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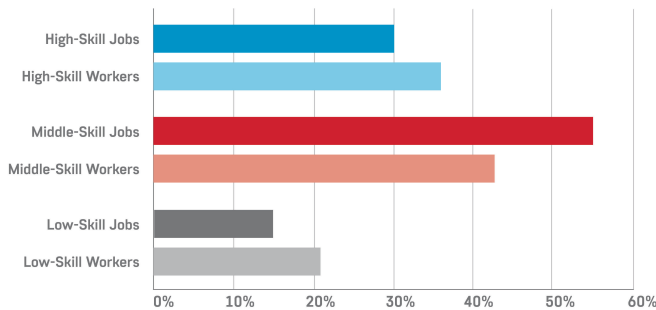
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The SPARK

CELEBRATING SUCCESSES SPARKED BY YOU!



Job and Workers by Skill Level, Pennsylvania, 2015



National Skills Coalition. Source: NSC analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics and Occupational Employment Statistics by State, May 2015 and Community Survey data, 2015

Middle-skill jobs are those that require more than a high school diploma but less than a bachelor's degree. There are more jobs than available workers in this segment and demand is predicted to remain strong through at least 2024. Literacy Pittsburgh offers a solution to help close this gap by transitioning more students into these family-sustaining careers.

READY & RELEVANT

New initiatives focus on fast tracking students into high-demand careers

Your support of Literacy Pittsburgh positions students for success as workers, as parents and as neighbors. New CEO Carey Harris wants to make sure that you can help even more students achieve their career goals and support their families.

This spring, Carey convened a group of community leaders to inform the transition into her new role and help shape Literacy Pittsburgh's future priorities. These conversations centered around the unique role Literacy Pittsburgh can play in meeting a pressing regional need.

Employers in just about every sector are worried about their workforce pipeline. The

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SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS: KRISHNA

A determined fast-tracker pursues his lifelong dream with your help.

Krishna didn't expect that an invitation from his cousin to visit Pittsburgh would end up changing his life. During his visit to the Steel City, Krishna met his future wife. After traveling back and forth from his native Jamaica for a few years, Krishna moved to Pittsburgh permanently in 2018.

In Jamaica, Krishna worked in the oil and gas industry but had a dream of

becoming a pilot. He wanted to start a training program in the U.S. but, like many immigrants, transferring his educational records was an obstacle. He chose to earn a high school equivalency diploma that would be more readily accepted by U.S. colleges.

Krishna came to Literacy Pittsburgh this past January to prepare for the exam. He first took the test



With his high school equivalency diploma in hand, Krishna can pursue his dream of becoming a pilot.

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READY AND RELEVANT

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gap between supply and demand is especially significant within middle-skill jobs. These are positions that require some job training but not a bachelor's degree. Demand is expected to remain strong through at least 2024 and, best of all, these jobs offer a family-sustaining paycheck.

Together, we have an invaluable role to play in expanding the middle-skill workforce. Literacy Pittsburgh is working with thousands of adults to increase their basic reading, writing, math and workforce skills—prerequisites for advancement into middle-skill employment and beyond. While the region has many workforce development providers, they lack the capacity and expertise to deliver free, high-quality basic education.

Literacy Pittsburgh has an invaluable role to play in expanding the region's middle-skills workforce.

At this moment, the region's economic needs, our students' goals and the interests of public and private investors converge around the opportunity to better serve more students and help them to achieve their career goals.

The committee identified three important needs for Literacy Pittsburgh.

- Diversify student enrollment by serving more students with a 9th grade education but no high school diploma. These “fast-trackers” can quickly benefit from services and move to their next step.
- Help students with career planning while they study with Literacy Pittsburgh because education is vital, but insufficient without a plan for the future.
- Develop partnerships with workforce development providers, higher education institutions and employers to more fully realize Literacy Pittsburgh's role as an important on-ramp to the workforce development system.

The committee recognizes the valuable role Literacy Pittsburgh can play in filling a gap in

the current workforce development landscape.

Literacy Pittsburgh's Board of Directors established three priorities to increase the organization's role in creating a ready and relevant workforce. These steps boost our profile in the workforce development arena, grow existing partnerships, create a means to support students on their next steps, and prioritize agency infrastructure improvements.

