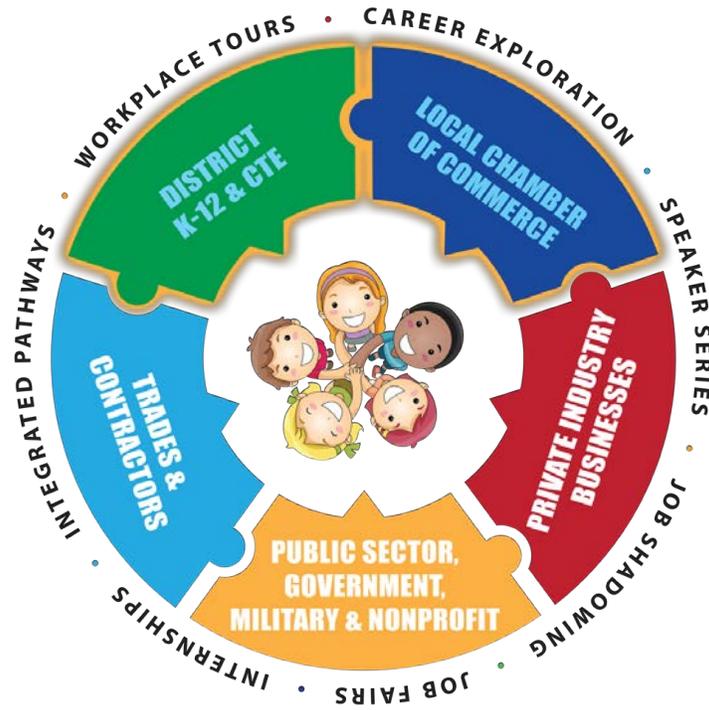


Career Readiness West Virginia



Marion County Summary Report

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Introduction

The following report provides a summary of the Career Readiness West Virginia analysis and recommendations for Marion County. To assess the Growth, Decline, and Opportunities facing both education and local industry, Forge Business Solutions worked with the members of the Marion County Board of Education and the Marion County Chamber of Commerce through the **Career Readiness West Virginia initiative**.

The Career Readiness West Virginia initiative is a collaborative partnership developing a sustainable future for the next generation of the workforce. The model brings together public education and local chambers of commerce, to partner with public and private sector employers, government, trades and contractors, and nonprofits to drive career and workforce development in local communities.

To gather insight on local industry trends, career opportunities, and active community partnerships, Forge distributed a multi-county online survey via SurveyMonkey to business leaders and employers throughout the Greater Marion County Region. The survey respondents completed the online Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020 (refer to Appendix A) and their responses were documented (refer to page 9 and Appendix B).

Additionally, Forge examined economic data, reviewed current partnerships and collaborations, and investigated relationships that can be created or enhanced. Through this work, Forge determined where collaboration can be fostered to develop a sustainable partnership model between local industry, public school districts, and Career Technical Education.

Forge has identified seven activities in which industry and education can collaborate to support workforce development: **Internships, Speakers' Series, Job Shadowing, Job Fairs, Integrated Pathways, Career Exploration, and Workplace Tours**.

Our sincere appreciation goes to Superintendent Randy Farley and Tina Shaw, President of the Marion County Chamber of Commerce, for their dedication to their community and support of Career Readiness West Virginia.



Marion County Schools



1516 Mary Lou Retton Drive
Fairmont, WV 26554

Superintendent: Randy Farley

Enrollment: 7,873

“Students who have prepared to be college and or career ready, by mastering various skill sets are quite valuable to the job market. It is of utmost importance for education and business to work together, to strengthen their relationships in the development of the next workforce.”

- **Randy Farley, Superintendent of Marion County Schools**

Marion County Chamber of Commerce



110 Adams Street
Fairmont, WV 26554

President: Tina Shaw

County Population: 56,097

“The Marion County business community values its partnership with the Marion County Board of Education. In today’s economy, it is vital that our students are prepared for the future and assisting with career readiness and public education is a vital part of the Marion County Chamber of Commerce. As they say, “it takes a village,” and our Chamber is a proud supporter of the education initiatives in our county.”

- **Tina Shaw, President of the Marion County Chamber of Commerce**



Marion County Summary

Forge Business Solutions utilized data and facts from the U.S. Census Bureau, West Virginia’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research *Economic Outlook 2020-2024 Report*, WorkForce West Virginia, and FRED Economic Data, as well as additional resources throughout the following report. All references and resources are included near the end of the report. It is important to note that some of the data collected to compose this report was gathered prior to the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Located in north central West Virginia, Marion County is home to Fairmont (county seat), Mannington, Pleasant Valley, as well as other towns and unincorporated communities. As of 2019, Marion County’s population was 56,097, but the county has experienced a slight decline of 0.6% in the total population since 2010.

The local community benefits from the educational and technical institutions, Fairmont State University, Pierpont Community and Technical College, and North Central WV Opportunities Industrialization Center; these institutions support local economic development by enriching the regional workforce through offering varying degrees of study, professional programs, and career certifications.

According to the Data USA 2017 report, the leading industries in Marion County are Health Care & Social Assistance, Accommodation & Food Services, and Educational Services. The most common jobs held by residents of Fairmont, WV by number of employees are Office & Administrative Support Occupations, Sales & Related Occupations, and Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations. Additionally, the highest paid jobs held by residents of Fairmont, WV (by median earnings) are Computer & Mathematical Occupations, Computer, Engineering, & Science Occupations, and Architecture & Engineering Occupations.

