

VIRGINIA



WORKFORCE CONNECTION

Virginia Workforce Council Fall 2011

Greater Peninsula and Hampton Roads receive \$5 million healthcare training grant



Sen. Mark Warner hosted the event at EVMS where he announced that PCFWD and Opplnc would receive a \$5 million healthcare training grant. (From left) On hand for the presentation are William H. Mann Jr., executive vice president of PCFWD; Matthew James, president and CEO of PCFWD; James O. Icenhour Jr., member of the James City County Board of Supervisors; Warner; Tina Vick, member of the Newport News City Council; John Olson, campus president of ECPI University, and Dr. John T. Dever, president of Thomas Nelson Community College.

From the Chairman's Perspective

Regional approach will strengthen education, workforce alignment

By Huey J. Battle
Chairman, Virginia Workforce Council

As you peruse this autumn issue you will observe many examples of success, achievement, resourcefulness and determination. Our local workforce areas, community colleges and partners have never

worked harder to provide opportunities for our citizens to forge a career path and aid our businesses in identifying the best-qualified candidates for their employment challenges.

Your Virginia
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Battle

The Peninsula Council for Workforce Development, in partnership with Opportunity Inc., was awarded a \$5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to provide advanced healthcare education, training and job placement assistance.

More than 330 people from across the Hampton Roads region will receive training under the grant for jobs averaging \$43,000 per year. The jobs will be in more than 20 specialties including dental hygiene, health information technology, lab technology, physical therapy, registered nursing, physician assistance, radiologic technology and respiratory therapy. According to Matthew James, president and CEO of PCFWD, "These are great jobs, paying more than the regional average. This program is sorely needed."

While program participation will be open to all eligible individuals, particular emphasis will be placed on recruiting minorities and veterans and their families, including recently exited military, military spouses and those displaced as a result of the Joint Forces Command closure. "These are among the fastest-growing occupations in Hampton Roads, at more than double the average across all occupations," says Judy Begland, president and CEO of Opplnc.

Eligible participants can receive an average of \$9,000 for training in an approved program. "Given the advanced skill level required, training in these fields is more expensive than for many other industries. This grant will enable our One-Stops to provide higher-than-normal training allowances, making these programs more affordable to participants," says James.

Officially called the Hampton Roads Healthcare Workforce Partnership, the grant brings together the region's two workforce investment boards as well as major education and employer partners. These include Tidewater,
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Six recognized for workforce development achievement in Western Virginia area

Six Roanoke area individuals, professionals and organizations were recognized Sept. 28 for their outstanding contributions to workforce development in the Western Virginia region. Virginia Community College System Chancellor Dr. Glenn DuBois delivered the keynote address at the event, sponsored by the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board.

Travis Jones, a military veteran who was laid off after 15 years of employment in the construction industry, was recognized as Program Participant of the Year. He took advantage of the opportunities presented by the dislocated worker program and made great strides in personal and professional growth.

Through the Franklin Center, Jones entered Virginia Western Community College's Water and Wastewater Certificate Program where he worked with workforce coordinator Lean Coffman who offered him tutoring and support. Jones is now the supervisor of the Crystal Spring Water Treatment Facility.

Barbara Humphreys was honored as Community Advocate of the Year for her choice to make workforce development a personal mission. As a career coach for Franklin County middle and high schools, she helps youth decide on a career and determine a career pathway. Humphreys, who serves on the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board's Youth Council, was instrumental in forming the Franklin County Career Council, which she now serves as president.

Western Virginia Water Authority was named Business of the Year for encouraging professional development for new and current employees. The authority also was honored for promoting career advancement opportunities and supporting the efforts of workforce centers, agencies and/or partners, while significantly increasing employment in the past year.

In 2008, with the assistance of Virginia Western Community College, the water authority created a training program that provided customized entry-level training that led to a certificate. Employees have access to a tuition assistance program so they can continue their education and work with area schools, colleges and civic organizations, creating a pipeline of workers for the future. In 2009, the Water Environment Federation honored the authority with a Public Education Award.

Dr. Robert Sandel, president of Virginia Western Community College, was named Training Provider of the Year for understanding employees and employers' needs. He was cited for using innovative approaches to training and education, as well as fostering a positive learning environment.

Sandel's efforts have focused on education, training and economic development opportunities. Under his direction, the college's workforce develop-

ment team focused on the needs of more than 300 local businesses, providing more than 31,000 hours of education and awarding more than 200 Career Readiness Certificates.

