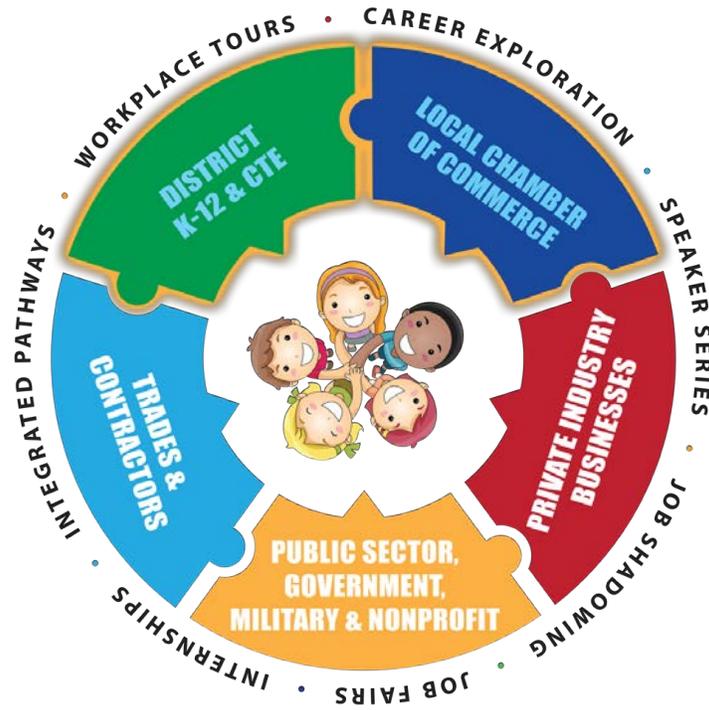


Career Readiness West Virginia



Preston County Summary Report

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Introduction

The following report provides a summary of the Career Readiness West Virginia analysis and recommendations for Preston County. To assess the Growth, Decline, and Opportunities facing both education and local industry, Forge Business Solutions worked with the members of the Preston County Board of Education and the Preston 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 Preston 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 Stephen Wotring and Kristy Ash, Executive Director of the Preston County Chamber of Commerce, for their dedication to their community and support of Career Readiness West Virginia.



Preston County Schools

731 Preston Dr,
Kingwood, WV 26537

Superintendent: Stephen Wotring
Enrollment: 4,373



“It is imperative in our education system that we ensure our students are well prepared to make career choices that lead to requirements of further education or direct entry into the workforce. Regardless of the path, this goal can only be achieved through a collaborative effort between the education and business communities leading to high expectations of rigor and relevance in all programming.”

- **Stephen Wotring, Superintendent of Preston County Schools**

Preston County Chamber of Commerce

200 West Main Street
Kingwood, West Virginia 26537

Executive Director: Kristy Ash
County Population: 33,432



“The Preston County Chamber of Commerce is excited to work closely with our local educators and business leaders to promote career readiness among our students. We encourage this collaboration which will inspire our future workforce and help our youth succeed.”

- **Kristy Ash, Executive Director of the Preston County Chamber of Commerce**



Preston 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 the northeast of West Virginia, Preston County is home to Kingwood (county seat), Albright, Bruceton Mills, Reedsville, and other towns and unincorporated communities. As of 2019, Preston County’s population was 33,432, but the county has experienced a slight decrease of 0.3% in the total population since 2010.

Preston County is a vibrant tourist destination with parks and public recreation areas such as Cathedral State Park, Cool Springs Park, Coopers Rock State Forest, Cranesville Swamp, Fairfax Stone, and Deckers Creek Wildlife Management Area.

According to the Data USA 2017 Report, the leading industries in Preston County are Education, Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Manufacturing. The most common jobs held by residents of Preston County (by number of employees) are Office & Administrative Support Occupations, Construction & Extraction Occupations, and Sales & Related Occupations. Additionally, the highest paid jobs held by residents of Preston County (by median earnings) are Architecture & Engineering Occupations, Computer & Mathematical Occupations, and Legal Occupations.

