

# Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce

A Forum on *Jobs and Opportunity* with the Candidates for Governor

Thursday June 29, 2006 • 6:00 - 8:00 pm  
Roxbury Community College's  
Media Arts Center

## Featuring:



Candidates: **Chris Gabrieli**



**Kerry Healey**



**Christy Mihos**



**Deval Patrick**



**Tom Reilly**



**Grace Ross**



Moderator: **Janet Wu**

## Planning Committee:

Loh-Sze Leung, Chair  
*SkillWorks*

Angel Bermudez  
*The Boston Foundation*

Cynthia Briggs  
*Partners in Career and Workforce Development*

Carmon Cunningham  
*Jobs for the Future*

Lisa Dickinson  
*Jobs for the Future*

Lew Finfer  
*Massachusetts Communities Action Network*

Sandy Goodman  
*Partnership for Automotive Career Education*

Dan Kobayashi  
*Workforce Solutions Group*

Sue Parsons  
*Massachusetts AFL-CIO*

Megan Briggs Reilly  
*The Boston Foundation*

Jim Rooney  
*The Boston Foundation*

David Trueblood  
*The Boston Foundation*

## Agenda

Brenda Mercomes, *Roxbury Community College*

Loh-Sze Leung, *SkillWorks*

Paul Grogan, *The Boston Foundation*

Ada Riggins, *Workforce Solutions Group*

Moderator: Janet Wu, *WCVB Channel 5*

Kerry Healey, *Republican Candidate for Governor*

Grace Toledo, *Health Care and Research Training Institute*

Deval Patrick, *Democratic Candidate for Governor*

Mike Fadel, *1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East*

Chris Gabrieli, *Democratic Candidate for Governor*

Amos Wanjiru, *ECCO/IUE-CWA 201 E-Team Machinist Program*

Tom Reilly, *Democratic Candidate for Governor*

Gary Gottlieb, *Brigham and Women's Hospital*

Christy Mihos, *Independent Candidate for Governor*

Margarita Restrepo, *SEIU 615*

Grace Ross, *Green-Rainbow Candidate for Governor*

Janet Wu, *WCVB Channel 5*

Refreshments/Reception in the Foyer

# Speaker Biographies

## **CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR:**

### **Chris Gabrieli, Democratic Candidate**

Chris Gabrieli's professional career began when he left medical school and transformed his father's struggling software company into an industry leader. He then spent fifteen years at Bessemer Venture Partners and later founded the Ironwood Equity Fund in Massachusetts, where he is currently managing director. Gabrieli has served as chairman of MassINC, a non-partisan think tank, and also sits on the boards of The Boston Plan for Excellence, The Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, the Boston Public Library Foundation, and both the Harvard and Boston University Schools of Public Health. After serving as the chair of Mayor Menino's Taskforce on After-school Time in 1999, Gabrieli founded Massachusetts 2020, a foundation which has devoted \$25 million to expanding after-school programs. He lives in Boston with his wife and their five children.

### **Kerry Healey, Republican Candidate**

Kerry Healey grew up in Daytona Beach, Florida and came to Massachusetts to attend Harvard College. She then earned a Ph.D. from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland in political science and law. Healey currently serves as Lieutenant Governor for the Romney-Healey administration. During her time in office, she has led efforts to increase penalties for drunk drivers and sex offenders. Before taking office as Lieutenant Governor, Healey spent many years as a law and public safety consultant at Abt Associates Inc., where she conducted extensive research for the U.S. Department of Justice. Healey is a past member of the Foundation Board of North Shore Community College and of the Friend's Board of Beverly Hospital. She lives in Beverly with her husband and two children.

### **Christy Mihos, Independent Candidate**

Christy Mihos is a lifelong resident of Massachusetts who, with his brother, turned his grandfather's small Brockton grocery store into a booming enterprise. Christy's Markets became the second largest convenience store chain in New England. Mihos ran for Massachusetts state senator for the south shore, and in 1998, he was appointed to the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, where he was vice chairman and later director. He has also served on the boards of the University of Massachusetts, the Boys and Girls Club of Brockton, a South Shore Greek Orthodox Church, and the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce. He lives in West Yarmouth with his wife and two children.

### **Deval Patrick, Democratic Candidate**

Deval Patrick grew up sharing a single bedroom with his mother and sister in Chicago. In high school, he earned a scholarship to attend Milton Academy. The first in his family to attend college, he graduated from Harvard University and then Harvard Law School. Patrick worked for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and for two corporate law firms in Boston. In 1994, President Clinton appointed him Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, the nation's top civil rights post. Patrick has also served in leadership positions for major corporations, including Texaco and Coca-Cola. Patrick has served on several charitable and corporate boards, as well as on the Federal Election Reform Commission under Presidents Carter and Ford, and the Massachusetts Judicial Nominating Council under Governor Weld. He lives in Milton with his wife and their two daughters.

