

# VIRGINIA



# WORKFORCE CONNECTION

Virginia Workforce Council Late Summer 2013

## From the Chairman's Perspective

By Raul Danny Vargas  
Chairman, Virginia Workforce Council

It is with great pride that I share this message with you as the new Chair of the Virginia Workforce Council. I was honored and humbled when Governor McDonnell asked me to take on a greater leadership role with this important advisory



Vargas

body. I had been serving as the Chairman of the Council's Performance and Accountability Committee and learned a great deal about the challenges that face

our employers, educators, local workforce investment boards and career pathways partners who are collaborating to employ our citizens and grow our economy.

The Council is working hard to improve the coordination of the entire workforce system, institute efficiencies, expand services and increase performance outcomes. Scorecards and report cards have been developed to help us track our progress. We are focusing like a laser beam now on industry sectors and utilizing labor market data strategically to plan for the jobs of the future.

We have approved a Work Plan to guide us through the next 2 fiscal years with the following critical priorities:

1. Increase workforce credential attainment in low-skills, low-wage adults with a focus on high school diploma equivalent, credential of work and career readiness, and industry certification(s) or community college certificates or degrees relevant to regionally available jobs.

(See CHAIRMAN on page 3)

## Grants Aid Virginia Workforce Development

### Job training funds in advanced manufacturing and culinary fields awarded

The Virginia Workforce Council recently awarded \$175,000 worth of incentive funds to 10 local workforce investment board (WIB) areas, with the majority going towards strengthening the advanced manufacturing and culinary workforce.

These awards recognize the hard work of local areas to meet performance measures and increase partnerships to meet the needs of Virginia's workforce and economy. Providing incentive awards is a requirement of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) legislation and Virginia Workforce Council policy.

### Regional Collaboration and Local Coordination Grant Recipients

Three grants of \$50,000 were awarded for innovative job training programs across the state.

**South Central, Virginia:** A Manufacturing Technology Summer Camp will provide work experience to youth through a partnership with the Virginia Manufacturer's Association and Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC). The camp will focus on enhancing advanced technology career accessibility and improving the image of today's manufacturing through the Dream It Do It Virginia initiative. The grant will enable the camp to have three locations in summer 2014 -Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center, Southern Virginia Higher Education Center and SVCC Keysville Campus. Welding will also be added to the curriculum.

**Alexandria-Arlington, Virginia:** A customized job training program will prepare homeless or at risk of being homeless individuals for existing culinary jobs in the region. A partnership between the WIB, Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services, the Arlington County Department of Human Services, and Marriot hotels, will create a Culinary Training Program. The grant will focus on outreach and recruitment, screening, training and job placement.

**Hampton Roads, Virginia:** Funds will expand existing partnerships with Tidewater Community College and the Chesapeake Public Library to

further advanced manufacturing in Hampton Roads. A "Foundation of Mechatronics" class to prepare high school students for Mechatronic certificate courses will be developed. Vouchers for 10 participants to pursue training in Advanced Manufacturing will be awarded.

### Exemplary Performance and Most Improved Grant Recipients

Exemplary performance awards totaling \$17,500 were awarded across nine WIBs -

- Area 2/New River/Mt. Rogers
- Area 3/Western Virginia
- Area 6/Piedmont Workforce Network
- Area 7/Region 2000/Central Virginia
- Area 8/South Central
- Area 11/Northern Virginia
- Area 14/Greater Peninsula
- Area 15/Crater Area
- Area 16/Hampton Roads


Most improved awards of \$2,500 each were awarded to three WIBs -

- Area 8/South Central
- Area 11/Northern Virginia
- Area 17/West Piedmont

### Background

Virginia's 15 Workforce Investment Boards work to advance workforce development programs and initiatives that achieve sustainable economic growth across the Commonwealth.

The Virginia Workforce Council is a business-led board that acts as the principal advisor to the Governor and provides strategic leadership to the state regarding the workforce development system and its efforts to create a strong workforce aligned with employer needs.

The Virginia Workforce Council is also charged with serving as the State Board for the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), setting policy and standards for the local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and One Stop Employment Centers. 

## Dream It. Do It. Virginia Best Practices

The Virginia Manufacturers Association and its members began developing the Dream It. Do It. Virginia (DIDIVA) network in 2009.

The statewide DIDIVA network is organized into five channels of resources: Explore, Ready, Train, Assess, and Employ. The focus of DIDIVA is to rebrand the image of manufacturing as an industry offering well-paying, highly-skilled career opportunities.

On April 30, DIDIVA launched its new interactive Career Information System (CIS) as part of its many Explore resources. CIS expands the information available to help drive the next generation of workers to advanced technology careers. The DIDIVA CIS is the first in the country to include more than 500 credentials required for advanced technology jobs. This allows users to create integrated career, education and credential pathways to employment.

## Dream! Do! VIRGINIA

The DIDIVA CIS allows people to "budget their life", take online skills and interest assessments, create professional portfolios and resumes, search industry-recognized credentials, aid in career exploration and connect individuals with employment. DIDIVA was invited by the Virginia Space Grant Consortium to participate in a webinar as part of the inaugural year of the Commonwealth STEM Industry Internship Program (CSIIP) to help educate its interns about STEM-related careers in manufacturing. This webinar also provides a "How To" demonstration on utilizing the CIS as a resource for career exploration.