As a top employer in the county, Preston County Schools serve about 4,373 of the community’s students with Preston County High School and the supporting middle and elementary schools. As reported in 2017, there are 542 employers in Preston County, many of whom are members of the Preston County Chamber of Commerce. While there is existing engagement between education and industry, Preston 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 Preston County

Name	Industry	Address
1. Federal Prison System	Government	1640 Sky View Dr, Bruceton Mills, WV 26525
2. Preston County Board of Education	Education	731 Preston Dr, Kingwood, WV 26537
3. Mon Health	Healthcare	150 Memorial Dr, Kingwood, WV 26537
4. C.W. Wright Construction	Construction	5294 S Preston Hwy, Tunnelton, WV 26444
5. Wal-Mart	Retail	100 Wal-Mart Drive, Kingwood, WV 26537
6. Preston Contractors	Construction	15237 S Preston Hwy, Kingwood, WV 26537
7. Superior Reedsville Filtration	Manufacturing	Co Rte 92/97, Reedsville, WV 26547
8. Bruceton Farm Service	Retail	88 Fuel Dr, Bruceton Mills, WV 26525
9. The Adjutant Generals Department	Military	Camp Dawson Rd, Kingwood, WV 26537
10. Kingwood Center	Healthcare	150 Memorial Dr, Kingwood, WV 26537

March 2019 - Source: WorkForce West Virginia

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

	Preston County	West Virginia
Median Household Income 2014 -2018	\$48,317	\$44,921
Per Capita Income in Past 12 Months in 2018 Dollars 2014-2018	\$23,337	\$25,479
Average Civilian Labor Participation Rate 2014-2018	52.5%	53.1%
Average Unemployment Rate March 2020	5.7%	6.1%



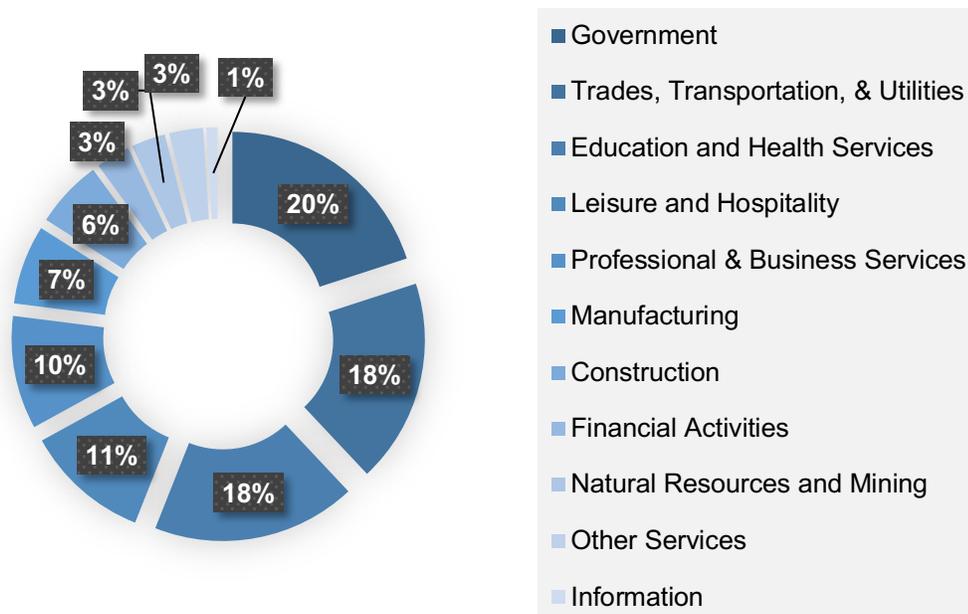
trends higher in the Eastern Panhandle, North Central, and Metro Valley regions, and lower in the rural areas.

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 educational 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 Preston County Schools and the Preston 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 Preston County Region. In total, 19 survey responses were received from the Greater Preston 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 industry as the pandemic continues to unfold.

