CONNECTICUT’S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM

Employers/Industry
- Bioscience
- Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- IT

Schools

Job Seekers

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) 1998/2014

Connecticut Department of Labor

Workforce Development Boards

Community Based Organizations
- CONN-CAT
- Workforce Alliance
- ReadyCT
- iris
- Emerge
- Job Corps

GOVERNOR’S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

City of New Haven Community College

VALLEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
CONTRIBUTORS

This report is a collaboration between The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, Valley Community Foundation, the Regional Labor Market Analysis Advisory Committee, and Blakely Consulting.

In addition, many workforce development stakeholders, community-based organizations, and job seekers offered their expertise and experiences to provide a robust report on the state of the labor market within the Greater New Haven and Valley Regions from January to June 2023.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed to this report.

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REPORT OVERVIEW

**Part One**  
Labor Market Scan  
- Literature Review  
- Statewide & labor market data for Greater New Haven and The Valley  
- Labor market data from the perspectives of race and gender

**Part Two**  
Growth Industries and Occupations  
- Matrix of target occupations within Healthcare Bioscience IT Manufacturing
- Matrix of industries in the Greater New Haven and Valley regions

**Part Three**  
Barriers and Opportunities  
- Listening sessions with jobseekers
- Stakeholder Interviews

**Part Four**  
Promising Practices  
- Case Studies highlighting innovative programs, companies & partnerships

**Part Five**  
Tracking Progress  
- Population metrics using American Community Survey (ACS) and Demecon Data
LABOR MARKET SCAN

PART ONE
GEOGRAPHIC FOOTPRINT OF REGIONAL LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS
There is unmet demand for middle-skill workers.
- In Connecticut, there are more middle-skill jobs than jobs requiring a degree
- Inability to fill these jobs is slowing economic growth

There is an equity opportunity in middle skill jobs
- Women and people of color are over-represented in low-paying jobs
- Immigrants are often underemployed and their skills are not being utilized
- Federal investment in job creation tends to focus on male-dominated fields
Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates: Male vs. Female

Population aged 20-64 years

Labor Force Participation Rate

In Greater New Haven, the Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is 65.2%, or 464,000 individuals. This is higher than Connecticut (64.2%) and the nation (62.5%).

Individuals can be out of the labor force for both positive (such as retirement) and negative (such as not being healthy enough to seek work) reasons.

Women are more likely than men to be out of the labor force altogether.
Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates: Race/Ethnicity

Population Aged 16 Years & Up

Unemployment

The unemployment rates for Black/African-Americans and Hispanic/Latinos are 10.3% and 9.4%, respectively.

S2301 EMPLOYMENT STATUS, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2017-2021), U.S. Census Bureau (Geography: New Haven-Milford MSA)
LATINO/HISPANIC MEN ARE LEAST LIKELY TO BE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

High school graduate or higher

- **Asian Female**: 85.4%
- **Asian Male**: 89.6%
- **Black Female**: 87.1%
- **Black Male**: 86.3%
- **Hispanic/Latina Female**: 77.1%
- **Hispanic/Latino Male**: 69.1%
- **White Female**: 95.5%
- **White Male**: 94.9%

**Source**: S1501 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2021), U.S. Census Bureau (Geography: New Haven-Milford MSA)
ASIAN & WHITES ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE COLLEGE DEGREES THAN BLACKS & LATINOS

Bachelor's degree or higher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian Female</td>
<td>61.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Male</td>
<td>58.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Female</td>
<td>32.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Male</td>
<td>19.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latina Female</td>
<td>23.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino Male</td>
<td>15.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Female</td>
<td>45.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Male</td>
<td>43.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The cost of living is increasing in New Haven-Milford Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Median Rent, New Haven

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Median Rent</th>
<th>One Bedroom</th>
<th>Studio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$909</td>
<td>$1,040</td>
<td>$866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$922</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$942</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$970</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$985</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data not available for 2020

