

Arkansas Northeastern College

- **What key workforce preparation programs does your agency/organization oversee or offer to Arkansans?**
 - The Solutions Group, a division dedicated to customized training primarily to manufacturers, Arkansas' most prolific provider of custom training through 20 years of Existing Workers Training Program grants and, currently, through Office of Skills Development grants
 - Cohort college credit programs in Steel Industry Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Welding, HVAC, Aviation Maintenance, Industrial Electricity, Construction Technology, Computer Information Systems, Office Management, Criminal Justice, Registered Nursing, Practical Nursing, Paramedic/EMT, Dental Assisting, Certified Nursing Assistant, & Phlebotomy
 - Technical/Secondary Center providing college credit credentials for high school students (8 area school districts) in the areas of Advanced Manufacturing, Welding, Aviation Maintenance, Criminal Justice, Medical Professions, & Construction Technology
 - Non-credit training for workforce orientation, specifically geared toward underserved (minority/low income) populations, including subsidized wage program using county economic development sales tax as funding source
 - Adult education offerings geared toward workforce orientation
 - Paid internship opportunities with local businesses for all allied technology cohort programs, except for Construction Technology (a 1-semester program), Office Management, and Criminal Justice, with over a dozen businesses, primarily manufacturers
 - Clinical experiences (unpaid) for all allied health cohort programs
 - Career placement services for all of the above via a full-time coordinator
 - Free transportation to training & educational opportunities at ANC via the Opportunity Bus serving impoverished neighborhoods
 - Career Coaches provided to local school districts to begin career exploration and preparation in junior high through high school
- **How much State and Federal funding are received for these programs? How many Arkansans are served by the programs?**
 - **Customized training:**
 - No federal funding, State consideration through current version of new Higher Education funding formula only for portion of customized training delivered for college credit (would estimate at \$100,000); formula measures related to non-credit workforce training promised but not yet developed by Department of Higher Education); training clients receive grant funds through Office of Skills Development, past year = \$160,000; occasional funding for training clients via AEDC for new or expanding companies, amounts vary by project
 - 1,500 Arkansans served on average per year
 - **Cohort college credit programs:**
 - Occasional federal funding through temporary USDOL grants; State funding through higher education funding formula – estimate of funds inclusive of all administrative, student services, academic support, and physical plant

overhead = \$2.2 million annually for allied technologies & \$3.6 million for allied health; State funding through Workforce 2000 funding of approximately \$750,000 annually

- **Technical/Secondary Center:**
 - No federal funding; State funding via Department of Career Education of approximately \$250,000; funding via local school districts (Department of Education) of approximately \$200,000 per year
 - 400 Arkansans served per year
- **Non-credit workforce orientation training:**
 - No federal funding; No State funding through current version of higher education funding formula; formula measures related to non-credit workforce training promised but not yet developed by ADHE
 - 100 Arkansans served per year
- **Adult Education:**
 - Approximately \$200,000 federal funds & \$150,000 State funds per year via Department of Career Education
 - 500 Arkansans served per year
- **Paid internships:**
 - No federal or state funding
 - 50 Arkansans served per year
- **Clinical experiences:**
 - No federal funding & State funding included in cohort program estimate
 - 150 Arkansans served per year
- **Career placement:**
 - No federal funding; No State funding through current version of higher education funding formula; formula measures related to post-completion employment promised but not yet developed by ADHE
 - 250 Arkansans served per year
- **Free transportation to training & education (Opportunity Bus):**
 - State funding via Department of Human Services, using federal USDA SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) in a 50% matching grant of approximately \$100,000 per year
 - 200 Arkansans served per year
- **Career Coaches:**
 - State funding via Department of Career Education of approximately \$150,000 annually; funding via local school districts (Department of Education) of approximately \$75,000 per year
 - 1,500 Arkansans served per year
- **How do these programs address the larger workforce needs of the State?**
 - **How is this determination made? What data/resources do you rely upon to make informed decisions about program offerings and their success?**
 - Primary information source is direct relationships/partnerships with business & healthcare community
 - The annual Economic Security Report, created by Act 852 of 2015 provides actual employment & wage data per program for all public colleges & universities in Arkansas

- ADWS maintains current high-demand occupation lists
 - **How do you connect with business and industry to understand workforce skill needs, trends, technology, etc.? Are there standing groups that you work with? If so, who, how, and why?**
 - Primary connection occurs continually through training, internships, clinical education partnerships with individual employers
 - ANC has 13 advisory councils (110 members) for each of its allied technologies & allied health programs that convene at least once per year
 - **What additional help can the State provide to offer greater understanding or clarity around its workforce needs? Is there additional data that you could use?**
 - More widely disseminated data from AEDC in terms of specific job sector needs forecast in the future
- **What improvements are needed for the State's workforce/education/talent development system? What improvements are needed for the programs you oversee or offer?**
 - The higher education funding formula administered by ADHE needs to incorporate a cost element for high-demand/high-wage/high-cost academic programs; otherwise, no incentive is provided to colleges to invest in expensive programs that Arkansas' economy needs when funding points can be earned just as easily with low cost programs for which a surplus of graduates already exists; consideration of a cost element has been promised by ADHE but with no timeline of or commitment to integration
 - Currently, OSD grant procedures collect post-training wage data immediately at the end of training. The post-training wage data collection should take place six months after the completion of training because most companies require trainees to demonstrate skills/knowledge acquired before issuing wage increases.
 - The OSD grant process should be upgraded to allow for online application submittal & award notification to make the process more efficient/timely
- **What other organizations and/or state agencies do you currently work with to prepare the Arkansas workforce?**
 - **How and why do you work with them?**
 - As described above, ANC works with ADHE, ACE, AEDC, ADWS, ADHS, & Dept. of Education (via local school districts)
 - ADWS assists with student referrals for unemployed persons
 - ANC partners with Department of Corrections to provide Construction Technology training to local inmates
 - **Are there other groups or state agencies that you would benefit from working with?**
- **What is the most important piece of information that this taskforce, for workforce education excellence, should consider as it moves forward with its work?**
 - The new higher education funding formula development process must be urgently committed to incorporating meaningful elements to provide incentive for colleges to be accountable for needed non-credit workforce training and post-completion employment outcomes, as well as timely integration of a cost factor for high-demand/high-wage/high-cost programs; otherwise, the funding model will work in contradiction to the Governor's published master plan for advancing Arkansas' economy

- **In addition to the questions outlined above, please be prepared to cite specific examples of programmatic alignment that address the state's workforce needs.**
 - See responses to first question; specific examples include Big River Steel start-up & commissioning training, the WORK & Jobs Council programs for workforce orientation of underserved populations, & a dozen specific paid internship programs