

## **GTR LINK Workforce Pipeline 5-year Plan**

The Golden Triangle Development LINK presents the following as a five-year projection for the development of workforce initiatives and programs at the high school level.

While the LINK and its partners will commit to supporting this plan in full, its success is predicated on the active and continued participation of local governments, local public school districts and administrators, local Community Colleges and Universities. Any figures or timelines listed as part of this plan, are subject to change dependent upon the aforementioned groups.

Workforce development is an ongoing top priority of the region, as indicated by the recent development of The Communiversity, the High School WorkKeys Initiative and the Early College High School at EMCC. These efforts, while not prompted by specific industries, were developed with an overall appreciation for the workforce development goals for the region. Projected start dates for each initiative are included in the descriptions below.

### **Governmental and Industrial Support**

Local city and county governments will be presented a resolution of support for continued high school workforce development as directed by the local economic development organization and its partners.

Industries in the Golden Triangle will be approached by the GTR LINK to participate a coordinated apprenticeship program for eligible high school students. This program will be designed by Dr. Malcom Portera, EMCC and GTR LINK Workforce development staff and implemented in conjunction with the opening of the Communiversity. Development of this program will begin Fall 2015.

It is the recommendation of the GTR LINK that the pending Communiversity be equipped with an interactive Inspiration Center to expose K-12, but specifically high school students, to local career opportunities and the educational pathways to be taken to attain those jobs. The center will feature participating industries via company created/directed installations that allow students to complete tasks reflective of the skill sets needed to attain employment. Research and development of this center will commence Summer 2015, upon agreement between EMCC and the GTRLINK, and open in conjunction with Communiversity.

### **Early Workforce Development Initiative**

The Early Workforce Development Initiative outlines the Golden Triangle Development LINK's goals to increase opportunities for high school students looking to enter the local workforce and to create a pipeline of skilled individuals in the region. There are three prevailing goals for the initiative:

- Increase testing and certification programs offered as part of the high school curriculum.
- Increase industry identified coursework offered as part of the high school curriculum.
- Develop industrial apprenticeship and/or internship programs for high school students.

### **Public School Agreements**

A formal MOU with the GTR LINK will be drafted and presented to each public high school in the Golden Triangle to commit the school to the following curriculum additions:

- The school will agree to offer a WorkKeys Prep Course to its junior and/or senior students, not exclusive to those enrolled in a vocational program.
- The school will agree to offer WorkKeys Testing at their location, to junior and/or senior students.
- The school will agree to evaluate future workforce development initiatives as proposed by the GTR LINK and its partners.

The GTR LINK will commit to the following through this MOU:

- Funding for testing scholarships.
- Coordination of apprenticeship, internship and exposure opportunities for students through the proposed Communiversity facility and curriculum.

### Testing and Course Completion Projections

WorkKeys testing is currently in pilot phase and will begin permanent implementation in the Fall of 2015 at Caledonia High School, Columbus High School, New Hope High School, West Point Career and Technology Center and West Lowndes High School. Starkville High School implemented testing in the Fall of 2016. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the public schools in the Golden Triangle enroll and average of 2,000 high school seniors annually.

### Pilot Data

| School                   | # of Testers | % Silver or Higher |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Columbus High School     | 8            | 50%                |
| Caledonia High School    | 11           | 91%                |
| New Hope High School     | 18           | 56%                |
| West Point High School   | 72           | 71%                |
| West Lowndes High School | 15           | 73%                |

Overall, students tested in the 2014-2015 school year attained at 69% Silver or higher score rate.

Based on the above data and qualitative information about each community we can conservatively anticipate the following 5-year projections:

| <b>Year</b> | <b># of Testers</b> | <b># Scoring Silver or Higher</b> |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Year 1      | 124                 | 86                                |
| Year 2      | 200                 | 138                               |
| Year 3      | 300                 | 207                               |
| Year 4      | 400                 | 276                               |
| Year 5      | 500                 | 345                               |

Data from the pilot program also indicated that 23 students received a Bronze score on the test. Given that WorkKeys will be offered during the school year to junior and senior students, it is conceivable that junior students who do not attain a Silver or higher score could continue progress to lift their score and augment the annual production rate.

Once a student has completed their WorkKeys test and attained a satisfactory score, it is then encouraged that they enroll in the Manufacturing Skills Basic course via the following delivery methods:

- Enroll in the course taught at each high school.
- Enroll at East Mississippi Community College during summer semester after their junior or senior years of high school.

It is estimated that in five years an approximate 150 students could complete Manufacturing Skills Basic prior to or immediately following high school graduation. This rate is limited by current available classroom/lab space, competition for enrollment space at the community college and cost differences between the educational institutions administering the course.

The planned increase in available space at the Community, anticipated construction of a new vocational facility available to three of the six public schools in the area, and potential for multiple sections of the course to be taught at the high school level does allow for these numbers to increase over time.

Update: We are now entering our third year of testing. In the second year, those receiving NCRCs and testing enrollment doubled.

| <b>2014-2015</b>         | <b># of Testers</b> | <b>CRCs Awarded</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Columbus High School     | 8                   | 4                   |
| Caledonia High School    | 11                  | 10                  |
| New Hope High School     | 18                  | 10                  |
| West Point High School   | 72                  | 51                  |
| West Lowndes High School | 15                  | 11                  |
| <b>Totals</b>            | <b>124</b>          | <b>86</b>           |

| <b>2015-2016</b>          | <b># of Testers</b> | <b>CRCs Awarded</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Columbus High School      | 36                  | 19                  |
| Caledonia High School     | 65                  | 50                  |
| New Hope High School      | 59                  | 28                  |
| West Point High School    | 90                  | 49                  |
| West Lowndes High School  | 19                  | 3                   |
| Columbus Christian School | 4                   | 4                   |
| <b>Totals</b>             | <b>273</b>          | <b>153</b>          |