The following subsections summarize the responses collected from the survey participants of the Greater Preston 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

- Health Careers
- Information Technology
- Higher Education
- Real Estate
- Tourism
- Small Business
- Trades
- Logging
- Retail
- Government
- Broadband Internet Expansion
- Agriculture
- Lumber

Decline

- Retail
- Gas/Oil/Coal
- Teaching
- Whitewater Rafting Industry
- Entrepreneurship From Young Business
- Small Locally Owned Stores/Shops
- Construction
- Transportation
- Manufacturing

Potential Opportunities

- Health Careers
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Education
- Trades
- Outdoor Recreation Industry
- Remote Working/Increased Broadband
- Commuter Community For Morgantown
- Real Estate
- Lodging Options
- Local Food/Meat
- Skilled Labor



- Technology
- Energy
- Real Estate
- Manufacturing

COVID-19 Impact on Local Industry

Industries That Have Been Negatively Impacted

- Aviation Industry
- Oil and Gas
- Information Technology
- Tourism
- Restaurants
- Hair Salons
- Gyms
- Churches
- Small Businesses
- Lodging
- Media
- Healthcare Facilities
- Consumer POS
- Real Estate

Industries That Have Been Positively Impacted

- Information Technology Industry
- Food Industry
- Food Delivery Services
- Home Improvement
- Grocery
- Printing
- Stores/Pharmacies
- Retail
- Online Sales
- Healthcare
- PPE Manufacturing

Industries That Have Not Been Affected

- Information Technologies
- Package Delivery
- Internet Providers
- Tobacco Outlets
- Grocery



- Logging
- Construction

The Pandemic's Impact on Local Organizations

- Our organization no longer has the ability to provide hands-on educational training experiences for students in programs such as welding and aviation.
- Minimal impact. Increased teleworking
- Closure of all revenue sources, fear in the community, financial issues, lack of clear and concise guidelines to assist us in planning ahead.
- Too many unknowns and moving target dates have been made this very difficult to manage properly.
- Lost revenue already and more is expected.
- Ineffective operation due to staggered starts and distancing
- Office is closed
- Staff working from home
- Cancelling Cheat River Festival
- Loss of advertising dollars. Those dollars pay for the service we provide.
- Real estate sales data released in upcoming months will begin to show a major slump, because buyer and seller activity has greatly slowed.
- Increased demand for senior nutrition and in-home care
- We have been forced to close for 6 weeks now

Job Market Outlook (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

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

4-year Degree or Greater

- Information Technology
- School Teachers
- Engineering
- Upper management
- Medical
- Education
- Health Sciences
- Business Administration
- Human Services

2-year Degree

- EMTs
- Respiratory Therapists
- Nurses
- Healthcare Information Technology



- Culinary
- Trades
- Healthcare
- Law Enforcement
- Office Work
- Public Safety/Corrections
- Health Technicians

Technical Certification

- Welding
- HVAC
- Healthcare
- Trade jobs
- Landscaping
- Mechanic
- CDL Driver
- Water Plant Operator
- CNA or LPN
- Electrician
- Plumber
- Real Estate Appraiser
- Personal Care
- Transportation/Automotive

High School Diploma or GED

- Construction
- Transportation
- General Labor
- Minimum Wage Jobs
- Unskilled Labor
- Food Service
- Teacher's Aide
- Support Service
- Custodial, Laborer In Agriculture
- Food Processing
- Equipment

No High School Diploma or Certification

- Construction
- General Labor
- Minimum Wage Jobs
- Unskilled Labor
- Utilities Labor
- Laborer



- Restaurant Worker
- Lawncare
- Roofers
- Retail Laborers

Top Characteristics Employers Seek in Potential Employees

- Team Oriented
- Reliable
- Truthful
- Security Clearance
- Information Technology Experience
- Engineering Or Technology College Degree
- Accountable
- Motivated
- Honesty
- Social Work Skills
- Office Skills
- Driver's License
- Organizational Skills
- Grant Writing
- Self-Starter
- Good Communication Skills
- Willingness and Quickness to Learn
- Professionalism
- Hard Working

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

Job Opportunities

- Customer Service
- Receptionist
- Sales
- Information Technology
- Retail
- IT
- Food Service
- Administrative
- Walmart
- Preston County Sheltered Workshop