### **Tom Reilly, Democratic Candidate**

Tom Reilly was born and raised in Springfield, Massachusetts. A product of the Springfield public schools and Cathedral High School, Reilly was the first person in his family to attend college. In 1990, Reilly was elected as the District Attorney in Middlesex County. As DA, he initiated the Community Based Justice program. Reilly was elected state Attorney General in 1998. His office investigated the actions of church management when allegations surfaced of sexual abuse of children by clergy of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston and issued a report detailing their failure to protect children from abuse. Reilly is currently serving his second term as Attorney General. Reilly and his wife Ruth have three daughters and six grandchildren.

### **Grace Ross, Green-Rainbow Candidate**

Born and raised in New York, Grace Ross came to Massachusetts to attend Harvard College and graduate school. As an activist, Ross has worked with a diverse group of leaders serving low-income people. She is committed to a range of progressive causes from non-violence, the environment, and international solidarity to anti-racist struggles, women's rights, union organizing, and gay/lesbian civil rights. Ross was the co-chair of the Green-Rainbow Party. She is the first openly lesbian woman to run for governor of Massachusetts. She lives in Worcester.

## **MODERATOR:**

### **Janet Wu**

Janet Wu has been the NewsCenter 5 State House reporter for WCVB-TV since January 1983. Wu is a key member of WCVB's political unit and was a member of the team honored in 2001 and 2005 with the coveted Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Political Journalism. From 1978 to 1983, Wu was the State House reporter for WGBH-TV, Boston's public television station. She also worked as a reporter for United Press International from 1973 to 1978. Wu, a native of Bridgewater, NJ, received a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. She is fluent in the Cantonese dialect of Chinese. Wu is married and has two children.

# Speaker Biographies

## **Mike Fadel**

Mike Fadel is Executive Vice President for 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, a 275,000 member healthcare local union stretching from Boston to Washington, D.C. Fadel leads the union's Massachusetts Division which includes 12,000 hospital, nursing home, and home care workers statewide. Since 1991 he has worked as an organizer, organizing director, and local union director for SEIU healthcare locals and has led career ladder and education committees in the union. Prior to that he was a clinic worker and SEIU union steward at Harvard Community Health Plan in Boston.

## **Gary L. Gottlieb**

Gary L. Gottlieb, M.D., M.B.A., serves as President of Brigham and Women's/Faulkner Hospitals. He is a Professor of Psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School. Gottlieb has served as chairman of Partners Psychiatry and president of North Shore Medical Center, Executive Vice Chair of Psychiatry and Associate Dean for Managed Care at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center, and as director and CEO of Friends Hospital in Philadelphia. Gottlieb is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholar. In 2005, Mayor Thomas Menino appointed Gottlieb as chairman of the Boston Private Industry Council, the city's workforce development board.

## **Paul S. Grogan**

Paul S. Grogan became President and CEO of the Boston Foundation in 2001, coming from Harvard University, where he served as Vice President for Government, Community and Public Affairs. Earlier, he headed the nonprofit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), which raised more than \$3 billion of private capital for inner city revitalization across the country under his leadership. Grogan served in the administrations of mayors Kevin White and Raymond Flynn, pioneering a series of public/private ventures including the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership and the Boston Compact. Currently, he is a member of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's Board of Directors and is a trustee of Williams College. He is the founder and volunteer President of CEOs for Cities, an organization comprised of big-city mayors, corporate leaders and university presidents. He is co-author of *Comeback Cities: A Blueprint for Urban Neighborhood Revival*, which was published in 2000.

## **Loh-Sze Leung**

Loh-Sze Leung is the director of SkillWorks, an effort to create a workforce development system that helps low-skill, low-income residents move to family-sustaining jobs and helps employers find and retain skilled employees. Prior to SkillWorks, Leung was the assistant executive director of the Los Angeles Youth Opportunity Movement, a youth education/workforce development program of the City of Los Angeles. Leung has also served as a program development, research, and fund raising consultant for organizations including the Los Angeles Regional Foodbank, the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy, Peace Games, the Boston Private Industry Council, and the Commonwealth Corporation. Leung was born in San Francisco, California and is the daughter of Chinese immigrants. Leung and her husband live in Brookline, MA.

