

Leon Works Roundtable Meeting

February 18, 2015
Lively Technical Institute

Commissioner Mary Ann Lindley, Chairman of the Leon County Commission, welcomed the stakeholders and thanked the Tallahassee/Leon County Economic Development Council (EDC), Leon County Schools (TCC), and Lively Technical Center for hosting the roundtable meetings (Attachment #1). Chairman Lindley related to the group how a workshop at a National Association of Counties conference and her own experience with local plumbers inspired her to look at middle-skill career needs in the community. At the County Commission's December 2014 annual retreat, the Commission directed staff to work with community partners to evaluate and identify the projected need for middle-skill job opportunities in our labor market. Chairman Lindley concluded that Leon County is seeking serve as a catalyst for promoting local middle-skill jobs, specifically to high-school students under an initiative called Leon Works.

Ms. Cristina Paredes, Leon County Director of Economic Vitality, noted that County staff has been analyzing employment data and meeting with stakeholders to identify challenges and opportunities in promoting middle-skill careers. This data and the feedback gathered from stakeholders will be presented to the County Commission March 10, 2015 as part of the Leon Works initiative. The Leon Works initiative would culminate in a one-day exposition to introduce high school students to middle-skill career opportunities. Ms. Paredes next discussed the roundtable meeting's goals with the stakeholders: 1) define "middle-skill" workforce; 2) identify and discuss the challenges in filling the shortage of middle-skill labor in our market; and 3) identify the challenges associated with promoting the training and career opportunities available in our community to high school students preparing to graduate. Ms. Paredes worked with the participates to define middle-skill careers to help the frame the group discussion. Chairman Lindley suggested that 'middle-skill' careers instead be called 'artisan-skill' careers to be more attractive to students, which the stakeholder group generally accepted.

After breaking for lunch, Mr. Jim McShane, CEO of CareerSource Capital Region (CSCR), discussed job figures that illustrate the community's needs and opportunities for middle-skill careers. Mr. McShane also discussed CSCR's work to place people in middle-skill careers. Mr. Randy Pridgeon, LCS Divisional Director of Secondary Schools, also discussed LCS's role in promoting middle-skill careers and that noted that the principals were in agreement that their students needed to know more about career options other than pursuing a four year degree. 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.

Mr. Ben Pingree, Vice President of Business Retention/Expansion and Public Policy for the EDC, and Ms. Laura Rogers, Director of World Class Schools of Leon County, facilitated an open dialogue among the stakeholders. Mr. Pingree began the discussion by asking employers about their largest labor employment challenges. Ms. Gloria Pugh, Owner of AMWAT Movers, discussed her industry's need for drivers with a CDL Class A trucking license, noting that truck drivers are well-paid and that many in the trucking industry are aging out. Mr. Pridgeon asked about driver employment requirements and Ms. Pugh noted an existing certification program as well as an apprenticeship program that she started in her company. Mr. Robert Moore with Tallahassee Memorial Hospital also noted a need for medical coders.

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Next, the stakeholders discussed trends in recruiting and retaining a middle-skill workforce. Mr. Paul Dean with Danfoss Turbocor discussed attributes he wanted in his employees other than training certifications. He stated that his company needed not only skilled workers, but workers with creativity for jobs in computer-aided design and application development. He also noted that in the next decade there would be a 50% drop in the HVAC installation workforce due to retirements. Mr. Vince Long, Leon County Administrator, discussed the County's challenges in retaining a full staff of emergency medical services staff and how deferred maintenance on infrastructure will likely create a demand for construction workers. Several of the LCS principals noted how increased emphasis on education assessments has made it more difficult to offer vocational-training courses, which may in turn be impacting the availability of a middle-skilled workforce. The stakeholders generally agreed that the difficulty in recruiting middle-skilled workers would likely get worse in the future unless steps were taken to address the issue.

The stakeholders discussed if the middle-skill workforce recruitment challenges are due to the perception or awareness issues. Ms. Kim Moore with Tallahassee Community College (TCC) noted TCC's work to make students more aware of their career options besides pursuing a four year degree. TCC has a 'train the trainer' program that educates middle and high school counselors about occupation opportunities that do not require a four year degree. TCC is also mapping the local education offerings to show students how they can continue their education from a certification to a four year degree and beyond. Mr. Patrick Wright with the Department of Education noted that many technical schools are renaming themselves as colleges due to perceptions that a college degree is more desirable. Several LCS principals discussed the stigma about not being successful unless you go to college and suggested that the community needs to tell students from an early age that success is more about finding a good career as opposed to the level of education attained. Ms. Paredes cited a Harvard report that addresses middle-skill workforce issues that underscores the need for employers, educators, and policymakers to collaborate together to address the community's middle-skill workforce needs, one of the goals of Leon Works. She additionally noted that the intention of the Leon Works Exposition was to complement the great work already being done by LCS as well as community and business partners to promote middle-skill careers.

