



NEW RIVER/MOUNT ROGERS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA CONSORTIUM BOARD

CULTIVATING TALENT FOR THE REGION

MEETING AGENDA

March 18, 2026

I. Call to Order – Chair Mary Biggs

II. Moment of Reflection/Pledge of Allegiance - Chair Biggs

III. Roll Call

IV. Approval to allow remote members to vote (only if a quorum is in the room)

*V. Consent Agenda

- Approval December 3, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- Operational Summary
- Financials

VI. Public Comment Period

VII. Election of Officers

VIII. Workforce Development Board Update – Chair Mike Miller

IX. Executive Summary – Jenny Bolte

X. Informational Items – Workforce System Updates

- One-Stop & Program Operator Report – Beth Carico
- Board Discretionary Grants Report – Angi Chandler
- Business Solutions Team Report – Kimber Simmons
- Special Projects Report – Marty Holliday
- Foundation Report – Marty Holliday

XI. Consortium Board Member Time

XII. Next Meeting – May 20, 2026, Joint Meeting, Wytheville Meeting Center, Lunch Provided

XIII. Miscellaneous

- Travel Reimbursement
- 2026 Consortium Board Meeting Schedule

XIII. Adjournment - Chair Biggs

**Requires Action of the Consortium Board*

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Joint Boards Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Miller and Chair Biggs, respectively, called to order the Joint meeting of the NRMW Workforce Development Board, the Consortium Board and the Workforce Development Foundation at 10:06 am on December 3, 2025 in person at the Wytheville Meeting Center and online via Zoom.

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

Chair Biggs lead the Boards in the Pledge of Allegiance and in a moment of reflection.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Renee Sturgill conducted roll call. The following persons were present and online, a quorum was present:

Consortium Board

Montgomery – Chair Mary Biggs
Bland – Cameron Burton
Galax – Sharon Ritchie
Giles – Perry Martin (Virtual)
Pulaski – Laura Walters
Smyth – Shawn Utt (Alt)
Washington – Charlie Hargis
Wythe – Brian Vaught

Workforce Board

Chair Michael Miller
Christi Altizer (Virtual)
Thad Austin
Ginny Ayers (Virtual)
Katie Boswell (Virtual)
Vicky Collins
Kelly Debusk
Jeff Dunnack
Jennifer McKenzie (Alt)
Patricia Dover-Bedwell (Alt)
Kim Hernandez
Mary Anne Halbrook
Jake Leonard
Christy Lowe
John Overton
Bryan Phipps
Cindy Robertson
Jay Williams (Virtual)
Larry Wyatt

Foundation

Chair Michael Miller
Laura Walters
Vicky Collins
Thad Austin
Jeff Dunnack
Mary Biggs
Cameron Burton

Staff

Jenny Bolte
Marty Holliday
Angi Chandler
Kathy Pickel
Renee Sturgill
Denise Lee
Sherri Hanshew
John Lowrey
Bam Felger
Marjorie Martin
Kimber Simmons

Guest

Logan Lorenzo
Patricia Bevil
Lisa Reedy
Leta Bradley
Beth Carico
Dominique Reeves
Victoria Beckner
Emily Linkas
Jennifer Claytor
Renee Moore Slayton
Allison Slayton
Karen Rhodes
Joyce McGuire
Robyn Crockett
Jennifer Houston
Linda Batchelor
Kimberly Keith
Brinda Rigney
Phyllis Conner
Laura Venable
Linda Nuckolls
Kim Catton
Paula Byrd
Rebecca Haynes
Kimberly McIvor
Fabian Garcia
Blane Clark

APPROVAL TO ALLOW MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE REMOTELY

Ms. Vicky Collins made the motion to allow members attending virtually to vote, Mr. John Overton seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Cameron Burton made the motion to approve the Agenda, Mr. Thad Austin seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- Consortium Board Consent Agenda
Ms. Laura Walters made the motion to approve the Consortium Board Consent Agenda, including approval of the September 17, 2025 meeting minutes and the Financial Summary. Mr. Charlie Hargis seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by all those in attendance.
- Workforce Development Board Consent Agenda
Ms. Vicky Collins made the motion to approve the Workforce Development Board Consent Agenda, including approval of the October 22, 2025 meeting minutes and the Operational Summary. Ms. Kim Hernandez seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by all those in attendance.
- Workforce Development Foundation Consent Agenda
Mr. Thad Austin made the motion to approve the Workforce Development Foundation Consent Agenda, including approval of the September 8, 2025 meeting minutes and the Foundation Report. Ms. Vicky Collins seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

PY25 BUDGET UPDATE

Executive Director Jenny Bolte reviewed the PY25 Budget Update.

- Workforce Development Board
Ms. Vicky Collins made the motion to approve the PY25 Budget Update and to recommend the budget to the Consortium Board. Ms. Mary Anne Halbrook seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by all those in attendance.
- Consortium Board
Mr. Cameron Burton made the motion to approve the PY25 Budget Update as recommended by the Workforce Development Board. Ms. Laura Walters seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

PY25 CONTRACT MODIFICATION

- Workforce Development Board
Mr. John Overton made the motion to approve the PY25 Contract Modification. Mr. Thad Austin seconded the motion. Mr. Bryan Phipps abstained. The motion was passed by all other members in attendance.
- Consortium Board:
Ms. Sharon Ritchie made the motion to approve the PY25 Contract Modification. Mr. Cameron Burton seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

BOARD APPOINTMENT – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Ms. Vicky Collins nominated Mr. Jeff Dunnack for appointment. Mr. Thad Austin made the motion to appoint Mr. Jeff Dunnack, Ms. Kim Hernandez seconded the motion, and the appointment was approved unanimously by all those in attendance.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Director Jenny Bolte noted that her written report was included in the meeting packet and provided brief highlights on ongoing efforts to secure additional funding and participation in Appalachian Regional Commission leadership activities.

PROGRAM SUMMARIES

- WIOA Title I Programs – Beth Carico
Ms. Carico provided brief highlights from the One-Stop System and Operations reports.
- Board Discretionary Programs – Angi Chandler, Kathy Pickel, and Marty Holliday
Ms. Chandler provided a brief overview of discretionary programs. Ms. Holliday highlighted that the ARISE grant officially began on October 1.
- Business Services Team – Kimber Simmons
Ms. Simmons shared brief updates from the Business Services Team, including the Board's designation as an approved apprenticeship intermediary and upcoming Business Solutions Team meetings.

