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## SkillWorks Receives Funding from Newly Launched National Fund for Workforce Solutions

### Boston-based Program Lauded as Model for National Fund

**Washington, D.C. (September 6, 2007)** - *SkillWorks: Partners for a Productive Workforce*, a multi-year project focused on providing skills to workers in Greater Boston that match employer demand, was awarded a renewal grant of \$450,000 from a newly-launched workforce development fund. The National Fund for Workforce Solutions is a \$50 million five-year effort to strengthen and expand effective workforce initiatives around the country. The National Fund is based on a workforce development model pioneered by SkillWorks, in which employees are given the training they need to match the demand of local employers.

So far, the Fund has \$15 million invested by the Annie E. Casey, Ford and Hitachi foundations and the U.S. Department of Labor. Leaders of the Fund are also recruiting additional commitments from foundations, business and the public sector to reach the \$50 million goal. The Fund expects to work with local initiatives to place at least 50,000 people in career-oriented jobs, leverage more than \$200 million in local funding and provide services to at least 1,000 employers to help them recruit, train and move employees into family-supporting jobs. The Fund has also made it a goal to expand resources and improve the efficiency of workforce development systems in more than 30 regions across the country including Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, and Washington, D.C.

“SkillWorks is a national model for enhancing the skills and earnings potential of low-income workers and expanding the ability of our businesses to meet the needs of their employees,” said Senator Edward M. Kennedy. “I’m thrilled that SkillWorks will receive this critical funding to continue their important work in making the Commonwealth’s economic engine accessible to all.”

“Over the past five years Skillworks has helped thousands of people in Greater Boston gain new skills to find productive, well-paying jobs,” said U.S. Senator John F. Kerry. “This new funding will only strengthen the crucial services that Skillworks provides throughout the city. I’m glad the National Fund for Workforce Solutions is investing in Skillworks. Massachusetts is stronger because of Skillworks’ commitment to the people of Boston.”

“These funds will allow SkillWorks to offer additional training and job placement to those interested in expanding their professional qualifications or learning a new field. I commend SkillWorks for their efforts to enhance the employment opportunities of workers in the Greater Boston area and for serving as a model for programs across the nation,” stated Congressman Mike Capuano.

*SkillWorks*, an initiative of sixteen funders including The Boston Foundation and the City of Boston, is the largest public/private investment in workforce development in Boston’s history. Over its five-year history, SkillWorks will work with more than 40 employers and 30 community-based organizations to help place and train over 3,000 workers with some of the region’s largest industry sectors and employers. The employee partnerships that SkillWorks funds include companies in the health care, hospitality, and automotive industries.

Angel Bermudez, Senior Director of Grantmaking and Special Projects at The Boston Foundation; Matt Fishman, Vice President for Community Health at Partners HealthCare; and Toddy Anderson, a SkillWorks participant who works at Partners HealthCare, were on hand to launch the National Fund for Workforce Solutions on September 6, 2007 at the National Press Club. The three individuals, and their experiences, were featured in a question and answer session at the event.

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