



Building a Future-Ready Workforce: The Power of Credentials in Community Colleges

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23 Colleges with 40+ campuses and over 200k students



FIVE-YEAR GOALS & KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



ACCELERATE OPPORTUNITY

Lead a fundamental talent and training transformation for Virginia's Workforce:

- Award 300,000 cumulative meaningful credentials by 2030 across all regions through accelerated access and success for every student.
- Develop a sustainable funding formula.
- Create a pathway for every high school student in Virginia to graduate with a meaningful postsecondary credential.

Engage Business, Industry, & Key Stakeholders

- 1,000+ letters/endorsements signed by business partners.
- Partner with every in-demand industry association.
- Endorsement of the Initiative by all 2025 statewide candidates.

Student & Alumni Engagement

- 50,000+ letters/petitions signed by students/alumni.
- Current students & alumni visit the General Assembly during session.

Comprehensive Statewide Earned & Paid Media Strategy

- 3,500+ student stories (25 per year, per college).
- Stories highlighting key business supporters in every local/regional publication.
- Multimedia strategy pushed via social media.
- Strategic events.

Data & Message Alignment

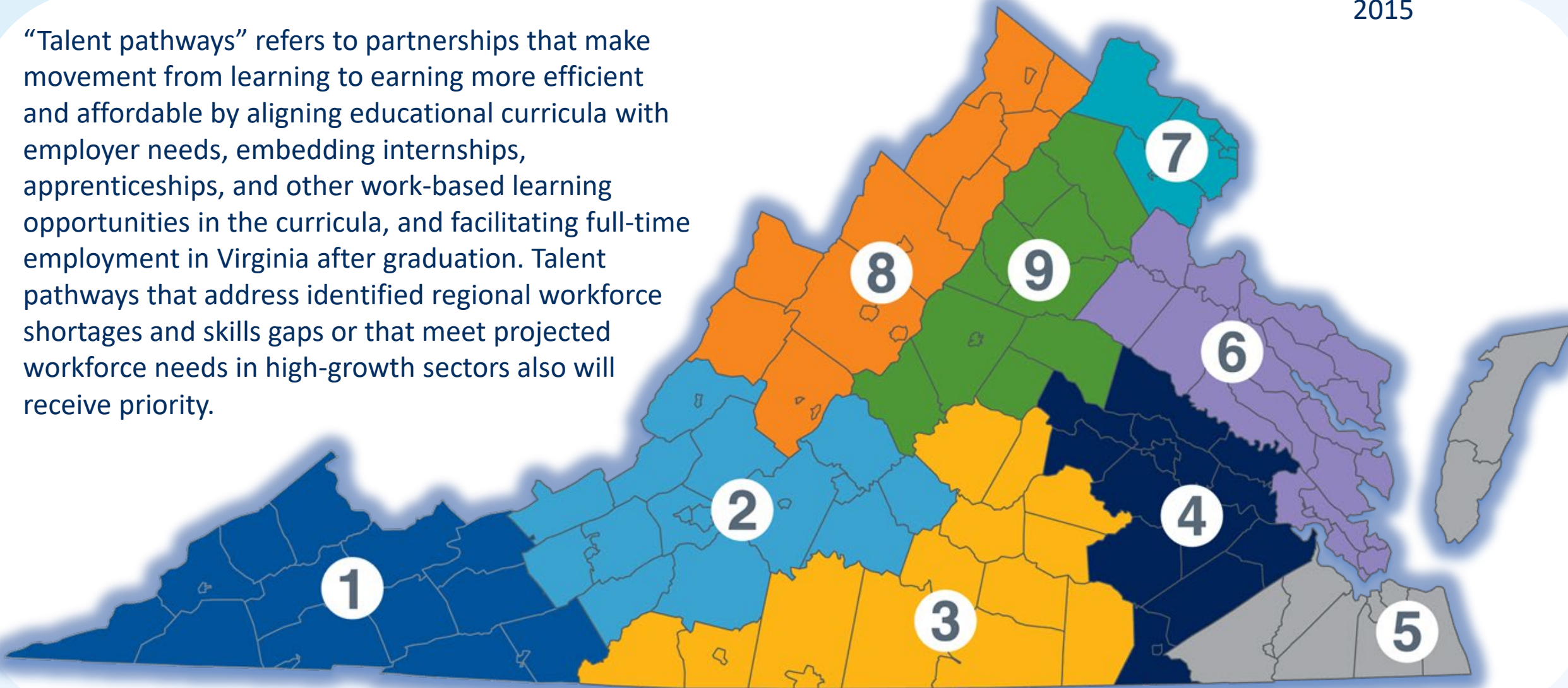
- One collective real-time CRM for workforce, business. partnership, legislative tracking, and communication (**year 2**).
- Message alignment between all stakeholders.