PARTNER REPORTS

- Adult Education – Patricia Dover-Bedwell (Alternate for Barry Yost)
Ms. Dover-Bedwell reported that two GED graduations are being held this week, with thirteen individuals completing GED requirements since July 1.
- Career & Technical Education – Summer Stone
No report.
- Community-Based Organizations – Mary Anne Halbrook, Bryan Phipps, Ginny Ayers
Ms. Halbrook had no report. Mr. Phipps reported that services remain intact. Ms. Ayers provided a virtual update from Literacy NRV, noting continued work with the YouthBuild program.

- Institute of Higher Education – Perry Hughes
No report.
- Economic & Community Development – Katie Boswell
Ms. Boswell provided a virtual update on Onward NRV.
- TANF Programs – Vicky Collins
Ms. Collins reported a 48-hour delay in SNAP benefit issuance with no guidance provided and noted that SNAP benefits are authorized through 2026.
- Title I Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Christi Altizer
Ms. Altizer reported virtually, highlighting adult career training efforts, credential attainment, services to high school students, and the need for apprenticeship and internship opportunities.
- Virginia Employment Services – Christy Lowe
Ms. Lowe reported that the Regional Director and Area Director were present.
- Job Corps
Vacant.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairs Mike Miller and Mary Biggs adjourned the meeting at 10:49 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kathy Pickel
Program Coordinator



NEW RIVER/MOUNT ROGERS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

CULTIVATING TALENT FOR THE REGION

WIOA Quarterly Monitoring Dashboard – PY25

Contractor: People Incorporated of Virginia

Reporting Period: 3rd Quarter Mid Quarter Report PY2025

I. Participant Enrollment & Demographics

Category	Target for PY25	Quarterly Actual (1/1-2/28)	Cumulative Total	Notes/Variance Explanation
Adult Participants	121	25	110	On Target
Dislocated Worker (DLW)	37	8	58	Met Target
Youth Participants	51	12	73	Met Target
% Served in Each Jurisdiction*	Equitable Access	See Attachment	See Attachment	
Individuals with Disabilities	25% of the total	2	31 (12.91%)	Behind on Target
Minority Participants	40% of the total	4	40 (16.66%)	Behind on Target
Out-of-School Youth	75% of youth	2	50 (83.33%)	On target

*Attach a breakdown of participant counts by jurisdiction.

II. Participant Outcomes

Adult:

Outcome Category	Goal	Quarterly Actual	Cumulative Total	Notes/Variance Explanation
Credential Attainment	78%	64.86% (24 of 37)	62.36% (56 of 87)	Below Target
Entered Unsubsidized Employment 2 nd Q after Exit	85%	70.00% (10 of 13)	88.57% (62 of 70)	On Target

Outcome Category	Goal	Quarterly Actual	Cumulative Total	Notes/Variance Explanation
Entered Unsubsidized Employment 4th Q after Exit	86.5%	80.85% (38 of 47)	80.56% (87 of 108)	Below target
Measurable Skills Gain	65%	46.47% (33 of 71)	46.47% (33 of 71)	Below Target

Dislocated Worker:

Credential Attainment	79.47%	33.33% (1 of 3)	77.78% (7 of 9)	Slightly below target
Entered Unsubsidized Employment 2 nd Q after Exit	82%	66.67% (8 of 9)	81.82% (18 of 22)	On target
Entered Unsubsidized Employment 4th Q after Exit	87.8%	90.00% (9 of 10)	84.78% (39 of 46)	Slightly below target
Measurable Skills Gain	65%	57.14% (12 of 21)	57.14% (12 of 21)	Below target

Youth:

Credential Attainment	60%	63.63% (21 of 27)	78.46% (51 of 65)	On target
Entered Unsubsidized Employment 2 nd Q after Exit	78.59%	72.72% (9 of 9)	79.63% (43 of 54)	On target
Entered Unsubsidized Employment 4th Q after Exit	80%	82.35% (28 of 34)	78.57% (66 of 84)	Slightly below target
Measurable Skills Gain	65%	30.00% (12 of 40)	30.00% (12 of 40)	Behind on Target

II. Strategic Innovations & Access

Area	Description of Activities This Quarter	Outcome/Impact
Digital Engagement Tools (e.g., Metrix, Conover)	Conover, NorthStar	Youth increase their work-readiness, and all participants enhance their digital skills for employment.
Employer Partnerships / Work-Based Learning	Provided to Kimber in the quarterly business services report	
Outreach Efforts	Outreach targeting Community College and public schools	People Inc. has been meeting with the community college workforce development departments – WCC, VHCC, and NRCC, and they have met with Adult Education. Additionally, People Inc. has been reaching out to curriculum/department heads regarding some of our in-demand occupations at community colleges and is beginning outreach/recruitment through public schools.
Cross-Partner Collaboration (e.g., referrals, co-enrollment)	Co-enrollment/partnerships	People Inc. has received an announcement that we will receive a SPARK Energy Grant – they will co-enroll WIOA youth with that grant once it is executed.

IV. Concerns/Technical Assistance Needs

Submitted by Clay Stein: *Clay Stein*

Reviewed by (NRMW WDB Program Manager): _____

Date of Review Meeting: _____

Jurisdiccional Count as of the End of February 2026

		Totals		Percentage
Bland County	Adult	4		
	Dislocated Worker	1	6	2.49%
	Youth	1		
Carrol County	Adult	14		
	Dislocated Worker	1	23	9.54%
	Youth	8		
Floyd County	Adult	3		
	Dislocated Worker	0	4	1.66%
	Youth	1		
Giles County	Adult	7		
	Dislocated Worker	0	12	4.98%
	Youth	5		
Grayson County	Adult	9		
	Dislocated Worker	0	12	4.98%
	Youth	3		
Montgomery County	Adult	5		
	Dislocated Worker	4	10	4.15%
	Youth	1		
Pulaski County	Adult	4		
	Dislocated Worker	11	16	6.64%
	Youth	1		
Smythe County	Adult	8		
	Dislocated Worker	7	30	12.45%
	Youth	15		
Washing ton County	Adult	14		
	Dislocated Worker	10	30	12.45%
	Youth	6		
Wythe County	Adult	10		
	Dislocated Worker	6	31	12.86%
	Youth	15		
City of Bristol	Adult	3		
	Dislocated Worker	6	11	4.56%
	Youth	2		
City of Galax	Adult	13		
	Dislocated Worker	1	22	9.13%
	Youth	8		
City of Radford	Adult	7		
	Dislocated Worker	4	15	6.22%
	Youth	4		
Other	Adult	9		
	Dislocated Worker	7	19	7.88%
	Youth	3		
			241	100.00%