As a top employer in the county, Marion County Schools serve about 7,873 of the community’s students with East Fairmont High School, Fairmont Senior High School, North Marion High School, and the supporting middle and elementary schools. As reported in 2017, there are 1,174 employers in Marion County, many of whom are members of the Marion County Chamber of Commerce.

While there is existing engagement between education and industry, Marion County Schools and local community leaders recognize the need to further enhance and expand career opportunities for students in collaboration with businesses in the community. Additionally, many community members communicated their support and dedication toward developing and implementing the [Career Readiness West Virginia partnership model](#).



Largest Employers in Marion County

Name	Industry	Address
1. Marion County Board of Education	Education	1516 Mary Lou Retton Dr, Fairmont, WV 26554
2. Fairmont State University	Education	1201 Locust Ave, Fairmont, WV 26554
3. Murray American Energy	Mining	1027 Little Indian Creek Rd, Morgantown, WV 26501
4. FirstEnergy	Energy	5001 Nasa Blvd, Fairmont, WV 26554
5. Fairmont Regional Medical Center* <i>*Business Closed</i>	Healthcare	1325 Locust Ave, Fairmont, WV 26554
6. Wal-Mart	Retail	32 Tygart Valley Mall, Fairmont, WV 26554
7. TPUSA-FHCS	Telecommunications	609 Bellview Blvd Ste 1a, Fairmont WV 26554
8. City of Fairmont	Government	200 Jackson St. Fairmont, WV 26554
9. Blue Gold Mine Services, LLC	Mining	6 Moran Circle, Fairmont, WV 26554
10. Novelis Corporation	Manufacturing	1800 Speedway Rd, Fairmont, WV 26554

March 2019 - Source: WorkForce West Virginia

The following table compares Marion County's economic performance and education attainment to the state average.

	Marion County	West Virginia
Median Household Income 2014 -2018	\$48,605	\$44,921
Per Capita Income in Past 12 Months in 2018 Dollars 2014-2018	\$25,909	\$25,479
Average Civilian Labor Participation Rate 2014-2018	56.9%	53.1%
Average Unemployment Rate March 2020	5.9%	6.1%



High School Graduate or Greater Percent of Persons Ages 25+ 2014-2018	89.3%	86.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher Percent of Persons Ages 25+ 2014-2018	23.4%	20.3%

Source: US Census Bureau and FRED Economic Data

West Virginia Overview

West Virginia's small population of 1.8 million has helped the state develop a strong sense of community and pride. Despite the camaraderie, its citizens face challenges that prompt many to move out of the state. Understanding the current state of West Virginia's economy is important in developing a plan for an improved future for West Virginia students.



Population

Since 2012, West Virginia's population has declined by nearly 51,000 and is projected to continue to regress over the next five years. West Virginia has one of the oldest populations and highest mortality rates in the country, heavily contributing to the declining population. However, the state's Eastern Panhandle has exhibited enormous growth over the past decade due to positive net migration and natural population growth.

Labor Participation

Low labor participation rates hinder potential economic prosperity in West Virginia. Less than 54% of West Virginia's adult population is working or looking for work, leaving the state with the lowest labor force participation rate in the nation. The labor participation rate varies throughout the state; the rate trends higher in the Eastern Panhandle, North Central, and Metro Valley regions, and lower in the rural areas.

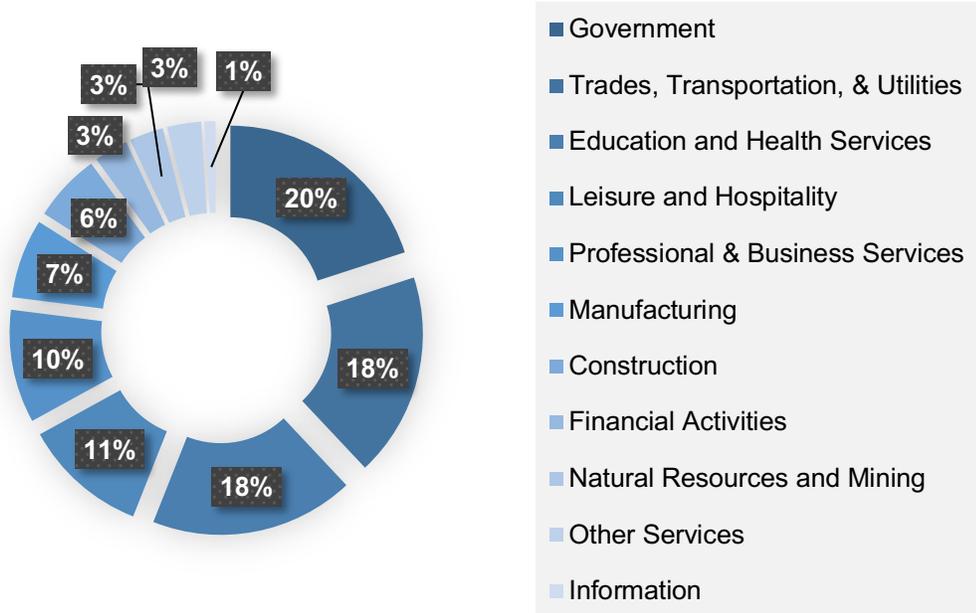


The opioid epidemic significantly affects the state’s workforce participation rate. West Virginia leads the nation in drug-related deaths, nearly triple the national average. In 2017, 58 out of 100,000 West Virginians died due to drug misuse. The prime workforce participation demographic is individuals ages 25-54; however, these individuals are also the most affected by the opioid epidemic.

