



## **Wiregrass Work Ready Region Work Ready Region Strategy Overview**

The Work Ready Region (WRR) initiative is designed to link education and workforce development efforts and align them with a specific regional industry cluster. The Wiregrass Work Ready Region is focusing its efforts on training workers for careers in advanced manufacturing industries and serves: Atkinson, Bacon, Ben Hill, Coffee, Irwin, Jeff Davis and Wilcox Counties.

### **Work Ready Region Strategy for the Wiregrass Work Ready Region**

#### Vision

The Wiregrass Work Ready Region will be recognized throughout the Southeast as a Work Ready Certified region that creates jobs, particularly in advanced manufacturing, by enthusiastically collaborating with economic development and education partners and taking advantage of available resources and opportunities.

#### Differentiating the Wiregrass Work Ready Region

- Three technical colleges and one post-secondary college located within a seven county region that provide numerous educational opportunities and the capacity to deliver customized training courses.
- Many stable existing business and industry operations, despite recent economic conditions, validate the region's potential for success and sustainability.
- Access to four interstate highways and close proximity of several major seaports including Savannah, Brunswick, Bainbridge, Ga., Tallahassee, and Jacksonville, FL.
- Competitive wage rates, low start-up and operating cost for business and industry, relatively low insurance rates, and competitive energy rates.

### **Building the Strategy**

#### What are our goals?

- Regional businesses continuously convey their needs and are effectively engaged in regional initiatives designed to meet these needs.
- Regional business leaders become active promoters of the Work Ready initiative.
- A significant number of area companies use Work Ready job profiles, assessments, and certifications in their promotion and hiring decisions.
- Area high school students and teachers understand the value and importance of education and training relative to the workplace.
- All seven counties of the Wiregrass Work Ready Region become Work Ready certified.



### Where will we compete?

- A growing, skilled workforce with Work Ready certification that actively supports the advanced manufacturing industry.
- Numerous organized and motivated stakeholder organizations that work regionally and collaboratively to support the region's businesses and industries.

### How will we win?

#### *Short-term (less than 6 months)*

- Expand current Work Ready Industry Network Team from 8 to 12 members
- Hold 2 of industry network meetings and numerous other in-facility meetings
- Speakers bureau established
- Complete 5 manufacturing specific job profiles
- Ensure 10 companies advertise the they "Prefer Work Ready"
- Ensure 2 companies advertise the they "Require Work Ready"
- Minimum of 1 county attain Certified Work Ready Community status

#### *Long-term (6 to 18 months)*

- Area teachers complete Work Ready teacher training program
- 15 companies advertise that they "Prefer Work Ready"
- 5 companies advertise that they "Require Work Ready"
- "Game of Real Life" presented in all county high schools
- Complete 15 job profiles
- 100 percent of high school seniors have an opportunity to receive Work Ready Certification assessments
- 100 percent of high schools have an opportunity to receive KeyTrain software
- 7 counties obtain Certified Work Ready Community status
- An agreed upon sustainability plan to ensure funding for the initiative after grant funds are expended