

SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA SECTOR STRATEGY PLAN

2017

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SOUTHCENTRAL MS WORKS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA SECTOR STRATEGY PLAN

INTRODUCTION

As requested by and at the direction of the Mississippi State Workforce Investment Board and to further the state's vision of economic development and skill growth, Southcentral Mississippi Works presents their Sector Strategy Plan. This plan presents strategies for the major job providers and economic-driving workforce sectors of Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics. The focus of this sector strategy plan is to identify and address current and emerging skill gaps and other workforce issues through the partnership of industry, government, education, training, economic development, and community organizations. The plan was developed through a collaborative effort with the objective of aligning state resources to better address industry demands.

The Southcentral Mississippi Works Workforce Development Area is a seventeen county area located in the southwestern quadrant of the state. The counties within the area are Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Copiah, Franklin, Hinds, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Madison, Pike, Rankin, Simpson, Walthall, Warren, Wilkinson, and Yazoo. The area was established as a workforce area under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and subsequently re-designated as a workforce development area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) passed into law in July 2014. The workforce area is administered by its fiscal agent, the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD), which works in coordination with Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District (SWMPDD). The workforce area's WIOA funded programs and activities are overseen by the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) and the Board of Commissioners (BOC), which is the area's local elected officials' board.

The area is served by two Economic Development Councils, the Greater Jackson Alliance and Southwest Mississippi Partnership. Four Community Colleges serve the area: 1) Copiah-Lincoln Community College; 2) Hinds Community College; 3) Holmes Community College; and 4) Southwest MS Community College. Five of the area's seventeen counties border the Mississippi River and are a major connector to the State of Louisiana. The Jackson Metropolitan Statistical Area consists of six counties in the northern portion of the workforce area. This area is highly populated and encompasses the capital city of Jackson, whereas the remainder of the workforce area is largely rural and non-metropolitan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objectives and Purpose

Sector Strategies are designed to address current and emerging skills gaps; provide a means to engage directly with industry across traditional and non-traditional boundaries; better align state and federal programs and resources serving employers and workers; and meet the needs of employers.

Our desire throughout this process has been to establish strong working relationships with workforce partners, industry representatives, educational entities, economic development organizations, and others to create a like-minded approach to identifying issues and gaps and designing solutions. To this end, the process has been a great success and will serve as a continuing effort to better meet the needs of the citizens of Southcentral Mississippi Works.

Mission, Vision and Goal

The **Mission** of the Southcentral Mississippi Works Workforce Development Area is to serve as a leader in workforce development with the capability to bring various partners and resources to the table and to serve as a catalyst for change in the State of Mississippi's workforce and industry.

Our **Vision** is to improve the quality of the workforce; the quantity of appropriately trained workers; meet targeted industry needs, both current and future; fill the industry pipelines with qualified workers; and thereby improve the livelihood of Mississippi employers and workers.

Achieving this Vision, with the ultimate **Goal** of making Mississippi a sought-after location for industry with a reputation for providing a well-trained, ready-to-work pool of employees requires a strong plan, an on-going process of review and improvement, and the ability and willingness of all workforce partners to design programs and activities to meet the challenges.

Team Building

Southcentral Mississippi Works recruited Sector Strategy Leadership Team members for each industry sector from every spectrum of the workforce continuum. The members are experts in their fields and have all worked individually and collectively for the betterment of Mississippi employers and workers and the services and products provided to the citizens.

Multiple meetings of the various Leadership Teams were conducted with designated agendas to better utilize the time of the valuable resource individuals that volunteered to participate. The members were all provided opportunities to present verbal and written feedback and after designated planning sessions specific follow-up assignments were delegated with deadlines and response formats defined. Following each session, detailed minutes were distributed and all written feedback and follow-up assignment documentation was consolidated and distributed to all team members.

The Sector Strategy Planning process has resulted in the establishment of crucial relationships between public workforce partners, secondary and post-secondary educational entities, and industry representatives. These relationships will provide an avenue for continuing discussions of needs, input into educational and training curriculum development and content, and feedback regarding the design

of publicly funded programs and activities in order to meet the needs and address identified skills gaps of workers.

Statistical and Data Analysis

The Southcentral Mississippi Works selection of Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics (Labor Market Data classifies this industry as Transportation and Warehousing) Industries was based on data analysis that demonstrates the sectors as consistently being high growth, high demand with favorable wage scales. All statistical data presented is based on that most recently available from the Mississippi Department of Employment Security - Labor Market Information Department. The details presented herein were generated by a team of dedicated leaders in the Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics industries as well as by educators, government, workforce developers, and business experts. Each of the three industry sectors was separately analyzed by work groups and the information herein incorporates the views, insights, professional expertise, and recommendations contributed by the respective teams and industry contributors.

Below are basic statistical factors, produced by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security - Labor Market Information Department, which validates the industry selections for the Southcentral MS Works area.

Overall Employment Statistics

Current Employment – 330,268
10 Year Projected Job Growth – 16,230
Average annual wage - \$40,787

Healthcare

Current Industry Employment - 60,432 (18% of area workforce)
10 Year Projected Occupational Job Growth – 2,940 (18% of area growth)
Industry Average Annual Wage - \$41,492.00

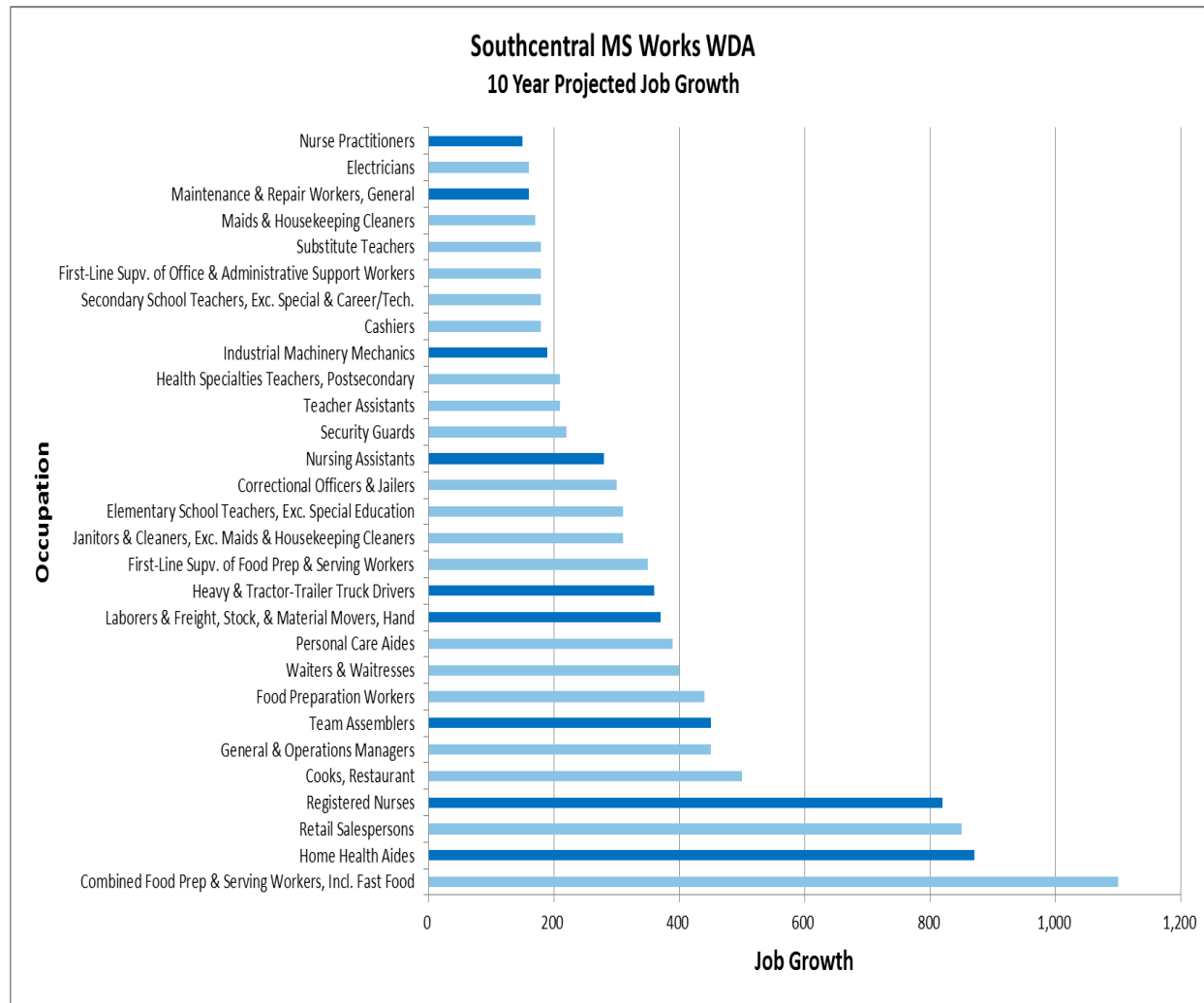
Manufacturing

Current Industry Employment – 28,203 (9% of area workforce)
10 Year Projected Occupational Job Growth – 810 (5% of area growth)
Industry Average Annual Wage - \$51,496

