

## A Workforce Challenge

The U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration's (ETA) New Youth Vision (2004) addresses critical issues surrounding the large number of youth leaving high school without a diploma, and other issues including youth who are not prepared for post-secondary education and training or employment. This has a significant impact on the economic development of communities, states, and regional economies. Recognizing that the workforce investment system plays a vital role developing the talent of the "youth supply pipeline," partnerships with institutions and non-profit organizations have become a critical component of ETA's efforts to serve this country's young people and prepare them as the next generation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.

## A Strategic Solution

In September 2005, ETA awarded the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA), one of this country's largest volunteer child advocacy associations, a *Jobs for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* grant. Recognizing that parents and guardians are among the most important keys to a young person's success in education and in employment, the agency and the PTA partnered to provide school personnel, students, and families with information that will better enable high school age youth to utilize available resources to assist with career planning and to help them make the right academic decisions that will affect successful transitions from school to work.

## An Effective Partnership

Through its partnership, ETA and the PTA have launched the *PTA Goes to Work Campaign* and produced both an internet site and a *PTA Career Planning Toolkit*. In today's economy, parents and guardians need to be as well informed about their child's opportunities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce as school guidance counselors and teachers. The *PTA Goes to Work* Web site ([www.pta.org/goestowork](http://www.pta.org/goestowork)) is a gateway for parents and school officials to explore vast career opportunities and allows students to navigate their own academic preparation. The *PTA Career Planning Toolkit* showcases high-growth industries and the skills needed to attain jobs. The toolkit provides three guides targeting the full array of PTA's audiences and includes additional items by ETA to promote career planning and college exploration.

In addition, this partnership seeks to:

- Provide access to accurate and user friendly career information that will create awareness of new and emerging careers, workforce trends, and career opportunities for youth entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.
- Encourage members of the state and local workforce system, educational institutions, and the National PTA to continue collaborative efforts and dialogue around youth career exploration and strengthening career awareness.
- Connect the local workforce system, businesses, and educators in developing education and training programs that effectively address young people's need for higher levels of education and skill development.

For more information on the Employment and Training Administration's partnership with the National Parent Teacher Association, visit [www.doleta.gov/youth\\_services](http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services) or call the Division of Youth Services, (202) 693-3030.

