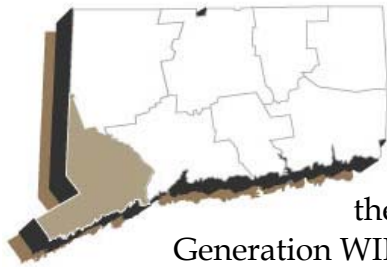


## Southwestern Connecticut



Southwestern Connecticut – the home to large corporations, manufacturing plants and rural farms – currently faces a labor shortage. This workforce challenge, which stems from stagnant population growth and the aging of the Baby Boomer generation, is among the obstacles the region looks to overcome as a Second Generation WIRED region.

High growth industries such as financial services seek talented workers to fill the nearly 1,000 jobs available in the region. The region will focus on developing untapped talent to help high growth industry employers meet workforce demands and successfully compete in the global economy. Through existing partnerships among state, regional and business organizations, Southwestern Connecticut will work to transform the region's economy and provide the spark needed to accelerate workforce growth.

Among the proposed solutions to improve the current workforce system are expanding pipelines of future workers for careers in various high growth sectors such as financial services; designing strategies to keep mature workers in the workforce; establishing more educational opportunities for limited-English speaking citizens; and providing customized training for people from non-traditional labor sources. Solutions implemented in Southwestern Connecticut would be shared statewide.

As a participant in the WIRED Initiative, the region is expanding its leadership group, exploring a broader definition of the region which crosses municipal and state boundaries, and utilizing technical assistance to develop a roadmap to drive sustainable transformation by enhancing the region's strengths and adaptive capacity.

The regional strategic partnership consists of thirteen organizations including The Workplace, Inc., The Business Council of Fairfield County, The Bridgeport Regional Business Council, Career Resources, Inc., Bridgeport Housing Authority, Norwalk Housing Authority, Stamford Public Housing Authority, Housatonic Community College, Norwalk Community College, Literacy Volunteers of America, Dress for Success of Mid Fairfield County, City of Stamford Office of Economic Development and the State of Connecticut Department of Labor.

