2019 JOINT ANNUAL MEETING

On Wednesday, October 2 at the Renaissance Portsmouth – Norfolk Waterfront Hotel, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council and the Greater Peninsula Workforce Board hosted the Inaugural Joint Annual Meeting and Workforce Innovation Awards, which showcased workforce development programs, services, and accomplishments over the past year for both organizations.

Also highlighted was the newly formed partnership with the Hampton Roads Workforce Council and the Greater Peninsula Workforce Board — presented during the 2018 meeting as the Southeastern Regional Workforce Collaborative.

Within the last year, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council and Greater Peninsula Workforce Board served 14,903 customers combined through their respective Virginia Career Works locations; and 8,762 youth and young adults collectively through programs aimed at the emerging workforce. As important, both organizations prioritized efforts to improve employment opportunities for transitioning service members — boasting more than 5,567 visits at the Hampton Roads Veterans Employment Center.

The meeting closed on a celebratory note with the 2019 Workforce Innovation Awards ceremony, which recognized businesses, community organizations, educational institutions, and individuals for their longstanding commitment to workforce development and impact on the Hampton Roads economy. This year’s honorees included:

- Community Based Organization – VersAbility Resources
- Education – New Horizons Regional Education Center
- Business – Ferguson
- Regional Innovator – Allfirst Industrial Contractors & Auxiliary Systems
- Workforce Champion of the Year – Amanda L. Slosson, Regional Transition Assistance Program Coordinator, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic

Elizabeth River Crossings Awards the Workforce Council with $201,000 Grant

The Hampton Roads Workforce Council and Elizabeth River Crossing (ERC) have partnered on The Connecting Opportunities Program — an innovative program to help local underserved and under-skilled community members find higher-paying, stable opportunities through skilled trade education. Thirty students per year will receive funding to complete a three to six-week program through Tidewater Community College’s Skilled Trades Academy, in which they will be provided with training and employment assistance for in-demand construction and maritime trades, such as welding, roofing, framing, and pipefitting.

Participants will represent the Workforce Council’s target job seekers, including the emerging workforce and transitioning service members; as well as members of the ALICE (Asset, Limited, Income Restrained, Employed) community.

To support this program, Elizabeth River Crossings will contribute $67,000 per year for three years — totaling $201,000. The Workforce Council will launch the first cohort in January 2020.
Message from the Board Chairs

Greetings!

This program year, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council and Greater Peninsula Workforce Board celebrated 45 years of service to workforce development efforts in the region. As we reflect on the past four decades, we acknowledge the obstacles surmounted and the progress made in our respective organizations and collaboratively.

Since our inception, we have expanded our services to focus on the emerging workforce — developing career exploration, financial literacy, and secondary education services for youth and young adults. We have also responded to barriers to employment by improving access to services and programs for jobseekers. Further, we significantly improved the job seeker experience for our transitioning service members and veterans through the development of the Hampton Roads Veterans Employment Center. We look forward to expanding these services with the launch of a new center on the Peninsula in the Spring.

Last year, both organizations launched a rebranding effort and seamlessly adopted the state’s unified workforce system — Virginia Career Works. We also partnered to establish the Southeastern Virginia Regional Workforce Collaborative to streamline the delivery of programs and services to job seekers and employers on the Southside and Peninsula.

Looking forward, we will continue to introduce new programs and services to keep pace with the evolving workforce — challenging existing service delivery models to attract new businesses to Hampton Roads. With the continued support of our industry, business and education partners, we expect this momentum to build as we work together to create a more vibrant economy where businesses and people thrive.
This Fall, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council partnered with the City of Norfolk Department of Development to host the Biz Café — a three-part event series designed to create more opportunities for entrepreneurs and aspiring business owners in underserved areas of Norfolk. New and existing businesses received information on developing a business plan, crafting the perfect pitch, and transitioning from employee to entrepreneur. The Biz Café, which took place at the Southside Aquatics Center, also offered financial, legal, accounting, marketing, management, and technical assistance to aspiring business owners. Participants had the opportunity to compete in the culminating Pitch Competition, during which five winners were awarded $1,500 in seed money. The Pitch Competition was funded by SunTrust Bank’s “Lighting the Way” grant.

The Hampton Roads Workforce Council and the Greater Peninsula Workforce Board assisted Fairlead Boatworks, a premier east coast marine vessel repair facility, by providing Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) to help advance the technical skills of their employees in trades related to the maritime industry. The Workforce Council previously assisted Fairlead Boatworks in workforce development efforts to support several job positions including: Electrician, Auditor, Welder, Machinist, Fiber Optics Installer, Ship Fitter, and Thermographer.