B25031 Median Gross Rent by Bedrooms, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2017-2021), U.S. Census Bureau (Geography: New Haven-Milford MSA)
PEOPLE WITH HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS & COLLEGE DEGREES HAVE HIGHER EARNINGS

Median Earnings in Past 12 Months

- Less than high school graduate
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Some college or associate’s degree
- Bachelor’s degree
- Graduate or professional degree

S1501 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2021), U.S. Census Bureau (Geography: New Haven-Milford MSA)
GROWTH INDUSTRIES & OCCUPATIONS

PART TWO
THE LARGEST EMPLOYERS IN THE GREATER NEW HAVEN REGION ARE IN HEALTHCARE AND MANUFACTURING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bozzuto’s Inc.</td>
<td>Distribution Centers (Wholesale)</td>
<td>1,000 - 4,999 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATICRETE International Inc.</td>
<td>Manufacturing (Tile/Ceramics)</td>
<td>1,000 - 4,999 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masonicare Health Center</td>
<td>Health Care Management</td>
<td>1,000 - 4,999 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medtronic Inc.</td>
<td>Retail Wholesale (manufacturing)</td>
<td>1,000 - 4,999 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Administration Connecticut Healthcare System</td>
<td>Health Care Management</td>
<td>1,000 - 4,999 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yale New Haven Health System</td>
<td>Health Care Management</td>
<td>5,000 - 9,999 employees*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*YNHH has approximately 14,984 employees, including 5,456 medical staff.
2023 Employers by Region (South Central WIOA), Labor Market Information from the Office of Research, Connecticut Department of Labor
The largest number of jobs is in healthcare.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Employment</th>
<th>Total Payroll (Annual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75,054</td>
<td>$4,263,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39,716</td>
<td>$1,400,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38,383</td>
<td>$2,611,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26,313</td>
<td>$1,831,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23,735</td>
<td>$583,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,689</td>
<td>$1,625,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,644</td>
<td>$1,445,366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14,506</td>
<td>$643,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13,548</td>
<td>$1,057,395</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Growth Industries in Connecticut

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>June 2022-June 2023</th>
<th>Rate percent</th>
<th>June 2021-June 2022</th>
<th>Rate percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leisure and Hospitality</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>12,800</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>7,600</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>-100</td>
<td>-0.3%</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>-500</td>
<td>-0.8%</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade, Transportation and Utilities</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>5,600</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational and Health Services</td>
<td>9,300</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and Business Services</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>5,200</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>-1,200</td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Occupational Groups: Healthcare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2021 National Employment Matrix title</strong></td>
<td><strong>SOC Code</strong></td>
<td><strong>Typical education needed for entry</strong></td>
<td><strong>Work experience in a related occupation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Typical on-the-job training</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgical technologists</td>
<td>29-2055</td>
<td>Postsecondary nondegree award</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses</td>
<td>29-2061</td>
<td>Postsecondary nondegree award</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical records specialists</td>
<td>29-2072</td>
<td>Postsecondary nondegree award</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health technologists and technicians, all other</td>
<td>29-2099</td>
<td>Postsecondary nondegree award</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note on Information Technology occupations

• IT occupations are represented in every industry
• IT jobs are generally low-pay or high-pay and requiring a degree
## TARGET OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS: BIOSCIENCE/BIOMEDICAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021 National Employment Matrix title</th>
<th>SOC Code</th>
<th>Typical education needed for entry</th>
<th>Work experience in a related occupation</th>
<th>Typical on-the-job training</th>
<th>Hourly Mean</th>
<th>Total employment* (New Haven MSA)</th>
<th>10-year change (CT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ophthalmic laboratory technicians</td>
<td>51-9083</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Moderate-term on-the-job training</td>
<td>$26.24</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opticians, Dispensing</td>
<td>22-2081</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>$32.03</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>15.40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total employment is number of people in that job
## Target Occupational Groups: Manufacturing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021 National Employment Matrix title</th>
<th>SOC Code</th>
<th>Typical education needed for entry</th>
<th>Work experience in a related occupation</th>
<th>Typical on-the-job training</th>
<th>Hourly Mean</th>
<th>Total employment (New Haven MSA)</th>
<th>10-year change (CT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Machinists</td>
<td>51-4041</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Long-term on-the-job training</td>
<td>$25.31</td>
<td>1070</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers</td>
<td>53-3032</td>
<td>Postsecondary nondegree award</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term on-the-job training</td>
<td>$25.21</td>
<td>3160</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT WE LEARNED

