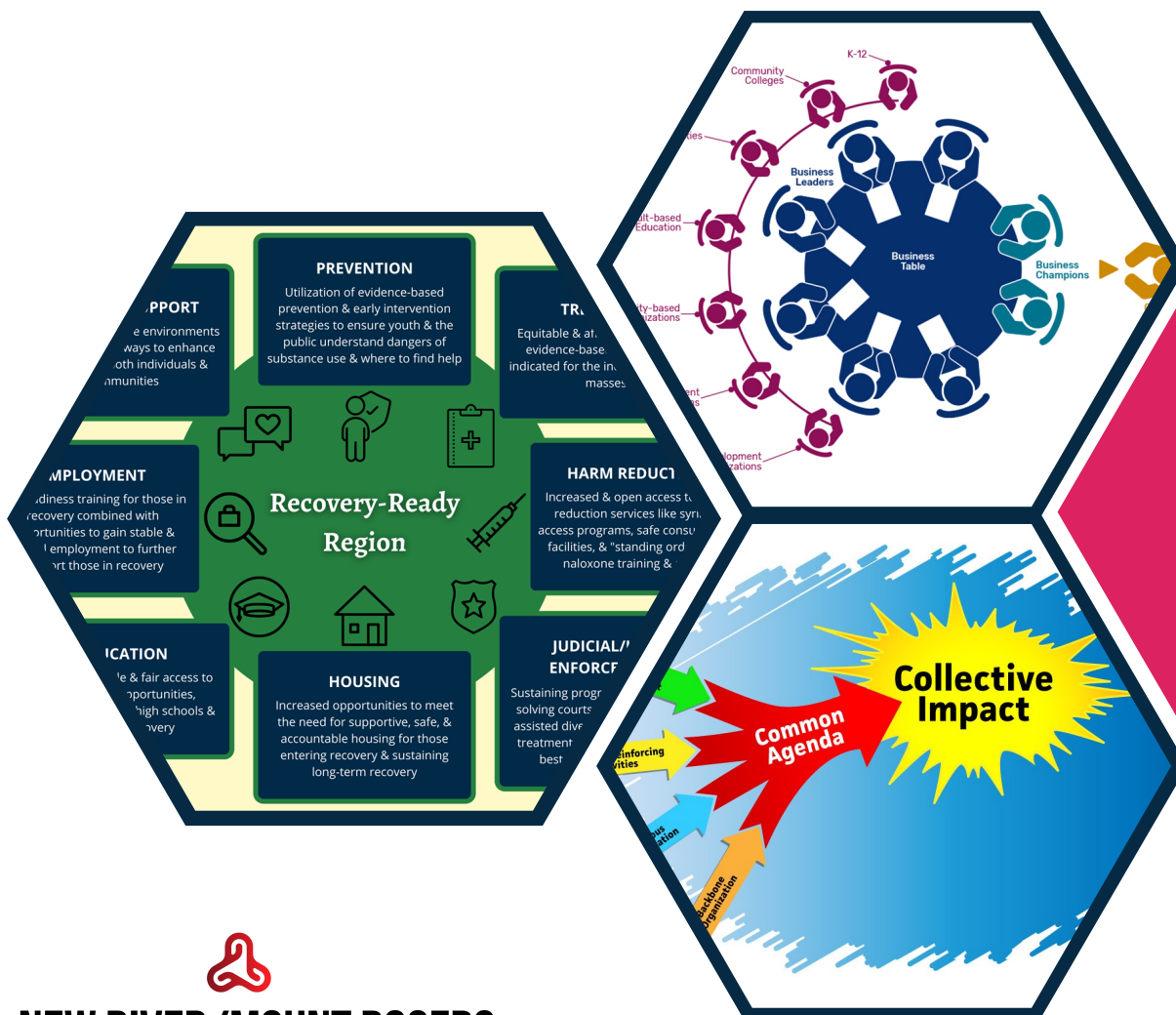


PY23

Annual Report



**NEW RIVER/MOUNT ROGERS
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**
CULTIVATING TALENT FOR THE REGION



**NEW RIVER/MOUNT ROGERS WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT AREA CONSORTIUM BOARD**
CULTIVATING TALENT FOR THE REGION



