



ALABAMA WORKFORCE COUNCIL

2020 ANNUAL REPORT





TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Letter to the Governor & Alabama Legislators	1
2. Executive Summary	2
3. AWC Members	5
4. Background, Mission, & Structure	8
5. Committee Focuses & Priorities	10
Educational Attainment Committee	11
Education & Industry Collaboration Committee	15
Marketing & Promotion Committee	17
Public-Private Partnership Committee	21
Workforce Structure & Alignment Committee	25
6. Appendix	29
Education & Industry Collaboration Committee: Where are the Workers?	30
Public-Private Partnership Committee Supplement	40
Workforce Market Segments Survey Results	43
Regional Workforce Council Reports	48



Dear Governor Kay Ivey & Alabama Legislators:

The Alabama Workforce Council appreciates your steadfast commitment and continued support of efforts to ensure Alabama provides her citizens with the necessary skills, access, and choices that will result in high-wage, in-demand careers that benefit the state's economy as a whole.

Under your direction and guidance, Alabama has experienced unprecedented record-low unemployment in all regions. Success breeds new challenges. To meet ever-growing workforce needs in an expanding economy, we have to find ways to bring working-age Alabamians sitting on the sidelines back into the workforce and address our low workforce participation rate.

To do that and to ensure our workforce is prepared for the future, we are working hard to help implement the Success Plus plan and to ensure that Alabama residents are able to earn valuable credentials, certificates, and degrees that will provide a pathway to greater employment opportunities.

This will only be accomplished if all of the state's stakeholders—from education and business leaders to special populations and state agencies—are involved in the process. All Alabamians need and deserve a voice in this process as we chart the path for our state now and for many years to come. However, we will only achieve success if all state agencies are following your lead in prioritizing workforce development, especially at the K-12 level.

To that end, we are delighted to submit the 2020 Alabama Workforce Council Annual Report. In this document, the AWC highlights many of the accomplishments made in the previous year and provides recommendations for your consideration for the coming year, which we believe will lead to additional growth, success, and prosperity for our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim McCartney".

Tim McCartney
Chair, Alabama Workforce Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandra Koblas".

Sandra Koblas
Vice Chair, Alabama Workforce Council

Cc: Members of the Alabama State Board of Education
 Members of the Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees
 Members of the Alabama Council of College and University Presidents
 Chairs of the Alabama Regional Workforce Councils

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Industry-Agency Engagement

Continued partnerships among employers, education, government, and community stakeholders will accelerate efforts to increase attainment levels. The Alabama Workforce Council (AWC), and seven Regional Workforce Councils (RWCs) provide direct access to industry leaders for state partners seeking to better understand workforce pipelines and access resources. The AWC believes there remain critical opportunities to continue building collaboration among all key partners to better align the education pipeline with workforce opportunities. To identify and collaborate on these opportunities, the AWC recommends partners continue to engage with existing state workforce councils and boards. As an independent body for industry voice, the AWC will continue to advocate as a single voice for industry needs, while also partnering and advocating for state and industry partners focused on helping meet those needs.

Education & Industry Collaboration Committee, page 16

Success Plus: Statewide Educational Attainment

Following adoption of Success Plus: Preparing Alabama's Workforce for Opportunity and Growth in 2018, the AWC focused on developing a framework and structure for implementation of the plan in 2019. The structure has provided the critical capacity and support to ensure:

- Continued and elevated focus on educational attainment in Alabama
- Increased coordination among business, industry, state agencies, and other partners
- Strengthened collaboration on key challenges and opportunities related to attainment
- Integration of additional capacity through support teams and resources for this work

The AWC is committed to achieving the Success Plus goal and to building the statewide infrastructure and systems to support goal achievement. In 2019, the AWC has served as a partner and advocate for infrastructure and systems change, including:

- Creation of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeships (AOA)
- Establishment of a credentialing process through the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP)
- Foundational work toward cross-agency data sharing through the Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS)

Educational Attainment Committee, page 14

AlabamaWorks! Building a Workforce Brand

Continued investment in public awareness is a top priority of the AWC and its partners. Public Awareness is the single-most barrier to accessing education and workforce services by Alabama students and workers. We must continue to encourage all workforce agencies to not only adopt but champion AlabamaWorks if we hope to build brand recognition for workforce resources among Alabamians. To reach hard-to-serve special populations during a period of tight labor markets and near full employment, we encourage leadership to continue to expand the AlabamaWorks budget for workforce marketing and branding.

Marketing & Promotion Committee, page 17

Digital Access to Workforce Opportunities

Codify the unified system under development by the Office of the Governor that will support a one-stop dashboard for connecting job seekers to employers, for career exploration and discovery, and for building digital profiles and resumes for students and jobseekers. The system and public facing

dashboard -- ATLAS on Career Pathways and the Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET) -- will more efficiently support existing siloed agency information to promote continuous improvement in education and workforce training programs. In doing so, the system will allow for a continuous business-systems assessment to help state leaders and service providers better understand individual outcomes resulting from Alabama education and workforce pipelines, identify opportunities for improvement by using real-time information, and continuously align programs and resources to the state's evolving economy.

Education & Industry Collaboration Committee, page 16

Marketing & Promotion Committee, page 19

Work-based Learning

The state should continue to develop strategies that will provide every Alabama student with the opportunity to create an individualized education and career pathway through the expansion of work-based learning programs that provide students with educational opportunities that typically cannot be replicated in the classroom and promote improved skills, higher efficiency, and the availability of a better-trained labor pool.

Structure & Alignment Committee, page 28

Access to Financial Aid

Two key opportunities to increase FAFSA completion are advocating to simplify the form and providing students and families with accurate, easy-to-understand information about the availability of grants and scholarships for technical and academic education after high school through the Cash for College campaign.

Public-Private Partnership Committee, page 24

Career Coach Expansion

The state has greatly expanded its career coach program over the past five years, and it should continue to allocate funds and increase resources and support needed to expand the program even further. There is a need to add additional career coaches at the state's larger high schools (where the student to career coach ratio is too high) and at the middle school level so that students begin thinking about potential career paths at a younger age. Career coaches should collaborate with the regional workforce councils, employers, and community colleges to recruit relevant placements for in-school CTE concentrators participating in work-based learning activities. Additionally, we recommend the implementation of standards for those who qualify to be a career coach as well as accountability metrics to measure how successful they are in their role.

Structure & Alignment Committee, page 28

Identifying Industry-recognized Credentials

The identification of industry-recognized credentials for inclusion in the regional and statewide Compendia of Valuable Credentials is a critical next step in Alabama's trek to add 500,000 high-skilled workers to the state's workforce by 2025. In 2020, the Council plans to work closely with the GOEWT and the ACCP to identify credentials of value that are aligned to in-demand occupations. The Council is collaborating with the ACCCP to develop and raise awareness about career pathways based on stackable credentials of value that support economic mobility and to ensure that all Alabama citizens have a clear path and access to earning them.

Structure & Alignment Committee, page 28



Segmentation

With record unemployment, we must reach working age Alabamians sitting on the economic sideline, as well as today's students, tomorrow's workers, and educate them about educational and career opportunities that can improve their quality of life. We must research how to better educate, inform, and mobilize these hard-to-reach population groups in order to convey the importance of earning certificates, credentials, and degrees that lead to high-demand jobs.

Marketing & Promotion Committee, page 19

Addressing Barriers

Identify and develop strategies to address barriers that prevent access and success in postsecondary educational attainment, particularly focused on historically underserved and rural populations who have been shown to experience specific and pronounced challenges to successfully completing a certificate, credential, or degree.

Public-Private Partnership Committee, page 24

ALABAMA WORKFORCE COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEMBERS

AWC MEMBERS



CHAIR

TIM MCCARTNEY

McCartney Construction
(Retired)



VICE CHAIR

SANDRA KOBLAS

Austal USA



ALAN BAKER

Alabama State
Representative



RONNIE BOLES

General Automotive
and Machine Shop



SCOTT BOWERS

AAA Cooper
Transportation



MYLA CALHOUN

Alabama Power



ED CASTILE

Alabama Department
of Commerce



**JENNIFER
CHRISTENBERRY**

ALFA



GEORGE CLARK

Alabama
Workforce Board



PHILIP CLEVELAND

Cleveland Senior
Living



NORMAN A. CROW

D.T. & Freight
Company



**CHARLES (CHUCK)
DILAURA**

Neptune Technology
Group (Retired)



TOMMY GLASSCOCK

Alabama State
Department of
Education



KAY GRAY

Dynetics



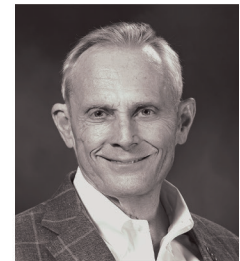
JOHN HACKETT

Kamtek



SETH HAMMETT

PowerSouth



ALLEN HARRIS

Bailey-Harris
Construction

AWC MEMBERS



MELISSA HERKT

Auburn University
Foundation



RANDY JORDAN

Bryant Bank



MIKE KEMP

Kemp Management
Solutions



MIKE KITCHENS

ACIPCO



CHRISTY KNOWLES

Coosa Valley Medical
Center



NEIL LAMB

Hudson Alpha



JEFF LYNN

Alabama Community
College System



LISA MORALES

East AlabamaWorks!



**DR. JOSEPH B.
MORTON**

Business Education
Alliance of Alabama



JESSICA OATES

International Paper



MIKE OATRIDGE

Honda Manufacturing
of Alabama



KC PANG

GD Copper USA, Inc



CLEVE POOLE

Pioneer Electric
Cooperative



DAVID REED

Whitaker Contracting



RANDY ROGERS

Evonik Industries



PEGGY SEASE

DCH Health System



**FITZGERALD
WASHINGTON**

Alabama
Department of Labor



PHIL WEBB

Webb Concrete &
Building Materials

PHOTOS UNAVAILABLE

Leroy Abrahams
Regions Financial Corporation

Joe Patton
Westervelt Company

Jim Purcell
Alabama Commission on Higher Education

Randy Skagen
NUCOR Steel

Daryl Taylor
Airbus U.S. Manufacturing

BACKGROUND, MISSION, & STRUCTURE

Background

In 2013, the Governor's College and Career Ready Task Force assembled leaders from education, industry, and government to produce a series of recommendations designed to leverage the strengths of education and industry in order to promote workforce and economic development in the state.

Among its recommendations, the Task Force recognized the need for a statewide council to serve as an advisory body in formulating policies, developing innovative educational workforce programming, and discussing issues critical to workforce development needs in Alabama. To that end, the AWC was codified into law in 2014 by Act No. 2014-16, and members were first appointed on July 1, 2014.

The Council is tasked with advising and supporting the Superintendent of the Alabama State Department of Education, the Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System, and the Council of College and University Presidents.

In 2015, the administration of the Council was transferred into the Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division by Act No. 2015-450.

Mission & Advisory Duties

Since its first meeting in July of 2014, the Council has concentrated its efforts on a number of objectives and duties—several of which have since been fully implemented.

The Council has focused on the following issues:

- Enhancing education and industry collaboration on an ongoing basis;
- Promoting access, articulation, and communication along the educational pipeline;
- Ensuring appropriate development of essential professional skills (also known as soft skills or essential workplace skills);
- Raising awareness of and promoting access to high-potential career pathways; and
- Encouraging more participation in projected high-demand, high-wage career opportunities within the State of Alabama.

The advisory duties of the Alabama Workforce Council include:

- Reviewing ways to streamline and align the existing workforce development functions of the state;
- Evaluating the best ways to increase awareness of and educate students on available opportunities in industry sectors;
- Considering ways to create a feedback loop for industry and education;
- Evaluating public/private partnerships to create industry-funded scholarship programs for community colleges, vocational programs, and dual enrollment programs;
- Assessing the value of increasing the marketing associated with career readiness and skilled craft trades;
- Evaluating standards for membership and operation of the state's Regional Workforce Councils; and
- Considering the realignment of counties that comprise each Regional Workforce Council, as required to meet the needs of employers.

Structure & Partners

To effectively address these advisory duties, the Council was divided into the following committees:

- Educational Attainment
- Education and Industry Collaboration
- Marketing and Promotion
- Public-Private Partnership
- Workforce Structure and Alignment

These committees meet and communicate regularly to conduct exploratory informational sessions and assessments, listen to industry experts, and review current efforts and best practices. Each of the committee members bring a wealth of personal industry knowledge and experience, and combine that with the information received during Council and committee meetings to guide their recommendations.



