

## Delivering a workforce 'second to none'



Opportunity Inc.

Hampton Roads' Workforce Development Board

**PROGRAM YEAR 2009**

July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010

[www.opp-inc.org](http://www.opp-inc.org)

## A message from the Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board

We are pleased to present this annual report, on behalf of the Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board. Program Year 2009 (July 1, 2009, to June 30, 2010) was a tumultuous year with high-unemployment rates. Although the recession that began in December 2007 officially ended in June 2009, the lingering effects of increasing and prolonged unemployment have continued to plague the national, state and regional economies.

South and Western Hampton Roads lost some 9,800 jobs over the program year despite being officially out of the recession. While this represented about half of the previous year's job losses, the February 2010 unemployment rate of 7.8 percent was the highest in more than a generation.

The region received funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ("stimulus"), providing resources for job training and youth summer job opportunities. Record numbers of individuals utilized the One-Stop Workforce Centers and many companies closed their doors or downsized, including International Paper's Franklin plant.

Initial indications suggest the current year will not be as tumultuous as the last one, yet challenges remain. Many will find their jobs will not come back as the economy improves. Still others will learn, after an extended period of unemployment, they need to upgrade their skills.

In the report that follows, you will see many of the ways we are working to assist those looking to gain new skills and improve old ones. We also are helping to prepare the next generation of workers for the competition they face in a truly global economy and are assisting businesses to meet their need for a skilled and qualified workforce.

We extend our thanks and appreciation to all who work with us in support of the region's workforce development strategy and commend them for their accomplishments as well.

Sincerely,



Donald Goldberg, Chairman  
Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board



Opportunity Inc.:

## Serving workforce needs for both businesses and jobseekers

Who we are

The Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board is business-led and comprises representatives of the region's key stakeholders in workforce development. The Board is tasked with providing leadership to develop and implement a sound workforce strategy for the communities it represents. Those communities are the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk and Virginia Beach, as well as the counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton.

A successful workforce development strategy is fundamental to a successful economic development strategy. Business profitability and competitiveness depend on the capability and productivity of the workforce. A well-paid and secure workforce depends on business profitability and competitiveness. One is not possible without the other. Ultimately, the strength of our workforce will determine the strength of our economy in Hampton Roads.



Workforce Development Board Meeting

## Financial overview

The majority of Opportunity Inc.'s funding comes from the U.S. Department of Labor under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). 2009 funding included substantial sums under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, or stimulus funding.

The table below details the Program Year 2009 source of funds, expenditures and balances carried forward into the current Program Year.

### Program Year 2009 Funding and Expenditures/Obligations

FUND	WIA and Stimulus Adult	WIA and Stimulus Dislocated Worker	WIA and Stimulus Youth	WIRED Grant	All Other Funds	TOTAL
Funding	\$3,486,001	\$1,774,558	\$3,997,472	\$2,969,101	\$587,284	\$12,814,416
Expenditures/Obligations	\$3,486,001	\$1,202,901	\$3,633,174	\$2,798,683	\$582,154	\$11,702,913
Carried Forward		\$571,657	\$364,298	\$170,418	\$5,130	\$1,111,503

## Displaced workers are helped when International Paper Mill closes

International Paper (IP) announced it would close its Franklin paper mill on Oct. 22, 2009, resulting in the loss of more than 1,100 jobs. In November, Opportunity Inc. opened an on-site Transition Center to provide services and resources such as unemployment insurance, skills assessment, access to occupational training and funding, and employment workshops on resume writing and interviewing skills. Opportunity Inc. also expanded its existing Franklin One-Stop Workforce Center, located at Paul D. Camp Community College. To date, more than 500 IP employees have been served.

To further help support displaced IP workers, Opportunity Inc. sponsored a number of events in 2010:

- Job Fair in January – 43 employers with job openings participated. More than 1,300 people attended with 52 on-site interviews and 29 employment offers made that day.
- Supplier Meeting in February – Connected several IP suppliers with state and federal resources and sponsored ads in local newspapers to promote affected suppliers.
- Community Resource Fair in March – Helped impacted IP families access needed services and resources.
- Community Forum in April – Informed residents on how Franklin and the counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton were working together to move the region forward.
- Jobseeker Workshop in June – Partnered with Monster.com to host a workshop at PDCCC for dislocated IP employees.



