

Leon Works Expo Workgroup

January 28, 2015

*Visit Tallahassee, 106 E. Jefferson Street
Second Floor Conference Room*

Attendees:

- Jim McShane, CEO, Career Source Capital Region
- Michael Parker, Economic & Community Development Director, City of Tallahassee
- Ben Pingree, Vice President of Business Retention/Expansion and Public Policy for the Tallahassee/Leon County Economic Development Council
- Laura Rogers, Program Director, World Class Schools of Leon County
- Barbara Wills, Leon County Schools Assistant Superintendent
- Jessica Lowe, Leon County Schools Virtual School Principal
- Randy Pridgeon, Divisional Director of Secondary Schools, Leon County Schools
- Marissa Mainwood, Workforce Development Special Projects Coordinator, Tallahassee Community College
- Britney Smith, Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Keiser University
- Heather Conley, Florida Choices Program – Department of Education Program Specialist
- Charles Bagwell
- Cristina Paredes, Leon County Director of Economic Vitality
- Mathieu Cavell, Leon County Public Information and Communications Manager
- Joshua Pascua Leon County Management Analyst

Ms. Cristina Paredes, Leon County Director of Economic Vitality, thanked the stakeholders for participating in the workgroup. After each stakeholder introduced themselves Ms. Paredes discussed the County's desire to serve as a catalyst for promoting local middle-skill jobs, specifically to high-school students, noting that the Leon County Board of County Commissioners recently adopted two 2015 strategic initiatives on this effort:

- Evaluate and identify the projected unmet local market for middle-skill job opportunities.
- Based upon the projected unmet local market for middle-skill jobs, and with Board approval, collaborate with community and regional partners to host a new "Leon Works" exposition to educate high school students (15-18 years old) on the diverse and exciting middle-skill career and jobs anticipated locally, while raising awareness regarding a wide range of career opportunities.

Ms. Paredes also discussed the workgroup's goals with the stakeholders, the first goal being to identify and discuss the challenges in filling the shortage of middle-skill labor in our market. The second goal of the workgroup would be to identify the challenges associated with promoting the training and career opportunities available in our community to high school students preparing to graduate.

Mr. Ben Pingree, Vice President of Business Retention/Expansion and Public Policy for the Tallahassee/Leon County Economic Development Council, began the workgroup's discussion by asking how the stakeholders define 'middle-skill' jobs/careers. The group shared that middle-

skill jobs/careers often require education beyond high school but not a four-year degree (one to two years of vocational training) and an earn an average wage of \$13 per hour or more. Ms. Heather Conley, Florida Choices Program Department of Education, noted that 15 of the fastest growing occupations in Florida require only two years of training and pay good wages (Attachment #1). The group agreed that the terminology of 'middle-skilled careers' may need to change to make middle-skilled careers more attractive and easy to promote. Mr. Pingree suggested instead of 'middle-skilled careers' that the term 'high-wage skilled jobs' be used.

The group discussed the need to change perceptions about skilled careers, especially with parents who may not be aware of opportunities associated with middle-skilled jobs/careers. Mr. Bagwell noted it was important to understand that middle-skill jobs/careers do not have to be the end of a career but rather that these jobs could be a stepping-stone to starting a business or to finding a person's career passion.

Mr. Randy Pridgeon, Divisional Director of Secondary Schools, Leon County Schools (LCS), observed that high school students routinely receive a lot of college recruitment literature as they prepare to graduate. He also noted that students preparing to enter the workforce often do not receive the same level of recruitment as college-bound students. In 2012, 24% of Leon County high school graduates continued their education at a state university, while 41% were enrolled in a state community college or state technical education center. This suggests that many Leon County high school students would benefit from information about alternatives to university-bound career paths. Mr. Pridgeon noted that the high schools would be open to allowing businesses to similarly recruit among the students.

Mr. Pridgeon also discussed that LCS administrators, high school principals, and the World Class Schools of Leon County team have recently been visiting local industries to familiarize them with local opportunities for students preparing to enter the workforce. These trips help to identify challenges and opportunities for the number of certification training programs LCS offers to promote middle-skill careers. The hope is that LCS will be able to create a paradigm shift in the way high schools prepare students for success after school. The group agreed with the need for the paradigm shift, noting that there is not enough room in the university system for every student. Additionally, Bright Futures scholarship requirements have become tougher to meet, suggesting that more students will be seeking degree alternatives. Mr. Pridgeon stressed the importance of anticipating needs in the local workforce so that LCS and other vocational training programs had enough time to provide the training to meet the demand. Ms. Conley suggested that the Department of Economic Opportunity tracks job demand and would have data to help determine that need.

Ms. Paredes stated that the County's pursuit of a one day Leon Works Expo would complement the ongoing efforts by LCS to promote middle-skill careers. The expo would serve as a one-stop shop for students to seek career opportunities and explore degree alternatives such as apprenticeships, certifications, and skilled trade careers.

Ms. Jessica Lowe, Leon County Schools Virtual School Principal, discussed a survey initiative that LCS could utilize to find out what high-wage careers interest students, which could help determine what industries to invite to the proposed Leon Works Expo. Ms. Conley noted career survey tools that she has seen used effectively and suggested that it would be good if the survey suggested career clusters. For example, students may be interested in helping people through medicine, but not what specific career path in that cluster would suit them.