GO VIRGINIA REGIONS



2015

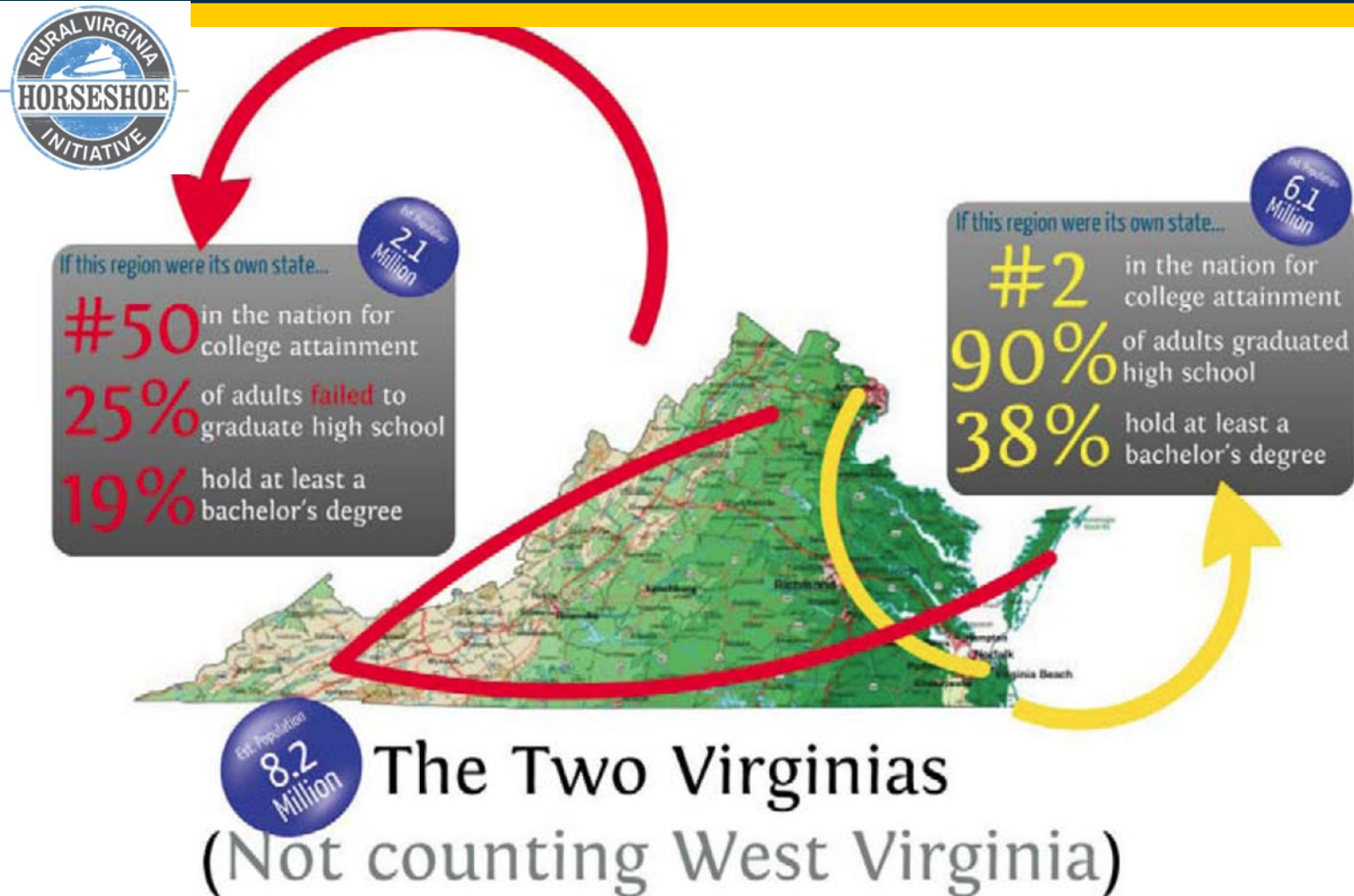
“Talent pathways” refers to partnerships that make movement from learning to earning more efficient and affordable by aligning educational curricula with employer needs, embedding internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities in the curricula, and facilitating full-time employment in Virginia after graduation. Talent pathways that address identified regional workforce shortages and skills gaps or that meet projected workforce needs in high-growth sectors also will receive priority.



RURAL VIRGINIA HORSESHOE INITIATIVE



2014



RURAL VIRGINIA HORSESHOE INITIATIVE



RVH region represents 75% of the Commonwealth's geography + 2.1 million Virginians

- 19% have Bachelor degrees or higher
- 25% lack a high school diploma
- By 2020, 66% of jobs will require postsecondary education or training

Goal:

- Reduce by 50% the number of Horseshoe residents who lack a high school diploma or its equivalence (currently nearly 1 in 4 to 1 in 8)
- Double the number of residents in the Horseshoe with an associate's degree or other college certification from 26% to 52%

RURAL VIRGINIA HORSESHOE INITIATIVE



High School Career Coaches

- 28 Coaches have served 51,000 students

GED incentives:

- 350 - \$1000 incentives per year (50 per pilot college – 7 colleges)
- May fund workforce credential training or academic- credit programs
- May award GED recipients who completed in the last 5 years
- Prioritize completers who can succeed in postsecondary education and training

FASTFORWARD



2016



Program
Details

Training at
Community
College

Credentials
Available

Info for
Employers

Resources

FastForward
Blog

Contact
Us



In-person and online training programs to kick-start your career

FASTFORWARD REQUIREMENTS

- **Industry-recognized:** skills are necessary for performing work functions according to employer standards
- **Portable:** widely recognized by multiple employers, educational institutions, and across geographic areas
- **Competency-based:** awarded upon successful completion of unbiased assessment
- **Third party validated:** contains a process for determining workplace validity, relevance, and continuous improvement
- **CPL:** articulated credit and credit for prior learning (CPL) are key
- **Stackable:** part of a career pathways framework leading to additional competencies, where possible

