

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

## A. GENERAL INFORMATION

**Report quarter:** Quarter 3, 2025

**Date of meeting:** September 4, 2025

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

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

**Date** 09/29/2025

## B. ATTENDANCE

Name	Organization	Industry or Education Organization	Contact Information
Aliesha Seitz	St. Lucie Public Schools	St. Lucie Public Schools	772-449-5559 Vashitie.seitz@stlucieschools.org
Lana Barros	Martin County School District	Martin County School District	772-219-1200 barros@martinschools.org
Linda Fitzpatrick	Keiser University	Keiser University	772-398-9990 lfitzpatrick@keiseruniversity.edu
Christi Shields	Indian River County School District	Indian River County School District	772-564-5006 christi.shields@indianriverschools.org
Anita Fischer (guest)	Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County	Economic Development Council of St. Lucie Council of St. Lucie County	772.324.2014 ext 204 afischer@youredc.com
Jim Brann (guest)	The Porch Factory	Skilled Trades	admin@diyscreenroom.com

Deb Frazier (guest)	Treasure Coast Builder's Association	Skilled Trades	deb@treasurecoastba.com
Abrianna Brown (guest)	Florida Training Services	Skilled Trades	abrianna.emery@fltrainingservices.com
Sean Mitchell (guest)	Boys and Girls Clubs of St. Lucie County	Education	Smitchell@bgcofslc.org
Leslie Haviland (guest)	Cleveland Clinic Martin Health	Healthcare	havilal@ccf.org
Christina Coble	CareerSource Research Coast	CareerSource Research Coast	
Jennifer Eimann	CareerSource Research Coast	CareerSource Research Coast	

## B. SUMMARY REPORT

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

This quarter's meeting focused on the skilled trades sector, delving more deeply into the needs and challenges of this industry.

Christina Coble, CSRC Business Services Manager, presented regional skilled trades labor market data to provide context for the discussion. The LMI examines manufacturing across the three-county Treasure Coast region (Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties) for the period 2024-2028. The LMI indicates that the region is a hot spot for construction-skilled trades talent, with supply levels significantly above the national average. The sector employs 28,253 potential workers and maintains robust growth momentum despite some economic softening.

#### Compensation and Competition

- **Average annual earnings:** \$60,946 (slightly below national average)
- **Competition level:** 149 vs. national average of 117 (high demand environment)

- The combination of high supply and high demand creates a dynamic, competitive marketplace

### **Growth Trajectory**

- Five-year growth: 25% increase (2019-2024)
- Future projections: 9% growth expected through 2029
- Post-COVID construction boom has driven significant regional expansion
- Growth is moderate but remains healthy for long-term sustainability

### **Workforce Demographics**

- Age distribution: Majority of workers aged 25-54
- Retirement risk: Above-average concern with 8,000+ potential retirees approaching
- Diversity: Strong racial diversity; gender diversity higher than national **average(though still male-dominated)**
- **Low youth participation:** 14-18 age group is minimally represented due to insurance

### **Employment Stability**

- Unemployment patterns show a strong recovery post-2020, with consistently low rates from January 2022 through the present. The industry demonstrated resilience, quickly rebounding from initial COVID impacts.

### **Industry Composition**

Primary job categories include:

- Construction and extraction occupations (majority)
- Management positions
- Installation, maintenance, and repair
- Supporting roles: office/administrative, business operations, transportation

### **Market Demand Indicators**

- Active employers: 500 companies posted jobs in the last 12 months
- Job postings: 1,792 unique opportunities
- Median posting duration: 32 days

- Employer diversity: Broad range prevents reliance on single companies

### **Economic Impact**

The industry generates substantial regional economic value:

- Gross regional product: \$2.3 billion (2024)
- Total earnings: \$1.8 billion
- Property income: \$518.4 million
- Tax revenue: \$29.1 million

### **Strategic Outlook**

Continuous growth since 2011 demonstrates industry viability following the 2007-2011 recession recovery. The workforce board has designated this as a priority industry for training investments, ensuring alignment between skill development and employment opportunities.