Another factor that impacts labor force participation is inadequate educational outcomes. A lack of education, skills, and training leaves adults unable to secure a career. The North Central, Eastern Panhandle, and Metro Valley regions exhibit the highest rates of education attainment in the state.

Future economic development strategies should focus on improving health outcomes, lowering drug abuse, and advancing education and vocational training opportunities in the state to make West Virginia’s workforce more appealing to potential businesses.

WV Employment Distribution by Sector



2018 – Source: [West Virginia Economic Outlook 2020-2024](#)



Top Ten Largest Private Companies in WV

Name	Industry
1. WVU Medicine	Healthcare
2. Wal-Mart	Retail
3. Charleston Area Medical Center	Healthcare
4. Mountain Health Network	Healthcare
5. Kroger	Grocery
6. Lowe's Home Centers, Inc.	Retail
7. Contura Energy	Metals and Mining
8. Wheeling Hospital, Inc.	Healthcare
9. Mylan Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	Pharmaceutical
10. Murray American Energy, Inc.	Mining

March 2019 - Source: [WorkForce West Virginia](#)

Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020

Forge Business Solutions collaborated with Marion County Schools and the Marion County Chamber of Commerce to distribute a multi-county online survey from April 17 to April 30, 2020, to business leaders and employers throughout the Greater Marion County Region. In total, 19 survey responses were received from the Greater Marion County Region. The survey respondents completed the online Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020 via SurveyMonkey. Given the changing nature of the economy in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, survey questions were developed to assess industry growth, decline, and opportunities before the pandemic, as well as to gauge the current state of the local industry as the pandemic continues to unfold.

The following subsections summarize the responses collected from the survey participants of the Greater Marion County Region. The responses may contain opinions that do not represent the research or thoughts of Forge. An example of the questionnaire is located in Appendix A. To view a complete list of the respondent's comments for each subsection, refer to Appendix B.



Local Industry Trends (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

Growth

- High Technology
- Health Services
- Education
- Health Careers
- Small Restaurants
- Hospitality
- Budget Retail
- Welding
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Oil and Gas
- Utilities
- Construction (Civil)
- Trades
- Mechanics
- Welders/Machinists
- Nursing
- Medical Care
- Brewery/ Restaurant Development
- Tourism
- Small Business
- Internet Opportunities
- Fazio's

Decline

- Mining
- Manufacturing
- Retail Shopping
- Healthcare
- Industrial and Commercial Retail
- Manual Machinist
- Coal Miner
- Manufacturing
- Residential Construction
- Teaching
- Construction
- Oil and Gas
- Sales
- Factory Business
- Coal Companies



Potential Opportunities

- Small Business in Personal Services
- Retail Shopping
- Tourism
- Healthcare
- Health Careers
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Education
- Construction
- Alternative Energy
- Manufacturing (High-Tech)
- Transportation
- Trades
- College
- Trade Schools
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Recreation
- Investment and Downtown Re-Development
- Marion County Rescue Squad

COVID-19 Impact on Local Industry

Industries That Have Been Negatively Impacted

- Restaurants and Beauty Shops
- Small Business
- Retail and Service
- Real Estate
- Aviation Industry
- Oil and Gas
- Healthcare
- Education
- Hospitality and Travel
- Manufacturing
- Hardware Stores
- Minimum Wage Employment
- Travel
- Recreation
- Small Businesses
- Sundale Nursing Home/Marion Co.



Industries That Have Been Positively Impacted

- Grocery Stores
- Pharmacies
- Media
- Information Technology Industry
- Food Industry
- Budget Retail
- PPE Manufacturers
- Pharmaceutical
- Netflix
- Online Retail
- Printing
- Internet Providers
- Technology Sales (Computers/Tablets)
- Medical Industries and Medical Facilities
- Walmart (Convenient Shopping)
- MCHD

Industries That Have Not Been Affected

- Construction
- Industrial
- Oil and Gas Industry
- Grocery
- Auto Repair
- Landscaping
- Lowe's/Millers

The Pandemic's Impact on Local Organizations

- Delivery of services has gone to online
- No longer have the ability to provide hands-on educational training experiences for students in programs such as welding and aviation.
- I am not able to have guests or events
- 70% loss of patient load/clientele in one month
- Reduction of workforce hours to about 50% of normal to accommodate lack of business.
- We have had to develop an entirely different paradigm for educating vocational students
- Inefficiencies in operation due to staggered starts and distancing
- Distance Learning Techniques (Not person to person)
- No hands-on learning
- We have limited office hours and scheduled one staff per day operations.
- Not being able to socially connect
- Schools shut down



Job Market Outlook (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

The current opportunities in the local job market for those with a...