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY



- Sponsored by a third-party credentialing body
- Program aligns to an occupation in the Virginia Board for Workforce Development's High Demand Occupations list (QR Code)
- Program cannot duplicate an existing high school CTE program
- Labor Market Information projects a 3% or higher growth rate locally
- LMI data should be supported with other data supporting demand locally
 - Recent job postings specifically citing the credential as preferred or required
 - Letters of support from local employers citing the specific credential as necessary for employment
 - Other evidence of support such as minutes from advisory council or regional business forum meetings.

FASTFORWARD CREDENTIALS



- Automotive
- Heating, Venting, & Air Conditioning
- Autobody Repair
- Heavy Equipment
- Building & Construction Technologies
- Information Technology
- Business, Professional Development, & Management
- Manufacturing & Industrial
- Communication
- Trades
- Education
- Plumbing & Pipefitting
- Electrical/Electronic Technology
- Transportation
- Emergency Medical Technology
- Wastewater
- Engineering
- Welding
- Gas Fitting/ Pipefitting
- Health Sciences & Safety

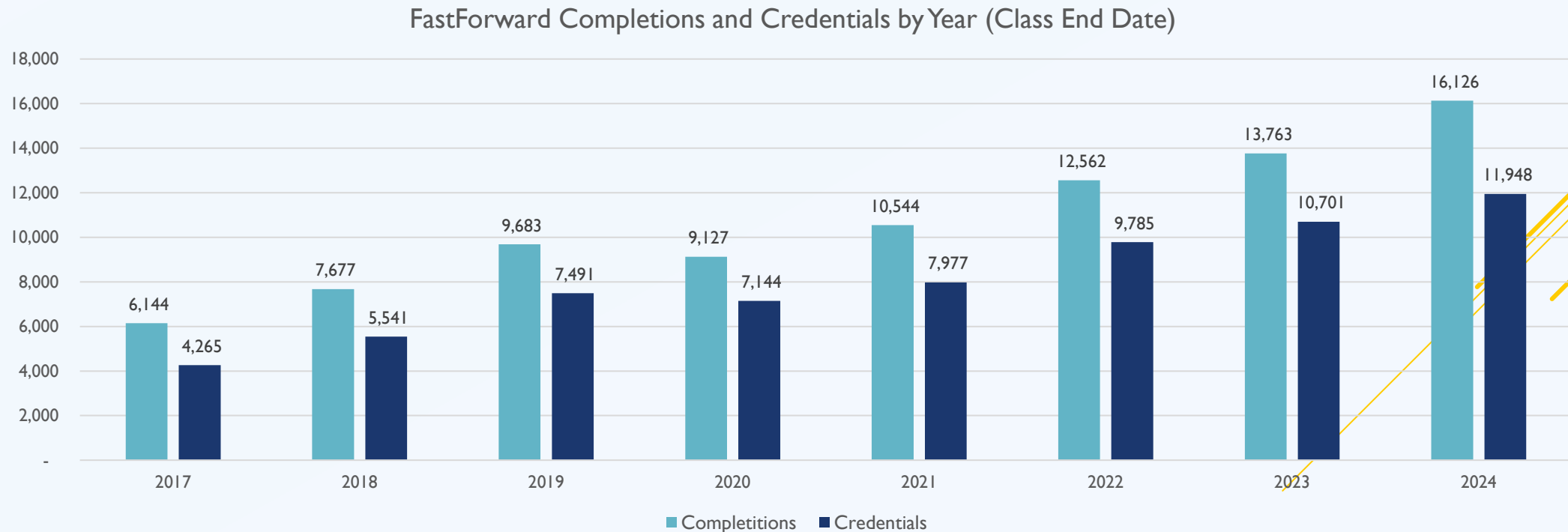
- Over 40% of FastForward students are minorities.
- Over 31% received SNAP or TANF prior to enrolling.
- Over 56% have dependents.
- Average FastForward student is age 34 and 2/3 are new to college.
- FastForward students saw a 55% increase in wages.