Construction skilled trades represent a cornerstone industry with strong fundamentals, diverse opportunities, and sustained growth potential despite broader economic uncertainties.

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

Skilled Trades represents a vital and growing sector for the Treasure Coast, offering above-average wages and strong growth and career prospects. The industry's projected growth rate was 25% between 2019-2024 and is projected to continue to grow 9% between 2025 and 2029. Skilled Trades are trainable occupations, making it an attractive career pathway for workforce development initiatives. The sector demonstrates diversity in both company size and workforce composition, with a healthy age distribution suggesting sustainable long-term growth.

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

As planned, a panel discussion was conducted regarding the current talent pipeline in Skilled Trades within the local area and included both WRT members and guest panelists from local manufacturers who were invited to participate. The panel and WRT members discussed the biggest challenges in workforce within the Skilled Trades sector. The following is a summary of the key workforce

challenges discussed by the panel, including guest industry experts Jim Brann, Deb Frazier, and Abrianna Brown.

### **Primary Workforce Challenges:**

**Employer Hesitation and Training Concerns:** Education providers report that employers increasingly avoid hiring young workers who require training, preferring to recruit experienced employees from competitors rather than invest in developing new talent. This trend stems from concerns about reliability, retention, and the perceived attitude that younger workers view positions as temporary jobs rather than long-term career opportunities.

**Generational Workplace Tensions:** A significant disconnect exists between older, experienced workers and younger employees entering the trades. Younger workers often perceive senior employees as uninvolved or overly critical, while experienced workers question the work ethic and commitment of newer hires. This dynamic creates workplace friction that impacts productivity and job satisfaction across age groups.

**Skills and Soft Skills Gaps:** Beyond technical training needs, employers consistently cite concerns about fundamental workplace behaviors, including punctuality, reliability, phone usage policies, and professional communication skills among younger workers.

**Pre-Apprenticeship to Apprenticeship Pipeline:** Successful programs create clear pathways from high school career and technical education (CTE) programs through pre-apprenticeships and into formal apprenticeships. This model includes 14 different pre-apprenticeship tracks, providing students with industry exposure and employers with a trained candidate pool.

### **Industry Perception and Career Development Challenges**

**Addressing Skilled Trades Stigma:** Participants acknowledged that the construction and skilled trades industries struggle with public perception, often viewed as less prestigious than four-year college paths. Successful programs combat this through:

- Integration of modern technology and equipment in training programs
- Clear demonstration of earning potential and career advancement opportunities
- Exposure to entrepreneurial possibilities within trades
- Multi-trade training to increase marketability and career options

**Business Philosophy Evolution** Progressive employers report success through adapting management approaches to meet changing workforce expectations. This includes flexible scheduling, mentorship programs, goal-setting sessions with employees, financial literacy training, and comprehensive benefits packages. Rather than maintaining traditional hierarchical structures, successful businesses focus on employee development and career pathway communication.

### **Recommendations and Next Steps**

**Enhanced Business Engagement** Moving beyond traditional job placement approaches, the group emphasized the need for sustained business involvement in workforce development. This includes supervisor and manager training for working with younger employees, ongoing coaching support during placement periods, and long-term thinking about industry talent pipeline development.

**Integrated Support Systems** Successful programs require coordination between multiple stakeholders, including educational institutions, economic development organizations, community groups like Boys and Girls Clubs, and individual businesses. This collaborative approach ensures comprehensive support for both students and employers throughout the placement and training process.

**Sustainable Funding Models** While external funding proved crucial for initial program success, participants recognized the need to develop sustainable models that don't rely on grant funding. This includes demonstrating return on investment to employers and developing cost-sharing arrangements that make programs economically viable long-term.

### **Future Focus Areas**

The group plans to expand these workforce development conversations beyond skilled trades to healthcare and other industries, recognizing that many challenges around generational workplace dynamics, training investments, and career pathway communication are universal across sectors. The next meeting will focus specifically on healthcare workforce development, applying lessons learned from skilled trades initiatives to address similar challenges in medical and healthcare support careers.