Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy Initiative

Report 3: Talent Alignment Strategy

June 2019
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01 Introduction
About the Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy

The purpose of the Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy is to ensure education and workforce development efforts are aligned with the needs of employers and to coordinate existing education and workforce development initiatives currently underway throughout the region. Ultimately, the project aims to create the next generation workforce that the Hampton Roads region will need to propel its economy forward.

CAEL and Avalanche Consulting were engaged to facilitate and prepare the Strategy, to include the following:

**Report 1: Workforce Analysis** will determine the makeup of the region’s labor force and identify the industries and occupations that are thriving. This report serves to construct a baseline analysis of the Hampton Roads region’s demographics and an analysis of the trends in the workforce and education infrastructure pipeline, including the supply of graduates’ in the Hampton Roads region.

**Report 2: Supply-Demand Gap Analysis** will identify what skills the workforce currently has, what skills employers need, and how to fill in gaps in the workforce pipeline. This report will review the growing industry and occupation clusters and provide a comprehensive inventory of all education and training assets in the region. Using this inventory, this report will include a supply, demand and program gap analysis as it relates to gaps in the workforce and educational programs.

**Report 3: Talent Alignment Strategy** will provide recommendations on how to align and improve the region’s talent pipeline. The strategy will include high level goals for developing, retaining, and attracting talent within the region. These goals will include several strategy recommendations for action, tactics to be deployed across the region and talent development systems, as well as a high level implementation plan to guide strategic activity.

**Stakeholder Input** will take place throughout this process. Focus groups and interviews will be facilitated with stakeholders in the region. A Steering Committee consisting of industry, education, and workforce leaders from throughout the Hampton Roads region will serve as advisors to the project.
Project Partners and Funders

The Hampton Roads Community Foundation is championing the Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy in partnership with the Hampton Roads Workforce Council, Greater Peninsula Workforce Board, and Reinvent Hampton Roads. The project was facilitated and developed by CAEL and Avalanche Consulting, Inc.

Hampton Roads Community Foundation
The Hampton Roads Community Foundation is the region’s largest grant and scholarship provider. Their focus is on partnering with donors from all walks of life to improve life in southeastern Virginia. They do that through grants, scholarships and leadership initiatives. Since 1950 it has awarded more than $282 million in grants and scholarships to improve lives in southeastern Virginia.

Hampton Roads Workforce Council
Hampton Roads Workforce Council is an organization advocating for a comprehensive approach to workforce development, endeavoring to solidify relationships between key stakeholders. The organization facilitates communication, funneling the needs of the business community back to the educators and training providers. Hampton Roads Workforce Council identifies employer needs and adjusts existing programs accordingly, as well as develops new training programs to better equip the region’s workforce for the labor marketplace.

Greater Peninsula Workforce Board
The Greater Peninsula Workforce Board is a group of community leaders appointed by local elected officials and tasked with planning and oversight responsibilities for workforce development programs and services within the seven localities that comprise the Virginia Career Works – Greater Peninsula Region. They are one of the fifteen Boards established within the Commonwealth by the Governor’s Office.

ReInvent Hampton Roads
ReInvent Hampton Roads is an outgrowth of a community leadership initiative of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation launched in 2012 focusing on regional economic competitiveness. The strategic focus of ReInvent Hampton Roads is creating more and higher paying jobs, building a culture where entrepreneurship can thrive and diversifying the economy.
Project Partners and Funders

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CAEL (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning)
CAEL is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to put meaningful learning, credentials and work within reach for every community. Since its founding in 1974, CAEL has been providing colleges and universities, companies, economic development organizations, labor organizations, and state and local governments with the tools and strategies they need for creating practical and effective lifelong learning solutions to address long-term skills needs.

Avalanche Consulting, Inc.
Avalanche Consulting is the nation’s premier economic development strategist. Avalanche is deeply driven to make a positive impact and seek clients who are equally inspired to energize their economies. Headquartered in Austin, Avalanche was established in 2005 and its team has a combined 85+ years of experience working with more than 150 cities, counties, and regions across the country.
Steering Committee and Focus Group Members

The Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy project partners and consulting team sincerely thank the members of Steering Committee and the participants in focus groups for helping inform and guide the development of this strategy. Members/participants include:

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About This Report

This report, the Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy, is the final piece of the Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy. This report is the culmination of gathering intensive stakeholder input, facilitating planning sessions, and collecting in-depth labor market data on industry and occupational trends.

Why is this strategy important?
Hampton Roads is facing a number of challenges when it comes to developing, retaining, and attracting talent that meet the needs of their regional labor market. This strategy will help key industry, education, workforce, and community leaders move forward together toward common goals and take action to bring the region closer to solving their workforce challenges.

The subsequent pages include high-level themed goals with specific strategies and tactics on how to align and improve the region’s talent pipeline.

Executive Summary: includes topline findings from the data analysis – both quantitative and qualitative. It puts the findings into a larger context and illustrates the larger intentions and goal structure of the strategy.

Strategy Section: details the larger strategic framework and themes of this report as well as guidance on how to use this report.

Goal Breakdown Sections: provides an overview of each goal, detailing the overall objective, the challenges, and value proposition. Following the first page is a further breakdown of the core strategies within the goal and associated specific tactics and promising practices to further support.

Promising Practices Appendix: provides a complete listing of relevant promising practices and models associated with each goal detailed in the strategy.
Executive Summary

With today’s labor market at near full employment, communities must proactively work to produce a talent pool with the right skills, access, and advancement opportunities along high-demand career pathways within a coordinated workforce development and education system. Leadership within the Hampton Roads region has determined that a focused, strategic approach to talent alignment is a critical next step in ensuring economic prosperity for the region’s businesses, residents, and future growth. This Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy reflects the learning and insights gained from stakeholders across the region, representing business and industry, education and training, economic development and workforce development. Labor market analyses were conducted by the consulting team in Report 1: Talent Analysis and Report 2: Supply and Demand Gap Analysis. The Talent Alignment Strategy lays out a set of goals, strategies and tactics that will increase Hampton Road’s ability to attract, retain and develop the talent needed to drive economic growth in the region.

Throughout the analysis and information-gathering process, four key goals emerged which guide the resulting Strategy document:

1. Clear career pathways must be well-known and accessible for students, residents, and workers at all skill levels
2. Education and training across the region must be better aligned to the current and emerging Hampton Roads labor market
3. The region should increase its efforts to attract and retain talent to grow the regional talent pool
4. Regional partnerships should be further developed, strengthened, and sustained in order to help prioritize workforce investments in the region

Each of these priorities was identified as a critical need for the region through both conversations and data analysis. While much has been done to support talent in the past, regional leadership now recognizes the need to implement a best-in-class, coordinated talent development system to propel the economy, residents, and companies toward a more prosperous and competitive future.

Research findings from reports 1 and 2 helped fuel the Talent Alignment Strategy. The following key findings were driving forces in the strategy development process:

There is a growing labor shortage in the region.

- Both Hampton Roads and the US are currently operating at or beyond full employment. As such, employers face both difficulty in finding employees and pressure for increased wages. The supply of labor is stressed even further as regional gains in employment (+30,000 jobs in five years) substantially outpaced growth in the working age population (+9,600 people).

- The supply-demand analysis points to several workforce trends in Hampton Roads: Labor supply gaps are largest for entry-level and middle skill positions. While Bachelor’s graduate output has increased significantly over the past 10 years, Certificate and Associate’s graduates have been in decline. Now, industries that need middle-skill workers can’t find them.

- Competition for technology skills outstrips the supply. All industries interviewed expressed a need for IT workers and the inability to find and retain them. Critical positions are at the Bachelor’s level or higher. National demand for IT workers is expected to grow significantly, and the 25,000 workers Amazon plans to hire in Northern Virginia will be a significant competitor (magnet) for university graduates.
Executive Summary

The region has an abundance of education and training providers, but broad career awareness is lacking.