4-year Degree or Greater

- Healthcare
- Engineering
- Lawyers
- Pharmacists
- Physicians
- Education/Teaching
- Attorney
- IT
- Banking
- Social Workers
- Management
- Nursing
- Accounting

2-year Degree

- Healthcare
- EMTs
- Respiratory Therapists
- Nurses
- Lab Tech.
- Nursing Assistant
- Financial
- IT
- Culinary
- Trades
- Social Work
- Office Management

Technical Certification

- Utilities
- Electricians
- Carpenters
- Miners
- Welding
- Plumbing
- HVAC
- Mechanic
- Construction Trade (Apprenticeship Programs)
- Cosmetology



- Automotive

High School Diploma or GED

- Service Industries
- Food Service
- Healthcare Aides
- Restaurants
- Retail
- Construction

No High School Diploma or Certification

- Service Industries
- Food Service
- Odd Jobs
- Restaurants
- Retail
- Utilities
- Farm Hand
- Grocery
- Fast Food Management
- Office Management
- Lawn Care
- Nursing Home

Top Characteristics Employers Seek in Potential Employees

- Team-Oriented
- Positive Attitude
- Technical Training
- Integrity
- Commitment
- Energy
- Truthful
- Willingness to Learn
- Qualified
- Dependable
- Passionate
- Professionalism
- Attention to Detail
- Driver's License
- Hardworking
- Follows Directions
- Bookkeeping
- Social Media Savvy
- Elevated Communication Skills



- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Organization
- People Skills Or Soft Skills
- Attendance
- Drug-Free

Opportunities for Those with Disabilities (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

Job Opportunities

- Service Industry
- Customer Service
- Receptionist
- Sales
- Cashier
- Laborers
- Collision Field
- Supermarket Stocker
- Commercial Cleaning
- Office Worker
- Home Healthcare
- Restaurants

Local Support/Programs

- Disability Action Center
- PACE
- Opportunity Workshop
- WorkForce WV
- WVDRS
- DHHR
- We offer a variety of supportive services and programs (i.e., Specialty Workshops, extra tutoring support, individual meetings with educators, meetings with a counselor as needed)
- Supporting fundraising activities
- Utilizing local organizations for confidential paper shredding
- IEP
- As much as possible, our facility and programs are geared to be inclusive, both in the physical and academic sense.
- At all events and activities, we require facilities that meet ADA requirements.



Opportunities for Those Serving in the National Guard and Reserves (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

Job Opportunities

- Many depending on their skills
- Many varied both public and private
- Criminal Justice
- Business
- Workforce WV
- More than any civilian

Local Support/Programs

- Any opportunity that is available to the general public is available to a Guardsman or Reservist
- Pierpont
- FSU
- Make accommodations for service requirements
- Various and work with individual situations
- Give the assistance that our students need (i.e., help navigate admissions, leverage benefits, manage the impact of deployments and more)
- Allowed local advertisement of Workforce WV and other local entities that assist with veterans and current military with civilian job finding
- I have had Guard members in the past as students, and we worked around their duty requirements by sending work with them to do or making remote learning available to them
- Job Training skills
- This community is very supportive of our military, to my knowledge.
- I hold my Military Relocation Professional (MRP) certification, so I can offer elevated customer service to military members who are buying or selling real estate.

Engagement with Education and/or Economic Development (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

- Partnerships
- Joining the Tri-State Energy Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (TEAM).
- Through the Marion County Chamber of Commerce
- Chamber of Commerce member, attend local municipal and public/private meetings for economic development
- We've partnered with key people in the electrical supply, electrical utilities, electrical contracting, inspection and industry sectors to not only determine their needs but build potential employment relationships. Additionally, we're working with the local community college, which has a Linesman program in partnership



with the electrical utility provider, to prepare those students who are interested to enter the Linesman program.

- Working with state BOE simulated workplace and tech schools
- We have worked with VITA at two of our events to enhance skills in financial management. We work with students through many of our programs to increase attendance and educational skills through tutoring.
- We offer classes to adults for free.
- Active with MCCC and other partners
- Our organization have a number of folks that serve on several Workforce Development Boards
- Through partnership and outreach in the community.
- Food and Toy Drives
- Presently, we are working with organizations to bring a Children's Discovery Center here, based on STEAM, that will bring jobs, increase interest in the STEAM fundamentals and increase the knowledge base of our students.

Barriers/Concerns for Collaboration with Education

Pre COVID-19 Pandemic

- Education bureaucracy sometimes is a hindrance
- Discord with local leaders. Facilitating communication and collaboration amongst like business sectors.
- Different views/value of the trade industry (kids working with their hands).
- Promote more technical classes to engage or get students excited about coming to school and wanting to learn.
- We have simulated workplace programs in every area; I feel the tech center reaches out to many people and businesses.
- Allow students to do individual internships
- Myths that everyone has to go to college to have a rewarding career

Post COVID-19 Pandemic

- State and federal regulations
- Addressing preconceived ideas and unwillingness to change current practices
- Preference to individuals of returning to work. Help to facilitate businesses to keeping as many jobs as possible.
- How do I teach a hands-on class with 90% shop work i.e. welding, cutting, measuring, work readiness skills via the internet?
- Technology available to every home is not equal



Recommendations

The Career Readiness WV model is student-centered. In an effort to increase workforce participation and improve job growth in the Marion County area, collaboration between education providers at all levels and the business community is imperative. The following activities and organizations are recommended.

Workplace Tours

The Marion County School District would benefit from preparing an annual master calendar of workplace tours with a variety of local employers for elementary, middle, and high school students. The workplace tours should be appropriate for the schools' respective grade levels.

Educators need to ensure students are learning about occupations available at every level of education: high school diplomas, certificates, 2-year degrees, and beyond. Employers and educators need to stress the importance of a knowledge-based, drug-free workforce. An emphasis should be placed on jobs in STEM-related areas.

Speakers' Series

In a centrally organized manner, speakers should be scheduled to present various occupations to K-12 students. These occupations should represent varying skillsets and levels of education. Career and Technical Education should be the emphasis of the speakers' series.