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board
Financial Report
Reporting Period: January 31, 2026

WIOA Administration

PY25 (Year 1) Funds Available	\$ 102,408.19
PY24 (Year 2) Funds Available	\$ 0.00

WIOA Adult Program

PY25 (Year 1) Funds Available	\$ 319,891.01
PY24 (Year 2) Funds Available	\$ 0.00

WIOA Dislocated Worker

PY25 (Year 1) Funds Available	\$ 265,013.10
PY24 (Year 2) Funds Available	\$ 24,955.98

WIOA Youth

PY25 (Year 1) Funds Available	\$ 403,670.84
PY24 (Year 2) Funds Available	\$ 0.00

(In School and Out of School combined)

Ticket To Work

Funds Available to Date	\$ 48,735.75
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Local Support

Funds Available to Date	\$ 31,884.39
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Foundation

Funds Available to Date	\$ 94,269.37
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Executive Summary – January–March 2026

Jenny Bolte

Executive Director Overview

This report highlights major funding initiatives, strategic partnerships, and organizational improvements underway to strengthen the regional workforce system and expand employment pathways across Southwest Virginia. The Workforce Development Board continues to align employer needs, workforce training investments, and regional partnerships to support long-term economic stability for businesses, communities, and jobseekers.

STRATEGIC FUNDING PIPELINE

(Projects advancing toward funding decisions)

ARC Community Project – Skilled Trades Training Program

3-Year Project | \$300,000 | Proposed April 2026

Addresses labor shortages in healthcare, construction, and manufacturing while expanding access for justice-involved and underserved populations.

Outputs: 100 participants | 80 placements | 50 businesses engaged

Regional Impact: Expands the skilled trades workforce and increases access to family-sustaining wages.

ARC POWER – POWERing Pathways

3-Year Project | \$2,000,000 Request | \$1.7M Match | Proposed May 2026

Addresses workforce shortages in healthcare, manufacturing, skilled trades, and IT while removing structural barriers to employment.

Outputs: 450 participants | 360 credentials | 338 placements | 75 employers engaged

Regional Impact: Accelerates economic diversification beyond coal and strengthens long-term regional resilience.

FUNDING REQUESTS SUBMITTED

(Completed proposals awaiting decisions)

U.S. Department of Labor – YouthBuild 2025

40-Month Project | \$1.5M Request | \$375K Match

Re-engages disconnected youth through education, credential attainment, and construction and healthcare pathways.

Outputs: 66 youth | 80% credential attainment | 75% employment/education | 10% apprenticeship transition

Strada Education Foundation – Advancing Workforce Mobility

Second Chance Skills Validation Pathway | 18 Months | \$400K Request

Develops employer-recognized skills badges to expand skills-based hiring for justice-impacted individuals.

Congressional Request – POWER Workforce Initiative

24-Month Project | \$900K Request

Expands employment pathways for justice-involved individuals, individuals in recovery, and opportunity youth through training and work-based learning in construction, manufacturing, skilled trades, and IT.

PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

(Opportunities currently being explored)

RESTART Initiative – Virginia Works

Statewide proposal to expand employment pathways for justice-involved individuals through training, career services, and employment placement in high-demand sectors.

NASA Aerospace Skilled Technical Workforce Hub – Virginia Tech

Proposed workforce partnership connecting regional employers with NASA Langley through Registered Apprenticeship mentorship and technical workforce development.

WORKFORCE SYSTEM GOVERNANCE & ALIGNMENT

EO has recently expanded workforce-related initiatives that overlap with functions statutorily assigned to the Local Workforce Development Board, including regional convening, employer engagement coordination, and work-based learning strategy. An alignment meeting has been requested to clarify roles and ensure coordinated workforce system leadership.

Virginia Works has reaffirmed the LWDB’s statutory role as the regional convener of the workforce system.

Workforce Center Strategy Discussions

Virginia Works is conducting statewide discussions with Workforce Board Directors regarding the future structure and role of Virginia Career Works Centers. Our region is actively participating in these conversations to ensure continued access and strong service delivery for employers and jobseekers.

REGIONAL WORKFORCE & RECOVERY COLLABORATION

Local governments across the region continue to invest in opioid abatement initiatives supporting individuals affected by substance use disorder. Workforce development plays an important role in long-term recovery by helping individuals reconnect to employment and community stability.

The Workforce Development Board is well positioned to partner with localities, recovery providers, and employers to strengthen employment pathways for individuals in recovery through training, career services, and work-based learning opportunities. Workforce development can complement existing recovery investments by helping individuals transition from stabilization and treatment into long-term economic independence.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY & SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Healthcare Pre-Apprenticeship: Competency-based on-ramp into patient-facing healthcare careers.

Impact: Strengthens the healthcare workforce pipeline.

Line Worker Pre-Apprenticeship: Utility workforce training with CDL credentialing in partnership with Wytheville Community College.

Impact: Expands the regional pipeline of skilled utility workers.

Learner Experience Platform (UMU): Centralizes intake, orientation, and training delivery across programs.

Impact: Improves efficiency, reporting, and scalable program delivery.

Policy and Governance Framework Alignment: Development of a three-tier policy structure aligning Governance, Fiscal Management, and Program Operations.

Impact: Improves compliance, monitoring readiness, and policy clarity.

ACCOUNTABILITY & PERFORMANCE

YouthBuild Federal Monitoring: The U.S. Department of Labor recently completed federal monitoring of the region's YouthBuild program, identifying it as a Best Practices program nationally.