- Generally, the availability of educational programs appears to be well-matched with key occupational areas in the region and in alignment with the competencies and credentials required to support key sectors. However, in many occupational clusters, demand is well outpacing supply indicating that programs are not at capacity (meaning not graduating as many students as they could) or other forces are effecting the supply of workers, such as competition among industry sectors and lack of career awareness and pathways across the region.

- Career messaging should help drive education choices. Many residents remain unaware of the breadth of career opportunities in the region. Understanding where employment opportunities are, and will likely be in the future, is critical to effective education and career planning. In many of the industries key to the Hampton Roads economy, the data suggests opportunities for realignment and redirection from one education field to a closely related one that would result in higher employability in areas of need.

Education pathways need to be aligned to real career pathways in the Hampton Roads labor market.

- Filling entry-level positions and providing management-level development presents a real challenge. Entering and progressing through a career requires support from employers and an aligned education and training system to ensure skills development along the pathway. Many employers, especially within Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare and IT, indicate that retaining employees is difficult. The inability to retain those in prime working ages may force companies to look outside the region for more experienced talent.

- Some businesses have developed internal pathway programs to help retain/advance workers and increase longevity within the company and the field. It is important to incentivize and scale these approaches so more workers can earn while they learn skills and employers can reap the benefit of a more stable incumbent workforce.

- Ensuring that there is a stackable credential and degree pathway for key areas where higher-level degrees are necessary for career progression simultaneously addresses skill gaps within the labor market, allows employers to access a labor pool and education system addressing skill needs aligned to their career pathways, and creates more long term, sustainable career options for Hampton Roads residents.

Economic and population trends drive the need for enhanced talent attraction and retention efforts.

- Exiting military personnel represent an important source of talent. More than 8,200 exiting military remained or moved to the Hampton Roads region in 2015 alone. While the overall veteran population in Hampton Roads has decreased by nearly 4% over the past 5 years, this is significantly less than the 13% decrease at the national level. In addition to the need to tap this exiting military workforce, serving the career needs of spouses must continue to be incorporated in veteran workforce programs.

- High school and college graduates leaving the region represent a source of talent that is not currently being utilized to its full potential. Capitalizing on this pipeline of talent requires efforts to retain local college graduates and encourage boomerangers - those that leave but return.
Executive Summary

Increased regional coordination and collaboration will be critical to addressing Hampton Road’s workforce needs now and into the future.

- There is an opportunity to enhance and build on existing partnership and collaboration efforts. Increasing system alignment by creating coordination across all systems and integrating talent investments into a single regional talent development strategy will be key to Hampton Road’s ability to create a robust workforce and world-class talent development system.

- Some previous regional talent development efforts have been hindered by lack of momentum for implementation. Promoting sector partnerships, establishing a regional convener, and creating spaces where there are opportunities to collaborate will be critical to supporting strategic action.

- The region’s reputation as a tourism destination and the presence of a large military population creates a market for higher housing costs while its unique geography compounds issues with transportation and accessibility. As a result, several employers express concern over the impact that a lack of affordable housing and insufficient public transportation has on their access to talent. This is not a problem that any one entity or municipality can solve alone.

The Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy lays out a comprehensive plan that will increase coordination among employers, educators, workforce development leaders, economic development organizations, and other regional skill development efforts to create a highly skilled, highly competitive workforce that will spur and drive economic growth. The strategy is intended to be a living document that regional leadership and stakeholders should use to guide investments, programmatic solutions, and coordinated and collaborative efforts to achieve a world-class workforce system in the Hampton Roads region. The goals are ambitious but achievable. Implementation of the Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy will require a collective effort driven by leaders across the region and will drive better coordination, communication, and cross-system collaboration.
Executive Summary

This strategy includes a set of goals, strategies, and tactics, as well as examples practices in action to guide the planning and implementation of these efforts. Below is a summary of the overall goals and strategies further detailed in this report:

**Goal 1**
Career Awareness and Pathways

- Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.
  - 1.1 Create and promote full scale career pathways for in-demand occupations
  - 1.2 Ramp up regional career awareness across K-12 systems and beyond
  - 1.3 Develop a regional web-based talent portal
  - 1.4 Launch initiatives to engage under and unemployed populations

**Goal 2**
Talent Development

- Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.
  - 2.1 Develop and adopt curriculum for soft skills across the region
  - 2.2 Promote existing and grow work-based learning and earn and learn models in the region
  - 2.3 Develop mentorship and/or coaching programs for new workforce entrants
  - 2.4 Identify resources and needs for incumbent working training

**Goal 3**
Talent Attraction and Retention

- The regional talent pool is grown through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.
  - 3.1 Enhance efforts to retain local college graduates and encourage boomerangers to return
  - 3.2 Support existing and explore new efforts to retain and engage exiting military personnel and military spouses in the regional job market
  - 3.3 Showcase Hampton Roads as a place to live, work, earn, and learn

**Goal 4**
Collaboration and Leadership

- Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.
  - 4.1 Support, promote and expand regional sector partnerships
  - 4.2 Establish regional convener role to coordinate sector partnerships and aggregate skill development needs across sectors
  - 4.3 Host an annual Regional Talent Pipeline Conference
  - 4.4 Enhance collaboration and coordination across and between K-12 and postsecondary education
Four C’s Strategic Framework

This Talent Alignment Strategy is oriented around a four C’s framework. It outlines high-level goals, strategies, and tactics designed to ensure education and workforce development efforts are aligned with the needs of employers and to better coordinate existing education and workforce development initiatives currently underway throughout the region. Each strategy offers suggested tactics to address some combination of enhancing collaboration, communication, capacity, and content.

**COLLABORATION**

Improve collaboration across the region within and between education, workforce development, economic development, and industry leadership.

**COMMUNICATION**

Improve communication across the region about system offerings, initiatives to increase business engagement and participation in workforce alignment efforts and to better communicate to students and the workforce about high-growth career opportunities.

**CAPACITY**

Increase limited capacity of systems and key stakeholders to workforce development, alignment and attraction efforts by focusing on a collective impact approach to their work across the region.

**CONTENT**

Adjust, align, and create new program and opportunities for education and skill development for target industries, occupations and core competencies demanded by the labor market.
Strategy Overview

The Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy was informed by workshops with the Talent Alignment Steering Committee, focus groups and interviews with regional stakeholders, and labor market data analysis. During these conversations, the consulting team asked leaders from industry, education, economic development, workforce development, and other community organizations about their perception of the workforce – both the pipeline and available regional talent, ideas for improvement, and their biggest needs or challenges.

A number of common themes emerged: the region’s employers are experiencing a talent shortage; to create a more robust talent pipeline, Hampton Roads’ education and training programs must aligned with industry needs; regional collaboration is critical; the region must be able to both attract talent from other parts of the state or country and to retain local talent, including those graduating from local high schools and postsecondary institutions.

The Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Framework, illustrated to the right, reflects key learning, goals and objectives gathered during the overall information gathering process. Each of the quadrants represents a key theme associated with the four goals of the Strategy. No quadrant is more important or pressing than the other, they are all important components of driving toward a highly skilled, highly competitive workforce that will spur and drive economic growth.

The following pages will detail the high-level goals for Hampton Roads. Each goal is associated with a theme that it addresses, why it is important, an overall objective, and a handful of specific tactics to reach these goals. Each strategy is accompanied by an example of a national or regional practice or model to consider.

How to take this strategy from planning to action:

- Drive ongoing conversations with key industry, economic development, education, workforce, and community stakeholders as the region moves toward strategy implementation.
- Build support, engagement, and buy-in from additional stakeholders in the region and at the state level.
- Utilize the framework, strategies, tactics, and high-level implementation plan to set working groups and priorities for each year for the next 3-5 years to achieve impact on each of the four goals. Refine activities and success metrics as work is implemented.
- Use the goals and strategies to promote, develop, and sustain partnerships and investments that address talent alignment across the region.
## Strategy Overview: Goals & Themes

### Goal #1  Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

- 1.1 Create and promote full scale career pathways for in-demand occupations
- 1.2 Ramp up regional career awareness across K-12 systems and beyond
- 1.3 Develop a regional web-based talent portal
- 1.4 Launch initiatives to engage under and unemployed populations

### Goal #2  Talent Development

Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.