International Paper Career Fair

## Youth programs operate year-round throughout the region

Opportunity Inc. provides year-round programs to help youth succeed in school and learn relevant workplace-readiness skills. In PY 2009, the KRA Corp. program, funded by Opportunity Inc., served 240 in-school youth at 12 locations and 90 out-of-school youth.

The KRA Youth Employability & Success (Y.E.S.) program includes work-readiness training, subsidized work experiences, job-search preparation and assistance, resume-writing and interviewing-skills training, and leadership development. Activities include community service projects, adult mentoring, financial literacy, and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) competitions. Students also can earn a workplace readiness skills certificate.

Programs are located in various schools and community centers throughout the region: Chesapeake Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Booker T. Washington, Lake Taylor, Granby and Maury high schools in Norfolk; Franklin High School; I.C. Norcom High School in Portsmouth, Smithfield High School in Isle of Wight, Lakeland High School in Suffolk, and Green Run and Bayside high schools in Virginia Beach. Southampton County Public Schools ran a similar program, serving 45 in-school youth.

## Summer work experience program is largest in Commonwealth

In summer 2009, 913 youth participated in Opportunity Inc.'s Summer Work Experience program, earning almost \$1.5 million at locations including municipal parks and recreation departments and motor pools, photography studios, child care centers, local colleges and universities, and summer camps. Along with the experience, youth received workplace readiness instruction in the classroom which included lessons in resume writing, interviewing, personal budgeting and dressing for success.

Opportunity Inc.'s program was the largest in Virginia, accounting for 26 percent of the state's total. According to DOL figures, it was larger than entire programs in 11 states.



Summer Work Experience

## Opportunity Inc. offers an array of business services

Opportunity Inc. offered a host of services to area businesses this past year, including applicant referral, candidate prescreening, access to tax credit programs and labor market information, customized skills training for new hires and On-the-Job Training (OJT) subsidies.

OJT is a program that reimburses employers for part of the cost of hiring and training a new employee. It is particularly important in the current economic environment because it reduces hiring costs and helps get the unemployed back to work and earning a wage while training.

PY 2009 saw several mass layoffs including the closing of the International Paper mill in Franklin, where 1,123 people lost their jobs. Since 2007, the number of people impacted by layoffs has steadily increased, with 2009 seeing the greatest number of employees laid off since the Norfolk Ford plant closed in 2006.

As a pro-active measure to layoffs and plant closings, Opportunity Inc. often joins forces with other service providers such as the Virginia Employment Commission to engage in a Rapid Response where they coordinate services and provide immediate information and aid to companies and their affected workers. Opportunity Inc. participated in 15 such actions throughout the program year, reaching 2,400 employees.

Nearly 300 business and community leaders attended Opportunity Inc.'s State of the Workforce: 2010 event in June to help them better understand how regional demographic and workforce trends will affect Hampton Roads' businesses, organizations and communities. Dr. Ed Gordon, author of *Winning the Global Talent Showdown*, was the keynote speaker. Decision makers were presented information that compared Hampton Roads' workforce to the state's and nation's. Each attendee received a technical report, prepared by Chmura Economics and Analytics. To view the complete report, go to [www.opp-inc.org](http://www.opp-inc.org).

Through funding from the U.S. Department of Labor, Opportunity Inc. developed a world-class Workplace Readiness Skills curriculum to provide resource materials to support teaching employer-valued workplace skills to Virginia high school students. It also partnered with the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) to create a national workplace readiness skills certification test.



State of the Workforce 2010

## Three-year SEVA-PORT grant helps boost economy, increase high-paying jobs throughout the region

In July 2007, the U.S. Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration awarded a three-year, \$5 million Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant to help local Workforce Investment Boards reposition the economy of Southeastern Virginia. The regional grant, officially named the Southeastern Virginia Partnership for Regional Transformation (SEVA-PORT), was managed by Opportunity Inc. in Norfolk, with support from the Peninsula Council for Workforce Development in Newport News and Crater Regional Workforce Investment Group in Petersburg, until it ended June 30, 2010.