The Council has sought input from educators, industry experts, and, most importantly, those institutions to which the recommendations are directed. To further engage numerous state and local departments and agencies that are involved in workforce development activities, the following state departments and organizations were involved in workforce development discussions:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Office of the Governor | • Career coaches |
| • Legislative leadership | • Business and industry leaders |
| • Department of Education | • Trade associations |
| • Two-year colleges | • Department of Rehab Services |
| • Four-year universities | • Department of Corrections |
| • Department of Commerce | • Department of Human Resources |
| • Department of Labor | • Charitable organizations |
| • Regional Workforce Councils | • Office of the Lieutenant Governor |

ALABAMA WORKFORCE COUNCIL

COMMITTEE FOCUSES & PRIORITIES

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT COMMITTEE

- **Chair:** Melissa Herkt, Auburn University Foundation
- Alan Baker, House of Representatives
- Nancy Buckner, Department of Human Resources
- Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw, Department of Rehabilitation Services
- Myla Calhoun, Alabama Power
- Ed Castile, Department of Commerce
- Clyde Chambliss, State Senate
- George Clark, Manufacture Alabama
- Terri Collins, House of Representatives
- Norman Crow, DT & Freight Company
- Kent Davis, Department of Veterans Affairs
- Brandon Demyan, Office of Senate President Pro Tempore
- Chuck DiLaura, Neptune Technology Group – Retired
- Jeff Dunn, Department of Corrections
- Allen Harris, Bailey-Harris Construction
- Sandra Koblas, Austal USA
- Jeff Lynn, Community College System
- Tim McCartney, McCartney Construction – Retired
- Cynthia McCarty, State Board of Education
- Nick Moore, Governor’s Office of Education and Workforce Transformation
- Nichelle Nix, Governor’s Office of Minority Affairs
- Cleve Poole, Pioneer Electric Cooperative
- Jim Purcell, Alabama Commission on Higher Education
- Jeana Ross, Department of Early Childhood Education
- Kristina Scott, Alabama Possible
- Fitzgerald Washington, Department of Labor
- Andrew Westcott, Office of Speaker of the House of Representatives

Success Plus Goal: Assessment & Continuous Improvement

Progress toward Alabama’s goal for post-secondary educational attainment is tracked and shared regularly, and adjustments are made to the plan and strategies to ensure success.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>A. Develop a dashboard to track and share progress for the strategic plan on a regular basis.</p> | <p>D. Develop a process for forecasting high-demand jobs at the state and regional levels annually.</p> |
| <p>B. Strengthen data collection and reporting related to education and workforce outcomes by linking existing data across state agencies.</p> | <p>E. Promote development of educational and credential attainment targets across the state that are aligned with the strategic plan.</p> |
| <p>C. Analyze data and use the outcomes to continuously improve programs, recommend funding allocation, and propose future budget needs on a regular basis.</p> | <p>F. Formally review and update the strategic plan annually.</p> |

2019 SUCCESSES

Overview

The Statewide Educational Attainment Committee continues to play an important role in advancing Alabama's efforts to increase and accelerate postsecondary educational attainment across the state. In 2018, the Attainment Committee led the planning process that resulted in the Alabama Workforce Council's adoption of Success Plus: Preparing Alabama's Workforce for Opportunity and Growth. In 2019, the Attainment Committee provided leadership, organization, and capacity to support the first year of implementation of Success Plus.

Collaborative Leadership

The Alabama Workforce Council (AWC) made two important changes to Attainment Committee leadership and membership in 2019 that resulted in stronger collaboration among business, industry, state agencies, and other partners. First, the chair of each AWC committee joined the Attainment Committee, increasing representation from business and industry on the committee and supporting strong communication and collaboration across the AWC committee structure.



Next, the AWC appointed Melissa Herkt to serve as chair of the Educational Attainment Committee effective July 30, 2019. This change aligned the structure of the Attainment Committee with the other four AWC committees by having an industry representative serve as chair. Herkt follows previous chairs Jeff Lynn and Ed Castile who successfully led the Attainment Committee in the development of Success Plus.

Assessment and Continuous Improvement

The focus of the Attainment Committee in 2019 was the fifth priority outlined in Success Plus: Assessment & Continuous Improvement. Within this focus, the Attainment Committee worked with partners across business, industry, and state government on a number of large-scale and collaborative initiatives, such as the Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) and the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP). The Attainment Committee also provided thought leadership to help identify, elevate, and explore a range of issues relevant to education, training, and workforce development across the state. The table below provides a more detailed overview of the progress and status of the Attainment Committee focus in 2019.

2019 Progress Summary for Success Plus Priority: Assessment & Continuous Improvement

Objective	Description	Status
5A	Develop a dashboard to track and share progress for the strategic plan on a regular basis.	Complete
5B	Strengthen data collection and reporting related to education and workforce outcomes by linking existing data across state agencies.	(Success Plus Dashboard) In Progress through ATLAS Task Force
5C	Analyze data and use the outcomes to continuously improve programs, recommend funding allocation, and propose future budget needs on a regular basis.	Ongoing Role for Attainment Committee as Champion for Key Educational Attainment Initiatives
5D	Develop a process for forecasting high-demand jobs at the state and regional levels annually.	In Progress through ACCCP Committee
5E	Promote development of educational and credential attainment targets across the state that are aligned with the strategic plan.	Complete (AWC Structure & Alignment Committee)
5F	Formally review and update the strategic plan annually.	In Progress (Ongoing Review of Metrics & Indicators)

Equity in Postsecondary Educational Attainment

In 2019, the Attainment Committee focused on exploring and elevating the importance of equity in postsecondary educational attainment across the state. The Attainment Committee engaged national thought leaders and local experts on this topic to explore best practices, innovative ideas, and current efforts in Alabama that are addressing issues of equity. The activities and outcomes related to this effort in 2019 included:

- Jimmy Clarke of HCM Strategists and Lumina Foundation Strategy Labs provided an overview of equity and postsecondary educational attainment to Attainment Committee members. Clarke also provided a national perspective about Alabama's leadership in equity and attainment through Success Plus, commending Alabama's focus on data and metrics, collaborative leadership, and integration of state and federal programs. (Q1 Meeting)
- Dr. Toya Barnes-Teamer from HCM Strategists presented a national perspective on equity in postsecondary educational attainment to the Attainment Committee. This included an

overview of Lumina Foundation's Equity Imperative, best practices from peer states, and a description of equity roundtables as a potential platform for continued focus on equity. (Q2 Meeting)

- Nick Moore of the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) presented an update on Alabama's key initiatives focused on equity and career pathways. (Q2 Meeting)

Data and Metrics

Within its focus on Assessment & Continuous Improvement, the Attainment Committee explored a number of important issues related to data and metrics for postsecondary educational attainment. These activities highlighted both the importance and complexity of measuring progress toward the postsecondary educational attainment goal and underscored the need to continue this focus in 2020. Attainment Committee activities and outcomes related to this in 2019 included:



- Attainment Committee members participated in an interactive training on the Success Plus Dashboard provided by Jesse Woods of StrategyWise. (Q3 Meeting)
- Attainment Committee members participated in a facilitated workshop of metrics and indicators for a Success Plus Scorecard. (Q4 Meeting)

2020 PRIORITIES

In 2020, the Attainment Committee will continue to serve as thought leaders and collaborators around a range of issues related to education and workforce development. As part of this work, the Attainment Committee will continue to focus on objectives within the Assessment & Continuous Improvement priority noted below and that are not yet complete.

Data Collection and Reporting

Strengthen data collection and reporting related to education and workforce outcomes by linking existing data across state agencies; continue to partner with the ATLAS Task Force (Objective 5B)

Formally review and update the strategic plan annually; continue to focus on metrics and indicators (Objective 5F)

Implement the process developed by the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP) for forecasting high-demand jobs at the state and regional levels annually (Objective 5D)

Continuous Improvement

Analyze data and use the outcomes to continuously improve programs, recommend funding allocation, and propose future budget needs on a regular basis; Continue to serve as a champion for key educational attainment initiatives across the state (Objective 5C)

EDUCATION & INDUSTRY COLLABORATION COMMITTEE

- **Chair:** Allen Harris, Bailey-Harris Construction
- **Co-Chair:** Mike Oatridge, Honda Manufacturing of Alabama
- Philip Cleveland, Marshall County School System
- Seth Hammett, PowerSouth
- Peggy Sease, DCH Health System
- KC Pang, GD Copper USA
- Randy Rogers, Evonik Industries

Success Plus Goal: Leadership and Collaboration

Partners at the state, regional, and local levels work together to support efforts aimed at increasing post-secondary educational attainment in Alabama.

- Develop a collaborative structure and process to support implementation of the strategic plan and develop the action steps, timelines, champions, resources, and metrics for each objective. Engage education, employers, government, and community partners in this collective impact model.
- Engage regional leaders and workforce councils and their membership to support implementation at the local level and ensure education and training leads to jobs for individuals.
- Integrate attainment goals into regional workforce council strategic plans.
- Evaluate current resources and funding related to educational attainment efforts, and identify and commit resources (funding, expertise, time) to initiatives identified in the strategic plan based on measurable outcomes.
- Identify best practices within Alabama and across other states and replicate these models

2019 SUCCESSES

Identifying Workers

Despite the decreased jobless rate across the state, Alabama's workforce participation rate has remained at a historical low and is currently the second worst in the nation. The Education & Industry Collaboration Committee (EICC) recognizes that to add 500,000 individuals to our state's workforce by 2025, the workforce participation rate must be improved.



Due to this need, the EICC focused on identifying various groups across the state that could serve as a labor source in Alabama. The EICC evaluated 17 population segments of potential workers and determined the likelihood of adding members of that population segment into the workforce.

The EICC believes that it is necessary to improve the state's image in order to draw people to live and work in Alabama and to ultimately meet the Success Plus goal of adding 500,000 new highly skilled workers to the workforce.

Data-driven Decisions

In a technology-driven world, job-matching efforts must be underpinned by big data and run on easily accessible digital platforms. The EICC recognizes that community partnership is necessary to facilitate job matching, so technology must be used more frequently and consistently by community partners and industry in order to keep the data platform relevant and updated.

The EICC recognizes the need for industry to be aware of available state-created tools that can bolster recruiting efforts, aimed at individuals who desire to obtain serious employment. In addition, the EICC recommends that policymakers explore ways to encourage lifelong learning among the targeted market and to facilitate skills acquisition for workers in the middle of their careers.

Align State Plans with Industry Needs

The EICC met with various groups on both the public and private side, to identify issues that affect the retention of workers by private industry, including chronic absenteeism. Industry must collaborate with local educators in Alabama's K-12 school system to not only prepare students for the workforce but also increase students' class attendance and engagement, which should result in a reduction in absenteeism.

Industry must continue to emphasize to educators and career coaches the issues created by chronic absenteeism and the importance of regular attendance upon a student's transition into the workforce. Ultimately, the EICC's goal is to ensure that educators and policy makers understand the importance of positive attendance from an industry perspective by identifying and retaining workers.

2020 PRIORITIES

Access to Information

Continue to educate students and parents about resources and models that promote industry awareness of available education and training for workers in order to close gaps in access to information and resources.

Best Practices

Identify and develop strategies deployed by other states or countries that increase the workforce participation rate and help transition individuals into the workforce.

Industry-Agency Engagement

Continued partnerships among employers, education, government, and community stakeholders will accelerate efforts to increase attainment levels.

The AWC, and seven Regional Workforce Councils (RWCs) provide direct access to industry leaders for state partners seeking to better understand workforce pipelines and access resources. The AWC believes there remain critical opportunities to continue building collaboration among all key partners to better align the education pipeline with workforce opportunities. To identify and collaborate on these opportunities, the AWC recommends partners continue to engage with existing state workforce councils and boards. As an independent body for industry voice, the AWC will continue to advocate as a single voice for industry needs, while also partnering and advocating for state and industry partners focused on helping meet those needs.

MARKETING & PROMOTION COMMITTEE

- **Chair:** Norman Crow, DT & Freight Company
- Scott Bowers, AAA Cooper Transportation
- Kay Gray, Dynetics
- John Hackett, Kamtek
- Randy Jordan, Bryant Bank
- Mike Kitchens, ACIPCO
- Jason Reid, Home Builders Association of Alabama
- Daryl Taylor, Airbus U.S. Manufacturing

Success Plus Goal: Awareness

All Alabama residents understand the importance of earning certificates, credentials, and degrees and know how to find information and resources to get started or continue their education and training.

- A. Develop public awareness campaigns to educate and inform Alabama residents about opportunities and access to high-demand jobs.
- B. Develop information about earning certificates, credentials, and degrees that lead to high-demand jobs and feature it on the AlabamaWorks one-stop shop website.
- C. Simply and consistently communicate the importance of earning certificates, credentials, and degrees across the state.
- D. Educate and engage champions from education (career coaches, teachers, and administrators), employers (business, industry, career centers), government, and community partners (churches, libraries, nonprofits) to play a role in increasing educational attainment.