Another way DIDIVA seeks to rebrand manufacturing is through hands-on experiential summer camps. During the 2013 summer, DIDIVA offered five unique manufacturing technology summer camps at different locations throughout Virginia. The goal of the camps is to ensure that students are properly introduced to modern manufacturing by industry experts, factory tours, demonstrations, and competitive manufacturing activities. The camp is a four-day "raw materials to finished goods" experience where participants learn how to design and execute a manufacturing process, brainstorm and make decisions, work as members of a manufacturing team, and learn basic skills they can build upon with additional training.

DIDIVA is an international award-winning initiative and is a best practice model for the National Association for Manufacturers - Manufacturing Skills Institute's Dream it. Do it. network.

Please visit [www.dreamitdoitvirginia.com](http://www.dreamitdoitvirginia.com) and watch the CSIIP webinar at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtJ6mU8MtIM&feature=youtu.be>.

## New Grant Awards for Employment Advancement for TANF Participants Program

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), an active participating agency in Virginia's Career Pathways and Workforce System, recently awarded \$7.26 million to local partnership programs through the agency's Employment Advancement for TANF Participants Program. Each of the grant awards will help current and former TANF clients, including single parents and other eligible adults, to prepare for entry and career progression in the workplace.

### Current Employment Advancement for TANF Participants Program awards for 2013-14 include:

**Arlington County Department of Human Services'** project is a joint venture with the Linden JOBS program designed to meet the needs of TANF recipients with disabilities.

**Bay Aging/Transit in Urbanna** provides transportation assistance to individuals in the Middle Peninsula/Northern Neck plus Charles City and New Kent Counties.

**Career Support Systems, Inc. in Richmond** is supporting a statewide project designed to promote the expansion of community-based employment support to TANF recipients with complex challenges to employment who reside in underserved communities

**Charlotte County Department of Social Services** program helps TANF/Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) participants prepare for employment through a Community and Workplace Support Program.

**Crater Regional Workforce Investment Board in Petersburg** provides individualized assistance to eligible participants such as occupational training tuition assistance, on-the-job training and support services.

**Danville Community College** partnering with Patrick Henry Community College operates a project to help those who have transitioned out of the TANF program to obtain the skills and education necessary to secure and maintain full-time unsubsidized employment.

**Fairfax County Department of Family Services'** program helps TANF participants with disabilities to become successfully employed through intensive case management, targeted job readiness, skills development, and customized job placement and retention services.

**Goodwill of Central Virginia, Inc.'s** Transition to Independence and Employment (TIE) program offers services to TANF participants with significant obstacles to employment.

**Harrisonburg/Rockingham Social Services District's** project is designed to encourage personal responsibility and financial independence for TANF recipients by reducing barriers and enhancing skills for employment.

**Henrico County DSS** works to address the need of TANF participants for education and job skills training in order for participants to secure competitive employment at self or family supporting wages.

**Job Assistance Center, Inc. in Shacklefords** has a three tier project: work preparation, work retention, and wage and job advancement.

**Norfolk Department of Human Services'** project provides access to an array of pre and post employment services through cooperative partnerships at a single service delivery site.

**Occupational Enterprises, Inc. in Lebanon** addresses the barriers to employment of substance abuse and prisoner reentry in order to secure employment opportunities, increase employment retention rates, promote job advancement and wage increases, and promote self-sufficiency for participants.

**Rappahannock Community College in Glens** will use their funding to provide employment development and advancement for TANF participants in the Middle Peninsula and the Northern Neck referred by local departments of social services.

**Regional Job Support Network, Inc.** provides Intensive Case Management (ICM) Team services to the targeted population through a collaborative agreement with local Department of Social Services.

**Rehabilitative Services and Vocational Placement, Inc. in Richmond** works with community providers to address the needs of TANF recipients with multiple barriers to employment.

**Richmond Behavioral Health Authority's** multi-agency collaboration is designed to improve employment outcomes for TANF participants with the identified barriers of substance abuse or co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders.

**Roanoke City DSS-Southwest Virginia Regional Employment Commission** helps the hardest-to-serve TANF/VIEW participants with multiple barriers to employment.

**Shenandoah Valley Social Services'** project is designed to better screen TANF recipients to identify and address potential employment barriers.

**The Skill Source Group, Inc. in Vienna** provides subsidized and unsubsidized employment

(See TANF PROGRAM AWARDS on page 5)

## Collaborative Funding Delivers High-Impact Program for Youth

**G**oodwill Industries of the Valleys in Roanoke recently used multi-source funding to deliver a high-impact career exploration program for out-of-school youth participants in Roanoke. The Prescription for Opportunity program was designed to help low income youth vision themselves in advanced health care occupations rather than automatically entering the health sector in lower-wage, lower-skilled jobs. Goodwill saw many youth with the skills to enter training in higher-paying health occupations such as registered nurse, physical therapy assistant, or radiologic technologist. These youth just needed more career knowledge and confidence in their ability to succeed.

Goodwill designed and delivered the Prescription for Opportunity program through funding received from the Wells Fargo Community Foundation, the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board's WIA Youth program, and the Walmart Foundation's Beyond Jobs Program to provide career exploration and work experience to 20 Roanoke-area out-of-school youth. Volunteers from local medical facilities and Goodwill staff provided a week of intensive career exploration in advanced health care occupations. The youth then completed 240 hours of work experience in health care settings that provided job shadowing opportunities. Following successful work experience, youth were connected to skills training in their selected occupations. Some youth are combining employment at an entry level in health care while training for more advanced credentials. To date, 18 youth have completed the program and have entered occupational skills training or will enter training at local community colleges or universities this fall.

