

2017 Annual Report



EARN
MARYLAND

The two interns pictured on the front cover from the Vehicles for Change partnership funded through the EARN Maryland program began their careers in the automotive industry by taking part in the occupational training offered at the Occupational Skills Training Center (OSTC) offered by Correctional Education within the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. To learn more about the Correctional Education program and its academic and occupational offerings, please visit the department's website at <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/ce/>.

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton
Chairman, Senate Finance
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Dereck E. Davis
Chairman, House Economic Matters
231 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: MSAR 9663

Dear Governor Hogan and Chairmen Middleton and Davis:

I am pleased to present the 2017 annual report for the Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Maryland program. 2017 has been a year of growth for the program, which continues to receive national recognition for its innovative approach to workforce development. Over the last 12 months, EARN Maryland has made tremendous progress due in part to the significant investments made by the Hogan administration in regard to cyber and green jobs training.

Recognizing that a workforce system disconnected from business fails to meet the needs of jobseekers, EARN places employer and industry partners at the forefront of program implementation. Intimate involvement in the process produces confidence that EARN participants have the relevant, in-demand skills to help grow their business, while providing valuable opportunities for the state's workforce. Since program inception, EARN Maryland has engaged over 850 employers, representing an increase of over 24 percent from last year.

As of October 2017, more than 2,300 unemployed and underemployed participants, many of whom have multiple barriers to employment, have obtained employment. Over 4,400 incumbent workers have participated in training, leading to improved business outcomes for employers, including increased cost savings, productivity, and retention.

While the program is having a profound impact on the state's business community, it continues to be a sound investment for the state. In a recent study on the economic impact of EARN Maryland, the Business Economic and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) at Salisbury University found that for every dollar the state invests into the program, an additional \$18.97 in economic activity is created.

The department is proud of the program's progress in 2017, and looks forward to sharing the continued growth and success in the years to come.

Best Regards,



Kelly M. Schulz
Secretary

cc: James Rzepkowski, Assistant Secretary for the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning, DLLR
Brandon Butler, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning, DLLR
Maria Iannatuono, Legislative Director, Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)



results by the numbers

Over 850

Maryland employers have participated in the EARN Maryland program

59

Strategic Industry Partnerships are currently being funded

2x

Governor Hogan has doubled the investment in EARN Maryland through the FY 2018 budget

Over 2,767

unemployed and underemployed participants completed entry level training, as of October 2017

Over 4,400

incumbent workers participated in training leading to a new skill, certification or credential

99%

of employers recently surveyed said that EARN has had a positive impact on their business

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A Year of Growth

Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Maryland is the state's nationally-recognized workforce program. The program is industry-led, designed to address business workforce needs by focusing on industry sector strategies that produce long-term solutions to sustained skills gaps and personnel shortages. The success of the program is seeded in collaboration among a diverse group of partners, including employer and industry partners, non-profit and community-based organizations, and workforce, economic development, and education partners. Based upon employer-identified training needs, Strategic Industry Partnerships provide education and skills training to unemployed and underemployed Marylanders, including support for individuals with specific barriers to employment. EARN also provides career advancement strategies for incumbent workers.



Governor Hogan and Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh at Vehicles for Change
Photo Credit: Steve Kwak, Governor's Press Office

Since the program began in 2014, EARN has been recognized as a national best practice for its innovation and implementation of sector strategies. In 2015 and 2016, the National Skills Coalition and Urban Institute praised EARN as a leader in industry-led workforce initiatives. In 2017, EARN was highlighted at the National Conference for State Legislatures as a model to be emulated. Additionally, at the request of the National Skills Coalition, EARN Maryland staff provided technical assistance to states seeking to emulate this national best practice.

The program focuses on three distinct subsets of the workforce: unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers. Regardless of industry and region of the state, employers identify a

“Growing this nationally-recognized, industry-led initiative is a common sense way to continue meeting our administration’s top priority of improving Maryland’s economy and putting more people to work.”

*– Governor Larry Hogan
May 2, 2017*

similar challenge around recruiting candidates with the appropriate skill sets for employment. As of October 2017, 2,767 unemployed and underemployed participants completed entry level training programs. Of those, 2,323 (84%) obtained employment. As a result of their

participation in EARN, employers have a steady pipeline of candidates with relevant skills to consider for hire, thus decreasing screening, interviewing, and training costs and reducing worker turnover.

Additionally, employers identify incumbent worker training as a cost-prohibitive yet indispensable tool that is critical for expansion, retention, and improved business outcomes. As of October 2017, over 4,400 incumbent workers have participated in training, earning a new skill, certification, or credential. Employer partners identify many benefits to their employees participating in EARN training, including increased cost savings, productivity, and retention.

Recognizing the success of the program, Governor Hogan invested in EARN through appropriations in the fiscal year 2018 budget to ensure Maryland employers have the talent they need to compete and grow in key industries. Specifically, \$3 million was earmarked to be invested to promote training in cyber and information technology. Over the next three years, \$1 million annually has been earmarked for green jobs training. These investments by Governor Hogan have doubled the program budget for FY18 and will allow a larger number of employers to benefit from this industry-driven program.

In response to the increased budget, the department determined it was the appropriate time to grow the program by adding new Strategic Industry Partnerships. The process to become an

“We are pleased to announce we [hired] all 15 graduates of the program. We believe this program trained participants to meet our hiring needs and we are hopeful these graduates will make a career here in Federalsburg. It is because of your support that companies like Crystal Steel will continue to grow and succeed right here in Maryland.”

Excerpt from a letter written to Governor Larry Hogan February 24, 2017

EARN grantee is competitive and comprehensive, designed to ensure that only industry-led, in-demand proposals receive funding. Each proposal undergoes a technical review and a fiscal and budgetary review. EARN staff reviews each proposal for content, program design, proposed partners, and other pertinent details. Each proposal is then reviewed by a team of industry and workforce experts, including staff from the Department of Commerce, Department of Human Services, Maryland Energy Administration, and the Governor’s Grants Office. Review teams consider whether the proposal meets program requirements, examine the innovation being proposed, gauge industry engagement and commitment, and vet the partnership’s plan for

sustainability of the program in the absence of EARN funding. Scores are compiled and a recommendation is made for the secretary’s review. This proven process ensures that quality partnerships are awarded EARN funding and will continue to be implemented as the program grows in 2018.

On January 23, 2017, the department announced a Solicitation for Implementation Grant Proposals, the first of its kind in over two years. On March 3, 2017, the department received 12 proposals encompassing a variety of industries, including manufacturing, information technology, construction, and green. After a thorough review process, the department awarded funding to nine new partnerships. These projects began in June and July of 2017 and a programmatic update for each project is included in the section entitled *EARN Maryland Strategic Industry Partnerships*.

Given Governor Hogan’s specific investment in cyber/information technology and green jobs training, the department released another solicitation in June of 2017 targeting these industries. A

total of 13 proposals were received, representing every region of the state. Following a comprehensive review process, eight cyber/IT and three green proposals were funded, comprised of over 70 employers. The grants, scheduled to begin January 1, 2018, are expected to provide training opportunities to more than 650 Maryland residents. A summary of these projects can be found in the section entitled *2018 Strategic Industry Partnerships*.

In 2017, the number of EARN Maryland Strategic Industry Partnerships has grown to 59, representing an increase of more than 30%. Program staff will work closely with each partnership, providing one-on-one support and technical assistance to ensure program success. Veteran EARN grantees will participate in peer-to-peer learning opportunities, giving new grantees the opportunity to learn best practices from their experienced colleagues. Over time, these new partnerships will find solutions to their unique challenges and develop their own best practices.

Implementing an Industry-Led Model

EARN challenges traditional workforce development models by placing employer and industry partners at the forefront of program implementation. Employers are tasked with identifying training needs, developing of curriculum, designing programs, and placing successful participants. Intimate involvement in the process provides employers with confidence that EARN participants have the relevant, in-demand skills to help grow their business, while providing valuable opportunities for the state's workforce.

Due to the critical role of employer and industry partners in the implementation of the program, EARN partnerships are encouraged to grow their employer network. As of October 2017, over 850 employers have participated in the program. This represents a 24% increase over last year. The program has developed a solid reputation due to its proven ability to provide a qualified pipeline of workers and industry solutions that are positively impacting business outcomes.

“The work of the IT Center has been a game changer for how our community approaches all things IT and is a model for other industry segments. With the goal of economic growth in the IT sector for Allegany County, the impact of the Western Maryland IT Center of Excellence will be felt for years to come.”

In 2017, the Business Economic and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) performed a survey to ascertain the effectiveness of the program from the perspective of EARN

employer and industry partners. The survey asked employers to rate the competitive advantage of EARN participants, the impact participation in the program has had on their business, and whether or not they believed it was a worthy investment. The survey also prompted respondents for suggestions on how to improve the program.

When asked to rate the competitive advantage of EARN participants, nearly 71% of survey respondents stated that they have a significant competitive advantage over their peers, with 28% responding that EARN participants have at least some competitive advantage. Over 99% of

*– Stu Czapski
Executive Director
Allegany County Chamber of Commerce*

respondents expressed that their participation in EARN is worth the investment. Finally, nearly 99% of employers expressed that their participation in EARN has had a positive impact on their business. To this specific question, respondents cited that the program has helped their business increase efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the mission and goals of the organization, expand and increase the diversity of the talent pool from which they hire, and increase exposure in the community and to candidates. The results of this survey solidify the impact of the industry-led model in improving business outcomes and best serving Maryland's workforce. The full report is included as **Appendix A** to this report.

Additional Benefits to the EARN Approach

The EARN model has transformed the way that workforce training is traditionally carried out in the state of Maryland. The collaborative nature of the program brings together organizations that typically do not work together, highlighting the individual strengths of these groups, while truly employing a holistic approach when working with program participants. While the primary intent of the program is to provide skills training and address workforce needs, many secondary benefits have emerged as a result of EARN Maryland.

Leveraged Funding

Other funders, through both public and philanthropic investments, are beginning to see the value in placing employers at the forefront of workforce development. As such, many organizations are beginning to shape workforce development grant programs around this model. Due to their

“EARN funding was instrumental in our plant increasing our efficiencies in our production lines by 15% to 20%, which overall saved the plant \$1.6 million dollars to our bottom line.”

experience in engaging employers and developing industry-led, innovative programs, EARN grantees have been able to secure additional funding totaling nearly \$3 million dollars in 2017. This funding increases the capacity of EARN grantees and allows a greater number of Marylanders to receive in-demand skills training.

In 2017, the department continued its partnership with the Maryland Department of Human Services' Food Supplement Employment Training (FSET) Program. Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture, the program connects people who receive monthly food supplement benefits (SNAP, food stamps) to job-driven training programs. The program requires a cost-match with non-federal funding. Participating programs will be reimbursed up to 50% of allowable program costs, thus increasing the state and other non-federal funders' investment and increasing the number of Marylanders that receive in-demand skills training. Because EARN is a state-funded program, EARN Maryland partnerships have the means to provide the cost match. The program began in Baltimore City and will eventually operate statewide. Four EARN grantees have taken advantage of the program, including the Jane Addams Resource Corporation, Civic Works, Humanim, and the Job Opportunities Task Force. DHS has reported that \$500,000 in FSET funds are being utilized as a match for EARN Maryland partnerships. It is anticipated that as the program is replicated across the state, additional EARN grantees will participate.

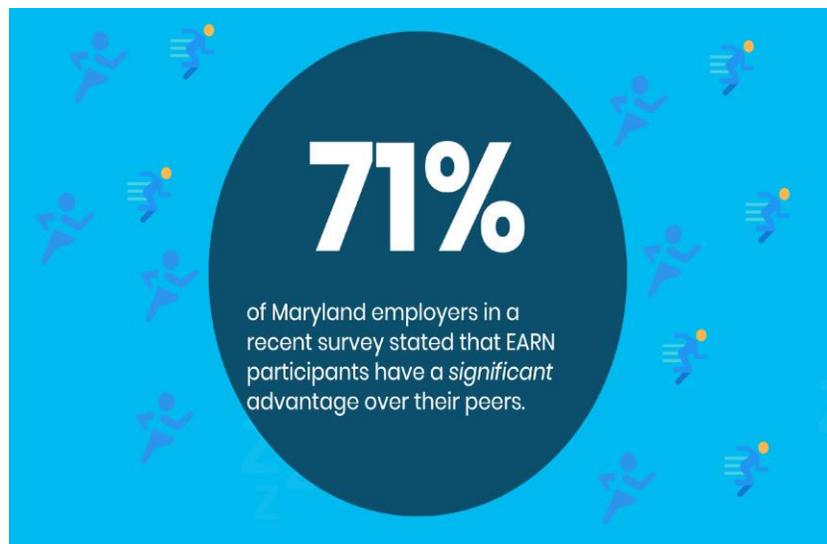
Improved Business Outcomes

The ultimate intent of EARN Maryland is to improve the business climate in the state by providing skills training that results in a more highly skilled workforce. While the program is succeeding in growing the pipeline of qualified workers and providing valuable opportunities to incumbent workers, employers identify additional benefits as a result of their participation in the program.

Employer partners identified increased productivity due to their participation in EARN. An employer partner of the Maryland Advanced Manufacturing and Plastics Partnership stated that due to an influx of highly skilled workers, the company was able to add a new production line, leading to new business contracts. The mHealth Partnership was instrumental in aiding the growth of three of their smaller employer partners. Upon hiring EARN trainees, the companies have gone on to secure contracts totaling \$8.25 million, which was made possible due to EARN addressing the company's human capital needs. Another employer credits EARN training with helping to exceed production targets by over 10%.

Another benefit identified by employers is cost savings. Many employers report significant cost savings as a result of their participation in the program. For example, because EARN is providing qualified candidates with relevant skills, employers

report lowered costs around screening, interviewing and training. Increased productivity and cost savings both lead to an increased bottom line, making employers more successful.



Expansion

EARN Maryland has facilitated the expansion of at least three successful programs. The Wor-Wic Welding Partnership continues to meet employer demand for entry-level welders on the Eastern Shore, while Project JumpStart is providing skilled workers to meet the growing number of infrastructure and construction projects in Prince George's County. The Jane Addams Resource Corporation, which was able to replicate its successful Chicago program because of EARN support, continues to be hailed a best practice in Baltimore City.

The department is proud to support the expansion of the Automotive Technicians for Change Program, which is led by Vehicles for Change. Currently operating in Baltimore County, the program is training returning citizens to be automotive technicians through hands-on experience and training. In 2018, this partnership will expand its work to Prince George's County. This project will meet a critical need, as Prince George's County is home to the second highest number of returning citizens in the state.

Return on Investment

As part of program evaluation, BEACON performed an economic impact study to determine the return on investment for EARN Maryland. The calculations, which are performed utilizing data

 <h3>Increased Productivity</h3> <p>An employer partner of the Maryland Advanced Manufacturing and Plastics Partnership stated that due to an influx of highly skilled workers, the company was able to add a new production line, leading to new business contracts.</p>	 <h3>Increased Opportunity</h3> <p>The mHealth Partnership was instrumental in aiding the growth of three of their smaller employer partners. Upon hiring EARN trainees, the companies have gone on to secure contracts totaling \$8.25 million, which was made possible due to EARN addressing the company's human capital needs.</p>
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supplied from each grantee, look at a variety of factors including wage improvements by program participants, increases in firm outputs attributable to an improved workforce and reductions in public expenditures as workers attain jobs or retain better paying jobs.

Additionally, the calculation takes into account the number of participants placed into jobs, net new jobs created and net new wages created per \$100,000 investment, and the total economic, employment and fiscal impact of the program. The analysis shows that for each dollar the state invests in EARN Maryland, an additional \$18.97 in economic activity is created. This is a slight increase over

EARN's Benefits to Employers

 <h3>Significant Cost Savings</h3> <p>Because EARN is providing qualified candidates with relevant skills, employers report lowered costs around screening, interviewing and training.</p>	 <h3>Expansion</h3> <p>EARN Maryland has facilitated the expansion of at least three successful programs: Wor-Wic Welding Partnership for entry-level welders on the Eastern Shore; Project JumpStart is providing skilled workers for construction projects in Prince George's County; and, the Jane Addams Resource Corporation continues to be hailed a best practice in Baltimore City.</p>
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the Return on Investment for the program last year. In comparison, the nationwide average return on investment for workforce development programs is \$3.41.

Identification of Statewide Training Needs

The Labor and Employment Article § 11-709(b)(4) of the Maryland Annotated Code requires EARN Maryland Strategic Industry Partnerships to identify workforce shortages and develop Workforce Training Plans that will efficiently and effectively bridge those gaps. Based upon feedback from industry partners, EARN partnerships are providing training to three distinct subsets of the workforce:

Preparatory: Preparatory training serves individuals who are not ready to enter the workforce, but would benefit from training and education. For example, many employers state that for even the most entry-level positions, some level of hands-on experience is required. Therefore, some Strategic Industry Partnerships are providing internship opportunities for students that are still

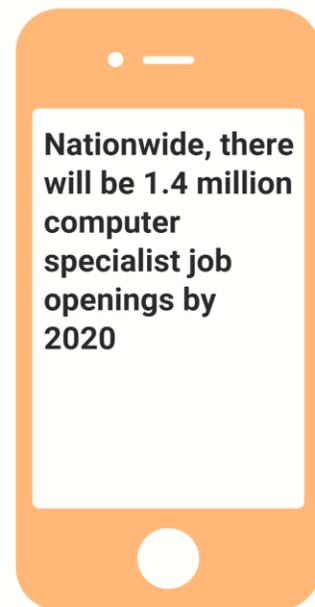
completing educational requirements. Over 330 Marylanders have received preparatory training, representing an important step towards full employment.

Due to perceptions surrounding the industry, Maryland manufacturers sometimes struggle to find and recruit the talent they need. To help address this workforce shortage, the Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership is implementing an internship program, targeting college students studying a wide array of disciplines, including engineering and marketing. The summer program provides a structured approach to the work experience and five cohort style learning sessions including speakers, plant tours, knowledge sharing and blended learning. While the program is providing valuable skills to students on the cusp of entering the workforce, the experience also allows the interns to think about a career in an industry they otherwise might not have considered, thus growing the desperately needed pipeline for Maryland manufacturers.