**NEW RIVER/MOUNT ROGERS
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**
CHANGING LIVES THROUGH THE POWER OF WORK



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About Us



The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Area Consortium Board

consist of the chief elected official or the chief administrative officer from each of the local governments comprising the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area (NR/MR WDA), which is a 13-jurisdiction area including the counties of Bland, Carroll, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Montgomery, Pulaski, Smyth, Washington and Wythe and the cities of Bristol, Galax and Radford. The Consortium Board serves as the policy board for the Area which includes making appointments to the Workforce Development Board.

The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (WDB) is made up of representatives from regional businesses (51%) and federally required members (e.g. Economic Development, Education, Labor, Community Organizations and more). The WDB oversees the programs and initiatives as specified in the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (which include programs for Adults, Youth and Dislocated Workers) and other special grants and programs as available.

The WDB is the designated convener for the region's workforce system (in order to have a seamless interface with the business community and economic development entities). The Workforce System includes (but is not limited to):

- K-12 Education systems
- Post-Secondary Education/Training providers
- Adult Education
- Training/Employment Programs offered for special populations
 - oVeterans
 - oUnemployed and/or underemployed
 - oOlder Workers
 - oWorkers with disabilities
 - oEconomically disadvantaged
 - oYouth (ages 14-24)

The New River/Mount Rogers Foundation (Foundation) supports the work of the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (WDB) and the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Consortium Board (CB). The Foundation focuses its attention on meeting the needs of the jobseekers served by the WDB & CB programs that are fostering their prosperity through occupational skills training, personal development opportunities, and wraparound supportive services to maximize their employment success. [Click here to learn more.](#)



Vision And Mission

Vision

The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Boards envision a region where every business has access to a qualified, job-ready workforce and every citizen in the region has the skills needed to secure meaningful, sustainable employment, competitive wages, and career advancement through an integrated workforce support infrastructure.

Mission

The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Boards support the region's economy through a collaborative approach to meeting needs of businesses and job seekers that is flexible and adaptable to the changing economic ecosystem.



Supporting Regional Economic Growth and Vitality

The NR/MR WDB continues to lead the region in developing a workforce system that is agile and flexible, enabling the system to adjust and/or respond to economic disturbances and shifts by leveraging and braiding the various Federal, State and local funds that come to the region to serve both businesses and job seekers. During PY'22, the NR/MR WDB used the following projects to support this systemic change even through the unusual conditions that were created by the Pandemic:

Business Solutions

As the region's designated Workforce System Convener, the WDB provides businesses easy access to solutions to meet workforce needs without having to navigate the bureaucracy of dozens of program providers. Click [Business Solutions](#) for more information.

Besides acting as a central point of contact for businesses seeking specific assistance, the NR/MR WDB oversees and staffs four (4) regional Business Solution Units (BSU) that are made up of workforce, economic development and business membership organizations. The WDB believes that services to the region's businesses should serve the widest possible range of businesses, be individualized and efficient with a single point of contact wherever possible (or a "no wrong door" approach). It is also our intent to share information about what services we are currently providing to businesses with partner agencies to avoid unnecessary duplication, including initial assessment and discovery, service plans, service coordination, outcome and follow-up information. In order to mount this collaborative effort, the BSU members offer cross training in one another's services so that we are able to provide more seamless referrals for needed services as well as being able to speak to the many services available, regardless of what agency may 'own' these services. Even during the pandemic, the WDB served the region's businesses through:

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Job Fairs/Recruiting Events

- **7** Multi-company events with **178** companies participating and over **700** jobseekers attending.
- Assisted **5** companies to host company-specific ..