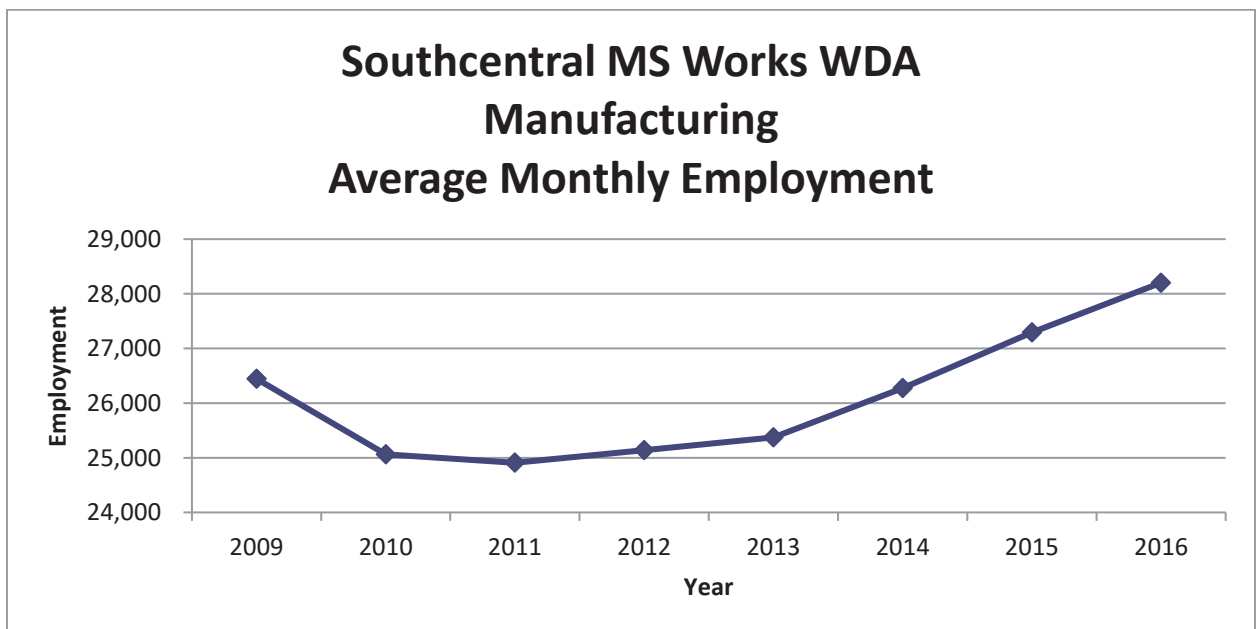
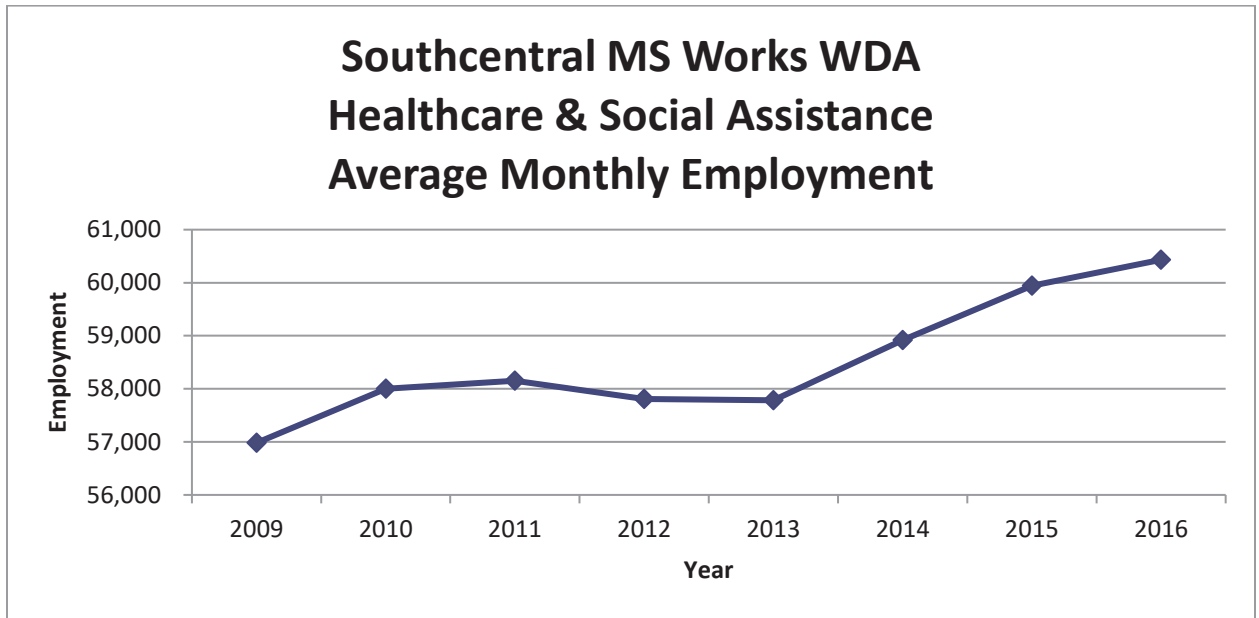
Transportation and Warehousing

Current Industry Employment – 15,320 (5% of area workforce)
10 Year Projected Occupational Job Growth – 1,160 (7% of area growth)
Industry Average Annual Wage - \$44,110

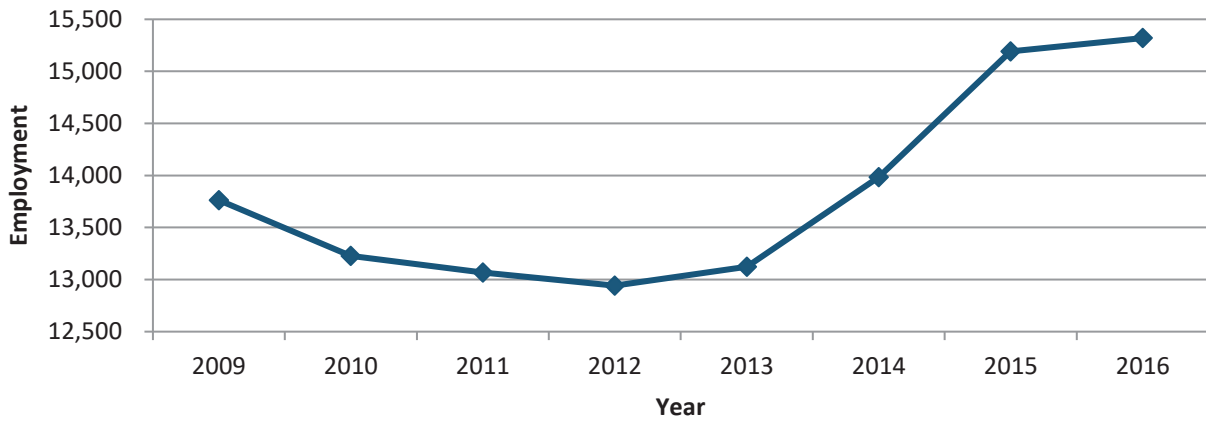
The chart below indicates the projected 10-year job growth by industry in the Southcentral Mississippi Works area.



The following charts demonstrate the increase in employment in each of the targeted industry sectors for the workforce area for the period from 2009 through 2016.

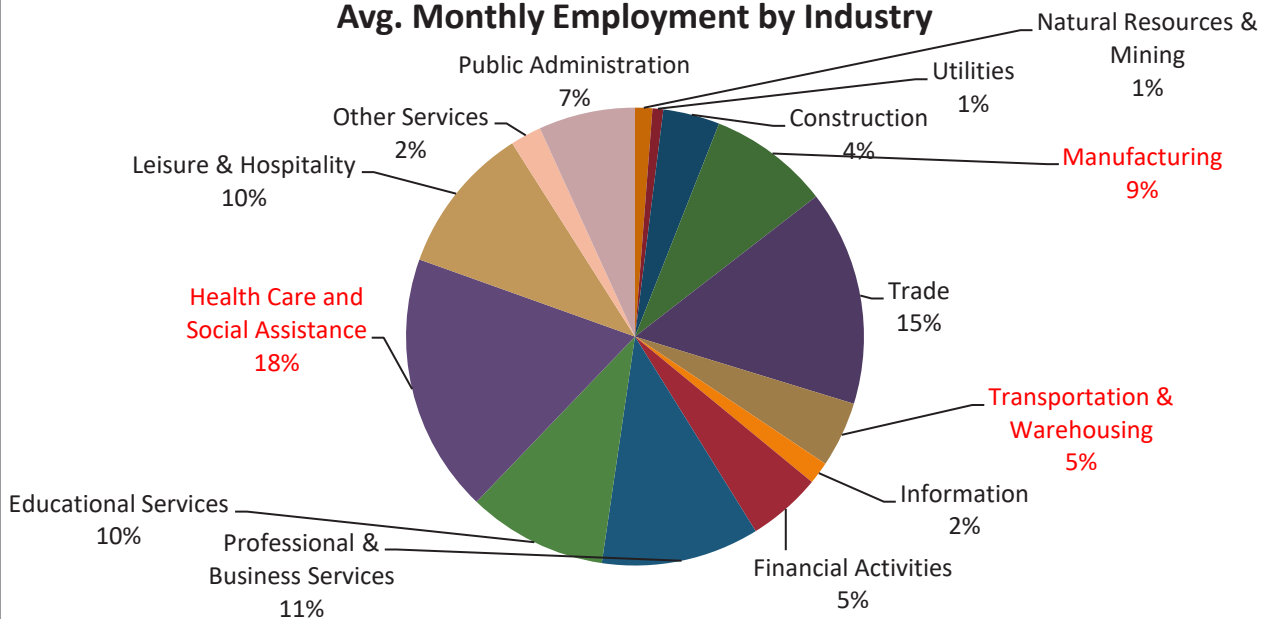


Southcentral MS Works WDA Transportation & Warehousing Average Monthly Employment