Ms. Paredes and Mr. Pingree noted that the next step is to partner with the Economic Development Council to host a roundtable meeting of employers to gauge what the local opportunities are for middle-skill careers. The roundtable meeting would also help the workgroup identify what industries should be invited to the potential Leon Works Expo in the fall. Mr. Pridgeon suggested that the roundtable be held at one of the high schools to tune employers into the opportunities to partner with LCS to train and hire students. The group agreed to host the roundtable meeting at Lively Technical School on February 18, 2015, from 11a.m. to 1p.m. in order to allow high school principals the opportunity to attend. Ms. Lowe noted that there will be a large number of retirements in 2016 among state workers and suggested that the Department of Management Services would be a good addition to the roundtable to provide insight on the State's hiring needs.

The workgroup also discussed ideas for the tentative Leon Works Expo. Mr. Parker discussed that middle-skill career opportunities should be promoted to the under-employed, not just students. Ms. Paredes noted that there has been some discussion regarding opening the Expo to the community in the afternoon after the high school students had an opportunity to attend. Mr. Bagwell suggested that hands-on demonstrations at the Expo would be attractive to students. Ms. Paredes stated that these demonstrations would be beneficial and are being discussed to include in the expo. Ms. Paredes also suggested that promotion for the Expo could highlight successful local people in these careers, who could act as role models and inspire the attendees. Mr. Bagwell mentioned that the Expo promotion efforts should be mindful that engaged students will readily show up; it is the less engaged students still trying to figure things out that would benefit most from the Expo.

Ms. Paredes closed the workgroup meeting by thanking the participants and recapping the next steps. After the roundtable meeting, the County Commission would get a status update on the projected unmet local need for middle-skill job opportunities and provide staff with direction.

The next steps for the Leon Works Expo will be a roundtable meeting with local businesses to discuss challenges and opportunities for middle-skill jobs. Leon County and the Economic Development Council will host the meeting at Lively Technical Center on Wednesday, February 18, 2015, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Leon Works Exposition will more than likely be held in mid-October 2015 and will be followed by a stakeholders wrap-up meeting in November.

Enclosure:

1. 25 Fastest-Growing Occupation Projections in Florida for 2013.

25 Fastest-Growing Occupation Projections in Florida for 2013

Includes openings due to growth and replacement openings resulting from workers permanently leaving the occupation.
This table includes occupations with a minimum of 4,000 jobs in 2013.

Rank	Title	Employment		Growth	2013 - 2021		2013 Average	Education Level
		current 2013	projections 2021		Percent Growth	Total Job Openings*	Hourly Wage	
1	Home Health Aides	31,281	43,907	12,626	40.4	15,752	10.52	3
2	Personal and Home Care Aides	14,724	20,218	5,494	37.3	6,378	10.08	3
3	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	10,544	14,061	3,517	33.4	4,830	15.05	3
4	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	7,454	9,908	2,454	32.9	3,445	13.94	4
5	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	4,856	6,437	1,581	32.6	2,156	28.80	3
6	Cost Estimators	11,197	14,830	3,633	32.5	5,306	28.30	4
7	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	14,836	19,534	4,698	31.7	7,838	28.33	5
8	Heating, A.C., and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	24,665	32,437	7,772	31.5	11,161	20.11	3
9	Physical Therapist Assistants	4,708	6,081	1,373	29.2	1,931	28.00	4
10	Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	10,744	13,842	3,098	28.8	5,001	10.77	1
11	Medical Secretaries	18,205	23,359	5,154	28.3	7,100	14.55	3
12	Logisticians	4,160	5,330	1,170	28.1	1,792	33.51	5
13	Nurse Practitioners	6,212	7,930	1,718	27.7	2,581	42.57	6
14	Dental Hygienists	10,669	13,559	2,890	27.1	4,552	29.05	4
15	Meeting and Convention Planners	4,246	5,353	1,107	26.1	1,741	23.72	4
16	Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers	6,267	7,896	1,629	26.0	2,830	17.93	3
17	Physical Therapists	12,960	16,302	3,342	25.8	4,510	40.57	6
18	Medical and Public Health Social Workers	6,674	8,368	1,694	25.4	2,947	22.18	6
19	Occupational Therapists	6,633	8,313	1,680	25.3	2,657	39.00	6
20	Helpers – Electricians	4,499	5,626	1,127	25.1	2,112	12.43	1
21	Physician Assistants	4,081	5,102	1,021	25.0	1,622	46.88	5
22	Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers	6,661	8,278	1,617	24.3	3,056	16.44	3
23	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	24,343	30,193	5,850	24.0	8,535	22.80	3
24	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	9,449	11,716	2,267	24.0	3,739	15.99	4
25	Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	14,671	18,164	3,493	23.8	5,361	15.03	2

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity:

Go to the Employment Projections page (www.floridajobs.org/lmsc/ep). Under "Employment Projections Data" select either Statewide or your Workforce Region and then Open. When the spreadsheet opens, choose the Occf worksheet at the bottom of the page. If you do not see the worksheets list, you may need to maximize the worksheet.





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1 Less than High School 2 = 8%

2 High School Diploma/GED 1 = 4%

3 Adult Vocational Certificate 9 = 36%

4 College: Cert/AS/AA 6 = 24%

5 Bachelor's 3 = 12%

6 Master's or Higher 4 = 16%