Renee Smith is one example of the program's success. Renee was a foster child who became a parent at age 15. She lived in very sub-standard housing, was receiving food stamps, and was working part-time in food service when she enrolled in the WIA Youth Program at age 20. Through Prescription for Opportunity, Renee completed career exploration, career plan development, HIPAA and CPR/First Aid training, work experience, and financial literacy activities. Renee did a great job at her work experience with Roanoke's Carilion Clinic and was offered a full-time job there. Carilion also provides Renee with the flexibility to pursue her degree as a registered nurse while working full-time. Renee has moved into a great new home and developed a solid financial stability plan for herself and her child. Renee will enter the RN program at Virginia Western Community College this fall.

While one funding source could not have provided this program's depth and variety of services, Goodwill used collaboration and braided funding to provide great employees for the region's health care providers and a brighter future for many Roanoke youth. 🌍



*Renee Smith and son are shining examples of the successful Prescription for Opportunity program.*

### CHAIRMAN'S PERSPECTIVE *(Continued from page 1)*

- Enrollment in GED
  - GED earned
  - Postsecondary credentials earned
  - Industry certifications and state licenses earned
  - Work Readiness Skills Credentials earned
  - Career Readiness Certificate earned
2. Help create jobs through demonstrated increase in the emerging and incumbent pipeline of workers, particularly the unemployed, in targeted industry sectors including Advanced Manufacturing, Information Technology, Health Care, Logistics, and Energy
    - Labor force participation rate
    - Percent change in total annual wages
    - Unemployment rate
    - Average weeks of unemployment
    - Percent change in employment
  3. Provide seamless assistance to our returning veterans to earn credit for their service and translate their military experience and training into civilian jobs.

Too many Virginians are concerned about their future and whether they will be able to secure a good paying job to provide for their families. Part of our job as a Council is to ensure we are doing everything we can to create an environment where the private sector can thrive and bring new good jobs to every corner of the Commonwealth. In my view, every day that we don't take action is another day that a Virginian is struggling. We need to

internalize that idea, take our roles seriously and put that sense of urgency into our work.

My hope is that the Council will strive to improve communications with our local Workforce Investment Boards. Please send me your suggestions in this regard to [vwc@vccs.edu](mailto:vwc@vccs.edu). One big step we have embarked on is to create a new "brand" for the Virginia Workforce Network. We anticipate a rollout at the end of 2013 so stay tuned.

The Council is in the midst of implementing the charge called for in legislation passed in the 2013 General Assembly session, specifically HB 2154. This legislation significantly amplifies the scope and purview of the Council. New members were added to the Council including the Virginia Director of Career and Technical Education. I believe the K-12 system is the foundation of the Council's work and I am pleased that it will now have a presence on our Council.

My leadership team on the Council includes Vice Chair Mark Herzog and Committee Chairmen Tim Tobin (Industry Sectors and Career Pathways) and Brett Vassey (Performance and Accountability). I congratulate them on their appointments to these important roles. Together we will step up to the Governor's challenge to be Virginia's job warriors and effect positive change in the lives of real people in the Commonwealth.

The Council will convene on October 10 in the northern Virginia region and I hope to see you there. 🌍

## Northern Virginia Successful Job Placement Strategies

### The SkillSource Group, Inc. Receives \$168,759 in Grant Funding for Needy Families in Prince William County

The SkillSource Group, Inc. (LWIA #11) recently was awarded \$168,759 from the Virginia Department of Social Services to provide employment services for TANF-eligible adults in Prince William County. The project is intended to reduce the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation and work with a secondary goal for these clients to become more integrated within the local public workforce system.

SkillSource partnered with the Prince William County Department of Social Services and Office of Housing and Community Development to serve 40 TANF-eligible adults over a one-year period. Funding will support a full-time Job Developer and subsidized work experiences.

### Loudoun Workforce Resource Center Hits Homerun

The Loudoun Workforce Resource Center (LWRC), a SkillSource Affiliate in Northern Virginia, recently hosted a Meet the Employer event showcasing the Salamander Resort and Spa, a 5-Star resort located in Middleburg, Virginia owned by Sheila C. Johnson, co-founder of the Black Entertainment Television Network.

The event featured a "full cycle hiring" process in which LWRC and Salamander staff assisted 73 jobseekers with the on-line application process, conducted on-site interviews and drug testing. Salamander extended offers of full-time employment

plus benefits to 25 jobseekers at a living wage exceeding traditional minimum wage salary levels.

One jobseeker, hired the previous week by Salamander in the Housekeeping Department, brought three family members to this event. Not only were all three family members hired, but the jobseeker also received a referral bonus!

### Success in South County

Sarah Smith\* worked for six years as a Project Manager utilizing her civil engineering degree. In February 2012, she was laid off and found it increasingly difficult to support her family as an unemployed single mother of two. Introduced to the Fairfax SkillSource Center - Alexandria, Sarah was enrolled in WIA intensive services in June 2012. Sarah's WIA case manager provided intensive resume assistance as well as employment and career counseling services. She attended and successfully completed Project Management training at George Mason University.

