



# 2021 Local Plan

Anne Arundel County Local Workforce  
Development Board

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# INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014, and went into effect July 1, 2015. WIOA supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. WIOA is designed to help both job seekers and businesses. WIOA addresses the needs of jobseekers through establishing a workforce system that helps them access education, training, and supportive services to gain employment and succeed in the labor market. WIOA also addresses business needs by matching them to the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

To ensure Maryland's effective implementation of the new federal law

“*Together, we will create empowered, healthy, safe, educated, thriving and sustainable communities in Anne Arundel County.*”

Steuart Pittman, Anne Arundel County Executive



the WIOA partners agreed on the development and implementation of proven best practices and strategies towards system improvement. The plan outlines the vision, goals, and strategies for WIOA implementation in the Local Area.

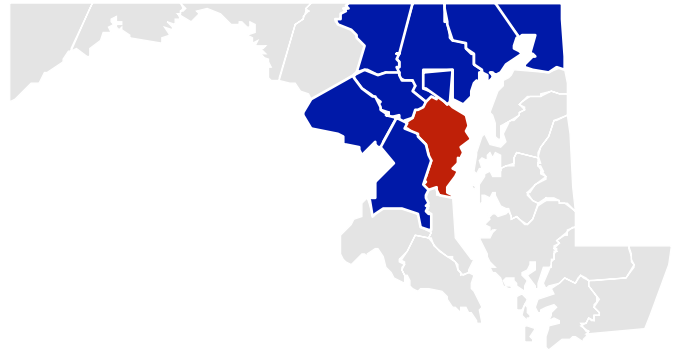
This Plan is in line with Maryland's Combined State Workforce Plan, which has a vision of a Maryland where every person maximizes his or her career potential and businesses have access to the human resources they need to be successful.

The implementation of the Plan will also be governed by the principals outlined by County Executive Steuart Pittman as he strives to make Anne Arundel County the best place for all and states that he is "committed to building a transparent government that encourages community participation".