Unemployed/Underemployed: Of the partnerships training unemployed and underemployed participants, many are targeting underserved populations, including returning citizens, disconnected youth and individuals from economically or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. These individuals often have significant barriers to employment, including lack of transportation, homelessness, addiction, childcare needs and criminal backgrounds. These barriers must be addressed to ensure success during and after training. Partnerships are addressing these barriers in different ways, which will be addressed in the subsequent pages of this report.

Incumbent: An incumbent worker is an individual who is already employed in the target industry, and who seeks to obtain additional training or credential. Employer partners identify incumbent worker training as a vital conduit for growth, expansion and increased business outcomes. However, this training is costly, making it difficult for employers to invest with existing budgetary constraints. Therefore, many partnerships have been utilizing EARN funds to upskill incumbent workers, which has led to improved productivity, cost savings, wages and job retention.

As is reflective of the state's industry composition, EARN Maryland continues to invest in a variety of industries, including Information Technology, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Skilled Trades and Green. The training needs and skills gaps vary based upon industry and region, but there are some commonalities, as described below.



Information Technology/Cybersecurity

The Information Technology and Cybersecurity industries are growing rapidly in Maryland, but employers experience difficulty finding candidates with the necessary training and skills. In fact, the United States Department of Labor projects that by 2020, there will be 1.4 million computer specialist job openings in the nation, but universities are only expected to produce enough qualified graduates to fill 29 percent of those jobs. Recognizing this increasing demand, Governor Hogan invested \$3 million into EARN Maryland to help bridge this disparity.

Industry recognized credentials and certifications are important in Information Technology and Cybersecurity, with even the most entry level positions requiring basic certifications. Therefore,

Strategic Industry Partnerships are offering a variety of certifications and credentials, including CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+, CompTIA Security+, Certified Ethical Hacker and Certified Information Systems Security Professional. Additionally, employers note that ideal candidates have some level of experience, leading partnerships to offer internship and on-the-job learning opportunities where trainees can put to practice the skills they learn in the classroom.

Healthcare

The landscape of the healthcare industry continues to evolve at a rapid pace. As more people obtain health insurance, the need for entry-level frontline workers increases. Therefore, many of the EARN healthcare partnerships are providing training for Certified Nursing Assistants and Geriatric Assistants. The need for these positions is compounded by high turnover rates, due to low pay for what is a difficult job. To combat this challenge, EARN partnerships are being creative to decrease turnover. For instance, in an effort to increase retention, the Ready to Care Partnership will begin offering stackable credentials in addition to the CNA/GNA certifications, making candidates eligible for higher wages.

Manufacturing

EARN partnerships are creatively engaging new stakeholders that can help change the stigma and increase education around the opportunities in the industry. For example, the Maryland Advancement Manufacturing and Plastics Partnership engaged with Baltimore County Public Schools to teach school staff, including counselors, teachers and administrators about the industry. The inaugural training session proved quite successful, with 5 high school students obtaining internship opportunities as a result of this training. The partnership plans to offer this training opportunity again in 2018.

Another challenge plaguing manufacturing is the aging workforce. It is estimated that 30-50% of the workforce is set to retire over the next couple years. Employer partners identify a need to provide leadership training to current employees who can fill the roles of retiring workers. Nearly half of the manufacturing partnerships are providing some type of leadership training to incumbent workers.

Meet T...

After spending nearly 18 years in prison, T was serious about turning his life around. He enrolled in Project JumpStart while working part-time as a security guard. Two weeks before graduation, his employer let him go after running a background check. After graduating from JumpStart, he was hired by a local construction company. Within 60 days, he was given two raises. Recently, his boss asked to talk with him. He was nervous. His employer let him know that they were so impressed with his performance, he was going to be promoted to a supervisory role within the company.

Job Readiness and Essential Skills Training

About half of EARN partnerships are providing training to unemployed and underemployed participants. Therefore, job readiness training is vital to ensuring trainees are successful during and after training. Job readiness training is training for the purpose of assisting and supporting low- and no- skilled workers in overcoming individual barriers to employment and developing the skills required to maintain employment. Job readiness training may include development of professional skills, occupational development skills, literacy advancement, transportation, childcare and financial stability services including financial coaching.

Every workforce training plan, regardless of the industry, region or subset of the workforce targeted, identifies the development of essential skills training as a key need for their growth and improvement. In fact, employer partners identify that essential skills training is equally, if not more important than technical training. Essential skills are defined as skills one needs for learning, work and life. Examples of essential skills include, but are not limited to, skills related to professionalism, problem-solving, timeliness, interpersonal communication and customer service. Though the delivery of this training may vary, all EARN partnerships are delivering some form of essential skills training.

Serving those with Barriers to Employment

Even with the Maryland unemployment rate at a nine-year low, many residents find themselves unemployed due to multiple barriers that make it difficult to obtain and retain employment. EARN Maryland Strategic Industry Partnerships focus on underserved populations with barriers to employment, including lack of transportation, homelessness, addiction, childcare needs and criminal backgrounds.

EARN Maryland requires collaboration with a variety of organizations, including non-profit or community-based organizations.



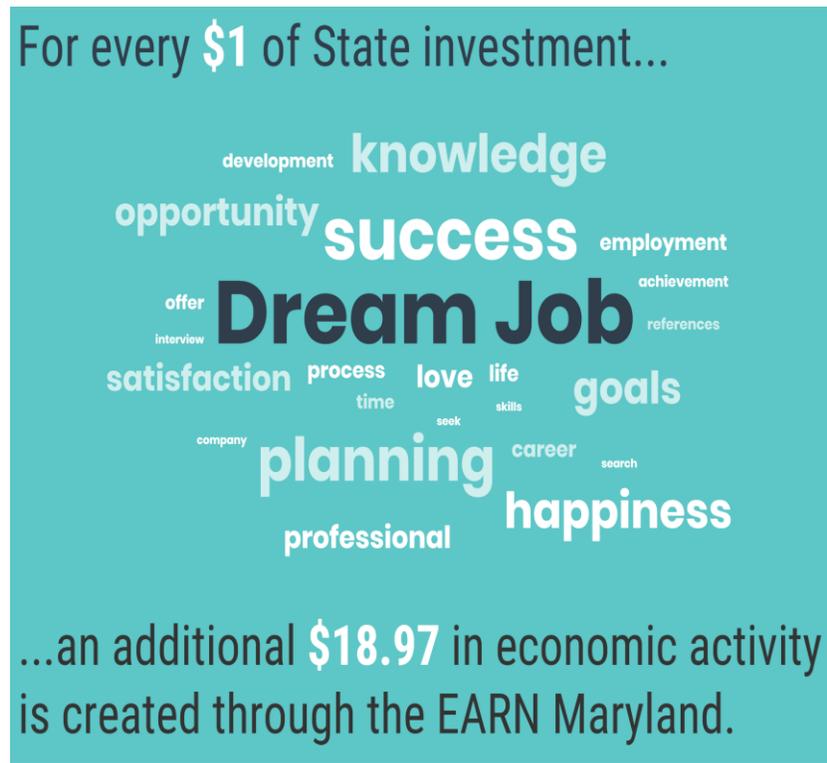
Pictured above are employers participating in the Humanim Culinary Strategic Industry Partnership

These groups understand the communities they serve and are well-equipped to remove any barriers that may hinder success in the workplace. The involvement of these groups in EARN Strategic Industry Partnerships have been central to participant success, both during training and upon completion as they enter the workforce.

Transportation continues to be the biggest barrier facing EARN participants. Public transportation can be time-intensive and undependable. Additionally, some

industries, like construction and healthcare, require travel to different work sites. Therefore, reliable transportation is critical to job retention. EARN Partnerships are employing creative methods to address the barrier of transportation.

For instance, the Baltimore Green Strategic Industry Partnership secured additional leveraged funding to launch a match savings program. Under this program, Civic Works is able to provide a one-to-one match to the savings trainees are able to accrue during the on-the-job portion of training, which is applied towards the purchase of a vehicle. To date, six participants have acquired vehicles through the match savings program. The Partnership has also developed relationships with the Church of the Good Shepherd, which offers 0% interest loans contributing



up to \$3,000 towards the purchase of a car, and Apple Auto, a repair shop which services Civic Works' fleet and as a result provides steeply discounted auto repair services to trainees. Many EARN Partnerships continue to work with Vehicles for Change, another EARN grantee, to provide vehicles to at a low cost with low interest loans.

That being said, the barrier of transportation is complicated and often times involves more than just the need for a vehicle. For instance, there are many costs associated with transportation, such as driver's education, insurance, and fees associated with suspended

licenses. Several partnerships are employing a flexible approach, working with different funders that are helping to remove these various transportation related barriers. For example, the Careers in Manufacturing Program has partnered with Central Scholarships, who are providing flexible funding to address the multi-faceted challenges around the barrier of transportation.

Interaction with the criminal justice system continues to be a barrier for EARN participants. However, some industries, such as manufacturing, construction and green tend to be more amenable to hiring candidates with a criminal background. Strategic Industry Partnerships in these industries have partnered with Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, providing expungement services for trainees. Through job readiness training, participants learn how to address "red flags" during the interview process, including criminal backgrounds, and practice these techniques through mock interviews. Finally, partnerships have identified their employer partners who are willing to consider candidates with a criminal background and utilize this information during the job placement process, intentionally matching appropriate candidates with "background friendly" employers.

Many partnerships have recognized the importance of continued case management and barrier removal after the participant completes the program and obtains employment. Receiving additional support and services post-training significantly increases a participant's likelihood of retaining employment. Partnerships have implemented different programs for continued support.

For instance, the Job Opportunities Task Force is piloting a secured loan program through a local bank to provide no-risk loans to graduates who need additional supports for housing or transportation costs. The loan, which has a very low interest rate, is secured by the organization so the lender takes no risk and the graduate is not penalized if he or she becomes unable to repay. Because the loan is through a bank, this program acts as a credit building tool for participants who likely would not have access to traditional financial products because of their credit score or minimal credit history.

The following is a small sampling of the successes EARN Maryland partnerships have shared, further demonstrating the model's success with serving all Maryland jobseekers.

Jameria displayed a passion for culinary arts from the start, especially creating and displaying her food as a piece of art. During the training, the young mother of four began to have some personal struggles and was facing homelessness. Through weekly work with her case manager, Jameria was connected to resources at the Housing Authority and was able to remain in her current home. Upon completion of training, Jameria was hired as a Bakery Associate at ShopRite, where she began working part-time and was quickly promoted to full-time.

- Baltimore Regional Culinary/Hospitality SIP

Jeffrey enrolled in the SMC entry-level manufacturing training after losing his CDL and exhausting his unemployment benefits. He was dependent on public transportation, had limited computer skills and needed full-time employment so that he could provide for his family. Upon completing training and earning a certification, Jeffrey received assistance updating his resume to reflect relevant skills for a career in manufacturing. He obtained employment as a Production Operator earning nearly \$17 an hour with full benefits. He is now making \$20.87 an hour and has recently obtained his driver's license.

-Susquehanna Manufacturing Coalition

After spending nearly half of his life in prison, Chris was ready for a change. While incarcerated, Chris enrolled in the Automotive Technician program at the Occupational Skills Training Center, and then the Automotive Technicians for Change program while on work release. Upon official release, Chris enrolled in the program full-time and excelled, learning a great deal and applying his knowledge to hands-on work on the donated vehicles and customer cars. Though he completed the program and is gainfully employed as a technician at Heritage MileOne, he spends his days off at the training center. Chris feels it is important to show the current participants that "opportunity is available if you put the work in for it".

-Automotive Technicians for Change

Shaneice was a single mother with minimal work history and no prior experience in the manufacturing industry. At first, Shaneice was hesitant about a career in manufacturing but after the classroom training and on-the-job experience, she felt confident that she could do the work. Pompeian was impressed with Shaneice throughout the training and offered her a production job, starting at \$14.06 an hour with benefits.

-Maryland Manufacturing Bootcamp

Prior to starting the program, Sherman worked in a low-wage, dead-end job for three years. After completing the training program, Sherman began employment as an Energy Retrofit Installer making \$16.82 per hour. Seeing Sherman's work ethic and strong skill set, his employer enrolled him in a Baltimore Green Strategic Industry Partnership (BGSIP) incumbent worker training course so that he could obtain the BPI Building Analyst and Envelope Professional certifications. With the BPI credential, Sherman is qualified to assume a greater leadership role and serve as a crew leader. Since completing the training program, "I can now think about future with my family, and I have more confidence that I can provide for them. I didn't feel that confidence before. The confidence that I can further advance and do more than what I am doing right now" says Sherman.

-Baltimore Green Strategic Industry Partnership

Marlon is a single dad who had been laid off and was out of work. He was a very motivated student. Half way through class, his mother passed away. He left class early, but was back the next day. He said his mother would never forgive him if he did not take advantage of the opportunity to complete training and provide for his family. He passed his CDL test on the first try and had multiple employment offers before he finished the course. He is currently employed at PT Logistics, making a living wage to support his family.

-Susquehanna Transportation and Logistics Partnership

Courtney was determined to start a career in healthcare, so she enrolled in the Cecil College CNA EARN program. During training, her home burned down and her family lost everything, including her uniforms, supplies and books. The Cecil College Foundation awarded this student an emergency scholarship to replace all of her lost supplies. She was able to complete training and is now working at Union Hospital making nearly \$14 an hour. She hopes to utilize her new career as a stepping stone to becoming a Registered Nurse.

-Ready to Care: An Eastern Shore Partnership to Train Healthcare Workers

Tracking Success, Accountability and Participants

EARN Maryland staff work closely with each Strategic Industry Partnership to provide support through the duration of the grant. Staff work with grantees to develop goals and measures of success for their individual partnerships. Due to the flexible composition of EARN, each partnership is unique in its goals. To ensure these goals are met, EARN staff provide specific support and technical assistance to each partnership. This support includes but is not limited to site visits and regular meetings with grantees. The development of a strong working relationship allows staff to better understand the challenges and successes of each partnership. Staff work with partnerships to highlight accomplishments of training programs and to implement technical

assistance plans if outcomes are not being met. Program staff work collaboratively with each partnership and strive to create an environment of trust and support for continuous improvement and innovation.

On a quarterly basis, grantees are required to support the following reports to the department:

- Quarterly Narrative Report – tracks all programmatic activity, including project activities, program highlights, challenges and success stories
- Quarterly Financial Report – tracks projected versus actual expenditures and leveraged resources
- Entry Report – captures all required demographic data
- Exit Report – captures all required outcome data

Programmatic oversight is provided to ensure that the partnership is on track to meet timelines, outcomes, and other deliverables outlined in the Grant Agreement and that data is complete and accurate. Fiscal oversight is provided by at least three staff at the department to confirm expenditures are allowable and reasonable.

Per the Labor and Employment Article § 11-709(b)(4) of the Maryland Annotated Code, EARN Maryland Partnerships are required to collect and track certain demographic data for all participants taking part in EARN funded training, including sex, race, national origin, income, county of residence and education attainment. Following the completion of training, partnerships must track certain outcome data, including whether or not each participant obtained a new credential or certification, identifiable skill, a new employment position or a title or wage promotion. The required metrics covering July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 are included as **Appendix B** to this report.

Based upon data points from the first two years of the program, the department determined it was necessary to make changes to the Entry and Exit reports to ensure uniform and accurate data. Some demographic data, which was left open-ended, appeared to elicit confusion from participants. For example, many participants were unsure of their National Origin. This led to sporadic responses. To alleviate this challenge, BEACON provided categories for National Origin and intake forms were modified to eliminate participant confusion. The Entry report was modified to include a drop-down menu, guaranteeing uniform and complete data. Though this change was implemented half way through the reporting period, the data reflected in Appendix B shows an improvement in response rates. From July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, 48% of participants did not report or were unsure of their national origin. From July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017, this number decreased to 21%. It is anticipated that this change will lead to more accurate reporting.

Similarly, the department modified components of the Exit report. One required metric is the number of participants that learn an identifiable skill as a result of their participation in the program. The Exit report initially prompted the grantee to list the identifiable skill(s) learned. Arguably, an EARN participant could learn many identifiable skills throughout their participation in the program. The wording of this question led to confusion regarding how many different skills to report and some grantees would leave this field blank. Upon review, the department felt that the wording of this question was leading to underreporting. The department changed this question on the Exit report to a yes or no question, simply asking whether the participant earned an identifiable skill as a result of their participation in training.

Per the Labor and Employment Article § 11-709(b)(4) of the Maryland Annotated Code, the department must track the number of participants to earn a title promotion. Initially, this metric was tracked for all participants. However, this metric is not applicable for unemployed and underemployed participants. Rather, a title promotion is tracked for partnerships focused on incumbent workers.

The department is committed to continually examining the policies and procedures of the program to ensure accurate and complete data collection.

Third Party Evaluation

The EARN Maryland program continues to partner with the Business Economic and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) at the Perdue School of Business at Salisbury University to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The broad areas for evaluation include assessment of the value to trainees, the value to employers, the quality and effectiveness of the partnership and systems change among, and within the industry and partner institution.

BEACON developed an Employer Satisfaction Survey to ascertain the program's progress and effectiveness in serving employers. The survey is included as **Appendix A** of this report. BEACON is also developing a Best Practices Guide for the EARN program that can be shared with new grantees over the coming years. The staff at BEACON engaged representatives from each of the partnerships to understand challenges and successes of the individual programs. These interactions frame the report that BEACON submits to the department each year. This report, which includes all interview, case study, reporting, evaluation and accountability documents and tools, provides an independent evaluation of EARN's impact.

In this report, BEACON highlights the economic impact study completed in 2017. As highlighted earlier in this report, for every dollar the state invests, an additional \$18.97 in economic activity is created. The nationwide average Return on Investment for workforce development programs is \$3.41. This further illustrates the value of the industry-led model and EARN Maryland's impact on economic and workforce development in Maryland.