The WIRED grants, awarded to 39 regions across the country, were designed to integrate economic and workforce development activities by bringing together state, local and federal entities with area businesses and industries, community and civic organizations, and academic establishments from grade schools to institutions of higher learning. More than 50 such groups participated in SEVA-PORT activities which aimed to diversify and expand the economy, increase higher-paying job opportunities and reduce the area's dependence on military spending.

SEVA-PORT's specific mission was to integrate, enhance and help link the emerging industry of Modeling and Simulation (M&S) with the expanding port-related industries of Transportation, Warehousing and Distribution (TWD). To accomplish this task, Opportunity Inc. implemented a two-prong approach that strengthened the talent pipeline by developing the skills and talent of dislocated workers and untapped labor pools, and supporting small business development.

At the high school level, the SEVA-PORT initiative helped expand the M&S talent pipeline through a new curriculum for seniors. Teachers and school counselors received specialized training related to M&S and TWD careers. A variety of technology-based summer camps and after-school programs for high school students were held at community colleges and Old Dominion University.

The community colleges of Tidewater, Thomas Nelson, Paul D. Camp, John Tyler and Southside Virginia now offer an associate's degree and certificate programs in M&S and logistics and have expanded their regional truck driving programs. Grant funds also were used to expand lab facilities with state-of-the-art software and hardware.

SEVA-PORT resources in existing One-Stop Centers provided students, dislocated workers and others with information on M&S and TWD programs. Tuition assistance was available to individuals interested in certificate and degree programs in these fields. SEVA-PORT funds also were used to increase employee access to training and proficiency in these new and emerging technologies.



Logistics Industry Tour



Summer Technology Camp



## One-Stop system sees influx of users

### Workforce centers attract record numbers

This past year, almost 11,000 individuals made a total of 56,000 visits to Opportunity Inc.'s One-Stop Workforce Centers. This was nearly double the volume experienced during the prior year.

The centers offer local area residents job seeking and keeping skills workshops, as well as up-to-date information on labor-market demands, training programs and financial aid. To help with job searches, the centers feature computers equipped with Internet access and other helpful tools. Assessment services and unemployment insurance benefits are also available to jobseekers.

The One-Stop system partners with the Virginia Employment Commission, local public schools, rehabilitative services, AARP, The Stop Organization, the Educational Opportunity Center, local housing authorities, community colleges and local human services departments.

### Training services also on the rise

The centers provided funding to train 1,437 individuals. This increased capacity was made possible through additional stimulus funds and nearly two-thirds of the program participants netted jobs that paid an average \$14.14 an hour.

The majority of the participants (52 percent) were trained in the allied health fields, while 10 percent received training in information technology. The table at the right shows the overall breakdown by categories.

### Share network locations approach 30

In an effort to expand its reach into the community, Opportunity Inc. has been working with city libraries and faith-based organizations to develop additional sites to access workforce development services.

Currently there are 29 active Share Network Access Points (SNAP) sites operated by public libraries and neighborhood community centers within Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach.

Under the initiative, local venues help connect jobseekers with employment services. Staff members are trained by One-Stop Development Center personnel. Individuals in need of more extensive services are referred to the centers.

Efforts are continuously under way to identify new partners and expand the initiative to other areas.

TRAINING CATEGORIES	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS
Medical	749 52%
Information Technology	137 10%
Transportation/ Logistics	114 8%
Personal Services	86 6%
Construction/ Maintenance	79 5%
Business	74 5%
Manufacturing	69 5%
Education	41 3%
Automotive	20 1%
Other Various	68 5%

#### **OppInc. One-Stop Workforce Center**

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#### **Regional Workforce Development Center**

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#### **Suffolk Workforce Development Center**

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# Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board

2009-2010

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2009-2010

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**Youth  
Career**  
CENTER OF HAMPTON ROADS

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