Mr. Pingree asked the stakeholders how they felt the community was currently doing to address the need to fill middle-skill occupations. Several employers noted that they perceived an issue with young people entering the workforce lacking certain life-skills and work-ethic; examples included attitude, poor customer service, and trouble getting to work on time. Ms. Pugh suggested that the community highlight successful local people without a four year degree to serve as role models to students. Ms. Paredes noted that highlighting role models had already been identified as a component of the Leon Works initiative. Mr. Chris Eldred with Teligent EMS discussed his company's internal training program and praised TCC's advanced manufacturing training programs. Mr. Pridgeon thanked Mr. McShane for sharing information about what vocational training would be in demand in the future. He noted that it helped LCS to know which occupations would be in demand in the future since it could take three years for LCS to set up new vocational training programs in the schools.

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Ms. Paredes began the open discussion portion of the meeting by calling attention to the handout on Florida's demand for middle-skill jobs (Attachment #2) and the fastest growing middle-skill occupation projections for the Leon-Gadsden-Wakulla Counties area (Attachment #3). She noted that many of the occupations highlighted during the earlier discussion were also identified by the Department of Economic Opportunity as being in higher demand in the future. Mr. McShane reminded the stakeholders that CSCR has resources and funding to help employers secure trained employees.

Several of the stakeholders discussed how to support LCS in providing more vocational training opportunities. Educators noted that current educational assessment policies limit their ability to provide more focused vocational training and that a change to education policy would require an act by the legislature. Mr. Wright suggested that more students could take advantage of the dual enrollment program to get more vocational training through Lively Technical or TCC. Ms. Brittany Smith with Keiser University suggested that employers could give guest presentations to students that would educate students about middle-skill career opportunities and serve as role models.

The stakeholders generally agreed that the Leon Works Exposition was a good idea to promote middle-skill careers to local high school students. Mr. Charles Bagwell reminded the stakeholders that the Leon Works initiative was focused on high school students and that it was important to engage students going forward on what they need and want. 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 discussion regarding opening the Expo to the community in the afternoon after the high school students had an opportunity to attend.

Ms. Paredes closed the workgroup meeting by thanking the participants and recapping the next steps. On March 10, 2015, the County Commission would get a status update on the projected unmet local need for middle-skill job opportunities and provide staff with direction. If approved, the Leon Works Exposition will likely be held in mid-October 2015. The one day Leon Works Exposition would serve to complement the ongoing efforts by LCS to promote middle-skill careers and serve as a one-stop shop for students to seek career opportunities and explore degree alternatives such as apprenticeships, certifications, and skilled trade careers. The expo would be followed by a stakeholders wrap-up meeting in November.

Attachment:

1. February 18, 2015 Roundtable Attendance
2. Florida's Forgotten Middle: Middle Skill Job Demand for Florida
3. Fastest-Growing Middle-Skill Occupation Projects for Leon, Gadsden, and Wakulla Counties

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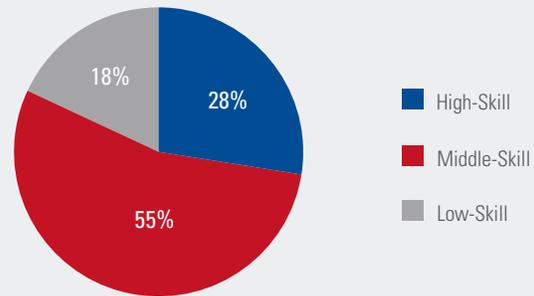
Florida's Forgotten Middle

Middle-skill jobs, which require education beyond high school but not a four-year degree, make up the largest part of America's and Florida's labor market. Key industries in Florida are unable to find enough sufficiently trained workers to fill these jobs.

Jobs by Skill Level, Florida, 2012

Demand for Middle-Skill Jobs is Strong

Fifty-five percent of all jobs in 2012 were middle-skill.

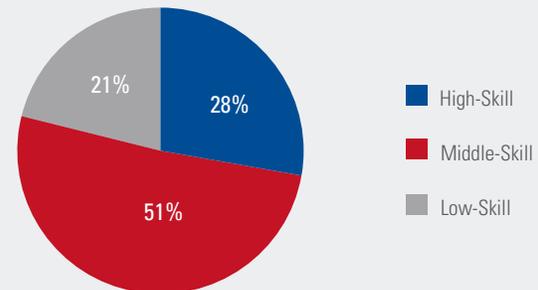


Source: NSC analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics by State, May 2012.