When possible, involving parents who are subject-matter experts in their field of practice should be utilized. For areas where parents don't have the expertise, other speakers should be sought out to ensure students are getting a wide range of occupational exposure.

Job Shadowing

Each school should have an opportunity to engage in job shadowing for a wide range of occupations. These opportunities must be able to ensure safety and appropriateness for the students. Job shadowing should not be limited to parents and their occupations, as many students may not have parents who are employed. Every student must have an opportunity to participate.



Job Fairs

All middle and high schools should participate in at least one annual job fair and/or reverse job fair. Job fairs should be age-appropriate and, when possible, on school premises. The idea behind job fairs is not only to offer jobs to high school graduates but to expose students to as many occupations and industries as possible.

Additionally, relationships between employers and future employees can be established at an earlier level, allowing students to focus on career opportunities with a clear understanding of how to obtain and excel in a specific career.

Interview skills, with an emphasis on communication, should be developed as soon as possible. Elementary schools should offer career day opportunities where subject-matter experts visit classrooms to discuss a variety of occupations and industries. Feedback from participating employers should be collected and utilized by educators to improve each job fair event.

Internships

Local employers should offer internships (paid or unpaid) as long as safety is ensured, positions are approved by the school district, and tasks are age-appropriate. Feedback should be collected and evaluated from both employer and student perspectives.

Internships should represent a wide range of occupations and varying levels of education. Special attention should be paid to ensure that students with fewer resources have an equal opportunity to be considered. A program should be established to recognize participating students for their work and success.



Integrated Pathways

Public education, community and technical colleges, and higher education institutions should collaborate to ensure students have an efficient and secure way to obtain varying levels of education necessary to secure a job and advance within their career fields. Educators should be embedded in all levels of workforce development and career readiness. This will ensure their awareness of the skillsets, knowledge, and degrees required by industries and employers.

Additional Recommendations

Marion County should consider its top employers as a primary resource for career readiness. Those employers are:

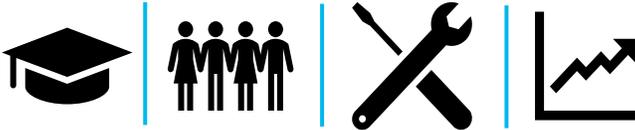
- Marion County Board of Education
- Fairmont State University
- Murray American Energy
- FirstEnergy
- Wal-Mart
- TPUSA-FHCS
- City of Fairmont
- Blue Gold Mine Services, LLC
- Novelis Corporation

Marion County Schools and the Marion County Chamber of Commerce should apply the Career Readiness WV model and provide guidance to the local career readiness advisory committee (assembled from its local stakeholders). Strategic partnerships should be developed not only with existing businesses, but with emerging industry leaders as well. Both large and small business communities should be engaged in this process.

The Career and Technical Education centers should offer open houses to employers in the Marion County area and surrounding counties that showcase the programs and skillsets being developed and deployed. An annual employer-sponsored professional etiquette workshop should be offered to students and parents.

Students with Disabilities

For students, the most common learning disabilities are ADHD, mental illness, orthopedic disabilities, hearing disabilities, and dyslexia. Post-secondary education and the workforce often have a stigma toward persons with disabilities, further challenging those students. The possible negative perceptions encourage many to conceal their disabilities after high school. Securing accommodations in the workplace can be a long, cumbersome process; due to these challenges, only 46% of adults with disabilities are



employed. Those with disabilities are more likely to work part-time jobs and attend college at half the rate of the general population.

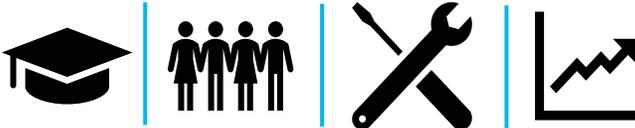
When entering the workforce, only 19% of those with disabilities report their disability to their employer and only 5% receive accommodations. These statistics show how critical it is for a partnership between education and industry to utilize a uniquely skilled workforce. Steadily transitioning those with an individualized education plan (IEP) into the workforce or schools providing technical certificates/2-year degrees will allow local businesses to continue improving their talent pool and communities.

The community can specifically help persons with disabilities by building their self-confidence. Focusing on an individual's strengths, rather than weaknesses, will help him or her develop a positive self-image. Additionally, eliminating a negative stigma will help students with disabilities enter the workforce. Providing essential accommodations for those with disabilities will encourage others to self-report their disability.

In Marion County, 11.6% of the population under the age of 65 has a disability, compared to the state average of 14.1%. There are several active organizations for individuals with disabilities in Marion County, such as:

- PACE Enterprises, a licensed Community Rehabilitation Program and Behavioral Mental Health Center, which helps persons with disabilities find meaningful employment and join the local workforce.
- The Disability Action Center, formerly The Arc of Marion County, provides educational and career training programs such as a Career Readiness Center, Experience IT Co-Op, education and training, health and wellness, life skills and independent living, reading and literacy, assistive computer technology, self-advocacy, fitness and exercise, information and referral and social and recreational opportunities.
- The Op Shop, formerly the Marion County Opportunity Workshop, offers rehabilitation services and employment opportunities by providing independent living skills, life skills training, job placement, job coaching, work adjustment, and supported employment services.

In West Virginia, steps are being taken to improve the lives of those with disabilities. Currently, the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services helps those with disabilities find work. The organization partners with Workforce West Virginia and the West Virginia Adult Education in developing a positive path forward for local communities.