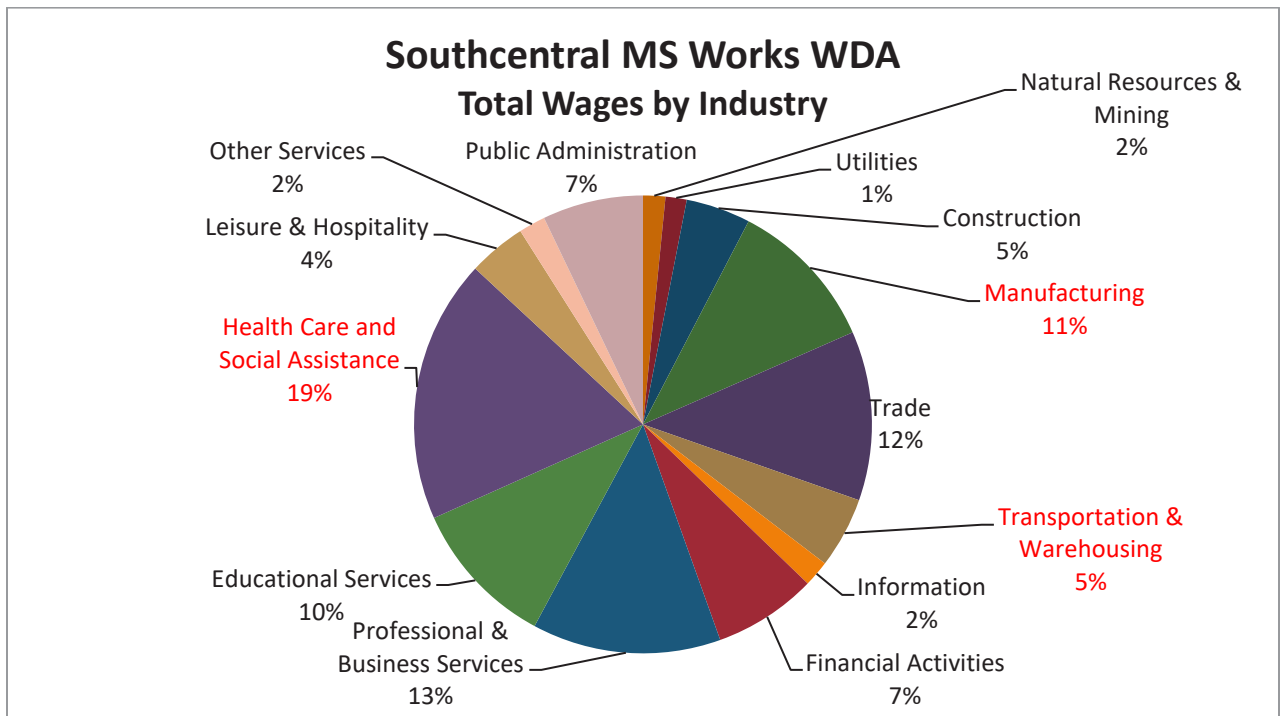


The following chart indicates and compares the percentage of average monthly employment by industry for the workforce area.

Southcentral MS Works WDA Avg. Monthly Employment by Industry



The following chart indicates and compares the percentage of total wages by industry for the workforce area.



PLANNING PROCESS

The goals and objectives were formalized by the Sector Strategy teams within public meetings. The industry analysis was conducted through in-person meetings with members of our Sector Strategy Teams providing input covering a broad spectrum of industry knowledge and expertise. All sector teams included business representatives, educators, workforce system members and developers, workforce associations, and economic development individuals. In addition to the sector teams, industry employers were surveyed via phone or in-person. Survey data collected across the industries included workforce needs, priorities, incoming / incumbent worker skill gaps, causation and barriers.

Every team member and industry resource contacted through the survey process was allowed to provide input.

Action Plans, outlined in detail within this report, have been developed and evaluation methodologies to gauge effectiveness do exist and will be utilized as the plan implementation progresses. The sector teams will continue to function as needed and updates will be presented.

EDUCATION SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT

Educational pathways leading to employment in the targeted industry sectors have been defined and K-12, Community College, and University programs are aligned or in the process of being aligned. Our sector groups will work closely with K-12 to disseminate career information, provide job shadowing opportunities, participate in career fairs, and provide input into the design of the single site workforce web system currently under development through efforts led by the Mississippi Development Authority.

Community College and University education pathways will be accessed by the sector industries to create and broaden apprenticeships, internships, and other work experience pathways.

The workforce system partners, including secondary career tech instructors and counselors, will be informed of existing informational websites, such as “Get on the Grid”, developed by the Mississippi Energy Institute for the purpose of providing information related to careers in the energy industry.

EXISTING AVAILABLE TRAINING

Currently, training is available for occupations within each targeted industry sector. Training that has been approved by Southcentral Mississippi Works Workforce Area is found on the state’s Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The list can be accessed at <http://www.mdes.ms.gov/i-need-a-job/job-searching-resources/training-education/eligible-training-provider-list-etpl-system/>.

As implementation of the Sector Strategy Plan progresses, Southcentral Mississippi Works, the area’s community colleges, industry representatives and other Stakeholders will work to ensure that training designed to meet specific industry needs is developed and made available.

BUSINESS SERVICES

In order to ensure continual review, adjustment, refinement and implementation of the sector strategy plan, Southcentral Mississippi Works intends to engage the services of a designated facilitator. The facilitator will be the point of contact for the targeted industry sectors and will coordinate workforce systems to better align state resources and craft tailored workforce solutions. This continual facilitation will be an important function in the workforce area’s efforts to implement the action steps outlined in the plan and to serve as a liaison to ensure that this plan is a living document that is continually reviewed and updated as necessary. Additionally, the facilitator will follow-up and report to the sector teams.

Utilizing funding made available by the State Workforce Investment Board, Southcentral Mississippi Works is currently engaging counties within the workforce area and assisting with their efforts to achieve the Work-Ready Community designation. Work-Ready Community designation will enhance the appeal of these locales to businesses and industries attempting to identify sites for expansion and development.

WIOA RESPONSE TO SECTOR STRATEGY EFFORTS

Southcentral Mississippi Works Workforce Development Area has taken a number of steps and implemented a number of actions specific to the use of WIOA resources to address deficiencies identified by the sector strategy teams. These actions will benefit all three targeted industry sectors.

- Priority will be given to funding WIOA On-the-Job training (OJT) with employers who offer employment in occupations within the targeted sector industries.
- WIOA Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy has been revised to raise the maximum amount that can be awarded for training for individuals desiring to enter occupations within the targeted industry sectors.
- WIOA Individual Training Account Policy has been revised to allow for the award of multiple ITAs for individuals who are following a career pathway within the targeted industry sectors. This action will serve to assist and encourage individuals in obtaining multiple, stackable credentials.
- WIOA Individual Training Account Policy has been revised so that the costs to be covered by the ITA include tuition, books, fees, certifications/licenses, tools, uniforms, and equipment for training for occupations within the targeted industry sectors.
- WIOA Individual Training Account Policy has been revised to require that all ITA applicants complete the basic modules in Career Ready 101 and obtain a Career Readiness Credential (CRC) prior to being approved for training. This requirement will improve work ethic, attendance, reliability and essential necessary skills of individuals receiving WIOA funded training. Engaging individuals to obtain their CRC is especially relevant as feedback received from the Sector Strategy Leadership Team members indicated that employers preferred that individuals possess these credentials. Credential attainment is a WIOA Performance Measure and is outlined in Mississippi's State Plan. Since the CRC is a nationally recognized, portable credential, it will serve to benefit the individual in all future employment.
- WIOA allows for incumbent worker training. SMW will allow incumbent worker training for occupations within the targeted industry sectors. Incumbent Worker training will provide WIOA funding for skill upgrading and retraining for current employees in addition to new hires.
- Priority for WIOA Internship or work experience opportunities will be given to individuals in occupations within the targeted sector industries. Internships/Work Experience employment is available for a period of 160 – 480 hours, depending on the occupation, at no cost to the employer, with the ultimate goal of permanent, unsubsidized employment.
- Emphasis and priority will be placed on training of any type (OJT, ITA, Internship, etc.) that is part of a career pathway. Again, multiple, stackable credentials will be strongly emphasized for individuals in these pathways.
- Emphasis will be placed on training of any type within the targeted industry sectors for individuals facing barriers to employment and for those hard-to-serve populations.
- SMW will participate with and support the Mississippi Apprenticeship Program (MAP) to encourage targeted industry employers in establishing registered apprenticeship programs.