Workshops:

- Hosted 2 “5G@Work Revisited” Workshops for Businesses with **73** attendees
- Hosted the first “Business Success Symposium” with 12 Resource Partners having booths, 10 breakout sessions and business networking. **118** were in attendance.
- Hosted **4** “Train the Trainer: Employability Skills” Workshops for Partners with **80** attendees
- Hosted **6** Workforce Exchange Events
- Hosted **3** Facility Tour for Partners

Incumbent Worker Training Projects:

- **15** Projects supporting **65** workers with **\$27,000** in reimbursements to **11** companies.

Business Services:

- Provided **686** services
- Provided services to **324** companies
- Provided multiple services to **84** companies



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Programs (WIOA)

The Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, are designed to provide quality employment and training services to assist eligible individuals in finding and qualifying for meaningful employment, and to help businesses find the skilled workers they need to compete and succeed in the marketplace.

Dislocated Workers

- Individuals that Received Individualized Career Services: 83
- Number in Training: 36
- Placement Rate of those exited: 91.6%
- Avg. Wage at Placement: \$ 22.44

Adult Program

- Individuals that Received Individualized Career Services: 202
- Number in Training: 147
- Placement Rate of those exited: 85.3%
- Avg. Wage at Placement: \$ 18.51

The Youth Program, under Title 1 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 is a comprehensive youth employment program for serving eligible youth, ages 14-24, who face barriers to education, training, and employment and enabling the youth to begin their journey along a meaningful career path.

Youth Program

- Individuals that Received Individualized Career Services: 181
- Attained a credential: 53
- Received Training: 111
- Placement Rate of those exited: 77.4%

Each year as part of youth career exploration camp People Inc, the WDB and Wytheville Community College partner to bring a variety of career options to life for the WIOA youth. Click [here](#) to see a video and learn more.



Pathways to a Strong and Healthy Region

Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER)

January 2021-December 2024



As we near the end of this project, we have successfully accomplished our goals of improving coordination between the economic and workforce development sectors and healthcare and human service sectors to tackle substance use disorder as well as creating continuity among support services to sustain long-term recovery for individuals and scale efforts to benefit the individual and family, business and industry, and the region as a whole. We have helped many individuals who struggle with substances by helping them gain industry credentials that lead to quality employment.

In partnership with the Virginia Rural Health Association, we have developed a plan to become a Recovery-Ready Region.

A Recovery Ready Region is essential in the collective efforts to combat the challenges posed by addiction, focusing on providing comprehensive support to individuals in recovery or seeking recovery support and returning to work.



Visit our [website](#) to hear Denise's journey to recovery and the help and support she received through the WIOA, WORC and POWER programs.

Outcomes to Date:

- 144 individuals in recovery completed training to become a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist. 141 earned certifications, and 104 gained employment.
- 130 individuals in recovery completed training in an in-demand occupational sector. 87 earned certifications and gained employment.
- 173 individuals in recovery seeking employment services were connected to employment.
- 42 health/human practitioners earned specialized credentials to support individuals with substance use disorder.
- 66 businesses have become Second Chance Employers.



Build Your Career - YouthBuild

**U.S. Department of Labor
July 2021-October 2025**



YouthBuild is nearing its end of active programming. While this project was very challenging for us initially, we are pleased to have finally found our way through. YouthBuild targets disadvantaged and low-income youth between the ages of 16 and 24, most of whom are secondary school dropouts and are either a member of a low-income family, a foster care youth, a youth who is homeless, an offender, a youth with a disability, a child of an incarcerated parent, or a migrant youth. In

YouthBuild, participants earn a GED® or high school diploma as well as industry credentials in construction, healthcare, or manufacturing. They also receive leadership skills and participate in community service to learn to give back to the community.