Military Service

The military provides various opportunities for students. Students can choose standard enlistment, delayed enlistment, or ROTC programs. If students choose to enlist, they still have the opportunity to attend college and trade schools through the GI Bill, grants, and scholarships. These integrated pathways allow students the opportunity to build on skills, experience, and knowledge for continuous learning and growth.

Members from all branches of the military stationed within West Virginia

Branch	Active	Reserve	Total
Army	67	1780	1847
Navy	3	76	79
Marine Corps	37	96	133
Air Force	18	0	18
Coast Guard	64	9	73
Army National Guard			4172
Air National Guard			2125

Data reported September 2019. Source: https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp

In addition to opportunities within the state for military service, many West Virginians choose to enlist in the military and return home after their service. This has made West Virginia home to over 138,508 veterans (not including National Guard/Reserve unless called to active duty) and 4,287 reside in Marion County. These veterans provide unique skills, experience, and knowledge acquired during their service.



Professional Development

As part of the district’s professional development program for teachers and administrators, Marion County should include employers and occupational specialists as speakers for its professional development program. This will provide educators with a better understanding of the demand for skillsets and key employee characteristics within the local economy.

Conclusion

Local business and community leaders should be surveyed on an annual basis to gather feedback and innovative ideas. This will catalyze continued growth and development of the Career Readiness WV model. The success of West Virginia’s economy greatly depends on diversification; local districts are not limited to the current industry landscape and should ensure students are being exposed to careers through a global lens. As new businesses and industries emerge, they will need to be equipped with a unique and diversified labor force. It is important for education to prepare students for the rapidly changing job market to allow West Virginia students to thrive throughout their future careers. Together, education and local industry can initiate new relationships and collaborations that allow students to acquire a deeper knowledge of careers, preparing them for a successful future.



Resources & References

Marion County Chamber of Commerce

<https://www.marionchamber.com/>

Marion County Schools

<https://www.marionboe.com/>

Marion County Website

<http://www.marioncountywv.com/>

Marion County Parks & Recreation

<https://www.mcparc.com/>

The Convention & Visitors Bureau of Marion County Inc.

<https://marioncvb.com/about-us/>

Disability Action Center

<http://disabilityactioncenter.com/>

The Op Shop

<https://theopshopwv.com/index.html>

PACE Enterprises, Inc.

<https://paceenterprises.org/>

Data USA: Fairmont, WV

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/fairmont-wv#economy>

West Virginia Economic Outlook Report 2020-2024

https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1310&context=bureau_b
[e](#)

Bureau of Business and Economic Research

https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/bureau_be/

Education Alliance

<http://educationalliance.org/>



WorkForce West Virginia

<https://workforcewv.org/>

myStrategic Compass

<https://www.winlearning.com/mystrategic-compass>

WV Division of Labor

<https://labor.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

West Virginia Department of Education

<https://wvde.us/>

Career Technical Education – WVDE

<https://wvde.us/technical-education/>

West Virginia Development Office

<https://westvirginia.gov/>

WV Adult Education

<https://wvde.state.wv.us/abe/>

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services

<https://wvdrs.org/>

smartasset

<https://smartasset.com/checking-account/fastest-growing-job-in-each-state-2019>

United States Census Bureau

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/WV>

FRED Economic Data

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>

United States Department of Labor

<https://data.bls.gov/projections/occupationProj>



WV Executive

<https://www.wvexecutive.com/west-virginias-largest-employers/>

National Intelligence Council

https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/GlobalTrends_2030.pdf

Forbes

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2017/12/19/14-hiring-qualities-that-are-more-important-than-experience/#73cedf7f7b73>

Defense Manpower Data Center

https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp



Appendix A

Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020

First Page/Disclaimer

Thank you for participating in the Career Readiness West Virginia online survey.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time. You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help our team develop insight into local career opportunities and workforce development trends.

Your survey answers will be sent to a link at SurveyMonkey.com where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Therefore, your responses are only accessible to members of the research team. Your information will be kept private and provided responses utilized in the research findings will remain anonymous.

Should you have any questions regarding the Career Readiness West Virginia initiative or the following survey, please contact info@forgebz.com or visit: <http://careerreadinesswv.com/>

Please check all that apply:

- I have read the information above.
- I voluntarily agree to participate in the survey.
- I am 18 years of age or older.

Background Information:

Name:

Email:

Organization/Title:

Organization Location (County/State):

Please select the primary county or counties your organization's employees reside:

- Cabell
- Doddridge
- Harrison
- Kanawha
- Lewis
- Marion
- Nicholas
- Preston
- Upshur



- Wyoming
- Other (please specify)

1. List the local industry trends in your region (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic). Please list three industries per section.

Growth:

Decline

Opportunities

2. What local industries have been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic?
Please list at least two industries that have been negatively impacted:

Please list at least two industries that have been positively impacted:

Please list at least two industries that have not been affected by the pandemic:

How has your organization been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic?

3. Based on education attainment, what are the opportunities in the local job market (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)? Please list three answers per section.

4-year degree or Greater

2-year degree

Technical Certification

High School Diploma or GED

No High School Diploma, GED, or Certification:

4. What are the top 3 characteristics/skills your organization is looking for in an employee?

5. What career opportunities are available in the local job market for persons with disabilities (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

Are there active local education and/or career programs for persons with disabilities?



What efforts have you/your organization taken to support persons with disabilities?

6. What career opportunities are available in the local job market for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

Are there active local education and/or career programs for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves?

