



## **WORKFORCE FLORIDA: A CATALYST FOR CREATING WORLD-CLASS TALENT**

A catalyst for creating world-class talent at every skill level, **Workforce Florida Inc.**, is the statewide workforce investment board charged with developing strategies and policies that help Floridians enter, remain and advance in the workforce while strengthening the state's business climate and supporting Florida's economic development priorities. Performance and accountability are key to strategies and policies developed by Workforce Florida, and efforts to cultivate and ensure a strong, systemwide focus on these fundamental elements are ongoing.

Workforce's Florida's nearly 40 board members include the Governor, four members of the Florida Legislature and leaders in business and government representing small business, industry, labor, economic development, education, youth, community-based organizations and several state agencies. With the exception of the legislative members, the Board is appointed by the Governor. Every state is charged to have such a board under the federal Workforce Investment Act.

### **Collaborating for Economic Opportunity**

Workforce Florida, while a separate and independent entity, is a key collaborative and strategic partner of the new Department of Economic Opportunity as well as Enterprise Florida Inc., the statewide economic development organization for Florida. Their shared mission: To advance the Governor Rick Scott's priority for creating 700,000 jobs in seven years through more effective, efficient and seamless economic development efforts.

Until recently, the state workforce system, also known as the Employ Florida network, consisted of Workforce Florida, the state's 24 Regional Workforce Boards, **nearly 100 One-Stop Centers** throughout Florida that serve job seekers and businesses, and the Agency for Workforce Innovation. However, beginning this Saturday, October 1, the Department of Economic Opportunity will replace the Agency, absorbing its workforce-related fiscal and administrative responsibilities as well as fiscal and program monitoring and oversight of the state's 24 Regional Workforce Boards.

Workforce Florida works with business, education and economic development to ensure the state workforce system addresses talent development needs at every skill level seeking to cultivate a globally competitive workforce.

## **WORKFORCE FLORIDA-LED INITIATIVES AT-A-GLANCE**

### **EMPLOY FLORIDA BANNER CENTERS**

Employ Florida Banner Centers, developed from Enterprise Florida Inc.'s 2004-2009 *Roadmap to Florida's Future*, help bolster talent for targeted sectors in Florida that help to diversify the state economy. A keystone of the centers is the partnership among workforce, education, industry and economic development.

Through direct input from Florida businesses, Banner Centers focus on developing and coordinating educational and training resources to boost the competitiveness of targeted industries. Currently, there are 11 Banner Centers based at an educational institution or industry organization that serve target industries including advanced manufacturing, agriscience, aviation/aerospace, construction, clean energy, energy, and homeland security and defense. Since 2006, Banner Centers have helped to train more than 3,000 people working with leading companies such as Publix, Coca Cola, Harris Corporation, Lockheed Martin, Pepperidge Farm, The Mosaic Company, Mitsubishi Power Systems and Honeycomb Company of America, among others. Banner Center trainees' wages have increased 48.10 percent on average within 15 months of completing training.

### **THE EMPLOY FLORIDA MARKETPLACE**

The Employ Florida Marketplace, at [www.EmployFlorida.com](http://www.EmployFlorida.com), is the state's comprehensive online employment resource and the web gateway to Florida workforce services and resources. It provides a no-cost access point available 24 hours, seven days a week to anyone needing workforce services. More than 100,000 Florida companies are already registered and using the Marketplace for employee recruitment, screening and training services and resources. For example, the Marketplace provides businesses with access to more than 500,000 resumes posted by job seekers. Job seekers can access, among many services, resume-building and skills-assessment tools, wage and career information and nearly 300,000 job listings. More than 60,000 visitors use [www.EmployFlorida.com](http://www.EmployFlorida.com) daily to screen applicants, search for jobs and research labor market data.

### **FLORIDA EIGHT**

The Florida Eight initiative provides regional teams with a variety of facilitation services and resources to build their regional capacity for economic development, talent development, job retention and international business opportunities—all priorities outlined in Governor Rick Scott's 7-7-7 Jobs Plan. Through Workforce Florida's investment—and consistent with its mission to strengthen the state's business climate through talent development—this initiative provides research, marketing and other resources to up to eight regional teams as they establish and implement business development plans which could yield benefits to participating regions for years to come. Planning for Florida Eight began in 2008 as a recommendation stemming from a Southwest Florida demonstration project, also funded by Workforce Florida.