Preparations are underway for upcoming Virginia Works state monitoring of workforce programs.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ARC Leadership Institute – Workforce Ecosystem Session

Strengthened regional workforce strategy and cross-sector alignment.

Virginia Directors of Workforce Development Network

Engagement with Virginia's Secretary of Labor and discussion of emerging Maritime and Nuclear workforce initiatives.

Lean Six Sigma – Yellow Belt Training

Process improvement training supporting operational efficiency and continuous improvement across workforce programs.



WIOA Program Overview

July 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026

Prepared by Elizabeth Carico

Director of Workforce Development

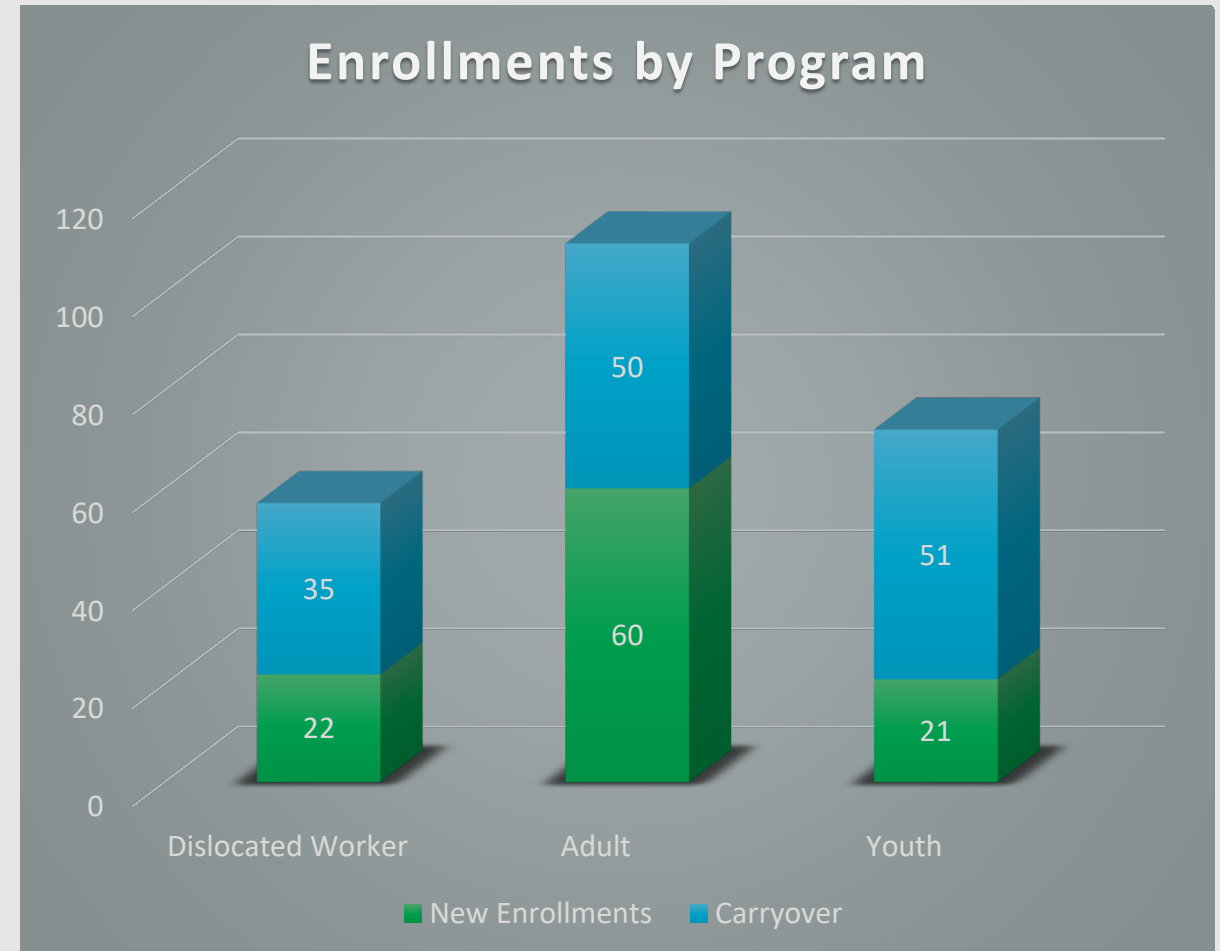
Title 1 Enrollments – Year to Date Program Year 25