Sarah started a Project Management position an architectural engineering consulting firm in January 2013 at an annual salary exceeding \$60,000 plus benefits. The WIA program initially provided transportation assistance to absorb some of her travel expenses from Virginia to her work place in Maryland. Sarah is preparing to take the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification exam which will support her continued professional growth and development.

*\*Client name changed*

## Youth Explore STEM Occupations through Radford University Career Camp

Thanks to funding from the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board, 24 youth participants (pictured below) in Goodwill Industries of the Valleys' WIA Youth program participated in a four-day Career Camp at Radford University in June 2013. This camp focused on STEM careers and provided opportunities for youth to access both community college and university programs. Youth also visited regional employers to take tours and interact with leaders in regional STEM-focused industries.

Specifically, the camp was organized around four industry-specific days of activities focused on the following STEM sectors: Healthcare/Sciences, Advanced Manufacturing, Information Technology and CSI/Law Enforcement/First Responder. Through presentations from Radford University academic programs, campers got a realistic look at STEM jobs and the education required for various occupations. Campers also visited New River Community College to learn about their new gaming design program and other Information Technology training opportunities.

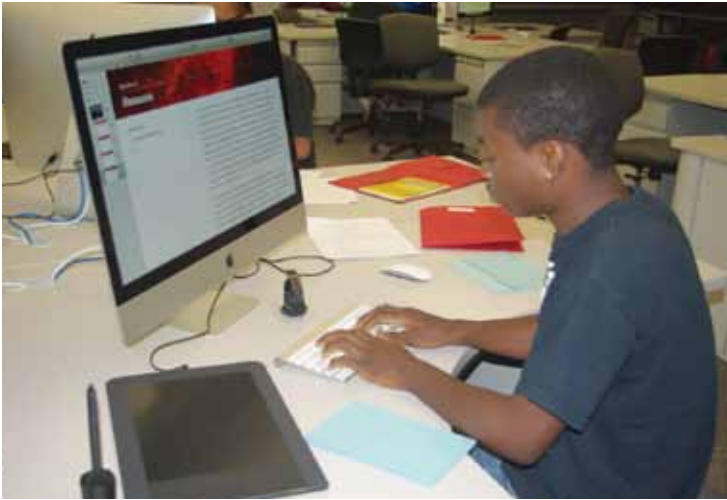
Area employers were excited to share details of specific jobs and the skills necessary for youth to achieve a successful career path. Employees of the Radford University Police Department, the Radford Fire Department, and Carilion Medical Center shared their employment experiences with participants. Goodwill and Radford University staff designed sessions to touch upon all stages of STEM career pathways, including all levels of education from a high school diploma to a Bachelor's degree.

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys was excited about this collaboration with Radford University and plans to conduct a second Career Camp in June 2014. At the concluding celebration and recognition ceremony for this year's camp, a participant summed up the experience nicely when he said, "I never knew science and technology could be put to use in so many cool ways!"



2013 Career Camp Participants at Radford University

# The Next Generation of Entrepreneurs – Youth Compete Using the Latest Technology at the 2013 STEM iBook Summer Camp



Derrick Barnwell creates an iBook to market his product during Opportunity Inc.'s VBCPS STEM program's iBook competition.

The atmosphere was mixed with nervousness and excitement as six student teams presented their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering or Math) business idea or product to a group of business leaders at the Advanced Technology Center in Virginia Beach. Yet, it wasn't the typical presentation. The teams were put to the challenge and unveiled their idea using Mac computers and Apple iBook Author software. These students were participants in Opportunity Inc.'s Virginia Beach City Public Schools STEM program. From July 1 through August 8, they learned how to create, develop and market their business ideas. Their presentations each told the story of their idea, how they plan to promote it and why it is worth a business leader's investment.

Junior Achievement of Hampton Roads provided volunteer judges for the program and throughout the program taught students the concepts of entrepreneurship, starting their own business, developing a business plan, resume writing and proper product/idea execution.

"It's been a really incredible six weeks—we've had a lot of volunteers and board members who have helped out. Also, the products that students have come up with have been extremely innovative," says Nikita Rodrigues, Junior Achievement of Hampton Roads' education director.

The teams' ideas included computer software that teaches one how to become computer savvy in just a few steps, a universal socket to make auto mechanics lives easier, a pillow that records dreams on a USB port, a bottle that automatically inserts nutritious flavor into water and a wrist band that gives off an energy boost.

"This was the most positive thing my son could be involved with this summer," said Chanda Montoya, mother of 18-year-old Jokari Alicdan. She said that her son, a Salem High School graduate, has a developmental disorder and this program helped him to enhance his social skills and be a part of the team.

Jokari, whose group developed the Manaband the solar powered wrist ban, says "I'm really not into presenting in front of crowds, so this really got me out there doing things I normally wouldn't try."

Arnie Lucius, a K-12 Senior Account Executive at Apple, Inc., attended the event to support the students and he was also a competition judge. "It's just so amazing to see the fruits of our labor and our product. Not only are we passionate about our products but we are passionate about how it changes the way we teach and learn."

At the end of the event, the judges deliberated and the winners were chosen. The Tempur-Dreamic team who created the Dreamcatcher was voted most innovative and won the prize... iBooks!

"This was a great program where our students had the opportunity to learn every aspect of becoming an entrepreneur," said Andrea Harrell, Opportunity's Director of Youth Initiatives. "The students mastered real world business basics and how to use the latest technology all in one program."

