On April 18, Hampton Roads Workforce Partners — Opportunity Inc., Peninsula Council for Workforce Development, the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance, and ReInvent Hampton Roads — presented findings from the 2017 State of the Workforce and Gap Analysis report, which describes the economic and business activities of the key industries operating in the Hampton Roads region and the labor force available to support these industries. The industry clusters examined in the report include: Advanced Manufacturing, Ship Repair and Ship Building, Food and Beverage Manufacturing, Port Operations, Life Sciences, Business and Consulting Services, Information Analytics and Security, and Tourism.

The State of the Workforce report provided business and economic development leaders with insight into the region’s workforce assets, and revealed actionable data to support efforts aimed at worker skill development, job creation, and improved economic opportunities.

The report was shared during two sessions at Old Dominion University’s Virginia Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center (VMASC) to a group of more than 150 economic development decision makers, business leaders, and educators in attendance.

The 2017 Hampton Roads State of the Workforce report was conducted and presented by labor market advisory group, EMSI. To download the executive summary and full report, visit www.opp-inc.org.

"This collaborative effort marks a new day for Hampton Roads, in terms of our ability to partner on workforce development initiatives across the region. We commissioned this study to give us a baseline of historical data, which we can now reference as we work to close the skills gap to ensure we have the talent to support high-demand jobs in our area."
- Shawn Avery, President and CEO, Opportunity Inc.

LIDL, an independent grocery store based in Germany, is launching its first U.S. stores, with several opening in Hampton Roads, including Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and Suffolk. In preparation for the grand opening in Virginia Beach, which took place on June 15, LIDL sought the assistance of Opportunity Inc.’s Business Services to find qualified candidates for a successful transition into their new locations.

Over the course of two multi-day hiring events in April, the Business Services team assisted more than 300 job seekers — resulting in more than 100 new hires to date. Opportunity Inc. is now working to support hiring initiatives for LIDL’s Suffolk location at the Suffolk One-Stop Workforce Center.

"Opportunity Inc. has allowed [us] to find the right candidate for the right job in a timely fashion."
- Jean-Christophe Chartier, Lidl Virginia Manager

"Congratulations to Steve Cook, our Vice President of Workforce Innovation. Steve is a 2017 graduate of LEAD Hampton Roads."
Message from the Chair of the Board

This issue marks my final column as the Chair of the Board for Opportunity Inc. The last two years have been peppered with new programs and partnerships, along with a few challenges. However, with the support of talented leadership and staff, and our strong Board, Executive Committee, and standing committees, Opportunity Inc. successfully turned those obstacles into opportunities for continued growth and development of our workforce.

We surmounted two significant challenges connected to the delivery of youth services. First, we completed our pivot from an in-school youth focus to devoting 70% of our youth funding to out-of-school youth, and reallocated staff resources to provide the required oversight and support. Secondly, we have released our very successful Youth Career Center of Hampton Roads, with its “open door” service policy, from restrictive federal guidelines by organizing our first ever fundraising campaign — raising funds for operational costs and relocating the center from Pembroke Mall to Tidewater Community College in Virginia Beach.

To augment our fundraising efforts, we solicited the support of our local governments. For the first time, beginning July 1, localities in Hampton Roads will provide funding for Opportunity Inc. at $0.25 per capita, resulting in approximately $288,000 of additional support. These funds, along with our fundraising dollars, will support programs without federal funding, such as (1) expanding the Youth Career Center, (2) creating an entrepreneurship development program to succeed Launch Hampton Roads, (3) growing our Pathways to Prosperity mentoring program, and (4) enhancing our business and economic development support activities and workforce development information resources.

Turning away from finances, our staff skillfully navigated new federal rules (including getting a gubernatorial waiver) to avoid having to contract out the entire operation of our One-Stop system. Instead, after an RFP process, we hired TCC as our “One Stop Operator,” to oversee the One Stop system, allowing us both to satisfy the federal requirement AND continue to build on the One Stop’s great results (which annually exceed all performance benchmarks). We also wrote and adopted a new regional Workforce Development Plan, for which staff is now drafting an implementation plan. Finally, in pathbreaking collaboration with HREDA, Reinvent Hampton Roads, and the Peninsula Council for Workforce Development, we released the 2017 State of the Workforce Report, which supports economic and workforce development policy and programming across the region.