- 2.1 Develop and adopt curriculum for soft skills across the region
- 2.2 Promote existing and grow work-based learning and earn and learn models in the region
- 2.3 Develop mentorship and/or coaching programs for new workforce entrants
- 2.4 Identify resources and needs for incumbent working training

### Goal #3  Talent Attraction and Retention

The regional talent pool is grown through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.

- 3.1 Enhance efforts to retain local college graduates and encourage boomerangers to return
- 3.2 Support existing and explore new efforts to retain and engage exiting military personnel and military spouses in the regional job market
- 3.3 Showcase Hampton Roads as a place to live, work, earn, and learn

### Goal #4  Collaboration and Leadership

Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

- 4.1 Support, promote and expand regional sector partnerships
- 4.2 Establish regional convener role to coordinate sector partnerships and aggregate skill development needs across sectors
- 4.3 Host an annual Regional Talent Pipeline Conference
- 4.4 Enhance collaboration and coordination across and between K-12 and postsecondary education
Goal #1:
Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways:
Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

Why this is important: When students, residents, and workers have access to clear pathways aligned with industry needs, they have a better understanding of what opportunities exist and how to pursue them. Focusing on pathways at the regional level rather than at the individual organization or institution level expands reach, improves consistency of messaging, and increases capacity.

Challenges: Filling entry-level positions and providing management-level development presents a real challenge for companies in Hampton Roads. Entering and progressing through a career requires support from employers and an aligned education and training system to ensure skills development along the pathway. Many residents are unaware of the breadth of careers in the regional labor market and don’t have ready access to information or guidance to make well-informed education and career decisions. Some of the region’s key industries also contend with misconceptions about what it means to work in the industry and the viable pathways their field offers.

Objective: Awareness of career opportunities and pathways within the region’s key industries is consistent across communities and constituents. Hampton Roads residents have ready access to clear and consistent information about career paths in the region, how to access occupations within them, and how to move along them regardless of their level of experience or education. Residents make well-informed career and education decisions that support the region’s industries and lead to family-sustaining wages.

Goal #1: Core Strategies

1.1 Create and promote full scale career pathways for in-demand occupations

1.2 Ramp up regional career awareness across K-12 systems and beyond

1.3 Develop a regional web-based talent portal

1.4 Launch initiatives to engage under and unemployed populations
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

Employers are struggling to fill positions across industries and skill levels. While there are a number of contributing factors to this career awareness is chief among them, particularly with skilled trades. Building pathways that enhance awareness of and guide career decisions toward in-demand occupations at all levels of education, training, and experience can help debunk false preconceptions about particular industries and careers and open a world of possibility for students and workers at all skill levels.

Supporting Tactics:

- Create an inventory of existing career pathway documentation being promoted in the region.
- Focus initially on creating regional pathways that highlight occupations within shipbuilding and ship repair as well as advanced manufacturing - highlight those foundational skills, expertise, and/or credentials that are applicable to both industries.
- Identify requisite skills, education, certification, and/or experience required to access key occupations at various levels as well as transition points to either higher-level roles or lateral moves from other industries into higher-demand occupations; include cost of related education programs as applicable and salary/benefit information.
- Ensure pathways provide multiple on/off ramps, including military transition, and promote them widely through regional website/talent portal, K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, and Career Centers.
- Scale and replicate Virginia Ship Repair Associate Pre-Hire Career Training Program within other industries. Identify baseline/crossover skills and then build follow-on programs for niche sectors.

Promising Practices and Models:

Iowa Career Pathways - Future Ready Iowa

Future Ready Iowa is an initiative to build Iowa’s talent pipeline. The initiative’s web portal houses resources, tools and information for high school students, adult learners, and employers including the State’s Sector Partnership Toolkits and career pathways in energy, information technology, and advanced manufacturing.

https://www.futurereadyiowa.gov/career-pathway-documents
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

All residents in Hampton Roads should be exposed to and aware of the breadth of careers available to them. Several of the region’s high schools have implemented career academy models but all students in the region, regardless of what district they are in or what school they attend, should be exposed to careers and receive high-quality career-related guidance and advising. This also means that teachers, guidance counselors, and parents who are charged with providing that guidance must be exposed to and well-versed in the region’s key industries, occupational areas, and potential career pathways.

Supporting Tactics:

- Implement 8th grade career exploration event(s) for the region.
- Increase opportunities to bring the classroom to employers and employers to the classroom. Provide K-12 students with the opportunity to visit warehouses, production floors, and shipyards to see work in action.
- Building on the WHRO STEM Van model, invest in mobile units to bring career awareness experiences to students, parents, and counselors, particularly in more rural or residential parts of the region where access to industry may be limited.
- Leverage technology to engage youth. Explore opportunities to enhance career awareness through the use of virtual reality and simulation, particularly when students may be too young to use industry tools or machinery. Showcase influence of tablets in the workplace related to engineering, production, logistics, and shipbuilding occupations.
- Celebrate careers and college by expanding and promoting signing days at high schools across the region.

Promising Practices and Models:

Mission Tomorrow - ChamberRVA, Richmond, VA

Mission Tomorrow is the Richmond region’s annual interactive career exploration event for students. Through an interactive series of activities and discussions with employers, Mission Tomorrow encourages students to explore career interests and in-demand jobs from over 140 businesses in the region.

https://www.chamberrva.com/programs/mission-tomorrow/
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

There are multitudes of excellent careers, skill development opportunities, and sources of career information in Hampton Roads. A regional talent portal serves as a single point of access for all things talent-related. This would provide Hampton Roads with a centralized hub of information that can be utilized by a range of stakeholders from economic developers to schools and the general public. In addition, this portal would provide an opportunity to share the region’s story and promote its virtues.

Supporting Tactics:

- Secure new or repurpose existing https://www.hamptonroadstalent.com/ domain to serve as the home of the talent portal.
- Collect and curate content for the site, using it as a venue to provide regional workforce data, showcase the region’s key industries, and as a vehicle to promote career pathways, link to open jobs, education and training offerings. This site could also promote WHRO-produced short videos featuring workers in the region’s key industries.
- Leverage the talent portal site for regional talent attraction efforts and materials showcasing the region, industries, and occupations.
- Create an online repository of contacts, resources, and programs related to industry and education:
  - List of companies, their talent/workforce contact, and existing programs (apprenticeship, externships, tours, in-school presentations, curriculum assistance, etc.)
  - List of education providers, relevant programs, contacts, and department heads or main points of contact
  - List of available resources for educators and industry (websites, toolkits, best practices, contacts, events, grants, videos and other content, etc.)
  - Matching service between companies and work-based learning opportunities

Promising Practices and Models:

StartWheel - Hampton Roads, VA

StartWheel is a non-profit organization whose mission is to centralize and mobilize efforts that foster the growth of entrepreneurism in the regional innovation economy. StartWheel’s website and role in the entrepreneurial space could be replicated and modified as needed to apply to the larger talent conversation. https://startwheel.org/
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

Meaningfully engaging the full range of current and prospective workers in the region’s labor force is particularly critical in periods of low unemployment when open positions still go unfilled. Though the region’s labor force participation is strong, there are still residents who are either entirely disconnected from the labor market or who are working in roles not commensurate with their education or experience. Creating a coordinated approach to connect these individuals to appropriate services, skill development, and jobs will enhance the talent pool and increase economic mobility.