## TANF PROGRAM AWARDS *(Continued from page 2)*

opportunities to increase skills attainment and, thus, self-sufficiency through employment.

**Southeast Rural Community Assistance in Roanoke** will create an employment training and job placement program for TANF participants seeking to enter and advance in the water and wastewater systems industry.

**Spotsylvania County DSS** will maintain and expand the Bridges to Practice model, an inter-agency service model for identifying and addressing learning and other disabilities in the targeted population.

**Suffolk DSS** continues its FOCUS (Framework of Customized Services for Stable and Secure Individuals, Families, Situations and Employment) program to assist the TANF population in moving towards self-reliance, self-sufficiency and strengthening of families.

**Tidewater Community College in Norfolk** has developed a comprehensive approach to workforce development for individuals with multiple barriers to employment through its Job Skills Training Program (JSTP). JSTP provides pre-secured, full-time jobs with benefit packages that offer opportunities for upward mobility to individuals who successfully complete the college's training program and internships

**Vehicles for Change** is a statewide program to provide low-income families reliable, independent transportation.

**Virginia Beach Department of Human Services** will provide services through Project

Breakthrough designed to identify and address the most serious barriers to employment experienced by the targeted population.

**Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services** will provide statewide vocational rehabilitation services leading to employment for eligible TANF recipients with disabilities.

**Virginia Tech Institute of Policy and Governance in Blacksburg** along with its local department of social services partners will prepare VIEW participants for employment through intensive job readiness, job development, and vocational case management.

**Way-To-Go in Massanutten** has a project designed to help low-income working families with their vehicle transportation needs.

**Williamsburg DSS' Project EMPLOY** (Empowering Myself to Provide Long-Term Solutions to Overcome Yesterdays barriers to self-sufficiency) is designed to identify and address barriers to self-sufficiency as they present themselves in the family system.

**Worksource Enterprises in Charlottesville**, through a collaborative approach with local departments of social services, will serve TANF participants with multiple barriers to employment.

Each successful proposal included partnerships of local departments of social services (LDSS), incorporated nonprofit or for-profit organizations, state agencies, and educational institutions. 🌐

## Work Experience That Works

“**W**ork experience is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time,” according to the Workforce Investment Act. Through a purposeful and planned, approach, People Incorporated has implemented a successful work experience/summer employment program for 2013.

“Approximately 75 young people are participating in the 2013 work experience/summer activity program operated by People Incorporated. It is wonderful to see so many young people gain access to meaningful work that allows them to explore careers and increase their skill levels” says Betty Rowe, Director of Workforce Development for People Incorporated.

According to Rowe, careful consideration is given to each participant who receives a WIA funded work experience and all work experiences must be a component of an individual employment plan that ultimately leads the young person to self-sufficiency.

How can such a successful work experience/summer activity program be implemented?

People Incorporated ascertains that it is all about assessments, work readiness training, and relationships. Through assessments and relationships with partners such as Adult Education, Department of Juvenile Justice, and Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, staff is able to determine the interests and aptitudes of youth which is an important component of setting up impactful work experiences. Prior to worksite placement, youth complete vigorous work readiness training that prepares them with the employability skills needed for success. Finally, People Incorporated carefully selects worksites with supervisors who have a sincere desire to coach young people in their employability skills. All of these processes awaken within youth an increased desire and readiness to enter the world of work.

During the 2013 work experience/summer activity program, many youth progressed through the career development process.

Elizabeth Scott worked as a recreational therapeutic aid at Copper Crest Farm which will count as field hours toward her degree in speech pathology from Radford University. Monterick Phillips discovered his talent in painting and design by assisting the scene carpenter at Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre with props and scene changes for upcoming shows. Michaela McWaters further explored a career in childcare as recommended by her postsecondary education rehabilitation transition report. Amy Johnson pursued her passion for animals at Pound Veterinary Hospital, and Anthony Jones assisted with the design of a marketing brochure and networked with other professionals in business at The Summitt Companies. These activities will be very beneficial when he begins



*Cody assisting in the park.*

job search upon graduation from Emory and Henry College in December 2013.

New for 2013, People Incorporated is using online survey software to assess the success of the work experience/summer employment program. Betty Rowe says “Three of our youth received job offers from the private sector as a result of the summer activity. We are eager to collect and analyze the survey results so we can continue to positively impact our youth and the 21st century workforce.”

## Wisdom at Work Launches in Region 2000

“**W**isdom at Work” is a free program designed to offer support, job search tips, basic computer training, and other useful information to job seekers ages 50 and over. It is a joint effort of Lynchburg College, the Region 2000 Workforce Investment Board and the Virginia Employment Commission.

The kick-off was June 20, and local employers have already taken advantage of this recruitment opportunity by sharing job postings with the group. Many employers recognize and place value in the strengths of this population, particularly in terms of work ethic and the “soft skills” that we so often hear are in high demand.

The current schedule of monthly programs includes presentations by: Virginia Employment Commission, Region 2000 Workforce Center, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys and Central Virginia Community College. Each workshop offers participants information about programs that could offer assistance, guidance on navigating through the job search process, and perhaps most importantly, the opportunity to network.