- SMW will solicit feedback and input from targeted industry employers on an on-going basis and make revisions and implement changes as necessary to meet needs.
- SMW will earmark WIOA funds for PY 17 in the amount of **\$900,000** to implement the Sector Strategy Plan Actions outlined in this document. These funds will be used to support Internships, On-the-Job Training, Individual Training Accounts, and other needs that may be identified as implementation of this Sector Strategy Plan progresses.

Special population barriers will be addressed for individuals needing assistance so they can be properly trained and equipped to enter the workforce. Barriers may include, but are not limited to, low-income, pregnant or parenting, education level, ex-offenders, low literacy, English language learners, long-term unemployed, disabilities, migrant and seasonal farm workers, homeless, displaced homemakers, and age. Plans for programs and activities to meet the targeted industry skill gaps and needs will take into account how they will affect and benefit individuals with barriers to employment.

PIPELINE

Education is the most important key to increasing the pipeline of individuals who may enter employment within the targeted sector industries. Student career awareness will be achieved through the dissemination of career information, job shadowing opportunities (for students and educators), career fair participation by sector representatives, and by providing further details and career information for the design of the single site workforce web system. Dual enrollment avenues will be encouraged and shared by our team educators through their existing channels of communication. K-12 students must be made aware of the many opportunities that exist for employment within the targeted sector industries, including level of expected income and the opportunity for advancement.

Industry employers and incumbent workers will be accessed through their associations, industry newsletters, and on-site meetings. Training opportunities and resulting benefits will be shared and proffered.

STATEWIDE WORKFORCE SYSTEM WEAKNESSES/GAPS

All three of the Leadership Teams identified two systemic workforce system-wide issues in our state. The first issue is the lack of a “one-stop” resource website where an individual, current employer or an industry exploring the possibility of locating in Mississippi can access information regarding workforce, education, training, and other resources. This information is all currently available, but unless a user is familiar with what agency provides the resource, it is almost impossible to obtain the information one needs. Mississippi needs a common identifier and common resource website. Below are the goal, objective and action identified by the Leadership Teams in relation to this weakness/gap.

Workforce Information System Fragmentation

Goal

Our sector strategy teams defined the components of the workforce information system to encompass – governmental entities, workforce and economic development organizations, and educational institutions. The workforce system is complex, highly regulated and many employers are not aware of the opportunities available or, if aware, are often confounded by the processes and the “government speak”. Additionally, educators / counselors, students, and parents have difficulty locating information on occupations, career pathways and education / training opportunities in employment sectors.

As stated previously under “Business Services”, our goal is to address employer needs by identifying a sector facilitator that will serve to promote and drive various workforce projects. The employer will have much less involvement with the individual aspects of the workforce system and will be presented a much more streamlined approach to information and resources. In addition, workforce partners participating in solutions will be given guidance on presenting the opportunities. Further, our teams will provide information to the MS Development Authority for use in the development of the marketing/branding strategy currently underway by the Boyette Group.

Objectives

- Increase employer participation in the workforce system
- Present a more streamlined approach and solution process to address employer workforce needs
- Define occupational career paths and information resources for educators, students, and perspective employees

Actions

- Provide input and data to the MS Development Authority to further the workforce, single site web initiative currently underway
- Continue our Sector Strategy Team approach and continue to build relationships with the workforce system participants
- Increase employer outreach to gather employer / industry workforce requirements, educate the public on available services and resources, and obtain feedback on completed initiatives

Continual Workforce Partner Staff Cross-Training

Goal

The Sector Strategy Leadership Teams identified a second workforce system-wide systemic weakness/gap in our state relative to the need for continual cross-training of front-line staff of workforce partner agencies and organizations. The Teams recognize that staff turnover and the need for re-training are widespread issues that affect not only the targeted industry sectors included in this Sector Strategy Plan, but also the staff of the workforce partner agencies and organizations responsible for providing services to those industries. Continual staff training is essential to the success of the Southcentral MS Works Sector Strategy Plan, and is equally essential to the success of the State Workforce Investment Board and WIOA efforts statewide.

In accordance with the State of Mississippi's Combined Plan, Southcentral MS Works is in the process of establishing a Sector Training Plus Comprehensive One-Stop Center to be centrally located in the Jackson Metropolitan area. The Center will physically house the services of all required workforce partner programs and the services of several other organizations that provide referral and support, as well as a broad spectrum of sector-focused workforce training by Hinds Community College. The Center will be the largest of its kind in the state and will include ample training space to host the continual staff training that both the workforce area and the state as a whole require to ensure the provision of effective and efficient service to all Mississippians.

Objectives

- To provide continual cross-training to front-line workforce staff providing services to job seekers and employers
- Present a more streamlined approach and service provision to address employer workforce needs
- Educate front-line staff in order to provide a more cohesive package of service to job seekers and employers by braiding the funding resources offered by workforce partners

Actions

- Provide continual training for front-line staff
- Increase front-line staff' working knowledge of all workforce partner programs and services

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Southcentral Mississippi Works Sector Strategy Plan has been approved by the Local Workforce Development Board and by the Local Elected Officials' Board and has been made available for public comment via the Central MS Planning & Development District website (www.cmpdd.org).

ASSESSMENT TOOL

The Assessment Tool contained in the SWIB Sector Strategy Planning Guide is attached to this plan.



HEALTHCARE IN SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS

The Lead Convener for the Healthcare Industry Sector Strategy Planning activity was the Mississippi Hospital Association (MHA). The Leadership Team for the Healthcare sector was comprised of the following individuals:

Healthcare Sector Strategy Leadership Team

Curnis Upkins, Jr. – Vice President of Human Resources and Workforce Services, MS Hospital Association

Shawn Rossi – Vice President for Education and Public Relations, MS Hospital Association

Jimmy Giles – Deputy Director of Human Resources and Workforce Services, MS Hospital Association

Brandi Garrett – Human Resources Director, GI Associates

Lindsey Lewis – Training and Development Coordinator, HMP Management / Bedford Nursing Homes

Celine Craig – Chief Human Resource Officer, King's Daughters Medical Center

Mary Ann Simpkins – People Development Coordinator, MS Baptist Health Systems

Cathy Smith – Chief Human Resources, University of MS Medical Center

Josh Bower – Director of Workforce Education, MS Community College Board

Robin Mitchell – Workforce Coordinator, Copiah-Lincoln Community College

Greg Word – Vice President of Economic Development, Greater Jackson Alliance

Libby Mahaffey – Dean, Nursing and Allied Health, Hinds Community College

Robin Parker – District Director of Integrated Pathways, Hinds Community College

Jeremy Smith – Vice President Career and Technical Education, Southwest MS Community College

LaNelle Weems – Director, MS Center for Quality and Workforce

Jean Massey – Executive Director Secondary Education, MS Department of Education

Mary Willoughby – Director Labor Market Information, MS Department of Employment Security

Janette McCory – Director of Nursing Education, MS Institutions of Higher Learning

Teresa Malone – Executive Director, MS Nurses Association

Wayne Miley – Programs and Workforce Development Director, MS Primary Healthcare Association

Mary Powers – Job Training Director, Southcentral MS Works

Cindy Goodin – WIOA Performance Coordinator, Southcentral MS Works

The following individuals also contributed to the development of this plan:

Additional Healthcare Sector Strategy Contributors

Joseph Ledbetter – Director of Nursing, Baptist – Yazoo

Chrissy Nicholson – Vice President of Human Resources, Delta Regional Medical Center

Dana McNabb – Human Resources Director, Field Memorial Hospital

Mark King – Employee Relations Representative, Forrest General Hospital

Susan Gabbert – Human Resources Director, Franklin County Hospital

Cynthia Render Leach – Human Resources Director, Highland Community Hospital

Melissa Cooper – Director of Nursing, Magee General Hospital

Reginia Brown – Human Resources Director, Magnolia Regional Medical Center

Kristina Romero – Executive Director, Medical Group Management Association

Betty Davis – MS Association of Associate Degree Nursing (Meridian Community College)

Debra Spring – MS Association of Associate Degree Nursing (Alcorn State University)

Denise Gardner – MS Association of Associate Degree Nursing (MS Delta Community College)

Lorene Willingham – MS Association of Associate Degree Nursing (Coahoma Community College)

Greg Baldwin – Human Resources Director, MS Baptist Health Systems

Brenda Castleberry – Director, Education Resource Center, MS Baptist Health Systems

Heidi Bordelon – Human Resources Coordinator, Pearl River County Hospital and Nursing Home

Mendall Kemp – Director, Rural Hospital Alliance

Scott Vincent – Human Resources Director, Rush Foundation Hospital

Donna Iler – Director of Education Services, Singing River Hospital

Penny McNeer – Human Resources Director, South Central Regional Medical Center

Jodi Creed – Recruiter, St Dominic Hospital

Kim Edwards – Human Resources Manager, St Dominic Hospital

Cori Bailey – Accounting Director, Tyler Holmes Hospital

Michelle Nowell – Human Resources Director, Winston Medical Center

GAPS, WEAKNESSES AND ACTION PLANS

The major workforce issues and skill gaps identified by the healthcare industry as a result of the Sector Strategy Planning process are delineated and action plans are included.