Supporting Tactics:

- Quantify and identify characteristics of under and unemployed individuals in the region to drive specific interventions best suited to the population.
- Inventory assets, services, and programs such as job search assistance, transportation, and affordable childcare. Map where services are located against areas of high poverty and unemployment. Identify gaps in services provided, accessibility of services, and appropriateness as it pertains to the under and unemployed population in the region.
- Employ a two-generation approach to career awareness, targeting not only students but also under and unemployed parents through CAP agencies/head start programs and schools.
- Coordinate a regional approach to leverage existing funding and identify new funding streams to provide services to upskill and support the under and unemployed.

Promising Practices and Models:

Metro Atlanta eXchange (MAX) for Workforce Solutions Provider Portal - Atlanta, GA

The MAX Provider Portal is a comprehensive publicly accessible web-based interactive map of the Atlanta Metro region’s workforce development programs and services ranging from job placement and soft skills development to supportive services. This resource provides information about specific services, how to access them, and target/populations served among other information.

http://metroatlantaexchange.org/portal/
Goal #2: Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.
Goal #2: Talent Development

Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.

Goal #2: Core Strategies

2.1 Develop and adopt curriculum for soft skills across the region

2.2 Promote existing and grow work-based learning and earn and learn models in the region

2.3 Develop mentorship and/or coaching programs for new workforce entrants

2.4 Identify resources and needs for incumbent working training

Why this is important: Hampton Roads’ current talent pool needs to have more opportunities to continue to build skills, obtain industry-valued credentials and gain access to new and growing career pathways in the region. Connecting workers with the right skills for the right job improves both employer hiring and retention efforts and enhances worker satisfaction and productivity.

Challenges: Some businesses have developed internal pathway programs to help retain or advance workers and incentivize longevity within the company and the field; However, these practices are applied inconsistently across industries and employers. Small- and mid-sized employers can face resource constraints that limit the range of their ability to invest in their incumbent workforce. By developing regional and cross- organizational support, more workers can earn while they learn skills and employers reap the benefit of a more stable incumbent workforce.

Objective: Talent development efforts effectively prepare residents for careers in the regional labor market. Education and training providers offer programming informed by industry that delivers skills, certifications, and other credentials valued by local employers and aligned with careers from entry to mid-level and beyond.
While technical and specialized skills are certainly important, across nearly all industries the region’s employers have identified the lack of “soft skills” as a significant barrier to finding appropriate candidates for open positions. Basic employability skills such as being at work on time and as scheduled, problem solving, teamwork, and effective communication also presents a challenge after hire. Currently, individual education and training providers are having to adopt or develop their own methods of providing soft skill development.

**Supporting Tactics:**
- Leverage existing resources such as the Hampton Roads Educational Telecommunications Association’s no-cost soft skills modules available through [http://www.workplaceready.org](http://www.workplaceready.org).
- Develop additional content and programming suited for different audiences including K-12, higher education, non-traditional learners, new entrants to the workforce, and incumbent workers.
- Engage stakeholders across the region to collaborate on creating, utilizing, and marketing these resources. Importantly, include employers in the development of programming and content to ensure relevance to their needs.

**Promising Practices and Models:**

**Soft Skills Training - WorkReadyNH**
WorkReadyNH is a tuition-free workforce development program tailored to meet the needs of job seekers and career builders, and provide training in the skills employers are seeking in their current and future employees. The soft skills course is a classroom-based component of the WorkReadyNH program that places participants in simulated workplace-related settings and covers areas that include communication skills, team-building & conflict resolution, problem-solving, and customer service.

[https://www.ccsnh.edu/workready-nh/soft-skills-course](https://www.ccsnh.edu/workready-nh/soft-skills-course)
Goal #2: Talent Development

*Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.*

In addition to classroom-based education, internships, apprenticeships, on-the-job training (OJT), and other work-based learning models play a critical role in increasing the talent pool and upskilling the incumbent workforce. These models are particularly well-suited for those middle-skill positions that companies in Hampton Roads are struggling to fill.

**Supporting Tactics:**

- Develop a shared pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship model across the region to develop talent in areas such as welding. Develop program in partnership between employers, educators, and workforce and economic development stakeholders.
- Promote, scale, and replicate local programs such as the Newport News Apprentice School and the Virginia Maritime Association’s “Internships 101” for employers. Promote the ability to use GI Bill dollars to support participation in apprenticeship programs.
- Create a regional summer internship program for college and/or high school students. Engage them in meaningful opportunities to develop skills with local employers.
- Launch IT apprenticeships for positions that do not require a security clearance to enhance the IT talent pool. Begin security clearance process during apprenticeship so that it will be completed by completion of the program.
- Continue to promote OJT offered to employers and workers through the workforce system as a vehicle to expand the talent pipeline and upskill the incumbent workforce.

**Promising Practices and Models:**

**New York State Manufacturers Intermediary Apprenticeship Program**

The Manufacturing Association of Central New York (MACNY) created a pilot program for managing local registered apprenticeships. This approach aims to support small and mid-sized manufacturing firms as they implement apprenticeship programs for local, in demand occupations. MACNY operates as an intermediary collaborating with multiple employers, connecting stakeholders to resources, serving as the main point of contact for the New York Department of Labor, and functioning in administrative and facilitation roles to support both the employer and apprentices.  

[https://www.macny.org/skilled-workforce/apprenticeship-program/](https://www.macny.org/skilled-workforce/apprenticeship-program/)
Goal #2: Talent Development

*Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.*

Employers report that not just finding talent, but also retaining it is a challenge to sustaining their workforce pipeline. Developing programs that support new workers as they enter the field can reduce turnover, improve worker satisfaction, and encourage skill development for both new talent and experienced workers.

**Supporting Tactics:**
- Expand career coaching, similar to the New Horizons model, to additional education and training providers to offer ongoing support to new workforce entrants across the region.
- Encourage and support employers providing workplace mentoring programs to new workforce entrants.

**Promising Practices and Models:**

**Spirit of Mentoring - Sodexo USA**
Sodexo offers a number of mentorship programs within its company. BRIDGE - participants engage in informal mentoring relationships tailored to increase their knowledge and skills as they gain exposure to one or more business lines. Peer2Peer - Employee Network Group members partner with one another for personal and professional development and a sense of connection. IMPACT - a limited number of participants engage each year in this structured cross-cultural/cross-divisional mentoring experience as they focus on leadership development [see appendix for link.]
Goal #2: Talent Development

*Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.*

Upskilling the incumbent workforce supports employee retention, creates resilience in the workforce, and provides workers with greater economic mobility. Many employers are facing shortages in their middle-skill and management occupations. This, coupled with impending retirements for a significant number of current workers, suggests that development of entry and mid-level workers is critical.

**Supporting Tactics:**
- Engage sector partnerships, industry associations, and other employer groups to identify existing and prospective upskilling needs.
- Identify incumbent worker training resources and funds available through local, state, and federal entities. Leverage and braid existing funding steams.
- Showcase public education and training facilities as a resource available to employers to train incumbent employees.
- Develop programs that take skilled trades workers to management level (e.g., leadership/management programs for engineers, production workers).
- Build on internal training, tuition assistance, certification, and badging programs to support career ladders.
- Provide support, training, and resources to regional employers in developing, implementing, and sustaining incumbent worker training programs.
- Bring multiple employers with similar training and/or certification needs together to create scale. Encourage small and mid-sized firms to collaborate on incumbent worker training practices to limit the risk of investment.

**Promising Practices and Models:**

**Kentucky Skills Network - Bluegrass State Skills Corporation**

The Bluegrass State Skills Corporation (BSSC) was established in 1984 by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky to stimulate economic development through customized business and industry-specific skills training programs. The BSSC works with qualified companies and Kentucky’s educational institutions to establish programs of skills upgrade and occupational upgrade training. Through the Cabinet for Economic Development’s Grant-in-Aid and Skills Training Investment Credit, the Kentucky Skills Network provides incentives to support Kentucky business’ efforts to help new and existing employees stay competitive through flexible, employer-driven skills-upgrade training.

