

# Working Washington Partnership

*You should join us!*

# Working Washington Partnership



Making Washington the premier state for employers who need a high-quality workforce.

We strongly support funding to expand these initiatives. This is a top priority for our economic future.



Working Washington Partnership

Your logo here!

## We invite you...

to support one of today's most important initiatives: making Washington the premier state for employers who need a high-quality workforce.

We are committed to sustaining a thriving economy with high-quality jobs in all regions across our state, an economy that serves as the foundation for personal and public stability, community safety and healthy citizenship.

Our local workforce development system is led by Workforce Development Councils (WDCs), joined in close partnership with state leaders, including the state's Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) and Employment Security Department. Our WDCs are directed by private-sector-led boards and are committed to building a strong regional economy for employers, with career opportunities for all job seekers. Working together, we provide employers with the trained workforce they need to prosper and develop the skills of all workers.

### We ask you to help us demonstrate persuasive public support for increased funding and capacity to:

1. Partner with business and labor to help create new jobs;
2. Expand training and retraining opportunities to equip workers with the skills employers need to gain a competitive advantage;
3. Prepare students and young workers for the ever-changing job market they will enter;
4. Help service members, veterans and military dependents make the transition to civilian life and seamlessly enter jobs;
5. Help unemployed and underemployed workers find the right job through innovative outreach, training and job-placement services, systematically eliminating long-term unemployment; and
6. Maintain an accountable, high-performing WorkSource system that continually improves outcomes for employers and job seekers.

Please join the Working Washington Partnership and add your organization's name to our list of partners on page 4. Joining means we will call on you to help us pursue private and public funding to expand upon proven innovations detailed on pages 2 and 3, and we will seek your help to continuously improve over time.

Talented workers are the foundation of our state, and nothing will affect the future of our economy more than the quality of the workforce we create. With your support, we will make Washington the best place in the world for businesses that need a high-quality workforce.

Sincerely,

WWA signature block

WTECB signature block

ESD signature block



**Our people are our number one economic resource. Success means profits, jobs and inclusive prosperity.**

**To make Washington the premier state for employers who need a high-quality workforce, we must fund and expand these innovations.**

- 1. Partner with business and labor to help create new jobs.** Workforce Development Councils work in tandem with local economic development councils to expand existing businesses and recruit new businesses. Workforce recruitment, screening and retention services provided through WorkSource, coupled with skill training provided by local colleges or private career schools, are key features. Employers are in a talent race, and additional capacity to serve their workforce needs is urgently needed to grow jobs.
- 2. Expand training and retraining opportunities to equip workers with the skills employers need to gain a competitive advantage.** Workforce Development Councils partner with businesses, economic development councils and educators to identify and close skill gaps that slow economic productivity. This includes economic research to identify critical shortages, industry skill panels so that industry

leadership drives local workforce strategies, and paying for on-the-job training or education for workers and job seekers. This is the real work required to close skill gaps, and it is highly cost-effective.

- 3. Prepare students and young workers for the ever-changing job market they will enter.** Workforce Development Councils work closely with local schools to match students with mentors from local businesses, on-site internships, job shadows and work experiences, building specific career pathways of their choice. This comprehensive approach, using real-world relevant work experience combined with a specific career pathway, is the cost-effective way to increase graduation rates and young adult employment, above 80 percent.
- 4. Help service members, veterans and military dependents transfer into civilian life and seamlessly enter jobs.** Helping veterans to acquire living-wage civilian jobs is not just patriotic, it is good business. Our military invests billions of dollars in training each year on some of the most sophisticated technology and advanced techniques in the

world. Former service personnel value the importance of being reliable, following directions, accomplishing a mission, the significance of teamwork, situational awareness and commitment – specific values that employers consistently report are in short supply. Helping veterans and newly discharge service personnel translate their military-gained skills into the language of the civilian workforce is a priority for us.

- 5. Help unemployed and underemployed workers find the right job.** The recovery has been marked by slow job growth. More than 145,000 workers in our state have exhausted unemployment benefits since the start of the Great Recession, and more than two-thirds of them remain unemployed. More than 60 percent have solid work histories and are highly motivated to return to work. In response, Workforce Development Councils partnered with Employment Security and the U.S. Department of Labor to create “Rapid Response for the Long-Term Unemployed.” This effort targets \$4 million in existing federal funding to services to help long-term unemployed workers find jobs.

- 6. Maintain an accountable, high-performing WorkSource system that continually improves outcomes for employers and job seekers.** The statewide WorkSource system is a broad-based partnership coordinated and certified at the local level by our Workforce Development Councils, providing the platform for Employment Security, other state agencies and non-profit service providers to serve employers and job seekers as a unified team. In 2013, WorkSource staff provided employment and training services to about 5,500 employers and 240,000 job seekers. Another 7,500 employers and 126,000 job seekers accessed

self-help services on go2worksource.com. More than 142,000 job seekers gain employment through WorkSource each year.

Studies show WorkSource job-search services improve people’s chances of finding work, increase their earnings and provide a high social return on investment. Through WorkSource, workers are finding jobs that improve their financial security – and employers are finding workers that advance their business’s goals. We’re proud of what we and our partners do every day to help Washingtonians succeed.

## **A call to action**

We call on legislators and public- and private-sector grant-makers to work with us to establish a significant, consistent, reliable and locally flexible funding stream to expand these initiatives. This will grow our capacity to help employers get the talented workforce they need to prosper and to help Washingtonians find jobs and advance their careers.