

Berkshire Workforce Board adds staff

Posted Monday, August 5, 2019 6:54 am

PITTSFIELD — Responsible for overseeing employment and training services in the region, the Berkshires workforce Board recently hired a new industry relations manager and a youth program specialist. Shannon Zayac, manager and industry relations, will be engaging employers throughout Berkshire county to define their workforce needs and assist with recruitment and retention strategies. She will be coordinating relevant training grants to bring more skilled workers into the workforce and develop a pipeline of future workers, expanding the career ladders within the manufacturing, hospitality and health care sectors. Zayac was previously the STEM program manager at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. She received her master of science degree in biochemistry, cellular molecular biology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and her bachelors of science in biochemistry at Stonehill College in Easton. Kathleen Toomey, youth program specialist, will be responsible for enhancing the region's career readiness models serving Berkshire County youth ages 14-21. This work will be in partnership with the region's 11 public school districts, MassHire Berkshire Career Center, Berkshire business community, higher education institutions and community-based organizations. Toomey is the former coordinator of positive youth development at the Berkshire United Way. She graduated from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley with a bachelor's degree in cultural anthropology. She holds certification in nonprofit leadership from Wheelock College and the BEST Initiative's Advancing Positive Youth Development through Health Resources in Action.