July 1, 2025 – Feb 28, 2026

Total Participants: 239

New Enrollments: 103

- Adult: 60
- Dislocated Worker: 22
- Youth: 21



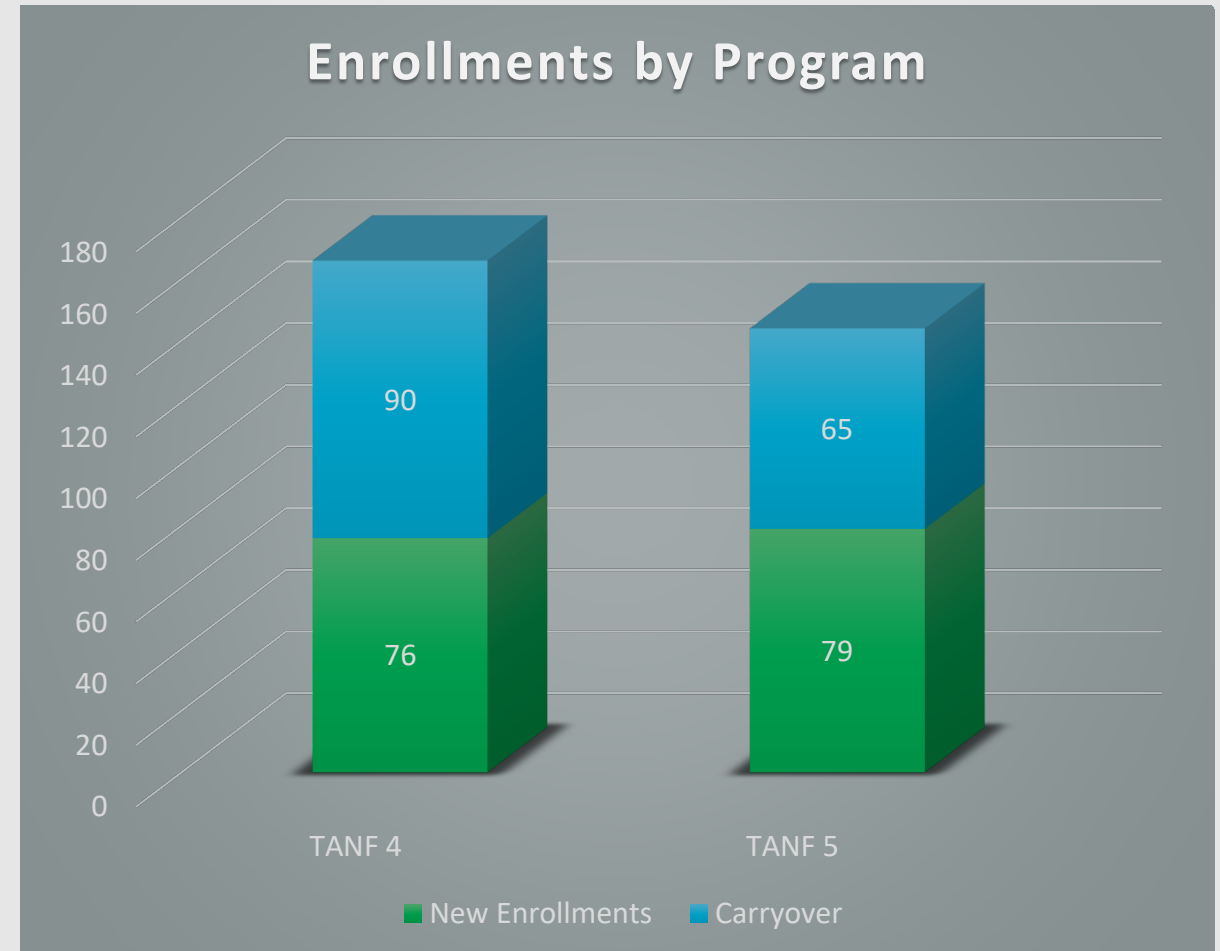
TANF Employment

July 1, 2054 – Jan 31, 2025

Total Participants: 310

New Enrollments: 155

- TANF 4: 76
- TANF 5: 79



Title 1 Activities

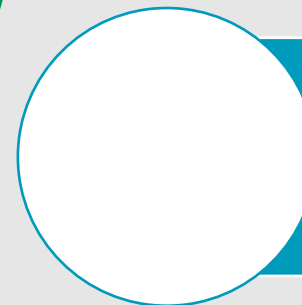
7 in Work
Experience

46 Enrolled in
Training

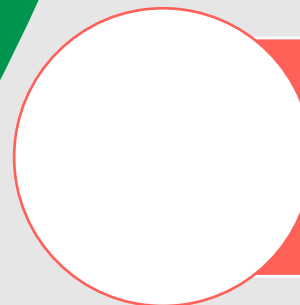
47
Credentials
Attained



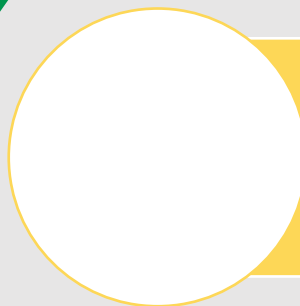
Outcomes



Placed in Employment:
PY25 – YTD: 78

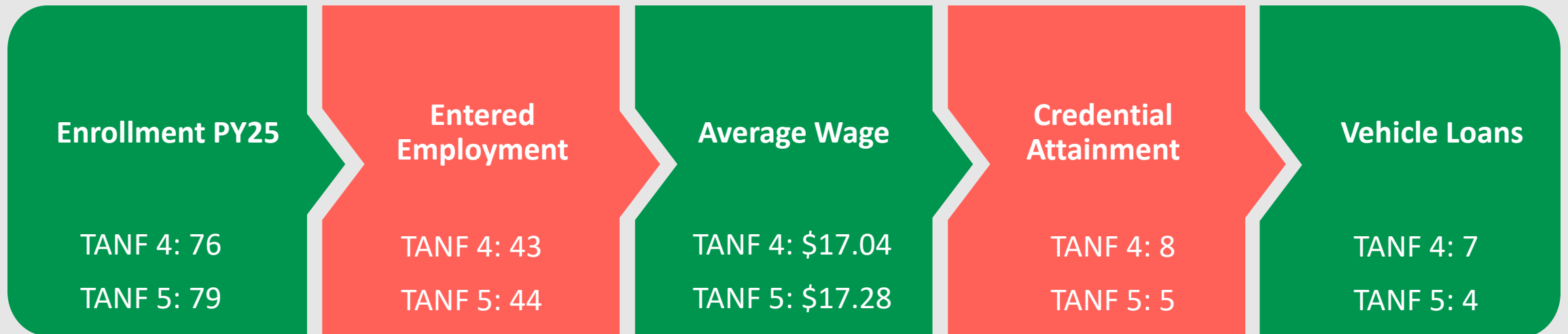


Average Wage:
PY25 – YTD: \$20.65



Credential Attainment:
PY25 – YTD: 47

TANF Employment Outcomes – YTD PY25



Customer Satisfaction:

“Without the support of these programs and the training assistance provided, I would not have been able to obtain my CDL or achieve my goals of providing for my family. These programs played a vital role in removing barriers, providing access to training, and helping me secure meaningful employment”

