

# LWDB 20, CareerSource Research Coast (CSRC) Workforce Readiness Taskforce QUARTERLY REPORT

## A. GENERAL INFORMATION

**Report quarter:** Quarter 2, 2024

**Date of meeting:** June 6, 2024

**Report prepared by:** Christina Coble, CSRC Business Services Manager

**Local workforce development board contact:** Christina Coble, Business Services Manager

**Date:** 06/31/2024

## B. ATTENDANCE

Name	Organization	Industry or Education Organization	Contact Information
Bill Wilcox	Phoenix Metal Products	Manufacturing	772-595-6586 Bill.wilcox@earthlink.net
Karen Giovengo	HCA Lawnwood Hospital	Healthcare	772-468-4500 Karen.giovengo@healthcare.com
Lana Barros	Martin County School District	Martin County School District	772-219-1200 barrosl@martinschools.org
Aliesha Seitz	St. Lucie Public Schools	St. Lucie Public Schools	772-429-5559 Aliesha.seitz@stlucieschools.org
Christi Shields	Treasure Coast Technical College	Treasure Coast Technical College	772-564-5006 Chirsti.shields@indianriverschools.org
Christina Coble (guest)	CareerSource Research Coast		
Jennifer Eimann (guest)	CareerSource Research Coast		

Name	Organization	Industry or Education	Contact Information
Martin Rivera (guest)	CareerSource Research Coast		
Anita Fisher (guest)	St. Lucie County Economic Development Council		
Stephanie Etter (guest)	Indian River State College		

## B. SUMMARY REPORT

1. Summary analysis of the local labor market based on the industry representative needs and education offerings. (Provide summary)

Christina Coble, Business Services Manager, presented a report on the local workforce development board's labor market information for Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River Counties. As part of the work being done by CSRC on the four-year plan and the regional planning area, the LMI assists in determining future workforce training needs, identifying labor availability, ascertaining prevailing wage rates, and exploring potential markets.

Specific areas of the report were highlighted:

Population and Job Growth: Between 2018 and 2023, the population increased by 10% (63,412), and jobs increased by 10.6% (54,000).

It was noted that job increases in our region outpaced the national growth rate of 3.9% by 6.7%. Thus, the LWDB 20 area is tracking ahead of the national job growth rate.

As the number of jobs increased, the labor force participation rate increased from 51.9% to 52.5% between 2018 and 2023.

Additionally, projections through 2028 reflect a continued increase in job growth through 2025, leveling off between 2026-2028.

In addition, it appears that our region's labor force will begin to decrease in 2024. A discussion of possible reasons was discussed within the committee, with commuting patterns, older workers retiring, and seasonal employment identified as explanations.

The report indicates that 301,569 people are projected to retire soon in our region, which is considerably higher than the national average. Couple that with the projected number of millennials in our area who are expected to take the roles of those retiring, and we show less than the national average. This may challenge our region in terms of finding a skilled workforce to replace retiring workers.

Educational Attainment: 19.1% of the LWDB 20 area residents possess a bachelor's degree, 2.1% below the national average, and 10.7% hold an associate's degree, 1.8% above the national average.

Growing Industries: The top growing industries in our region are healthcare, construction, administrative and support, and transportation and warehousing. The consortium members represent these industries, and we must continue working together to ensure continued opportunities and provide a talent pipeline in our region.

## 2. Information on priority industry sectors and occupations for the local area. (Provide summary)

A discussion regarding Master Credentials List was initiated among the task force. The Master Credentials List is a comprehensive list of state-approved degree and non-degree credentials of value that prepare Floridians for in-demand occupations.

Christi Shields, Director, Treasure Coast Technical College, discussed the master credentials list and the potential implications of certifications slated for deletion in 2025-2026, particularly for healthcare and the food service industries.

Ms. Shields stated that the Master Credentials List application is open year-round for Florida school districts, Florida College System institutions, and local workforce development boards to submit credentials for consideration and remove those no longer eligible.

Ms. Shields stated that many credentials, including two certifications important to our area, nursing assistant and safe serve, are up for deletion in 2025-2026 from the master credential list.

After further discussion, the Workforce Readiness Task Force proposed involving industry partners in assessing how these changes could impact credentialing requirements for hiring purposes. The discussion also revolved around the impending September 30, 2024, deadline for credential applications and the potential addition of new certifications aligned with employer needs.

Ms. Shields stated that these certifications are not slated to be removed until 2025-2026, so there is time for the consortium members/industry partners to discuss further how their removal from the Master Credentials List could impact credentialing requirements for hiring purposes.

Ms. Coble offered to send out the complete Master Credentials List so that task force members would have time to review it. Then, at the September meeting, a further discussion on how the industry credentials students earn align with the workforce they will enter and how to use this state credential attainment and employer demand data to align the region's education system with workforce demand.

Lana Barros, Director of Innovation & Choice, Martin County School District, added that the Workforce Readiness Task Force's work is important in ensuring that the programs and certifications offered in our high schools appear on the master credential list and align with what our employers want and need.

### 3. Information on the status of existing talent pipelines for in-demand occupations. (Provide summary)

Christina Coble, Business Services Manager, stated that CSRC had just received instructions from the state regarding the development of a WIOA four-year plan. Tracey McMorris, Vice President of Operations/COO, has taken the lead in that process and has identified Shelly Batton, Colleen Gill, and Christina Coble to work with on all data collection.

Ms. Coble explained that staff looks at Labor Market Information (LMI) in the region to assist with making an informed decision about essential elements such as demand for occupations and industries, compensation trends, and workforce demographics to determine the direction of the next four years.

In addition, soliciting information and feedback from local industry and education partners is essential to developing the plan and ensuring we are aware of the talent pipelines needed for in-demand occupations.

Ms. Coble asked the task force what CareerSource Research Coast (CSRC) could do better over the next four years to market our services and increase our engagement with employers, enhancing the collaborative and creative efforts between CSRC and area employers and ensuring their needs are met.

Response provided by the task force:

- Partner with high school to provide resources for employment after graduation/on-campus hiring events and input about in-demand occupations.
- Possible internships during the summer for high school graduates to allow employers time to build skill sets.
- More in-person targeted engagement with employers regarding available services
- Survey to identify the workforce development needs of businesses
- Develop resources to address identified workforce development needs

Bill Wilcox, President, Phoenix Metals, inquired how information is provided to employers moving into our region about both workforce and the local economy.

Anita Fischer, Director of Workforce Readiness at the Economic Development Council (EDC) of St. Lucie County, stated that whether an employer is opening or expanding a business, the EDC's job is to bring together all the partner organizations to provide the resources needed to the employer.

Ms. Fischer stated that the EDC is working to streamline the process to make it easier for employers to locate the specific information they need and make it more accessible. Bringing CSRC in at the beginning of the process as a collaborator to service the employer's needs and address questions regarding the workforce can increase employer engagement at the onset of the process. Companies may be concerned about their ability to find skilled labor when there are low unemployment rates. Through partnership with local economic development partners, CSRC can present the required services and programs to train and develop the labor force.