HIGHLIGHTS FROM INTERVIEWS AND LISTENING SESSIONS

PART THREE
A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORKFORCE ECO-SYSTEM

Within the workforce eco-system, the following were interviewed:

**Workforce Development**
- City of New Haven
- CT Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT)
- CT Dept of Labor
- Governor’s Workforce Council
- Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce: Regional Sector Partnerships [RSPs]
- Office of Manufacturing
- Office of Workforce Strategy
- Workforce Alliance
- The Workplace, Inc.

**Community-Based Organizations**
- Christian Community Action
- Community Action Agency of New Haven
- ConnCAT
- District Arts & Education
- EMERGE
- IRIS [Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services]
- Job Corps New Haven
- MATCH [Manufacturing and Technical Community Hub]
- New Haven Hiring Initiative
- New Haven Promise
- ReadyCT

**Schools**
- Biopath at SCSU
- DCI Resources
- Emmett O’Brien Tech

**Employers**
- Anomatic Corporation
- Edgewell Personal Care
- Modern Plastics
- Penn Globe

**Job Seekers**
- IT trainees
- Opportunity Youth
- Refugees
- Returning Citizens
- Women
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: WHAT WE LEARNED (PART ONE)

**Marketing**
There continues to be a disconnect between those seeking employment, training opportunities, and employers seeking employees.

**IT training has its challenges**
IT is a rapidly changing field. Some training programs are challenged with preparing individuals for employment that pays a living wage.

**Wraparound services are critical**
Case management can serve as supplemental support while individuals focus on gaining skills for future employment.
Training programs are not full. There is speculation that job seekers have joined the Gig economy (UBER, DoorDash). Some individuals who were interviewed shared their aspirations of starting their own business.

Many employers are in the suburbs where transportation is lacking; job seekers who cannot afford to live in the suburbs or do not have a car are limited to where they can work.
NON Profits Offering Training Programs: What We Learned

• Wraparound services are critical to trainee success
• Language barriers limit access to training
• Educating job seekers to job search effectively is critical
• Cultural factors and discrimination impact job seekers
  — People of color continue to experience discrimination because of their race or appearance (e.g., being overweight).
  — Past offenders are discriminated against because of their past.
  — Employers must consider developing workplace models that are supportive of people of color and traditionally underserved individuals.
• Benefits cliffs prevent workers from accepting employment or advancing
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMMIGRANTS &amp; REFUGEES: WHAT WE LEARNED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language barriers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not being able to speak, read or write English is a barrier to low and high paying jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International college degrees or credentials are not recognized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discrimination</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers lack trust in individuals from middle eastern countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lacking a network</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having no or a limited professional network makes it difficult to learn about job openings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lots of training</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition to skill training, refugees must learn all our systems (e.g., transportation, obtaining employment, healthcare, and the educational).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flexibility</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees with larger families require a caretaker at home, making it challenging for women to find work due to the needed flexibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benefits cliff</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rise in food and housing costs has elevated the fear of losing benefits; they risk being unable to support themselves and their family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Childcare</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare is a new experience, as some countries do not have childcare systems where children are cared for by strangers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IT TRAINEES: WHAT WE LEARNED

**Job search challenges**
Sending a resume does not always yield a response; many never hear back from the employers.

**Job requirements**
Job requirements are numerous for some roles, discouraging job searching.

**Lack of experience**
"Almost impossible to get a job without experience."

**Internships**
“IT internships are necessary for hands-on experience.”

**Employment gaps**
Employment gaps can be challenging. Employers always want to know why there is a gap in someone's resume.

