



## Heart of Georgia Work Ready Region Strategy Overview

The Work Ready Regions initiative links education and workforce development and aligns their efforts to meet the needs of a specific regional industry cluster. The Heart of Georgia's Work Ready Region initiative is focused on advanced manufacturing and distribution activities in the counties of Bleckley, Dodge, Johnson, Laurens, Telfair, Treutlen, Wheeler and Wilkinson.

### Work Ready strategy for the Heart of Georgia Region

#### Vision

The Heart of Georgia Work Ready Region will have a growing cluster of advanced manufacturing and distribution industries primarily serving the east coast and Southeastern U.S.

#### Differentiating the Region

- Located on an interstate at a mid-point between the nation's largest airport (Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport) and the nation's fastest growing seaport (Port of Savannah)
- Publicly owned, but commercially available, redundant T-3 fiber connection that links the city of Dublin with nearby major metro markets without having to go through local telecom providers

### Building the Strategy

#### Goals

- Sustain stable, long-term regional economic growth
- Maintain a diverse and growing industry base
- Identify the workforce skills and abilities that area employers need
- Create a clearer bridge between industry's workforce needs and people completing education and training programs
- Achieve Certified Work Ready Community status for each of the region's eight counties

#### **Where will we compete?**

- Attract distribution facilities that need relatively easy access to the Port of Savannah, especially retail product distributors serving the Southeast (15-20 states)
- Attract manufacturing facilities that require significant distribution elements, especially those serving Southeastern markets
- Fulfill high bandwidth needs of facilities requiring high speed Internet access for inventory management and production fulfillment operations

## How will we win?

### Short-term

- Eight advanced manufacturing and/or distribution facilities will recognize and use Work Ready Certificates by mid-2009
- 18 job profiles will be completed, underway or scheduled by mid-2009; eight will be completed
- Three counties will attain Certified Work Ready Community status by mid-2009
- Develop and implement a successful advanced manufacturing and warehouse distribution career pathways for the emerging, transitioning and underemployed workforce
- Organize a sustainable advanced manufacturing industry network

### Long-term

- 12 advanced manufacturing and/or distribution facilities will recognize and use Work Ready Certificates by the end of 2009
- 30 job profiles will be completed, underway or scheduled by the end of 2009; 20 will be completed
- Eight counties will attain Certified Work Ready Community status by the end of 2009
- Ensure sustainability of initiative by ensuring that companies explicitly reference Work Ready Certificates in their job requirements for future workers
- Establish Work Ready Certification as an element of internal company promotion decisions
- Utilize job profiling system as a way to better understand existing workforce capabilities and future workforce skill development requirements
- Improve the ability of area high schools to prepare their students to achieve gold level in Work Ready assessment designed to measure ability to locate information
- Institutionalize advanced manufacturing and warehouse/distribution center career pathways for emerging, transitioning and underemployed workforce
- Institutionalize advanced manufacturing industry network
- Institutionalize real time regional talent management process for advanced manufacturing industry network