E.R – TANF Employment and WIOA Adult participant



Thank You

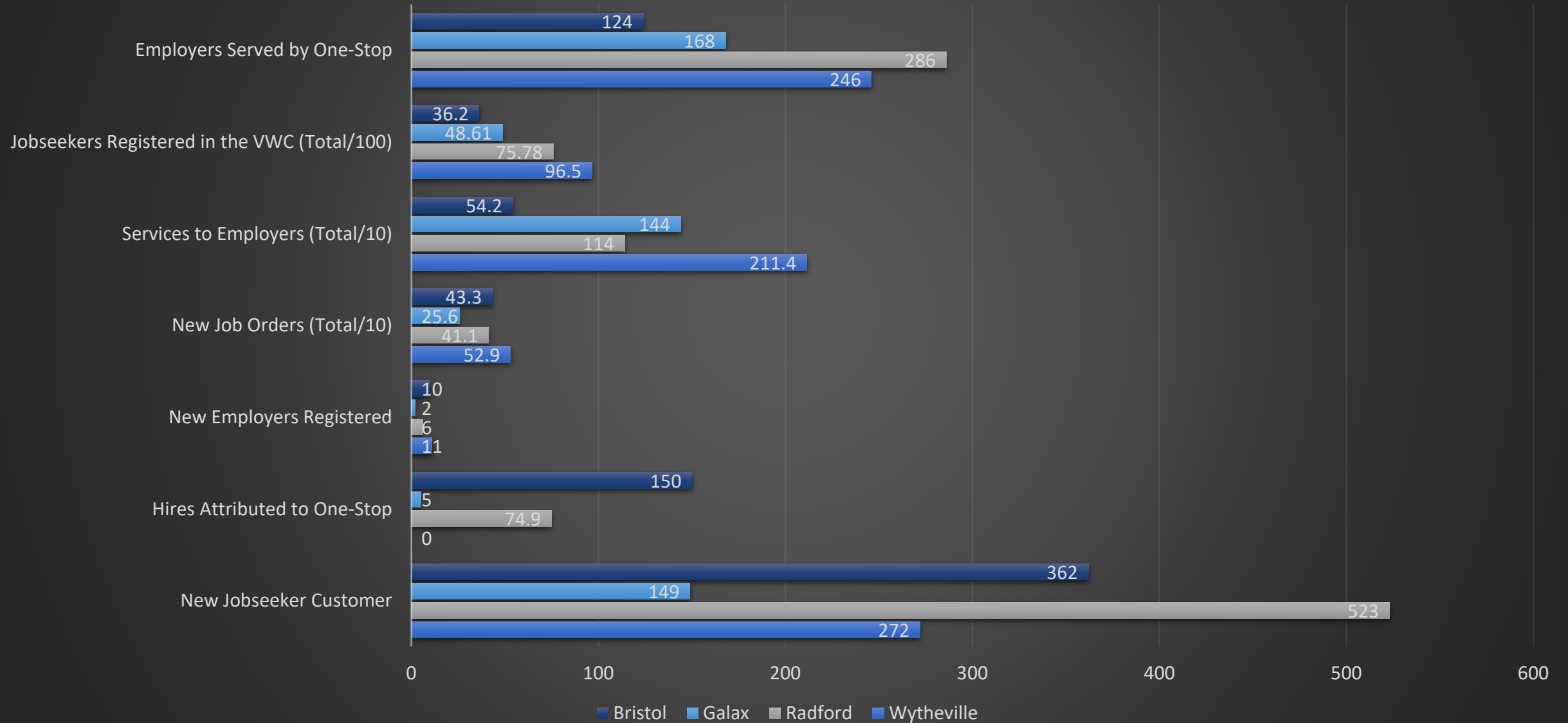
One Stop System Report

New River Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area II

Program Year 2025 – July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

One Stop Operations

July 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026



Center Activity

Staff Training

- JVSG Priority of Service Training
- Building a Learning Culture Training
- Meaningful UI Training
- DOC Power App Training

Center Activity

- Intake and Orientation
 - Smyth Co, Wythe Co, Radford – District 28, Grayson Co, and Carroll County

Business Service Activity

Regional Teams meet bi-monthly

- Abingdon, Galax, Radford, Wytheville

Upcoming Career Fairs

- New River Career Expo: March 25, 2026
- Crossroads Spring Career Fair: April 30, 2026
- Wytheville Spring Career Fair: April 21, 2026
- VHCC Get Hired: April 30, 2026

Layoff Activity

Company	Event	Affected Workers	Effective Date	Status	Rapid Response
Utility Trailer	Layoff	127 – Glade 90 – Atkins	10/2/2025 – 10/3/2025	Ongoing	10/2/2025 – 10/3/2025
MEC	Layoff	12	Unknown	Ongoing	None
Parkdale	Closure	68	9/30/2025	Ongoing	9/10/2025 – 9/11/2025
Bondcote	Closure	80	9/30/2025 – 3/2026	Ongoing	8/6/2025
Job Corps	Unknown Status	85	Unknown	Watching	RR held onsite 6/12/2025
Speyside Bourbon Cooperage, Inc	Layoff	52	4/23/2026	Ongoing	No RR at this time – employees not working
Fontaine Modification	Layoff	5	3/2/2026	Ongoing	No notice – provided electronic materials
Turman Hardwood Flooring	Layoff	12	3/6/2026	Ongoing	No notice



Customer Satisfaction

- Job Seekers
 - Services Received at the Center
 - 3 – Very Satisfied
 - Were you informed of other services available to you through other agencies?
 - 3 – Yes
 - 0 – No
 - Comments:
 - “Great staff to help sign up for unemployment!”
 - “Great job to everyone. Very Helpful!”



NEW RIVER/MOUNT ROGERS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

CULTIVATING TALENT FOR THE REGION

DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

March 2026

	ENROLLED		COMPLETE TRAINING		CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT		OBTAIN EMPLOYMENT	
	Goal	Status	Goal	Status	Goal	Status	Goal	Status
Pathway Home 5 July 2024 – December 2027	150	92	98	43	90	43	90	45
ARC Ready October 2025 – September 2028	200	41	180	8	160	7	150	7

	ENROLLED		EARNED MEASURABLE SKILL GAINS		CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT		EMPLOYMENT OR EDUCATION 2 ND QUARTER		EMPLOYMENT OR EDUCATION 4 TH QUARTER	
	Goal	Status	Goal	Status	Goal	Status	Goal	Status	Goal	Status
YouthBuild 24 June 2024 – September 2027	66	62	47	46	53	35	47	16	43	2

	ENROLLED		TRAUMA REBOOT COURSE		CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT		OBTAIN EMPLOYMENT	
Reboot Recovery May 2025 – December 2027								
Trauma Reboot Course	----	36	----	36	----	28	----	16
Training and Job Placement	125	122	----	19	113	82	88	78

Our Participants Tell Their Story



Sadora

Thank you so much for giving me the chance to share my story. I truly mean it when I say your program changed my life. The support I received came at a time when I felt like I had no one, and it filled a space that had been empty for a very long time.

