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**ST. LOUIS MOSAIC PROJECT LAUNCHES**

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GLOBAL TALENT HIRING PROGRAM**

**ST.** **LOUIS** (Sep. 12, 2014) – A major new workforce and economic development initiative – the ***International Student Global Talent Hiring Program*** – hopes to retain more of the 9,000 international students currently studying in the St. Louis bi-state region.

Betsy Cohen, executive director of the St. Louis Mosaic Project, announced the effort today at the World Trade Center’s Growing Global conference attended by 650 regional executive and economic development leaders.

The international hiring program adds another critical component to the Mosaic Project’s portfolio, as the effort works to transform St. Louis into the fastest growing major metropolitan region for immigration by 2020 and promotes regional prosperity through immigration and innovation. This hiring collaboration also involves the Regional Business Council, International Institute of St. Louis and five universities on the Mosaic Project Steering Committee: Saint Louis University, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, University of Missouri-St. Louis, Washington University in St. Louis and Webster University.

More than 30 educators from the universities’ international student offices and career centers convened at a St. Louis Mosaic Project-sponsored workshop in June 2014. Their goal? To address what each university can do to better prepare international students, as well as how they can assist companies that recruit on campus in understanding how to hire an international student.

“The ***Student Global Hiring Program*** includes six components to simplify the complex hiring process for students who want to become part of the St. Louis community and to help corporate leaders who want to become more globally oriented in their hiring practices,” Cohen said. “Ultimately, we all will benefit by keeping talent here in the St. Louis region,” she added.

The six components are: A mentoring program through the Regional Business Council, materials on international hiring for University Career Services office, regional “best practice” sharing among International Student Offices/Career Services Offices, free legal consulting for companies who need information about the process of hiring an international student, a regional International Student Certificate program on interviewing/networking skills and a Corporate Global Employer Program. Corporations can become a Silver or Gold Mosaic Global Employer by participating in actions involving international students, from hosting practice interview sessions to long-term employment.

“We don’t want to be the training camp for the world’s elite workers.  We want these talented individuals to be able to stay here and grow our economy, and these are simple and effective tools to reach that goal,” said Cohen.

Interested companies can contact Betsy Cohen.

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**About the St. Louis Mosaic Project:**

St. Louis aims to be a cultural mosaic because this community believes that immigrants invigorate our region, drive innovation and take us back to our roots. The St. Louis Mosaic Project’s goal is to transform St. Louis into the fastest growing major metropolitan area for immigration by 2020 and promote regional prosperity through immigration and innovation.

The St. Louis Mosaic Project was launched in 2012 in response to [**an economic impact report**](http://www.stlmosaicproject.org/resources.html), outlining St. Louis to be lagging in immigrant growth as well as highlighting the economic benefits of increasing its foreign-born population. The Mosaic Project is a regional initiative that is professionally managed by St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, World Trade Center St. Louis and a 22-member committee.

For more information about the St. Louis Mosaic Project, visit [www.stlmosaicproject.org](http://www.stlmosaicproject.org).