[http://thinkkentucky.com/Workforce/BSSC.aspx](http://thinkkentucky.com/Workforce/BSSC.aspx)
Goal #3: The regional talent pool is grown through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.
Goal #3: Talent Attraction and Retention

The regional talent pool is grown through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.

Why this is important: In addition to upskilling and creating access to opportunities for the current workforce, retaining graduates from Hampton Roads education institutions, encouraging residents who have left to return, and attracting new talent to the region will be critical approaches to addressing workforce shortages in the region. Developing existing talent while also expanding the talent pool means Hampton Roads is in a better position to attract, and retain, the talent required and demanded by the labor market.

Challenges: The Workforce Analysis and Supply-Demand Gap Analysis determined that there is a growing labor shortage in the region. Employers face difficulty in finding and retaining employees, particularly for entry-level and middle skill positions. The supply of labor is stressed even further as regional gains in employment (+30,000 jobs in five years) substantially outpaced growth in the working age population (+9,600 people).

Objective: There is a coordinated, regional effort to promote Hampton Roads as a superior destination to live, work, and learn. Students, workers, and residents developed in Hampton Roads stay in the region, while talent interested in relocating to the region can easily obtain information on employment opportunities, education and training programs, and support services. Employers have access to entry and experienced talent within the region and resources to support attracting new talent.

Goal #3: Core Strategies

3.1 Enhance efforts to retain local college graduates and encourage boomerangers to return

3.2 Support existing and explore new efforts to retain and engage exiting military personnel and military spouses in the regional job market

3.3 Showcase Hampton Roads as a place to live, work, earn, and learn
Goal #3: Talent Attraction and Retention

The regional talent pool is grown through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.

3.1 Enhance efforts to retain local college graduates and encourage boomerangers to return

High school and college graduates leaving the region represent a source of talent that is not currently being utilized to its full potential. Capitalizing on this pipeline of talent requires a coordinated effort to showcase opportunities in the region for local college graduates and encourage boomerangers to return.

Supporting Tactics:

- Bolster existing young professionals groups such as tHRive and the Urban League of Hampton Roads Young Professionals and/or create new groups and programs.
- Expand outreach efforts to current students in local education institutions. Create/_scale mentoring programs that connect students to recent college graduates and experienced professionals in the region. Explore regional approaches to expand and strengthen ties between students and local employers/career opportunities.
- Actively market to former residents/graduates of local institutions who have left the region about career opportunities, quality of life, and cost of living. Conduct market research to better understand the makeup and needs of alumni of local education and training programs who left the region after graduation and local residents who left to attend education institutions elsewhere and have not returned.

Promising Practices and Models:

Destination Cleveland - Cleveland, OH

As part of a larger talent attraction initiative, Destination Cleveland has created a campaign to attract former Clevelanders to return to the region. The initiative includes digital advertising, a social media campaign (#comebacktoCLE) as well as advertising on social media and public transportation in cities where former residents have moved. Ad dedicated landing page ties the marketing efforts together and provides a central location to both disseminate and gather information. Destination Cleveland aims to use the initiative to identify what might influence and attract former Clevelanders.

https://www.thisiscleveland.com/come-back-to-cleveland
Goal #3: Talent Attraction and Retention

The regional talent pool is grown through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.

Exiting military are an important source of talent. More than 8,200 exiting military remained or moved to the Hampton Roads region in 2015 alone. While the overall veteran population in Hampton Roads has decreased by nearly 4% over the past 5 years, it is significantly less than the 13% decrease at the national level. Employers and regional stakeholders report difficulty accessing up-to-date information on exiting military personnel, a mismatch between military education and industry-required credentials, and challenges matching wages. In addition to the need to tap this exiting military workforce, serving the career needs of spouses will need to be incorporated in veteran workforce programs.

Supporting Tactics:

- Continue to promote Veterans Career Compass across the region and attract more employers to use the program. Expand outreach to increase the use of the Hampton Roads Veterans Employment Center.
- Expand efforts that help exiting military personnel understand the transition services provided by the region, know their options for civilian employment, and choose to stay in the region.
- Continue to explore options for regularly gathering up-to-date information on the number of exiting military personnel intending to remain in the region and their levels of education and training, and experience in order to both better support veterans transitioning to civilian employment and estimate their potential impact on the region’s talent pipeline.
- Promote short-term industry credentials in Transportation (e.g. Commercial Drivers License) and IT prior to military separation.
- Showcase Virginia Community Colleges’ Credit2Careers service. Encourage more education and training institutions in the region to offer credit for military service.

Promising Practices and Models:

Synchronous Training and Credit Program - Salina, KS
Salina Area Technical College partners with the Kansas National Guard to offer a program where service members can gain credit toward an Associate of Applied Science degree while still serving in the military. The Allied Trade Specialist program, combines welding and machining, and is open to soldiers training in a range of military occupations. Others include a program that aligns Wheeled Vehicle Repairer military occupations with the Diesel Technology program and the Military Policy occupations with the community college’s Police Science program.

Goal #3: Talent Attraction and Retention

Grow the regional talent pool through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.

The Hampton Roads region provides its students, workers, and residents a diversity of options for work and play. Identifying and creating a regional message and proactively sharing the region’s story with target audiences across a variety of marketing platforms will increase awareness of the region’s job opportunities and lifestyle offerings, ultimately growing the pool of top talent that chooses to live and work in Hampton Roads.

Supporting Tactics:

- Leverage the talent portal to promote Hampton Road and its career opportunities to local talent and employers but also as a tool for talent attraction- highlighting Hampton Roads as a place to live, visit, and do business.
- Develop regional messaging for talent attraction and retention. Utilize partnerships to expand the reach of initiatives that are siloed by geography or organization. Build off of the current talent attraction and retention efforts spearheaded by economic development by leveraging the marketing channels, networks, and expertise of a range of regional stakeholders.
- Identify, capture, and share stories in the region that emphasize a “sense of place”. Showcase the “Hampton Roads” story by asking residents to share what they love about living and working in the region. Create social media campaigns that target individual audiences.
- Develop a Hampton Roads Ambassador program to connect new residents with locals. Create a guidebook about living and working in Hampton Roads that can be shared with new residents, employers looking to attract talent to the region, and previous residents or alumni of local education institutions who have left.

Promising Practices and Models:

Talent Attraction Website - Springfield, MO

The Springfield Business Development Corporation (SBDC), the economic development arm of the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, created a website promoting Springfield, MO. The site includes information on living, working, and learning in the region with statistics on key industries, global reach, and business climate as well as livability stats like low costs of living, low childcare costs and short commute times. The site also includes testimonials, news updates, and a relocation guide. This model could be applied in Hampton Roads through the talent portal addressed in Goal #1. [https://www.liveinspringfieldmo.com/](https://www.liveinspringfieldmo.com/)
Strategy

Goal #4: Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.
Goal #4: Collaboration and Leadership

Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

Goal #4: Core Strategies

4.1 Support, promote and expand regional sector partnerships

4.2 Establish regional convener role to coordinate sector partnerships and aggregate skill development needs across sectors

4.3 Host an annual Regional Talent Pipeline Conference

4.4 Enhance collaboration and coordination across and between K-12 and postsecondary education

Why this is Important: Increased coordination among employers, educators, workforce development leaders, economic development organizations, and other regional skill development efforts is necessary to create a highly skilled, highly competitive workforce that will spur and drive economic growth. Focusing on partnerships and collaboration across Hampton Roads increases the effectiveness, reach, and ability to scale regional efforts. A coordinated system is a high functioning system.

Challenges: Currently, there are limited ways to leverage the full power of regional efforts. Previous regional talent development efforts have gathered insight into the needs of the local labor force but have stalled gaining momentum for implementation. Promoting sector partnerships, establishing a regional convener, and creating opportunities for collaboration will be critical to supporting strategic action. Successful implementation requires building on activities that are currently underway in the region, avoiding duplication of efforts, and sharing learning and resources.