**Location**
There may be IT jobs, but many are far from their home.

**Additional training**
There is a need for continued training and obtaining additional certifications.

**Growth opportunities**
The opportunity to grow is essential even if it means starting at a lower wage.
Wages
There are a lot of low-wage jobs but find themselves underqualified for higher paying jobs.

Transportation
Jobs are located in places where transportation is a barrier.

Mental Health
Youth experience stress, anxiety and depression. Don’t feel they can advocate for themselves.

Discrimination
Experience discrimination against their race and age.

WHAT WE LEARNED:
OPPORTUNITY YOUTH
**RETURNING CITIZENS: WHAT WE LEARNED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact by their past</th>
<th>Job search</th>
<th>Cost of living</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employers tend not to hire individuals with a criminal history without consideration for all they have done since then to improve their life.</td>
<td>The best way to get a job is to know someone that works at the company so that person can vouch for them.</td>
<td>Given inflation and the cost of rent and food, there is often a need for earning additional income.</td>
<td>Transportation is a huge barrier, especially during second and third shift. The responsibility of transportation should rest with the employer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No retirement</th>
<th>One part of their story</th>
<th>Lack of skills</th>
<th>Mental health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals incarcerated for a long time are not eligible for social security benefits due to lack of employment, resulting in elderly individuals having to work and being unable to retire.</td>
<td>Former offenders are people too and have a heart. Consider everything about the person, especially their desire to change their life. Their incarceration is only one part of the story.</td>
<td>The longer someone has been incarcerated the less skills they have. Training is critical.</td>
<td>Mental health needs addressing so that individuals can heal from past trauma.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Women: What We Learned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health presents challenges</th>
<th>Bias against medical cannabis</th>
<th>Need multiple jobs</th>
<th>Job searching is discouraging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental health can make it challenging to pursue and retain employment; people are living with trauma.</td>
<td>Medical cannabis is frowned upon. When employers learn about a potential candidate’s cannabis use, there is often no follow-up from the employer.</td>
<td>To make a livable wage, individuals must work multiple jobs.</td>
<td>Applying for jobs is discouraging; employers do not return calls, and when you call, you never get the same person. Email does not yield a response either.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discrimination</th>
<th>Unpaid trainings</th>
<th>Values alignment is important</th>
<th>Paperwork is burdensome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience discrimination around race, weight, tattoos, eyelashes. “If you do not look like them, they don't like you.&quot;</td>
<td>Trainings that do not pay are difficult because individuals need money now.</td>
<td>When the company's values do not align with yours, it gets hard to work there.</td>
<td>Complicated processes, needing specific paperwork not easily accessible often means that's the end.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Employers: What We Learned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention</th>
<th>Managing expectations</th>
<th>Different workforce</th>
<th>Mental health issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retention is a concern; high turnover minimizes the investment made in training.</td>
<td>Companies do not have enough pathways for every employee; therefore, managing expectations is a must.</td>
<td>Today’s workforce and their needs creates challenges for employers. Jobseekers are “naming their price.”</td>
<td>Employers are recognizing the increase in mental health issues among employees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leverage funding</th>
<th>Double-edged sword</th>
<th>Cost of living</th>
<th>Mismatched skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some employers take advantage of the state workforce funding for apprenticeships to leverage attracting talent.</td>
<td>Apprenticeships can be a double-edged sword; sometimes an apprentice could be earning more than the current staff.</td>
<td>The cost of living detracts individuals from moving to CT and has encouraged individuals to relocate.</td>
<td>Jobseekers find themselves mismatched with a job/position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IMPLICATIONS OF BENEFITS CLIFF

Benefits cliffs (the “cliff effect”) refer to the sudden and often unexpected decrease in public benefits that can occur with a small increase in earnings.

