



Workforce Area #11

**Workforce Investment Act
Local Plan Annual Report**

For the Period: July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

**Submitted to the Virginia Community College System
September 2, 2014**

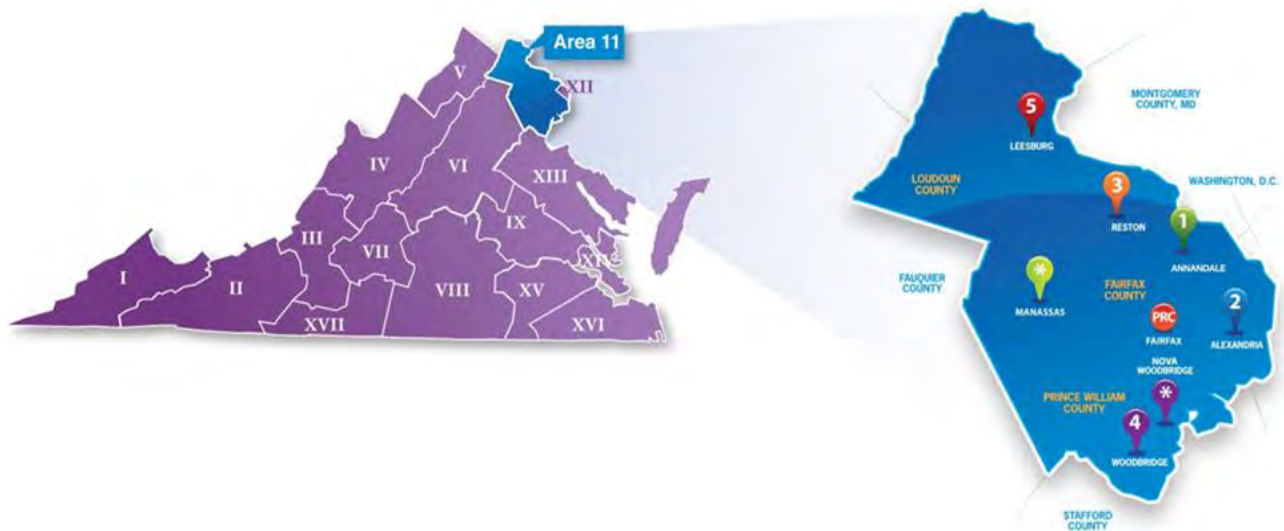
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Introduction

The Northern Virginia Workforce Area #11 serves over 1.9 million residents and tens of thousands of businesses in Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties and the cities of Falls Church, Fairfax, Manassas and Manassas Park. It is the largest workforce area by population in the Commonwealth of Virginia and serves approximately 50,000 business units. Our six (6) *SkillSource* Centers and additional affiliate sites offer multiple free services to both businesses seeking to hire and retain good workers and to job seekers helping them to prepare for and find jobs that can support themselves and their families.

The workforce and job training services provided by *SkillSource* and its multiple State, local and community-based partner organizations has continually expanded to meet the growing local needs in Northern Virginia. In particular, *SkillSource* has launched new initiatives to support Northern Virginia military veterans with training and job placement, assisting new business owners expand and hire additional workers, helping long-term unemployed jobseekers with job counseling and skills training to return to employment, guiding local adults with disabilities back into permanent long-term employment, supporting former offenders in returning to stable employment while continually responding to a dynamic and diversified regional economy.



I. Progress and Updates on Local Plan Strategies, Goals and Objectives

Specific strategies, goals, objectives from current approved Operations Plan

The workforce and job training services provided by *SkillSource* and its multiple State, local and community-based partner organizations substantially expanded in 2014 and is continuing to meet growing local community needs. In particular, we embrace our new and continued services supporting Northern Virginia military veterans with their training and job placement, assisting new business owners expand and hire additional workers, guiding local adults with disabilities back into permanent long-term employment, while continually responding to a dynamic and diversified regional economy.