Gaps and Weaknesses

1. Recruitment and Retention of Registered Nurses
2. Incumbent Worker Training
3. Limited Clinical Opportunities for Nursing Students
4. Workforce Information System Fragmentation – addressed previously in this document

1. Recruitment and Retention of Registered Nurses

Goal

Assist the industry with the most prevalent workforce issue identified through the survey process – Registered Nurse Recruitment and Retention. The state community colleges and four year colleges in conjunction with MHA Health, Research, and Education Foundation, Inc. and multiple hospitals in the sector area currently operate a nurse extern program. Although the program is a great success, with an average of 150 students in the Southcentral Mississippi Works Area participating each summer, there are approximately 100 students that apply that are not hired due to funding limitations at healthcare facilities. The goal is to increase the number of available extern positions thereby maximizing the learning and job training opportunities for student nurses.

The industry average for Registered Nurse turnover is 17% and the average cost to replace each Registered Nurse employee is \$48,000. Nurse occupations generally serve as the primary caregivers and touch points in all healthcare environments, including hospitals, clinics, nursing homes and community settings. Approximately 70% of the communication with and care provided to patients and family members in a healthcare setting is provided by a member of the nursing profession. Customer service, expertise, and quality of care are all measures that impact federal reimbursements, patient loyalty and overall growth of the business. Industry regulations and requirements are ever-changing and present greater needs for employers.

Industry interviews conducted through this sector initiative have indicated that the nurse extern opportunity is the single most effective tool for recruitment and turnover prevention. The nursing student participating in the summer extern program actually works at a hospital under a hospital preceptor nurse while also being guided by a faculty member. The student and nurse preceptor must follow and document completion of an itemized training protocol wherein the student is introduced to multiple facets of the nursing occupation. The employer is able to utilize this on-the-job training period to evaluate the skills of the prospective nurse, and likewise the student can determine that this is the proper occupational field and if the employer is the right place to work following graduation. Generally, the successful students remain employed after the summer extern period and work in a part-time, as needed, nurse aide role until graduation and licensure is attained.

Objectives

- Increase the number of externship opportunities for nursing students
- Expand the program at rural hospitals so students in these communities have participation opportunities
- Decrease nurse turnover rates
- Track the employment and wage data of the students completing the program

Actions

- Designate WIOA funding sources in PY 17 to cover at least 25 additional externs in the workforce area
- Communicate with rural hospitals in an effort to expand the number of extern positions available in their respective hospitals
- Encourage the state's other workforce areas to make the Nurse Externships a statewide initiative

2. Incumbent Worker Training

Goal

Increase opportunities for specialized, high-demand occupational training including; 1) Telemedicine, 2) Wound Care, 3) Diabetes, 4) Dementia / Alzheimer's, 5) Care / Case Management, 6) Cyber Security, 7) Quality Measures - MACRA/MIPS, 8) Operating Room Circulatory Nurse Program. Healthcare reimbursement relies more and more on delivery methods, specialized care and case management. Training opportunities are limited and costly. Our sector team will pursue "train the trainer" approaches and also review expansion of existing educational curriculum to develop specialized training courses. Many of these courses result in industry-recognized certifications, wage increases, increased employee satisfaction, and greater reimbursement dollars thereby increasing the economic advantages to the state.

Objectives

- Increase the number of training opportunities in these critical areas for incumbent workers
- Create "train the trainer" opportunities where appropriate
- Expand existing educational curriculum at the community college level for identified specializations
- Increase the number of individuals certified in Wound Care, Diabetes, Care / Case Managers

Actions

- Identify funding streams, including grants, WIOA ITAs, Workforce Enhancement Training (WET) Funds, etc. to assist with advanced training opportunities
- Work with Community College team members to expand existing curriculum
- Identify educators or existing healthcare specialists that can be positioned to conduct the identified training

3. Limited Clinical Opportunities for Nursing Students

Goal

Assist and expand the clinical training opportunities for nursing students. The Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) has licensed scheduling software that can be utilized by the schools of nursing and healthcare facilities (hospitals and nursing homes). The employers surveyed indicated that on-site clinical training is paramount to having a job ready employee at the conclusion of the educational period. There is high-demand by schools for clinical access to healthcare work environments and scheduling is burdensome on the employer. The scheduling software allows the employer to document availability of clinical opportunities (clinical specialties, time frames, number of students, etc.) and the schools can schedule based on the presented schedule.

Objectives

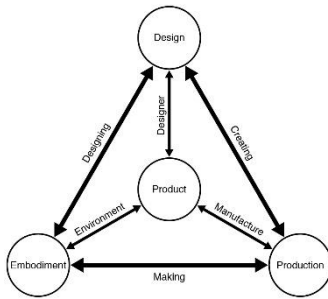
- Increase the number of educational and healthcare facilities utilizing the software
- Improve the clinical experience thereby improving the quality of the new employee after graduation
- Strengthen industry and education relationships
- Streamline the clinical scheduling process

Actions

- Market the available software tools to the non-user healthcare facilities and educational institutions.
- MHA Health, Research, and Education Foundation, Inc. will coordinate the communication and software training with the educational institutions and healthcare entities

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Letters of Support from stakeholders in the healthcare industry are attached to this plan.



MANUFACTURING IN SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS

The Lead Conveners for the Manufacturing Sector Strategy Plan activity were Hinds Community College and Greater Jackson Alliance. The Leadership Team for the Manufacturing sector was comprised of the following individuals:

Manufacturing Sector Strategy Leadership Team

David Creel – District Director of Manufacturing, Hinds Community College

Robin Parker – District Director of Integrated Pathways, Hinds Community College

Greg Word – Senior Vice President of Economic Development, Greater Jackson Alliance

Josh Bower – Director of Workforce Training, MS Community College Board

Michael Curran – Mississippi Development Authority

Mary Willoughby – Chief Labor Market Information, Mississippi Department of Employment Security

Jean Massey – Executive Director of Secondary Education, Mississippi Department of Education

Regina Todd – Assistant Director, Rankin First Economic Development

Danielle Winningham – Business Development Manager, Madison County Economic Development Authority

Curnis Upkins III – Director of Business Development and Marketing, Hinds County Economic Development Authority

Garrick Combs – Executive Director, Brookhaven Chamber of Commerce

Donnie Caughman – Executive Director, Simpson County Development Foundation

Pablo Diaz – Warren County Economic Development Authority

Jill Busby – Executive Director, Pike County Economic Development District

Kenny Goza - Program Coordinator, Copiah-Lincoln Community College

Angela Berch – Workforce Education, Copiah-Lincoln Community College

Michael Clements – Industrial Training Coordinator, Southwest MS Community College

Amanda Howell – Southwest MS Community College

John Wesley – Entergy, Business Retention and Expansion

Mitch Stringer – Director of Business and Economic Development, Cooperative Energy

Shannon Hillman – Marketing and Membership Manager, Mississippi Manufacturers' Association

Mary Powers – Job Training Director, Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area

Cindy Goodin – WIOA Performance Coordinator, Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area

The following individuals also contributed to the development of this plan:

Additional Manufacturing Sector Strategy Contributors

DaCondra Smith – Plant Manager, Laclede Chain

Jens Kaufhold – Vice President of Finance and Administration, ISA Tan Tec

Liz Densmore – Director of Marketing and Human Resources, LEC, Incorporated

Stephen Henderson – Mill Learning Leader, International Paper

Maggie Chain – Human Resources Manager, International Paper

Shannon Maddox – Hunter Engineering

Carolyn Bratton – Unified Brands

Jeanese Kimes and Joe Woods – Milwaukee Tool

Michelle Rhodes – TempStaff

Richard Lind – Express Employment Professionals

LaToya Bracey - UPS

Andrew Mallinson and Brad Williams – Multicraft

Bucky Crystal – Rockett Incorporated

Dawn Shue and Joe Russell – Great Southern Industries

Wayne Octtinger and David Sims – Precision Machining Services

Jennifer Stewart – Precision Spine Inc.

Kathy Priddy and Michael Mosley – Magnolia Label

Chelsea Twiner and Joel James – Trucker Supply Company

Joey Busby and David Dixon – Kalalou

Toni Lowe and Chad Gartrell – ERDC

Ed Dundas – Plant Manager, Air Cruiser Company

Renee McCaa – Human Resources Manager, American Railcar Industries

Ronnie Wooten – Plant Manager, Franklin Lumber Company

Kenny Lawson, President – Great River Industries

GAPS, WEAKNESSES AND ACTION PLANS

The major workforce issues and skill gaps identified by the manufacturing industry as a result of the Sector Strategy Planning process are delineated and action plans are included.