Implications of the cliff include:

- Financial insecurity
- Workforce disincentives
- Poverty traps

“[Cliff effects] can discourage people from taking on new work or getting promoted along a career pathway, It's keeping people out of the labor force.”

--Colleen Dawicki, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
PROMISING PRACTICE: EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

The SpringfieldWORKS/Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council has developed a pilot to address Cliff Effects in Massachusetts.

- 3-year pilot
- Uses $1M in ARPA funds to make families whole for lost benefits

For example, say a family’s total financial resources, including public assistance, is $40,000. Then, a small raise at work leads to a drop in public benefits, and their total financial resources drop to $35,000. The program would pay out $5,000 to get the family back to their starting point.
PROMISING PRACTICES & CASE STUDIES

PART FOUR
BEST PRACTICES

Employer partnerships
Employers, educational institutions, and training providers working together to develop curricula and programs tailored specific for industry needs. Employers provide input on the skills and competencies that are most important to ensure training programs are relevant and effective.

Paid training
Paid training to support workers in obtaining middle skill jobs. By providing financial support for training, employers can help to remove some of the financial barriers that may prevent workers from pursuing training opportunities.

Stackable credentials
Stackable credentials refer to the practice of earning multiple certifications, with each credential building on the knowledge and skills acquired in previous training programs. The goal of stackable credentials is to create a pathway for workers to advance in their careers and obtain higher-paying jobs.
## CASE STUDY: Pathways to Healthcare, Virginia Commonwealth University Health System, Richmond VA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM OVERVIEW</th>
<th>WHAT STANDS OUT: MENTORING</th>
<th>PROGRAM RESULTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pathways to Healthcare is a workforce development initiative started in 2018 designed to prepare Richmond residents for employment in a healthcare industry. Once employed, the program provides active support to workers to retain their positions and provides opportunities for workers to continue their education.</td>
<td>One of the unique features of the Pathways to Healthcare program is its emphasis on providing students with the support and resources needed to overcome barriers to success. Their staff provide one on one career coaching to new hires to ensure that workers can retain their employment for the first year. This involves actively mentoring workers and providing a source of support for them and their managers as they manage the transition to full time employment.</td>
<td>The Pathways program places approximately 60 students per year in positions in VCU Health.</td>
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## Program Overview

BioLaunch is a workforce training program designed to train and prepare New Haven residents for a career in the region’s growing biotechnology industry. Launched in 2023, the program prepares individuals for careers as technicians in biotechnology, life sciences laboratories, or research programs. During the six-month program, students are provided with a monthly stipend in addition to childcare and transportation support.

## What Stands Out: Partnerships

**A Trilogy for Success**

Founder, Craig Crews, Ph.D. uses the metaphor of three legs of a stool to describe BioLaunch’s approach: (1) developing a program influenced by industry needs and partners motivated to solve its workforce development challenges, (2) partnering with workforce development experts to design a successful curriculum and program, (3) offering training in a state-of-the-art laboratory, centrally located in Downtown New Haven.

**Amendable Hours**

The training program runs Monday through Friday from 8:30 am - 2:30 pm, a schedule that is comparable with children’s school hours, allowing caretakers to be home in time for their children’s arrival from school.

## Program Results

The program intends to train two cohorts of 15 participants annually.
## Program Overview

MATCH is specifically designed for individuals who have experienced barriers to employment, including immigrants, women, re-entering citizens, and unskilled individuals. It is also designed to allow a trainee to explore where their interests fit best through on-the-job training; in other words, if a certain position or operation does not seem like the right fit, trainees will be able to learn other machines or operations until they can find the best match.