On November 13, 2017, the department hosted the third EARN Annual Meeting. This gathering provided the opportunity for grantees to come together, learn about changes to the program, brainstorm solutions to challenges and share best practices. EARN Maryland staff provided programmatic updates and solicited feedback from grantees regarding potential changes that could improve the program. BEACON presented an update on program evaluation. This was the first EARN Annual Meeting for newly funded EARN grantees and provided an invaluable opportunity to learn about best practices and meet their colleagues as they begin implementation.

Current EARN Maryland Strategic Industry Partnerships

Given additional EARN funding in Fiscal Year 2018, EARN Maryland has grown the number of partnerships. The following section lists the 46 Strategic Industry Partnerships, accompanied by a programmatic update. The primary jurisdiction in which each partnership is operating is identified, though it should be noted that EARN Maryland partnerships are intended to be regional, both in their make-up and reach. Partnerships awarded funding beginning in 2017 are italicized.

Manufacturing

Careers in Manufacturing Program

Region: Baltimore City

Description: In 2015, the Jane Addams Resource Corporation launched the Careers in Manufacturing Program, seeking to replicate its successful Chicago program. The program, which offers training in welding and computer numerical control machining, has placed 72 unemployed and underemployed participants into employment, with wages averaging nearly \$16 an hour. Along with teaching technical skills, the program offers intensive career readiness and essential skills training and comprehensive wraparound services.

Because many of the participants have multiple barriers to employment, in 2017 JARC focused on forming partnerships with various organizations to assist with barrier removal. For instance, the program partnered with the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service who worked with trainees to process an estimated 90 expungements. JARC also began working with Central Scholarships, who provide funding for driving school, learners permits, financing vehicles and other transportation-related barrier removal. These partnerships help to ensure participants can not only obtain employment, but are able to retain employment post-training.

In 2017, JARC launched an incumbent worker training program designed to provide customized skills training to the existing workforce while strengthening relationships with employer partners. Nearly thirty incumbent workers have received customized training. In 2018, JARC will utilize EARN funds to continue its Careers in Manufacturing Program and grow the incumbent worker training program.

Participant Success Story: Malik was tired of looking for employment every six months and wanted a consistent income when he enrolled in JARC's Careers in Manufacturing Program. He earned a 10-hour OSHA certification and a National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) Machinist Level I Milling. This certification made him a highly sought after candidate, and he obtained employment making \$23 an hour with benefits. After six months on the job, he received a pay increase and is now making \$31 an hour. Malik has since been able to purchase his first car and home, which he credits to the financial coaching he received at JARC.

Susquehanna Manufacturing Coalition

Region: Susquehanna

Description: In 2017, the Susquehanna Manufacturing Coalition continued to employ a flexible approach in meeting the needs of area manufacturers. Employer partners continue to identify the need for a pipeline of qualified workers. To meet this need, the partnership provided training through the Manufacturing Foundation Technician course, which is a blend of classroom and on-the-job training. To date, 82% of participants who completed training have obtained employment.

Employers in the Susquehanna region also identify the need for incumbent worker training, an indispensable way to increase efficiency that is often cost-prohibitive. Forty-five incumbent workers have earned certifications in in-demand skills, such as LEAN, Ultrasonic Testing, VG Studio, and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point. Business Service Representatives from the

Susquehanna Workforce Network have been instrumental in ensuring that industry needs are met and that the partnership is providing in-demand training. In 2018, the partnership will utilize EARN funding to pilot a hybrid version of the Manufacturing Foundation Technician training and will continue to offer on-the-job and incumbent worker training opportunities.

Industry Feedback: “We were able to hire two excellent employees through the OJT EARN Program which reduced our financial exposure and made it easier for us to give candidates with little experience a chance for full time employment.”

Wor-Wic Welding Strategic Industry Partnership (formerly known as Maryland Offshore Wind Strategic Industry Partnership)

Region: Eastern Shore

Description: The Wor-Wic Welding training program continues to provide in-demand training to unemployed and underemployed Eastern Shore residents. In 2017, the training curriculum was extended from 13 to 16 weeks. The additional time allows students the opportunity to visit and tour different employer sites and receive hands-on experience working on metal fabrication projects. This change is in direct response to employer feedback and it is believed that participants are better prepared and more marketable as a result of this modification.

To date, 55 students have completed the program, with 46 (84%) obtaining employment, some earning wages as high as \$19 an hour. The partnership has secured funding to continue implementing this program to meet the growing employer demand in 2018.

Industry Feedback: “We have been able to hire at least one graduate from each class and we currently have four graduates working for us. They come out of the program with work readiness that makes them a great fit for our team to make an immediate impact in our business. The program has been beneficial in teaching not just the knowledge and abilities of welding and manufacturing but also the behaviors and competencies to be successful in a fast-paced environment. We have been extremely lucky to visit with the students at the program and provide onsite tours so students are excited to come work for us! We look forward to our continued partnership and working with future graduates!”

Maryland Manufacturing Bootcamp and Incumbent Worker Training Program

Region: Statewide

Description: Led by the Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership, the goal of this project is to help Maryland manufacturers grow their workforce, increase profits and improve processes. In order to accomplish this goal, this partnership has worked with over 50 manufacturers to identify areas of opportunity. Overwhelmingly, employers identify the need for a pipeline of qualified workers and upskilling opportunities for their existing employees.

The partnership has continued to utilize the Manufacturing Bootcamp to help employers find entry level team members. In the manufacturing industry, employers struggle to find candidates who will show up on a timely, consistent basis that are drug-free and have a good attitude. The bootcamp operates as a simulated work environment and is meant to self-select out the participants that are not a good fit for employers. Over 70 participants have been placed into

employment and employers identify significant cost-savings and increased retention as a result of the program.

Manufacturers also identify incumbent worker training as a high priority for growth. However, training is often cost-prohibitive. To meet this need, this partnership is employing an incumbent worker match program, meaning that employers pay half the cost of training and EARN funds cover the remainder. Over 550 incumbent workers have received training in a variety of areas, including leadership, project management, LEAN and safety. Among the most utilized training in 2017 was leadership training. Over the next few years, an estimated 30-50% of the current manufacturing workforce is expected to retire. This training has been crucial in developing leadership skills for mid-level employees who will step into leadership roles in the coming months and years.

Employer feedback: “We are pleased to announce we [hired] all 15 graduates of the program. We believe this program trained participants to meet our hiring needs and we are hopeful these graduates will make a career here in Federalsburg. It is because of your support that companies like Crystal Steel will continue to grow and succeed right here in Maryland.” *Excerpt from a letter written to Governor Larry Hogan on February 24, 2017*

Washington County Manufacturing Partnership

Region: Western Maryland

Description: One of the lessons learned for the overall EARN program is that employers struggle to lead Strategic Industry Partnerships due to time constraints. Recognizing this challenge, the partnership engaged the Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), an intermediary who regularly convenes employers, develops curriculum to meet industry needs and implements in-demand training. Maryland MEP took on a project management role and reconvened the partnership to understand the current industry need.

Overwhelmingly, employers identified the need for continued incumbent worker training, specifically leadership, organizational development, safety, project management and electrical and industrial maintenance. Over the last twelve months, nearly 70 incumbent workers have received training in LEAN, Six Sigma Green Belt, HVAC and OSHA. The Washington County Manufacturing Partnership has funding to continue addressing the needs of Western Maryland manufacturers in 2018.

PrintSIP

Region: Statewide

Description: Led by the Printing and Graphics Association MidAtlantic, this partnership is working statewide to meet the needs of one of Maryland’s largest industries. PrintSIP is implementing training modules around Graphic Communications, Digital Print Production, Offset Press Operations Binding and Finishing and Digital File Preparation and Output. To date, 31 incumbent workers have participated in training, earning new certifications and skills that will increase their marketability and improve employer outcomes.

Before the creation of PrintSIP, there were no post-secondary training opportunities in the printing industry. This Strategic Industry Partnership has filled that void, earning the praise of one of the industry's top media outlets, *What They Think*. In 2017, PrintSIP refined its statewide strategy by utilizing existing, well-equipped, high school print production labs, allowing PrintSIP to offer classes at 8 facilities located around the state. In 2018, PrintSIP will continue targeting incumbent workers and will pilot a training program for Baltimore City high school students.

Industry Feedback: “We are very pleased with PrintSIP. We have sent employees to the Digital Production Printing (DPP), Offset Press Operations & Binding and Finishing (OPO), and Digital File Prep and Output (DFP) courses. The DPP course provided foundational knowledge about new digital technologies that will be used to make informed decisions about expanding our business. The OPO course provided a new employee with a greater understanding of the offset press and bindery processes allowing them to be more effective in their job. The DFP course provided a veteran employee with updated information concerning prepress workflows. To our knowledge, PrintSIP is the only organization in the area that is providing this type of industry related training which is critical to the growth of our company!”

Maryland Advanced Manufacturing and Plastics Partnership

Region: Baltimore

Description: The Maryland Advanced Manufacturing and Plastics Partnership, led by Berry Plastics, continues to work with the Community College of Baltimore County to provide incumbent worker training. To date, over 200 incumbent workers have received training in a variety of different areas, including safety, leadership, hydraulics, pneumatics, injection molding, electricity and quality. Employers identify an increase in productivity, cost savings and jobs retained, and many participants are earning wage increases as a result of their participation in training.

“Without the EARN Grant Partnership and the Funding provided, there was no way, economically that we could have provided the different levels of technical training that our new hires and incumbents so desperately needed. The working knowledge these team members took with them was extraordinary!”

With an aging workforce, a universal concern in the industry is around the stigmas of manufacturing and the need to attract a younger workforce. To alleviate this challenge, the Maryland Advanced Manufacturing and Plastics Partnership connected with Baltimore County Public Schools to teach school staff, including counselors, teachers and administrators, about the manufacturing industry and the opportunities it presents. As a result of this work, employer partners currently have five high school engineering students participating in paid internships. This effort will raise awareness for the manufacturing industry and help to strengthen the pipeline of workers for the employer partners.

Industry Feedback: “Without the EARN Grant Partnership and the Funding provided, there was no way, economically that we could have provided the different levels of technical training that our new hires and incumbents so desperately needed. The working knowledge these team members took with them was extraordinary!”

Maryland Advanced Manufacturing Skills Partnership

Region: Statewide

Description: Like many other Maryland manufacturers, the 27 employers who participate in the Maryland Advanced Manufacturing Skills Partnership express concern about the difficulty in recruiting a pipeline of qualified workers to fill the positions of retiring workers. One of the challenges associated with this problem are the stigmas surrounding manufacturing. In order to combat this, this partnership is offering internship opportunities to college students, a demographic the industry has trouble reaching. It is the goal of this initiative to provide an opportunity in the workforce in an industry that is traditionally not considered by college graduates. In 2017, ten students completed internships.

The partnership also provided LEAN training to incumbent workers, including process improvement, 5s and Six Sigma. Finally, this partnership worked with employers to develop job tasks and competencies for employees to be used in the development of apprenticeship programs. The partnership will utilize funding in 2018 to expand the internship program and provide advanced manufacturing incumbent worker training.

Participant Success Story: “I can’t thank MD MEP enough for this opportunity to be a part of the internship program and for connecting me with B’More Organic. I didn’t know much about manufacturing or B’More Organic prior to coming into the program, but after a great summer experience, I want to pursue a job in manufacturing after graduation.”

Curtis Bay Industrial Training Partnership

Region: Baltimore

Description: Awarded funding in June 2017, the Curtis Bay Industrial Training Partnership is developing and implementing a comprehensive training program that will meet the needs of its five chemical and process manufacturing employer partners in the Curtis Bay area of Baltimore. The curriculum, which focuses on process operators and industrial maintenance, is meant to upskill the current workforce and create a pipeline of new, highly-skilled workers. To date, the partnership has trained nearly 200 participants in skills such as chemical and hazardous substances, math and chemistry for chemical operations and properties of materials. Employers and employees alike are reaping the benefits of this training and have identified a decreased Total Recordable Injury Rate and increased productivity.

Healthcare

Baltimore Healthcare Partnership

Region: Baltimore City

Description: Led by the Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare, this partnership continues to engage the seven major hospitals in Baltimore City to eliminate the critical shortage of qualified healthcare workers. Employers continue to identify an urgent need for Certified Nursing Assistants, Patient Care Technicians, Certified Medicine Aide and Medical Assistant. To date, the partnership has placed over 420 unemployed and underemployed residents into employment at various healthcare institutions. The partnership credits its success to a diverse

blend of education, economic development, non-profit and employer partners. That being said, different partners are tasked with recruitment, screening, training and job placement services. Tracking the large amount of data with many different partners has been a challenge for this partnership. In 2017, the partnership implemented a data tracking system that makes data collection much simpler.

Participant Success Story: LaAsia enrolled in the Peer Recovery Specialist training and excelled. She is currently employed at the University of Maryland Medical Center. During her time in training, LaAsia applied for a vehicle through a partnership with Vehicles for Change. She was approved for and awarded a vehicle to assist with her transportation and continued success as a Peer Recovery Specialist.

Health IT Strategic Industry Partnership

Region: Baltimore

Description: Led by the Community College of Baltimore County, this partnership continues to meet the needs of incumbent workers at large institutions such as John Hopkins Hospital, the University of Maryland Medical Center, Upper Chesapeake Health and LifeBridge Healthcare Systems. To date, more than 80 participants have received training in Project Management, Instructional Design and IT Security, many earning wage increases as a result of their new skills, certification or credential. One challenge the partnership experienced related to this incumbent worker training was a lag time in the student taking the certification exam once training was complete. Recognizing the time constraints of students who are also working full-time, the partnership now includes the lengthy application process as a part of the program and offers refresher courses. As a result, the partnership is seeing a decrease in lag time between the course ending and students taking the certification exam.

In 2017, the partnership piloted an internship program preparing participants to be Health IT Systems Analysts. Six students graduated from the program in late 2017, and they are currently being connected to employment opportunities. Due to the partnership's experience implementing industry-led Health IT training, CCBC is working with the Maryland Healthcare Management Information Systems Society to become their first education partner.

Participant Success Story: "The internship helped put much of what was learned in the textbooks into practice. I truly enjoyed the experience at University of Maryland Medical System. I tested software such as Eggplant and further expounded my understanding of the EPIC HER. I had the opportunity to be part of Go-Live for one of their local hospitals. Due to the training I received, I was hired as a Junior Associate of Production Support for a local software company that specializes in Health IT contracts!"

Ready to Care: An Eastern Shore Partnership to Train Healthcare Workers

Region: Eastern Shore

Description: Led by the Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center, this partnership continues to work with Cecil and Chesapeake College and Wor-Wic Community College to deliver Certified Nursing Assistant and Geriatric Nursing Assistant Training. The geographic distance between the three colleges allows the partnership to reach the whole Eastern Shore. Over the last

year, 38 students have completed training with 34 (89%) being placed into employment. This demonstrates the urgent need for these positions on the Eastern Shore. To meet this demand, the partnership will continue CNA and GNA training in 2018. In addition to this training, additional stackable certifications will be offered, making candidates more marketable and eligible for higher wages.

“We value EARN. It embodies the true spirit of collaboration among community partners, education, employers etc., for a common goal of training the workforce for current jobs.”

Industry Feedback: “We value EARN. It embodies the true spirit of collaboration among community partners, education, employers etc., for a common goal of training the workforce for current jobs. We share our mission to create opportunities for career pathways to improve the lives we serve.”

Southern Maryland Healthcare Industry Alliance

Region: Southern Maryland

Description: The Southern Maryland Healthcare Industry Alliance successfully completed its project in 2017. The partnership provided training in Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified Clinical Medical Assistant and Certified Medical Administrative Assistant, successfully placing nearly 50 unemployed and underemployed participants into employment. The nature of the funding allowed the partnership to shift the training plan based upon industry changes. For example, the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and a new regulation lessened the urgency for a previously identified training module. Employer partners made the decision to move funding to a more in demand training.

One challenge this partnership encountered was the use of open enrollment rather than a cohort system. Though this provided flexibility for program participants, it made case management significantly more time consuming. Additional staff time was utilized to ensure success, but moving forward the partnership will utilize a cohort system. As of this report, the partnership stated that current training needs had been met, but the group would continue to meet to discuss potential surfacing needs.

Participant Success Story: Nicole, a single mother of two, found herself on unemployment insurance and nearing the end of her benefits. She enrolled in the Certified Clinical Medical Assisting program. While she had experience in the industry, her employment history was spotty and she lacked the necessary certifications to compete in the current workforce. After leaving an abusive relationship, she found herself nearing homelessness. Through grant funding, she was able to not only enroll in training, but also secured much needed wrap-around services, including childcare, transportation and uniforms. She finished at the top of her class and is now employed at a doctor’s office making over \$15 an hour. Additionally, she was able to secure permanent housing in Calvert County through their housing program.

Healthcare Workers: Rx for Employability

Region: Montgomery County

Description: In 2017, this partnership shifted its focus to meet a critical demand for nurses. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing examined the nursing shortage, which will be exasperated as baby boomers age and the need for healthcare grows. In fact, between 2015 and 2020, the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 26% increase in the number of nursing jobs. To meet this challenge, Rx for Employability is partnering with six employers and two higher education partners to pilot a hybrid Nurse Credential program. Along with technical training, students will also have access to supplemental learning opportunities, such as English language learning, computer skills, financial literacy and essential skills training. Twenty-three students are currently enrolled, and it is anticipated that 64 will complete over the next two years.

Industry Feedback: “We look forward to partnering with the Healthcare Initiative Foundation, WorkSource Montgomery and the School of Nursing to further expand opportunities for students to obtain their nursing degree now and in the future.”

Welcome Back Behavioral Partnership

Region: Montgomery County

Description: In 2017, this partnership continued to support the need for bilingual behavioral healthcare workers in Montgomery County. The Welcome Back Behavioral Partnership continued to work with internationally trained, yet underemployed, health professionals. Program participants receive individual coaching and guidance to assist with the United States licensure and certification process. To date, twelve participants have been placed into employment, making an average of \$21 an hour.

Over the past year, placement has slowed due to unforeseen circumstances. For example, the partnership is working through the complexities of the behavioral health profession licensure and certification through several Boards in Maryland. Though relationships with the Boards have improved since the beginning of implementation, this process is complicated and time consuming. Participants are hesitant to accept “stepping stone” positions while they wait for completion of the project as these positions are typically lower-wage. Additionally, language levels continue to be a challenge. The partnership continues to diligently work with participants in the program, offering additional English Language Acquisition courses and certifications that will make the participants more marketable.