“This unique partnership has garnered success for the local workforce and to area employers, as well as regional communities, via increased labor skills, greater income, and raised revenues for commercial enterprise and local government.” – Timothy Richardt, Apprenticeship Program Manager, Fairlead Boatworks.

The NextGen Regional Internship Program provides internship opportunities for youth and young adults in Hampton Roads. The nine-week paid internship program currently supports residents of Portsmouth, Norfolk, and Chesapeake — ages 16 to 21. Participants gain valuable experience in a variety of industries throughout the summer. This year, several businesses participated including the Virginia Ship Repair Association, Simls, Inc., and Ascension Realty.

“The NextGen program has been a wonderful partnership for the Virginia Ship Repair Association! Hosting our NextGen Summer Intern, Victoria, was a great experience. Victoria was always helpful, positive, and brought a smile to everyone who entered our office. We miss having her around, but wish her the best in what we’re sure will be a very successful future. We’ve also been lucky enough to bring on-board Sydney, a participant in the Undefeated Youth program. Sydney came to us well-prepared and ready to work, and she’s been eager and enthusiastic to learn about our industry and assist our Members. The Hampton Roads Workforce Council and the entire NextGen team should be very proud of the work being done to prepare the future workforce.” - Barbara Washer, Director, Development & Programming, Virginia Ship Repair Association.

To find out more about sponsoring or hosting a NextGen Intern, contact Christina Brooks at 757-373-8732.
Youth Workforce Center Offers Pharmacy Tech Course

The New Horizons Regional Education Centers (NHREC) Youth Workforce Center (YWC) partnered with CVS to offer a WIOA-specific Pharmacy Tech course. Through this partnership, students will be able to participate in several CVS workforce initiatives, such as apprenticeships, customized training programs, and on-the-job training.

Additionally, the YWC recruited a pharmacist from a local hospital to teach the course. These students will be exposed to leadership activities such as Facebook micro credentialing, career readiness certification, and a potential field trip to the Maryland corporate office. Participants will also attend work and job readiness workshops and develop portfolios, which will include their resume, cover letter, industry and stacked credentials, and letters of recommendation and support. All students are eligible to take the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) exam.

VIRGINIA CAREER WORKS SUCCESS STORY

Meet Ms. Fogel

After relocating to Virginia from Florida, Ms. Fogel faced several barriers to employment resulting from a non-transferable Dental Assistant Certification. As the sole provider for her family, Ms. Fogel visited VCW – Greater Peninsula Region seeking WIOA funding to assist with obtaining her Dental Assistant certificate to continue her career in Hampton Roads. Ms. Fogel attended Today's Dental Assisting School, an all-inclusive 10-week program, which covers all necessary supplies, lab fees, and radiation safety certification. Upon completion, she received a Certificate in Dental Assistance and a letter of recommendation outlining her training and experience. Within 15 days of graduating from the program, Ms. Fogel secured a job at Hampton Roads Pediatric Dentistry. Congratulations Ms. Fogel!!

HAMPTON ROADS VETERANS EMPLOYMENT CENTER SUCCESS STORY

Meet Ms. Wiggins

Ms. Wiggins was unemployed when she came to the Hampton Roads Veterans Employment Center and Virginia Career Works Norfolk Center for assistance on July 22nd. With an Active Duty husband and young child to care for, she was eager to find a job. Ms. Wiggins met with Amy Rodriguez, Veterans Career Developer and fellow military spouse, who helped her refine her resume to become more attractive to employers. She also attended a resume building workshop and began going on interviews. By August 12th, Ms. Wiggins was offered a job with great benefits. Congratulations Ms. Wiggins!

“I am so grateful for Amy and the HRVEC/VCW team. Everyone was so friendly and informative from the moment I walked into the office until I came back to ring the bell signifying that I got the job.” – A. Wiggins

Congratulations to Our Award-Winning Staff Members!

• Christina Brooks – a 2019 Inside Business Top 40 Under 40 honoree
• Amanda Green – recognized in CoVABiz's Millennials on the Move
• Fred Showers, Career Developer (Q1) Molly Brown, Career Coach (Q2), Deborah Bailey, Business Services Assistant (Q3) – recognized as Staff Members of the Quarter

Welcome New Staff Members!

• Whitney Lester, Senior Director of Talent Development, Hampton Roads Workforce Council
• Katherine (Katie) Henderson, Senior Project Manager, Greater Peninsula Workforce Board