

## Closing “Skills Gap” Opens Opportunities

(NAPSA)—A new program has helped close the “skills gap” many say divides today’s workforce. That “gap” is the difference between the skills an employer needs and the skills that a worker has. Closing it may open a number of employment opportunities.

The initiative has also been credited with helping workers transition to new careers, helping high-school graduates identify career paths and helping employers make better hiring and promotion decisions.

The program, currently being run in Ohio, is expected to have nationwide benefits. Ohio, like many major metropolitan areas, is experiencing a shifting economic base. Manufacturers are leaving the area, computer occupations dominate the fastest growing jobs and technology has been slowing the demand for administrative support workers. In addition, operators and laborers are expected to account for only 13 percent of Ohio’s job growth between 1998 and 2008, while professionals will account for more than 50 percent.

The state, through the Ohio Board of Regents, turned to Prometric, a part of The Thomson Corporation (NYSE: TOC, TSX: TOC), to help develop and deliver a bundle of technology-based services to connect people, skills training and jobs.

“The initiative gives individuals and employers the information and resources they need to achieve the best possible fit between skill levels, work preferences and job requirements,” said Michael Bran-



**A new program may help today’s workers become more “tech savvy.”**

nick, Prometric’s president.

Brannick’s company, which led a consortium of vendors cooperating with Ohio, used its capabilities as a global leader in technology-enabled testing and assessment services to build a tailored solution for the state. Ohio is now delivering this much needed service through a network of community colleges, technical colleges and university branch campuses.

“The program supports the workforce because individuals can use it to set better career goals, choose appropriate training as needed and gain credentials that confirm their knowledge and skills,” says Michael Taggart of the Ohio Board of Regents. The program is also expected to support business and even bring new business into the area by providing skilled workers.

For more information visit [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com).