## **Brenda Mercomes**

Brenda Williams Mercomes, Ed.D., is the Academic Vice President at Roxbury Community College. Originally, from Kansas City, Dr. Mercomes began her education career by teaching composition and literature at the secondary university levels. In 1986, she moved to Massachusetts to accept a position in the English Department at Massasoit Community College. In 1988, she became chair of the Language Arts Division and remained in that position until she was promoted to Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts. In September 2003, she became academic vice president at RCC. Mercomes holds a bachelor's degree in English and a Master's degree in English Literature from Emporia State University, in Emporia, Kansas, and a doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

## **Margarita Restrepo**

Margarita Restrepo immigrated from Columbia and began work as a cleaner in Massachusetts almost 20 years ago. She is now working for Evergreen Management as a cleaner at Whidden Hospital in Everett. Restrepo has just been re-elected by fellow workers to serve on the Executive Board of SEIU Local 615, the property services local representing 16,000 cleaners, maintenance workers and security officers in higher education and commercial buildings.

## **Ada Riggins**

Ada Riggins has been a teacher in Cambridge, MA for 16 years. Currently, she teaches first and second graders at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Open School. A deacon at Messiah Baptist Church in Brockton, Riggins is extremely active in her community. She is a leader within the Brockton Interfaith Community, an organization affiliated with the Massachusetts Communities Action Network. She has also been involved in her organization's effort to support passage of the workforce development funding in the Economic Stimulus Bill. Riggins is the recipient of the Christa McAuliffe Teaching Incentive Grant and the 2005 Althea Lindsey Teacher of the Year award. She is a native of Boston and is married with three children.

## **Grace Toledo**

Grace Toledo graduated from the Boston Health Care and Research Training Institute's pre-employment training program in June 2006. Toledo was inspired by her boyfriend's success in the program, which helped him get a good job as an animal lab technician. Toledo completed an internship in the cell biology department's finance office at Harvard Medical School. Toledo is interested in pursuing a career in the medical field and would like to get her nursing degree. She encourages the next governor to fund programs like this that help single parents and others who cannot afford to pay for training or college on their own. Toledo currently lives in Mission Hill with her daughter, Shayla.

## **Amos Wanjiru**

Amos Wanjiru, a native of Kenya now living in Lynn, is a recent graduate of the E-team Machinist Job Training Program in Essex County sponsored by ECCO and the IEU/CWA Local 201. This program trains and prepares students to get jobs as entry level machinists.

# Format

The forum is not a debate. Each candidate will deliver brief opening and closing comments, and the moderator will ask each candidate three questions. Each candidate will have an opportunity to outline his or her strategies for: creating and keeping jobs for Massachusetts residents; providing Massachusetts adults with opportunities to develop the skills needed to succeed in jobs that can support a family; and keeping the state competitive.

Candidates have also received the questions that attendees submitted along with their online registrations, and each candidate has been encouraged to incorporate those concerns into their responses.

## Candidate Questions

Fact: 165,900 adults in Massachusetts are unemployed.

Fact: The state population is shrinking. Without immigration, there would be fewer working people in Massachusetts today than there were 10 years ago.

Fact: Twelve different state agencies offer job training or oversee resources. Sometimes programs and funding are not well coordinated, making it difficult for people to access the training that they need.

**How will you make workforce development an integral part of your jobs and economic development strategy? Please discuss any specific policies, budget, or legislation that you will propose to coordinate funds, invest them more strategically, and increase accountability.**

Fact: Two in five employers say there are too few qualified applicants to fill job openings and that more training resources are needed to prepare workers to meet employer needs.

Fact: There are 73,000 job openings in Massachusetts, but many adults lack the skills to fill them; 40 percent of these jobs require an Associate's degree.

Fact: There is no annual state funded job training program except for welfare recipients.

**In your first budget as governor, will you provide a public match that will support a new Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, available to all workers, that equals the \$21 million Workforce Training Fund that employers now support through a surcharge on unemployment taxes?**

Fact: 1.1 million adults in Massachusetts—one out of three adults—lack the skills to succeed in today's economy.

Fact: Today, 24,000 people are on waiting lists to get a GED or to learn English, and thousands more cannot even get on a waiting list because the lists are so long.

Fact: \$8 million dollars will continue the work begun by the education reform of the mid-1990s to make adult basic education available to all adults who request services.

**Will you propose an \$8 million increase in Adult Basic Education in your first budget as governor, and will you support increasing it further in subsequent years based on state revenues? This increase would enable thousands of people to get the basic education and English proficiency needed to get better-paying jobs, continue with education, participate more fully in community and family life, and become the skilled workers that employers need.**

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