

SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER

Inaugural Issue of the Southeastern Virginia Regional Workforce Collaborative



First Regional Executive Leadership Meetings

Collaboration has been at the forefront of workforce stakeholders to create meaningful employment opportunities and provide comprehensive services for existing and prospective employers. On September 26, 2018, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council and the Greater Peninsula Workforce Board signed a Regional Resolution supporting the Southeastern Virginia Regional Workforce Collaborative—making the first step toward a more integrated, holistic regional workforce system.

The first Regional Executive Committee Meeting took place on February 20 at Tidewater Community College – Center for Workforce Solutions. Shawn Avery, President and CEO, Workforce Council, and William Mann Jr., Executive Director, Greater Peninsula Workforce Board, shared insight on how this newly formed partnership will help to address the needs of area employers and job seekers in the region.

The first Regional Board Meeting took place on March 28, 2019 at Hampton University. Presenters included former Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell, Megan Healy, Chief Workforce Development Adviser for Governor Ralph Northam, and Duane Poe, Director of Workforce Development and Career Pathways University College at Hampton University who offered remarks to a full room of elected officials, board members, and business and education leaders in the region.



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIRS



Delceno Miles
Board Chair
Hampton Roads Workforce Council

Greetings!

We are pleased to present this inaugural issue of the Southeastern Virginia Regional Workforce Collaborative – a newly formed partnership of the Hampton Roads Workforce Council and Greater Peninsula Workforce Board. For several years, regionalism has been a hot-button topic in Hampton Roads—particularly for workforce development stakeholders. We realize the value in creating greater synergy across various businesses and industries on the Southside and the Peninsula; and believe this joint initiative sets the tone for the region on how we can better leverage shared resources to build a more vibrant economy. This partnership is a game-changer for the delivery of workforce services to our multiple stakeholders throughout the region that most employers view as one marketplace.



John Olson, Ed.D.
Board Chair
Greater Peninsula Workforce Board

With the Commonwealth's recent launch of a unified workforce system, —rebranded as Virginia Career Works—we identified a unique opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to our regional workforce system. This trend-setting collaboration provides a unified resource to our business community.

As you will read in this issue and those forthcoming, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council and Greater Peninsula Workforce Board provide programs and services designed to assist employers and job seekers. This strategic regional approach to workforce development will enable us to more effectively implement business engagement strategies, continuous communication and outreach efforts, program development and support, provisions of labor market intelligence, veteran transition support and services, and emerging workforce initiatives to keep pace with new technologies and career pathways.

The Hampton Roads Community Foundation Awards \$143,000 Grant to Support Workforce Development Efforts

The Hampton Roads Community Foundation awarded a \$143,000 grant to the Hampton Roads Workforce Council, Greater Peninsula Workforce Board, and Reinvent Hampton Roads in support of the Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy – a project designed to help develop the next generation workforce.



Creating JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

The Hampton Roads Workforce Council and the Greater Peninsula Workforce Board collaborate to provide \$150,000 to support training activities for the America Builds and Repairs Great Ships project – an initiative designed to fill future jobs in the maritime-related industry.

MEET *Karen*

Karen Pitman visited the Virginia Career Works Hampton Center in May of 2018 facing barriers to gain employment. A single mom, recently separated, with three teenage daughters, Karen had been a stay-at-home parent for the past seventeen years with little professional work experience and received rejections from employers.

Karen requested enrollment into the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program and was advised to apply for an Ability One position with Versability Resources, Inc., because of her documented disability. She was hired full-time with benefits in July of 2018 and by August she received great reviews on her work. Karen completed 740 hours of OJT on December 10, 2018 and looks forward to the upwardly mobile opportunities available through her new employer.



MEET *Antonio*

A dislocated worker and Navy Veteran, Antonio Romo visited Virginia Career Works Norfolk Center and the Hampton Roads Veteran's Employment Center to receive training services to enter a new career field after being laid off from his company of more than 12 years. Antonio utilized the services available, such as employment skill enhancement workshops and resources provided through the Virginia Financial Success Network. He credits the staff for helping him to secure the necessary training to obtain required certifications, which ultimately resulted in him finding new employment with Aerotek. Congratulations, Antonio!



Project Homeless Connect 25

On January 23, Mayor Kenny Alexander (Norfolk) kicked off Project Homeless Connect 25 — a program that provides resources and support services to homeless or nearly homeless individuals and families. Through this initiative, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council connected with nearly 100 people, half of which were Veterans.



Hampton Roads Workforce Council receives GO Virginia Grant

On March 13, Governor Ralph Northam announced more than \$6.7 million in Growth and Opportunity for Virginia (GO Virginia) funding for seven regional projects to support entrepreneurship, workforce, and talent-development initiatives. The Hampton Roads Workforce Council was awarded \$99,705 in enhanced capacity building funds to help build the Hampton Roads Coalition for Talent Development with the goal of advancing economic growth for businesses and prosperity for the residents of Hampton Roads.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE EMERGING WORKFORCE

NEXTGEN OPPORTUNITY FAIR

In partnership with the City of Chesapeake, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council hosted the 8th Annual NextGen Opportunity Fair on March 7 at the Chesapeake Conference Center. With ninety-five vendors in attendance, hundreds of youth and young adults – ages 14-24 – gained access to several employment, volunteer and post-secondary opportunities in the region. The Workforce Council will also host the Fall NextGen Opportunity Fair on August 7.



"By [attending the NextGen Opportunity Fair], I was able to meet a lot of employers in a concentrated area and got to talk to a lot of people, learn a lot and get information, and hopefully I just got a job!"
-Oskar, Student

YOUTH CAREER EXPO



The 11th Annual Youth Career Expo was held on March 21, 2019. This event, in partnership with the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce (VPCC) and the Six Greater Peninsula School divisions, took place at the Hampton Roads Convention in Hampton. More than 1,500 students registered to attend from the Six Greater Peninsula School divisions, which included New Horizons Regional Education Centers, Rivermont School-Hampton, Franklin High School, and Rappahannock High School. In addition, more than 75 vendors shared insight with students who were able to engage with employers about future careers, participate in mock interviews and financial literacy games sponsored by BayPort Credit Union, and attend workshops — "Workplace Etiquette" hosted by 4-H and "Communications" hosted by Alternatives.

STAFF UPDATES

CONGRATULATIONS to Christine Rogan on her retirement after 26 years of service as the Work-Based Training Coordinator for Virginia Career Works-Greater Peninsula Region. We wish her all the best!

CONGRATULATIONS to Diana Cordero on her recent promotion as the new Business Services Coordinator for Virginia Career Works-Greater Peninsula Region.

CONGRATULATIONS to Amy Rodriguez on her new position as the Career Developer for the Hampton Roads Veteran's Employment Center.



Funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Equal Opportunity Employer/Program (Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.)