Job Openings by Skill Level, Florida, 2013-21

Demand for Middle-Skill Jobs Will Remain Strong

Between 2013-2021, 51 percent of job openings will be middle-skill.

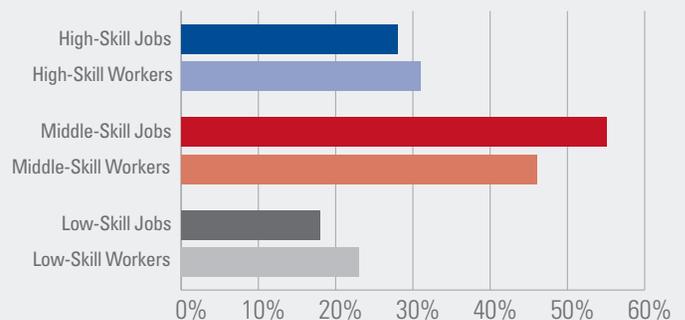


Source: NSC analysis of long-term occupational projections from state labor/employment agency.

Jobs and Workers by Skill Level, Florida, 2012

A Middle-Skill Gap

Middle-skill jobs account for 55 percent of Florida's labor market, but only 46 percent of the state's workers are trained to the middle-skill level.



Source: NSC analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics by State, May 2012 and American Community Survey data, 2012.



Fastest-Growing Middle-Skill Occupation Projects for Leon, Gadsden, and Wakulla Counties

Rank	Occupation	Employment		2014 - 2022E		Average Hourly Wage (\$)**	Education Level
		2014	2022	Growth	Total Job Openings		
1	Registered Nurses	3,068	3,557	489	915	27.91	Associate Degree
2	Receptionists and Information Clerks	1,491	1,736	245	611	12.42	High School Diploma
3	Child Care Workers	1,118	1,299	181	464	9.59	Postsecondary Vocational
4	Nursing Assistants	1,212	1,435	223	344	11.02	Postsecondary Vocational
5	Home Health Aides	777	1,036	259	337	9.89	Postsecondary Vocational
6	Insurance Sales Agents	868	1,030	162	320	37.46	Postsecondary Vocational
7	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	765	876	111	273	19.52	Postsecondary Vocational
8	Heating, A.C., and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	590	774	184	265	19.45	Postsecondary Vocational
9	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	605	697	92	196	15.35	Postsecondary Vocational
10	Medical Assistants	627	746	119	194	14.14	Postsecondary Vocational
11	Electricians	474	561	87	188	17.73	Postsecondary Vocational
12	Software Developers, Applications	619	727	108	157	34.74	Associate Degree
13	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	512	605	93	149	22.17	Postsecondary Vocational
14	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	476	546	70	144	14.28	Associate Degree
15	Pharmacy Technicians	384	465	81	132	13.38	Postsecondary Vocational
16	Personal and Home Care Aides	345	453	108	129	9.73	Postsecondary Vocational
17	Coaches and Scouts	319	375	56	122	44.38	High School Diploma
18	Loan Officers	286	330	44	102	34.44	Associate Degree
19	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	238	289	51	100	13.34	Associate Degree
20	Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	261	297	36	98	16.34	High School Diploma
21	Operating Engineers/Construction Equipment Operators	272	320	48	97	16.00	Postsecondary Vocational
22	Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	274	327	53	88	17.65	High School Diploma
23	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	204	263	59	86	12.66	Associate Degree
24	Medical Secretaries	222	282	60	84	12.76	Postsecondary Vocational
25	Dental Assistants	228	272	44	81	17.69	Postsecondary Vocational
26	Radiologic Technologists	207	259	52	77	23.87	Postsecondary Vocational
27	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	210	239	29	77	17.14	Postsecondary Vocational
28	Brickmasons and Blockmasons	162	210	48	75	15.76	Postsecondary Vocational
29	Dental Hygienists	194	239	45	75	27.15	Associate Degree
30	Database Administrators	261	300	39	73	30.83	Associate Degree
31	Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	233	265	32	72	11.32	High School Diploma
32	Cost Estimators	182	223	41	68	29.21	Associate Degree
33	Meeting and Convention Planners	179	212	33	60	20.71	Associate Degree
34	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	136	163	27	56	16.06	Postsecondary Vocational
35	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	130	155	25	41	14.33	Postsecondary Vocational

This table includes occupations with a minimum of 125 jobs in 2014.

* Includes openings due to growth and replacement needs

** Hourly wages for teaching occupations were calculated using a 40-hour work week for 9½ months per year.