



May 21, 2012

The Honorable Brian Higgins
Office of Brian Higgins
2459 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Higgins:

The Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce is writing today to state its support for the Job Corps program. Cassadaga Job Corps Academy has been providing education and training services for nearly 35 years and has become an important partner in training and educating the young people of our community. Our members recognize and often voice the need for a better trained, better prepared workforce, particularly among younger workers and that is exactly what the Job Corps program is working to provide.

Job Corps stands out among training programs, providing comprehensive career training for 100 career areas in 11 different industries. Many businesses throughout Chautauqua County have partnered with the Cassadaga Academy to offer internships, job shadowing, mentoring and, of course, jobs to students and graduates. In addition to important vocational training the students also come out of the Academy having developed critical employability and customer service skills. Cassadaga graduates are well prepared to enter the workforce.

The Cassadaga Job Corps is also a part of the fabric of our County. It works closely with many local businesses by purchasing goods and services. Students and staff are highly visible and involved in important community service projects and helping those in need throughout our region. Job Corps is also ensuring that students give back to our community while they live and learn here.

Most importantly, Job Corps works. It is our nation's most effective career preparation program for economically disadvantaged youth ages 16 to 24, who might otherwise cost our communities and taxpayers billions of dollars over the course of their lifetimes. Job Corps reverses that drain, because 85 percent of graduates secure a job, enter higher education, or enlist in the military.

Job Corps is an important partner in Chautauqua County and it is our hope that it will continue to operate and provide services here for many years to come. Your support of the Job Corps program is vital to ensure they continue to change young lives and impact our community for the better.

Sincerely,

Todd Tranum
President
Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce

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