2019 SUCCESSES

The Marketing and Promotion Committee understands that in order for Alabama to reach the Governor's attainment goal of 500,000 credentialed workers by 2025, all residents of Alabama must understand the importance of – and the significant opportunities provided by – earning certificates, credentials, and degrees. Specifically, a priority of the committee was providing easy-to-find information and resources targeted towards various special population groups who were identified as most likely to enter or re-enter the workforce. Additionally, promoting AlabamaWorks as a unified statewide brand and increasing the general public's awareness through earned and paid media remains imperative.

Identify & Reach Priority Population Groups

In a time of record-low unemployment, it is critical that we understand where we can reach and mobilize those currently not in the workforce. The AWC commissioned two surveys in 2019 to better understand the priority population groups identified in the Governor's Attainment Report.

- The first survey commissioned by the AWC was focused on the priority population groups identified in the Governor's Attainment Report to determine which groups were most likely enter or re-enter the state's workforce based on a number of questions related to barriers, real or perceived, they face to joining or rejoining the workforce. This included disability, transportation, lacking necessary skills, access to childcare, caring for family, and many others.

- A second survey segmented the population groups from the first survey that were identified as most likely to enter or re-enter our state's workforce and, more specifically, dialed in on where they receive their news, which communications are most likely to move them to take action, and how we can help remove the barriers they face to participate in Alabama's labor force.

The information gathered from the two surveys was utilized to develop online digital advertising strategies that allowed AlabamaWorks to directly engage with these population groups identified as most likely to take action towards employment. Furthermore, AlabamaWorks was able to engage these audiences on communication channels where they said they're most likely to receive information, while also delivering messaging they indicated would most effectively resonate with them.

Full survey results can be found in the appendix.

Maximize Brand Awareness, Exposure, & Reach

In an effort to leverage the limited dollars allocated towards statewide marketing and promotion of the AlabamaWorks brand, the AWC partnered with a number of organizations. A unified brand and raising awareness about the opportunities within the Success Plus Plan has been and remains a critical priority moving forward. As indicated by the numbers below, AlabamaWorks far-outweighed its paid advertising reach versus its investment.

- Based on the survey results, targeted digital advertising was created that produced over 900,000 impressions resulting in nearly 23,000 clicks (2.51% click-through-rate compared to the industry standard of 0.47%).
- Partnering with the Alabama Broadcaster's Association, the committee leveraged an ad buy that produced a 10:1 ROI ratio with over 30,000 spots airing across Alabama with a paid media value of almost one million dollars compared to the one hundred thousand dollars invested. Radio was also a significant component of these paid media efforts. Additionally, a partnership with the Alabama Press Association allowed the AWC to reach many statewide newspapers and their print editions at pennies on the dollar.
- The Marketing and Promotion Committee utilized multiple digital online news sources to produce hundreds of thousands of online page views for AlabamaWorks sponsored content statewide in 2019. This included the engagement of multiple statewide digital news networks. For example, one outlet produced 84,429 unique viewers coupled with over 3 million digital ad impressions and over 2,200 ad clicks (average click-through-rate of .18% for all ads) and was the second driver of overall traffic to the AlabamaWorks website.
- Productive earned media strategies such as press releases, guest editorials, digital communications, and other efforts continue to have a significant impact on consistently telling the story of AlabamaWorks in every corner of the state.



2020 PRIORITIES

Continued Statewide Brand Awareness

Continued investment in public awareness is a top priority of the AWC and its partners.

Public Awareness is the single-most barrier to accessing education and workforce services by Alabama students and workers. We must continue to encourage all workforce agencies to not only adopt but champion AlabamaWorks if we hope to build brand recognition for workforce resources among Alabamians. To reach hard-to-serve special populations during a period of tight labor markets and near full employment, we encourage leadership to continue to expand the AlabamaWorks budget for workforce marketing and branding.

The Marketing and Promotion Committee would recommend that the AWC continue to develop strategies that will provide all Alabama residents with the opportunity and access to create an individualized education and career pathway. While AlabamaWorks is not in its infancy stage, it's still very limited due to funding in terms of being identified as the "one-stop shop" for workforce and career readiness. A primary goal this year will be to continue to leverage the AlabamaWorks brand through strategic marketing partnerships and content-driven strategy in order to multiply every dollar that has been allocated to increase public awareness of the overall brand and goals.

Targeted Advertising & Outreach to Priority Population Groups

While significant work has been done to identify and deploy targeted outreach to a variety of the priority population groups included in the Governor's Education Attainment Report, the Marketing and Promotion Committee would recommend that the AWC continue further survey work to better understand how to educate, inform, and mobilize these hard-to-reach population groups. Additionally, the Committee would also like to further research how to best identify and consistently communicate with these population groups in order to convey the importance of earning certificates, credentials, and degrees that lead to high-demand jobs. With a record-low unemployment rate, it will be imperative that the Marketing and Promotion Committee continue to target those who are unemployed in a way that is engaging through content-driven strategy. To that end, the Committee plans to expand the current social media channels in 2020 to include Instagram as it aligns with the survey data.

Digital Access to Workforce Opportunities

Codify the unified system under development by the Governor's Office of Workforce and Transformation (GOEWT) that will support a one-stop dashboard for connecting job seekers to employers, for career exploration and discovery, and for building digital profiles and resumes for students and jobseekers.

The system and public facing dashboard -- Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways and the Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET) -- will more efficiently support existing siloed agency information to promote continuous improvement in education and workforce training programs. In doing so, the system will allow for a continuous business-systems assessment to help state leaders and service providers better understand individual outcomes resulting from Alabama education and workforce pipelines, identify opportunities for improvement by using real-time information, and continuously align programs and resources to the state's evolving economy.

The Marketing and Promotion Committee will work to help manage the ACCET and how to publicly communicate/engage with the multiple population groups, as well as how to best mobilize them to

take action in the workforce.

This would include focusing on the Governor's two-pronged career pathways model; focusing on in-school youth who may participate in a registered or industry-recognized apprenticeship program, earn their associate degree, and earn stackable credentials at the time of high school graduation. Or, under the second prong, adults who are disconnected from the workforce or those who are underemployed may upskill or become basic-skills proficient through multiple on and off ramps from workforce training and employment through stackable credentials mapped to a traditional associate degree.

Competency-based career pathways and credentials of value provide the basis for multiple points of entry and exit into and out of the workforce and education and workforce training to permit an individual to earn progressive wage increases by signaling the mastery of new skills to employers through earning stackable credentials linked to traditional academic coursework while on the pathway to earning a degree or terminal credential. Furthermore, individuals who are reticent to enter the workforce will recognize a positive incentive to enter the workforce through the security of a competency-based career pathways linked to credentials of value that provides portability and transferability between and within firms and industries.

Highlight Partner Successes

Highlight the importance of the establishment of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA), the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP), the 2020 WIOA combined plan, the State Plan Indicators of Performance and Program Quality and Accountability Metrics, among many other important initiatives.



PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

- **Chair:** Myla Calhoun, Alabama Power
- **Co-Chair:** Jennifer Christenberry, ALFA
- Leroy Abrahams, Regions Financial Corporation
- Chap Jackson, Coosa Composites
- Neil Lamb, Hudson Alpha
- Joseph Morton, Business Education Alliance of Alabama
- Joe Patton, Westervelt Company
- Phil Webb, Webb Concrete & Building Materials

Success Plus Goal: Access & Success

Alabama residents of all ages, backgrounds, and resources have access to education and receive the continuous support they need to complete certificates, credentials, and degrees.

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Provide education about financial aid, personal finance, and debt management for students, families, and job seekers. | (ELL), first-generation college students, low-income individuals, minorities, rural residents, and single-parent households. |
| B. Develop strategies to support affordability of education and training. | F. Promote access to education and training for individuals in the corrections system, including those seeking pardon or parole. |
| C. Identify barriers to access and success, such as transportation, family healthcare, and childcare, and develop innovative and creative programs to address those barriers. | G. Promote access to education and training for veterans. |
| D. Develop student success services and navigation programs at all levels of education and training. | H. Develop online tools to support access and success and share via website. |
| E. Develop strategies to ensure equity of access and support for populations with significant barriers to post-secondary educational attainment, including disabled and special needs individuals, English Language Learners | |

2019 SUCCESSES

Coalition Building

Education and workforce barriers are wide-ranging – from financial aid to transportation to childcare and more. The Public-Private Partnership Committee (PPPC) recognizes that many organizations and institutions across Alabama provide effective direct services designed to remove and address such barriers.

To help amplify the impact of existing programs, the PPPC invited a cohort of more than 30 nonprofits from across the state to engage with the committee to promote collaboration and create partner linkages that expand workforce and economic opportunities. The partnership seeks to build

the capacity of cohort partners and their programs by providing technical assistance, including grant writing services, support for staff to expand services, and outcomes tracking, that allow them to continue to connect more Alabamians to training and economic opportunity.

- **Grant Support** – Cohort members have been awarded \$6.4 million in out-of-state grant support and have another \$5 million in pending or in process applications. Grant writers are working with cohort members to identify additional opportunities and create partner applications that include two or more cohort members.
- **Capacity-Expanding Staffing** – New and expanding work does not happen without employees to head up initiatives. Committee partners have provided three cohort partners with grants for staffing to create or expand capacity for programs to improve workforce outcomes in Alabama.
- **Metrics Tracking** – The Alabama Power Foundation is tracking outcomes of supported activities of the cohort to U.N. Sustainable Development Goals, which are the standard language of program impact for large national and global foundations. This alignment allows the members of the cohort to align their impact with that of potential national partners.

National Partnerships

The PPPC is actively connecting and supporting partnerships between local and national nonprofits, serving as a catalyst for attracting resources and expertise to Alabama.

The committee has worked with industry, agency, and nonprofit partners to build or expand national relationships that help cohort partners grow their ability to meet the needs of their communities. These relationships serve to connect partners with new approaches to collective impact, emerging social-service strategies, and resources that can help them grow their impact to Alabama's workforce.

Along with thought leadership from national partners, these relationships serve to raise awareness of social investment opportunities in Alabama and has helped attract more than \$6 million in new resources to the state – helping partners connect people to jobs, economic opportunity, and meet the needs of their communities.

Access to Financial Aid

In order to promote the Governor's plan to add 500,000 individuals with valuable postsecondary credentials to Alabama's workforce by 2025, stakeholders across the state worked to ensure high school seniors understood and applied for financial aid.

More than 28,000 members of Alabama's Class of 2019 completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by June 30, 2019, and gained access to the scholarships, grants, work-study programs, and low-cost loans. Completing the FAFSA is a key indicator of whether high school students will go on to pursue postsecondary education; 9 out of 10 students who file a financial aid form continue their education immediately after high school.

In December 2019, President Trump signed the FUTURE Act, sponsored by Alabama Sen. Doug Jones, which simplified the FAFSA by enabling data sharing between the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Department of Education, removing 20 questions from the form, and decreasing the likelihood of errors in the financial aid process.

Across the 16 Southern Regional Education Board States, in 2016-17, about \$23.5 billion was invested in federal and state student aid. Of this, about \$18 billion was federal and \$5 billion was

state funded, or 79 percent and 21 percent, respectively. But in Alabama, just 1 percent of all student aid is state funded--the lowest investment of any of the 16 Southern Regional Education Board states. With 99 percent federal, Pell is Alabama's de facto state student aid program. Given this split, it is not surprising that national reports by entities such as the Lumina Foundation find that Alabama starts students in college at rates similar to other states but does not finish them. This underscores the need to better align our state's programs in order to save students and taxpayers time, credits, and money.

Lumina Equity Leadership Acceleration Grant

In July 2019, Alabama was selected as one of six states to receive an Equity Leadership Acceleration Grant (ELAG) from the Lumina Foundation, which is the nation's largest philanthropic organization focused on increasing success in higher education. Funding of \$50,000 is intended to support states in building coalitions, systems and processes to increase equity in postsecondary attainment. Led by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) in partnership with the AWC and the GOEWT, Alabama's ELAG efforts focus on cultivating equity champions as part of the state's Success Plus Attainment Plan and informing the broader outreach campaign to increase postsecondary participation and success, particularly for Alabamians of color and other underserved populations.



2020 PRIORITIES

Regional Coalitions

Develop a network of non-agency partners and encourage collaboration to share best practices, leverage resources, and develop programs that support access to workforce opportunities and provide wrap-around services to better ensure successful certificate, credential, degree completion, and long-term job success.