## ECPI University Named Cisco Academy Instructor Trainer Center

**E**CPI University faculty members Dr. Vijay Bhuse, Mr. Larry Saccoia, and Mr. Al Portes have earned the highly coveted Cisco Academy Instructor Trainer certification, and are now authorized to train Cisco Academy Instructors worldwide.

The role of Instructor Trainer is the top teaching and technical role in the Cisco Networking Academy. These trainers are responsible for promoting academic and instructional excellence among Academy Instructors. In order to be designated as an Instructor Trainer, Cisco created a new rigorous qualification process requiring instructors to:

- Be nominated from a Cisco Authorized Instructor Training Center.
- Achieve and maintain industry certification associated with the Networking Academy curriculum they will be teaching.
- Take and pass a pre-test.
- Pass a two day face-to-face evaluation, scheduled and delivered by a member of the Cisco Technical Advocacy Team. (This evaluation includes hands-on configuration and troubleshooting, as well as preparing and presenting demo lectures.)

With these three Instructor Trainers, ECPI University is now designated a Cisco Academy Instructor Trainer Center (ITC) as well as a Cisco Academy Support Center (ASC), making it among just a few select locations on the east coast to have achieved this status.

As an ITC, ECPI can now provide training, technical support, and ongoing professional development for (and approve) new instructors. As an ASC, ECPI University is the provider of baseline support and partners with academies to promote a quality student experience, sustainability, and student success.



## CRC and Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Earn National Award

Congratulations to the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, in Fishersville, VA, on winning 2nd place in the National Career Pathways Network's (NCPN's) Career Partnership Excellence Award. The national award, sponsored by Kuder, Inc, recognizes outstanding partnerships to promote career guidance, professional development for educators, and the importance of employers in education and work-based learning opportunities for students. This year marks the first time that a Virginia program has placed in the top 3 for a NCPN award.

Woodrow Wilson's winning application focused on the school's efforts to ensure that the Virginians with disabilities served by the Center earn a Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). To date, 535 clients of the Center have attained a CRC at a Bronze level or higher for a pass rate of 85% of those assessed. The success of Woodrow Wilson's approach to preparing its students for the CRC includes use of a software training program that engages and supports individuals with diverse preferred styles of learning, a strong integration of the CRC in all work training programs, and lots of staff encouragement as to the importance of the test...and that students can earn the credential.

"Governor McDonnell has promoted Virginia's Career Readiness Certification program as a way to help employers recognize that certified job applicants present the requisite skill level to compete in our workforce. Our Commonwealth's Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center staff has adapted the program into a valuable asset that helps our students be ready for employment and compete for jobs. Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center graduates are trained to use their CRC information in job interviews to further underscore their readiness to go to work," said DARS Commissioner Job Rothrock.

The Virginia Workforce Council (VWC) established the Virginia CRC as a state performance measure for Workforce Investment Boards in January 2008. The Virginia CRC is based on the ACT-developed skills database, containing over 18,000 detailed job profiles. By matching job profile information with individual scores on WorkKeys assessments, employers are equipped to make reliable decisions about hiring and training, as well as program development needs. Successful completion of ACT's WorkKeys assessments in applied mathematics, reading for information, and locating information leads to the attainment of a CRC, a portable skills credential identified by employers as critical to workplace success.

The award provides Woodrow Wilson representatives with free travel to the NCPN Conference to be held this year in San Antonio, TX. (Last year's conference was held in Richmond). Additionally, the school will receive a \$2,000 cash prize as well as other benefits. The Woodrow Wilson initiative will be featured in the NCPN newsletter, at the annual NCPN membership luncheon, and in featured sessions at the national conference. 🌍

## 2013 National Career Pathways Network (NCPN) Conference

"Linking Education and Economic Prosperity" is the theme of the 2013 NCPN Conference. The conference will take place in San Antonio from October 13-15, with the preconference beginning Sunday. All events are at the Grand Hyatt Hotel on the famous River Walk. Whether you are an educator from secondary or postsecondary institutions or from business/industry, you will have the opportunity to network, listen, and learn from each other.

Please join NCPN for this professional development opportunity that includes 125+ breakout sessions, many networking opportunities, and an exhibit hall that showcases the latest products and services.

### Main conference sessions will focus on the following strands:

- Impactful Instruction
- Career Counseling & Coaching
- Adult Career Pathways
- Leadership & Operational Strategies
- Pathway Transitions

- Workforce & Economic Development Solutions
- Funding And Sustainability

### Preconference workshops (Sun, Oct 12) include:

- The San Antonio Model: A Unique Career Pathway Network
- Technology-Infused Classroom
- College and Career Readiness and Toolkits
- Career Pathways Effect Series: Counseling for Success
- Career Pathways Effect Series: Partnership Opportunities
- Career Pathways Leadership (CPL) Certification Workshop-STEM-Focused Version
- NACPL Forum: Education in the Workplace for Economic Prosperity

We hope you will make plans to attend, and bring your family with you to see some of the local attractions of San Antonio. To register go to [www.ncpn.info/registration.php](http://www.ncpn.info/registration.php).

For more information about the conference, contact [swilson@cord.org](mailto:swilson@cord.org). 🌍

## Local Partnerships Make a Big Impact for Business and Jobseekers

On May 9, more than 1,000 jobseekers from the Capital Region had the opportunity to meet 50 local employers as part of the Mt. Gilead Spring Career Fair. The career fair was a collective effort of Resource, the Capital Region Workforce Investment Board, and Mt. Gilead Full Gospel International Ministry in Chesterfield County, Virginia. The career fair is one of the many unique ways that Resource Business Solutions, Resource's regional business services collaboration, is connecting business with a skilled workforce in the Capital Region.

