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NEWS RELEASE

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Whitman Joins Bell Atlantic in Announcing Creation of Over 1,000 Jobs

Governor Christie Whitman was joined by Bell Atlantic today at a Newark vocational school to announce the creation of over 1,000 new jobs in New Jersey over the next two years.

"These are the jobs of the future," Whitman told students at Newark's Technology High School, the site of Bell Atlantic's Tech 2000 program, which provides technical training for the city's youth for careers in the telecommunications field. "They are jobs that will make it possible for you to live, work and raise a family in New Jersey."

With assistance from the state's Business Employment Incentive Program (BEIP) and a customized job training grant, Bell Atlantic Communications and Construction Services, based in South Plainfield, will create nearly 600 new technical jobs over a one year period. Bell Atlantic Mobile of Bedminster, a separate entity, also expects to create more than 500 jobs over the next two years with the assistance of a BEIP grant. Bell Atlantic employs over 17,000 workers in New Jersey.

The BEIP program was established in the Department of Labor in 1996 to provide incentives for companies to expand their operations in New Jersey. The program has resulted in 20,000 new jobs in New Jersey. Customized Job Training Grants are also administered by the Department of Labor.

"Bell Atlantic is a big company," Whitman said. "These jobs could have very easily gone elsewhere. But by working together closely in public-private partnership, these new jobs will be located right here in New Jersey."

New Jersey has been a national and regional leader in the number of business relocations to the state. In 1996 alone, 95 companies relocated to New Jersey, generating more than 7,000 jobs in the state.

As of July, there were 196,400 more jobs in New Jersey than in 1994, with a record 3.9 million people now in the workforce. At 5.2 percent, unemployment in New Jersey has dropped to its lowest level in 7 years.

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