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**Empowering People...Enriching Lives**

**For release: Wednesday, March 3, 2010    Contact: Joan Wishod Reardon, Public Relations Director**

## **Grant will help HARC to Transform Lives through Employment**

HARC's employment services division, Career Connections, recently hosted a luncheon with five area partners to celebrate a new program launched with a \$245,036 grant from the New York State Department of Labor.

The Turning Point to Employment Program assists unemployed, lower income individuals, ages 18 and older, to either prepare for or to find competitive employment or to advance their careers. Career Connections staff offers personalized case management and training to help individuals address the life issues that are preventing them from being employed.

Those interested in the Turning Point program can contact Robin Mattox, employment services manager, at (315) 574-7662. Walk-ins are also welcome at the Career Connections center at 127 East Albany Street in Herkimer, NY.

Other Turning Point program area partners include: Working Solutions One-Stop Career Center in Herkimer County, Herkimer County Department of Social Services, New York State Department of Corrections, Herkimer County BOCES, and Herkimer County Community College.

HARC Executive Director Kevin Crosley said, "According to Department of Labor statistics, there is a forty percent chance that new hires who lack the basic skills necessary to perform entry level work will fail in their jobs. Career Connections will work with people to explore the many facets that make a good employee, such as communication, interpersonal, and decision making skills to help ensure they are ready to join the workforce and to retain their jobs. Within a very short time, our staff has connected 19 people with partners to get their GED, vocational training, or college coursework. People enrolled in the program are also learning how to interview and create resumes, working on career exploration, and looking for job openings. Each week, individuals utilize our on-site Computer Lab to hone their skills. Our staff is quite excited about helping individuals to break down the barriers to achieve meaningful and consistent employment."



HARC and Career Connections staff working to help people to find competitive employment include, front, from left, Robin Mattox, employment services manager, Susan Streeter, HARC director of Day & Clinical Services, and Kathy Leslie, Career Connections director. Back, from left, Luke Brinkerhoff, case manager, Dawn-Jaycox-Weeks, evaluator, and Kaycie Beekman and Marc Richardson, instructors.