Gaps and Weaknesses

1. Recruitment and Retention of Qualified People to fill the Manufacturing Sector Pipeline
2. Limited Number of Current and Potential Employees with Needed Necessary Skills (Employability Skills)
3. Inadequate Number of People with Basic, Middle, and Advanced Manufacturing Related Technical Skills
4. Minimal opportunities dedicated to industry specific skills training

1. Recruitment and Retention of Qualified People to Fill the Manufacturing Sector Pipeline

Goal

Assist the industry with the most prevalent workforce issue identified through the survey process – to increase the number of individuals entering manufacturing occupations. Industry members, high school personnel, and community college personnel identified the need to change the public's perception of advanced manufacturing jobs. In 2015, the Manufacturing Institute administered the Public Perception Index Survey. The survey found that people throughout the nation greatly support the manufacturing industry and would choose to have a manufacturing plant open in their region over other types of employers. However, only 37% of survey respondents indicated that they would encourage their children to pursue a career in manufacturing.

Industry member and leadership team feedback suggest that recruitment and retention strategies focus on the following groups of Mississippians:

1. Middle and High School Students
2. Low Skilled Adults (those lacking basic academic skills or without a high school diploma or equivalency credential), Unemployed, and Underemployed
3. Non-traditional Employees (females and minorities) for the high-demand, high-skill occupations

Objectives

- Increase the number of manufacturing internship and apprenticeship opportunities in the workforce area
- Increase the number of manufacturing training opportunities in the workforce area
- Track the employment and wage data of the students completing these type programs

Actions

- Utilize designated WIOA funding sources in PY 17 to fund manufacturing internship opportunities in the workforce area

- Explore the feasibility of the development of a Manufacturing Academy to target the following skills training areas:
 - Core Skills (Pre-employment and Necessary Skills)
 - Basic Manufacturing Skills (Production Technician; short term credit training program and non-credit training program)
 - Technical Skills program that focuses on middle skill training for the following areas: Maintenance, Machinist, Drafting, Quality Control, Welding
 - Advanced Skills training program focused on advanced skill training in the following areas: Mechatronics, Engineering Technology, CNC Programming, PLC Programming

2. Limited Number of Current and Potential Employees with Needed Necessary Skills (Employability Skills)

Goal

Increase the opportunity for current and potential manufacturing employees to earn the SMART Start Credential. The Smart Start Class Pathway is a 120-hour course of study focusing on essential skills needed to become work- or career-ready in middle-skill jobs by addressing the needs identified by employers. The Smart Start course is also designed to train and educate individuals in need of basic education and job-readiness skills. Smart Start is an effort of the Mississippi Community College Board; its curricula is Career Ready 101, a product of the ACT company. Successful completion of Smart Start produces a Smart Start Credential. In order to earn the Smart Start Credential, participants must complete all 3 of the following:

- Employability Skills Training Module Completion
- Level 3 (Bronze) on the National Career Readiness Certificate
- A Job Readiness Project

Objective

- Improve work ethic, attendance, and participation and worker reliability through the implementation of the Smart Start Credential program

Actions

- Support the Smart Start Pathway program as a pre-requisite for manufacturing training programs
- Work with training providers to build “work ready” requirements (adherence to dress code, attendance, completion of work, etc.)
- Explore the feasibility of an incentive program for implementing positive “work ready” habits while workforce area participants are in training programs
- Prioritize the awarding of internship opportunities for students who successfully earn the Smart Start Credential

3. Inadequate Number of People with Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Manufacturing Skills

Goal

Assist in the development and implementation of manufacturing related short-term basic manufacturing training programs, middle skill manufacturing training programs, and advanced manufacturing training programs. Entry into this pathway will be determined by work-readiness assessment. A short-term credit or non-credit program must include entry-level, industry-recognized certifications that prepare future workers for an entry level production position. Participants entering the Basic Manufacturing Skills Training Program must attain a Level 4 (Silver) on the National Career Readiness Certificate. Certifications may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Manufacturing Skills Basic (regional workforce certification)
- OSHA, CPR, and First Aid
- Mechanical Aptitude Assessment

Middle and Advanced Manufacturing Skills Training programs should also include industry-recognized certifications as well as college credentials (career certificate, technical certificate, Associate of Applied Science degrees, and advanced technical certificates). Students entering the middle and advanced manufacturing skills training programs must have an appropriate score defined by ACT WorkKeys (<http://profiles.keytrain.com>) on the National Career Readiness Certificate. The diagram on the following page describes a possible career pathway for middle and advanced skills training.

Objective

- Prioritize the awarding of training opportunities and ITAs in the areas of basic-skilled, middle-skilled, and advanced-skilled opportunities in the Manufacturing Skills Sector

Action

- Partner with training providers to develop and implement basic-skilled, middle-skilled, and advanced-skilled opportunities in the Manufacturing Skills Sector


```

graph TD
    SSA[Smart Start Credential  
Necessary Skills Training (Employability Skills), NCRC preparation, High School Equivalency Preparation, Career] --> MB[Manufacturing Basic Certification (Production Technician)  
Regional, Manufacturing Skill Basic Certification, Specific Industry Certifications (OSHA, First Aid, CPE, Fork Lift, etc.)]
    MB --> CC[Career Choice/Workforce Certification (Multi-Skill)  
Industrial Maintenance, Advanced Machining, Facility Maintenance]
    MB --> I1[Internships  
Middle Skilled Technician Internship, OJT, or Entry Level Employment]
    CC --> DP[Degree Programs  
Industrial Maintenance Degrees, Advanced Machining Degrees, HVAC or Construction Degrees]
    DP --> SSE[Enter Self Sustaining Employment]
    DP --> I2[Internships]
    subgraph DashedBox [ ]
        CC
        DP
    end
    PA[Participant Assessment  
National Career Readiness Certificate, Career Interest Inventory, Employability Skills Assessment, and/or Mechanical Aptitude Assessment] -.-> SSA
    PA -.-> MB
    PA -.-> CC
    PA -.-> DP
    PA -.-> SSE
  
```

4. Minimal opportunities dedicated to industry specific training

Goal

Assist industry in the workforce area by developing customized training. The Mississippi Community College Board offers funding resources for specialty training opportunities such as, but not limited to, paper mill operator, leather technician, and quality control technologies. This funding originates from the Workforce Enhancement Training (WET) Fund. The purpose of this funding is to allow Community Colleges to partner with business and industry to offer customized training programs to achieve desired workforce training goals. Training plans are designed to be flexible and practical while producing highly skilled workers.

Objective

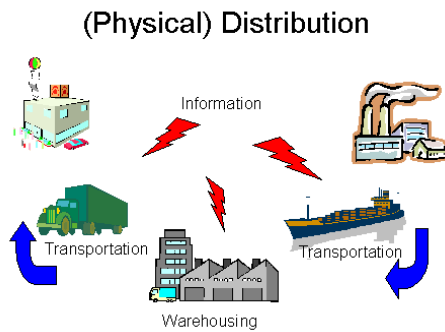
- Increase the number of industry specific training programs offered through community colleges throughout the workforce area

Action

- Partner with community colleges to develop and implement customized, industry specific training programs

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Letters of Support from stakeholders in the manufacturing industry are attached to this plan.



TRANSPORTATION/ DISTRIBUTION/LOGISTICS IN SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS

The Lead Convener for the Transportation/Distribution/Logistics Sector Strategy Plan activity was Hinds Community College. The Leadership Team for the Transportation/Distribution/Logistics sector was comprised of the following individuals:

Transportation/Distribution/Logistics Sector Strategy Leadership Team

Chad Stocks - Vice President of Career, Workforce, and Adult Education, Hinds Community College

David Creel – District Director of Manufacturing, Hinds Community College

Robin Parker – District Director of Integrated Pathways, Hinds Community College

Tracy Church, Director of Supply Chain – Nissan North America

Mark Amis, Distribution Manager – Miskelly Furniture

Darren Vandevender, Human Resource Director, Vantec Hatchi

Richie Morton, Operations Manager – Jackson Paper

Milton Williams, Distribution Director – Siemens

Mary Powers – Job Training Director, Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area

Cindy Goodin – WIOA Performance Coordinator, Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area

Josh Bower – Director of Workforce Training, MS Community College Board

Michael Curran – Mississippi Development Authority

Mary Willoughby – Chief Labor Market Information, Mississippi Department of Employment Security

Jean Massey – Executive Director of Secondary Education, Mississippi Department of Education

Greg Word – Senior Vice President of Economic Development, Greater Jackson Alliance

Regina Todd – Assistant Director, Rankin First Economic Development

Danielle Winningham – Business Development Manager, Madison County Economic Development Authority

Curnis Upkins III – Director of Business Development and Marketing, Hinds County Economic Development Authority

Garrick Combs – Executive Director, Brookhaven Chamber of Commerce

Donnie Caughman – Executive Director, Simpson County Development Foundation

Pablo Diaz – Warren County Economic Development Authority

Jill Busby – Executive Director, Pike County Economic Development District

Kenny Goza, Program Coordinator – Copiah-Lincoln Community College

Dennis Thompson, Logistics Instructor – Hinds Community College

GAPS, WEAKNESSES AND ACTION PLANS

The major workforce issues and skill gaps identified by the transportation/distribution/logistics industry as a result of the Sector Strategy Planning process are delineated and action plans are included.