Sector Strategies, OJT and Transitional Employment

Northern Virginia Workforce Area #11 has focused on multiple high-demand, fast growing industry sectors for nearly a decade. While there are up to six key employment sectors in the Northern Virginia region, the Northern Virginia Workforce Area has focused on sectors 1-5 below, including:

- 1) Business and Professional Services, including Information Technology
- 2) Health Care
- 3) Hospitality and Food Establishments
- 4) Retail Services
- 5) Construction
- 6) Government (Federal, State and local)

Building career pathways in and through high-demand, high growth industry sectors are a critical component to overall workforce system design and implementation.

In addition to regional employer sector strategies, Area #11 has had significant success using on-the-job training (OJT) job placement, as a means to introduce contextual learning, which imparts thinking, reasoning and work readiness attributes employers value in their workers. In OJT the focus on direct learning, as the worker is also earning a paycheck that leads to full-time

employment, has been a critically successful tool to engage both local employers and job seekers alike. In 2013 and beyond, Northern Virginia Workforce Area will align these skills, attributes, and employer needs through the implementation of a new WIA Transitional Employment Program (work experience), which targets low-skilled adults and their need to gain real-life work experience. Transitional employment will focus on 60-90 day terms, where participants receive training stipends, rather than full-time wages, while participating in real work opportunities.

Detail any changes and/or updates to projected goals/objectives

State Certification of Prince William Workforce Center

In June 2014, officials from the Virginia Community College System notified the Northern Virginia Workforce Area #11 staff that the Prince William Workforce Center had met all required criteria and has been designated as a State-certified Tier II Workforce Center. As of July 2014, the Prince William Workforce Center is one of five State-certified Tier II workforce centers throughout the Commonwealth.

Implementation of Employer Solutions Team

In response to requirements established by the Virginia Board of Workforce Development and the Virginia Community College System and to meet the unique needs of our business customers *SkillSource* and its partners have implemented a comprehensive new employer-focused team (also known as a Business Services Team). Employers can expect a prompt response to inquiries and a seamless, single point-of-contact customer experience. Whether contacting *SkillSource* by phone or special website inquiry form a designated representative will respond within one (1) business day. A new database tool will be used to track, monitor, and report all customer interactions. Expertise in Recruitment and Screening, Employee Development/Retention, and Consultative and Planning are among the services offered. *SkillSource* representatives are also accountable to customer satisfaction standards.

Success in Instituting TANF Employment Assistance in Prince William County

Starting in July 2013 and through June 2014, *SkillSource* has successfully placed 58 adults enrolled in Prince William County's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program into temporary and permanent employment opportunities. Through a three-year grant from the

Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), *SkillSource* partnered with the Prince William County Department of Social Services and the Prince William County Office of Housing and Community Development on this project to promote job preparation and work experiences for TANF-eligible adult job seekers. During Year One of the three year grant period, the Prince William TANF Project exceeded its one-year goal to place 35 TANF-eligible adults into employment by 11%, actually placing 39 into employment. 31 of these placements are subsidized work experiences with local employers in industries such as Healthcare and Retail. Twelve (12) jobseekers have been placed into non-subsidized permanent employment. *SkillSource* has been approved by VDSS for Year Two of this initiative.

Completion of Pilot Registered Apprenticeship (RAP) Initiative for Young Adults with Disabilities

The *SkillSource* Registered Apprenticeship grant through the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) provided assessment, training, supportive services and placement for young adults, including those with disabilities, between the ages of 16 and 27 into apprenticeship programs. *SkillSource*, as the lead entity, engaged numerous partners in this regional initiative – primarily, its *SkillSource* One-Stop Employment Centers and their Operator, the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, and ServiceSource, a non-profit organization that provides employment and training services to people with disabilities.

Through the grant's completion in September 2013, NOVA RAP had served 137 participants, 60 of whom did not have a disability and 77 with a disability. RAP placed two (2) participants in direct employment and four (4) participants in apprenticeship positions. Two (2) of the apprenticeship positions were in cosmetology, one (1) was in barbering and one (1) was in the CVS pharmacy technician track. All of these individuals had disabilities. One participant was placed into a pharmacy apprenticeship with CVS and eventually was hired by CVS. 20 participants enrolled in an education course for training in apprenticeship fields, such as Trades and Pharmacy, and 18 were placed into a pre-apprenticeship work experience.