Participant Success Story: Martha is from Colombia, South America, where she practiced as a Psychologist and Family Therapist for 20 years. Through the Welcome Back Pilot Program for Behavioral Health, she was able to enroll in courses at Montgomery College to enhance her English skills. She also took a basic computer skills course, job readiness courses and a training on career options for internationally-trained behavioral health professionals. In addition, she took courses in crisis management, stages of change and motivational interviewing, which enriched her knowledge on the standards related to the behavioral health professions in the U.S. Recently, the Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists approved her courses and hours from her masters abroad and she is applying for her Graduate Marriage and Family Therapy License so that she can start practicing in the United States.

Healthcare Partnership of Prince George’s and Charles Counties

Region: Southern Maryland

Description: This partnership received additional funding in 2017 to continue providing training in Certified Nursing Assistant and Geriatric Nursing Assistant training. The partnership, which now has nearly 20 employers participating, graduated its first cohort of the year at the end of September, with another class of 20 completing at the end of November 2017. Due to the strong employer engagement and high demand for candidates with these certifications, it is anticipated that the partnership will continue to place at least 80% of graduates into employment.

Participant Success Story: Despite significant family issues, Victoria attended every class on time. During class, the instructor learned that Victoria has an abusive boyfriend and mother. Victoria's was focused and determined to get her CNA/GNA, so that she can get a job and get her own home for her and her children. At graduation, we learned that Victoria and her elementary school age daughter had become homeless that morning. IT Works and The Training Source immediately began working on a contingency plan, including temporary housing. Ultimately, Victoria spoke with a shelter and secured housing for the evening; eventually securing an apartment with the help of the partnership. Victoria successfully completed the course and is well on her way to employment.

Specialized Nursing Bridge Program

Region: Montgomery County

Description: The shortage of Registered Nurses continues to be a workforce challenge for the healthcare field. Between 2015 and 2020, the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 26% increase in the number of nursing jobs. The problem is compounded by a 25% turnover rate for first year nurses. The Specialized Nursing Bridge program is working to combat this challenge with the creation of a comprehensive nursing residency program.

“The Nurse Residency Program has provided us with the ability to recruit bright, intelligent, engaged graduate nurses who have infused a new level of excitement and energy into our nursing workforce.”

The twelve-month program includes structured learning and individualized precept time, with a focus on success quality outcomes. The curriculum was developed based upon feedback given in exit interviews from first year nurses. Retention rates for cohorts completing the program are around 95% and successful completers receive a wage increase and title promotion. It is anticipated that over 100 nurses will complete the program by the end of the grant period, exceeding the deliverables of the grant. Because the program lasts for a year and includes multiple cohorts, the partnership received a programmatic extension to complete additional cohorts and track outcomes.

Industry Feedback: “The Nurse Residency Program has provided us with the ability to recruit bright, intelligent, engaged graduate nurses who have infused a new level of excitement and energy into our nursing workforce.”

Healthcare Mentorship Baltimore

Region: Baltimore

Description: In partnership with the Maryland Center for Adult Training and the Community College of Baltimore County, Healthcare Mentorship Baltimore is providing technical training in

Certified Nursing Assistant and Geriatric Nursing Assistant. New Pathways, the Lead Applicant for this project, provides comprehensive essential skills training, case management and job readiness instruction. In 2017, the program experienced continued success, placing 93% of program participants into employment. In 2018, the program will continue to train Certified Nursing Assistants and Geriatric Nursing Assistants, meeting a critical demand for a diverse group of healthcare organizations.

Participant Success Story: After dropping out of high school at age 14 and becoming homeless, Taccara was determined to start a career in healthcare. At 18, she enrolled in Healthcare Mentorship Baltimore at New Pathways. Upon successful graduation from essential skills training, Taccara accepted a full-time job offer with Genesis Healthcare as a CNA/GNA – with paid training. Upon graduation, Taccara received her CNA/GNA certification and was awarded as the valedictorian of her class. She was hired at the Genesis Homewood facility, where she maintained her employment for over a year, despite a challenging commute (2 hours each way) relying on public transportation. During this time, she was recognized by her supervisor for her work ethic, bedside manner, and reliability as an employee. She was able to save up for a car, provide for her younger siblings, and make plans to move out of her family’s apartment. Currently, Taccara works full-time at Future Care, where she was offered a higher salary, greater benefits, and a shorter commute. She continues to work for Genesis per diem and as needed as a source of supplemental income. At Future Care, she was promoted within her department and is pursuing her nursing degree.

Maryland Direct Support Professional Training Consortium

Region: Statewide

“This transference of knowledge and skill is a desired outcome when implementing training, and serves to improve the practice and quality of service provided by the employer as a whole.”

Description: In Maryland, the industry of supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities is a 1.5-billion-dollar industry employing over 11,000 Direct Support Professionals (DSP’s) who provide vital employment, recreational and residential supports to a vulnerable sector of our society. However, the industry has a turnover rate near 50% due to low wages and little room for advancement.

The Maryland Direct Support Professional Training Consortium is working to decrease the attrition rate by implementing a pilot will lead to industry standards that can be used by the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration. These industry standards will improve career outcomes by creating competency based training and certifications that lead to a raise in wages, opportunities for specialization, and a decrease turnover of direct support staff throughout the state. The training modules will include in-person classroom sessions based on adult learning principles, self-paced online learning from existing sources, and on-the-job training and mentoring.

Industry Feedback: “While the first cohort is currently being implemented, learners from the five agencies are excited and many have informally shared newly learned concepts and practices with coworkers once they are back on the job. This transference of knowledge and skill is a

desired outcome when implementing training, and serves to improve the practice and quality of service provided by the employer as a whole.”

Baltimore Regional Healthcare/Higher Education Strategic Industry Partnership

Region: Baltimore

Description: This partnership will provide occupational skills training to unemployed and underemployed participants in preparation for a career in high-demand administrative assistant occupations, with a focus on the industry sectors of healthcare and higher education. The program blends classroom and on-the-job training, and participants earn industry-recognized credentials, such as Microsoft Office Skills Certificate and the Professional Administrative Certificate of Excellence.

Successful candidates will have the opportunity to obtain employment at anchor institutions in positions including Executive/Administrative Assistant, Office Clerk, Unit Secretary, Staff Assistant, and Certified Medical Administrative Assistant. Thirty participants are expected to complete the program and will have the opportunity to interview at healthcare institutions such as Johns Hopkins, Mercy Medical and University of Maryland Medical Center.

Construction/Skilled Trades

Project JumpStart

Region: Baltimore City

Description: Since receiving EARN funding in 2014, the Job Opportunities Task Force has been able to leverage funding to double the number of Baltimore City residents served through the program. Project JumpStart is a pre-apprenticeship program that provides participants with basic plumbing, carpentry and electrical skills. Students also receive essential safety training, financial coaching, a stipend and driver’s education, if necessary. In 2017, 18 students obtained employment, with the program maintaining its 80% placement rate.

Project JumpStart recognizes the need to provide additional supports post-training. The program is piloting a secured loan program through a local bank to provide no-risk loans to graduates who need additional supports for things like housing and transportation costs. Because the loan is through a bank, it is reported to the credit agency so it will also act as a credit building tool. Most of the program participants would not have access to these loans because of their credit score or minimal credit history. The Job Opportunities Task Force believes this will become a model for other workforce development programs.

Participant Success Story: EJ was in Habicorp (a partnership between Habitat for Humanity and Americorps), when he enrolled in Project Jumpstart. At the time, he was receiving Social Security Disability due to high levels of lead in his blood. EJ could have chosen to live on his Social Security Disability income, but he wanted to do more. He had some significant obstacles to working in the construction field because he struggled with math, due to a learning disability caused by high lead levels. Despite his difficulties he continued working, hard both at his job site and in the JumpStart program. When his Americorps service was about to conclude, Project JumpStart connected EJ with an employer. The employer was very impressed by his attitude and energy. EJ was forthcoming with her that he struggled with math. She appreciated his candor and

hired him on the spot. To this day she brags about EJ and what a great find he was. EJ is excited to have a job he enjoys and that he is able to work and help support his family.

Suburban Maryland Construction Initiative

Region: Southern Maryland

Description: Led by the Finishing Trades Institute of Maryland, this partnership continues to provide training to unemployed, underemployed and incumbent workers. Due to a growing number of infrastructure and construction projects in the region, the partnership is building a pipeline of qualified workers to meet the demand by providing a pre-apprenticeship program. This program is meant to provide the basic skills and job readiness training to prepare participants to enter a formal apprenticeship program. To date, 83% of participants have entered employment.

“EARN Maryland has transformed the apprenticeship program of the Finishing Trades Institutes as a training provider.”

Additionally, over the life of the program, more than 600 incumbent workers have received certifications, credentials and skills in a variety of different areas, including architectural coating, confined space, platform and equipment operation. The Finishing Trades Institute has identified the EARN program as the mechanism that has transformed the way the organization thinks about workforce development.

Industry Feedback: “EARN Maryland has transformed the apprenticeship program of the Finishing Trades Institutes as a training provider. Due to EARN funding, the partnership has been able to advance the training programs within the FTI's industries, build stronger and meaningful relationships with industry partners to advance the industries needs and aid them to stay competitive, and career opportunities to the citizens of the state of Maryland.”

Project JumpStart

Region: Prince George's County

Description: After expanding into Prince George's County in 2016, the partnership utilized 2017 to further solidify employer connections and provide pre-apprenticeship training. Thirty-four students have completed training, of which, 22 are employed, making an average wage of \$15.42 to start. Four graduates have completed driver's education and two have been sponsored for a vehicle due to a partnership with Vehicles for Change. The Financial Case Manager has held financial workshops to further assist graduates as they transition to employment. The Job Coach continues to work with participants who have not been placed on employment leads. It is anticipated that the placement numbers will increase over the next few months.

Industry Feedback: “Over the past several years, Jump Start has provided our company numerous employees who were hungry for an opportunity. Today, we have 7 of their referrals who have become excellent apprentices and turned their opportunities into careers. The employees as well as our company have benefited.”

Marine Trades Industry Partnership

Region: Statewide

Description: Like many of the skilled trades, the marine trades industry is experiencing difficulty recruiting a pipeline of workers to fill the positions of retiring baby boomers. Younger generations are considering other industries for work, some not even aware of the opportunities that exist in the marine trades. In an effort to raise awareness for the marine trades industry and help to

“Prior to the MTIP, there just weren’t any new, young applicants at the start of their career. I believe that the real promise of this program is that we are showing work in the trades as an opportunity again, and that even the applicants that don’t work out are having good experiences and carrying the message to other potential workers.”

strengthen the pipeline of workers for employer partners, this partnership is offering preparatory training in the form of paid internships to high school seniors and college-age students. Nearly 50 interns have completed the program, with 30 receiving offers of employment at the end of their internship. Employers report great satisfaction with this project and its ability to educate youth on the opportunities available in this industry.

The nearly 60 employers who participate in this partnership also report the need for a more highly skilled workforce. As a result, this partnership is utilizing funding to upskill incumbent workers. To date, 81 incumbent workers have received training in a variety of different areas, earning certifications and wage increases as a result of their participation in training.

Industry Feedback: “Prior to the MTIP, there just weren’t any new, young applicants at the start of their career. I believe that the real promise of this program is that we are showing work in the trades as an opportunity again, and that even the applicants that don’t work out are having good experiences and carrying the message to other potential workers.”

Architectural Metal and Glass Initiative

Region: Southern Maryland

Description: In 2017, this partnership continued to supply integral incumbent worker training meant to advance the competitiveness of contractors in the glazing industry. To date, nearly 350 incumbent workers have received training in a variety of different skill sets, including equipment operator, total stations and curtain wall installer. According to the partnership, however, the biggest success for the incumbent worker training has been the secondary benefits. For example, the Finishing Trades Institute is now accredited by the Department of Education. Additionally, employer partners are currently working with the state of Maryland to become certified by the North American Contractor Certification Program for Architectural Glass and Metal Contractors. Finally, the curriculum and certifications developed with EARN funding will continue to be implemented long after the grant is completed.

The partnership has also made significant progress in its efforts around pre-apprenticeship training. To date, nearly 70 participants have been placed into employment. Over the last year, the partnership has worked to engage different organizations to help in their mission of reaching

the hardest-to-serve participants, including returning citizens. Forging relationships with groups that can ensure participants receive the supports they need in order to be successful. Many participants are placed into formal apprenticeships, meaning their education and training will continue and wages will increase over time. The pre-apprenticeship training program has significantly improved as a result of EARN funding and is now a best practice for other members of the IUPAT, as well as other building trades.

Industry Feedback: “When the EARN program, the FTI developed programs to work on recruitment, retention, and training incumbent workers in the ever changing industries of the FTI. Today we are starting to see the participants become the future leader of our organization, and within the workforce. A program that was built to change the life of Marylanders by affording opportunities to careers has ended up creating an environment that has advanced our apprenticeship program. This is a value that is near impossible to put a dollar amount on as the impact has affected all the apprentices and instructors in the program.”

Remediation and Construction Industry Partnership

Region: Baltimore City

Description: The Baltimore region’s environmental remediation and construction industry is rapidly growing, fueled by a high concentration of contaminated land and vacant properties, polluted stormwater runoff and impervious surfaces, strong public policies, and increasing public awareness. However, the industry is facing severe mid-skill worker shortages, which is preventing the pace of business expansion from reaching its full potential. In response, this partnership is providing training for mid-skill Brownfields Remediation Technician positions and mid-skill Stormwater Management Technician positions. With its 13 employer partners, RCIP has designed innovative training modules that will provide workers with industry needed skills, experience, knowledge and certifications. To date, 14 participants have completed training, with 7 being placed into employment. It is anticipated that the remaining 7 will be placed into employment over the coming weeks.

Creating a Pipeline of Green Jobs

Region: Anne Arundel County

Description: To address the skills gap in the construction industry, the Creating a Pipeline of Green Jobs partnership is implementing a program that include basic construction skills training, construction safety training, job readiness skills workshops, and work and learn opportunities at business partner sites. The program will target offenders and ex-offenders, out-of-school youth and women. Participants will receive national industry recognized transferable credentials for construction, safety and environmental courses. The program will also include assessment and removal of barriers to training and employment that participants are facing.

In concert with its six employer partners, a *Skills Committee for Green Jobs* will be created. This Committee’s role will be to understand the workforce issues related to the “green” industry and to identify the ongoing in-demand skills needed in the areas of construction and manufacturing within the “Green Business” sector, and implement statewide , industry-led, collaborative skills development and entrepreneur development initiatives that will enable the state to meet the needs

of “green businesses.” The creation of the Committee will allow for continuity of the effort and capacity to respond to business hiring needs in the most efficient fashion.

Eastern Shore Construction Alliance

Region: Worcester, Wicomico and Somerset counties

Description: Led by Wor-Wic Community College, this partnership is seeking to bridge the skills gap that hampers the growth of the construction industry on the Lower Eastern Shore. The Eastern Shore Construction Alliance, comprised of eight employer partners, higher education, the Workforce Development Board and staffing professionals, seeks to meet a variety of employer-identified workforce gaps, including specific technical skills and job readiness training. The initiative provides training that includes industry recognized credentials, supportive services, and real work experience through work and learn opportunities. Seven students are currently enrolled in the program, and it is anticipated that 20 will receive training over the life of the grant.

Cybersecurity/Information Technology

IT Center for Excellence: Preparing Western Maryland for the Future

Region: Western Maryland

Description: In 2017, the IT Center for Excellence continued to meet employer demand by training incumbent workers and students interested in working in the field upon graduation. To date, 150 incumbent workers have received training in a variety of different areas, including Cisco Certified Network Associate, CompTIA, ITIL Foundations, Security+ and Networking. Employers continue to indicate that even the most entry level positions in this industry require some sort of on-the-job experience. Therefore, the IT Center for Excellence offers internship opportunities to students at Allegany College and Frostburg University. Two students took advantage of the internship experience in 2017, and both were retained upon completion of their program. Finally, the partnership hosted the second annual *Tech at the Gap*, a professional development and networking opportunity, meant to showcase Western Maryland as the premier region for tech companies. One hundred and eighty tech professionals attended, and the conference received high marks.

Industry Feedback: “The successes First United has had through the partnerships created via the Western MD IT Center of Excellence are immeasurable. First, the amount of quality, timely, and relevant IT and security training has been an asset to our organization. The training offered has provided enhanced skills to more people than we could have otherwise trained based on our current resource constraints. These training classes have also helped our employees better tackle IT and security problems in our organization, kept them abreast of the current cybersecurity threat landscape, and shows our regulators that we are committed to having an up-to-date workforce. Lastly, the relationships we have made with other Industry Partners have been invaluable. We have shared knowledge of IT and security processes, vendors, and technology which has helped us resolve problems in our organization faster (through information sharing) in addition to selecting technology and vendors with a proven track record with these industry partners. On a regular basis, IT conversions are being had between different vertical industries to solve problems and recommend various technology and vendors. The Western Maryland IT

Center of Excellence is an invaluable partnership that gives our local businesses and economy a leg up because of the collaborations and training opportunities!”

mHealth Focused Health IT SIP

Region: Baltimore/Washington Corridor

Description: Responding to employer demand, mHealth continues to train individuals for the mobile health industry. In 2017, six participants were placed into employment, with one additional student currently in training. This exceeds the goal of this round of funding, which was to train and place 5 participants. More than 100 companies have been engaged in training, community building and educational events since the partnership formed in 2014, and more than 165 trainees, including previously unemployed, business managers and industry stakeholders have been engaged in fostering the digital health industry in Maryland through EARN-related programming and events. The partnership will reconvene to determine existing needs in 2018.

“Vheda Health is honored to partner with EARN. The program has been instrumental to developing a key team member that now leads our operations support.”

Industry Feedback: “Vheda Health is honored to partner with EARN. The program has been instrumental to developing a key team member that now leads our operations support.”