Credential Training Available Near You

FASTFORWARD OUTCOMES

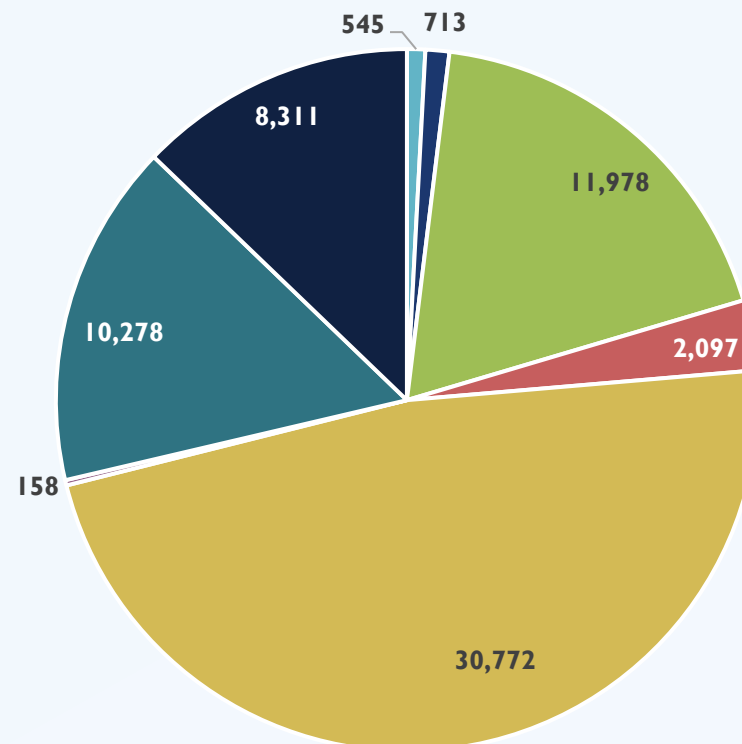
FY 2024 COMPLETIONS GREW BY 17% (95%) AND CREDENTIALS GREW BY 12%. CREDENTIAL COMPLETIONS EXCEEDED CAREER-TECHNICAL ASSOCIATES DEGREES FOR THE FIRST TIME.



FASTFORWARD OUTCOMES

FastForward Credentials by Industry

- Business & Customer Service
- Education
- Health Care
- Information Technology
- Logistics & Transportation
- STEM
- Skilled Trades
- Welding & Manufacturing

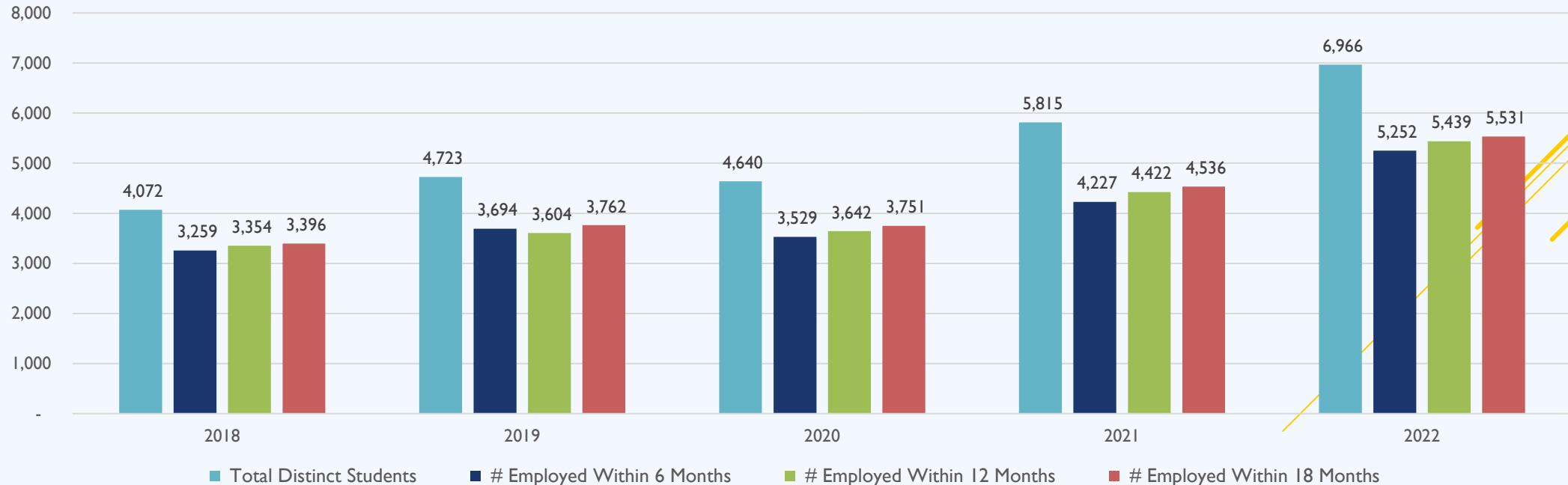


NEARLY 65,000
CREDENTIALS HAVE
BEEN EARNED
SINCE 2016.

FASTFORWARD EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

75% OF FY 2022 CREDENTIAL EARNERS WERE EMPLOYED WITHIN 6 MONTHS. 42,000 EMPLOYED IN VIRGINIA.

Employment Status of FastForward Credential Earners, FY 2018-FY 2022



FASTFORWARD EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Industry	Median Wage Increase
Business & Customer Service	\$10,072
Education	\$29,131
Healthcare	\$13,783
Information Technology	\$24,787
Logistics & Transportation	\$16,259
Skilled Trades	\$23,426
Welding & Manufacturing	\$23,849

WAGE GAINS IN EVERY INDUSTRY

Since inception, FastForward students have earned nearly \$6.3 billion in wages as tracked in the UI data. Nearly \$2.6 Billion in logistics and transportation industries with an average wage of nearly \$50k in FY 2023. Just over \$1 Billion in Healthcare with an average wage of \$31k.

FASTFORWARD STUDENTS



CREDENTIAL EARNERS:

- 89% SAID THEIR CREDENTIAL IS SOMETHING EMPLOYERS WANT
- 75% GET PAID VACATION
- 75% GET EMPLOYER-PAID MEDICAL INSURANCE
- 83% ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR JOB DUTIES

STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES



Why
FastForward?