National Partnerships

Continue to nurture and expand relationships with national partners focused on growing programing, introducing nationally-recognized techniques, and building capacity of local workforce

partners to provide wraparound support toward completion of training and successful job placement.

Addressing Barriers

Identify and develop strategies to address barriers that prevent access and success in postsecondary educational attainment, particularly focused on historically underserved and rural populations who have been shown to experience specific and pronounced challenges to successfully completing a certificate, credential, or degree.

Access to Financial Aid

Two key opportunities to increase FAFSA completion are advocating to simplify the form and providing students and families accurate, easy-to-understand information about the availability of grants and scholarships for technical and academic education after high school through the Cash for College campaign.

In order to support more targeted outreach to students, the ACHE launched a FAFSA Completion Portal for high school guidance counselors and career coaches based on a template developed by the Colorado Department of Education.



Explore College Promise Options for Alabama

Currently 24 states have state-wide College Promise programs. The existing programs are highly varied based upon population to be served. In addition to the 24 state-wide programs, there are 300 community- and regionally-based programs, according to the bipartisan College Promise Campaign.

Some College Promise programs aim at high school seniors broadly, others at specific populations such as CTE, apprenticeships, or returning adults. The funding mechanisms for college and career promise programs across the country are as diverse as the programs. Some

are last-dollar, others provide funding for wrap-around services including transportation and child care. But in all cases, the federal Pell Grant provides foundational funding. Education Testing Service (2018) has identified five distinct funding models for statewide and local College Promise programs.

Should Alabama provide a state career promise model, the state will be positioning itself to complement the expanded year-round Pell supported by the Alabama congressional delegation led by Sen. Richard Shelby and signed into law as part of the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act on May 4, 2017. This Act created a new summer Pell Grant of \$2,920 on top of the existing nine-month federal Pell Grant of nearly \$6,000, aligning for the first time the nation's foundational need-based student aid program to the continuous enrollment systems public higher education has had in place for more than four decades. This act was operationalized starting in summer 2018.

WORKFORCE STRUCTURE & ALIGNMENT COMMITTEE

- **Chair:** Cleve Poole, Pioneer Electric Cooperative
- **Co-Chair:** Chuck Dilaura, Neptune Technology Group – Retired
- Mike Kemp, Kemp Management Solutions
- Christy Knowles, Coosa Valley Medical Center
- Jessica Oates, International Paper
- Daryle Pilkinton, Arista Aviation Service
- Randy Skagen, NUCOR Steel
- Ronnie Boles, General Automotive and Machine Shop

Success Plus Goal: Access & Success

Pathways from education and training to high-demand jobs are defined. Programs, curriculum, and guidance along pathways encourage success, achievement, and opportunities for continuing education.

- A. Design and communicate clear pathways from education and training to high wage/high-demand jobs.
- B. Expand CTE and dual-enrollment programs across the state to meet the demands of industry and invest in training excellent teachers for these programs.
- C. Expand work-based learning programs across the state.
- D. Expand apprenticeship opportunities for youth and adults.
- E. Integrate life and employment skills in curriculum and training from k-12 onward.
- F. Develop a formal process for establishing and evaluating high-quality credentials driven by the needs of business and industry on an ongoing basis.
- G. Strengthen the network of well-trained career coaches and career coordinators at all levels of education and training.
- H. Strengthen and expand the use of statewide career planning tools for all levels of education and training.

2019 SUCCESSES

Establishment of the Alabama Committee on Credentialing & Career Pathways

The GOEWT applied for and won a Credential Engine grant that provided \$50,000 to support the development of an Alabama Credential Registry. The registry will support the work of the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP) in identifying credentials of value. The ACHE is managing the grant.

All credentials, whether included on the Compendium of Valuable Credential or not, will be registered on the Alabama Credential Registry. The ACHE, ALSDE, and ACCS will collaborate to proactively register secondary and postsecondary credential and degrees. The Alabama Credential Registry will be linked to the ATLAS on Career Pathways and the ACCET to ensure that all credentials are coded for inclusion in the Alabama Competency Taxonomy and the Alabama Credential Taxonomy.

Alabama has received grant funding of \$50,000 from Credential Engine to promote transparency

around credentials for consumers and employers. Funds will be used to develop a statewide credential registry and publish information on Alabama's credentials to the national Credential Finder database. Alabama's registry will support the work of the ACCCP.

The ACCCP was established by Legislative Act No. 2019-506 and is being co-chaired by State Superintendent of Education Dr. Eric Mackey and Alabama Community College System Chancellor Jimmy Baker. Members of the AWC, and specifically the Workforce Structure and Alignment Committee, along with subject matter experts from numerous state agencies are also involved in this work. The ACCCP is tasked with:

1. Identifying the in-demand career pathways across Alabama and in each of the state's seven regions and developing competency models and career pathways for each of the in-demand occupations; and
2. Identifying the credentials of value associated with each of the in-demand occupations.

All occupations in the state are being ranked based upon a five-star rubric system that was developed by analyzing labor market information and considers whether an occupation meets the following criteria:

- Pays wages that are at least 70% of the mean regional wage
- Belongs in a career cluster that is ranked in the top eight for the annual regional attainment goal
- Has positive annual growth and positive projected growth over the next decade
- Is included on the regional top four in-demand jobs list (or in the 75th percentile for average regional wage)
- Requires a post-secondary degree, certificate, or credential for initial employment

An in-demand job would meet at least three of the five criteria. Competency models for each in-demand occupation will include personal effectiveness, academic competencies, workplace competencies, industry-specific competencies, sector-specific competencies, occupation-specific competencies, and management competencies. The ACCCP held its first meeting at the Hyundai facility in Montgomery on December 18, 2019.

Implementation of the Technical Advisory Committees

The ACCCP recommended individuals to the Governor who have been appointed to serve on Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) for each of the 16 career clusters. The TACs are comprised of seven members each who are subject matter experts with experience in education, workforce, and economic development. In addition to developing the regional and statewide list of in-demand occupations, the TACs will make recommendations to the ACCCP about which credentials should be included in the regional and statewide Compendia of Valuable Credentials by considering whether the credential is:

- Required by law, mandated by industry, or preferred by industry
- Required to obtain a job, part of a stackable sequence, or complementary
- Accredited or recognized by a statewide or national industry-recognized accrediting body
- Aligned to an occupation on a regional or statewide list of in-demand occupations
- Achievable by students in a secondary and/or post-secondary level of study
- Earned after a minimum number of hours of instruction time
- Stackable in a sequence of aligned competencies
- Valuable in that it leads to a wage premium of at least 20% over a high school diploma
- Trackable by the ATLAS on Career Pathways

- Portable across or within an industry sector

The TACs have begun their work, and the members of the AWC Structure & Alignment Committee are actively involved in this process.

Work-based Learning

On May 22, 2019, Governor Ivey's request to allow in-school youth ages 16-24 to access Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) was approved by the U.S. Department of Labor. In-school youth who are WIOA-eligible and who are participating in a pre-apprenticeship or a youth apprenticeship program will use ITAs to support the required technical instruction component of youth apprenticeship, costs associated with dual enrollment course or CTE courses, and to procure supportive services such as transportation and childcare needed to persist in a career pathway.

Act 2019-527, the Eliminating Legal Barrier to Apprenticeship (ELBA) Act—passed by the Alabama Legislature and signed into law by Governor Ivey in 2019—removed legal barriers that prevented 16- and 17-year-olds from completing apprenticeship programs in apprenticeable occupations if the in-school youth apprenticeship is supervised by the Alabama Department of Education and the Alabama Department of Labor and if the hazards associated with an apprenticeable occupation are merely incidental to the apprenticeship.

Act 2019-506, the Alabama Industry-Recognized and Registered Apprenticeship Act—passed by the Alabama Legislature and signed into law by Governor Ivey in 2019—created a \$500 enhancement for the Apprenticeship Alabama Tax Credit for hiring in-school youth apprentices.

Alabama received a \$1.2 million federal programmatic apprenticeship state expansion (ASE) grant in June 2019. The \$1.2M ASE is split over three years to support the on-the-job training component for in-school and out-of-school youth apprentices. The funds will be used by the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship to incentivize youth apprentice employers to provide wage increases according to the wage progression established by the apprentice's competency model and apprentice/employer agreement.

2020 PRIORITIES

Identifying Industry-recognized Credentials

The identification of industry-recognized credentials for inclusion in the Compendium of Valuable Credentials is a critical next step in Alabama's trek to add 500,000 high-skilled workers to the state's workforce by 2025. In 2020, the Structure & Alignment Committee plans to work closely with the GOEWT and the TACs to identify credentials of value and to ensure that all Alabama citizens have a clear path and access to earning them.

Career Coach Expansion

The state has greatly expanded its career coach program over the past five years, and it should continue to allocate funds and increase resources and support needed to expand the program even further. There is a need to add additional career coaches at the state's larger high schools (where the student to career coach ratio is too high) and at the middle school level so that students begin thinking about potential career paths at a younger age. Career coaches should collaborate with the regional workforce councils, employers, and community colleges to recruit relevant placements for in-school CTE concentrators participating in work-based learning activities. Additionally, we

recommend the implementation of standards for those who qualify to be a career coach as well as accountability metrics to measure how successful they are in their role.

Work-based Learning

The state should continue to develop strategies that will provide every Alabama student the opportunity to create an individualized education and career pathway.

This can be accomplished by expanding work-based learning programs and developing connections between work-based learning, workplace competencies, and academic coursework that will help the state link competency-based career pathways to in-demand occupations.

Work-based learning provides students with educational opportunities that typically cannot be replicated in the classroom and promotes improved skills, higher efficiency, and the availability of a better-trained labor pool. Well-managed work-based learning experiences build confidence in the school system and have benefits for the student, employer, mentor, school, and community.

The state recently established the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship within AIDT, and it is focused on expanding the use of registered apprenticeships and providing students across the state with opportunities to participate in work-based learning programs.

The committee also supports the state's long-term strategic plan to scale work-based learning by fostering collaboration between the business and education communities.

ALABAMA WORKFORCE COUNCIL

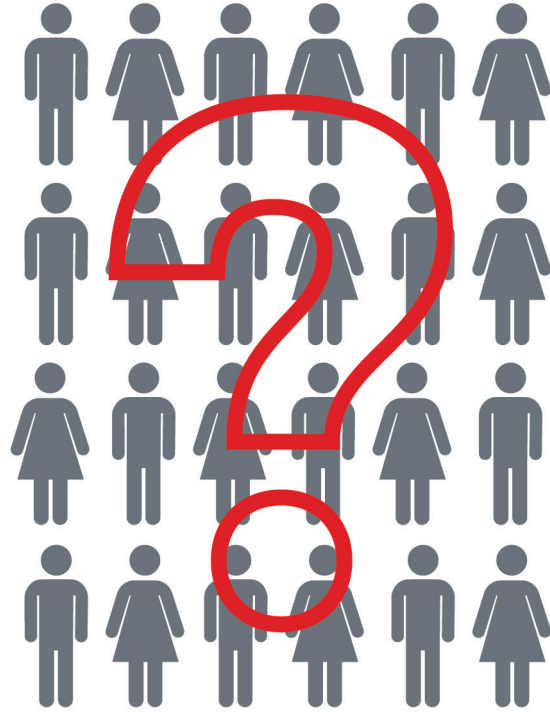
APPENDIX

EDUCATION & INDUSTRY COLLABORATION COMMITTEE: WHERE ARE THE WORKERS?

Introduction

In 2019, the Education & Industry Collaboration Committee (EICC) of the AWC focused on identifying various population segments (i.e., “buckets” of workers) that could serve as a labor source in Alabama. The EICC evaluated 17 population segments of potential workers and determined the likelihood of adding majority of the population segment into the workforce. In addition, the EICC considered various issues that affect the State’s labor participation rate, including absenteeism, transportation, and the need for a vast improvement of Alabama’s image.

The EICC developed and implemented a process for evaluating, establishing, and documenting population segments that could be untapped labor sources crucial to attaining the Success Plus plan’s target of adding 500,000 skilled workers to the State’s workforce by 2025. First, the EICC identified population segments and the type of data that would be necessary to fully evaluate the attainability of each segment (“Phase One”). Based on publicly available data from federal and state agencies, the EICC performed a careful review of each identified population segment to determine: (1) the approximate amount of individuals included in the population segment; (2) the factors influencing workforce participation for each segment; and (3) the attainability of adding a majority of the population segment to the workforce. The following population segments and issues were considered as part of the EICC’s Phase One review; however, the EICC determined they did not meet the criteria to be carried over for a more thorough “Phase Two” review for the reasons stated.