Tech Frederick

Region: Frederick County

Description: When Tech Frederick received funding in 2015, employers identified the development of a pipeline of skilled workers as the most urgent workforce needs. Two years later, the partnership indicated that the needs shifted and true growth was dependent upon a more highly skilled workforce. Therefore, Tech Frederick spent much of 2017 understanding the incumbent worker training needs and developing the corresponding competencies and curriculum to meet this demand. In late 2017, the partnership implemented Cooper User Experience training for 10 incumbent workers. Tech Frederick has historically struggled with data collection, as the lead applicant is also an employer partner. To manage this challenge, the partnership implemented a data collection system that will make this process seamless.

Industry Feedback: “My team learned how to craft a truly user centered product, starting from interviewing stakeholders who sponsor the product and the customers who would potentially use the product. This training will better help us make our clients (typically other Maryland businesses) more successful by ensuring they are fulfilling their customer needs with the products they create.”

CyberWorks

Region: Central Maryland

Description: In 2017, Cyber Works, led by Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation,

Meet Alfonso...

Alfonso was as high school graduate with limited work experience. He was underemployed making \$10.50 an hour when he entered the program. He excelled during training, and upon completion, obtained employment making \$16 an hour as a UAS Flight Technician. He has since been promoted.

completed its first grant under EARN. The regional consortium offers both technical and practical skills-training tailored to industry needs. Since inception, the project has provided training to over 80 unemployed, underemployed and incumbent workers. Fifty-nine individuals obtained employment and incumbent workers earned industry-recognized certifications and credentials, including ITIL, Incident Responder, Security+ and Certification for Information System Security Professional.

Upon completion of the first round of funding, the partnership reconvened employer partners for feedback. Based upon the experiences from the first grant, the partnership tweaked the program and applied for additional funding. In 2018, the partnership will employ a customized approach for each participant, utilizing assessments to understand the gaps between the skills of a candidate and the requirements of specific positions.

Participant Success Story: In November 2013, Mr. Sugatan was laid off. After enrolling in a program at a local community college, he was directed to CyberWorks. Mr. Sugatan enrolled in Cyber Mindset, CyberWorks program meant to help candidates understand the skills needed for a job in cybersecurity. Upon completion of training, he obtained employment with a Department of Defense contractor at the Defense Information Systems Agency.

Committee to Expand UAS Employment

Region: Eastern Shore

Description: In 2017, the Committee to Expand UAS Employment continued to provide training opportunities for unemployed and underemployed participants, and also launched a First Responders incumbent worker training program. The UAS Generalist Course, which lasts four weeks, consists of classroom and hands-on training. Participants receive training in communications, set up, aerodynamics, compulsion and airport ground operations. The partnership modified the program in 2017 to include comprehensive essential skills and job readiness training which has significantly improved outcomes. To date, the partnership has placed 83% of program participants into employment.

The partnership also implemented incumbent worker training. The one-week course provides first responders with FAA Part 107 regulations and the incorporation of unmanned aerial systems into their work. To date, 24 first responders have successfully completed training. In 2018, the

partnership will reevaluate industry demand to understand training needs and retool the program as necessary.

Participant Success Story: Alfonso was a high school graduate with limited work experience. He was underemployed making \$10.50 an hour when he entered the program. He excelled during training, and upon completion, obtained employment making \$16 an hour as a UAS Flight Technician. He has since been promoted.

Intrusion Countermeasures Education and Training (ICE-T)

Region: Baltimore

Description: Data shows that more than 200,000 cybersecurity jobs are currently unfilled, with the shortage projected to grow to more than 1.5 million by 2019. Funded in July 2017, this unique partnership is a Baltimore-based consortium that targets short-term and long-term shortages identified in the cybersecurity industry. ICE-T provides a blend of classroom and realistic, hands-on simulation to ensure cybersecurity professionals, both entry-level and incumbent workers, have the skills necessary for success. This partnership includes Baltimore City Community College and the Maryland Cyber Range, a virtual reality cyber training school. To date, the partnership has trained eighteen incumbent workers and sixteen unemployed and underemployed participants are currently enrolled in training.

Industry Feedback: “As a Government Contractor, we are thrilled to have hired applicants from the consortiums training program. The employees we have hired are familiar with our requirements. In addition, there is a pool of trained applicants available to us when we are awarded a Government contract that requires the hiring of multiple employees.”

Partnership for Tech Talent

Region: Capital Region

Description: This partnership helps unemployed and underemployed Marylanders access training, post-secondary credentials and career development to meet Maryland’s tech talent needs. Rigorous technology training, professional development and career coaching leads to CompTIA A+, Network+ and Security+ certifications. Candidates are prepared for entry-level employment in positions including Desktop Support Specialist, IT Support Analyst and Network Field Technician. The Partnership for Tech Talent relies heavily on industry partners who provide internships, mock interviews and professional coaching. To date, 14 students have completed training, with 11 being placed into full-time employment making an average starting wage of \$16.62 an hour plus full benefits. It is anticipated that over 100 students will be trained, with 80% of students obtaining employment over the life of the grant.

Participant Success Story: “I went from job to job trying to find a start in the IT field. When I came across Per Scholas, I thought it was too good to be true. Per Scholas really opened new doors for me. I received hands-on experience working with various hardware and software components and program and increased my knowledge in all aspects of computers. Per Scholas also prepared me for the A+ exams, taught me the skills necessary to land a job, and helped me develop a well-rounded business and professional mindset. After landing a job as a Service Desk Engineer, I finally felt that I had completed a long-sought milestone that I have been trying to

reach for years. Per Scholas really has changed my life. In 10 weeks, I earned skills that might have taken me 4 years.”

BioTechnology

BioTechnology Baltimore Strategic Industry Partnership

Region: Baltimore City

Description: Responding to the growing demand for BioTechnology jobs, Baltimore BioWorks and Baltimore City Community College are providing training that combines classroom, hands-on-instruction and on-the-job work experience. In 2017, the partnership modified the program to include resume writing, interview techniques and professional development to the curriculum based on employer feedback from its 39 partners.

To date, 102 students have completed training, of which, 94 (92%) have entered employment. Four of those students are continuing their education. In 2018, the partnership will continue offering in-demand training to those wishing to start a career in the BioTechnology field.

“I was a welfare mom, now I am a Research Associate at Med Immune in Gaithersburg at \$25.00 per hour. This would not have been possible without the assistance the EARN grant provided me.”

Participant Success Story: “I was a welfare mom, now I am a Research Associate at MedImmune in Gaithersburg at \$25.00 per hour. This would not have been possible without the assistance the EARN grant provided me.”

Baltimore BioPrep (formerly a subgrantee of BioTechnology Baltimore SIP)

Region: Baltimore City

Description: Since 2014, the Baltimore Biotechnical Institute has been a Subgrantee of the Baltimore BioTechnology Partnership. The two groups initially applied for EARN funding separately. However, so as not to duplicate efforts in the region and to encourage collaboration and the sharing of best practices, the department funded the proposals jointly. After two years of partnership, for the purposes of fiscal reporting, it was determined that the organizations could apply separately. The groups will still work together closely and cross-refer accordingly.

Baltimore BioPrep is funding the Baltimore BioTechnical Institute’s Laboratory Associates program, which consists of two components. The first part, BioSTART, is a 12-week bridge program designed to advance participants’ skills and knowledge in basic math, communication, and professional development each presented under the purview of the bio/lab-based industry. Laboratory Associates is the second portion of the training, which provides the academics and practice in critical industry-related and bench skills necessary for success in the field. The total program is at least six months and includes a required 100-hour, paid internship. Through an articulation agreement with Baltimore City Community College, successful completers are eligible for 6 credits toward an AAS degree in biotechnology. To date, nearly 30 students have been placed into employment, with an average starting wage of \$12 an hour.

BioTrain

Region: Montgomery County

Description: In 2017, BioTrain continued providing vital training opportunities to a wide variety of participants. The nearly 30 employer partners continue to identify a need for incumbent worker training. Nearly 350 incumbent workers have been trained in a variety of different areas, including protein purification, quality, business communication and bioinformatics.

BioTrain also offered preparatory training in 2017. The BioTechnology industry is complex and one that requires comprehensive knowledge, even for entry level positions. Therefore, employers requested preparatory training, such as BioTechnology Essential Skills and BioTechnology 101. Nearly 200 participants have completed this training. Additionally, BioTrain partnered with WorkSource Montgomery to create a career map to break down the multifaceted industry so preparatory workers have some guidance on how to enter the industry.

Industry Feedback: “BioTrain is a critical asset to our biotech ecosystem that has built up the credibility and reputation for quality over the past few years is poised to now make an even greater impact in the years to come. The Biotech industry is complex and is challenging for any training program to build credibility with due to the demanding federal regulations, high education standards, and the high degree of segmentation in industry. This is why the BioTrain program is so critical today, especially now that the industry has grown and increased the demands for talent and training even more. The BioTrain program serves a critical need for our region that I and many of us are committed to and committed to growing it.”

Transportation and Logistics

Mid-Maryland MOVE Montgomery

Region: Mid-Maryland

Description: In 2017, Montgomery College continued to provide in-demand training to address the growing demand for qualified workers in the transit and transportation trucking industry. Based upon employer feedback, the partnership is providing CDL B training, a seventy hour course that intensive pre-trip drills, airbrake discussions, driving maneuvers and critical road safety skills. Additionally, employers identified the need for job readiness and essential skills training, including health and wellness, customer service and problem solving.

The participant, a veteran, was not employed at the time of enrollment. He was receiving \$187 every two weeks in temporary disability. Now he is working for University of Maryland College Park as a driver. He drives the buses and the shuttles on campus. He's very happy, making \$17 an hour with full benefits.

To date, 86 students have completed the program, with 74 (86%) obtaining employment. Montgomery College credits their participation with EARN and the industry-led model for securing additional funding in other industry sectors. In 2018, the partnership will continue offering CDL training to unemployed and underemployed participants.

Participant Success Story: The participant, a veteran, was not employed at the time of enrollment. He was receiving \$187 every two weeks in temporary disability. Now he is working for University of Maryland College Park as a driver. He drives the buses and the shuttles on campus. He's very happy, making \$17 an hour with full benefits.

Western Maryland MOVE (formerly a Subgrantee of Mid-Maryland MOVE Montgomery)

Region: Western Maryland

Description: In 2014, Hagerstown Community College and Montgomery College applied separately for EARN funding to implement a transportation and logistics focused Strategic Industry Partnership. The department, so as not to duplicate efforts regionally, funded the proposals jointly. Two years later, the organizations had formed a strong relationship, shared best practices and worked collaboratively to develop a program to be considered a best practice. Due to challenges around fiscal reporting between the two colleges and because the intent of the joint partnership was met, it was determined that the colleges could apply separately moving forward.

In 2017, Western Maryland MOVE continued providing CDL A and B training to unemployed and underemployed participants. The partnership also provided limited front line leadership training for employer partners. To date, 176 students have completed training, of which, 162 (92%) have obtained employment. Based upon employer feedback, the CDL B training was expanded to include the Passenger (P) endorsement, making candidates more marketable. The partnership piloted a program with food stamp recipients and is exploring a partnership with the Washington County Detention Center. Additionally, Hagerstown Community College is actively exploring apprenticeship as another option to meet employer demand. In 2018, the partnership will continue providing CDL A, B and Forklift training

Participant Success Story: “In just a short time, I've seen how [this program] has impact my future. I went from not making any money to being sought out by several different companies to where I have the option to choose and these companies start out at \$60-65,000 per year. It is definitely a game changer for me.”

Maritime Transportation and Logistics

Region: Baltimore

Description: The Maritime Transportation and Logistics Partnership, led by Maryland New Directions, have continued to provide occupational skills training to unemployed and underemployed Marylanders. The MTDL program provides clients with a three-week (90 hours) job training program paired with comprehensive employment assistance services. Thirty hours of the program are focused on industry-specific modules, such as Port History, Warehousing, Logistics and Freight Forwarding. In addition, participants receive sixty hours of job readiness training. Participants receive interviewing experience through mock interviews and networking opportunities with industry professionals.

To date, 357 participants completed training, of which, 266 (75%) obtained employment. Participants have earned over 400 industry recognized credentials, such as forklift certification, Certified Customs Certification and Global Logistics Associate, and are earning nearly \$13 an hour on average to start. Maryland New Directions is utilizing the EARN model to grow its

presence in the transportation and logistics industry, recently launching a CDL training program. The partnership will continue to convene its Industry Advisory Council in 2018 to understand developing training needs to remain responsive to industry demand.

Participant Success Story: Unable to afford college and recently laid off, Roger had little sense of where to turn. Roger knew very little about the Port of Baltimore, but the promise of a good job was all he needed to enroll in the MTDL course. After successfully completing the program, Roger obtained employment with Mercedes Benz's Baltimore Vehicle Processing Center. Roger saw this as a stepping stone and continued to take full advantage of MND's ongoing services, enrolling in the Certified Customs Specialist certification program. Roger earned his CCS certification and soon joined the team at John S. Connor as an Import Security Filing Coordinator.

Susquehanna Transportation and Logistics

Region: Susquehanna

Description: In 2017, this partnership continued providing training to meet the growing demand for CDL drivers. The Susquehanna Transportation and Logistics program provides sequential entry level training modules on advanced techniques and procedures. The training is enhanced by the use of a simulator, which mimics real-life experiences, such as inclement weather. In 2017, the partnership implemented financial literacy training, which has received strong feedback from participants. The employer partners remain engaged, attending job fairs on a quarterly basis to meet prospective candidates. To date, over 100 students have obtained employment and more than thirty employers have hired graduates of the program. In 2018, the partnership will continue to provide comprehensive, in-demand training to unemployed and underemployed residents.

Participant Success Story: After graduating from high school, Gabriel worked several part-time jobs, but hadn't found anything he wanted to do for his career. His aunt encouraged him to enroll in CDL training. He was nervous at the beginning class, and not sure if he would complete the training. By the end of the class, he had risen to be one of the star pupils. He had job offers from Frito Lay, CF Logistics and Schneider Trucking. He went from a kid with no direction to a solid applicant with three job offers from very good companies.

Green Jobs

Baltimore Green Strategic Industry Partnership

Region: Baltimore

Description: Led by Civic Works, the Baltimore Green Strategic Industry Partnership continued providing valuable training opportunities to unemployed, underemployed and incumbent workers in 2017. Entry level training focuses on the foundational technical skills, government mandated certifications, and job readiness skills. Employers especially value the 320 hours of on-the-job training, a unique component to training that no other program in Maryland offers. This experience allows trainees the time to develop hands-on skills.

Committed to serving those with many barriers to employment, the Baltimore Green SIP recently partnered with organizations such as the Baltimore Office of Child Support, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, the District Court Reentry Program, and the Maryland

Division of Probation and Parole for recruitment. To date, 88 participants have completed training, with 79 (90%) obtaining employment.

The biggest benefit of hiring from BGSIP has been employing fully-trained individuals with all of the certifications needed for the industry. They have gone through three months of training and are already prepared when they start the position.

Employers also identify the need for incumbent worker training in a variety of different areas, including energy analysis, building science, leadership and sales. More than 80 incumbent workers have completed training, earning significant wage increases as a result of the training.

In turn, the advancement of incumbent Installers to higher-level positions has benefitted entry-level graduates by opening new Energy Retrofit Installer positions within the workforce. Over the last year, the Baltimore Green Strategic Industry Partnership has nearly doubled in size with 29 employers participating.

Industry Feedback: “The biggest benefit of hiring from BGSIP has been employing fully-trained individuals with all of the certifications needed for the industry. They have gone through three months of training and are already prepared when they start the position. Otherwise, we would have to schedule the training ourselves, which would strain our resources and limit our ability to grow as a company. Having the classes available through BGSIP has been extremely valuable for us.”

Water and Wastewater Career Development Partnership of Central Maryland

Region: Statewide

Description: In 2017, the Water and Wastewater Career Development Partnership of Central Maryland continued providing training to incumbent workers. A new mandate requires all Water and Wastewater Operators to become fully certified in order to obtain employment. The certification exam is difficult, with only 37% of test takers passing the first time. This partnership provides the necessary training to help better prepare test takers for the certification exam, including a math review and exam preparation. To date, 245 participants have entered the program, with 241 earning at least one certification. Though the total process takes about three years to complete, 45 participants are fully certified. Others are in the pipeline to complete this year. The fourteen employer partners remain engaged. In 2018, the partnership will continue working with the enrolled participants to further their training and pass the certification exam.

Participant Success Story: Charles failed the Water certification exam the first time he attempted it. He enrolled in the WWCD training program to help prepare for his second attempt. He passed and is now a fully certified Water Operator for Calvert County Water and Sewer.

Clean Energy Training Partnership

Region: Baltimore

Description: Led by the Living Classrooms Foundation in partnership with Power52, the Clean Energy Training Partnership will develop and implement a needs-based employment training

program that prepares unemployed and underemployed individuals for sustainable employment in the renewable energy industry. The comprehensive program combines classroom training and eight weeks of hands-on-experience, where participants will have the opportunity to apply the technical and job-readiness skills learned in the classroom. Following training, participants will sit for the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners Certification, a highly regarded industry-recognized certification. It is anticipated that 80 participants will be served over the two year grant period.

Hospitality

Baltimore Regional Culinary/Hospitality Strategic Industry Partnership

Region: Baltimore

Description: In 2017, Humanim and Moveable Feast continued their partnership to provide culinary arts training to unemployed and underemployed Baltimore City residents. The twelve-week program teaches participants basic culinary and safety skills and provides hands-on experience in a commercial kitchen. In addition, trainees receive customer service training, case management, financial education, resume building and customized job placement support.

At the completion of training, students have the opportunity to earn their ServSafe certification and a nationally recognized customer service certification. The partnership recently engaged the Baltimore Development Corporation to convene small minority and women owned restaurant owners and chefs to promote the program and offer business service assistance. To date, nearly 75 students have been placed into employment, with wages averaging \$12.50 an hour to start.