Local Support/Programs

- Stepping Stones
- Preston Workshop



- PaceTech
- 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)
- We hire and make accommodations for them.
- Transportation
- On-The-Job Training

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

Job Opportunities and Local Support/Programs

- Criminal Justice
- Business
- All businesses provide leave for employees who are serving.
- Camp Dawson
- Hazelton Penitentiary
- Give the assistance that our students need (i.e., help navigate admissions, leverage benefits, manage the impact of deployments and more)
- We support any opportunity as it is presented.
- We accommodate their training
- Holding a Military Relocation Professional (MRP) certification, so I can offer elevated customer service to military members who are buying or selling real estate.
- Accommodate training and service leave

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

- In 2017, we strategically positioned our institution to help develop new and seamless systems for companies and workers by joining the Tri-State Energy Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (TEAM). The consortium consists of leaders from industry, higher education, and workforce economic development organizations across 27 counties in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. In collaboration with TEAM, we have strengthened, expanded and created a number of programs and partnerships to address the immediate needs of our region.
- Working with state BOE simulated workplace and tech schools
- Our Trail Towns program is working within Preston County and its trail network and amplifying the ancillary businesses that support trail use.
- Mentoring new agents
- Cooperative agreements with FSU nursing & WVU PT, OT, SW for practicum training opportunities; Administer job-training for those ages 55+
- Serve on Workforce Development Board and participate in One-Stop Network



- Our organization have members that serve on several Workforce Development Boards
- Identifying gaps in services and seeking grants
- Working to expand our company and number of employees
- We continual maintain access to the Cheat River for private and commercial boating. This can range from whitewater trips to family fishing outings on flat water. We are also currently designing and building an 8-mile rail trail along the Cheat River between Kingwood and Rowlesburg.
- Serve on the Preston Chamber board, Preston Task Force, Mon & Preston United Way board
- Provide Public transportation, community support services

Barriers/Concerns for Collaboration with Education

Pre COVID-19 Pandemic

- Not necessarily a concern with collaborating with education, but with the educator's ability to be extended any further.
- Need shift to education towards trades
- We need more events that bring together all levels of the community.

Post COVID-19 Pandemic

- No concerns. I am confident that open channels would be received well by all with limitations of availability.



Recommendations

The Career Readiness WV model is student-centered. In an effort to increase workforce participation and improve job growth in the Preston 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 Preston 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

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

- Federal Prison System
- Preston County Board of Education
- Mon Health
- C.W. Wright Construction
- Wal-Mart
- Preston Contractors
- Superior Reedsville Filtration
- Bruceton Farm Service
- The Adjutant Generals Department
- Kingwood Center

Preston County Schools and the Preston 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 Preston 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.

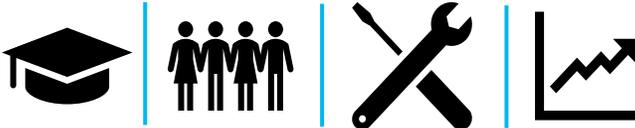
When entering the workforce, only 19% of those with disabilities report their disability to their employer and only 5% receive accommodations. These statistics show how critical it is for a partnership between education and industry to utilize a uniquely skilled workforce. Steadily transitioning those 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 Preston County, 13.5% 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 Preston 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.
- SteppingStones, a non-profit organization that provides personal development programs and activities for children and adults with disabilities.
- The Preston County Workshop, an integrated rehabilitation facility, that works with West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services to match individuals with job opportunities and provides their employees with career training, preparation, support.