Franklin Center Executive Director Kathy Hodges received the Professional of the Year award for her work within the workforce development system. She was honored for her excellent program knowledge, outstanding services to business and individual customers, and dedication to continuous improvement.

Hodges has developed a network of local business, education and community partners to meet customer needs. She has brought thousands of grant dollars to Franklin County, with the most recent funds used to offset the rising cost of GED® testing and continue the on-site LPN program. She recently oversaw the expansion of The Franklin Center.

Workforce Services Manager Kim Moore was recognized for her service and dedication to the local workforce center. In particular, Moore was instrumental in the development of the Roanoke Valley Workforce Center, the state's first integrated workforce center. She is relocating to Maine.

Western Virginia Workforce Development Board is a nonprofit organization that serves as a liaison between the public, the business community and partner organizations. It administers employment and training programs through public and private grants in Alleghany Highlands, Roanoke Valley and Franklin County. The board charters and provides WIA workforce services oversight for local Virginia workforce network centers including the Roanoke Valley Workforce Center, The Franklin Center in Rocky Mount, the Covington VEC and the Goodwill Jobs Campus. 🌐



SkillSource Group issues economic impact study

The SkillSource Group Inc., the nonprofit arm of the Northern Virginia Workforce Area #11, recently issued the 2011 regional economic impact study documenting the strong return-on-investment for publicly funded workforce services in Northern Virginia. The study was conducted by Mangum Economic Consulting LLC of Richmond.

The 2011 report assessed the regional economic and fiscal impact of the employment, skills training and job placement services provided by the Northern Virginia workforce system in FY 2011. When comparing public costs associated with the Northern Virginia workforce system's programs to the economic benefits associated with the employment outcomes, this study estimated the Northern Virginia public return-on-investment was 4.7 times greater than the program costs. When core workforce services are included, the benefits increase to 8.4 times greater than the program costs.

The Northern Virginia study exclusively reviewed the regional workforce programs funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA - Stimulus Funding). When comparing the \$8.8 million in cumulative economic benefits to the Northern Virginia workforce system's \$1.2 million in ARRA-funded workforce programs in FY 2010 and FY 2011, benefits exceeded program costs by 7.2. This indicates that ARRA-funded workforce programs delivered economic benefits more than seven times greater than program costs.

The 2011 study and executive summary can be reviewed at www.myskillsource.org/home/documents/SkillSourceGroup_EIAreport_Oct2011.pdf 🌐

HEALTHCARE GRANT

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Thomas Nelson and Paul D. Camp community colleges; Eastern Virginia Medical School; Hampton, Norfolk State and Old Dominion universities; Bon Secours, Riverside and Sentara health systems; and Chesapeake Regional Medical Center.

Department of Labor goals under the program are to provide training and job placement assistance in high-demand occupations for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. This should be done in such a way as to help participants become re-employed as quickly as possible. 🌐

CHAIRMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

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Workforce Council is equally determined to advise Gov. Robert McDonnell in these efforts. We were inspired by the governor's second annual Forum on Education and Workforce Training held in early November. Our Council convened immediately following that forum and took swift action by passing a resolution to ramp up the number of Career Readiness Certificates earned in Virginia and explore the possibility of establishing the Work Readiness Communities Program in the Commonwealth. You will learn more about this initiative at our next business meeting Jan. 5 in Richmond.

My areas of focus over the next year and beyond will be concentrated around three goals: alignment, branding and regionalism. I have touched on these critical strategies in some of my previous columns.

My areas of focus over the next year and beyond will be concentrated around three goals: alignment, branding and regionalism.

As I shared with the Council at our Nov. 3 meeting, my hope is that we can continue to align the disciplines of workforce and economic development with higher education/K through 12. A regional approach

will strengthen that alignment.

We can be guided by many best practices around the country where contiguous counties and states blend and braid their resources, programs and services to be more efficient and effective. In many ways we are compelled to take this approach given the shrinking pool of financial support from public sources.

Finally, I would like to give a fresh brand to all of these strategies, in order for the Virginia Workforce Network to be easily recognizable and for all to clearly understand the role of the Virginia Workforce Council.