What made the career fair particularly successful is the emphasis RBS put on bringing in employers who had at least three open positions that were actively being recruited for at the event. As a result 96% of jobseekers attending the career fair found the event valuable to their career search.

Resource Business Solutions worked diligently with its partners to create a unique set of job readiness workshops preceding the event that jobseekers were invited to participate in. The goal was ensure that employers at the event would have the opportunity to meet jobseekers who were ready to work for them. This effort to increase the value of the career fair for employers worked exceedingly well with 79% of employers rating the career fair as an "excellent" or "above average" recruiting tool, and 93% of employers either hiring or planning to hire a jobseeker from the career fair. At this time there have been 42 confirmed hires from the event.

The success of the event caught the attention of local media with both print and television news coverage, and has already led Mt. Gilead to begin planning the fall career fair with Resource Business Solutions. 🌍



# Youth Participate in Advanced Manufacturing Camp



The competition was fierce, but “About That Time,” a team of four students (pictured at left) participating in a one-week Dream It.Do It.Virginia Manufacturing Camp held at the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) came out on top. For their creative clock design, and quality manufacturing, members of the winning team each received a \$100 Walmart gift card donated by The Virginia Growth Alliance.

The Dream It. Do It.Virginia Camp was funded by the South Central Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and offered in partnership with Southside Virginia Community College and the SVHEC. Working with instructors Ronnie Cole and Clint Johnson, coaches Charlotte Cline, Ernest Vass, Jim Luedtke, and Morris Bryant, the students from Halifax, Prince Edward, and Buckingham Counties learned important lessons in advanced manufacturing processes and techniques. They used these lessons, and the SVHEC’s advanced manufacturing equipment to design and build a small clock. The week culminated on Friday with teams producing ten identical, quality clocks, and presenting them for evaluation to a panel of three judges.

“The quality of work was very good. They were consistent with very few blemishes,” said judge David Forlines, owner of Mid Atlantic Test & Balance, Inc. Fellow judge Dr. Betty Adams, SVHEC Executive Director, agreed stating, “It’s amazing to me the quality of workmanship achieved in such a short period of time. I never would’ve guessed high school students created these clocks.

It made it very tough to judge.” In the end, the teams were separated by one point with “About That Time,” coached by Ernest Vass, getting the win.

The Dream It. Do It.Virginia Manufacturing Technology Camp introduces older youth (ages 16-21) to the manufacturing design process in a fun and interactive way. Debra Crowder, Executive Director of the South Central WIB, said, “We want to get the word out about advanced manufacturing, and help young people see a different side of manufacturing.

During the camp, students had an opportunity to use a Computer Numerical Controlled (CNC) router, CNC lathe, laser engraver, and digital imaging. Camp activities also included a tour of Riverstone Energy Centre and the Center for Coatings Research and Education (C-CARE), and hearing a presentation from ABB Lead Process Engineer Patricia Ricketts on ABB’s global operations, manufacturing processes, and career opportunities. This year’s students were participants in the Workforce Investment Act youth program. Each one was required to write an essay convincing Youth Coordinator Christin Jackson that they should be accepted into the camp.

Halifax County participant Shawntae Logan summed up her camp experience by saying, “It’s been fun, and something I’ll be able to carry with me throughout my life.” Her coach, Jim Luedtke, owner of Custom Wood Creations in South Boston, was equally enthusiastic about the camp stating, “I’m really enjoying the experience with my team--I call them the terrific trio!”

For more information about the Dream It, Do It Manufacturing Camp contact WIA Youth Coordinator Christin Jackson at [christin.jackson@southside.edu](mailto:christin.jackson@southside.edu) This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it or call 434-394-8904.

## Perseverance Leads to Dream Career

Heather Bobbitt was enrolled in the WIA Adult program in February 2013. She was a public assistance recipient and had not worked in over a year. Heather had a desire to work in healthcare but without the proper accommodations, Heather could not have been successful in the training or career field. In partnership with Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and Wytheville Community College (WCC), Heather’s WIA case manager obtained documentation of required accommodations and worked with WCC to staff to ensure she would receive the accommodations



Heather Bobbitt

throughout her training. Heather successfully completed the Nurse Aide class and was offered employment at a residential living facility with the stipulation she become licensed.

Heather’s case manager assisted with gathering and submitting the required documentation to the Board of Nursing in order to request accommodations on her State licensing exam. This included having her psychological assessment from 2008 reviewed and recertified by a licensed psychologist, obtaining a letter of support from the nurse aide coordinator at WCC specifying the accommodations that she was provided during training, and a letter outlining the specific

accommodations requested for her licensing exam.

Upon submission of the documentation; the Board of Nursing contacted Heather to discuss the required accommodations including additional time on the exam; use of an electronic digital stethoscope, and a reader for the oral exam. Due to Heather’s hearing impairment; she could not use the standard oral administration of the test (an audio recording) nor use the standard amplified stethoscope as the board usually permitted in these instances. Heather reads lips as her main method of communication and in conjunction with the learning disability; she required an individual to read the assessment to her. The Board of Nursing approved the request for additional time; but was unable to approve the other requests without a direct review in front of the board. Upon special consideration by the Board of Nursing; all of the accommodations were granted, but Heather was required to provide the stethoscope. The WIA program was able to assist Heather with purchasing the electronic/digital stethoscope, which she uses for employment as well as the licensing exam.

