



## **NJDOE News**

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### **Groundhog Job Shadow Day Kicks-Off Activities To Promote Student Awareness About Real Life Career Choices**

Punxsutawney Phil will not be the only one to see his shadow beginning on February 2 of this year, as thousands of employees nationwide will as well. Beginning on Monday, February 2, thousands of employers from all walks of life will host students as part of the sixth annual Groundhog Job Shadow Day.

In New Jersey, more than 18,000 students in grades 7 through 11 are expected to spend one day shadowing scientists, teachers, firefighters, graphic designers, government employees and other workers from hundreds of professions in order to experience the workplace firsthand.

"This year-long initiative clearly illustrates how skills learned in school are put to use in the workplace," said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera, who will participate in the program this year as he did last year. "Moreover, the experience provides an opportunity for New Jersey students, in at-risk situations, to be exposed to various career options they otherwise might not have the chance to explore. I encourage students and employer sponsors to participate in this valuable experience throughout the year."

Governor James E. McGreevey will issue a proclamation declaring February 2, 2004 as Groundhog Job Shadow Day in New Jersey. The proclamation, in part, states that the day "allows employers to help prepare the future generation of New Jersey's workers while demonstrating a tangible commitment to supporting and improving the community."

"Job shadowing assists us in preparing New Jersey's children for productive and meaningful careers through direct interaction," Governor James E. McGreevey said. "We will continue to build on this positive partnership between the public and private sectors to develop high quality teaching and learning standards and classroom programs."

Several government agencies, schools, and businesses are participating in the Groundhog Job Shadow initiative this week and throughout the year. In addition to the New Jersey Department of Education's hosting of over 30 students from Trenton Central High School in Mercer County on February 5<sup>th</sup>, the departments of Community Affairs, Labor, Human Services, Military and Veterans Affairs, and State are also participating in various capacities.

Other state shadowing efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Camden County Technical Schools which will have their culinary arts and marketing students shadow professionals at the Marlton TGIFridays;
- C-Tech, a Sparta based company specializing in the manufacturing of educational programs and training aids, will host students from Technology High School in Newark;
- Students from Belleville High School in Essex County will attend a clinic for Dental Assisting and Massage Therapy courses provided by The Institute for Health Education; and
- The Morris County School of Technology will provide various shadowing experiences for their students at local businesses throughout Morris County.

The Groundhog Job Shadow initiative aims to provide students interested in exploring particular occupation opportunities to spend time with a professional working in that industry. Employee sponsors explain job skills, educational requirements, interviewing processes and other aspects of work to help students make a connection between what they learn in school and their career interests

Formed in 1997, the Job Shadow Day Coalition consists of America's Promise; the National School-to-Work

Office/Department of Education/Department of Labor; Junior Achievement; and the American Society of Association Executives. Sponsors of New Jersey's efforts include the New Jersey Hotel/Motel Association, the New Jersey Restaurant Association and the New Jersey Association of Black Female Lawyers.

For more information about participating in Groundhog Job Shadow Day activities now and throughout the year, contact Allwyn Baskin at the New Jersey Department of Education, 609-292-6573, or visit the following Web site:

[www.jobshadow.org](http://www.jobshadow.org)