Leveraging our strong growth and impressive track record to enable our students to be more ready and relevant for the region's economic growth is the future of Literacy Pittsburgh. We thank you for being a part of our past, present and future. ●

TRANSITION COMMITTEE

Earl Buford Partner4Work

Dr. Quintin Bullock Community College of Allegheny County

Ed Denton Denton/Neeley and Literacy Pittsburgh Board member

Michelle Figlar Heinz Endowments

Jordan Golin Jewish Family & Community Services

Tiffini Gorman Office of Mayor Bill Peduto

Abigail Horn Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Lisa Kuzma Richard King Mellon Foundation

Vera Krekanova Allegheny Conference on Community Development

Tom McGough UPMC

Jess Mooney Office of County Executive Rich Fitzgerald

Gary Singery Literacy Pittsburgh Immediate Past Board President

Kathy Sullivan Clark Hill LLC and Literacy Pittsburgh Board President



PARTNER MESSAGE

A Blueprint for the Future

As leader of the workforce development system for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County,

Partner4Work is pleased to endorse the Literacy Pittsburgh Transition Committee report and strategic priorities to help a variety of adult learners contribute to a vibrant regional economy and achieve self-sufficiency.

The work of the Transition Committee in the last several months has focused on opportunities to advance the system to help individuals build better lives through learning and employment. The discussions focused on workforce pipeline development, college and career services and organizational infrastructure.

It has been my privilege to participate in these thoughtful and robust conversations, and to join a panel of passionate community leaders and advocates assembled to raise the bar for adult learners in the region. Partner4Work specifically looks forward to increasing the number of Literacy Pittsburgh students who attain their high school equivalency credential and transition to job training or other postsecondary education. This is a pathway to family-sustaining wages while helping businesses meet an urgent need for talent. In addition, we firmly believe the strategic priorities outlined in the report will position Literacy Pittsburgh as a critical body in helping disadvantaged job seekers become viable job candidates and workforce participants, helping individuals begin or advance on an A-to-Z career pathway.

These recommendations represent more than a list of aspirations; rather, I believe they represent the blueprint to ensure a ready and relevant workforce today and in the future. Partner4Work looks forward to seeing these priorities come to fruition to advance our mutual goals.

Earl Buford
Chief Executive Officer
Partner4Work

Ready & Relevant

The Literacy Pittsburgh Board of Directors has adopted three priorities based on the Transition Committee's recommendations.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PIPELINE

- Further diversify our student population by growing the number of fast-trackers by 75% over over the next three years to reach 26% of our student population.
- Practice new approaches that reach this population by offering courses tailored directly to student career goals.
- Expand workplace contracts to help employers retain and develop employees.

COLLEGE AND CAREER SERVICES

- More deliberately and comprehensively support a student's journey through basic skills education to the next step. Prioritize co-location with career services providers at our community sites.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Elevate the role of data, information and planning.
- Organize and expand staffing to improve outcomes.
- Diversify and grow public and private sector revenue to fuel operations and growth.

To find out how you can be a part of Literacy Pittsburgh's plans to create a Ready & Relevant workforce, please contact Tim Richart at 412-393-7633 or trichart@literacypittsburgh.org.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

A behind-the-scenes peek at new initiatives.

Embedding career awareness throughout a student's journey with us is a primary component of our Ready & Relevant plans.

"Beginning at orientation, students will be made aware of the different ways we can help them prepare for a career," explains Rachel Baron, Director of College and Career Readiness Programs. "Improving academic skills is not an end point but a step in the path."

Our curriculum and textbooks will be aligned to national college and career readiness standards. For example, math lessons will be geared toward the higher-level math students need to succeed in college. Critical thinking, such as comparing and contrasting information, will be introduced at all levels of instruction.

Expanded relationships with trade schools, employers and

existing partners like CareerLink and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will give more students a chance to explore their career and job training options.

"We will also offer tailored classes such as math for healthcare or the trades that tie closely to job expectations," Rachel explains.

Several pilots are already in progress and we look forward to growing these offerings in the months to come. ●

KRISHNA

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in May, but failed the math portion by one point. Undeterred, he honed in the specific concepts he struggled with and when he took the test just a few weeks later, he doubled his math score and earned his diploma!

Krishna also used our Career Transitions services while studying for the exam. He attended a tour of Community College of Allegheny County we organized and learned that the South campus offered an aviation technology program.

"I sat down with [Workplace Skills Manager] Andrea and we came up with a plan. She helped me apply for grants and get financial aid."

Krishna will begin at CCAC South in the spring. He is excited to learn everything he can—from the business aspect to flying to plane maintenance.

Krishna's drive leaves no doubt that this "fast-tracker" will achieve great success. ●

"When you help people better themselves and enter the workforce you improve your entire society." ~Dana

Dana has been a Workplace Skills Volunteer since February 2017. She works with students one-on-one helping them to explore job openings in their fields of interest. She gives them advice on how to tailor their resumes, coaches them through the online job applications and helps them craft winning cover letters. The mentoring and encouragement Dana provides is just as important, helping students to gain confidence and persevere in their job search efforts.



Dana (right) helps Vanessa complete an online job application.



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A copy of the official registration and financial information for Literacy Pittsburgh may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free, within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

