

## BUSINESS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES UNIT

This unit is directed by the Vice President for Business and Workforce Development Opportunities and is responsible for the administration and management of Workforce Florida's employer-specific training programs, the Employ Florida Banner Centers, as well as the key initiatives under the purview of the Board of Directors' Business Competitiveness Council. The unit also serves as the interface with key sister organizations on significant economic development projects and related initiatives: Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI), Space Florida, Inc., the Florida Economic Development Council and other business-led organizations.

### MAJOR FUNCTIONS AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

#### *Partnering with Business to Deliver a Demand Driven Workforce System*

- Administers Florida's two popular statewide Employer-Specific Training Grant Programs—Quick Response Training and Incumbent Worker Training. Expansion Management magazine ranked these two programs among the top 10 nationwide for responsiveness to business training needs and flexibility. These programs leverage considerable public/private funds for targeted training for skills in demand thus achieving greater use of limited public sector training funds. Virtually all businesses receiving training grants are within the state's targeted industries, ensuring investment in wealth-generating jobs for Florida's economic growth. An independent analysis conducted by the Florida Education & Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) last year confirms the programs impact on trainee wages before and after training: For QRT, the average wage gain was 146.5 percent; for IWT, the average wage gain was 44 percent. Since July 2000, these programs have produced the following outcomes:
  - Number Trained: 159,736
  - Total Awards: \$87.4 million
  - Total Leveraged/Matched: \$1,098.1 Million
  - Average Cost Per Trainee (QRT): \$889
  - Average Cost Per Trainee (IWT): \$300

#### *Supporting Training and Development of Florida's Talent Pipeline*

- Provides oversight of WFI's Business Competitiveness Council that provides advice and counsel on current and emerging business climate and workforce competitiveness issues in order to build Florida's talent pipeline and support the creation of world-class talent. Examples of issues may include, but are not limited to:
  - Aerospace workforce transition from Shuttle to Constellation
  - Employ Florida Banner Centers



- Sustainability sectors of interest including Energy, Water Resources and Green Economy talent development
- Rural support
- To serve as workforce “ambassadors” for Florida’s overall workforce development, business and job retention, business recruitment, and training, including the marketing of Workforce Florida’s two flagship grant training programs:
  - Quick Response Training
  - Incumbent Worker Training
- To create a platform for dialogue for the members of the Business Competitiveness Council, committees, stakeholders, and other partners.

### *Strengthening and Coordinating Economic Development Partnerships*

- Support Enterprise Florida (EFI) in their efforts to retain, grow and attract wealth-generating industries, as well as support to Florida’s existing businesses. Serve on EFI’s Stakeholders Council to ensure the workforce system’s responsiveness to business workforce needs.
- Ensure linkages with EFI’s marketing efforts to ensure synergy and consistency of message and linkages between Florida’s Roadmap for Economic Development and the Workforce Florida Strategic Plan.
- Strengthen connectivity between workforce and economic development by serving on the Florida Economic Development Council’s Board of Directors and Executive Committee, and continuing joint regional meetings and conferences that focus on shared objectives.
- Partner with economic development organizations (EFI, Space Florida, others) on special projects of mutual benefit (e.g., Life Sciences study, business intelligence gathering).

### *Leveraging Technology to Enhance Florida’s Workforce System*

- Through the Employ Florida Banner Centers, provide businesses with access to graduates who have received relevant training, industry-recognized certifications and at-a-glance labor market information.
- Full use of Workforce Florida-funded, Web-based training platforms, such as the Advanced Learning Environment for Aerospace Technicians and Biotechnology training.

### *Strengthening Florida’s Rural Workforce System*

- Build rural capacity development through focused monthly meetings with rural regional workforce board leaders.
- Serve on Florida’s Rural Economic Development Initiative committee to ensure workforce issues are considered along with other policy areas in addressing the unique needs of Florida’s rural areas.



- Support Florida’s three Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern, as designated by the Governor, by ensuring priority is given to businesses located within these areas requesting training grants and other workforce services.

### *Strengthening Partnerships with Education*

- Through the Employ Florida Banner Centers, implement system-wide partnerships among business, education, economic development and workforce to meet existing and future workforce needs of targeted industry sectors—those sectors that continue to diversify and strengthen our economy—and areas with critical shortages. These Banner Centers (both named and proposed) are listed below and include the business-led association that backs the Center
  - Aviation/Aerospace (Florida Aviation Aerospace Association)
  - Manufacturing (Manufacturing Association of Florida)
  - Biotechnology (BioFlorida)
  - Construction (National Center for Construction Education)
  - Energy (Florida Energy Workforce Consortium)
  - Alternative Energy
  - Health Services
  - Logistics & Distribution
  - Homeland Security
  - Digital Media
  - Secondary Career Academies (Florida Career & Professional Education Act)
- Develop and maintain an industry certification matrix, as required by the Florida Career & Professional Education Act, to ensure that career and technical education programs statewide deploy curriculum that connotes industry-recognized certifications in demand by Florida’s key industry sectors.