In West Virginia, small strides 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

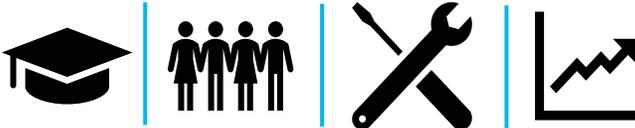
The military provides various opportunities for students. Students can choose standard enlistment, delayed enlistment, or ROTC programs. If students choose to enlist, they still have the opportunity to attend college and trade schools through the GI Bill, grants, and scholarships. These integrated pathways 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 2,295 reside in Preston 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, Preston 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 to 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

Preston County Chamber of Commerce

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

Preston County Schools

<http://preston-k12.wvnet.edu/boe/>

Preston County Tourism

<https://www.visitmountainercountry.com/preston-county/>

Data USA: Preston County, WV

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/preston-county-wv>

The Preston County Workshop

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

SteppingStones

<https://www.steppingstoneswv.org/index.html>

PACE Enterprises, Inc.

<https://paceenterprises.org/>

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 Preston 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:

- Health Careers
- Information Technology
- Higher Education
- Real Estate
- Tourism
- Real Estate
- Expenses
- Small Business
- Trades
- Camp Dawson
- West Virginia Air National Guard
- Logging
- Retail
- Government
- Broadband Internet Expansion
- Tourism (Craft Breweries, Alpine Lake, Rail Trail Expansions, Etc.)
- Healthcare
- Agriculture
- Lumber

Decline

- Retail
- Gas/Oil/Coal
- Mining
- Teaching
- Energy Sector Jobs
- Whitewater Rafting Industry
- Entrepreneurship From Young Business
- Small Locally Owned Stores/Shops
- Construction



- Transportation
- Manufacturing

Opportunities

- Health Careers
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Education
- Trades
- Outdoor Recreation Industry
- Remote Working/Increased Broadband
- Commuter Community For Morgantown
- Real Estate
- Lodging Options
- Local Food/Meat
- Skilled Labor
- Technology
- Energy
- Real Estate
- Manufacturing

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

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

- Aviation Industry
- Oil and Gas
- Information Technology
- Tourism
- Restaurants
- Hair Salons
- Gyms
- Churches
- Small Businesses
- Furloughed Employees
- Lodging
- Outdoor Recreation - Boat Rentals, Rafting Trips
- Media
- Healthcare Facilities
- Consumer POS
- Real Estate
- Personal Services
- Recreation



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

- Information Technology Industry
- Food Industry
- Food Delivery Services
- Essential Businesses
- Unemployment Recipients
- Home Improvement
- Grocery
- Printing
- Stores/Pharmacies
- Retail
- Online Sales
- Local Farms With Meat & Vegetables Delivery Options
- Walmart/Big Box Retailers
- Health Care
- PPE Manufacturing

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

- Information Technologies
- Package Delivery
- All Industries
- Internet Providers
- Tobacco Outlets
- Residential Construction
- Grocery
- Logging
- Construction

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

- Yes. Due to COVID-19, we no longer have the ability to provide hands-on educational training experiences for students in programs such as welding, aviation.
- Minimal impact. Increased teleworking.
- Closure of all revenue sources, fear in the community, financial issues, lack of clear and concise guidelines to assist us in planning ahead. Too many unknowns and moving target dates have been made this very difficult to manage properly.
- Big concerns on how we can bring employees back to work when permitted if they make much more on unemployment.
- Lost revenue already and more is expected.
- We have been closed.
- Ineffective operation due to staggered starts and distancing
- Office is closed



- Staff working from home
- Biggest impact was cancelling our largest fundraiser, Cheat River Festival.
- Loss of advertising dollars. Those dollars pay for the service we provide.
- Real estate sales data released in upcoming months will begin to show a major slump, because buyer and seller activity has greatly slowed.
- Increased demand for senior nutrition and in-home care
- We have been forced to close for 6 weeks

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

- Information Technology
- School Teachers
- Engineering
- Upper Management
- Medicine
- Education
- Health Sciences
- Business Administration
- Human Services

2-year degree

- EMTs
- Respiratory Therapists
- Nurses
- Healthcare
- Healthcare Information Technology
- IT
- Culinary
- Trades
- Healthcare
- Law Enforcement
- Office Work
- Public Safety/Corrections
- Health Technicians

Technical Certification

- Welding
- Heating & A/C
- Healthcare
- Trade jobs
- Landscaping
- Mechanic



- CDL Driver
- Water Plant Operator
- CNA or LPN
- Electrician
- Plumber
- Real Estate Appraiser
- Personal Care
- Transportation/Automotive