## **GLOBAL TRADE AND LOGISTICS INITIATIVE**

Joined by partners including the Florida Chamber of Commerce, the Florida Ports Council, the University of North Florida, Broward College, and private-sector businesses, Workforce Florida recently announced a new, statewide global trade and logistics initiative at JAXPORT. This multi-pronged, \$2 million-plus initiative is aimed at retaining jobs and expanding international trade and exports in Florida. The initiative was developed in response to the Florida Chamber Foundation's *Florida Trade and Logistics Study*, released in December 2010, which identified seven major opportunities for Florida to increase its role as an international trade hub.

## **INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING**

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) helps established businesses maintain a competitive workforce by providing partial reimbursement for training aimed at upgrading their employees' skills. IWT reimburses for instructors' and trainers' salaries and tuition; curriculum development; and textbooks and manuals. Like Quick Response Training, IWT is a popular training resource for Florida businesses, especially small businesses. From July 2010 to July 2011, Workforce Florida awarded 215 new IWT grants totaling more than \$5,915,606 to help companies train and retain jobs for more than 14,739 full-time employees. Trainees' wages have increased 11.40 percent on average 15 months after completion of IWT-supported training.

## **QUICK RESPONSE TRAINING**

Quick Response Training (QRT) provides funding, as partial reimbursement, for customized training of employees at new or expanding businesses. QRT reimburses for instructors' and trainers' salaries and tuition; curriculum development; and textbooks and manuals. Florida's QRT was recently cited in the *Enterprising States* annual report by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Chamber Foundation, which ranked Florida No. 1 in the nation for workforce and job training. The top industry sectors receiving QRT grants are: information technology, manufacturing and financial and professional services. From July 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011, Workforce Florida awarded QRT grants totaling more than \$8,545,367 to support the creation of 5,423 new jobs as well as skills upgrade training for 2,683 existing full-time jobs. On average, trainees' wages have increased by 36.3 percent within 15 months of completing QRT-supported training.

## **STEMflorida**

In 2009, the Workforce Florida Board of Directors in collaboration with Enterprise Florida established a \$580,000 grant to fund the strategic initiative **STEMflorida**, which is aimed at identifying the needs of STEM-enabled employers and improving the skills of Florida's workforce to meet those need. This work is more important than ever, given Florid Governor Rick Scott's focus on job retention and job creation through his 7-7-7 Jobs Plan. Governor Scott recently Scott recently stated publicly that STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) will play a key role in achieving these economic development goals. To find out more about Florida's STEM movement, visit [www.stemflorida.net](http://www.stemflorida.net).

## **TALENT SUPPLY CHAIN**

Florida's Talent Supply Chain Team is the first of its kind in the nation and is being developed through leadership support by Workforce Florida consistent with the state's five-year strategic plan for workforce development. The Talent Supply Chain Team, comprised of high-level strategic policymakers from nine private and public bodies including Workforce Florida, the Florida Chamber, the Florida Council of 100, K-12 schools and the Florida College System, is moving aggressively to map and align industry demands to the system of education in Florida.

## **TARGET INDUSTRY CLUSTER TASK FORCES**

One of Workforce Florida's six strategic goals for talent development is providing world-class service to Florida's target industry clusters. Enterprise Florida has identified six high-impact clusters, which hold promise for economic growth and diversification and pay higher than average wages. They include information technology, aviation/aerospace, clean technology, financial and professional services, homeland security and defense and life sciences. Workforce Florida intends to create and stage the launch of six Targeted Industry Cluster Task Forces over three years, starting this year with aviation/aerospace and clean technology.

**Find out more by visiting [www.WorkforceFlorida.com](http://www.WorkforceFlorida.com)**

"The role of **Workforce Florida** has never been more important than in today's tough economy."

**FORMER LT. GOV. TONI JENNINGS** *Two-time Florida Senate President and a former Chair of Workforce Florida*

"The shape of Florida's workforce is going to be changing so much and the issues that we will be dealing with are so new to us that they are going to take a lot of thought and a lot of time.

When I talk to people about demographics and what's coming, they always ask me who is focusing on this in the state, who is talking about this, who is planning for it? **Workforce Florida** and a couple of other entities are really the only ones doing that so it is a very important role."

**AMY BAKER** *Coordinator of the Florida Legislature's Office of Economic & Demographic Research*

## **RECENT ACCOLADES**

- **Top Performing Workforce Development and Training State, *Enterprising States*.** A report of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Chamber Foundation
- **Consistent top-three ranking in CNBC's Top States for Business.** No. 2, 2011; No. 1, 2010 and No. 3, 2009.
- **No. 4 in the Nation for Workforce Training Programs.** *2010 Business-Facilities Workforce Training Leaders*
- **Strategic Plan recognized by U.S. Department of Labor.** *Florida's workforce development strategic plan and implementation noted as a national best practice model.*