

## May 4, 2006 Funding released for miner training

For Immediate Release

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Johnstown, PA - U.S. Rep. John Murtha said today that about 150 new miners in Southwestern Pennsylvania and parts of adjacent states will receive training with the release of funding for a United Mine Workers of America Career Centers program.

The program is designed to train new miners to replace older workers with long experience that will be lost as they retire.

"Coal production in the U.S. reached a record level last year, and Pennsylvania's production was up nearly 2 percent over the previous year," Murtha said. "With the abundant coal reserves available here in Western Pennsylvania, we're starting now to equip the next generation of miners with the mechanical and safety skills they need to carry on the region's long mining heritage."

The program will recruit at least 200 people, and about 150 are expected to enroll. They will receive 40 hours of training to meet Pennsylvania's Mine Safety and Health Administration training and CPR certification requirements for underground miners. About 115 participants are expected to be placed in jobs earning an average wage of \$18.77 an hour.

Career Centers programs earlier this year received funding for a program designed to train dislocated miners as heavy equipment operators or for other high-demand occupations such as advanced materials/metals industries or health care.

"Once again Congressman Murtha has proved that he can deliver the services needed in Southwestern Pennsylvania," said Clemmy Allen, UMWA Career Centers executive director. "In light of the Sago and Alma, W. Va., incidents, this funding helps us achieve the goal of providing proper training to new miners before they enter the mines."