Gaps and Weaknesses

1. Recruitment and Retention of Qualified People to fill the Transportation / Distribution / Logistics (TDL) Sector Pipeline
2. Employers across the TDL industry have challenges finding applicants with strong necessary skills (employability skills), which negatively affects retention in the industry
3. Limited amount of people who possess TDL entry-level skills and certifications
4. A majority of technical skills required for jobs in the industry can be acquired through short-term training programs and during on-the-job training

1. Recruitment and Retention of Qualified People to fill the Transportation / Distribution / Logistics (TDL) Sector Pipeline

Goal

Assist the industry with the workforce issues identified - to increase the number of individuals entering TDL occupations. The local workforce supply is primarily composed of the following elements:

1. Entry of new high school or community college graduates into the available talent pool
2. Existing talent of qualified unemployed workers actively seeking employment
3. Existing low skilled, unqualified unemployed workers actively seeking employment

Stakeholders interviewed reported recruiting students from high schools. The stakeholders also indicated that they felt the first two populations listed above will not effectively fill the needed pipeline supply for the TDL Industry.

Objectives

- Increase the number of TDL internships, apprenticeships and on the job training opportunities for the workforce area
- Increase the number of other TDL training opportunities in the workforce area
- Track the employment and wage data of the students completing the training programs

Actions

- Utilize designated WIOA funding sources in PY 17 to fund TDL internships in the workforce area
- Explore the feasibility of the development and implementation of a Transportation Focused, Counseling to Careers (C2C) Academy for out of school youth participants that target the following skills training areas:
 - Core Skills (Pre-employment and Necessary Skills)
 - Basic Transportation Skills (Fork Lift Certification, OSHA Certification, Additional Program Specific Certifications)
 - Technical Skills programs that focuses on middle skills training for the following areas: 1) Diesel Service Technician, 2) Heavy Equipment Service Technician, 3) Heavy Equipment Operator, 4) Maritime Transportation, 5) Commercial Truck Driving, 6) Transportation Parts and Marketing, 7) Collision Repair, 8) Automotive Service Repair)

2. Employers across the TDL industry have challenges finding applicants with strong necessary skills (employability skills), which negatively affects retention in the industry.

Goal

Increase the opportunity for current and potential TDL employees to earn the Smart Start Credential (discussed in the manufacturing sector section above). While regional employers are generally satisfied with the technical skills of industry graduates, they expressed concern for the lack of basic necessary skills among technically qualified applicants. Industry employers reported a shortage of applicants with resume writing proficiency, punctuality, and communication skills. These abilities are vital, and indicate how an interviewed individual will perform in a work environment if he or she is hired. Because employers have experienced challenges in workforce retention due to an industry-wide deficit of basic necessary skills, they are forced to increase retention efforts to locate well-rounded applicants to fill openings.

Objective

- Improve work ethic, attendance, and participation and worker reliability through the implementation of the Smart Start Credential program

Actions

- Support the Smart Start Pathway program as a pre-requisite for TDL training programs
- Work with training providers to build “work ready” requirements (adherence to dress code, attendance, completion of work, etc.)
- Explore the feasibility of an incentive program for implementing positive “work ready” habits while workforce area participants are in training programs
- Prioritize the awarding of internship opportunities for students who successfully earn the Smart Start Credential

3. Limited amount of people who possess TDL entry-level skills and certifications.

Goal

A majority of technical skills required for jobs in the industry can be acquired through short-term training programs and during on-the-job training. Southcentral Mississippi Works will assist in the development and implementation of TDL related short-term basic training programs, middle skills TDL training programs, and advanced skills TDL training programs. Entry into this pathway will be determined by work-readiness assessment. A short-term credit or non-credit program must include entry-level; industry-recognized certifications that prepare future workers for an entry-level position. Certifications may include, but are not limited to, the following certifications:

- Transportation Skills Basic (development of a regional workforce certification)
- Fork Lift, OSHA, CPR, and First Aid
- Mechanical Aptitude Assessment
- Pathway Specific Credentials

Objective

- Increase the number of training opportunities and ITAs for a TDL Skills Basic Certification program

Action

- Collaborate with training providers to investigate the development and implementation of basic-skilled, middle-skilled, and advanced-skilled opportunities in the TDL Sector

4. A majority of technical skills required for jobs in the industry can be acquired through short-term training programs and during on-the-job training.

Goal

Assist industry in the workforce area in working with community colleges to develop and expand effective short-term training curricula. The Mississippi Community College Board offers funding resources for short-term training opportunities. This funding originates from the Workforce Enhancement Training (WET) Fund. The purpose of this funding is to allow Community Colleges to partner with business and industry to offer short-term non-credit training programs to achieve desired workforce training goals. Training plans are designed to be flexible and practical while producing highly skilled workers.

Objective

To increase the number and availability of short-term training opportunities in order to fill employer needs

Actions

- Collaborate with community colleges within the workforce area to encourage the design of more short-term training programs
- Educate area employers to the availability of funding through the Workforce Enhancement Training Fund and connect them with community colleges to access those funds
- Utilize WIOA funds, where appropriate, for Internships, ITAs and On-the-Job Training

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Letters of Support from stakeholders in the TDL industry are attached to this plan.

ASSESSMENT TOOL

Identify the core competencies that are present/completed or non-existent/not addressed by the Industry Partnership by completing the table below:

Core Competencies for Effective Industry Partnerships	Present	Non-Existent	Need Technical Assistance
Sector Selection			
Data Analysis was used to select sectors	X		
Consensus based decision process used to select sectors	X		
Other Describe	N/A		
Industry Analysis			
Survey of employers to determine workforce needs and priorities	X		
Gap Analysis of specific needs of industry	X		
Analysis of skill gap of incumbent workers	X		
Root cause of gaps have been identified	X		
Barriers for employees/new hires are identified and understood	X		
Capacity Building			
Written objectives including mission, vision, and goal statement	X		
Employers have leadership role in industry partnership	X		
Formal decision making protocols are established	X		
Written governance principles are established	X		
Meetings are scheduled in advance	X		
Agenda is distributed in advance of meeting	X		
Meetings are followed by dissemination of meeting minutes	X		
Planning			
Goals and objectives are clearly identified	X		
Action plans of strategies are in place to achieve goals	X		
Public meetings were used to share strategies and solicit input	X		
Evaluation and Business Impact	X		
Formal evaluation methods to gauge effectiveness are in place	X		
Formal evaluation methods to gauge training programs effectiveness	X		
Evaluation results are presented to key stakeholders	X		
Education			
Defined and clearly articulated pathways that lead to employment	X		
K-12 programs and curricula are aligned	X		
Career-technical programs award national credentials	X		
Community colleges career/technical programs and curricula aligned	X		
Apprenticeships, internships, work experience in place for pathways	X		
Business Services			
Plan for coordination between public workforce partners and industry	X		
Barriers to employment for special populations are identified	X		
Pipeline			
Activities to create career awareness for students at all levels	X		
Strategies to recruit incumbent workers into training pathways	X		
Dual enrollment and dual credit for career/technical training in place	X		



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 106 Highland Way • Suite 101 • Madison, MS 39110 • 601.355.1234
 1815 Mission 66 • Vicksburg, MS 39180 • 601.638.8801

May 26, 2017

Physicians

Stewart A. Boyd, MD
 Donald P. Brannan, MD
 Albert F. Chiemprabha, MD
 Shirley S. Donelson, MD
 Pierce D. Dotherow, MD
 Charles E. Hall, MD
 Reed B. Hogan, MD
 Reed B. Hogan III, MD
 Ronald P. Kotfila, MD
 Makau P. Lee, MD
 Jeffrey B. McCrary, MD
 J. Trippie McNeese, MD
 Paul B. Milner, MD
 Michelle A. Petro, MD
 Vonda G. Reeves, MD
 Matt Runnels, MD
 Vishwanath N. Shenoy, MD
 James A. Underwood Jr., MD
 E. Stephens Weeks Jr., MD
 Jane-Claire B. Williams, MD
 Mark E. Wilson, MD
 Cindy Haden Wright, MD

Pediatric

Mary Allyson Lowry, MD, MPH
 Sara Rippel, MD, MSCI
 Angela B. Shannon, MD

Pathology

Keith Brown, MD
 Samuel Hensley, MD
 Jason K. Jones, MD

Mr. Michael Monk
 Chief Executive Officer
 Central MS Planning and Development District
 P. O. Box 4935
 Jackson, MS 39296-4935

RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area Sector Strategy Plan

Dear Mr. Monk:

GI Associates & Endoscopy Center is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Mississippi Hospital Association. This process has been valuable in identifying the healthcare industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into healthcare fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the healthcare workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the healthcare industry's employers.

Sincerely,

Brandi Garrett, SHRM-CP, PHR
 Director of Human Resources
 GI Associates & Endoscopy Center

HUNTER**ENGINEERING COMPANY**

PHONE (601) 857-8883 FAX (601) 857-3132

2489 Clinton-Raymond Road
Raymond, Mississippi 39154 USA

May 16, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

Hunter Engineering Company is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College.