Growing up without real family support shaped so much of my life. I had to figure out things on my own that most people have help with. It often felt like I was walking through everything by myself, trying to be strong even when I was hurting. That lack of support didn't make me a bad person; it just meant I didn't have the guidance, love, or stability many people take for granted. Life wasn't easy. I always wanted better, but I didn't always have the tools or people to help me get there.

When I connected with your program, it felt like my life finally had a chance to shift. For the first time in a long time, I had people who genuinely cared about me, believed in me, and wanted me to succeed. That meant everything. It felt like someone finally saw me — not where I came from or what I lacked, but who I could become. The trainings, the support, the conversations, and the encouragement helped rebuild parts of me that had been broken for years. I learned how to communicate better, handle stress, stay organized, and believe in myself. More than skills, I gained confidence and hope. I began to feel like I deserved a good life too.

The journey wasn't easy. Starting over without guidance felt overwhelming. Finding steady work, transportation, and stability was a struggle. There were days I felt discouraged and questioned if things would get better. But I kept going. I stayed patient with myself and reminded myself how far I had come. Slowly, things began to change.

Finding steady work gave me a sense of security I had been missing for so long. Being able to take care of my responsibilities and stand on my own meant everything. Every step forward proved that I am capable — not defined by what I lacked, but by my strength and determination.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you. To everyone in the program who encouraged me, guided me, and believed in me even when I struggled to believe in myself — you gave me something I didn't grow up with: support, understanding, and hope. That changed me. It helped me become stronger, more confident, and more grounded in who I am today.

I'm still building my life, one day at a time. I'm working, staying focused, and continuing to grow. I'm open to more training and learning — anything that helps me keep moving forward. My dream is to become more stable and one day help others who feel alone or unsupported, just like I once did.

I'm truly grateful — not just for the opportunities, but for the kindness and belief that helped me become who I am today. Thank you for letting me share my journey, and for being part of it.



A One-Day Community Response: Preventing Youth Homelessness Through Partnership



Two young adults in our region were hours away from homelessness. With no safe place to stay and few options left, the very real possibility of spending the night outside was approaching quickly. One of the young adults, already connected to our organization through the Pathway Home program, reached out when the crisis escalated. What changed their trajectory was not a single program, but a shared sense of urgency across our community.

Within one day, the NRMR Workforce Development Board mobilized resources to coordinate temporary hotel accommodations, ensuring both young people had a safe, secure place to sleep that night. That immediate action provided more than shelter — it created a pause, a moment of stability, and the chance to plan rather than crisis-manage.

At the same time, partners across the system mobilized. People Inc. helped coordinate next steps and engaged its Rapid Rehousing Program to begin identifying longer-term housing solutions. Virginia Works, YouthBuild, and the WIOA Youth Program stepped in to ensure the young adults remained connected to education, workforce training, and employment pathways — critical anchors during a moment of upheaval.

Attention to basic needs helped restore dignity during a destabilizing time. People Inc.'s TANF program provided essential household items, hygiene supplies, and food resources. Tri-City Shuttle committed to transportation so appointments, services, and work responsibilities remained accessible. The Parole Office coordinated to ensure continuity of supervision and support, preventing service disruptions during this critical transition.

What stood out most, however, was what the young people themselves shared afterward: “For the first time, we feel like someone was truly in our corner.” That sense of being seen, supported, and advocated for marked a turning point.

This one-day response, rooted in partnership, communication, and trust, prevented two young adults from experiencing homelessness. It demonstrates what is possible when systems work together quickly and compassionately — meeting urgency with coordination and replacing crisis with stability, dignity, and hope.



New River | Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board
Business Solutions Teams Report – 3rd Quarter PY 2025
January/February 2026

General Business Engagement

Recruitment Assistance

Job Fairs and Recruiting Events

- Worked with partners on plans for upcoming Spring Career Fairs – NRV Job Fair Expo (March 25), Wythe/Bland Career Fair (TBD), Crossroads Career Fair (April 30) and Virginia Highland HIRED (April 30).
- Talked with Central Seal – company from KY doing a road construction project in Abingdon. Referred to Abingdon Workforce Center for assistance.

Workforce Information/Consulting

Workforce Services Conversations

- Tekni Plex: Talked with new Sr HR staff about training needs. Are interested in Genedge training around
- Senior Home Share: Talked with management staff about training needs. Interested in a Train the Trainer project to assist with training current and future staff.
- Real Performance Machinery: Talked with HR staff about an apprenticeship in Machining and, possibility, one for Welding. Also talked about training needs – looking at CPA coursework for one employee. (Working with VA Works to become an Apprenticeship Intermediary)
- ABA of SWVA: Talked with staff about possible up-skilling training for current staff.
- Omnibuild Contractors: Talked with staff about training needs and multiple programs including IWT, OJTs and other Work-based learning opportunities. Referred to Virginia Works for discussion about Registered Apprenticeship.
- Celanese: Worked with HR staff to do pre-hire and pre-promotion assessments.

Training

Incumbent Worker Training

- Current Projects with:
 - Spectrum Brands
 - HAPCO
- Information:
 - ABA of SWVA
 - Real Performance Machinery
 - Mohawk
 - Tekni Plex
 - Senior Home Share
 - Omnibuild Contractors
 - NRV Home Builder Association

Work-based Learning

- Work Experience Projects:
 - Town of Hillsville – Possible for Public Works
 - Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands – Clothing Closet
 - Timberland Contracting – Construction
- OJT Projects:
 - Possible project with Somic America, Inc.

Workshops/Business Trainings

- Working with Genedge on several possible business workshop throughout our region

Other

- Participated in multiple Sector Partnership meetings.
- Participated Connect Appalachia curriculum creation meetings.

Business Solutions Teams Meetings:**Virginia Highlands:**

- January Meeting: Met via Zoom. Joined by representative of XCAL Tools. Talked about upcoming job fairs as well as invitations to other speakers. Next meeting will be in person at VHCC.