Program
Details

Credentials
Available

Info for
Employers

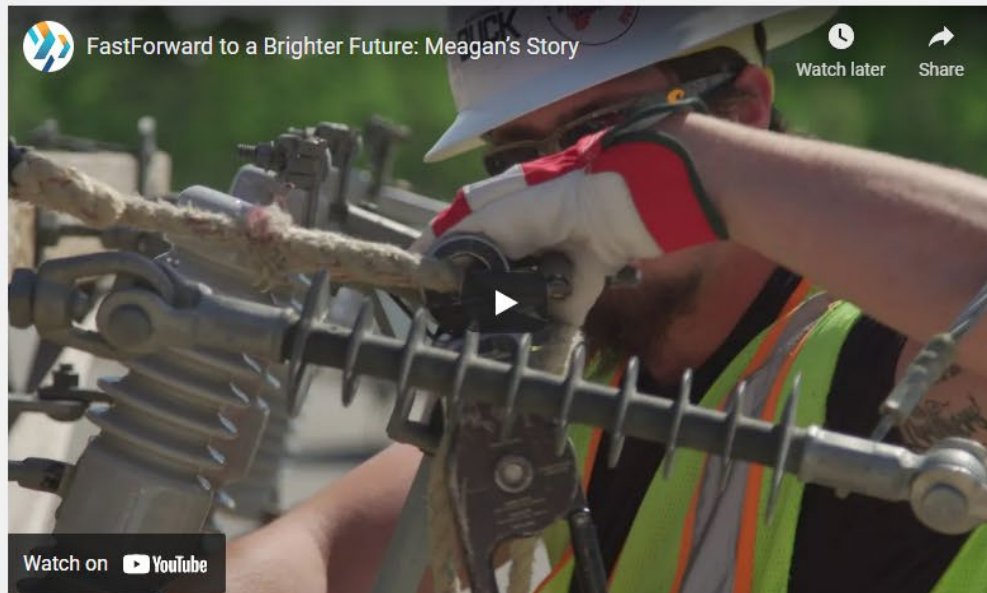
Resources

FastForward
Blog

Contact Us

FastForward in Action

<https://fastforwardva.org>



2,209 views • July 18, 2019

FastForward to a Brighter Future: Megan's Story

We talked to Meagan Yeager, a FastForward graduate, about her experience going through the powerline worker program at Southside Virginia Community College. She climbed, she trained and 11 weeks later, Meagan had a job and a secure future at Virginia's largest electric utility.

Share



See More Videos

Investments in Capacity Building

Funding allows for the creation of 21st Century Learning Spaces which included virtual reality, simulators, Hyflex, interdisciplinary approaches to instruction, IET, professional development, mobile labs, and extensive building renovations allowing for colleges to address capacity issues.



PROGRAM CAPACITY BUILDING



VIRGINIA INFRASTRUCTURE ACADEMY



Energy + Trades & Utilities + Transportation, Bridge & Highway

In partnership with the Lumina Foundation, Virginia's Community Colleges (VCCS) is working to leverage resources, expand, and streamline efforts to meet the needs of in-demand infrastructure industries and provide short-term industry training and credentials leading to employment for thousands of Virginians.

Projected Outcomes

- 35,000 infrastructure jobs over the next five years.
- Increased employer hiring based on availability to find skilled workers.
- 55% wage increases for students who complete their credential.
- Streamlined employer-partner network that increases job placement rates.

AWS INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS



Virginia has become known as the Cloud Capital of the World, with **70%** of the world's internet running through the Commonwealth. Businesses from around the globe have committed billions of dollars in new data center and other large-scale data infrastructure construction projects around the state.

This means **1,000+** new high-paying infrastructure jobs in the coming years for Virginians with the right skills and certifications to make these projects a reality. One of those organizations is **Amazon Web Services (AWS)**, who has **invested \$63.9 billion to date in Virginia**, and last year committed to investing an **additional \$35 billion** in the Commonwealth. These investments mean jobs in Virginia, both with AWS and with the hundreds of Virginia-based businesses AWS relies on to support the construction and operation of its data centers.

In-Demand Jobs:

- **Electrical**
- **HVAC**
- **Fiber Optics**
- **Data Center Tech**

AWS JOB OPPORTUNITIES



AWS Jobs

View available **AWS** jobs in Virginia below.



Amazon

[View Jobs](#)

Fiber Jobs

View available **Fiber** jobs in Virginia below.



NTI National Technologies

[View Jobs](#)

Power Jobs

View available **Power** jobs in Virginia below.



Dominion Energy

[View Jobs](#)

Electrical Jobs

View available **Electrical** jobs in Virginia below.



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 26 (Washington, D.C.)