I am very excited about our chance to be successful in meeting the challenges before us and very pleased with the team that the governor has identified to serve on the Council. We have much to be grateful for during this season of Thanksgiving. Please cherish your time with family and friends. We will be ready to roll up our sleeves and tackle the New Year 2012 in good measure. 🍂

PCFWD and TNCC study identifies upcoming manufacturing jobs in area

The Peninsula Council for Workforce Development and Thomas Nelson Community College released their Skills to Succeed Inventory, a comprehensive study of careers with 14 top Virginia Peninsula manufacturing companies. The companies reported they will need 11,500 skilled trades and precision production workers from 2012 to 2016.

The study, funded by the Ford Foundation and Virginia's Community Colleges, is part of the Peninsula Career Pathways Collaborative, a communitywide initiative that includes businesses, public school divisions, adult education centers, TNCC, and regional economic and workforce agencies that will build career pathways. It includes skill-specific information on the number of upcoming manufacturing job openings, identifying 11 high-demand occupations.

The Skills to Succeed Inventory has been called the most comprehensive study of its kind on the Virginia Peninsula. Instead of relying solely on federal databases, study results were based on confidential one-on-one interviews conducted with Peninsula executives.

"This is a call to action for our businesses, school divisions, colleges and universities to partner together to build, re-engineer and accelerate adult and youth career pathways into these upcoming manufacturing jobs," says the new TNCC president, Dr. John Dever, who with Delegate Matthew James, president and CEO of PCFWD, released the study at the Oct. 17 Executive Leadership Summit. The summit was attended by U.S. Congressman Robert Scott and State Sen. John Miller, as well as K-12 and higher-education representatives and industry leaders.

Businesses and educators convened in work-sessions in November to recommend ways to modify and fund existing pathways and develop new ones to fill workforce educational gaps. "The goal is to customize education and training for different populations, including military veterans, dislocated workers, STEM high school and college students, underemployed workers and young adults seeking technical jobs but lacking a GED® and specific skills," says James.

"Working together we can build pathways that are more than on-ramps, but career highways where continuing education and credentials deliver advanced skills and higher wages on the way," adds Dever.

The 14 participating businesses currently employ nearly 90 percent of the manufacturing workforce in the region. 🌐

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The comprehensive Skills to Succeed Inventory study was released at the Oct. 17 Executive Leadership Summit, which was attended by educators, industry leaders and state representatives. Seen here, Jesse White, director of career and technical education for Hampton City Schools, comments on the findings.

Solis, Oates meet with Virginia jobseekers in Northern Virginia

In October, U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis and Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Jane Oates met with jobseekers at the Falls Church SkillSource Center, one of five Workforce Centers in the Northern Virginia Workforce Area #11.

The women discussed the need for continued skills development and training and also met with several students working in the center's computer lab. The students were preparing to test for the Virginia Career Readiness Certificate.

Later, the secretary and assistant secretary met with Dr. David C. Miles, chairman of the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board, and center staff. Their discussions focused on the workforce area's strategic priorities in meeting local private business needs. They also talked about specific program accomplishments that targeted entrepreneurship initiatives and offender re-entry efforts.



(Above, from left) Marsha Enkenrud, manager of the Reston Center, accompanies Jane Oates and Hilda Solis during the women's visit in October.



(At right) Hoa Doan, with the Falls Church SkillSource Center, discusses workforce priorities with Hilda Solis during the U.S. secretary of labor's visit to the center.



(At left) U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis takes the opportunity to chat with one of the jobseekers at the center.



Alexandria/Arlington WIB achieves notable certification

On Sept. 19, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration certified the Alexandria/Arlington Workforce Investment Board's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). CEDS is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies.

The WIB's CEDS analyzes the state of the workforce and economies of the city of Alexandria and Arlington County and establishes regional goals and objectives. Alexandria/Arlington is the 38th WIB in the United States to achieve this certification.

For more information, please contact David Remick at dremick@arlingtonva.us. You can review the CEDS at www.alexandriarlingtonwib.com.

Opplnc launches 'Hire-A-Vet' program

In honor of Veterans Day, Opportunity Inc. launched "Hire-A-Vet Hampton Roads" with web resources to assist employers in reaching and hiring exiting military and other veterans.

"One of the most frequent questions asked by employers is: 'How do I reach exiting military and other veterans with job opportunities?' So we developed this website and employer hiring guide to help them better connect to veterans," says Judy Begland, president and CEO of Opplnc.

"An Employer's Guide to Hiring Exiting Military Personnel and Other Veterans in Hampton Roads" features step-by-step instructions for using no-cost, readily available tools to identify and reach veterans as potential employees. It is available as a PDF download from the webpage at www.opp-inc.org/hireavet.