Crossroads:

- February Meeting: Met via Zoom due to the inclement weather and WCC closure. Talked about planning for the 2026 Crossroads Career Fair.

Wythe/Bland:

- February Meeting: Hybrid meeting. Talked about planning for the Wythe/Bland Career Fair. Also talked about recent regional layoffs. Talked about possible Business Engagement workshop for partners (looking at May).

New River Valley:

- February Meeting: Was a virtual meeting solely focused on planning for the NRV Job Fair Expo.

Connect Appalachia Employer Engagement Initiative

Purpose

The initiative helps regional employers expand their workforce by implementing **skills-first, recovery-ready, and second-chance hiring practices** that maintain safety and performance standards while addressing persistent labor shortages.

Why This Matters

Employers across the region face ongoing difficulty filling essential roles. At the same time, many qualified individuals remain underutilized due to barriers unrelated to job performance. This initiative connects untapped talent with employer workforce needs using practical, business-focused strategies.

What We Are Building (in progress)

- Employer training curriculum (6 Modules)
 - Module 1 was presented to the three sector partnerships in January
- Sector-specific implementation tools
- Supervisor guidance and response protocols
- Skills-first job description and policy templates
- Employer ROI calculator
- Sector partnership outreach strategy

Employer Value

Employers will receive practical tools to:

- Reduce time-to-fill vacancies
- Improve employee retention
- Expand qualified applicant pools
- Strengthen workforce stability

Conservative estimates indicate **\$5,000–\$20,000 potential savings per hire** through reduced turnover, vacancy time, and overtime costs.

Implementation Approach

- Pilot delivered through regional sector partnerships
- Training offered at no cost to employers (focus on both large and small employers)
- Early adopter employers will inform regional scaling

Expected Outcomes

- Increased workforce participation
- Improved retention in priority industries
- Expanded employer hiring capacity

Sector Partnership Strategy Update

Purpose

Sector partnerships serve as the primary mechanism for aligning workforce investments with real-time employer demand across key industries. Through structured, employer-led engagement, partnerships generate actionable intelligence that informs training priorities, talent strategies, and system responsiveness.

Current Structure

Monthly virtual partnerships are active in:

- Healthcare & Human Services
- Manufacturing, Logistics & Warehousing
- Construction & other Skilled Trades

Each partnership follows a consistent engagement model designed to move from insight to action.

Strategic Engagement Framework

Partnerships operate within a continuous three-phase cycle:

1. Listen

Employers identify current workforce pressures, skill needs, and operational challenges.

Outcome: Validated sector priorities based on direct employer input.

2. Focus

Participants narrow priorities to issues that are both high-impact and solvable in the near term.

Outcome: Alignment of workforce strategies with industry-defined needs.

3. Act

Employers collaborate with workforce partners to shape targeted responses and pilot solutions.

Outcome: Implementation of employer-informed workforce initiatives.

This structured approach strengthens accountability, relevance, and measurable impact.

Impact to Date

- Increased employer engagement and participation consistency
- Clearer identification of sector-specific workforce priorities
- Stronger alignment between workforce services and industry needs

Partnerships are slowly evolving from discussion forums into strategic implementation platforms.

Strategic Value to the Workforce System

Sector partnerships provide:

- Real-time labor market intelligence
- Direct employer voice in workforce investment decisions
- Mechanisms to align training resources with industry demand
- Stronger employer-system relationships
- A structured pathway from workforce insight to implementation

Next Phase Priorities

Over the coming months, partnerships will:

- Identify sector-specific workforce initiatives for pilot implementation
- Strengthen employer leadership roles within partnerships
- Continue building regional alignment across workforce areas
- Translate employer priorities into targeted workforce strategies

Workforce Development Foundation READY Grant

Strategic Workplan Dashboard

March 18, 2026

Financial Capacity Building

Contracted with Kobia Consulting to provide staff/board training and help develop a fundraising plan.

Partnerships Established

Goal: 6 Public–Private Partnerships

Current: _____

Private / Corporate Funds Raised

Goal: \$100,000+

Current: \$1,705 (through GLNRV & Giving Tuesday initiatives)

Will be participating in the GiveLocalNRV fundraising opportunity in June 2026.

Grants Awarded

Goal: 2

Current: Waiting on final announcement of 1

New Revenue Streams Developed

Goal: 1 Fee-for-Service Model

Status: x Not Started ☐ In Progress ☐ Completed

Donor Development Progress

- Potential Donor List Developed (100+) ☐
- Donor CRM Implemented ☐
- New Website with a Donate Now opportunity is in development ☐

Workforce Program Impact

Participants Receiving Supportive Services

Goal: 200

Current: _____

Participants Completing Workforce Training

Goal: 160

Current: _____

Employment Outcomes (within 6 months)

Goal: 75%

Current: _____

Operational Excellence

Staff have started the Yellow Belt Training

Lean Six Sigma Training

Training Level	Goal	Current
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Yellow Belt	16 staff	started
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Green Belt	7 staff	____
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Black Belt	3 staff	____
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Process Improvements Completed

Goal: 5

Current: _____

Technology Improvements

- B2B Engage system enhancements ☐
- ProjectHub / ClearPoint fully implemented ☐
- Automated reporting tools implemented ☐

Outreach and Community Engagement

Contracts with VT Center for Economic and Community Engagement and Kobia Consulting have been signed to help with this work.

New Organizational Partnerships

Goal: 5

Current: _____

Industry Workforce Initiatives Launched

Goal: 5

Current: _____

Increase in Program Inquiries

Goal: 40%

Current: _____

Increase in Online Engagement

Goal: 60%

Current: _____

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder Roundtables Completed

☐ Year 1

☐ Year 2

☐ Year 3

Community Listening Events Held
Goal: 50 participants annually
Current: _____

Key Accomplishments This Quarter

- MOU Signed
- Lean Six Sigma Training started

Challenges / Board Support Needed

- As we move forward, potential donors/business sponsors will need to be identified



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

2026 Meeting Schedule

March 18th : Wytheville Community College

May 20th : Wytheville Meeting Center
-Joint Meeting with WDB and Foundation

September 16th : Wytheville Community College

December 9th : Wytheville Meeting Center
-Joint Meeting with WDB and Foundation

All meetings will begin at 10:00am