This process has been valuable in identifying the manufacturing industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into manufacturing fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the manufacturing workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,



Shannon Maddox
Human Resources Manager



Stephen Henderson
Mill Learning Leader
Maggie Cain
Human Resources Manager

INTERNATIONAL PAPER
3737 Highway 3 North
REDWOOD, MS 39156

12 May 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan

Dear Mr. Monk:

International Paper at the Vicksburg, Miss. Mill is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the manufacturing industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into manufacturing fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the manufacturing workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

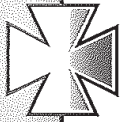
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Henderson".

Stephen Henderson
Mill Learning Leader

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maggie Cain".

Maggie Cain
Human Resources Manager



KING'S
DAUGHTERS
Medical Center

427 Highway 51 North – Brookhaven, MS 39601
PO Box 948 – Brookhaven, MS 39602-0948
601.833.6011 – www.kdmc.org

May 23, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

King's Daughters Medical Center is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Mississippi Hospital Association. This process has been valuable in identifying the healthcare industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into healthcare fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the healthcare workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the healthcare industry's employers.

Sincerely,

Alvin Hoover, CEO, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

May 15, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area Sector Strategy Plan

Dear Mr. Monk:

Laclede Chain Company is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the manufacturing industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into manufacturing fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the manufacturing workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,



DaCondra Smith
Plant Manager

**LIZ HOGUE DENSMORE**

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND HUMAN RESOURCES

LOUISIANA

13073 PLANK ROAD
BAKER, LOUISIANA 70714
TELEPHONE: 225.774.2348
FACSIMILE: 225.774.2349
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MISSISSIPPI

110 EXCELL DRIVE (PEARL, 39208)
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TELEPHONE: 601.939.8535
FACSIMILE: 601.939.9427

May 12, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area Sector Strategy Plan

Dear Mr. Monk:

LEC, Incorporated is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the manufacturing industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into manufacturing fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the manufacturing workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,

Liz Densmore
Director of Marketing and Human Resources
LEC, Incorporated

May 16, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

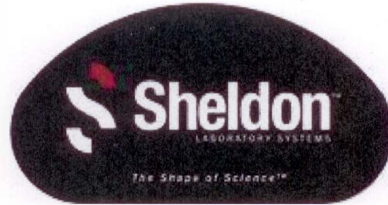
Magnolia Label Company, Inc. is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the manufacturing industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into manufacturing fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the manufacturing workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Priddy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kathy" and last name "Priddy" clearly distinguishable.

Kathy Priddy
President, Magnolia Label Co., Inc.



Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area Sector Strategy Plan

Dear Mr. Monk:

Sheldon is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the manufacturing industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering manufacturing fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the manufacturing workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,

Jenny Phillips
Chief Operating Officer



Jackson, Mississippi (601) 939-1000 • (800) 682-6409
408 Hwy 49 South • P.O. Box 6038 • Jackson, MS 39288-6038



JOHN DEERE

May 25, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

Stribling Equipment, LLC is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the transportation industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into transportation, distribution and logistics fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the transportation industry's workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,

Gerald S. Swanson
CEO

Jackson, MS • 601-939-1000
Hattiesburg, MS • 601-544-3000
Memphis, TN • 901-345-5294
Texarkana, AR • 870-772-9321

Natchez, MS • 601-442-3613
Biloxi, MS • 228-365-0000
Jackson, TN • 731-422-2542
Fort Smith, AR • 479-646-8381

Greenwood, MS • 662-453-7556
Brookhaven, MS • 601-835-4400
Little Rock, AR • 501-455-2540
Springdale, AR • 479-756-9779

Meridian, MS • 601-482-5575
Philadelphia, MS • 601-656-1997
Monticello, AR • 870-367-3496
Arkadelphia, AR • 870-246-8678

Columbus, MS • 662-328-0820
Tupelo, MS • 662-844-3212
Camden, AR • 870-574-0290
Jonesboro, AR • 870-268-9900

Personnel

Robin E. Crosby, HR Manager

Walmart Transportation

2196 Manufacturers Blvd. NE
Brookhaven, MS 39601
Phone 601.835.3688
Fax 601.835.3352
www.walmart.com

May 16, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

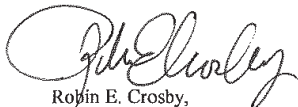
**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

Walmart Transportation of Brookhaven, MS is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the transportation industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into transportation, distribution and logistics fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the transportation industry's workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,



Robin E. Crosby,
Human Resource Manager



Waters International Trucks, Inc.

19 Feltus St * P.O. Box 457 * Natchez, MS 39120

Phone: 1-(601)-445-8850 * Fax: 1-(601)-445-8858 * Toll Free: 1-(877)-844-5100

Date: 5/15/17

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

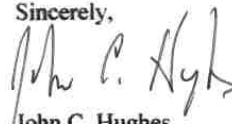
**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

Waters International Trucks is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the transportation industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into transportation, distribution and logistics fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the transportation industry's workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,



John C. Hughes
Branch Manager



2005 Dealer of the Year

Other Locations: Columbus, Kosciusko, Meridian, and Hattiesburg, MS

EMPIRE TRUCK SALES

Jackson, Mississippi (601) 939-5000 • (800) 872-3673
373 Hwy 49 South • P.O. Box 54325 • Jackson, MS 39288-4325

FREIGHTLINER

W
WESTERN STAR

THOMAS
BUSSES

May 25, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

Empire Truck Sales, LLC is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Greater Jackson Alliance and Hinds Community College. This process has been valuable in identifying the transportation industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into transportation, distribution and logistics fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the transportation industry's workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the industry's employers.

Sincerely,



Gerald S. Swanson
CEO

Meridian, MS • 601-482-5575
Waynesboro, MS • 601-735-2092

Columbus, MS • 662-328-0820
Mobile, AL • 251-330-0088

Hattiesburg, MS • 601-544-3000
Slidell, LA • 985-641-4000

Biloxi, MS • 228-365-0000
Pensacola, FL • 850-478-0031

Brookhaven, MS • 601-835-4400
Mossy Head, FL • 850-951-2100



June 1, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

Bedford Care Center is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Mississippi Hospital Association. This process has been valuable in identifying the healthcare industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into healthcare fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the healthcare workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the healthcare industry's employers.

Sincerely,

Rick Blackledge
Corporate Compliance
Bedford Care Center



June 1, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P.O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

Re: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan

Dear Mr. Monk:

Southwest MS Regional Medical Center is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Mississippi Hospital Association. This process has been valuable in identifying the healthcare industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into healthcare fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the healthcare workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the healthcare industry's employers.

Sincerely,



Don Haskins
Director of Human Resources and Asset/Risk Mgt.
Southwest MS Regional Medical Center



*PO Box 636, Meadville, MS 39653
Ph: 601-384-5801, Fax: (601) 384-4100*

May 31, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

Franklin County Memorial Hospital is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Mississippi Hospital Association. This process has been valuable in identifying the healthcare industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into healthcare fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the healthcare workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the healthcare industry's employers.

Sincerely,

Mike Boleware
Administrator
Franklin County Memorial Hospital



JAMES G. CHASTAIN, DIRECTOR

MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

P.O. BOX 157-A, WHITFIELD, MS 39193

(601) 351-8000

WWW.MSH.STATE.MS.US

May 30, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

Mississippi State Hospital is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Mississippi Hospital Association. This process has been valuable in identifying the healthcare industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into healthcare fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the healthcare workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the healthcare industry's employers.

Sincerely,

JAMES G. CHASTAIN, FACHE
Hospital Director
Mississippi State Hospital

A FACILITY OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

ACCREDITED BY THE JOINT COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS



June 2, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central MS Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296-4935

**RE: Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area
Sector Strategy Plan**

Dear Mr. Monk:

The University Of Mississippi Medical Center is pleased to join with the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area and lend support to the area's Sector Strategy Plan that has recently been developed under the leadership of the Mississippi Hospital Association. This process has been valuable in identifying the healthcare industry's weaknesses, needs and the resources currently available; and in the development of goals and action steps to address the needs and provide qualified workers. It is our intent to continue to work with Southcentral MS Works in their efforts to implement the Sector Strategy Plan and to participate with them to increase the pipeline of individuals entering into healthcare fields of study and employment and to design programs and activities to meet the industry gaps.

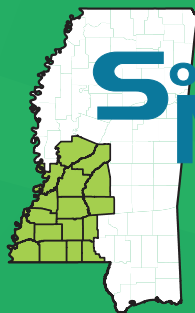
We are committed to this effort as we work together to improve the healthcare workforce, engage and train job seekers in the field and provide solutions for the healthcare industry's employers.

Sincerely,



Cathy Smith, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Chief Human Resources - UHHS
University Hospitals and Health System
The University Of Mississippi Medical Center
601-984-4111





Southcentral
Mississippi
Works

**Central Mississippi Planning
and Development District**

P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, Mississippi 39296-4935
601-981-1511
www.cmpdd.org