



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Seward Joins Otsego Now To Launch Regional Workforce Training Center

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR    October 6, 2015

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**ONEONTA, 10/06/15** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today announced a \$100,000 legislative grant to support the new **Otsego Now** Regional Workforce Training Center.

**“Otsego County’s dedicated, hard-working workforce is well-known, but new technology and evolving businesses need specially-trained employees – that’s where the Otsego Now Regional Workforce Training Center comes in,”** said Senator Seward. **“This new center will serve as an**

**integral component of our regional and local economic development strategy. I am pleased to partner with Otsego Now to bring this workforce training initiative to the community, and I look forward to seeing its positive influence on our region's future success."**

Senator Seward announced the grant during an open house at the [Otsego Now Regional Workforce Training Center](#) at 189 Main Street in Oneonta. The innovative center includes state-of-the-art classrooms, seminar rooms, and multi-purpose training education spaces. The center will offer classes to qualified trainees and also provide space to the business community for other purposes such as strategic planning sessions and technical training.

Otsego IDA Board Chairman Robert Hanft said, "Our industry-specific job training programs will offer an important service to major regional employers, and will make Otsego County more competitive in the site selection arena."

The center will also host an eagerly anticipated partnership with Hartwick College faculty, including members of the college's Economics and Business & Accounting departments, where students and local citizens will engage in direct economic development work. A strong focus will be made to enhance the regional entrepreneurial spirit through internships, hands-on participation by faculty members, and direct business courses that incorporate the needs of local and newly started businesses.

Hartwick College Professor of Economics Dr. Carlana Ficano said, "I believe that Hartwick College's Liberal Arts in Practice curriculum is a tangible example of the college's belief that students learn best when the questions they pursue are grounded in the communities in which they operate, and when their work has real-world implications that extend beyond the classroom. We look forward to a fruitful partnership between Hartwick's academic departments, our Craft Food and Beverage Center initiative, and Otsego Now."

Empire State Development Regional Director Ken Tompkins said, “We are enthusiastic about working with Otsego Now to establish a regional workforce training center in Otsego County. A regional center dedicated to workforce training, and integrating components of entrepreneurship and skill development, will be an important element in overall economic development for the Mohawk Valley.”

The initial pilot training program will focus on career and job readiness for entry-level positions and will be a collaborative effort between the center and area business partners such as Oneonta-based companies Corning, Burt Rigid Box, and Pathfinder Village of Edmeston.

Pathfinder Village President and CEO Paul Landers said, “It is critically important to any business to have an adequately trained workforce, and that is why Pathfinder Village is excited to join with Otsego Now for this new initiative.”

Burt Rigid Box Operations Manager Greg Ward said, “This new economic development initiative is a positive step bringing future employees, businesses within the area, and Otsego County together to achieve the goals of success for all involved.”

Individuals interested in submitting an application for one of the center training courses can visit <http://otsegonow.com/?p=90> to complete and submit an application online or to print it out and mail it in. Area business owners and managers with questions about the center and its programs and services can contact Dawn Rivers, director of the Workforce Training Center, at [rivers@otsegonow.com](mailto:rivers@otsegonow.com) or 607-267-4010.