As I reflect on my tenure with Opportunity Inc., I can’t conclude without thanking our CEO, Shawn Avery, who has taken the reins of this organization and shaped it for its next generation of growth and success. Shawn assembled and empowered a small but excellent staff that has greatly impacted our region by forging partnerships with private industries, localities, state agencies, and public and private educational institutions. I am convinced we have the premiere workforce development organization in Virginia, and I am most thankful to the Board for allowing me such a meaningful role in its leadership for the past two years. I look forward to great new successes in the coming years under the leadership of Delceno Miles and her new Vice Chair, Mark Johnson.

Cordially yours.

William L. Nusbaum
Chair of the Board

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS TEAM UP FOR REGIONAL HEALTHCARE FAIR

In partnership with the Peninsula Council, Virginia Employment Commission, Job Assistance Center, LLC, and Thomas Nelson Workforce Development, Opportunity Inc. hosted the Regional Healthcare Fair on June 8 — providing job seekers with the opportunity to connect and network with more than 30 participating employers in the healthcare field throughout Hampton Roads.

The fair featured employers, community colleges and medical schools—offering a range of resources for job seekers, and those seeking continued education in the healthcare field. The rapid growth within the healthcare industry has required organizations to focus more on attracting, retaining, and managing quality talent. In addition, community colleges, such as Tidewater, Paul D. Camp and Thomas Nelson Community Colleges, now offer a range of healthcare workforce training programs to create meaningful career pathways.

"I think these events are important, not only for the job seekers but also for the vendors to be able to interact with each other — see what others are offering. It’s possible they may know someone that we can take on and vice versa." - Danielle Calhoun, Assistant Director of Compensation and Employee Relations, EVMS
**Meeting Opportunities**

Governor Terry McAuliffe has signed an executive order aimed at creating meaningful career pathways. The order focuses on expanding pathways and credit for prior learning and experience. In support of this initiative, the Governor has appointed Opportunity Inc. as a key partner in the development of additional economic development programs.

The Governor’s executive order emphasizes the importance of collaboration among community colleges, medical schools, and employers. The newly formed partnership between Tidewater Community College and Opportunity Inc. is intended to streamline access to education and training opportunities for job seekers.

The regional fair, which is scheduled for June 8, will provide job seekers with the opportunity to connect with employers, community colleges, and medical schools. This event aims to showcase the range of healthcare workforce training resources available in the region.

Cordially yours,

[Signature]

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**Youth Services Alumni... Where Are They Now?**

**Meet Christina Felder**

Christina Felder was one of the first students to receive services offered through the Youth Career Center of Hampton Roads. After experiencing grade retention in elementary school, Christina’s confidence in her academic performance began to suffer, which ultimately resulted in behavior problems. With the encouragement and support of her mother, Christina began to frequent the Youth Career Center while in middle school. The YCCHR tutored her in her coursework, specifically math.

Christina advanced to high school—graduating in only two years after completing several summer courses. She later graduated from Tidewater Community College and enrolled in Old Dominion University, where she received her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology and minor in Public Administration this Spring. Christina is now in the process of applying for graduate programs with plans to pursue a master’s degree in Education and School Counseling.

> “Learning to utilize my resources—such as counselors, teachers, and the great tutors at the Youth and Career Center—became my biggest asset.” – Christina Felder

**Meet Giancarlo Balarezo**

After making the decision to obtain his GED, Giancarlo Balarezo stopped by the Virginia Beach Adult Learning Center to inquire about enrollment in the Foundations Transition Program (FTP). Through hard work and perseverance, he enrolled in FTP in September 2016 and received his GED shortly after.

Marking his accomplishment, Gian received two awards at his 2016 graduation ceremony—a $1000 scholarship from the Lions’ Club to attend Tidewater Community College and recognition for receiving an award for receiving the highest GED exam test scores in his class.

Gian is now employed at Williams Farm Recreation Center as a Member Services Facility Customer Assistant, and was recently hired for a permanent, part-time position at Bow Creek Recreation Center. To further advance his education and career, Gian enrolled in summer courses at Tidewater Community College and plans to continue his studies at Christopher Newport University.

> “The Foundations Transition Program is a great step to getting your life back on track. It helped me to earn my GED® certificate and to move on to employment and ultimately my main goal—enrolling in college at Tidewater Community College for Business Administration.” – Giancarlo Balarezo

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**Contact us today to find out how your business can support Workforce Development initiatives in our region.**
About Opportunity Inc.

Established by the Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board, Opportunity Inc. oversees workforce development programs for South and Western Hampton Roads. Opportunity Inc. provides strategic workforce development solutions designed to assist businesses in accessing qualified workers and jobseekers in search of suitable job openings and training opportunities to bolster their earning potential.

Stay Connected!

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