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wells to be in production for 50 years or so," Fischer said. "We're looking at a lifetime of job opportunities so it's worth it to get this right.

"One of the challenges is this is a new industry in Pennsylvania so we don't have a ready trained workforce that can just step in," Fischer said. "There are a lot of players working to develop training programs for this."

She said a common curriculum is important for two reasons.

"If someone was trained with this curriculum, the industry will know what they're capable of," Fischer said. "And for the working population, it gives them greater mobility. They can follow the work because their credentials will be recognized industrywide."

There are about 150 occupations related to Marcellus Shale natural gas production, Fischer said.

According to Danielle Boston, director of public outreach for PIOGA in Wexford, there are several estimates on job creation related to shale development.

"We worked with Penn State Cooperative Extension for the region," Boston said. "They estimated job creation in 2011 could be 111,000. That includes direct, indirect and induced jobs."

Induced jobs are hotel, retail, restaurants and other ancillary services that will be impacted by well operations.

PIOGA is a trade association representing 800 companies involved in traditional oil and gas operations as well as Marcellus Shale. ♦

THE EDUCATION ASSET

Autumn is back-to-school time, but it's not just youths and college students returning to the classroom. For many workers, continuing education is a year-round, lifelong endeavor.

In this issue, Business Matters looks at several educational issues, including tuition reim-

bursement for employees trying to advance in the workplace, efforts to train residents in the burgeoning Marcellus Shale natural gas industry, and an initiative to educate the next generation to fill competitive jobs in engineering, manufacturing and science.