- **Incarcerated Individuals**—There are various programs already in place at the Alabama Department of Corrections to train and reintroduce prisoners to the workforce. For example, the Alabama Community College System, in partnership with the Alabama Department of Corrections, has numerous education and skill training programs in place at the state correctional institutions to reintroduce inmates to the workforce.
- **Legal Immigrants**—Legal immigrants should be offered training in the English language, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (“STEM”), and soft-skills development. Funding, state legislation, and cooperation with federal government programs would likely be required to achieve meaningful success.
- **Unemployment Beneficiaries**—Alabama is close to full employment, and thus, this population segment was determined to be of little value to the overall attainment strategy of the EICC.
- **Social Security Income Beneficiaries**—Federal program, State cannot affect eligibility requirements.
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Beneficiaries**—Federal program, State cannot affect eligibility requirements.

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“SNAP”) Beneficiaries**—Federal program, State cannot affect eligibility requirements.
- **Medicaid Recipients**—Federal program, State cannot affect eligibility requirements.
- **Drug Abuse/Drug Addiction**—With over 17,000 Alabamians addicted, excluding some 14,000 incarcerated for drugs, this issue will require further study and potential legislation to reduce benefits and increase treatment options. The EICC acknowledges that potential workers are affected by the Opioid Crisis in Alabama. However, the Governor’s Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council has been tasked with developing a comprehensive coordinated strategy to combat Alabama’s crisis, including reducing the number of adverse consequences caused by opioid addiction like inability to work and/or retain a job.
- **Stay-at-Home Parents**—According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau data from 2017, Alabama has roughly 334,530 stay-at-home parents. The EICC determined that majority of these individuals are typically not financially incentivized to work and can face obstacles in re-entering prior careers. Accordingly, the EICC determined that this was not a population segment worth pursuing for attainability purposes.
- **College Students**—This segment consists mainly of part-time workers that would not be able to meet long-term labor demands. However, the State is focusing on increasing apprenticed students and retaining college graduates. Moreover, college students provide needed part-time help for hundreds of Alabama businesses.

The EICC’s Phase Two review included a deeper evaluation of certain selected population segments and what can be done to improve their employment outcomes. The EICC focused this review on the following population segments and issues: chronic absenteeism, discouraged workers, the able-disabled, veterans, and public high school graduates, out-bound commuters, Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (“OASDI”) program beneficiaries, and Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (“ABAWDs”). During this phase, the EICC collected additional data from state and federal agencies, evaluated programs implemented by other states to increase workforce participation in each population segment, and heard from subject matter experts that interact with these population segments regularly. After an in-depth review, the EICC determined that the following population segments were not attainable for the reasons stated.

- **ABAWD Beneficiaries**—Subset of federal SNAP program that provides SNAP benefits for 3 months in 3 years unless an individual is meeting certain work requirements. The State cannot restrict eligibility requirements. Alabama does not currently have a time limit waiver on benefits and has an extended disqualification period, so it is already doing the most it can legally do with respect to this program.
- **OASDI Beneficiaries**—Comprehensive federal benefits program that provides benefits to retirees and disabled individuals, and to their spouses, children and survivors. A person contributes to this program either through payroll/self-employment taxes and is eligible for benefits based on a minimum number of work credits. The OASDI program is a federally funded and administered program and Alabama has no regulatory authority over the program. Moreover, the majority of individuals receiving OASDI benefits in Alabama are retirees over the age of 62 (approximately 733,000).
- **Out-Bound Commuters**—Alabama has a net out commute of approximately 40,000 workers. The target rich area here is recruiting workers from other states, but the issue is the cost per capita to sway already committed workers versus those from surrounding states as pointed out in the March 13, 2019 Cygnal Report. Research revealed that factors beyond the EICC’s influence lead to a worker’s decision to commute out of state for a job, such as job availability, salary, commute time, and family/community specific needs.

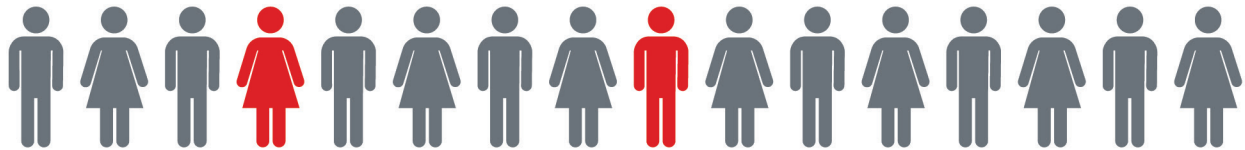
Accordingly, the EICC’s report offers recommendations and solutions focused on the following population segments and issues: **chronic absenteeism, able-disabled, veterans, discouraged**

workers, and public high school graduates.

The EICC acknowledges that regardless of the recommendations provided in this report, to achieve attainability in the selected population segments, improving our State's image is necessary to draw people to live and work in Alabama, and thus, is the ultimate conceivable method to meet Success Plus's 2025 goal of obtaining 500,000 new workers in the State.

Chronic Absenteeism

Poor attendance in the workplace is contributing to Alabama's low workforce numbers. Employers are combating workplace absenteeism to minimize production loss. Despite this prevalent issue, policies established by the Alabama State Department of Education (the "ALSDE") do not align with the goal of reducing absenteeism. In its 2017 report on chronic absenteeism, the ALSDE made clear that "[c]hronic absenteeism is defined as missing 15 or more days of school for any reason – including excused or unexcused absences." [1] Similarly, under Alabama's Every Student Succeeds Act state plan, the State defines chronic absenteeism as the percentage of students having 15 or more absences in a given school year. The State's goal is to decrease the overall chronic absenteeism rate to no greater than 5% by 2030 for all districts, schools, and the state. In the 2017-2018 school year, more than 18% of Alabama public school students were chronically absent. [2] Despite the data evidencing chronic absenteeism as an issue facing Alabama's students, and despite the ALSDE establishing a threshold of what "chronic absenteeism" is supposed to be, the ALSDE's 2019



Attendance Manual increased the number of total allowed absences (including excused and unexcused absences) from 15 to 18 for the 2019-2020 school year. [3] This policy is in direct contradiction to the table on page one of the ALSDE Attendance Manual, which shows students missing 15-19 school days have a one in five chance to graduate High School. [4]

The EICC believes this policy change will negatively affect Alabama students and families by reducing the number of required attendance days. Almost all employers have an attendance policy that generally allows for far less than 18 absences in a year prior to termination. As evidence, a 2018 Bureau of Labor Statistics Survey lists the average unexcused absence rate of different sectors of workers in 2018 between two, for mining jobs, and four, for healthcare support occupations. [5] Both well below the allowed school absenteeism rate. Simply put, industry maintains that accepted/excessive absence in school, sets students up for failure by diminishing the importance of the commitment to be at work every day. As a result, all policies related to attendance in schools should be

uniformly tailored toward ensuring that students learn the importance of attendance early so that bad absenteeism habits do not continue when they become workers.

Ultimately, the EICC's goal is to ensure that educators and policy makers understand the importance of positive attendance from an industry perspective by identifying and retaining workers. As a result, the EICC recommends that the ALSDE revise its absenteeism policy and reduce the number of allowed absences going forward from 18 to 9 per school year, effective Fall 2020.

Notably, the EICC found that a significant negative impact on student attendance is excessive teacher absence. As important as reducing student absences, is the positive example set by teachers who are committed to being at work. Industry employers do not allow for excessive absences, and as the goal of education is to prepare students for the workforce, why is it allowed in the K-12 classroom? The EICC recommends that the Legislature address this serious issue within the teacher retirement system and implement the

proposed “Tier 3” benefit package. Many schools across the country are enacting policies and are collecting real-time data on absences so that they can detect patterns and intervene with individual students early. These schools use technology and data systems to track attendance data and give daily updates on students’ attendance. Other states have implemented methods to improve attendance. For example, Texas has deployed a flu immunization campaign which directly links health and attendance. Similar efforts in Alabama can be used to partner industry with schools and community organizations in order to improve attendance rates. The EICC will support forthcoming state legislation or ALSDE policy changes in line with the recommendations cited above. It is important for Alabama industries that the image of our State project a progressive and forward thinking mindset.



Existing Programs in Place to Reduce Absenteeism

Industry Outreach

The EICC acknowledges that collaboration and career development by industry with local educators is necessary in Alabama’s K-12 school system to prepare students for the workforce and increase students’ class participation, assuring better attendance. The EICC recommends that the AWC encourage its industry-members to emphasize to educators

and career coaches the issues created by chronic absenteeism, so that students will understand the importance of positive attendance in the workforce. Furthermore, the EICC supports the Regional Workforce Councils’ sponsored educator tours, which help to communicate industry expectations to students.

Alabama’s Two Career Preparedness Programs

The High School Ready to Work program focuses on students who are ready to enter the workforce after graduation and requires a 95% attendance rate in order for participating students to obtain their National Career Readiness Certificate and Alabama Certified Work Credential. Importantly, this program is in the process of meeting the requirements to become a recognized postsecondary credential, which will enable participating students to master the competencies for each of the 16 career clusters. In the Simulated Workplace program, students attend business or industry learning environments that are simulated like companies. In these simulated workplaces, the concept of job promotion based on positive attendance is conveyed to students, including the general standard employer absenteeism policy of 9 days.

DISABLED INDIVIDUALS

Individuals with disabilities are significantly under-represented in the Alabama labor market. Employment data shows a persistent disparity between people with disabilities and the general public.

As of 2017, 14.7% of Alabama’s population between the ages of 20-64 were disabled—approximately 413,500 individuals. Of that number, approximately 138,936 disabled individuals were working or seeking work, leaving 274,564 disabled individuals not in the labor force. Additionally, individuals with a disability are eligible for certain federal support benefits, such as social security disability benefits, SNAP benefits, etc., which provide financial support when those individuals are



unable to work.

It is indisputable that there is a need for a targeted job-readiness and skills training program that will strengthen the Alabama workforce by forging stronger linkages between families, individuals with disabilities, and employers to meet the workforce needs. Individuals with disabilities represent an “untapped” labor force that can provide employers much-needed employees who have shown to be dedicated, have excellent attendance records, low turnover, and on-time work performance.

The EICC has developed the following recommendations to increase the number of disabled individuals in Alabama’s workforce.

Increase the Staff of Non-Profits

The goal of the Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation (“ADRS”) is to increase the rate of placement of individuals into the workforce by 25% at a minimum. Any increase in funding to ADRS, through the state budget, will be funneled to all Vocational Rehabilitation Programs. That includes 29 Community Rehabilitation Partner agencies and 39 Community Rehabilitation Programs (“CRP”) that tailor their functions to close the gap between disabled individuals seeking work and employers willing to hire them. More effective partnerships are achieved when state funds are challenged through the ADRS due the federal match potential, which will match five dollars for every one dollar of state funds. The successes of employment for our disabled is due in great part to these CRPs and cannot be overstated. In addition to any State funding increases, it is recommended to consider utilization of philanthropic means as well.

The ADRS’ Vocational Rehabilitation Service (“VRS”) is the program that, statewide and nationally, provides specialized staff, has 100 years of public VRS experience, and receives federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (“WIOA”) funding to support the employment of our able disabled. Over the last five years,

approximately half of some 21,500 disabled have received employment through these CRPs. The internal resources developed over many years, such as rehabilitation engineering, assistive technology, business relations services for employers, mobility specialists, and others, are utilized with the Community Partners to maximize efficiency.



Increase Funding for Reliable and Accessible Public Transportation

Individuals with disabilities are three times more likely to depend on public transportation than those without disabilities. Many rural areas in Alabama lack any type of transportation service, affecting many persons with disabilities for whom public transportation is a personal and employment related lifeline.

Improving access to transportation requires coordination of state, county, and local resources. According to the data available from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Alabama is one of only four states to provide no state funding for public transit.^[6] In the absence of investing in these services, Alabama fails to take advantage of available federal matching funds. In general, the federal public transportation program allows an 80% matching share for capital projects (i.e., the purchase of new buses or vans) and a 50% maximum share for operating expenses.^[7] Accordingly, the EICC recommends that the Legislature dedicate a reasonable amount of funds to begin utilizing the federal matching funds program.

Tax Incentive for Hiring Disabled Workers

To further encourage employers to hire capable disabled individuals, the EICC supports the recent motion passed by the ADRS to pursue

legislation for an Alabama Work Opportunity Tax Credit for employers who successfully hire and retain person with disabilities. Modeled after Act 2019-506, we propose consideration of an employer tax credit of \$1,750 after seven months employment and possible consideration of a bonus based on employment service, to be deliberated with the present bill that ADRS is supporting this upcoming legislative session.

