

2016 Strategic Innovation Grant Awardees

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry awarded 14 entities Strategic Innovation Grants to support the commonwealth’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan. The grants support Governor Wolf’s vision of “jobs that pay, schools that teach, and government that works” by encouraging creativity and innovation in achieving one or both of the following goals for workforce development depicted in the WIOA Combined State Plan.

- Establish career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential and degree attainment and provide all Pennsylvanians, with an emphasis on Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment, an opportunity to obtain a job that pays.
- Engage employers through multi-employer workforce partnerships to improve the connection and responsiveness of workforce programs to the demand side of the labor market, increase public-private investment in critical skills, and support the spread of employer practices that create jobs that pay.

Grants were awarded utilizing state Reemployment Fund resources. A list of grantees and brief summaries of their projects follows.

Applicant	Amount
A. Phillip Randolph Institute	\$ 400,000.00
Berks County Workforce Development Board	\$ 250,000.00
Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Committee	\$ 130,776.00
Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation	\$ 125,000.00
Chester County Workforce Development Board	\$ 323,000.00
Collegiate Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development	\$ 385,314.00
Finishing Trades Institute Mid-Atlantic Region	\$ 400,000.00
Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board	\$ 154,664.00
Lehigh Valley Workforce Development Board	\$ 400,000.00
Penn Asian Senior Services	\$ 316,560.00
Philadelphia Works	\$ 214,686.00
South Central PA Works	\$ 400,000.00
Spanish American Civic Association for Equality	\$ 100,000.00
Three Rivers Workforce Development Board	\$ 400,000.00
TOTAL	\$4,000,000.00

Grantee: A. Phillip Randolph Institute

Amount Awarded: \$ 400,000

Location: Pittsburgh (Allegheny County)

Project Summary: The grantee will develop a program to recruit, select, train and place low-income individuals in the City of Pittsburgh in jobs in the construction trades. The program resembles a pre-apprenticeship program. The project takes advantage of the demand generated by major regional development projects such as the Almono Project in Hazelwood, the 28-acre Pittsburgh Penguins-led complex in the Lower Hill District, and the Shell ethane cracker plant in Beaver County.

Grantee: Berks County Workforce Development Board

Amount Awarded: \$ 250,000

Location: Berks and Lancaster Counties

Project Summary: The project will facilitate the expansion and refinement of career pathways in manufacturing, healthcare, information technology, construction, visual communications and live entertainment. This project will expand the means for youth to gain the training and experience required to follow the identified career pathways. This will be accomplished through the financing of post-secondary credits for high school Career and Technical education students participating in dual-enrollment and direct coursework at participating two-year degree colleges and the expansion of youth work experience to a year-round model.

Grantee: Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Committee

Amount Awarded: \$ 130,776

Location: Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties

Project Summary: The project will help establish a career pathway for low skilled youth and adults into a Pennsylvania registered apprenticeship program. The grantee will provide an introduction, educational services and a career employment opportunity to 24 Pennsylvania residents who currently experience barriers to this type of career pathway.

Grantee: Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation

Amount Awarded: \$ 125,000

Location: Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union Counties

Project Summary: The project seeks to support the development and promotion of Registered Apprenticeship programs in the region. The project will specifically target training funds to encourage businesses to adopt newly approved apprenticeship programs for Advanced Certified Nursing Assistants and Mechatronics Technicians. The project will also create at least one additional Registered Apprenticeship program in the region based on local employer needs.

Grantee: Chester County Workforce Development Board

Amount Awarded: \$ 323,000

Location: Chester County

Project Summary: The project will provide intensive workshops, skills training, On-the-Job Training, job placement, and follow-up services to criminal justice-involved residents of Chester County. These residents include returning citizens recently released from incarceration from Chester County Prison, state or federal prisons, those who are engaged with Chester County Adult Probation & Parole, and noncustodial parents referred from Chester County Domestic Relations.

Grantee: Collegiate Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development

Amount Awarded: \$ 385,314

Location: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia

Project Summary: The project will provide education and technical training to strengthen the transportation, logistics and warehousing workforce that directly and indirectly serves the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority and the Delaware River Port Authority. Training will address the skill needs of new hires as well as incumbent workers to increase the economic competitiveness of Pennsylvania's port facilities.

Grantee: Finishing Trades Institute of the Mid-Atlantic Region

Amount Awarded: \$ 400,000

Location: Philadelphia County

Project Summary: The Finishing Trades Institute of the Mid-Atlantic Region, in partnership with four union apprenticeship schools, will design a learning management system to better track, recruit, train and identify the training and educational needs of youth aging out of the foster care system and the long-term unemployed. The project will also provide in-person job ready training to prepare individuals to enter union Registered Apprenticeship programs.

Grantee: Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board

Amount Awarded: \$ 154,664

Location: Lackawanna County

Project Summary: The *Careers To Employment* project is designed to address immediate and long-term needs of employers in health-care and related fields in Lackawanna County. The project provides a comprehensive mix of services through a hands-on approach revolving around pre-training orientation, work experience/internship activities, occupational skills training, On-The-Job Training and customized training initiatives.

Grantee: Lehigh Valley Workforce Development Board

Amount Awarded: \$ 400,000

Location: Lehigh and Northampton Counties

Project Summary: The *Innovative PREParations* project will develop a common Career Pathways model for business, training and community service providers, develop and pilot a careers class and a career readiness credential and digital badge, develop a Regional Workforce Supply and Demand Data Analysis of Lehigh Valley's workforce and talent supply, and establish an Employer Engagement Center at PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley.

Grantee: Penn Asian Senior Services

Amount Awarded: \$ 316,560

Location: Bucks, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties

Project Summary: The project will provide competency-based, culturally sensitive and language appropriate training programs to create career pathways in the field of healthcare for individuals from the Cambodian, Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Vietnamese and other Asian American communities in the Greater Philadelphia area. Individuals will be trained to be qualified state certified nursing assistants and home health aides. The project will increase the number of diverse direct care providers earning a livable wage and will alleviate barriers to quality health care for the elderly Asian population in the region.

Grantee: Philadelphia Works

Amount Awarded: \$ 214,686

Location: Bucks, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties

Project Summary: Philadelphia Works will partner with Rhoads Industries to develop pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs to meet the talent needs of Rhoads Industries and other small to mid-size manufacturers in the region. The project will result in approval of a competency-based Registered Apprenticeship program, scoring mechanisms to evaluate apprentice candidates, and recruitment and enrollment of an initial cohort of apprentices.

Grantee: South Central PA Works

Amount Awarded: \$ 400,000

Location: Dauphin County

Project Summary: South Central PA Works will partner with the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) to launch a transitional work program for formerly incarcerated men and women returning to Dauphin County. The program includes life skills education, paid transitional employment, job coaching and job development services, job retention, support and follow-up services, and job training along career pathways.

Grantee: Spanish American Civic Association for Equality

Amount Awarded: \$ 100,000

Location: Lancaster County

Project Summary: The project will promote language development, adult basic education, bilingual occupational skills training, job readiness and placement for community members, primarily Hispanics.

Grantee: Three Rivers Workforce Development Board

Amount Awarded: \$ 400,000

Location: Allegheny County

Project Summary: Three Rivers Workforce Development Board will partner with UPMC and the Energy Innovation Center to develop a training program for Environmental Service Technicians. The training program will allow low-skilled individuals with barriers to employment to secure employment through short-term pre-employment training with opportunities to move upward along a career pathway upon placement.