After extensive coordination of services and resources, Heather was able to take the licensing exam passing on her first attempt; and retain employment at the residential living facility. Heather loves her work and the interaction that she has with the residents. She works hard and supervisors are very pleased to have her as an employee. Heather has a bright outlook for a long term career path and retention of her employment. Heather added, “Without the assistance of the WIA adult program; I would still be looking for employment to this day. I am thankful for the opportunity that the WIA Adult program provided me.”



# Launch Hampton Roads Entrepreneurship Program Inaugural Class

Launch Hampton Roads saw its first cohort of budding entrepreneurs complete formal training in early June. Six participants completed the intensive week long start-up boot camp with training in: business planning; accounting; finance and credit; and sales and marketing. The week ended on Friday with a mini-“shark tank” event where participants were able to present their business idea and plan to local business start-up community advisors.

Training was conducted through the Old Dominion University Business Gateway and was well received by the participants. “The Launch Hampton Roads Program has given me the additional confidence I needed to help me start my new business,” said participant Donyata Washington. Ms. Washington is developing an online staffing agency through which people on public assistance can satisfy their work requirements from home. Washington was particularly struck by the commitment of the program staff, instructors and volunteers, remarking, “to have access to business owners and experts for an entire week was truly invaluable. You could feel that they really care about playing a part in your future success.”

Going forward, participants are paired with a mentor and will have access to a variety of additional

*Group Photo of Launch Hampton Roads' Inaugural Cohort and Instructors*

programs and services including: networking and special events; and specialized training in areas like federal contracting. A second cohort of seven participants completed training in July.

Launch Hampton Roads is Opportunity Inc.'s grant to provide entrepreneurship training under the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation Fund as part of a three-region Virginia consortium. The group, also known as the Virginia Employment Through Entrepreneurship Consortium (VETEC), received over \$8.0 million from the US Department of Labor to provide 1,000 adult and dislocated workers eligible for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services with comprehensive entrepreneurship training and technical assistance. The Northern Virginia workforce board, the program lead, and the Richmond workforce board are also participants in VETEC. 🌐



## Tim Tobin, Spotsylvania Regional Medical Center CEO Retires

Tobin, who became Spotsylvania Regional Medical Center's first CEO in 2008, announced his retirement effective August 31.

“It's been a great honor to open Spotsylvania Regional and set it on a course for success,” said Tobin. “From a plot of vacant woodland, we've been able to build a facility that has become an indispensable part of our community. I'm immensely proud of what our employees and physician partners have accomplished here - especially their unwavering commitment to patients.”



*Tobin*

“Tim directed the development of Spotsylvania Regional Medical Center even before we broke ground,” said Margaret Lewis, Senior Executive of HCA Virginia and President of HCA's Capital Division. “He has been an outstanding leader during its first three years of operation and created a patient-first culture that has earned the community's trust.”

Prior to joining Spotsylvania Regional, Tobin served as CEO at three other facilities - LewisGale Hospital Alleghany in Low Moor, VA; Clinch Valley Medical Center in Richlands, VA; and Coliseum Medical Centers in Macon, Georgia. Tobin has been active in community and healthcare organizations, currently serving as board member of Rappahannock Goodwill Industries and appointed by the Governor to The Virginia Workforce Council.

Tobin plans to stay in the Spotsylvania region, travel, and spend time with his wife, Sue, and two college-age children. “It hardly seems possible that twenty-eight years have passed,” he said of his time with HCA. “I've enjoyed it tremendously - especially the people I've met and been privileged to work with. They're the ones who have made it all worthwhile.”

Tobin will remain a member of the Virginia Workforce Council. 🌐

## High School Students Conduct Scientific Research on College Campus through Opportunity Inc. Program

A lucky group of junior and senior high school students who participated in the 2012-2013 Norfolk State University Science & Technology Education Preparation (STEP) program funded by Opportunity Inc. had the chance to live the life of a college student for two-weeks. The youth, who were involved in enrichment activities through the school year, were invited to participate in a two-week residential summer program to conduct research with faculty members.

The theme for this residential program was environmental science and students were tasked with conducting research on salt and fresh water samples. As the students conducted research, they took field trips to the Norfolk Botanical Garden, Hoffer Creek Wildlife Preserve, Luray Caverns and several sites on the Outer Banks to learn more about the environment.

Monte Wood, a rising high school senior said he is, “glad the program is in place. There needs to be more programs like this because it gives college and work experience to students who otherwise wouldn't get it.”

“The best part of my summer work experience was staying on the NSU campus. It allowed us to be



*High school students dig holes in the sand for planting in an effort to aid in the restoration of the sand dunes.*

exposed to different careers as well as it gave us a real college experience,” Diamen Carlisle, a rising high school senior.

At the end of the residency, students attended a workshop with faculty to learn how to present their research findings in-person and virtually.

Ms. Jennifer West, the Materials Science and Engineering Hub Coordinator for NSU's McDemmond Center for Applied Research (MCAR) and also a program mentor says, “I love working with Opportunity Inc. youth and look forward to continuing to share my love of research with them for many years to come!” 🌐