## What Stands Out:

MATCH intends to address the myriad of challenges faced by today’s workforce, such as:

<table>
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<th>Transportation &amp; Location:</th>
<th>The training/manufacturing facility will be located on one of the most traveled bus lines.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Family Friendly Schedules:</td>
<td>Individuals will train for 25 hours per week, enabling caretakers to be home in time for the arrival of school-aged students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transcending Language Barriers:</td>
<td>MATCH will offer translators, bi-lingual instructors, and on-site ESL classes.</td>
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<td>Industry Led Training:</td>
<td>Instructors are current manufacturing experts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Supports:</td>
<td>MATCH will collaborate with local nonprofit organizations that offer resources making the facility a “one-stop shop” for resources, training, and job opportunities.</td>
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## Program Results

The program will launch in the fall 2023 and currently has 50 individuals on the waitlist.
TRACKING CHANGE

PART FIVE
POPULATION LEVEL METRICS

The following metrics can be used to track change over time.

● Labor force participation rate by race and gender
● Unemployment rate
● Indicators of underemployment: % involuntarily part time
RECOMMENDATIONS
RECOMMENDATIONS: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM

PART ONE

Develop a robust marketing strategy that reaches everyone.

**BACKGROUND:** Few job seekers we spoke with mentioned any training programs offered by the Workforce Investment Boards, nonprofit organizations, or the new opportunities the Governor’s Workforce Council and the Office of Workforce Strategy set forth.

Strengthen collaborations between employers and training organizations.

**BACKGROUND:** Job seekers, training programs, and employers all reported that there are no guaranteed jobs once an individual completes training. This has left training graduates discouraged and takes training programs and employers "off the hook."

Develop networking opportunities.

**BACKGROUND:** Job seekers shared lacking a formal professional network they can go to for jobs. They expressed how difficult networking can be when you do not have a relationship with executive-level individuals.
**RECOMMENDATIONS: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM**

**PART TWO**

**Support jobseekers through their first year of employment.**

**BACKGROUND:** Training programs tend to offer supportive or wraparound services during training and less support during the individual's employment. The decrease in support can be challenging. Programs extending support past the training period had greater outcomes.

**Evaluate the relevance and quality of training programs.**

**BACKGROUND:** Our interviews exposed a mismatch between industry needs and training programs. While efforts ensure training programs meet employers' current needs, job seekers and employers highlighted that more work must be done.

**Invest in quality training programs that lead to employment.**

**BACKGROUND:** Community-based organizations struggle with tracking the ratio between outreach and enrollment. This presents a vulnerability in understanding where the problems are regarding enrollment. A tracking mechanism can address some of these vulnerabilities.
**BACKGROUND:** Today's workforce is different compared to past generations. Changes in the economy, way of life, and our complex environment affect how individuals show up for work. To attract and retain candidates, create innovative practices that will increase trust, engagement, and loyalty.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: EMPLOYERS**

**PART ONE**

Reconsider the recruitment process.

**BACKGROUND:** All the job seekers we met reported discrimination as a barrier. Employers can use this information to examine their processes and ensure equitable practices.

Offer benefits needed by today’s workforce.

**BACKGROUND:** Today's workforce is different compared to past generations. Changes in the economy, way of life, and our complex environment affect how individuals show up for work. To attract and retain candidates, create innovative practices that will increase trust, engagement, and loyalty.
RECOMMENDATIONS: EMPLOYERS

PART TWO

Tap into your organizational culture as a retention strategy.

BACKGROUND: Job seekers are searching for organizations that value them and whose values align with theirs. Employers reported challenges with retention. Creating a values-driven organizational culture can help with employee citizenship, thus reducing turnover.

Evaluate and address discriminatory practices.

BACKGROUND: Every group of job seekers cited discrimination as a barrier to obtaining employment. Employers should review their processes from recruitment to career progression to ensure equity across employees.
CONCLUSIONS

• There is an urgent need to connect workers with middle-skill jobs
• Opportunities exist in healthcare, manufacturing, and technology
• Training programs must be designed with close employer participation and engagement
• Employers must be creative and innovative to include marginalized workers into new fields
• Lack of care infrastructure is keeping workers, especially women, out of the labor market