Participant Success Story: Sheba was first introduced to Humanim through attending a parent engagement financial workshop at the school her daughter attends. Unemployed at the time, Sheba was interested in returning to work but faced several barriers, including lack of transportation, health issues, and debt. With the help of her Family Support Services case manager, Sheba enrolled in Humanim's EARN culinary training program, where she received hands-on culinary training and earned her ServSafe and NRF Customer Service certifications. After successfully completing her training, Humanim's culinary social enterprise City Seeds hired Sheba to work in their new cafe in Baltimore. Sheba's food and customer service skills have been described by customers as friendly, welcoming, helpful, and professional. Sheba continues to work towards her financial goals of budgeting, eliminating debt, and building her savings through Humanim's Match Savings program. Recently, Sheba was accepted a full time position as Lead Cafe Assistant with the Walters.

Building Employer-led Alliances for Careers in Hospitality – Eastern Shore (BEACHES)

Region: Eastern Shore

Description: The hospitality and tourism industry is vital to the economic prosperity of the Eastern Shore, making it imperative that employers have a highly skilled workforce. Comprised of employers, industry associations and economic development entities, this partnership is providing customized training opportunities to incumbent workers. In 2017, training was provided in customer service, ServSafe, leadership and conflict resolution. Since program inception, over 200 employees have participated in training. The partnership recently received the *Visionary Impact Award* from the Maryland Tourism Council for their innovative, employer-

led approach. In 2018, the partnership will train over 200 unemployed, underemployed and incumbent workers for the Oceans Down Casino, slated to open in late 2017.

Automotive Repair

Automotive Technicians for Change

Region: Baltimore

Description: Led by Vehicles for Change, this program is training returning citizens to be automotive technicians. Automotive Technicians for Change, which lasts for up to six months, operates as a simulated work environment and provides hands-on experience and training, preparing interns to earn Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certifications. The program offers comprehensive barrier removal and essential skills training, which is vital to participant success upon completion of the program.

Since program inception in 2015, nearly 60 interns have been placed into employment, collectively earning over 200 ASE certifications. According to the National Institute of Justice, about 66% of returning citizens recidivate within three years. Of that number, half recidivate the first year. The interns who have completed the Automotive Technicians for Change program over the last two years have a 3% recidivism rate, a testament to the comprehensive nature of the program.

Participant Success Story: Omari, 25, lacked direction and was struggling to find stable employment due to his record. He enrolled in Full Circle Service Center where he learned theory in the required ASE certification training classes and practiced those skills through hands-on application. He gained three ASE certifications and accepted employment in the industry.

2018 Strategic Industry Partnerships

In Fiscal Year 2018, due to a significant investment from Governor Hogan, including \$3 million for Cyber and Information Technology and \$1 million for Green jobs training, the EARN budget doubled to \$8 million. As a result, the department released a Solicitation for Implementation Grant Proposals targeting these industries in June 2017. After a substantial review process, the department funded eleven proposals, comprised of over 70 employer partners. These projects are scheduled to begin in January 2018. Below is a description of these Strategic Industry Partnerships and the regions in which they are operating.

Cyber/Information Technology

Susquehanna IT/Cyber Partnership

Region: Susquehanna

Description: Led by the Susquehanna Workforce Network, the Susquehanna IT/Cyber Partnership seeks to increase the skills of the workforce in Cecil and Harford Counties. The SIP's eight employer partners identified training needs for unemployed, underemployed and incumbent workers. Cecil College and Harford Community College will provide entry level foundation training that will result in industry-recognized credentials, such as CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+ and CompTIA Security+. Incumbent workers will receive training in preparation for higher level certifications, including Certified Ethical Hacker, Certified

Information Systems Security Professional and Cisco Certified Network Associate. Cecil College and Harford Community College will be integral training partners in this effort.

SANS Cyber Workforce Academy

Region: Statewide, focus on Capital and Central Regions

Description: The SANS Cyber Workforce Academy will provide training to veterans and women seeking to enter the cybersecurity field to generate new talent for employers. Because women comprise just 11% of the cybersecurity field, this partnership has engaged the Women's Society of Cyberjutsu and SANS Women's Immersion Academies to aid with recruitment to diversify the field. Additionally, honoring their service to the nation, the partnership will work with SANS VetSuccess and the USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore to train veterans who likely have many transferable skills. Participants will receive foundational skills along with defense and skills incident handling. Eighty participants are projected to enroll in the program.

MILVETS Cyber Incubator Partnership

Region: Capital Region

Description: The MILVETS Cyber Incubator Partnership seeks to establish a talent pipeline of cybersecurity professionals to help meet the growing demand for cyber skills in Maryland. The training and industry-recognized credentials offered are in line with the Department of Defense (DoD) baseline requirements mandated in DoD 8570/8140, including A+, Network+ and Security+, Certified Ethical Hacker, and Certified Information Systems Security Professional. This partnership will also provide comprehensive essential skills training, mentoring and internship opportunities to all students.

Code Partners

Region: Capital Region

Description: The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a shortage of 1 million software engineers by 2020. Code Partners will provide in-demand training to 50 unemployed and underemployed participants. The program includes technical training in web development, front and back end programming, and data analysis. Additionally, program participants receive mentoring and have the opportunity to take part in professional development opportunities. Led by WorkSource Montgomery, Code Partners includes nine employer partners, higher education, economic development entities and industry associations.

Advanced Cybersecurity Training Consortium

Region: Statewide

Description: The Advanced Cybersecurity Training Consortium (ACT-C), comprised of six employers, multiple higher education partners and the Baltimore Cyber Range will provide training to 50 unemployed and underemployed participants from around the state. Through its partnership with the Cyber Pathways Across Maryland members, the consortium will provide advanced training to students completing community college programs. The Baltimore Cyber

Range provides access to real-world practice that can significantly enhance the individual's experience level and dramatically improve their potential for obtaining employment.

Additionally, each community college will have the opportunity to identify an instructor to receive 40 hours of training at the Baltimore Cyber Range. The instructors will then be well-positioned to conduct cyber threat training using real-world threats, review how threats are deployed and how they are detected, mitigated and remediated. This will allow the project to reach well over the 50 participants trained through this funding.

Cybersecurity Education and Certification (CEC) Program

Region: Baltimore

Description: Led by the Community College of Baltimore County, this partnership will provide training to Marylanders interested in obtaining employment in the Cybersecurity field. The partnership, based upon feedback from its 8 employer partners, will develop two tracks of Accelerated Stacked Credentials. The Department of Defense 8570 certification track will provide the certifications necessary to work on government networks. Students in this 16-week course will earn Network +, Security +, Operating Systems Security and Ethical Hacking Systems Security. Students in the Networking Certificate Track receive Introduction to Networks, Introduction to Linux/Unix, Network + and Security +. Students receive mentoring from employer partners and will have the opportunity to access hands-on learning experiences through internships.

Education Partnership for IT Careers (EPIC)

Region: Capital Region

Description: ByteBack and the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation will partner to provide training to 50 unemployed and underemployed Maryland residents with barriers to employment. The partnership formed an Industry Sector Advisory Council, comprised of eight employer partners, non-profit leaders and economic development entities that shaped the program, identifying specific technical and essential skills necessary to enter the IT industry as a Computer Support Specialist. Starting at the beginning level, participants receive CompTIA Fundamentals and A+ certifications. Job readiness, essential skills, mentoring and professional development are embedded into the EPIC program.

NPower Tech Fundamentals Program

Region: Baltimore

Description: The NPower Tech Fundamentals Program will provide training to 100 unemployed and underemployed residents, providing foundational training that will prepare candidates for a variety of jobs, including desktop analyst, business analyst, field technician, junior network administrator and quality assurance analyst. The program consists of 22 weeks of classroom instruction, where students learn hardware, networking, troubleshooting, windows operating systems security, software and web development, in preparation for the CompTIA A+ certification. Following classroom instruction, students participate in a paid internship, gaining valuable hands-on experience with employer partners. Job readiness and essential skills training are embedded into the curriculum, along with mentoring and professional development opportunities.

Green Jobs

Hagerstown Community College Green Solar Installation and Training Examination (SITE)

Region: Washington County

Description : As the green industry has grown in Maryland, so has the need for a qualified workforce with a standardized industry view of effective and efficient solar photovoltaic (PV) installations. Responding to the needs of their five employer partners, the SITE training program will target entry-level and incumbent workers, providing in-demand training around North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioner (NABCEP) certifications. In addition, the partnership will work with NABCEP to ensure that codes enforcement jurisdictions have the tools to evaluate existing solar installations through a new inspector credential. The credential will fill the knowledge gap between installation and site examination that challenges code officials, home inspectors, and others involved with new or old solar PV arrays.

Clean Energy Training Partnership - Howard County

Region: Howard, Baltimore and Carroll Counties

Description: Led by Power52, the Clean Energy Training Partnership is working with seven employer partners to provide training to 27 unemployed and underemployed Marylanders with barriers to employment in preparation for sustainable employment in the renewable energy industry. Following classroom instruction, in which participants earn OSHA certifications and are prepared for the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners certification, participants receive 4 weeks of hands-on field training in the installation of solar panels and battery storage. Each participant receives intensive case management, including barrier removal and wraparound services to ensure success.

Prince George's County Sustainable Energy Workforce Development Program (SEWDP)

Region: Prince George's County

Description: Energy employers in Prince George's County express great concern about challenges around recruitment and developing a qualified pipeline of workers. To bridge that gap, this partnership unites business partners with training institutions, community based organizations, and workforce partners to provide work based learning, occupational skills training and career readiness training to prepare for participants for employment in the sustainable energy sector. The Get Into Energy Bootcamp provides basic literacy skills, numeracy skills, work readiness and general utility construction trades. Participants have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized certifications, including OSHA 10, NCCER Core, CPR/First Aid and Electrical Level 1. It is projected that 70 participants will complete the program.

Utilizing Data

EARN Maryland's workforce training plans are intended to be data-driven to ensure that industry's most immediate workforce needs are met and that its trainees are well-positioned for meaningful employment.

The requirements contained within the Solicitation for Implementation Grant Proposals mirror the enabling statute's contingent funding requirements of evidence of workforce shortages and a demonstrated need for worker training. The Solicitation requires that the Workforce Training Plan developed with Implementation Grant funds be both data-driven and experience-driven. This means that the Plan prepared by the Strategic Industry must assess and address:

- Data-based evidence of shortages in skilled employment within the target industry over a sustained period of time or as projected, based upon planned large-scale Programs underway (e.g. large construction or transit projects) or large-scale industry changes (e.g. health care) and description of specific high-demand occupations or sets of occupations at different skill and salary levels within the identified target industry; and
- Real experiences from target industry employers regarding actual and projected gaps in skills training and job readiness. In their upfront planning process, grantees should focus on ways to obtain input from a broad base of employers in their target industry and region in order to define common workforce needs. They should consider using focus groups, surveys, and other outreach tools.

The 20 partnerships funded in 2017 identified the training and skills needs in their Implementation Grant Proposals, based upon a variety of previous or existing workforce studies, plans, or research. A listing of the data sources utilized is provided in **Appendix C** of this report.

Conclusion

2017 has been a year of growth for EARN Maryland, due in part to Governor Hogan's significant investment into the program. Partnerships are continuing to develop best practices, changing the lives of Marylanders each day. Employer and industry partners express great satisfaction with the program, due to a more highly skilled workforce that leads to improved business outcomes. The Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation is proud to support the program and looks forward to sharing more success stories with the General Assembly for years to come.

Appendix A

The following report was completed by the Business Economic and Community Outreach Network at Salisbury University and submitted to the department on December 15, 2017.

EMPLOYER SATISFACTION SURVEY FOR THE *EARN MARYLAND* GRANT PROGRAM

Covering the 2016-2017 Grant Year

Presented to the

Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

by the

**Business, Economic, and Community Outreach Network
Franklin P. Perdue School of Business at Salisbury University**

December 15, 2017

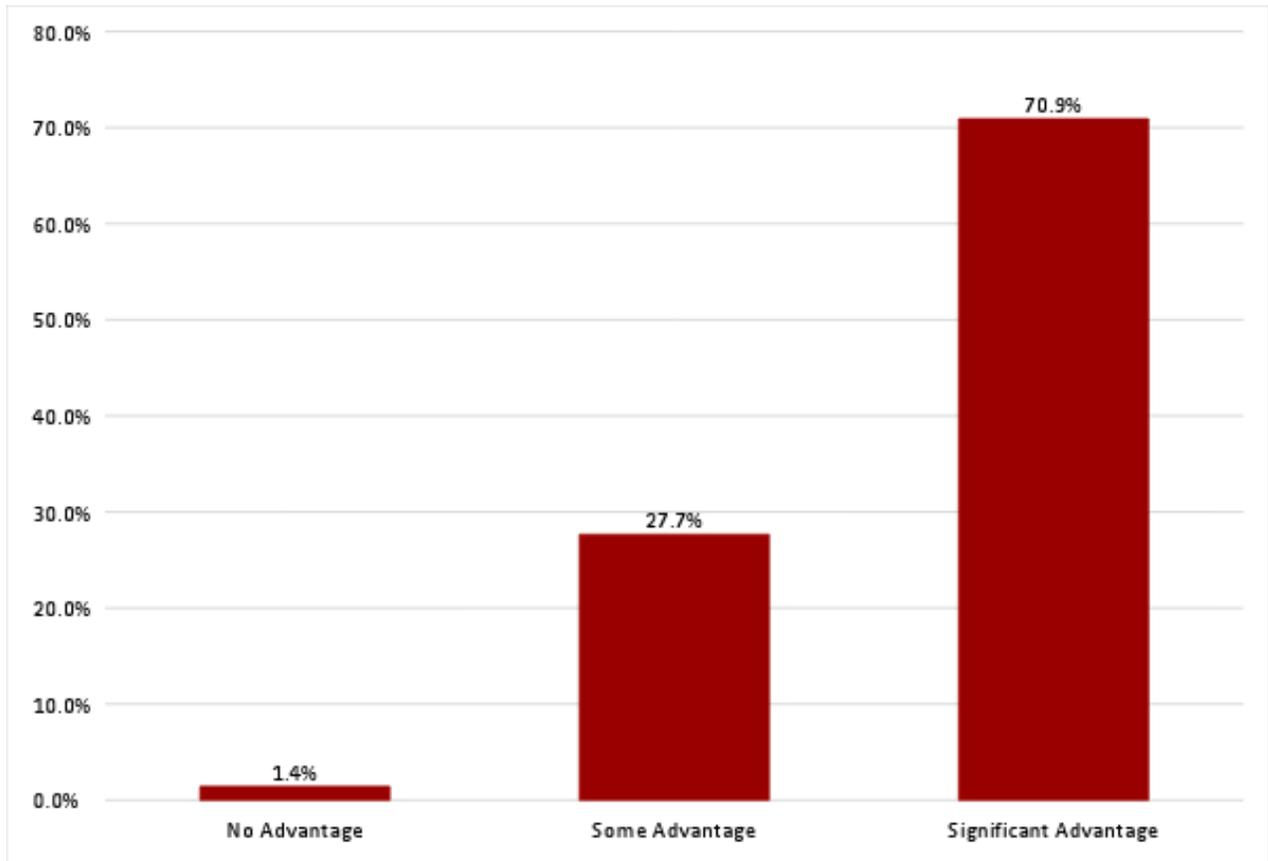
Introduction

The Business, Economic, and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) of the Franklin P. Perdue School of Business at Salisbury University has been engaged by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) to evaluate the progress of the EARN Grant Program in the general and of each of the EARN Grant Projects in particular. As part of this engagement for the 2016-2017 grant cycle, BEACON has been tasked with conducting an Employer Satisfaction Survey in order to gather input from the employer-standpoint as to the success of the EARN program. The report summarizes the results of the survey for the EARN MD program as a whole. Due to privacy and confidentiality requirements, results cannot be reported at the individual partnership level.



Question 1: How would you rate the competitive advantage of EARN participants who complete training? (Response Rate: 141)

Nearly 71% of respondents feel that the EARN participants who complete training have a significant competitive advantage. An additional 28% of respondents feel that they have at least some competitive advantage and less than 2% of respondents feel that they have no competitive advantage.



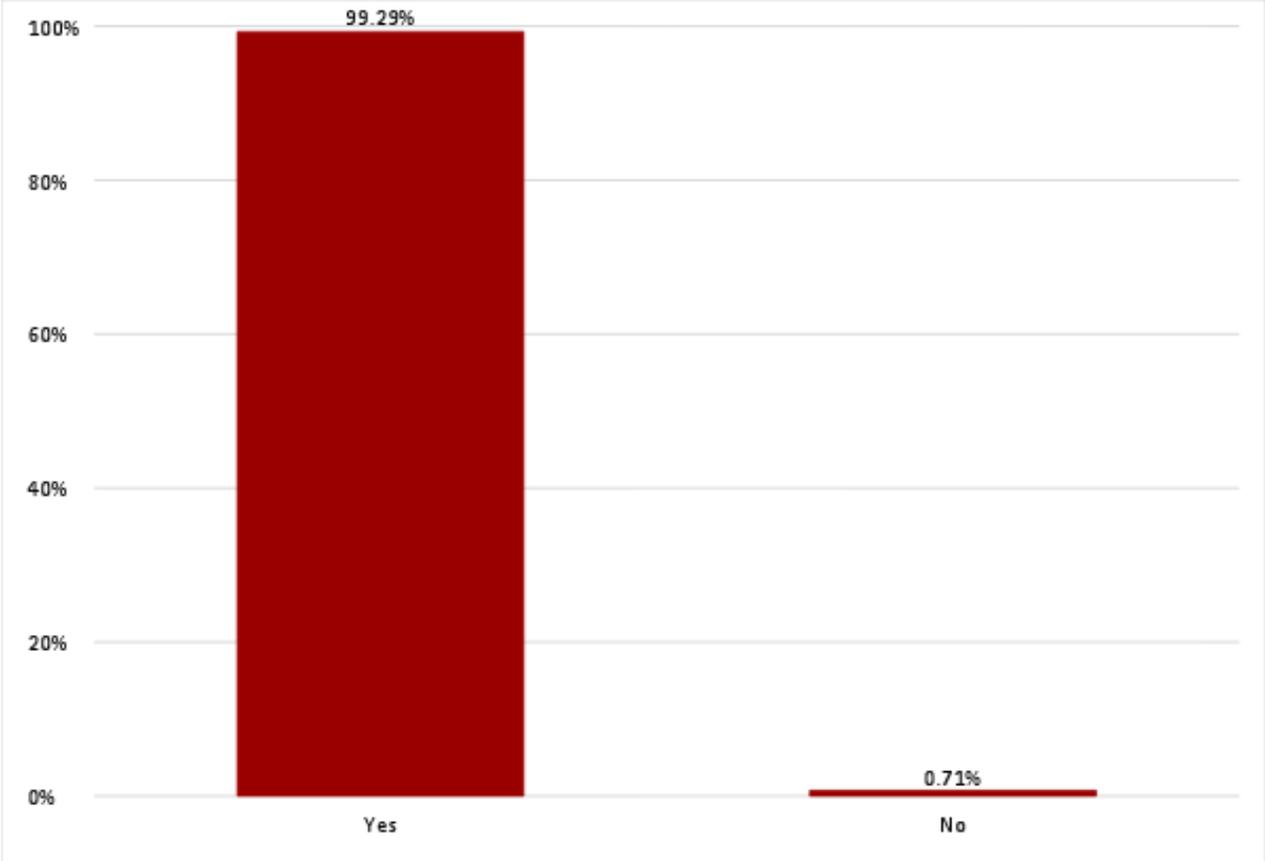
Comments:

Just under half of respondents (61) offered open-ended comments to this question. Most frequently comments revolved around the following areas: training and training outcomes, screening, and opportunities for employers. In regards to training, many respondents noted that the EARN program provides affords training opportunities to individual who may not otherwise have training available to them. Having the training before an interview takes places puts the participants at an advantage. Additionally, training specific to the industry is often matched with more general training, such as that in soft skills, that provides individuals an advantage in both the industry specifically and the job market in general. Positive training outcomes that were mentioned include a better prepared and knowledgeable employee, a

higher level of competence in the field, and a better understanding of industry expectations for participants. The training opportunities afforded by the EARN program are also more efficient, timely, and affordable than other industry training programs. Many respondents also praised the screening process that EARN participants have gone through. This serves as a strong vetting process for the employers. Several positive opportunities for employers were noted including the ability to have customized training to meet their specific needs and a higher ability to fill positions in areas of critical need.