What efforts have you/your organization taken to support for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves?

7. How is your organization engaging with public education and/or public and private industry for the purpose of workforce and economic development (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

8. How are you/your organization engaged in local economic development (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

9. What concerns do you have about collaborating with education? What barriers can you identify and how can we overcome those? (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic):

10. What concerns do you have about collaborating with education? What barriers can you identify and how can we overcome those? (Post COVID-19 Pandemic):

11. Additional comments regarding career readiness and workforce development in your community:



Appendix B

The list below contains the responses collected from the participants of the Greater Marion County Region. Each section represents the questions from the Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020 **The comments may contain opinions that do not represent the research or thoughts of Forge.**

1. List the local industry trends in your region (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic). Please list three industries per section.

Growth:

- High Technology
- Health Services
- Education
- Health Careers
- Small Restaurants
- Hospitality
- Budget Retail
- Welding
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Oil And Gas
- Utilities
- Construction (Civil)
- Trades
- Mechanics
- Welders/Machinists
- Nursing
- Medical Care
- Brewery/ Restaurants Dev.
- Tourism
- Small Business
- Internet Opportunities
- Fazios

Decline

- Mining
- Manufacturing
- Retail Shopping
- Healthcare
- Industrial And Commercial Retail



- Manual Machinist
- Coal Miner
- Manufacturing
- Residential Construction
- Teaching
- Construction
- Gas And Oil
- Sales
- Factory Business
- Coal Companies
- John Manchin Assisted Living

Opportunities

- Small Business In Personal Services
- Retail Shopping
- Tourism
- Healthcare
- Health Careers
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Education
- Construction
- Alternative Energy
- Manufacturing (High-Tech)
- Transportation
- Trades
- College
- Trade Schools
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Recreation
- Investment & Downtown Re-Development
- Marion County Rescue Squad

2. What local industries have been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Please list at least two industries that have been negatively impacted:

- Restaurants and Beauty Shops
- Small Business
- Retail and Service
- Real Estate
- Aviation Industry
- Oil and Gas
- Healthcare,
- Education
- Hospitality and Travel
- Manufacturing



- Hardware Stores
- Minimum Wage Employment
- Travel
- Recreation
- Small Businesses
- Sundale Nursing Home/Marion Co

Please list at least two industries that have been positively impacted:

- Grocery Stores
- Pharmacies
- Media
- Information Technology Industry
- Food Industry
- Budget Retail
- PPE Manufacturers
- Pharmaceutical
- Netflix
- Online Retail
- Printing
- Internet Providers
- Technology Sales (Computers/Tablets)
- Medical Industries and Medical Facilities
- Walmart (Convenient Shopping)
- MCHD

Please list at least two industries that have not been affected by the pandemic:

- Not Sure
- Construction
- Industrial
- Oil and Gas Industry
- Construction
- Residential Construction
- Grocery
- Auto Repair
- Landscaping
- Lowe's/Millers

How has your organization been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic?

- Delivery of services has gone to online
- No longer have the ability to provide hands-on educational training experiences for students in programs such as welding and aviation.
- I am not able to have guests or events
- 70% loss of patient load/clientele in one month



- Reduction of workforce hours to about 50% of normal to accommodate lack of business.
- Negatively
- We have had to develop an entirely different paradigm for educating vocational students
- Inefficiencies in operation due to staggered starts and distancing
- Distance Learning Techniques (Not person to person)
- No hands-on learning
- We have limited office hours and scheduled 1 staff per day operations.
- Not being able to socially connect
- Schools shut down

3. Based on education attainment, what are the opportunities in the local job market (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)? Please list three answers per section.

4-year degree or Greater

- High Technology
- Healthcare
- Teaching
- Engineering
- Lawyers
- Pharmacists
- Physicians
- Education/Teaching
- Clinical Healthcare
- Attorney
- Medical Careers
- IT
- Banking
- Social Workers
- Management
- Nursing
- Accounting

2-year degree

- High Technology
- Healthcare
- EMTs
- Respiratory Therapists
- Nurses
- Lab Tech
- Nursing Assistant
- Clerical
- Financial



- IT
- Culinary
- Trades
- Social Work
- Office Management

Technical Certification

- Utilities
- Electricians
- Carpenters
- Miners
- Welding
- Plumbing
- HVAC
- Mechanic
- Construction Trade (Apprenticeship Programs)
- Cosmetology
- Machine Shop Tech.
- Automotive

High School Diploma or GED

- Service Industries
- Food Service
- Health Care Aides
- Some Construction
- Restaurants
- Retail
- Construction
- Budget Retail
- Fast Food

No High School Diploma, GED, or Certification:

- Service Industries
- Food Service
- Odd Jobs
- Restaurants
- Retail
- Utilities
- Farm Hand
- Grocery
- Fast Food Management
- Office Management
- Lawn Care
- Nursing Home



4. What are the top 3 characteristics/skills your organization is looking for in an employee?

- Positive Attitude
- Technical Training
- Education
- Integrity
- Qualifications
- Commitment
- Energy
- Team Oriented
- Reliable
- Truthful
- Reliability
- Integrity
- Willingness To Learn
- Qualified
- Dependable
- Passionate
- Pride
- Professionalism
- Attention To Detail
- Dependable In Coming To Work
- Driver's License
- Organizational Skills
- Dependable/Reliable
- Hard Working
- Follows Directions
- Bookkeeping
- Social Media Savvy
- Elevated Communication Skills
- Flexibility/Creativity
- Organization
- People Skills Or Soft Skills
- Attendance
- Dependable
- Drug Free

5. What career opportunities are available in the local job market for persons with disabilities (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

- Service Industry
- Quite Varied
- Customer Service



- Receptionist
- Sales
- Training centers also hire individuals
- Some retail establishments
- PACE
- Disability Action Center
- Depends on the industry and the disability. There aren't many opportunities in my industry.
- On Job Training
- Cashier
- Laborers
- Apprenticeship Training
- Collision Field
- Supermarket Stocker
- Commercial Cleaning
- Office Worker
- Home Health Care
- Restaurants

Are there active local education and/or career programs for persons with disabilities?