Amber

When Amber reached out to the NRMW Workforce Development Board, she was facing several obstacles in her life. She did not have stable housing and was unsure what to do to improve her situation. In addition, she had no idea what she wanted to do with her life. She began working with the YouthBuild and the WIOA Youth programs and admits she didn't really want to follow through with either program. However staff were so helpful, and she kept following through on everything they had asked of her. After taking a career assessment, Amber states, "They just gave me options, and one of the best was the CNA training." At

the beginning, Amber acknowledges, there were good days and bad, but staff were "there for you no matter what." While CNA training wasn't exactly what she thought she wanted to do, she decided to try it and ended up liking it. She participated in training at Warm Hearth Village in Blacksburg through the Healthcare Academy of Southwest Virginia. After some obstacles to work through with the Virginia Board of Nursing, Amber was able to obtain her CNA license. There were times she didn't think she would ever get her license but received encouragement and support from her instructor and the workforce staff to follow this plan through to the end.

Now that Amber is a certified nursing assistant and is employed at the Pulaski Health and Rehabilitation Center, she states that it is her supervisor, co-workers, and the residents that make every day worth it. She has found a supportive and caring workplace that encourages her to keep going every day. This

experience has made her realize that she wants to take the next step in her Career and possibly pursue LPN or RN training. As she looks back now, Amber states that she started “way at the bottom” where “everything was just hard.” She became homeless but staff were “right there with [her].” She further states that she “honestly didn’t think [she] was going to get through all of it,” but she surprised herself. “You’ve got to give yourself a little bit of credit,” Amber said, “And yeah, I was trying too. I wanted to do something better. And it got better. There are people who actually believe in you when you don’t believe in yourself.” Amber is a true success, overcoming numerous obstacles to make a better life for herself. She sees that she got a job where she can “actually make a difference,” and that is very rewarding to her. We are all very proud of Amber.

YouthBuild students also helped to build Habitat for Humanity homes in Floyd and Pulaski counties and learned a great deal under the direction of Habitat staff.



Program Outcomes to Date:

- 93 participants enrolled. 68 dropouts (lack secondary credential); 25 low-skilled youth with barriers to employment.
- 59 participants accomplished a measurable skills gain and completed occupational training.
- 52 participants earned an Industry Recognized Credential.
- 56 participants obtained employment.

In July, we were awarded a second YouthBuild grant to serve 66 at-risk youth during 2024 to 2026.



Public Health Professionals Program

Human Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

July 2022-July 2025

(Subrecipient of VRHA)



Our HRSA project addresses the ongoing critical need in healthcare facilities for trained public health professionals serving rural communities in Virginia. We aim to provide job development, training, and placement in community health fields for rural community members.



Alysha

I am a single mother of five children. In January, I started the Phlebotomy training with Pathway Medical Institute and graduated in March. I am now employed as a Phlebotomist at Quest Diagnostics in Christiansburg and I'm loving every minute of it. I do plan to further my education to keep growing in the medical field. The NR/MR Workforce Development Board helped me a lot. Without them, I would not have been able to complete this training and get this job to support myself and my children.

Program Outcomes to Date:

- 131 participants enrolled.
- 45 participants completed occupational training.
- 40 participants earned an Industry Recognized Credential.
- 36 participants obtained employment.



Pathways to New Beginnings

Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) U.S. Department of Labor and the Appalachian Regional Commission

September 2022-September 2025



WORC seeks to address systemic and programmatic barriers for 180 recovering and justice-involved citizens, by coordinating innovative training and business services, providing access to employment opportunities, and aligning workforce and economic development strategies and activities in our region. Training and credentialing focuses on in-demand occupations in the targeted industries of Construction, Manufacturing, and Healthcare resulting in the expressed competencies and credentials needed and valued by businesses.



Chris

I am 35 years old, and for the first time in my life I feel a sense of pride in myself. This is because of the help and support I received from this program after I was released from prison. I feel as if I have been given a new start at life. Since being released from prison in August of 2023, it has been very difficult to get to where I am. I came out with nothing but the clothes on my back which didn't even fit. I could not walk in Walmart and buy a pair of pants due to anxiety. Everything around me was new and different. Thanks to this program I have been given a chance! I was able to go into a training that gave me confidence in my skills. I was able to do a work experience and earn money until I could adjust to being back in the real world. I received

help getting my teeth fixed so that I had the self-confidence I needed. Now I have a job that I enjoy and am proud of, and I can earn enough money that I don't have to turn back down the wrong path.