High School Diploma or GED

- Construction
- Transportation
- General Labor
- Minimum Wage Jobs
- Unskilled Labor
- Food Service
- Teacher's Aide
- Support Service
- Custodial, Laborer In Agriculture
- Food Processing
- Equipment

No High School Diploma, GED, or Certification:

- Construction
- General Labor
- Minimum Wage Jobs
- Unskilled Labor
- Utilities Labor
- Laborer
- Restaurant Worker
- Lawncare
- Roofers
- Retail Laborers

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

- Team Oriented
- Reliable
- Truthful
- Security Clearance
- Information Technology Experience
- Engineering or Technology College Degree
- Accountable



- Motivated
- Honesty
- Social Work Skills
- Office Skills
- Driver's License
- Organizational Skills
- Grant Writing
- A College Degree In STEM
- Self-Starter
- Good Communication Skills
- Willingness And Quickness To Learn,
- Work Practices - Honest, Attentive To Detail, Cooperative, Prompt, Prepared, Presentable, Ability
- Professionalism
- Hard Working

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

- Customer Service, Receptionist, Sales and etc.
- Information Technology
- Retail
- Employers are required to provide accommodations to people with disabilities. Opportunities are dependent on the type and level of disability and the job functions that can be performed.
- IT, food service, administrative
- Walmart
- Preston County Sheltered Workshop

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

- Preston Workshop and Stepping Stones
- Preston Workshop
- PaceTech

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

- 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)
- We do not discriminate
- We are open to providing support when the opportunity arises.
- We hire and make accommodations for them.



- We comply with all Equal Housing guidelines.
- Transportation
- On-the-job training

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

- Criminal Justice, Business
- The same as everyone else
- I believe all businesses provide leave for employees who are serving.
- Camp Dawson
- Hazelton Penitentiary

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

- Not Sure

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

- Give the assistance that our students need (i.e., help navigate admissions, leverage benefits, manage the impact of deployments and more)
- We do not discriminate
- We support any opportunity as it is presented.
- We accommodate their training
- 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.
- Accommodate training and service leave

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)?

- In 2017, we strategically positioned our institution to help develop new and seamless systems for companies and workers by joining the Tri-State Energy Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (TEAM). The consortium consists of leaders from industry, higher education, and workforce economic development organizations across 27 counties in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. In collaboration with TEAM, we have strengthened, expanded and created a number of programs and partnerships to address the immediate needs of our region.
- Member of county organizations and committees
- Working with state BOE simulated workplace and tech schools
- Our Trail Towns program is working within Preston county and its trail network and amplifying the ancillary businesses that support trail use.



- Mentoring new agents
- Cooperative agreements with FSU nursing & WVU PT, OT, SW for practicum training opportunities; Administer job-training for age 55+; Serve on Workforce Development Board and participate in One-Stop Network

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

- Our organization have members that serve on several Workforce Development Boards
- Participation in county and local organizations and committees
- identifying gaps in services and seeking grants
- Working to expand our company and number of employees
- We continual maintain access to the Cheat River for private and commercial boating. This can range from whitewater trips to family fishing outings on flat water. We are also currently designing and building an 8-mile rail trail along the Cheat River between Kingwood and Rowlesburg.
- Serve on the Preston Chamber board, Preston Task Force, Mon & Preston United Way board
- Provide Public transportation, community support services

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):

- Not necessarily a concern with collaborating with education, but with the educator's ability to be extended any further.
- Need shift to education towards trades
- We need more events that bring together all levels of the community.

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):

- No concerns. I am confident that open channels would be received well by all with limitations of availability.

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

- TEAM Consortium is developing a Regional Rapid Response Action Plan, underwritten by private funds, that we hope will provide all of the higher education institutions members with local, real-time data on market needs over the next 12 months. Information about the skills gap between what industry needs immediately, and what job candidates have to offer, will inform specific curriculum or program adjustments our education and training partners will need to make to accommodate.
- Internship programs are good for industry and for the students.