Encourage the State to Serve as a Model Employer for Disabled Individuals

The EICC urges the Governor's Office on Disability ("GOOD") to consider the issuance of an executive order that would make Alabama a "Model Employer." Equally important is the teaming up of the State Personnel Department and the Governor's office to structure and ensure that the State's hiring process and the existing "hiring preference" become more streamlined and efficient toward employing the able disabled.

Assist Employers in Tailoring an Apprenticeship Program Focused on the Disabled Through the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships are an employer's training program and as such, the employers define the skills and competencies they require of employees. For those willing to invest, the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship ("AOA") will assist employers in creating efficient and effective apprenticeship programs. The aim of the AOA is to set a standard for the employer to include this group of valued individuals into the workforce. The ADRS will supply the talent pool and also partner with AOA given its previous success and experience in this area (ADRS has placed 11,960 disabled individuals into 69 different career cluster pathways in 2017, 2018 and through September 2019). With the previous successes of the ADRS, including youth work-based learning programs, several summer work-based programs for students with sensory impairment, work-based learning in a secondary school setting and others, ADRS has resources, expertise and related services that will be needed in the establishment of this new

apprenticeship endeavor for our State. It is this new endeavor that will be an opportunity for the AOA and ADRS to work closely together to better the lives of our disabled citizenry and improve the image of Alabama as a model employer State.

It is important to note that ADRS has the potential to maximize state WIOA funds, which are matched at five dollars for every one dollar of state funds, to strengthen this partnership.

VETERANS

Alabama is a military-friendly state that boasts a rich military history. As of 2017, Alabama had approximately 369,962 veterans living in the state.^[8] In 2018, Alabama's average veteran unemployment rate was 2.8%.^[9]



Unlike other categories discussed in this report, there is not an unemployment gap with veterans. The EICC has outlined some proposed actions to address increasing the number of working veterans and their spouses in the State of Alabama.



Recruit Out-of-State Veterans

Veterans are known to be a very disciplined and hard-working part of the labor force. The EICC believes particular focus should be placed on adding to the existing number of veterans in Alabama by recruiting out-of-state veterans to move to Alabama for work. Upon leaving the service, military members have a choice in which state they want to relocate, find a job and settle down. Many states recruit other states' active

service members and veterans to increase their own workforce numbers. Alabama is already engaged in these types of efforts, but they could be bolstered by allocating funding to increase those efforts. This can be accomplished by attending and recruiting at other states' veteran job fairs, improving Alabama's own veteran job fairs, increasing recruiting tools through technology such as virtual job interviews and social media, etc. The EICC also recommends that the State improve Alabama's military and veteran image by highlighting our rich military history and benefits offered to veterans and service members, enticing our current veteran population to stay in Alabama and to recruit out-of-state veterans.

Support Non-Profits such as Still Serving Veterans

Still Serving Veterans ("SSV") is a 13 year-old 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation headquartered in Huntsville, Alabama, with two regional offices in Birmingham and Phenix City. Its principal focus is assisting veterans and transitioning military members' move into their next career after having served our nation's military. With mature procedures and processes, over the last three years, SSV has helped over 2,700 veterans find meaningful work. Each client is provided personalized coaching and support by a counselor who is also a veteran. Each client's demographic and case notes are entered into a case management system which provides for extensive tracking, reporting, and analysis. From January 1 through November 15, 2019, SSV has assisted 939 veterans gain employment with an average salary of \$48,746. The SSV Virtual Team attends various military career fairs each year in Tennessee, Georgia, and Washington D.C. They have established relationships with veteran and military career fair coordinators including Recruit Military and Warriors to the Workforce. Through partnering with the state, and expanding this model to recruiting efforts at additional job and career fairs, the SSV Virtual Team can serve as a recruiting arm for Alabama, actively recruiting transitioning military, veterans and spouses to come live and work in Alabama. The EICC recommends supporting the proven veterans recruiting model of SSV by contributing financially to their needs for: hiring additional

veterans to work on their virtual team, and covering travel costs to attend veteran and military career fairs. The annual cost estimate for this initiative is \$201,473.

To set this program up for success, the EICC endorses a legislative effort to include an initial three-year funding amount of \$604,419.00 to Still Serving Veterans with provision for annual renewal beginning on the fourth year, provided that SSV furnishes metrics on an annual basis to comply with the State's legislative financing requirements.

Increase Awareness of Military Spouse Professional License Fee Reimbursement

Spouses of active service members and veterans face certain challenges with seeking and maintaining their own employment, which has a direct impact on Alabama's workforce numbers. In general, spouses of active duty service members struggle to find employment when they are transferred to a new location because many employers know that the duration of their employment is only temporary due to the transient nature of military assignments. Additionally, spouses in careers with state certification requirements often face a long waiting period for their work licenses to transfer, delaying their employment opportunities. Licensing fees associated with re-licensing in a new state can become burdensome as well. To help alleviate this problem, the Department of Defense has developed programs to reimburse spouses up to \$500 for professional relicensing cost when they relocate.

Finally, in consideration of the value of veteran programs and the enhanced State image concomitant, the EICC endorses exploration into a mechanism for reimbursements where federal programs prove insufficient, as part of a veteran focused legislative effort.

DISCOURAGED WORKERS

Discouraged workers are a subset of individuals that are marginally attached to the labor force. These are individuals who have sought work within the last year, but are not part of the labor force because they haven't

pursued employment in the last month. In Alabama, there are approximately 21,300 marginally attached, of which 6,300 are classified as discouraged workers, indicating that they stopped seeking employment because they did not think they would get a job. This population segment is willing to work, but for some reason has not been offered the right opportunity and stopped seeking work. These could be people who were previous caregivers, retirees who want to return to work, individuals who lack basic employable skills or work experience, or people with justice related backgrounds. Data shows that as the economy improves, people within this population segment feel encouraged and return to the labor force, actively seeking employment. However, if they are not offered employment within a reasonable amount of time, they will again stop seeking employment.

The AlabamaWorks Cygnal Survey of February 12, 2019 report recommends targeting the age groups of 18-34 in urban areas to gain the highest return on investment using state resources. Those resources would include, but not be limited to, conquering transportation barriers where it makes sense, focus marketing, improve data-digital platforms to facilitate job matching, methods to improve/supplement worker training and others. This aligns with AlabamaWorks and could be executed region-wide. Discouraged workers are likely to always be a target population segment.

Improve Marketing of Current State Resources for Job Matching

In a technology-driven world, digital platforms aimed at job matching must use expansive amounts of data to support local economies so clients are matched with jobs in demand in the area. The use of data can be difficult to interpret if not presented with end users in mind. The EICC endorses the State's AlabamaWorks platform, while recognizing that community partnerships are needed to expand the platform to include more tools for individuals that are easily accessible and simplified to provide the most information with the least number of steps and references. The marketing team of AlabamaWorks can assist in efforts to ensure that the digital platform is meaningful for individuals, while presenting the platform

to businesses as a recruiting tool, aimed at individuals who seek meaningful employment.

Improve Worker Skills: Education and Training

Discouraged workers need assistance in obtaining postsecondary certificates, credentials, and degrees of value leading to well-compensated jobs as soon as possible. Policymakers could explore ways to encourage lifelong learning among the targeted market and skills acquisition for workers in the middle of their careers. These types of policies could take the form of "Individual Training Accounts" ("ITAs") or "Lifelong Learning Accounts" ("LLAs"), which would provide workers the flexibility to save on their own and use federal assistance in a way that best prepares them for available jobs. In Oregon, LLAs are an employee-owned educational savings account that helps pay for education and training expenses. The program is a new employee benefits program where regular contributions by employees are matched by the employer.^[10] Trade school tuition reimbursement is another option if a student ⁽¹⁾ completes the trade school curriculum, ⁽²⁾ is gainfully employed within a certain amount of time after completing the program, and ⁽³⁾ is employed by an Alabama employer. The State could easily create a higher incentive if the student lands a job in a "rural" county – similar to the Jobs Act tax credits.

Reduce Occupational Licensing Barriers

One quarter of occupations now require workers to obtain state-mandated licenses, up from about 5% in 1950.^[11] While some of these credentials provide important assurances of consumer safety, imposing licensing requirements on too many occupations, with standards that vary across states, creates unnecessary hurdles for workers who aspire to gain meaningful employment in a new profession. Alabama needs a streamlined renewal path, perhaps a 30-day review period while employed, a one-two week tutoring session, or other appropriate training to allow the employee to begin working as soon as possible.



PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

In 2017, Alabama's public high school graduating class totaled 49,764 students.^[12] Of these graduates, 15,804 (or 32%) enrolled in a four-year college, and another 15,738 students enrolled in a two-year college program.^[13] That leaves just over 18,000 high school graduates who did not enroll in any college program.^[14]

Alabama's 18,000 high school graduates who are not seeking a college education are a prime source for recruiting new entrants into the labor force. Alabama does not have data showing how many of these 18,000 graduates went to work, which poses a need for a new metric system to provide data to aid in targeting this group effectively. The nationwide labor force participation rate for this segment of the population is 72.3%, with male high school graduates having a slightly higher overall labor participation rate compared to female high school graduates.^[15] Unfortunately, the statistics from the past 50 years show that the participation rate for high school graduates without a college degree has dropped almost 10%.^[16] Therefore, it is vital that Alabama has programs and plans prepared to reverse this trend and bring this demographic into the labor force. A pointed effort to expose and offer

training for these students from the eighth grade until they reach an employable age is indisputably the most efficient approach to meet the Governor's goals by 2025.

High School Trade Competitions

Multiple states have begun hosting competitions where various high school teams compete in trade-related challenges. One such challenge in Louisiana involved a private trade association hosting craft competitions in the fields of welding, carpentry, and electrical.^[17] Alabama could just as easily find private sector associations or industries willing to host these competitions. Plenty of Alabama high schools already have classes and extra-curricular programs geared toward technical trades, so creating a competition for these students could serve as a positive reinforcement for students seeking an alternative to attending college.

Industry Partnerships with Schools

Often times in Alabama high schools, part of the school schedule may contain a "sports hour" for athletes, but there is no compensatory time allotted for students who wish to ply a trade. Although there may be technical classes offered at the high school, if students were able to spend time with potential employers while gaining practical experience, the transition from high school graduation to joining the workforce could be more seamless. Not only would students have an opportunity to explore a field of interest, but employers in the community would also have a chance to target and recruit those students directly out of high school.

[1] Alabama State Department of Education, Report Highlights the Focus on Chronic Absenteeism in Alabama and the Nation (Sept. 6, 2018), available at <https://www.alsde.edu/sec/comm/News%20Releases/09-06-2017%20Portraits%20of%20Change%20-%20Chronic%20Absenteeism%20Report.pdf>.

[2] See Attendance Works, The Time is Now: Leveraging the Power of Chronic Absences to Improve Achievement Presentation (Mar. 31, 2018) available at [https://www.alsde.edu/sec/pss/Attendance/Alabama%20-%20March%2021%202018%20-Revised%20\(002\).pptx](https://www.alsde.edu/sec/pss/Attendance/Alabama%20-%20March%2021%202018%20-Revised%20(002).pptx).

[3] See Alabama State Board of Education, Alabama Attendance Manual at 33 (Revised 2019) available at <https://www.alsde.edu/sec/pss/Attendance/Absolute%20Final%202019%20Attendance%20Manual%20Revised1.pdf>.

[4] See *id.* at 1.

[5] <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat47.htm>

[6] Alabama, Arizona, Hawaii, and Utah do not fund public transportation. <https://www.bts.gov/sites/bts.dot.gov/files/docs/browse-statistical-products-and-data/bts-publications/203186/sts2015.pdf>.

[7] <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42706.pdf> at page 3.

[8] See U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Alabama Analysis and Statistics Report (September 2017).

[9] See <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/vet.htm>.

[10] <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/lifelonglearningaccount.asp>

[11] Conor McKay, Ethan Pollack, and Alastair Fitzpayne, Automation and a changing economy part II: Policies for shared prosperity, Aspen Institute Future of Work Initiative, April 2019.

[12] <https://parcalabama.org/college-going-rates-for-alabama-high-schools-2/>

[13] <https://parcalabama.org/college-going-rates-for-alabama-high-schools-2/>

[14] Research did not reveal similar data for 2018 and 2019. Therefore, for purposes of this report, 2017 numbers are utilized.