Question 2: Do you believe this program was worth your investment? (Response Rate: 141)

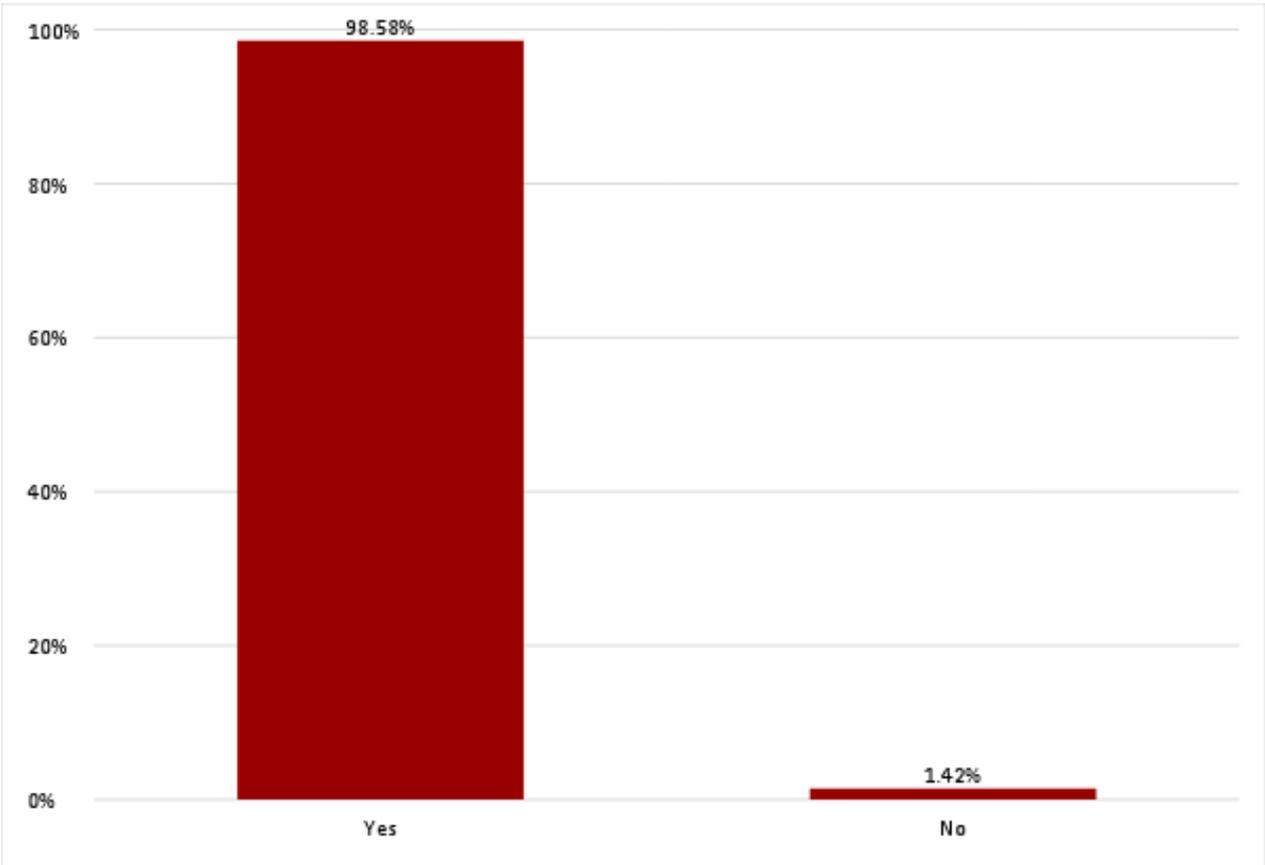
Over 99% of respondents feel that the EARN program is worth their investment.



Comments:

About a third of respondents offered open-ended comments on this question. The comments were very positive, providing much support for and encouragement of the program. Specific areas of value there were mentioned include the training content, the availability of training options, and the affordability of training. While employers recognized the value to their organization they also recognized the value to the community and the state as a whole. Several respondents also noted the positive outcomes for training participants beyond just the training itself. These outcomes include a second chance for those with barriers to employment and a positive emotional impact on employees that recognize the investment in their future.

Question 3: Do you believe your participation in this program has had a positive impact on your business?



Comments:

Just over a third of respondents provided open-ended comments to this question. Comments centered on the organizations’ ability to fill positions with qualified, enthusiastic employees and in to grow the skill sets of incumbent workers. They also noted that the program has helped them increase efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the mission and goals of the organization, expand and increase the diversity of the talent pool from which they hire, and increase exposure in the community and to candidates. The program has also helped to increase the organizations’ network within their communities. Lastly, several respondents noted the positive impact on employees, including the opportunity for growth and the fact that employees feel valued when the company invests in their training opportunities, as a benefit to their organization as whole.

**Question 4: Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the program?
(Response Rate: 81)**

Overall, 81 people responded to this question. Of those that responded, approximately 20% stated that they did not have any suggestions and just offered praise of the program and/or partnership. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and supportive and many expressed the hope that the EARN program will continue and will be expanded. Opportunities for expansion that were noted include offering additional programs/classes, moving into more low-income areas in the state, increasing the number of participants, and including apprenticeship programs. It was also suggested that the program expand its connection to the K-12 school systems to better connect students with local industries and make them aware of opportunities at a younger age.

In regards to participants, several respondents suggested increasing post-placement support, particularly for individuals with certain employment barriers. Post-placement support could include additional case management and job coaching. More follow-up with participants was also suggested in order to gain feedback from their perspective on areas for improvement. In terms of program content, the need for additional soft skills training was mentioned several times.

Lastly, several comments were made in regards to reporting. Respondents suggested reducing the reporting burden noting that it is timely and difficult. Recommendations were made for converting more reporting process to electronic forms.

Appendix A- Full Comment Response Sets

Question 1: How would you rate the competitive advantage of EARN participants who complete training?

A total of 61 open-ended comments were provided by survey respondents. They are as follows:

- Training, especially for technology, may be the difference between receiving an interview or not.
- As long as the participants put the training to good use, it is a significant advantage. This training, in conjunction with corporate sponsored training, will give participants the knowledge and ability to not only perform better at their current job, but be competitive for other jobs and promotions.
- The access to current and quality training for incumbent workers enables me to get my staff trained more quickly than I ever could without this program. I have access to numerous training classes that would normally have to be taken over a 5 or more year period.
- Especially with software companies there is a significant investment in getting interns up to speed. This program addresses that exact problem.
- Participants are well trained and properly screened
- We here at _____ are happy to support _____. We have used them as a major resource when filling various positions at our facility. We have hired Caregivers, and Med- Techs and our partnership with _____ has thrived.
- We have welcomed several interns, each of whom made a positive contribution to our organization's mission.
- These Interns are effectively taught how to succeed in a restaurant environment. They are on time and hard working with good degree of humility.
- Having the skills to perform the positions are necessary and makes the individuals more equipped for real world positions.
- These programs have given then participants a tremendous advantage in the field. The additional training received has led to increased productivity, knowledge, safety, and retention amongst the participants.
- The participants that have went through these programs have a much better knowledge and understanding of the job site safety, equipment and the products they will be using every day.
- This partnership is now providing customized training for interested biotechnology companies with wonderful results.
- Opportunity for all training relative to the trade one is striving to master is always an advantage.
- This training establishes a good baseline and gives an introduction to format and expectation of the industry and future training.
- The EARN Program helps candidates to better prepare for the real work force. It gives them an advantage to others who may be applying for similar positions.
- Communication and basic life skills are critical to one's career success.

- The employee we've hired is performing at a high level.
- Comprehensive training from industry experts prepares the trainees well
- Most participants were not aware of and did not know many of the quality and regulatory requirements and lexicon in the BioTech industry. The class provided a good introduction, references, and links to resources. Provide basic concepts and a starting point for gaining further expertise.
- The candidates that complete the training are able to step in perform well and with minimal supervision.
- One participant reported that the material was not advanced enough. A second participant reported that the material was a refresher, but well presented. A third participant reported that the material was net new, extremely helpful, and immediately applicable.
- The participants are better prepared for their jobs. depending on the position it may be a little more challenging to measure
- We are in dire need of Healthcare Workers in the Southern Maryland Area. The EARN participants have assisted our facility in meeting the needs of our patients. This is an excellent program.
- EARN participants get opportunities they would NOT have had without the training.
- My experience with two candidates that completed the EARN program and then worked with our program has been very positive. Both displayed confidence in their interactions with us, competence in the subject matter, and performed at a high level on the tasks assigned to them.
- There was only one opportunity to hire someone who completed the training, and it was for a critical position we were trying to fill. There was a candidate who completed the application process, had a job interview scheduled, and was a no call, no show for the interview.
- They can cite real life experience (compared to just academic exposure)
- Participants are learning both technical and much needed soft skills that prepare them for the workplace.
- These people have an advantage in the work place because they have a skill.
- The EARN-sponsored ____ program provides the screening and training that leads to highly successful employees for our firm.
- The participants that complete the welding training help us and our employers meet the demand for certified welders.
- Program is helping bring an entry level tech up to a skilled technician's level. This is very beneficial as technicians are very difficult to find.
- Our front of the house staff has been much more attentive to our members and guests since they completed their training. The staff is more knowledgeable and expressive on food and drink items, as well as what compliments what, which is a tremendous benefit to our business.
- Having multi lingual staff is always an advantage
- This partnership continues to deliver quality and necessary training to the manufacturing companies who need it most. The industrial tech training offers the participating companies the resources and flexibility they need to compete in today's economy and the

training also provides employees with the skill sets they need to grow and contribute to their jobs.

The partnership has also done a great job engaging with the local community and preparing educators and students for opportunities available in the manufacturing community. The program was a huge success and more programs like these are needed throughout Maryland, especially in Baltimore.

- The training we received helped with the technical aspects of programming our manufacturing equipment. This significantly increased our production and as a result our sales figures.
- Helps the participant to be job ready
- Helps to address the workforce shortage.
- Certified Nursing Assistant/ Geriatric Nursing Assistants are in very high demand in Cecil/Kent County. This training is required for the participant to be employed in both hospitals and nursing homes.
- EARN participants receive soft skills training that allow them to excel during the interview process.
- They have the advantage of applying for jobs with CDL in hand. That is a huge advantage with most employers of commercial drivers.
- Training new employees is time consuming and costly so these participants have a leg up when looking for new hires
- This partnership is bringing in highly respected industry professionals to provide training to our participants. To determine training offerings, we engage local IT employers to determine what skills they would find value in their employees investing in. We use this data to bring in the best of the best, and offer training to set our participants ahead of competitors.
- The employee earned a new skill set which is valuable both to the individual and the employer.
- If the training is held in a hospital setting, there would be significant advantage.
- We have had one employee take advantage of a number of the offerings and have seen a true difference in his performance, engagement and understanding of the industry.
- The competitive advantage of our graduates compared to your basic walk in is that they have completed OSHA 10 and first aid/CPR, have spent time reviewing math that is relevant to the construction field, that they have been through a process which has helped determined if they are well suited for construction, and that they have been screened and vetted for their work readiness.
- All the employees said how good this class was. they really enjoyed the interaction with everyone
- Some of the training given gave the students a head start on mandatory training requirements. It also gave vital insights to the job requirements that someone with no skills would have to depend on the employer to start from 0 skill level and train
- Giving new skills and brushing up on changes in the industry, enables me to bring on new staff that are getting older and retiring from the printing industry
- Participants have been able to pass the state certification exam and be promoted from an operator-in-training to an operator.

- While it is understood that recent graduates of truck driver training schools will not have the experience level unless enrolled in a course that lasts several months, any person attending some type of training will have an advantage over a person acquiring their license w/o training.
- In the past, participants who have completed training have had opportunities for interviews at partner companies. Now that our program is targeting incumbent workers, our training offerings will absolutely provide participants with relevant skills that give them an advantage.
- Our organization's participation was well worth the effort in aiding the participants.
- These folks gain a macro perspective of the industry which is advantageous but certainly not enough to boots on the ground ready to handle many jobs.
- Participants who come to the program already have some interest in our industry, so their motivation to complete the process often gives them an advantage to someone walking in off the street looking for a job.
- Some employees really learn a lot from it and others are not as engaged. It also takes a lot of work on the part of the employer to make sure we're following up on the new skills and looking for ways to use them and challenge the employee.
- Those that take the time to invest in their future will continue to thrive in the industry.
- Being an EARN participant gives students financial support so they may use their time to study and prepare for class. In addition, the emotional relief of receiving funding....removing the burden and giving support to the student is huge. Often this is the first time they have received support for anything. Overall, this makes them a stronger student.
- In our industry, EARN Participants have access to training that they would not otherwise receive. They benefit from significant advantage in developing job competencies inside each business and achieve a competitive advantage in the overall job market.
- Most are internally motivated to get the chance to work in our industry

Question 2: Do you believe this program was worth your investment?

A total of 46 open-ended comments were provided by survey respondents. They are as follows:

- Training content was excellent, teacher was very good and I got everything plus more out of the class than I wanted to.
- The availability and cost of the training is unmatched.
- Many people with barriers to employment just need a chance to start over again
- We have a small staff, and we serve 350-600 or more people a day, Monday through Friday throughout the year.
The assistance of EARN participants has been a great asset.
- We have hired 3 interns from this program thus far. It is hard to find reliable cooks in Baltimore.
- A program whose goal is to educate, train and eventually position the individual to get a position is worthwhile for any employer.
- This program is without a doubt changing the industry and need to have continued investment and support.
- This program is well worth investment.
- Yes, so far may investment has only been time that I gladly offer.
- Trained workers are more cost effective than those you have to train in field from step one.
- Most definitely
- For reasons mentioned above. Also it provided additional courses in areas like pre-clinical and clinical research that were not offered elsewhere.
- Marginally to medium with respect to some of the content but a positive emotional impact on employees since they recognized the investment
- Yes
- I have been an instructor and content developer for several courses over the last two year. Developing the content, working with the various partners and especially the students has been a rewarding and gratifying experience. Special thanks to ____ - a consummate, cool-headed professional and wonderful mentor.
- Yes!
- The technical sales training allowed us to share some common language and take new approaches that led to improved results.
- The training is directly related to aspects of their job duties
- The program is well-worth the investment. We are receiving awesome applicants out of this program.
- Yes it is.
- We were never able to hire anyone who completed training through this program
- We hope to expand this program so more businesses can participate. We are constantly training new staff since this is a seasonal environment. However we need these people trained in customer service to properly serve the guests. The economic impact of the industry in extensive and whether or not guests come back has a lot to do with how they

were treated.

- Any program that trains people in a skill is worth every penny!
- Absolutely. ____ is uniquely effective in delivering employees who are ready to work and motivated.
- Yes there was very helpful information given in the class
- This program is AMAZING and the people the EARN GRANT has help will help the citizens of MD get back to work.
- Our employee was able to bring the skills he learned into the plant in practical application.
- We participated in two training programs which we truly enjoyed and found success with.
- Absolutely, we all (managers, front and back of the house staff) learned multiple aspects of cleanliness and food handling which is extremely important in our business of events and weddings, especially for those that are handled off-premise, such as on the grounds under a tent.
- Very much so. The more multilingual, competent staff we have the better
- Without this grant money and training, we would not have been able to trouble shoot and correct our production issues.
- Seems to be a good value
- Whether or not my agency directly benefits our community benefits.
- It has been a pleasure to work with ____ to promote this much needed training.
- The ability to provide input that is passed to the EARN participants and their network is invaluable.
- We are happy to partner with this program by providing them school bus vehicles to use in their training.
- This program has really shown a spotlight on our organization. We have been able to educate and train unemployed works for free and equip them to receive certifications at low cost. We anticipate this impact expanding as we are now able to offer another \$150K in training to incumbent workers in Frederick. Like mentioned above, the training selections are picked specifically based on our industry training needs. EARN has helped us build relationships with our community and provide a valuable service.
- Yes, many of the students would not have been able to afford the program if it was not for the grant.
- Very good cost share program, bang for the buck.
- This program trains young men and women how to be ready for not just work but the world and what to expect.
- There are some individuals who truly took to the skills learned and have excelled.
- The time and effort pays off with more productivity.
- This program has not only generated a lot of excitement in our community but has been able to support and invest in our IT community of professionals. The training we offer is desirable and we have generated a lot of interest. As a county, we are advocating for Tech and this training has complimented our values well. Participants are learning new skills at no cost that has impacted the way they do business.
- Two out of three participants turned into good employees so yes it was worth it.