Objective: Leadership in the region creates and strengthen partnerships across stakeholder groups. Spaces are created where collaboration and partnership are developed, reinforced, and celebrated. Residents benefit from a coordinated system where a regional mindset is embraced and stakeholders consciously move beyond localized silos of engagement.
Goal #4: Collaboration and Leadership

Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

4.1 Support, promote and expand regional sector partnerships

Sector partnerships are a useful tool to drive collaboration between stakeholders connected to an industry — including employers, education, workforce, and economic development — to address the needs of that particular industry sector rather than individual employer. They support the short- and long-term growth of an industry by addressing challenges, defining skill needs, developing career pathways, and improving worker training and retention at all skill levels. Sector partnerships can be used to promote engagement and provide an opportunity for smaller and mid sized-employers to address common issues and speak to the needs of their industry with a collective voice.

Supporting Tactics:

- Create a task force for building IT talent and showcasing regional IT opportunities across all major industries.
- Support the development of a regional manufacturing alliance. Partner with the Shipbuilding industry to collaborate on cross-sector career pathways.
- Convene employers on issues of talent development through a variety of venues such as lunch and learns to highlight promising practices, working groups to identify common skill standards, and promoting industry-recognized credentials through Chamber membership.
- Develop a wide range of incentives for regional participation in sector partnerships. There is a risk that participation is optional and often sub-leadership is represented as a proxy for a full-fledged regional convening.

Promising Practices and Models:

Talent-to-Industry Exchanges - MidAmerica Regional Council, Kansas City, KS

Talent-to-Industry Exchanges (TIEs) are replicable public/private partnerships that bring industry and education groups together to solve workforce challenges. GradForce KC introduced the TIE concept in 2016 to address the alignment of the region’s education pipeline with workforce needs in specific industries. TIEs are regional and comprehensive, industry-led, data-driven, and action-oriented.

Goal #4: Collaboration and Leadership

Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

4.2 Establish regional convener role to coordinate sector partnerships and aggregate skill development needs across sectors

There are many current workforce, career, and skill development efforts underway in the Hampton Roads region. It will be critical as this strategy is deployed to identify a lead organization to serve as a broker of information, coordinate collaboration, and drive partnerships across stakeholder groups. Regional talent development involves a multitude of moving pieces and implementation efforts will require dedicating time and resources to coordinating those efforts.

Supporting Tactics:
- Secure funding for an individual role that serves as a regional facilitator focused on talent alignment, to be housed at a single organization or shared across multiple organizations.
- Appoint the role of a designated convener to leading implementation of the Hampton Roads Talent Alignment Strategy, including convening the Hampton Roads Coalition for Talent Development (COALITION), ensuring the forward motion of working groups, and reporting out to stakeholders.
- Explore approaches to operationalizing and sustaining this role. Identify specific services that support talent alignment, including facilitating sector partnerships, engaging stakeholders, and providing additional capacity to collaboration activities.
- Assess trends, coordinate information sharing, aggregate the needs of various stakeholders, and share findings with the field to support investment decisions by employers, educators, and other stakeholders.

Promising Practices and Models:

I-86 Innovation Corridor - New York’s Southern Tier

The I-86 Innovation Corridor is comprised of Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties and boasts the highest concentration of advanced manufacturing and transportation equipment manufacturing companies in New York State’s Southern Tier. Following the completion of a regional workforce development strategy, the I-86 Steering Committee approved an organizational structure to drive implementation of the plan, which included the creation of a new Director of Workforce Development position to be located administratively in the Three Rivers Development Foundation [see appendix for link].
Goal #4: Collaboration and Leadership
Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

4.3 Host an annual Regional Talent Pipeline Conference

In an effort to enhance momentum for strategy implementation, it is critical to provide updates, set annual agendas, and refresh approaches by hosting an annual Regional Talent Pipeline Conference. This conference brings together leaders and practitioners across the region, including educators, industry, workforce development, social services, and career counselors. Common updates on sharing lessons learned, best practices, and workforce trends can be used as the core of these forums and create a call to action each year for prioritized activities related to talent alignment.

Supporting Tactics:

- Use this conference to highlight initiatives, facilitate discussions between stakeholders, and share resources within and across industries. This Conference is an opportunity to drive programmatic investment, review key metrics related to workforce supply and demand, and celebrate progress made in implementing talent alignment initiatives.
- Create spaces where advisors, counselors, and educators can receive training, learn about industry needs, and connect to employers.
- Use this as a forum to convene and showcase the Hampton Roads Coalition for Talent Development (COALITION) during the conference.
- Promote the Conference publicly to increase transparency of partnerships, collaboration, and strategies for the region.

Promising Practices and Models:

Education Summit - ChamberRVA, Richmond, VA
ChamberRVA will host its inaugural Education Summit, presented in partnership with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, in July of 2019. Supporting their work to enhance alignment between education and business communities around tomorrow’s workforce talent requirements, the summit will discuss innovative educational approaches to address future talent needs.

http://go.chamberrva.com/events/details/education-summit-5394
Goal #4: Collaboration and Leadership
Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

Creating a space through which education leaders consistently engage, increase opportunities to collaborate, and leverage their investments, industry partnerships, and programs for students will drive more alignment and reduce the potential for unnecessary program duplication in the region.

Supporting Tactics:
- Utilize the inventory of workforce assets in the region related to education, training, and support services to inform strategic decisions, advising/case management, and programmatic investments. Coordinate efforts to identify duplication, areas for additional investment, and opportunities for partnership. See Goal #1 for more information on the inventory.
- Encourage data sharing agreements and partnership charters to improve services provided to participants, students, and workers and streamline their case management.
- Expand opportunities to work collaboratively when developing new programs across the region so that each K-12 system and higher education institution is not creating programs in a silo, but as part of a larger education network supporting the Hampton Roads region as a whole.

Promising Practices and Models:

Academic Leaders Council – Miami-Dade Beacon Council
Miami Dade Academic Leaders Council (ALC) was developed to address skills gaps in target industries by aligning curriculum with target industry needs, advancing internship programs that retain college graduates in Miami-Dade County, and collaborating on universal educational issues.

https://www.beaconcouncil.com/ocog/community-partnerships/
05

Promising Practices
Appendix
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

1.1 Create and promote full scale career pathways for most in-demand occupations

**Iowa Career Pathways - Future Ready Iowa:**
Future Ready Iowa is an initiative to build Iowa’s talent pipeline. The initiative’s web portal houses resources, tools and information for high school students, adult learners, and employers including the State’s Sector Partnership Toolkits and career pathways in energy, information technology, and advanced manufacturing.
https://www.futurereadyiowa.gov/career-pathway-documents

**TNWorkLearnEarn – Tennessee:**
A website providing detailed education, career and career pathing information on in-demand jobs in high-growth industries in the state of Tennessee. Includes a live link to job boards within the specified target industries. https://tn.worklearnearn.org/
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

1.2 Ramp up regional career awareness across K-12 systems and beyond

Mission Tomorrow - ChamberRVA, Richmond, VA:
Mission Tomorrow is the Richmond region’s annual interactive career exploration event for students. Through an interactive series of activities and discussions with employers, Mission Tomorrow encourages students to explore career interests and in-demand jobs from over 140 businesses in the region. https://www.chamberrva.com/programs/mission-tomorrow/

Career Launch - RoundRock Chamber, TX:
A Chamber-led skilled trades image campaign webpage that details the benefits of skilled trades careers such as Electricians, Plumbers, IT/CAD and Project Managers. The page links out to an interactive website that identifies well-paying jobs and the best programs to prepare students for them, compares projected earnings to the financial investment needed, and analyzes the earnings potential. https://roundrockchamber.org/career-launch/