[15] <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2017/69-point-7-percent-of-2016-high-school-graduates-enrolled-in-college-in-october-2016.htm>

[16] <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/social-mobility-memos/2017/02/03/what-we-know-and-dont-know-about-the-declining-labor-force-participation-rate/>

[17] <https://www.wafb.com/2019/04/11/pelican-chapter-assoc-builders-hosts-annual-high-school-craft-championship-welding-carpentry-etc/>

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE SUPPLEMENT

2019 Nonprofit Cohort Partners

Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers
Alabama Possible
Birmingham Education Foundation
Boys & Girls Clubs of Alabama
Bronze Valley
Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama
Community Services Program
Community Works
Cyber Huntsville
Geospatial Huntsville
Goodwill Industries of the Southern Rivers, Inc.
Hope Inspired Ministries
Hope Place Family Resource Center
Innovate Birmingham
Jones Valley Teaching Farms
Mobile Area Education Foundation
Opportunity Alabama (OPAL)
Regional Alliance 4 Children

Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement (SAFE)
Teach for America: Alabama
Tech Alabama
The Alfred Saliba Center for Families
The Dannon Project
Tuscaloosa's One Place
U.S. Space & Rocket Center Education Foundation
United Ability
Walker Area Community Foundation
Wiregrass Foundation
WISE
Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham
Woodlawn Foundation



2019 Grant Applications Awarded: \$6,404,500

Cohort Member(s)	RFP Grantmaker	Amount Awarded	Grant Details
Dannon Project	US Dept of Labor, ETA	\$1,500,000	This Reentry for Adults grant will serve 188 adults, age 25 and older, who reside in a targeted low-income area of Birmingham and Jefferson County.
Dannon Project	US Dept of Labor, ETA	\$4,500,000	This Reentry Project for Young Adults grant will serve young men and women, age 18 – 24 years old, who are currently or previously justice-involved or who have dropped out of high school. The program will serve 463 participants in a targeted low-income area of Jefferson County and the City of Montgomery.
OPAL, Bronze Valley	EDA RIS SFS	\$284,500	This grant supports the development of an “Empower Alabama Fund,” an opportunity zone-focused seed fund to recruit and invest in startups throughout Birmingham.
OPAL	DRA SEDAP	\$120,000	The Building a Local Ecosystem in the Black Belt project will create an Opportunity Zones (OZ)-based funding and business development ecosystem designed around the unique challenges and opportunities in the Delta region of Alabama – more commonly known as the “Black Belt.”

2019 Grant Applications In Progress: Up to \$6,735,000

Cohort Member(s)	RFP Grantmaker	Amount Awarded	Grant Details
OPAL, Bronze Valley	Appalachian Regional Commission	\$735,000	Investment in coal-impacted communities through high-impact placemaking within one of Birmingham’s underserved neighborhoods
Birmingham Education Foundation, various others	JP Morgan Chase Advancing Cities	Up to \$3,000,000	The AdvancingCities Challenge will make investments in cities to support creative, collaborative, and sustainable solutions that address cross-cutting challenges that help more people benefit from a growing economy.
SAFE	EDA-Public Works & EA Programs	Up to \$3,000,000	Projects will support work in Opportunity Zones and lead to the creation and retention of jobs and increased private investment, advancing innovation, enhancing the manufacturing capacities of regions, providing workforce development opportunities, and growing ecosystems that attract foreign direct investment.

2019 Technical Assistance Awarded: \$87,000

Cohort Member(s)	RFP Grantmaker	Amount Awarded	Grant Details
Birmingham Education Foundation	Alabama Power Foundation	\$27,000	Capacity-building award to complete and operationalize an asset map for the Birmingham City Schools and its key partners.
OPAL	Alabama Power Foundation	\$35,000	Capacity-building award to develop a first-of-its kind framework that maps low-income community needs in certain defined geographies (Opportunity Zones), leverages private investment to meet those needs, and measures progress along the way.
SAFE	Alabama Power Foundation	\$35,000	Capacity-building award to enhance the workforce development capacity and rural sustainability practices for Sylacauga and the surrounding region to grow and thrive. We look to become the prototype concept for rural Alabama development centers across the state.

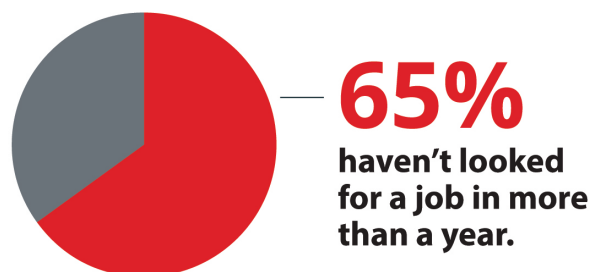
WORKFORCE MARKET SEGMENTS SURVEY RESULTS

Summary Analysis

- **32%** of respondents are likely to look for a job in the next 12 months, with **19%** being very likely to look for work.
- The most common reason given for being unemployed long-term is **illness or disability (37%)**, followed by respondents **staying home with children (20%)**, and those citing **personal and family responsibilities (19%)**.
- Even though only **32%** of unemployed respondents are likely to look for a job, **45%** are likely to consider taking a job if offered a livable salary and benefits. This indicates that the barrier to finding a job may appear too high for those unlikely to look for work.
- More than one third of respondents have applied for or are on Medicaid and **28% have applied for or received SNAP benefits**.
- Only **22%** of respondents have never applied for any type of government benefits.
- Of those respondents who have received or applied for some type of government benefit, those receiving CHIP benefits are the **most likely to look for a job in the next year (48%)** or **accept a full-time job offered to them (52%)**.

Recommendations

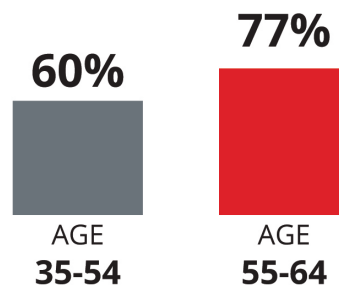
- The likelihood to not return to the workforce is correlated strongly with age. The majority of resources will need to be focused on respondents between the ages of 18-34.
- Respondents who receive or have applied for CHIP, TANF, and the Pell Grant are the only respondents receiving benefits that are more likely than not to accept an offer of full-time employment. Those first two categories could present a messaging opportunity to respondents with children that we will want to look at during the follow-up research.
- **52%** of respondents who have served time



49%
of respondents
are disabled

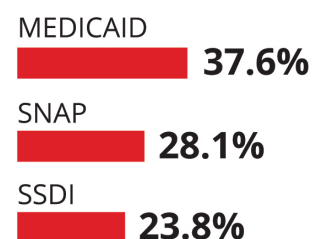


Consider themselves disabled.



This is the largest barrier to work-force re-entry.

Most common
government
benefits
received or
applied for:



Respondents who
are single are

15%

more likely to return
to the workforce than
those who are married.

in a correctional facility are likely to accept full-time employment. Compared to the rest of the sample, this seems like low-hanging fruit from an outreach/messaging perspective.

Respondents in urban areas are

8%

more likely to accept full-time employment than those in rural areas. This will be useful as you discuss media targeting.



- Single, African American male respondents who are 18-24, living in urban areas, and enrolled in college are the most likely to be looking for a job in the next 12 months and would be the most likely to accept a full-time job offered to them. This should be the primary target for AlabamaWorks.
- Of this group, the primary difficulties they cited when looking for work are lack of transportation, work being difficult to find, and that they lack necessary skills.
- The next likeliest cohort to return are citizens in congressional districts 3 and 4 that are post-college age (25-34) and have 1 or 2 children, have an income of \$20k - \$30k, and receive the majority of their news on their phone through facebook. This should be your secondary target.
- Of those who would not return to the workforce, illness and disability was the primary reason. While some would accept a job, your resources are better allocated elsewhere.

Further Recommendations

- If we remove the larger barriers keeping people from finding a job (disability, stay-at-home parents, taking care of family),

things begin to look more positive. **78%** of respondents who said work was difficult to find or that they didn't have transportation would likely accept a full time job. **67%** of those who have difficulty finding childcare would be likely to take full-time employment as well. These are going to be key hurdles to discuss as you work to return Alabamians to the labor force.

- As we turn to the second study, we recommend targeting respondents ages 45 and under who have been unemployed for more than 1 month, and are not disabled, stay-at-home parents, or caring for other family members.

Methodology

This online survey was conducted February 28 – March 10, 2019, with 403 targeted unemployed and out-of-workforce Alabamians. The survey was conducted using an online survey platform whereby respondents were only able to participate by unique, secure email invitations and through smart phone applications. Only one response was allowed per respondent.

Summary Analysis

- Men 24-35 years old are the most likely group to be unemployed but looking for work (**84%**).
- **70%** of black respondents identified as unemployed but looking for work, compared to just **55%** of white respondents.
- Total pay (**87%**), location (**82%**), and work environment and culture (**82%**) were the top three job offer factors among respondents overall.
- Healthcare benefits (**79%**) and scheduling flexibility (**78%**) fell just outside of the top three factors, however, both had higher intensity (**54% very important**) than work environment and cultures (**51% very important**).
- Two-thirds of all respondents (**66%**) identified total pay as “very important.”
- Access to childcare was by far the least important job attribute. **40%** of respondents said this factor was important,

while **25%** said unimportant.

- Vacation/paid time off and scheduling flexibility were most important to women 36-40 years old (**93% important**).
- **91%** of female respondents between 24 and 30 years old identified healthcare benefits as important. **63%** said this job factor was very important.
- Advancement opportunities are significantly more important (+15 points) to men under 30 years old (**52% very important**) compared to their female counterparts (**37% very important**).
- Likewise, training/professional development opportunities tested 7 points higher among white respondents (**75% important**) than black respondents (**68% important**). However, interest intensity in training/professional development opportunities was 10 points higher among black respondents (**50% very important**) than white respondents (**40% very important**).
- Access to childcare matters least to respondents from Huntsville (**30% important**) compared to the rest of the state (**42% important**).
- Almost half of all respondents (**47%**) said their monthly take-home pay would need to be \$2000 or less to offset their expenses. Only **12%** said they needed more than \$3000 per month.
- **32%** of Huntsville respondents said their take-home pay would need to be between \$2k-\$3k, compared to just **21%** of respondents outside of the Rocket City.
- More than six out of every ten respondents (**61%**) indicated they are likely to look for a job within the next 12 months. Less than **20%** said unlikely.
- Men 30-40 years old (**52% likely**) are less likely to pursue employment in the next year compared to men under 30 (**66% likely**).
- Respondents currently enrolled in an educational program are more likely (**74% likely**) to pursue employment in the next

year than those who are not enrolled (**60% likely**).

- Mobile is the weakest area of the state for employment pursuit, with only **51%** of respondents indicating they were likely to search for a job in the next year, compared to **63%** of respondents outside of Mobile.
- Free skills training for in-demand jobs produced the strongest results of the message tests, with **68%** choosing more likely (**35% much more likely**). Job fair notification (**64% more likely**) and application/interview preparation (**63% more likely**) closely followed.

Free skills training reached

60%

more likely among every major demographic grouping except for men 31-to-40 years old.



- Application/interview preparation tested highest among women under 30 years old (**72% more likely**) and respondents from Mobile (**69% more likely**).

Further Summary Analysis

- A ride-sharing program was the least effective message among respondents overall (**43% more likely**). This program peaked with respondents with an annual household income of less than \$20k.
- Respondents in Birmingham showed the most interest in free or reduced-cost classes (**60% more likely**).
- **72%** of respondents over 40 years old and **69%** of Birmingham respondents chose "more likely" when asked about job fair notification.

- Free or reduced-cost child care and low-interest personal loans failed to reach **50%** more likely.
- After hearing the resources provided by the state, **47%** of respondents said they were more likely to apply for a job in Alabama. Only **17%** said less likely.
- Respondents from Montgomery were the least likely (**25% less likely**) to apply for jobs in Alabama after hearing the program offerings.



Ad Targeting Recommendations

- African-American males 24-30 years old (and men in general in this age category) are the low hanging fruit that should be the focus of your initial advertising strategy.
- The social component of advertising dollars needs to be focused on Facebook and Instagram in order to maximize reach to target audiences. Snapchat is an effective means of reaching African-Americans males if budgeting allows for it.
- YouTube is the best bet for streaming video advertising with **67%** of respondents noting the service as their primary streaming app. This holds across almost every demographic group. Hulu is also an effective method of reaching women under 30 and Men over 40.
- Respondents are still consuming live TV primarily through Cable (**32%**) which holds across most demographic groupings. While Cable TV should certainly be considered as part of any media strategy, we would only recommend cable ad

purchases in the Montgomery, Birmingham, and Dothan DMAs.

- In Mobile we recommend splitting those dollars across cable and satellite providers (but keep in mind that mobile residents are the least likely geographic grouping to look for a job). Satellite is also an effective means of reaching the rural unemployed, where high-speed internet and cable TV are scarce, and coverage by cell carriers may be lacking.
- Keep in mind that television advertising comes secondary to online campaigns including display, social media, and YouTube ads due to its lower cost and advanced targeting features.

