaces for young people to hang out and interact.

College & Career Readiness

- The National Guard recruits at many high schools – why don't NH companies or economic development/workforce development groups put the same amount of effort into talking about career pathways and opportunities in NH?
- Career & Technical Education Centers offer a valuable experience but there is still a stigma that it's "voc-tech" – we need to educate the general public about CTEs.
- Could job fairs be done differently – industries/occupations statewide could be presented along with the career pathways that exist for them vs. local companies exhibiting individually. Also, have younger kids participate.
- Teachers are critical influencers.
- The word is getting out about doing first two years of college at community college because it's more affordable.
- Guidance counselors and parents are still pushing us to go to 4 year colleges, although things are starting to change and there is more focus on kids' passions and how to translate that into a career.
- We want more education about career opportunities in NH. We want more experiences interacting with businesses.

Businesses

- Many of us want flexibility in our work schedules.
- We are very worried about paying back our student loans and feel pressure to earn the most money possible to make our payments.
- We are looking for jobs that offer tuition assistance, student loan repayment assistance.
- Wish there were better connections between the biotech field and universities.
- We know we live in a global community but we don't know that there are companies in NH doing business on a global scale – we think that only happens in the city.
- We want opportunities to connect early with careers/businesses to learn about our options.
- We are mobile, we like outdoor recreational opportunities, volunteer work and a team experience.
- We want careers that help others and solve big problems.
- We want to work for socially conscious companies.

Other

- The media influences our career aspirations.