[View Jobs](#)



The Electrical Alliance

[View Jobs](#)



Rosendin

[View Jobs](#)

VIRGINIA INFRASTRUCTURE ACADEMY

Recently awarded federal congressionally directed spending of \$1.5 million to support 4 colleges' VIA programming:

- Laurel Ridge Community College - Establish Powerline Worker Program
- Blue Ridge Community College - Expand Heavy Equipment Operator Program
- Mountain Gateway Community College - Launch Heavy Equipment Operator Program
- Wytheville Community College - Enhance Heavy Equipment Operator Program

Nuclear Worker Training Program Coming to PVCC

- In cooperation with Day and Zimmerman
- Staffing provider for Dominion Energy
- First Cohort Feb of 2025 ahead of the March (outage) - Refueling at the Lake Anna Nuclear Facility

BPI Updates - \$5m federal grant to support data centers and broadband:

- Amazon web services page is live: <https://fastforwardva.org/aws>
- First Fiber Optics Technician Training began this week at LRCC
- Two others will launch at GCC and PVCC in November

Invitation to VCCS Skilled Trades Summit focusing on:

- Identifying trends and forming partnerships
- Addressing workforce gaps and training needs
- Highlighting FastForward and VIA programs for employers' hiring needs

Skilled Trades Summit

October 22, 2024, from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
The Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center
110 Shenandoah Avenue
Roanoke, VA 24016



VIRGINIA ENERGY – VIRGINIA TRAINING FOR RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CONTRACTORS (TREC)

Virginia's Allocation: ~\$3.4M

The Training for Residential Energy Contractor (TREC) Program makes \$200 million available to state energy offices to:

- ▶ Train, test, and certify residential energy efficiency and electrification contractors
- ▶ Prepare the workforce to meet demand for HOMES / HEAR implementation

To be managed by a new Virginia Energy coordinator, in close partnership with many partners, supporting SWAM contractors and serving disadvantaged communities

The Virginia TREC Program will support the occupations of:

- ▶ HVAC Technicians
- ▶ Plumbers
- ▶ Weatherization Installers and Technicians

Virginia's Community Colleges and the Virginia Infrastructure Academy will provide training and RTI for registered apprenticeships

VIRGINIA G3



2020



Find Your College

For Employers



Learn How to Qualify

G3 FAQs

About G3

Participating Colleges

Programs

GET A SKILL
GET A JOB
GET AHEAD

Healthcare



WHAT IS G3?

THIS LAST DOLLAR GRANT PROGRAM IS FOR STUDENTS WHO:



**Classify as Low or
Middle Income**

Household below 400% FPL
Roughly \$111,000 for a
family of four



Qualify for In-state Tuition
Domiciled - Resided in Virginia
for a least one-year with the
intent to stay and work here



**Are Part-Time or Full-Time with
a Minimum of Six Credits**



Have a 2.0 GPA or Higher



Are of Any Age

Past the compulsory age for
high school (no longer in high
school); adults pursuing their
GED is acceptable based on
educational program eligibility



**Student Success Incentive
Grant (SSIG) provides full-
time full-Pell credit students
with \$900 per semester and
\$450 per summer term**



**Complete the Financial Aid
Application (FAFSA or FANTIC)
Last Dollar with a 3-year max;
can still receive G3 with a
Bachelor's degree or higher**



**-Enroll in an IT/Computer Science, Skilled
Trades/Manufacturing/Construction,
Healthcare, Education, Public Safety,
Hospitality or Culinary Arts Programs
-G3 can be used for FastForward and credit
programs simultaneously (same pathway) and
promote stackable credentials and CPL**



**Currently, G3 can be used to
cover 100% of tuition for an
incarcerated student in a G3-
approved program**

STACKABLE CREDENTIALS IN 6 DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES



Education



Healthcare



Hospitality & Culinary Arts



Information Technology



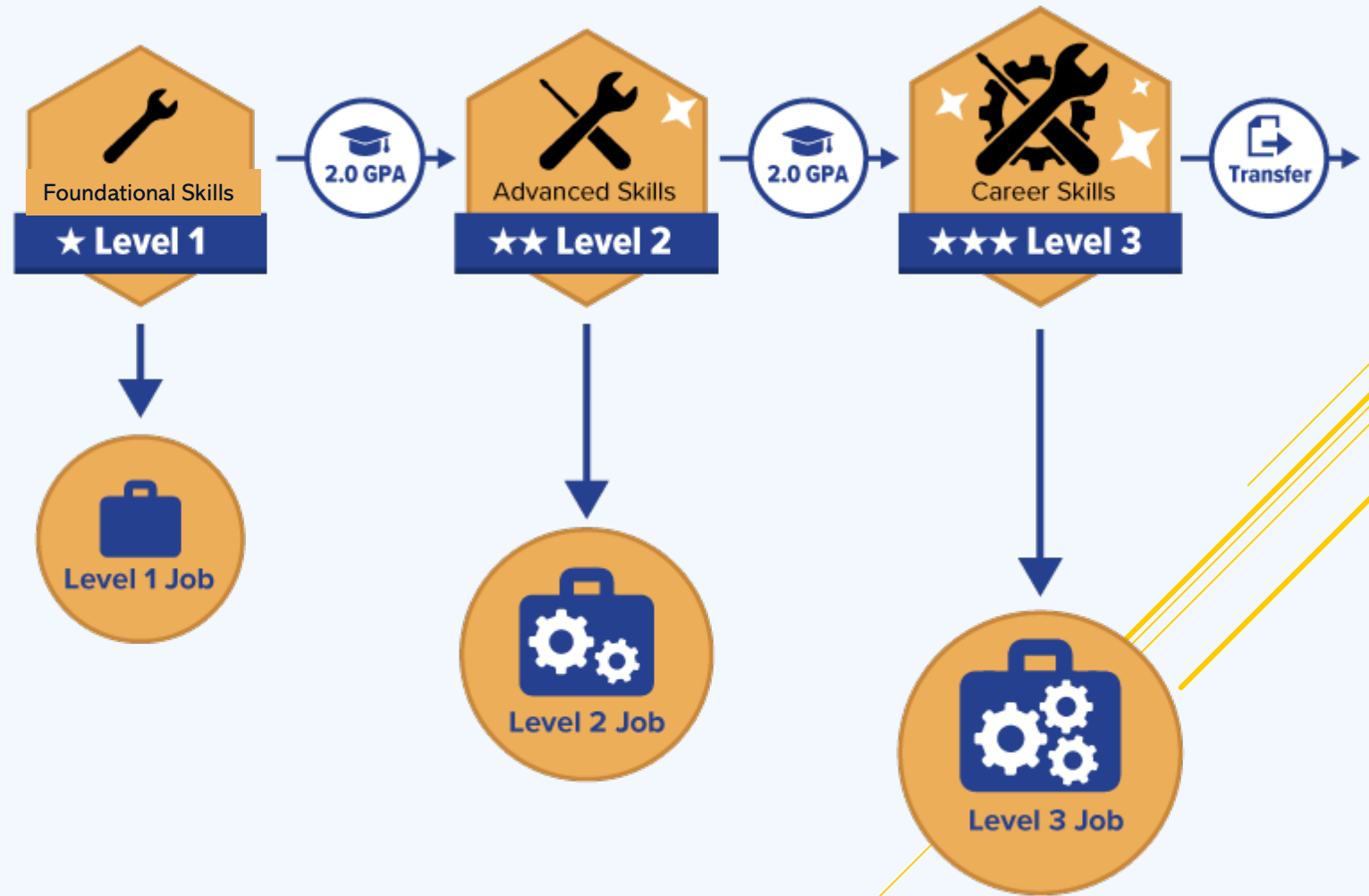
Public Safety



Skilled Trades,
Manufacturing &
Construction

STACKABLE CREDENTIALS

- ▶ Designed around the life challenges of working students
- ▶ Puts skills first and allows students to earn stackable college credentials as they move through their education
- ▶ Allows a student to start and stop (while working) without losing academic progress along the way to an associate degree



YEAR 3 OUTCOMES



FY24

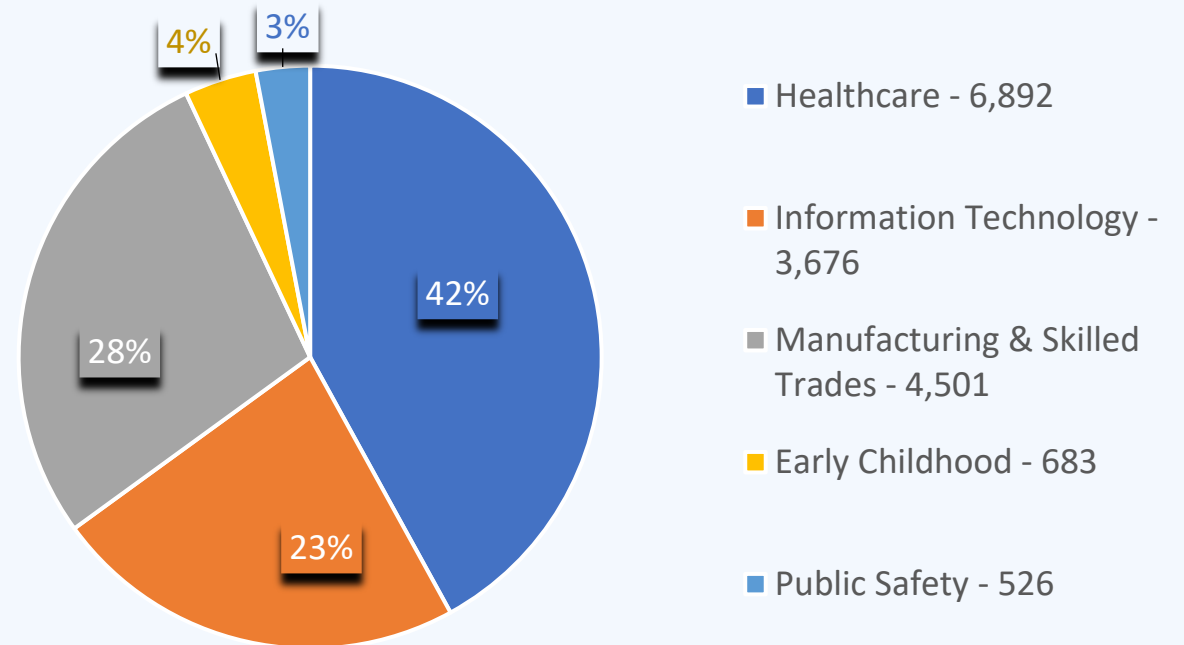
13,648 students received \$22.9 million G3 funding

Enrollments by Race	Credit	WCG-Noncredit
White	48%	33%
Black/African-American	25%	40%
Hispanic	14%	10%
Asian	6%	5%

Helping the ALICE population: 31% of G3 students are below the federal poverty level and over 56% were below 200% FPL.