Business AfterSchool - Greater Spokane, Inc., Spokane, WA:
Business AfterSchool is a series of industry skill workshops that provide on-site, in the workplace environment, awareness of Spokane’s high-demand industry sectors by highlighting new technology, research, development and innovation. The region’s students, families, and community are invited to engage in these career-connected learning workshops to learn about the occupations and employment paths within the region’s key industries. https://greaterspokane.org/business-after-school/

Teaching the Teachers - Greater Spokane, Inc., Spokane, WA:
Teaching the Teachers workshops give educators the chance to experience what future opportunities for work and education await their students in the business world and see how the skills they are teaching are applied in the business world. Businesses get the chance to meet educators and educators get the chance to share what they learn with their students. https://greaterspokane.org/teaching-the-teachers/
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

1.3 Develop a regional web-based talent portal

StartWheel - Hampton Roads, VA:
StartWheel is a non-profit organization whose mission is to centralize and mobilize efforts that foster the growth of entrepreneurship in the regional innovation economy. They aim to cultivate an entrepreneurial network where talent, resources, information, and leadership work together. StartWheel's website and role in the entrepreneurial space could be replicated and modified as needed to apply to the larger talent conversation. https://startwheel.org/

ImaginePittsburgh.com - Pittsburgh, PA:
ImaginePittsburgh.com, a program of the Allegheny Conference, is a unique virtual concierge service designed to attract and retain diverse local, national, and international mid-career talent. It will showcase the Pittsburgh region as an exceptional place to advance a career and build a life, simultaneously serving both employers and job seekers. https://imaginepittsburgh.com/
Goal #1: Career Awareness and Pathways

Career opportunities in Hampton Roads are well-known, accessible, and offer clear pathways for students, residents, and workers across all skill levels.

1.4 Launch initiatives to engage under and unemployed populations

**Metro Atlanta eXchange (MAX) for Workforce Solutions Provider Portal - Atlanta, GA:**
The MAX Provider Portal is a comprehensive publicly accessible web-based interactive map of the Atlanta Metro region’s workforce development programs and services ranging from job placement and soft skills development to supportive services. This resource provides information about specific services, how to access them, and target/populations served among other things.

[http://metroatlantaexchange.org/portal/](http://metroatlantaexchange.org/portal/)

**Meet the out-of-work Report from The Brookings Institution:**
Even during times of economic growth and low unemployment there can still be a disconnect between those who would like to work and available jobs. This analysis examines the characteristics of the out-of-work population, segmenting it into groups based on factors such as educational attainment, age, work history, disability, and family status and provides recommendations workforce development programs appropriate to these various segments.

[https://www.brookings.edu/research/meet-the-out-of-work/](https://www.brookings.edu/research/meet-the-out-of-work/)
Goal #2: Talent Development

*Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.*

2.1 Adopt curriculum for soft skills across the region

**Soft Skills Training – WorkReadyNH:**

WorkReadyNH is a tuition-free workforce development program tailored to meet the needs of job seekers and career builders, and provide training in the skills employers are seeking in their current and future employees. The soft skills course is a classroom-based component of the WorkReadyNH program that places participants in simulated workplace-related settings and covers areas that include communication skills, team-building & conflict resolution, problem-solving, and customer service.

[https://www.ccsnh.edu/workready-nh/soft-skills-course](https://www.ccsnh.edu/workready-nh/soft-skills-course)

**Soft Skills Training - CareerSource Brevard, Brevard County, FL:**

CareerSource Brevard is committed to providing Brevard businesses with employees that are ready for the workplace as well as helping employers provide new ways for their existing employees to pick up the skills needed to succeed. They have partnered with WIN to offer Essential Soft Skills - a nationally recognized soft skills training program. Essential Soft Skills is competency-based, endorsed by Brevard County Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) chapters.


**Free Work Skills Learning Content – GCFLearnFree.org:**

For almost 20 years, the GCFLearnFree.org program has helped millions around the world learn the essential skills they need to live and work in the 21st century. GCFLearnFree.org offers more than 200 topics, including more than 7,000 lessons, more than 1,000 videos, and more than 50 interactives and games, completely free. Their workplace skills tutorials cover subjects such as job success, communication skills, workplace basics, and business communication.

Goal #2: Talent Development

*Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.*

2.2 Promote existing and grow work-based learning and earn and learn models in the region

New York State Manufacturers Intermediary Apprenticeship Program:
The Manufacturing Association of Central New York (MACNY) create a pilot program for managing local registered apprenticeships. This approach aims to support small and mid-sized manufacturing firms as they implement apprenticeship programs for local, in demand occupations. MACNY operates as an intermediary collaborating with multiple employers, connecting stakeholders to resources, serving as the main point of contact for the New York Department of Labor, and functioning in administrative and facilitation roles to support both the employer and apprentices.  
[https://www.macny.org/skilled-workforce/apprenticeship-program/](https://www.macny.org/skilled-workforce/apprenticeship-program/)

Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeship Program - West Michigan Works!:
The Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeship Program (MARAP) is the first-of-its-kind in the nation, bringing together major health care providers in the region to collectively address a critical shortage of talent in healthcare. Apprentices earn a wage while learning the skills to succeed in a high-demand career and graduate with a job, often with little or no debt.  
[https://jobs.westmiworks.org/marap/](https://jobs.westmiworks.org/marap/)

Apprenticeship 2000 - Charlotte, NC:
Apprenticeship 2000 is an award winning organization that began in 1995 as an industrial apprenticeship partnership located in the Charlotte, NC region. Apprenticeship 2000 was formed to offer technical career opportunities to motivated high school students and employment after their graduation. In this co-op training program participants learn hands-on skills and earn an associates degree (two-year degree) in mechatronics for free.  

Apprenticeship 2020 - Chicagoland Workforce Funders Alliance:
Apprenticeship 2020 is partnering with the Chicago Apprentice Network, co-created by Aon and Accenture and the driving force behind scaling apprenticeships in the Chicago region, to address employer barriers in launching apprenticeships and other types of work-based learning models in high demand industries and occupations. The Chicago Apprentice Network has created an apprenticeship playbook to help companies address skills and training gaps to provide under-represented groups access to professional jobs.  
[https://chicagoworkforcefunders.org/apprenticeship-2020/](https://chicagoworkforcefunders.org/apprenticeship-2020/)
Goal #2: Talent Development

*Education, training, and other talent development efforts are aligned with and connected to Hampton Roads’ labor market.*

2.3 Develop mentorship and/or coaching programs for new workforce entrants

**Spirit of Mentoring - Sodexo USA:**
Sodexo offers a number of mentorship programs within its company. BRIDGE - participants engage in informal mentoring relationships tailored to increase their knowledge and skills as they gain exposure to one or more business lines. Peer2Peer - Employee Network Group members partner with one another for personal and professional development and a sense of connection. IMPACT – a limited number of participants engage each year in this structured cross-cultural/cross-divisional mentoring experience as they focus on leadership development.


**100 Black Men of Virginia Peninsula, Inc.:**
The 100 Black Men of America, Inc. seeks to serve as a beacon of leadership by utilizing diverse talents to create environments where children are motivated to achieve and to empower our people to become self-sufficient shareholders in the economic and social fabric of their communities. 100 Black Men provides a holistic mentoring program that addresses the social, emotional and cultural needs of children ages 8-18. [https://100blackmenva.org/](https://100blackmenva.org/)

2.4 Identify resources and needs for incumbent working training

**Kentucky Skills Network - Bluegrass State Skills Corporation:**
The Bluegrass State Skills Corporation (BSSC) was established in 1984 by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky to stimulate economic development through customized business and industry-specific skills training programs. The BSSC works with qualified companies and Kentucky’s educational institutions to establish programs of skills upgrade and occupational upgrade training. Through the Cabinet for Economic Development’s Grant-in-Aid and Skills Training Investment Credit, the Kentucky Skills Network provides incentives to support Kentucky business’ efforts to help new and existing employees stay competitive through flexible, employer-driven skills-upgrade training. [http://thinkkentucky.com/Workforce/BSSC.aspx](http://thinkkentucky.com/Workforce/BSSC.aspx)
Goal #3: Talent Attraction and Retention

Grow the regional talent pool through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.