- We are providing training we wouldn't have been able to do before.
- Every business has the same problem of finding employees, any program to try to hire is expensive, results are poor, this program has some cost, but is not an expensive investment.

Question 3: Do you believe your participation in this program has had a positive impact on your business?

A total of 50 open-ended comments were provided by survey respondents. They are as follows:

- Many of my employees have benefited significantly from the program.
- More structured Program and Project management methodologies and frameworks to bring projects in at our before schedule deadline and at or below budget.
- The training makes my IT organization better, which helps us provide better service to our customers, while meeting regulatory requirements.
- I was able to develop key sources of value for my business that I was otherwise not going to be able to justify financing because of this project.
- The participants enthusiasm is contagious
- Being able to have various positions filled with qualified applicants is a benefit.
- Additional assistance in the kitchen has helped us to fulfill our mission of service to men, women and children who are among Baltimore's most vulnerable citizens.
- We were able to round out the kitchen with the last round of interns. Our intern has become an integral part of our kitchen.
- Definitely has increased our diversity in the potential candidates and working with other organizations to make getting jobs easier
- The positive impacts have been tremendous and we will continue to see the impacts going into the future.
- With the pre-apprenticeship program we have workers going to job sites that have some skills and are safety minded. Before this we had workers just starting out not knowing much about the jobs, job site and the safety that goes along with be on a site.
- Students matriculate between partners.
- Having an expanded pool of workers to pull from gives us a better opportunity of finding workers that can contribute to the success of our operations.
- I have located employees from it.
- As of yet we have to see any benefits but with the new initiatives we believe we will only benefit. We have now two offices in Maryland and we think we can attract some talent out of the EARN Program.
- Helped employees see things from a different perspective and because they received outside training they felt valued
- On-going training of employees has helped the organization
- Yes
- I'm a consultant, so working with people at all levels of the Biotech business gave me new insights and valuable contacts.
- Yes! In a hard-to-fill-trade environment any time a trained, enthusiastic candidate becomes available is a positive impact on our business.
- It provides participants with an opportunity for growth
- Our participation in this program has had a tremendous impact on our facility. It is allowed us to improve the quality of care to our patients. We have seen a reduction in customer service complaints from our residents, families and staff because we now have

more well-trained staff to provide care for the patients. We have seen our worker's compensation claims reduced because we have adequate staff to take care of the patients.

- Our company gets more candidates to consider for assignments after training and we get good exposure and advertising as well!
- We were able to work with two outstanding individuals who went through the EARN program. Their confidence and interactions with other members of the staff were first-rate. Their desire to further develop their skills, leadership qualities, and confidence positioned them to be successful candidates for the positions we needed to fill.
- There used to be a series of workshops available on a variety of staff development topics. Some of our staff participated in this training, and we received feedback that it was valuable. Those workshops have not been made available for quite some time.
- We have seen a positive Industry impact for all of the businesses that participated. As we all know in hospitality and tourism, our greatest asset is our people- smiling faces, bright eyes and friendly staff that are always willing to help our guests in any way possible- all in an effort to give that valued visitor/family a phenomenal guest experience. With more than 12,000 seasonal employees in Ocean City, many of which are working the front line and interacting daily with our valued guests, we saw a need to give them the skills necessary to provide outstanding customer service and deal with difficult situations under pressure. Although each business does provide training, we wanted to collaborate to provide town wide opportunities for our members to elevate the culture of kindness and service in our town, which relies on tourism as our lifeblood. We wanted a program that could be replicated and done with each new wave of seasonal employees as well as train supervisors to emulate and instill these critical skills.
- It helps us in our community and others, to put people to work.
- Yes, the EARN program at ____ is providing the welders that we need and is increasing the diversification of our work force.
- We have hired 5 program graduates.
- Has added skill level to our maintenance department
- Yes, participating in the food handling portion of this program was especially helpful to our front managers, partners and others that don't work directly in the kitchen know what to look out for in the kitchen when observing staff with food preparation, cooking, and cleaning.
- There has yet to be substantial fruit from our efforts, but the planning thus far is working out.
- This program provide valuable services to the business community and the unemployed/underemployed worker population.
- Very helpful to both build our projects and foster a talented employee.
- This program definitely had a positive impact on our ability to produce and sell a quality product.
- It provides training opportunities for staff that help them better support the clients we serve.
- Unsure if any participants have been hire at our facility but due to the severe shortage of CNA/GNAs it cannot hurt.

- We were able to network with community partners which allowed us to gain insight in the community from another point of view and gain contacts to assistance our recruitment efforts.
- As an educational agency, we are happy with any contribution we make to the overall education of our county.
- ____ has sent over 6 employees to training so far and anticipates sending more throughout the program. We have learned skills that we have been able to bring back to our company and apply to our processes.
- We have been able to get more civilian into a respectable professional. They received very good training from ____.
- We were able to fill in voids in needed skill set areas.
- I know for a fact that we have had a positive impact on these individuals' lives for the better and are reaping the rewards as a company.
- Yes. They have been eager to learn a new trade. Some have found the time constraints a little harder to adjust to but for the most part a positive outcome.
- Better skilled employees.
- In addition to providing this needed training, the ACT assessments done by the participants indicates approx 40% of the workforce has a need for remedial training, which has helped us as the training agency to focus efforts in this area, specifically with mathematics.
- Absolutely. I have learned valuable project management skills form my involvement in the EARN program. Great way to for us to be involved in our community.
- Providing a solid "pipeline" of potential employees is vital to the industry.
- The program gives us a source for vetted, motivated young employees.
- We are benefiting from our assigned interns.

Question 4: Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the program?

A total of 50 open-ended comments were provided by survey respondents. They are as follows:

- None--the Earn grant is a fantastic opportunity! I hope it can continue into the future.
- The only thing I didn't like was being asked my salary. That is personal information that I do not like to share.
- Please continue the program!
- Go into the poor area of our country and teach these kids and adults how to become truck drivers!!!!!!!!!!
- Get more candidates.
CDL drivers are in great demand.
- Nothing besides perhaps an online streamlined sign up process. Otherwise we are highly satisfied with the program.
- My suggestion would be how can we broaden the impact of our efforts and increase the impact on incumbent and career changers / unemployed. This is not just a problem for EARN but the entire workforce development industry.
- The individuals need more support after placement into positions. Some EARN participants face additional challenges requiring attention from the employer, which the employer is not always able to provide. For example, providing job coaching, case management, or placement into the next position.
- Reach out to the American Culinary Federation to enable the culinary students to receive the new level of certification of Certified Fundamental Culinarian. This would enable the students to prove that they are ready for entry level cooking positions
- The program operates efficiently, and provides participants with good skills.
- Reliability is the most valuable asset any employee has to his/her employer. I would instill this belief in all your graduates. If someone can show up to work on time then he/she is likely to keep that job for as long as he/she wants it.
Turnover in restaurants is such a problem for both the employee and the employer. Reliability helps solve this problem in a huge way. Graduates need to know this. Maybe finding work within walking distance (in order to avoid the terrible Baltimore traspo) would be a good starting place.
- Make it bigger. The more well trained Baltimore cooks the better our businesses will thrive.
- Suggestions that I have is making sure to let individuals know that having a good attitude, being prompt and being engaged will always make them stand out in a crowd. Despite whatever barriers they have experienced in the past, it should be used as motivation to do better. Having more time to explain the importance of having a resume and cover letter even if the employer may not require one is important. Each person should know their past employers at least in the past five to ten years.
- The only suggestion I can make is we need to find ways to continue to work with the EARN programs as well as continue to expand the program.
- Keep up the good work. This program via Moveable Feast is phenomenal, outstanding, and first class. They develop individual holistically for the world of work.

- There is always room for improvement, but to say what that is right now I cannot come up with anything. I think it is going well and everyone seems to be pleased.
- Although EARN has been a very supportive partner, biotech training is much more costly than other training to employment programs. The analysis parameters used to determine the cost per trainee reflects this expense. Administration of EARN should recognize this difference and permit higher funding for laboratory training. Perhaps BEACON could also reflect these differences by putting laboratory training programs in a separate category.
- Keep all who are given grants accountable.
- Yes! Grow to program to repeat the successes!
- No
- Perhaps keeping track of students who have gone through EARN and bringing them back to see what helped (didn't help) them. Getting feedback to improve the program would be great!
- Many of the non-lab courses could be delivered on-line in whole or part.
The level of the content was varied - it could be more consistent
Same with the quality of the instructors
If continued this program will evolve and these minor issues overcome...
- I would love to see more subsidy's for organizations who hire personnel via EARN.
- Invest more!
- Make the presentations available on line with an assessment, allowing flexibility in schedule.
- I believe that a deeper dive into some certifications that the American Society for Quality, ASQ, offers would be of great advantage to the students. I think that a co-sponsor program in Certified Quality Auditor (CQA) and Certified Six Sigma Green Belt (CSSGB) would be very helpful. I also believe that a deeper course into Lean for Healthcare and Biotech with an MCC certificate would be very beneficial for participants looking for a job or looking to increase their value to the marketplace.
- More programs in other areas of MD, Prince Georges County for example.
- Not at this time.
- I do not have any suggestions at this time.
- I would like to continue to offer opportunities for K-12 students to collaborate and connect with local industries and make use of this opportunity. The leaders of this program, could find ways to connect on a more routine basis with all K-12 school systems.
- My suggestion on improving the program would be to offer more classes. This program has been a great asset and a huge success in the Southern Maryland area. We have received so much positive feedback on this program. We have candidates calling daily asking when they can enroll in the next class.
- This is a very good program that should be promoted widely to businesses and non-governmental entities. Maintain high standards in selecting the candidates who go through the program as their eventual success will only enhance what EARN has to offer.
- Continue to source eager participants.
- Sometimes the communication on offerings/cohorts/etc. seems very episodic versus a standard method of opportunity delivery to consider in sufficient time for planning.
thanks!

- To provide as little administrative burden on businesses/employers as possible
- The current structure of the program/partnership in the Southern Maryland Region is outstanding, I have no suggestions for improvement..
- None
- I am a huge fan of the EARN program, particularly as it funds programs such as the one at _____. These programs form the bridge between industry and the work force development organizations. Without EARN, these two functions are too far removed from one another.
- No
- No, the Program was very informative. The Program could be longer because it was very fast paced and I feel like you could learn much more if there were a few more weeks of classes.
- The EARN Program should have a subcategory that focuses on manufacturing and construction as that is one of the fast growing industries in the state and a industry that lack many skilled workers. This program has allow ____ to train more under-skilled and underemployed workers that can go out and get livable wage jobs. I would suggest it giving more money to the manufacturing industries and welding.
- None. Everything went well for us, and the staff at MD MEP were lovely to work with.
- Continue regularly scheduled classes
- We don't have any suggestions for improvement. Our experience has been fantastic. The interns are bright and have been able to quickly apply the skills they have learned in school to complete our projects. We hope they are able to apply what they learned as they move forward in their educational pursuits and future careers.
- Not at this time
- The front of the house training (customer service portion) could be more hands-on. More role playing, more interactive.
- None. Great job by everyone
- The reporting is too timely and difficult on companies :)
- Great programs!
- ____ does a very good job in providing some basic education on the logistics industry which definitely gives job candidates a leg up and reduces the learning curve that hiring companies have to engage in with entry level employees. There is always room for improvement but not sure I can offer a suggestion at this point.
- I would have been wonderful to have more people in the training.
- More promotion of the program so that it's better understood what the advantages and benefits are.
- No
- None at this time.
- We welcome a vehicle for candidate trainees that are vetted for ability to work in the USA reading and math test with a valid reliable tool, etc., interest in the health care, environment, etc.
This would create a continual pipeline of candidates for nursing center employment. It would also be helpful for candidates to attend an essential skill training program prior to training.

After the candidate completes the training and is employed, it would be beneficial for the grant to cover a career coach to work in collaboration with retention. There are barriers e.g. child care, working with your supervisor etc. that they could coach for success. We could work together.

- Provide funding for more applicants and enough notice to employers to post for potential current employees (housekeeping/dietary etc.) who may want to increase their skills and earn a better living wage.
- Adding nursing education and training to the program would be ideal.
- As is typical of most programs...too much paperwork.
- No
- I think they run a good program.
- We got many of your graduates who were really good at one thing, but had no clue about other parts of the job. That wasn't helpful to us.

Also some that we got were ok with the work, but were constantly late, or had no idea how to work with others, lied about the fact that they never went to get their driver's license, etc.

We have 2 of your graduates now who are awesome, though

- Our biggest issue with the people we hire through this program is their lack of timeliness. They are often late to the job and often call off. There have been several let go simply because they don't show and don't call repeatedly. I think this is a problem across the board though not just through this specific program. If there was a way to teach why punctuality and good communication is so important it would be great but I know how difficult that is.
- Switching from paperwork to electronic forms would make EARN processes much easier. Tech Frederick has just set up a software that allows us to do this for our participants. We would be happy to share more details with you on how to make filing processes for other grant programs more efficient.
- It's a great program. More people need to be aware of what wonderful programs are available through DLLR'S partnerships with the colleges and businesses in the communities and state.
- None at this time, we look forward to being another user for additional opportunities for training.
- No suggestions at this time - program is beneficial to the hospitality industry and our partners and seems to be serving its purpose.
- No, it needs no improvement. I think the program is very important in helping employers afford to have employees trained to understand their industry and be more effective in their positions.
- We understand we are on the outer reaches of _____'s coverage area and that the current location enables many employers to take advantage of the program, however a closer location to our office in northern Baltimore County would make more of our team willing and able to participate.
- Screening the participants as far as attitude a little more. Tool training is a must. But for the most part there is little more they can do. The student has to really want to succeed in job. Being on time and a dedicated attitude towards the work and work hours would be

the only issues I can see. I believe some of the successful students should be asked back to on-going classes to tell the positive outcome they have achieved. I believe it is a hard road for some to adjust and light at the end of the tunnel may be too hard to see.

- 1. Offer in more locations.
- Any "hands-on" training related to coupling and uncoupling tractor and trailer, sliding trailer tandems, alley docking, and hours of service would be extremely beneficial for a newly licensed driver to have in his/her skill set.
- Our company is testing and implementing a new software to track and process participants from application to program exit. It requires all information the state needs to be filled before the participant can participate in training.
This could potentially benefit other partnerships. Attaining information required was previously a weak point for us and we are excited to see the impact this system has on our processes and how it increases our efficiency.
- Always more training.
If clients knew where they were headed after the training, then perhaps more individualized training could be offered to make them more valuable.
An apprenticeship program would be ideal.
Industry and government need to come together to make this happen...like the European models.
- Find ways to get better candidates into the program who want to commit to our industry.
- Easier administrative tasks. There are a lot of details to keep track of and report.
- if there is a way to rate motivation prior to placement it would be fantastic. We had a candidate that did not work out because of his lack of motivation but still firmly believe the program is the best avenue for introduction to the maritime industry.
- Working with the specific marine facilities to improve the employer/intern match.
- Funding for partial certifications, funding for stackable credentials....these types of funding do not cost as much yet are just as effective to help a student receive another layer of education resulting in a higher paying job.
- Streamline / Simplify reporting requirements.
- More applicants!
- Not at this time.

Appendix B

In order to ensure accountability, EARN Maryland Partnerships are required to comply with specific reporting requirements. These measures are meant to track the metrics set forth in the Labor and Employment Article § 11-709(b)(4) of the Maryland Annotated Code. Statutorily-required data is presented below. The data below covers the time period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

By Sex

Sex	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
Male	1,856	64%
Female	1,031	35%
Not specified	24	1%

By Race

Race	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
White	1290	44%
Black/African American	1061	36%
Asian	130	4%
Native American/American Indian	9	<1%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	7	<1%
Hispanic/Latino	275	9%
Two or More Races	22	1%
Other	32	1%
Not Specified	85	3%

By Income

Income Level	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
Less than \$10,000	1123	39%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	64	2%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	155	5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	159	5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	409	14%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	451	15%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	151	5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	70	2%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	19	1%

\$200,000 or more	6	<1%
Unreported or Incalculable	304	10%

By National Origin

National Origin	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
American	1797	62%
North American (excluding USA)	30	1%
Central and Latin America	193	7%
European	53	2%
African	103	4%
Middle Eastern	11	0%
Asian	71	2%
Oceania	0	0%
Two or More Identified	13	0%
Other	15	1%
Not reported	625	21%

By County of Residence

County of Residence	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
Allegany County	71	2%
Anne Arundel County	147	5%
Baltimore City	730	25%
Baltimore County	309	10%
Calvert County	38	1%
Caroline County	8	<1%
Carroll County	42	1%

Cecil County	60	2%
Charles County	60	2%
Dorchester County	12	<1%
Frederick County	68	2%
Garrett County	6	<1%
Harford County	109	3%
Howard County	44	1%
Kent County	29	1%
Montgomery County	265	9%
Prince George's County	111	4%
Queen Anne's County	18	<1%
Somerset County	20	<1%
St. Mary's County	105	3%
Talbot County	6	<1%
Washington County	62	2%
Wicomico County	131	4%
Worcester County	48	1%
Outside of Maryland	206	7%
Not reported	206	7%

By Educational Attainment

Education Level	# of Participants	Percentage of Whole
Some High School or Less	75	3%
High School Diploma/GED/Equivalent	1397	48%
Some College	440	15%
Associate's Degree	134	5%
Bachelor's Degree	375	13%
Advanced Degree (Master's, PhD, other)	260	9%

Trade School	55	2%
Other/Undisclosed	175	6%

Credential or Certification – 1618

Identifiable Skill - 2342

A new Employment Position - 898

A Title Promotion - 331

A Wage Promotion - 806

Appendix C

The following is a listing of data sources used by EARN Maryland partnerships in the identification of training and skills needs.

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