\$\$\$ Wage gains: For 2021-22 completers of G3 academic credit programs, the median annual wage more than doubled, with an increase from \$19,832 to \$41,130.

G3 Enrollments by Industry



GET AHEAD

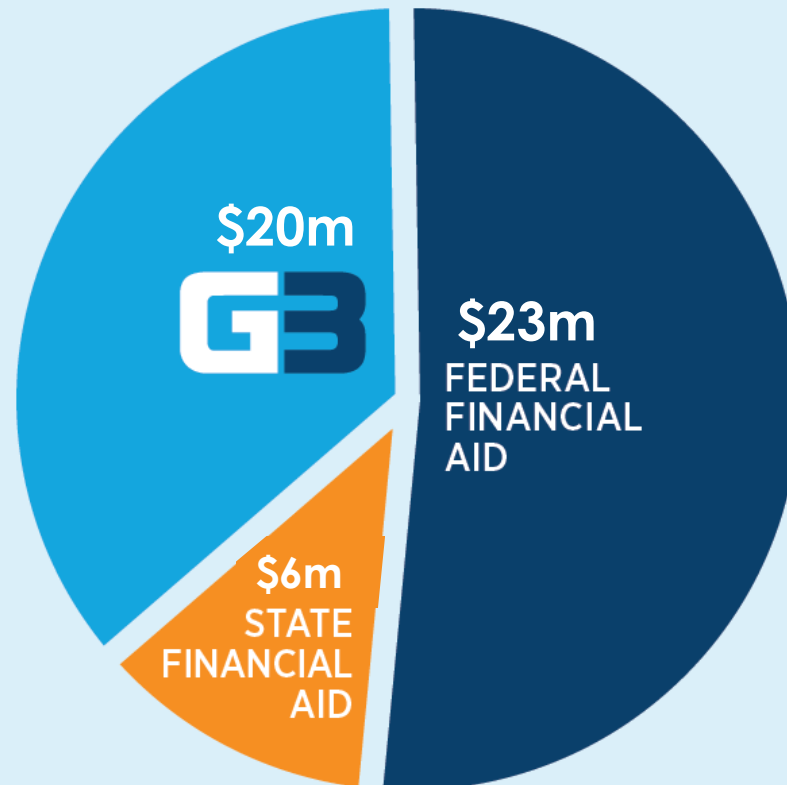
49% of students were adults over the age of 25

84% of students retained semester over semester

2,799 degrees, certificates and diplomas earned

9% increase in enrollment in G3-eligible programs year over year

During the 2022-23 academic year, Virginia's Community Colleges received \$34.5 million in G3 financial aid dollars to be awarded to qualified students. Of this, \$30.5 million was allocated to colleges for students in associate degree and certificate programs and \$2 million was allocated for students in noncredit WCG programs. Approximately \$20.6 million in G3 tuition assistance was disbursed to 12,594 eligible VCCS students during the 2022-23 academic year.



2,998

low-income, full-time students received **Student Success Initiative Grants**



54%

of students receiving G3 were from families earning below 200% of the **Federal Poverty Level**



DUAL ENROLLMENT & TRANSFER



www.transfervirginia.org

Dual Enrollment & High School

- ▶ 8.62% increase in DE FTEs from 2023-2024
- ▶ 20,387 Dual FTE
- ▶ 52,193 Dual headcount
- ▶ 135 High School Career Coaches in 185 high schools
- ▶ 24.2% VCCCS students are dual enrollment
- ▶ New legislation is creating College & Career Ready Virginia

Transfer

- ▶ Collaboration between the Commonwealth's two- and four-year colleges and universities, SCHEV, and the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program.
- ▶ Removes gateway barriers
- ▶ Improve credit efficiency
- ▶ Improve time to transfer
- ▶ Improve degree attainment rates

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL)

www.credits2careers.org

**Virginia's community colleges and CPL –
Reviewing all FastForward programs for CPL, creating stackable career pathways into academic credit programs**

How can CPL be earned?

- ▶ Exams & Standardized Tests
- ▶ Professional Certifications & Awards
- ▶ Workplace Experience & Training
- ▶ Military Service
- ▶ College credits earned at another college or university



Credits2Careers Features



**Guiding Heroes to
Their Future**



**FastForward
Credentialers**



**Justice Impacted
Individuals**



Financial Assistance



Fastest Degree



Source: CAEL and WICHE
websites:
cael.org/pla-impact and
wiche.edu/recognition-of-learning.

How does CPL help adults?

**12-15 CPL
credits
awarded**

**9 to 14
Months
Time saved**

**\$1,500 to
\$10,200
Money Saved**

**17.6 More
Credits**

Completion
rates: **49%**
with CPL
27% without

Boosted
completion
rates by: 17%
for all CPL,
30% CPL
excluding credit
for military

16 CREDITS FOR PRIOR LEARNING AND 125 CLINICAL HOURS FOR ASSOCIATES IN NURSING

CNA is a prerequisite for the LPN which stacks RMA, CPT, CCMA. Earning the LPN credential in this pathway makes students eligible for 16 CPL in the RN program pathway, skipping the 1st year.



THANK YOU!

Dr. Angela Lawhorne
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