3.1 Enhance efforts to retain local college graduates and encourage boomerangers to return

Destination Cleveland - Cleveland, OH:
As part of a larger talent attraction initiative, Destination Cleveland has created a campaign to attract former Clevelanders to return to the region. The initiative includes digital advertising, a social media campaign (#comebacktoCLE) as well as advertising on social media and public transportation in cities where former residents have moved. A dedicated landing page ties the marketing efforts together and provides a central location to both disseminate and gather information. Destination Cleveland aims to use the initiative to identify what might influence and attract former Clevelanders.

https://www.thisiscleveland.com/come-back-to-Cleveland

TYPros (Tulsa’s Young Professionals) - Tulsa, Oklahoma:
TYPros, an initiative of the Tulsa Regional Chamber started in 2005, is a young professionals organization focused on creating and showcasing events, activities, and “straight up things to do” in the Tulsa region. Its mission is to attract and retain young, creative talent in the Tulsa region while also developing the next generation of leaders and enhancing Tulsa’s sense of place.

https://www.typros.org/
Goal #3: Talent Attraction and Retention

Grow the regional talent pool through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.

3.2 Support existing and explore new efforts to retain and engage exiting military personnel and military spouses in the regional job market

**Synchronous Training and Credit Program - Salina, KS:**
Salina Area Technical College partners with the Kansas National Guard to offer a program where current service members can gain credit toward an Associate of Applied Science degree while still serving in the military. The Allied Trade Specialist program, combines welding and machining, and is open to soldiers training in a range of military occupations. Others include a program that aligns Wheeled Vehicle Repairer military occupations with the Diesel Technology program and the Military Policy occupations with the community college’s Police Science program.


**Employer Veteran Hiring Policies - Schneider National:**
Schneider National, a trucking and transportation logistics services organization out of Green Bay, Wisconsin support veteran employees while closing addressing some of their worker shortage challenges by taking advantage of government transition programs like the Military Skills Test Waiver. This program, managed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), allows drivers with two years experience safely operating military vehicles to obtain a CDL without taking the skills test. In part due to this program, over a quarter of Schneider’s workforce is made up of veterans.

[https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/commercial-drivers-license/military-driver-programs](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/commercial-drivers-license/military-driver-programs)
Goal #3: Talent Attraction and Retention

Grow the regional talent pool through coordinated talent attraction and retention efforts.

3.3 Showcase Hampton Roads as a place to live, work, earn, and learn

Talent Attraction Website - Springfield, Missouri:
The Springfield Business Development Corporation (SBDC), the economic development arm of the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, created a website promoting Springfield, MO. The site includes information on living, working, and learning in the region with statistics on key industries, global reach, and business climate as well as livability stats like low costs of living, low childcare costs and short commute times. The site also includes testimonials, news updates, and a relocation guide. This model could be applied in Hampton Roads through the talent portal addressed in Goal #1. [https://www.liveinspringfieldmo.com/](https://www.liveinspringfieldmo.com/)

Talent Attraction Website - Boise, Idaho:
In an effort to boost talent attraction, Boise Valley Economic Partnership and other partners developed a testimonial-driven website to attract young professionals to the area to live and work in the region – complete with video interviews, key statistics, news, and links to resources. This model could be applied in Hampton Roads through the talent portal. [https://www.bvep.org/](https://www.bvep.org/)

Live Capitalized: Conversations Around the Table - Baton Rouge, LA:
The Baton Rouge Area Chamber developed a program called Around the Table, presented by the East Baton Rouge School System. The program places 225 participants in 20 different homes for conversations with community connectors, such as CEOs, University Presidents, and creative entrepreneurs. The program is intended to connect new residents with long-time locals and encourage engaging conversations. [https://brac.org/around-the-table/](https://brac.org/around-the-table/)

Tulsa Mosaic - Tulsa, OK:
Celebrating a diverse and inclusive region can be a valuable approach to talent attraction and retention. Tulsa Mosaic is an innovative initiative that works to elevate and encourage diversity in the workplace by educating, leading, and influencing business to create diverse and inclusive workforce cultures to enhance their competitive advantage. [https://tulsachamber.com/programandservice/mosaic/](https://tulsachamber.com/programandservice/mosaic/)

Des Moines, Iowa – Relocation Guide:
In an effort to increase talent attraction to the area, the Greater Des Moines Partnership developed a Relocation Guide to showcase the region. The content is available online and in-print and details key statistics, messaging, and professional photography to highly the quality of life and benefits of working in the region. The guide has been distributed to more than 1,500 people directly and is often distributed from local employers at job fairs and recruiting events. [https://www.dspartnership.com/living-here](https://www.dspartnership.com/living-here)
Goal #4: Collaboration and Leadership

Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

4.1 Support, promote and expand regional sector partnerships

**Talent-to-Industry Exchanges - MidAmerica Regional Council, Kansas City, KS:**
Talent-to-Industry Exchanges (TIEs) are replicable public/private partnerships that bring industry and education groups together to solve workforce challenges. GradForce KC introduced the TIE concept in 2016 to address the alignment of the region’s education pipeline with workforce needs in specific industries. TIEs are regional and comprehensive, industry-led, data-driven, and action-oriented.


**Sector Partnership Toolkit - State of Iowa:**
The State of Iowa developed a comprehensive toolkit for the key milestone stages of developing a successful sector partnership, starting with Planning, Emerging, and then Sustaining. Each stage includes detailed toolkits with training materials to help guide and assist growing sector partnerships.

Goal #4: Collaboration and Leadership

Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

4.2 Establish regional convener role to coordinate sector partnerships and aggregate skill development needs across sectors

I-86 Innovation Corridor - New York’s Southern Tier:
The I-86 Innovation Corridor is comprised of Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties and boasts the highest concentration of advanced manufacturing and transportation equipment manufacturing companies in New York State’s Southern Tier. Following the completion of a regional workforce development strategy, the I-86 Steering Committee approved an organizational structure to drive implementation of the plan, which included the creation of a new Director of Workforce Development position to be located administratively in the Three Rivers Development Foundation.

https://www.peda.org/resources/Documents/FINAL_I-86%20Innovation%20Corridor%20Workforce%20Development%20Director%20Ad_.pdf

Northwest Arkansas Council - Northwest Arkansas:
The Northwest Arkansas Council created a workforce development director position to work with educators and business people to develop and strengthen the region’s career and technical education programs. This role builds partnerships between colleges, technical schools and high school training programs and employers, provides career information to students and schools, and assists school districts and the region’s employers in continuous support and improvement of career training programs. In addition, the workforce development director works with area chambers of commerce in communicating regional training and partnership needs. http://www.nwacouncil.org/our-staff
Goal #4: Collaboration and Leadership

Collaboration drives regional efforts and is supported by robust partnerships across and between key stakeholder groups.

4.3 Host an annual Regional Talent Pipeline Conference

Education Summit - ChamberRVA, Richmond, VA:
ChamberRVA will host its inaugural Education Summit, presented in partnership with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, in July of 2019. Supporting their work to enhance alignment between education and business communities around tomorrow’s workforce talent requirements, the summit will discuss innovative educational approaches to address future talent needs. http://go.chamberrva.com/events/details/education-summit-5394

4.4 Enhance collaboration and coordination across and between K-12 and postsecondary education

Academic Leaders Council – Miami-Dade Beacon Council:
Miami Dade Academic Leaders Council (ALC) was developed to address skills gaps in target industries by aligning curriculum with target industry needs, advancing internship programs that retain college graduates in Miami-Dade County, and collaborating on universal educational issues. This model could easily be expanded to include K-12 in addition to postsecondary institutions. https://www.beaconcouncil.com/ocog/community-partnerships/