Learn more by visiting our [website](#) to hear how we worked with partners and leveraged the WORC grant with others to help our clients become gainfully employed. Kent participated in several of our programs and talks about his experience transitioning into employment. He was referred by Virginia Works and participated in the Advanced Manufacturing Technician training through the Center for Manufacturing Excellence of SWVA. After training, he worked with board staff for assistance in securing gainful employment.

Program Outcomes to Date:

- 142 participants enrolled.
- 118 participants completed occupational training and earned an Industry Recognized Credential.
- 99 participants obtained employment.



Governor's Set Aside Funds under WIOA Title I Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Programs



Ready SWVA: October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2024

Ready SWVA project is a pilot project covering 21 localities.

The goal of this project is to Strengthen the early childhood education system in SWVA by:

1. Expanding supply of affordable, quality childcare
2. Build the workforce of early childhood educators
3. Retain the young workforce by building a connecting them to jobs in the area
4. Providing back-office support to operating child care programs

Program Outcomes:

- 147 New Teachers Placed
- 91 Centers Participating in the Shared Alliance
- 266 Students Enrolled in Early Childhood Education
- 78 Completed Training



Workforce Innovations: November 2022-March 2024

We are pleased that we exceeded all outcomes for this project that closed earlier this year. Its intent was to offer an innovative solution and activities to address our worker shortage and provide businesses with the skilled workers they need, ultimately helping people with barriers obtain employment in a career pathway that offers competitive wages with opportunities for growth and advancement.

Program Outcomes:

- 55 participants enrolled.
- 55 participants completed occupational training.
- 42 participants earned an Industry Recognized Credential.
- 43 participants obtained employment.

**Three new projects this year
June 26, 2023 - September 30, 2024**

Soft Skills Training: Addresses the skills needs explicitly stated by the business community by assisting 50 participants in gaining valuable soft skills toward employment entry or retention. Foundational training and work experience is being offered to participants.

Program Outcomes to Date:

- 50 participants enrolled.
- 40 participants completed occupational training.
- 40 participants earned an Industry Recognized Credential.
- 36 participants obtained employment.

Technical Skills Training: aims to supply skilled workers to manufacturing businesses and healthcare establishments who need in-demand jobs filled to sustain operations and potentially grow.

Program Outcomes to Date:

- 39 participants enrolled.
- 29 participants completed occupational training.
- 24 participants earned an Industry Recognized Credential.
- 24 participants obtained employment.

Supplemental Training Grant: (1) Offer HBI training in the community to jobseekers interested in employment in a skilled trade as well as behind the walls at a correctional institution in our region to inmates due to be released in six months who are interested in the skilled trades; (2) Provide training to our lead construction trainer to obtain HBI certifications in Carpentry, Building Construction Technology, Brick Masonry, Electrical, HVAC Plumbing, Weatherization, Solar Installation, Landscaping, and Painting; (3) Grow our skilled trades employer base for expanded work-based learning, a critical component of the HBI training programs, and employment opportunities; and (4) develop/modify an entrepreneurial training program for participants interested in self-employment.

Program Outcomes to Date:

- 27 participants enrolled.
- 18 participants completed occupational training.
- 18 participants earned an Industry Recognized Credential.
- 16 participants obtained employment.



Filling the Trades Gap

CONGRESSIONAL



GRANTS

**U.S. Department of Labor
December 2023-November 2025**



The focus of our Community Project is to provide activities and services to address workforce challenges in the region. We will (1) engage in sector strategies to identify industry trends and needs, education development, training or other strategies, and the implementation and coordination of services; (2) coordinate or provide sector-based training programs targeting disadvantaged populations with barriers to employment; (3) develop our capacity and efficiencies; and (4) further develop the workforce system and its partners.