Further Ad Targeting Recommendations

African American Men 24-30

Primary Modes: Facebook, Mobile Games

Secondary Modes: YouTube

Message: Free manufacturing, computer, and workforce skills training for jobs that are in high demand in Alabama

AND

Notifications of job fairs in your area that include employers who are ready to hire and conducting on-site interviews

Women Under 30

Primary Modes: Facebook, YouTube, Mobile Games
Secondary Modes: Instagram, Cable, Hulu

Message: Free training online or in-person to prepare for job interviews, write or improve your resumé, prepare job applications, and career coaching

AND

Notifications of job fairs in your area that include employers who are ready to hire and conducting on-site interviews

African-American Men 18-24

Primary Modes: YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat
Secondary Modes: Facebook, Cable

Message: Free manufacturing, computer, and workforce skills training for jobs that are in high demand in Alabama

Men 40+

Primary Modes: Display Ads, Mobile Games, Facebook, Cable

Secondary Modes: YouTube, Hulu, Podcasts

Message: Free manufacturing, computer, and workforce skills training for jobs that are in high demand in Alabama

AND

Notifications of job fairs in your area that include employers who are ready to hire and conducting on-site interviews

Women 40+

Primary Modes: Mobile Games, Facebook

Secondary Modes: Display Ads, Cable, Local TV

Message: Free training online or in-person to prepare for job interviews, write or improve your resumé, prepare job applications, and career coaching.

AND

Free manufacturing, computer, and workforce skills training for jobs that are in high demand in Alabama

REGIONAL WORKFORCE COUNCIL REPORTS

North AlabamaWorks!

North AlabamaWorks (NAW) has worked diligently to meet the goals set forth by the AWC and Business and Industry of Region 1. The RWC has successfully completed, and in most cases exceeded, the required metrics.

- African-American males 24-30 years old
- 93% Business and Industry representation on the North AlabamaWorks Board of Directors. The NAW Board feels that since our ultimate client is Business and Industry, we should maximize their input on all workforce decisions.
- 100% of Region 1 schools are being touched by a Career Exploration Event with support from North AlabamaWorks. This effort consists of eight separate events. The RWC is providing Career Exploration Guides to 15,050 students and Spanish Versions in areas with high populations of Spanish-speaking families.
- Success Plus is being spear-headed by our Educational Attainment Committee. This committee is focused on the execution of action items from Governor Ivey's Plan, with the goal for Region 1 being

125,000 workers. This committee includes representatives from K-12 (Superintendents, Principals, Career Technical Directors), community colleges, and local universities.

- Region 1 has established a Back To Work Committee focused on a regional network of partners for helping the unemployed and underemployed get into the workforce, particularly in light of the Success Plus goal. Significant barriers include poverty, childcare, and transportation, as well as challenges for those coming out of incarceration and drug recovery programs.
- North AlabamaWorks has made a concerted effort to promote and market training solutions and available workforce resources to Business and Industry, educational providers, and residents. This is demonstrated by the increased utilization of and participation in programs across Region 1 such as: 7 short-term training Occupational Skills programs totaling over \$1.1 M; Individual Training Accounts increased 37%; On-The-Job training accounts increased 285%; Incumbent Worker funds received by 16 companies trained over 260 employees.

East AlabamaWorks!

East AlabamaWorks was focused on supporting immediate, short and long term workforce pipeline needs in 2019. For immediate needs, we organized four hiring events across the region that saw hundreds of job seekers attend to apply for over 3,000 available jobs. Many employers were able to do on the spot interviews and extend contingent offers. We collaborated with new partners to ensure we reached the entire region with opportunities. To fill short term workforce needs, our automotive and manufacturing sector determined there was a critical demand for industrial automation professionals. With seven industry partners, we stood up East Alabama FAME (Federation

for Advanced Manufacturing Education) which is held as a model for all FAME chapters in Alabama and across the country. Currently, sixteen students are enrolled in college and working for one of our sponsoring employers. FAME is ensuring that students graduate with a degree and additional certifications while being employed. In 2019, we took over 1,000 educators and administrators on industry tours to show the workforce needs in our region. This has allowed relationships to be formed for ongoing connections between schools and business which are helping to fill jobs with high school graduates. To support long term needs, East AlabamaWorks hosts Worlds of Work. Nearly 8,000 students attend with over 100 different career options and supported by over

1,200 volunteers. In 2019, Worlds of Work was attended by 100% of 8th grade and 75% of 11th grade students from across all seven counties of Region 2. Realizing that career exploration cannot wait to start in the 8th grade, we also hosted a 4th grade event taking forty students

through six career worlds to learn more about future pathways. Teachers were provided materials for further exploration of career options. East AlabamaWorks looks forward to seeing continued gains to achieve our regional goal supporting SuccessPlus.

West AlabamaWorks!

West AlabamaWorks (WAW) helps employers and employees succeed, earning the Governor's Award for Best Workforce System in 2019.

Developing a skilled workforce ensures a strong future. WAW's Industry Clusters drive projects, including ways to develop skilled workers. Industry leaders at the Automotive Cluster expressed a need for supervisory training. WAW partnered with Integrity Solutions to offer coaching, drawing attendees from Honda, Toyota and Mercedes. WAW also partnered with AIDT to offer training classes, providing a lower-cost solution. Both training options have been popular among attendees, making supervisors more prepared.

By partnering with area school systems, WAW is creating a pipeline for future employees, aligning with Governor Ivey's SuccessPlus plan. The fourth-annual Worlds of Work Expo allowed over 5,000 students to explore high-demand careers, and over 70 high school seniors received contingent job offers at WOW 2.0. WAW partnered with Alabama General Contractors to provide YouScience, career aptitude and exploration software, for Tuscaloosa City and County Schools. Approximately 85 seniors from seven school systems were honored for entering jobs or apprenticeships at West Alabama Regional Signing Day. Educator Workforce Academy entered its second year, educating



superintendents and principals about West Alabama's in-demand careers.

The majority of Region 3 is rural, so WAW developed a rural outreach plan to target outlying areas, taking services to every county in the region and offering 10 hiring events. Through partnerships with ZF Chassis Systems, Phifer Incorporated and Lifelink, LLC, WAW is rehabilitating inmates for the workforce through the West Alabama Prisoner Re-entry Program at Bibb County Correctional Facility.

Through utilization of federal dollars, WAW was granted a larger WIOA budget, helping individuals and companies receive training, such as the PCA Pipeline with DCH Health System and Shelton State Community College. The program recruits individuals who are interested in a healthcare career, funded by WIOA.

Central 6 Works!

Central Six is a regional collaborative that includes philanthropic organizations, local business and industry, Alabama Community College System, K-12 Systems, training providers, and local municipal governments. Our mission is to create a 21st Century workforce

that is proactive, responsive, results driven, and supports the region's diverse population and employers by providing quality job opportunities in support of a vibrant regional economy. We are impacting workforce development by actively engaging industry, understanding their needs, and applying their expertise to influence workforce training and funding.

In doing so, we utilize an industry “cluster” approach to form, support, and strengthen partnerships between business and industry and education, and push for policy changes relevant to these goals. Our current industry clusters include: construction, manufacturing, healthcare, information technology and education/ training providers. We work with our clusters to identify career pathways, discover gaps currently existing in that pathway, and work with training providers to fill these gaps and create a complete pipeline. This year our work included establishing two U.S. DOL federally registered apprenticeship programs serving the manufacturing and information

technology industries. These programs provide career pathways for industrial maintenance technicians and software developers. We also introduced our industry partners to state and federal resources and helped them save \$423,246 through on-the-job training funds. We increased our efforts to re-engage individuals in the workforce and provided employment or training for 538 individuals across the region. We also worked with regional partners to create career awareness opportunities for over 7,200 students. Finally, we are continuing to advance the “Building It Together” initiative focused on economic growth and workforce alignment across all six counties.

Central AlabamaWorks!

FY19 was an eventful year for Central AlabamaWorks - one full of new partnerships, opportunities and collaboration. Our board and staff worked diligently to provide a seamless transition in leadership in late January. The primary focus of FY19 was to develop strong industry clusters while continuing to forge important relationships.

The Healthcare and Manufacturing Clusters made progress this year in developing focused goals and strategies. A Request for Training (RFT) was issued from work that began in the manufacturing cluster last year. This RFT was addressed in a unique way by Southern Union State Community

College. Through a federally funded WIOA Occupation Skills Grant, Southern Union offered Ready to Work (RTW) and MSSC certifications in a “Boot Camp” setting, resulting in the Ascend Program, a career training program in advanced manufacturing that helps improve soft-skills, giving the individual a chance to be a preferred candidate.

New this year is a Chemical Process Consortium that is being developed. The consortium is working to see a new Process Technician program come to fruition in FY20.

Our rural initiatives included the RTW Mobile Training Unit in Perry and Dallas counties. The Selma/ Dallas County EDA partnered with Central AlabamaWorks,

the Dallas County and Selma City schools, Apprenticeship Alabama, and the ALSDE to host the first “Triple Threat Hiring Event.” At last count, 7 job offers have been made.

FY19 saw the addition of a second Career Discovery event at Trenholm State in Montgomery serving nearly 1,800 additional students from the central and west side of Region 5. The Educator Workforce Academy was also approved and began with its first session in early October of 2019. Eleven Superintendents and CTE Directors make up the first cohort.

Thank you to those partners and supporters who continually assist Central AlabamaWorks in developing new and continued workforce initiatives.

Southeast AlabamaWorks!

Southeast AlabamaWorks began FY19 by adding two team members: Katie Thomas, Business and Industry Relations Manager, and Ann Carr, Programs Manager, have been valuable assets to accomplishing the

organization’s vision and mission.

While the Southeast AlabamaWorks Industry Clusters continue to expand with the addition of Healthcare and Manufacturing, the Aviation and Distribution Clusters have committed to enhancing career awareness and opportunities. Two new Alabama Community College System

healthcare programs are scheduled to begin in January 2020 and Spring 2021 as a direct result of conversations and insight from cluster meetings.

Southeast AlabamaWorks, the Alabama Career Center System's One Stop offices, and local Chambers of Commerce have partnered to promote and implement On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work Based Learning (WBL) opportunities across Region 6. With more people working in Southeast Alabama than ever before, there are more opportunities than ever before.

Southeast AlabamaWorks sponsored and coordinated several company-specific direct hire job fairs. Included is the regional Fort Rucker Wiregrass Area Job Fair where over 125 companies attended with almost 600 jobseekers vying for open positions. We also facilitated

two Rapid Response hiring events for those affected by total plant closures. Results included significant number of job placements and registrations into ITAs.

With the help of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship, we established the first USDOL registered apprenticeship in our region at Higgins Electric, Inc. The program currently has four apprentices working through the four-year program to earn their journeymen electrician license.

Finally, we held our fourth annual Southeast WOW event for over 4,100 eighth grade students with 90 hands-on experiences. We also hosted our first Educator Workforce Academy where 24 educators completed the four-session event culminating with an Action Plan to evaluate their current CTE programs.

Southeast Alabama Workforce Development Council Works!

The Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council's (SAWDC) 2019 focus was improving the quality of relationships with stakeholders specifically industry and education partners. SAWDC brought best practices into the region to support workforce development such as our Educators Workforce Academy and Ready to Work bringing value to companies and job seekers. Focusing on the entirety of Region 07 has been a priority and we are excited about the programs designed specifically for our rural communities. SAWDC, in partnership with Apprenticeship Alabama, led the development of over 13 new apprenticeship programs including occupations such as airframe and powerplant mechanic, industrial

maintenance mechanic, computer support specialist, restaurant manager, lodging managers and tool and die specialists. Alabama's largest and longest standing 3-D career fair for 8th graders, Worlds of Opportunity, celebrated it's 10 year anniversary with over 8,200 students being exposed to in-demand careers with 128 companies participating supported by over 1,200 volunteers. SAWDC also announced an additional Worlds of Opportunity specifically for the rural counties on region 07 to be held in 2020. The inaugural Region 7 Educators Workforce Academy was launched with over 40 educators in two cohorts to assure that educational administrators are exposed to quality

careers in and near their own communities. The SAWDC Ready to Work program was launched with two pilot high schools and included over 35 seniors. These pilots have already seen success exposing and directing these young people into high demand jobs with family sustaining wages. SAWDC continues to focus on serving job seekers increase the number of job seekers served increased over 2018 by over 200%. With unemployment at historic lows, SAWDC has formed unique partnerships such as engaging local pastors and conducting Grill and Chill Events with DOL to further engage in communities and drive jobs seekers into high wage, high demand occupations.

