

## **PIC Annual Meeting Remarks**

**by Cathy E. Minehan, President & Chief Executive Officer  
Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce Annual Luncheon  
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It is indeed an honor and a pleasure to be speaking to you as the incoming Chair of the Boston Private Industry Council and it is an even greater honor to take the place of Moose Mansfield [Ferdinand Colloredo-Mansfeld] -- a tough act to follow if there ever was one. Four years ago, on short notice, Moose agreed to chair the PIC once again as we were facing tremendous challenges. How could we move the school-to-career effort from a federally funded program -- that might have been simply a flash in the pan here in Boston -- to a major part of the public school agenda, funded by local public and private dollars? How could we implement privately run career centers that make training and retraining opportunities a reality for the adult workforce of Boston? And how could this PIC organization learn to be more focused on measurable results? Moose has met these challenges, provided critical leadership to our efforts, and left a PIC stronger and more able to serve the students, workforce, employers, higher education system, and the public sector better than ever. You have my deepest gratitude Moose.

It is also my pleasure to stand before you at a time of economic success in the nation, in New England, and in Boston. As they say -- this is about as good as it gets. Strong growth, low inflation, millions of jobs created, very low unemployment. The real question is how can we keep things this way? And I believe the PIC is one answer to this question. The strong national and local economies are like the tide, lifting the boats of those capable of making it in this increasingly high tech, highly competitive economy. And we in the PIC are into building boats. We build boats for high school students that enable them to see the linkages between school learning and working, to stay in school longer, and to be more successful than others in work and school after high school. We build boats for adults to enable them to enter the workforce, and to retrain for the jobs that are available. And we've begun to build boats for those who remain on welfare, enabling them to begin work for companies which will train them in preparation for, and as they work to fill much needed jobs.

And finally it is my pleasure to stand before you in the recognition that private and public support and commitment to education reform and job opportunities for all has seldom been this strong. We seem to be realizing the collaborative vision of the Boston Compact, with business, higher education, cultural and human service partners all willing to be held accountable for real contributions to the school reform agenda. Bill Boyan, our PIC vice chair, is representative of business commitment. He has raised over \$20 million through his work as chair of the Annenberg Challenge, and as the leader of the Boston Plan for Excellence. Last week, Mayor Riordan of Los Angeles called Mayor Menino a revolutionary for his commitment to public education and Tom's leadership here in Boston on school reform has been nothing sort of that. It was Mayor Menino who brought Tom Payzant to Boston. He is one of the most experienced and thoughtful educators in the country -- and it is under Tom Payzant's leadership that Boston has established new standards and a new curriculum, implemented new achievement tests and begun the process of transforming the public schools.

And for Massachusetts as a whole, we see a totally bipartisan effort to transform public education statewide -- to make our public schools a shining beacon of hope for all, and the foundation of a growing, vibrant state economy. There are no dissenting voices in our state about the goal of high performance public schools, and the programs sponsored by the PIC support this goal. Make no mistake -- the programs sponsored by the PIC -- school to career and privately run career centers -- are controversial subjects nationally and in other states. But we have proven these efforts work, in part through the efforts of one of the 1998 PIC Achievers, Maryellen Donahue. And because these programs work, I am

confident of their continued support.

The theme of our 1998 Annual Meeting is Making the Workplace a Learning Place. Boston high school students are learning at the workplace through the PIC's school-to-career activities. Welfare recipients are going to work accompanied by an education and training plan designed to increase their skills and offer career opportunities through an initiative the PIC has designed with new federal money. The three one stop career centers chartered by the PIC are connecting job seekers with employers and with education and training opportunities. Our theme is more than a message. It is a method. And, like any advanced method, we use sophisticated tools to get results. One of these is the work-based learning plan included in your PIC achiever booklet. (Hold up work based learning plan -- the audience will have one in their PIC Achiever booklets.) It helps to structure learning on the job and facilitates communication between the workplace and the classroom. To teachers, it is a learning plan. To employers, it is a performance evaluation. We anticipate that it will be valuable to job training programs and the new welfare-to-work initiative as well as to high school reform. We wanted you to see this as a tangible product of the PIC's efforts to create measurable progress in the schools, in the workplace, and for our economy.

In closing, I want to pay special tribute to all of you who have joined us for today's Annual Meeting. You are the front line of the Boston PIC and its partnership initiatives -teachers, workplace supervisors and mentors, career center workers, job training providers, Compact partners and all of you who serve on PIC committees.

This year, you have risen to the challenge of welfare reform and made the "work first" concept a positive by insisting on simultaneous education and training. I want to make special mention of Marriott Corporation and Benjamin Health Care -- the first to employers to step forward for the new federal welfare-to-work initiative the PIC is managing in partnership with Mayor Menino.

I also want to make special mention of the individuals who work in the one stop career centers and the organizations that operate the new centers -- Dimock Health Center, Morgan Memorial Goodwill and the Women's Educational and Industrial Union for Career Link, Jewish Vocational Services and the City of Boston for The Work Place, and the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training for JobNet. You have continuously improved the quality of labor market connections and truly reinvented government -- against enormous odds and opposition. The Boston PIC is committed to the one stop career center concept as the right way to treat both job seekers and employers.

Massachusetts is the home of public education, and Boston holds a special place in the hearts of millions and millions of students past and present. It is the quintessential city-on-a-hill -- a beacon for freedom and hope. The economy is strong, our directions are clear, we have public and private support. The challenges are great but our will is strong. We will make Boston a place where everyone can advance, everyone from every walk of life and every part of the city, everyone who is committed to lifelong learning and skill development. And in doing so, we will make our city and state strong, competitive, and a leader in the new economy.

Thank you.

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