Program Outcomes to Date:

- 83 participants enrolled.
- 28 participants completed occupational training.
- 17 participants earned an Industry Recognized Credential.
- 13 participants obtained employment.
- 3 Sector Partnerships Convened (Construction/Skilled Trades, Healthcare and Manufacturing)

Sector Partnerships

As part of this project three [Sector Partnerships](#) are being convened by the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (on a monthly meeting basis) in Construction/Skilled Trades, Healthcare and Manufacturing.

Sector partnerships are partnerships of companies, from the same industry, with education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations that focus on key issues related to the target industry in their natural labor market region.

They are employer-driven; they are regional; they are convened by a credible third-party; they act as a coordinating body across multiple education, workforce development, economic development and other programs; they create highly customized responses to a target industry's needs, and therefore highly accurate.

Promoting the Trades Industries: In collaboration with partner, People Incorporated, we worked to promote the skilled trades industries. Rural LISC funded the project. Click on the links to visit our website and hear from participants and partners about these critical industries in our region.

[Manufacturing](#)

[Healthcare](#)

[Construction](#)

Leveraging our Resources

Leveraging POWER, WORC, and the Supplemental grants, we began offering at Bland Correctional Center pre- and post-release services. During pre-release, we provide Home Builders Institute's Pre-Apprenticeship Certification Training. Once released, we assist with reintegration into society by providing supportive services and assistance with employment. To date, we have successfully graduated four cohorts, serving 74 individuals. All participants earned a credential. 36 have been released, and 24 are gainfully employed with an average wage of \$18.75 per hour.



Virtual Reality has provided an excellent opportunity for our incarcerated participants to practice their vocational skills while also enhancing their digital skills. Participants have noted how much they appreciate the virtual reality experience. During the last commencement ceremony, one participant addressing his classmates noted about the virtual reality that at first he was hesitant because the last technology he used was Nintendo, and he didn't want to make a fool of himself. He then went on to say, "I am a very hands on and visual learner. So what this platform allowed me to do was see, identify, and learn how to properly use different tools without actually having my hands on them. It also permitted me to develop situational awareness without physically being present at some of the sites and locations used in the training. The virtual aspect of the class gave it a very tangible feel, and I think that because of that, I'll be able to retain the knowledge I've gained."

Visit our [website](#) to learn more about this program and hear former Warden Rodney Younce and Workforce Services Coordinator Tim Williams talk about our partnership.

Visit our [website](#) to hear Timothy's story about his journey from prison back to society and his appreciation of the WORC grant and the HBI PACT program.

What's Next?

Pathway Home



In collaboration with Total Action for Progress, we are offering a Pathway Home program to help individuals incarcerated in our jails and prisons in having a successful reintegration.

Aiming to eliminate the time gap

between release from incarceration and enrollment into a reentry employment program, Pathway Home is a job-driven program that builds connections to local businesses that enables transitioning participants to secure employment. Pre-release services begin between 20 to 180 days from participants' scheduled release dates in preparation for returning to their communities. Pre-release services include needs assessment, individual development plans, comprehensive case management, career exploration and planning, job preparation, legal assistance, counseling, and assistance with linking inmates to the social services required to help them transition back to their communities. Post-release activities include linking participants to employers (including apprenticeship opportunities), external service providers, skill-building services, occupational training in-demand industries, industry-recognized credentials, career services, supportive and follow-up services.



Contact Us



More information about our area, boards and programs can be found on our website at <http://www.VCWNewRiverMtRogers.com>.

Follow us on:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NRMRWIB>

LinkedIn: <https://linkedin.com/company/virginia-career-works-newriver-mountrogers>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/New-RiverMount-Rogers-Workforce-Development-Board-105788432136587>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nrmrworkforcenetwork> (The Regional Workforce System)

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