- Disability Action Center
- PACE
- Opportunity Workshop
- WorkForce
- WVDRS
- I believe WVU has a good program in place.
- DHHR
- Marion county has several

What efforts have you/your organization taken to support persons with disabilities?

- Hiring qualified clients
- Strongly promote a number of special programs
- We offer a variety of supportive services and programs (i.e., specialty workshops, extra tutoring support, individual meetings with educators, meetings with a counselor as needed)
- Supporting fundraising activities
- Utilizing local organizations for confidential paper shredding
- IEP
- As much as possible, our facility and programs are geared to be inclusive, both in the physical and academic sense.



- At all events and activities, we require facilities meet ADA requirements
- Meeting the required elements of the system/ United Way

6. What career opportunities are available in the local job market for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

- Many depending on their skills
- Many varied both public and private
- Criminal Justice, Business
- Workforce WV
- More than any civilian
- Opportunities are similar, although some oil and gas industry jobs would not be compatible with military service requirements
- Any. This community is very supportive of our military, to my knowledge.

Are there active local education and/or career programs for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves?

- Not Sure
- Any opportunity that is available to the general public is available to a Guardsman or Reservist
- Some education programs at Fairmont State and Pierpont
- Pierpont
- FSU

What efforts have you/your organization taken to support for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves?

- Make accommodations for service requirements
- Various and work with individual situations
- Give the assistance that our students need (i.e., help navigate admissions, leverage benefits, manage the impact of deployments and more)
- Allowed local advertisement of Workforce WV and other local entities that assist with veterans and current military with civilian job finding
- I have had Guard members in the past as students, and we worked around their duty requirements by sending work with them to do or making remote learning available to them
- Job Training skills

7. How is your organization engaging with public education and/or public and private industry for the purpose of workforce and economic development (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

- Partnerships
- Many partnerships
- Joining the Tri-State Energy Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (TEAM).
- Through the Marion Co Chamber of Commerce



- Chamber of commerce member, attend local municipal and public/private meetings for economic development
- We've partnered with key people in the electrical supply, electrical utilities, electrical contracting, inspection and industry sectors to not only determine their needs but build potential employment relationships. Additionally, we're working with the local community college, which has a Linesman program in partnership with the electrical utility provider, to prepare those students who are interested to enter the Linesman program.
- Working with state BOE simulated workplace and tech schools
- (Industry) Partners in Education, Skills USA
- We have worked with VITA at two of our events to enhance skills in financial management. We work with students through many of our programs to increase attendance and educational skills through tutoring.
- We offer classes to adults for free.

8. How are you/your organization engaged in local economic development (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

- Serve on boards and organizations
- Active with MCCC and other partners
- Our organization have a number of folks that serve on several Workforce Development Boards
- Active member of the Chamber of Commerce
- Attending local meetings
- Through partnership and outreach in the community.
- Food and Toy Drives
- Presently, we are working with organizations to bring a Children's Discovery Center her, based on STEAM, that will bring jobs, increase interest in the STEAM fundamentals and increase the knowledge base of our students.
- Our students are very involved with community activities and causes

9. What concerns do you have about collaborating with education? What barriers can you identify and how can we overcome those? (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic):

- Education bureaucracy sometimes is a hindrance
- Realistic and informed collaboration work well here
- Discord with local leaders. Facilitating communication and collaboration amongst like business sectors.
- Different views/value of the trade industry (kids working with their hands). Promote more technical classes to engage or get students excited about coming to school and wanting to learn.
- Zero. We work well with Marion County BOE and have MOU's with them so that we can work with their students and parents of students.
- We have simulated workplace programs in every area; I feel the tech center reaches out to many people and business
- Allow students to do individual internship



- Myths that everyone has to go to college to have a rewarding career

10. What concerns do you have about collaborating with education? What barriers can you identify and how can we overcome those? (Post COVID-19 Pandemic):

- State and federal regulations
- Addressing preconceived ideas and unwillingness to change current practices
- Preference to individuals of returning to work. Help to facilitate businesses to keeping as many jobs as possible.
- How do I teach a hands-on class with 90% shop work i.e. Welding, cutting, measuring, work readiness skills via the internet?
- Technology available to every home is not equal

11. Additional comments regarding career readiness and workforce development in your community:

- In my opinion WV Workforce does not do enough to inform students or citizens of the opportunity available
- We are in the midst of an apathy problem. Many of our residents feel so displaced, beaten down and there's a family history of relying on social services and others instead of working within the system that is there to build themselves and their families. In many of our educational programs dealing with truancy. The student doesn't care about going to school because the parent doesn't value education. We have to break that cycle to win this battle.
- I think the county is doing a great job of trying to meet the needs of the citizens of Marion County
- Many students are easily employed after CTE programs