Anne Arundel County Local Workforce Development Board

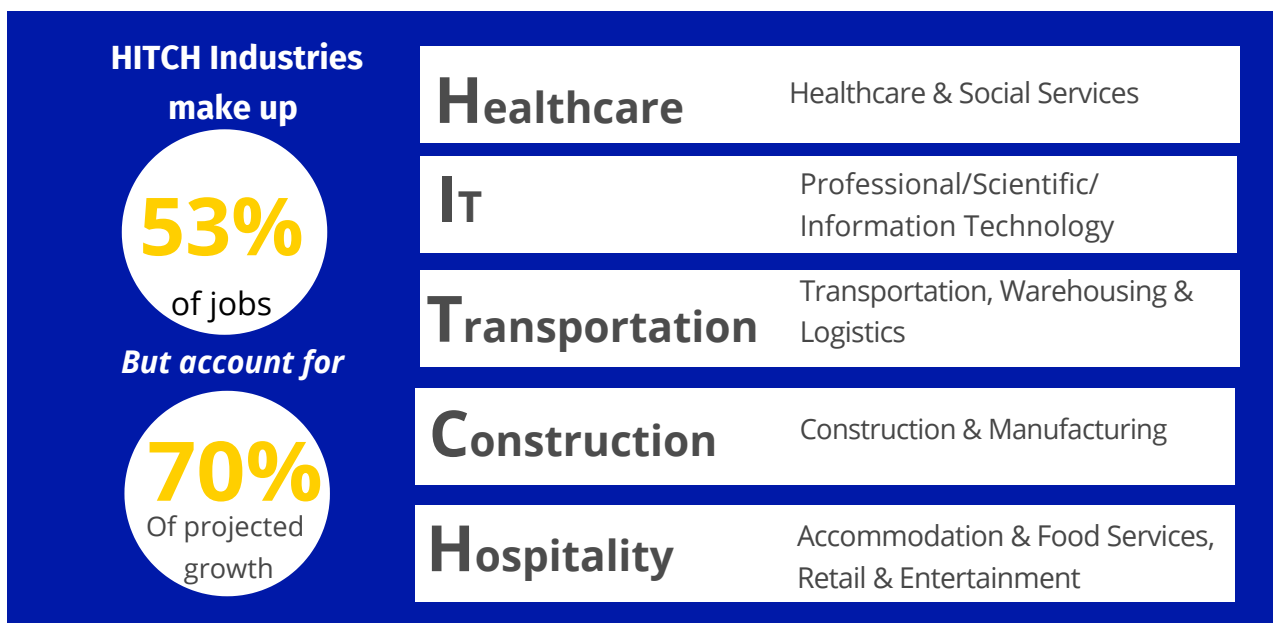
# COUNTY OVERVIEW

Located in the cross-section of two major metropolitan regions defined by their government, cybersecurity and data intelligence, and healthcare industries, Anne Arundel County, MD, offers ample opportunity for its residents but also presents unique challenges that require workforce professionals to be innovative and thoughtful when developing service delivery programs. Anne Arundel County is located in the Baltimore Region—consisting of Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, and Howard Counties and is adjacent to the Washington Metropolitan region that includes Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties. Both regions have a heavy concentration of government and government contractor jobs as well as a large number of healthcare and professional and scientific services jobs. These industries provide over 1.2 million jobs and are expected to continue to expand over the next four years.



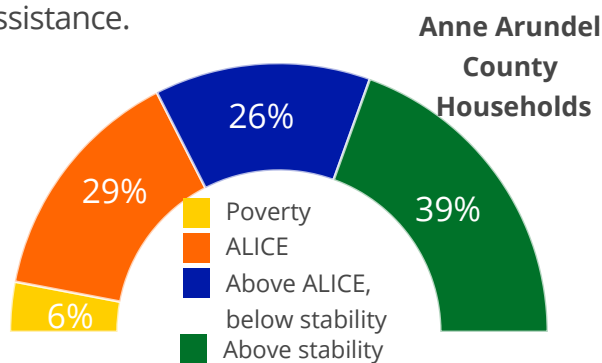
The largest single concentration of jobs in the County is at and around Fort George G. Meade including the National Security Agency, the Defense Information Systems Agency, and the contractors that support their missions, accounting for 62,680 jobs. Other significant employment hubs in the County include the North County Industrial zone, the BWI Airport zone, the Arundel Mills zone, two regional hospitals, and the City of Annapolis.

The Anne Arundel County Local Workforce Development Board (the Board) focuses on the high growth industries of Healthcare, Information Technology, Transportation, Construction, and Hospitality (“HITCH”). These industries are projected to grow the fastest in the Region.



# THE ECONOMY

The median household income (\$101,147) in the County is higher than Maryland and the poverty rate (5.8%) for individuals is lower than the State as a whole, however there are populations that have substantial barriers to employment and lack a sustainable income. Among those groups are veterans, individuals with disabilities, out-of-school youth, long-term unemployed, low-skilled individuals, ex-offenders, and those on government assistance.



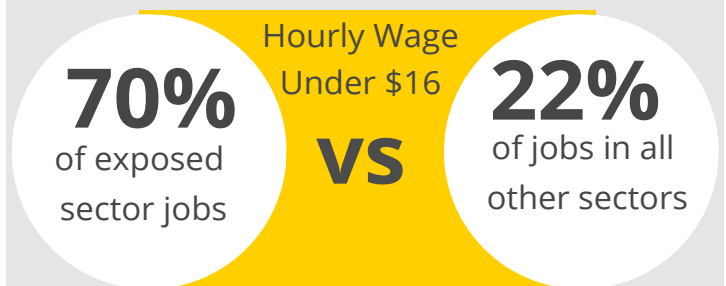
Furthermore, a significant portion of households in Anne Arundel are classified as Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE). In other words, the working poor. These households do not meet the minimum survival income level for the county. ALICE households represent over 1 in 4 households (29%), an increase of over 6% since 2010. Interestingly, the ALICE level in the county is exactly the same as the US as a whole, meaning the higher median income does not equal more financially secure households.

The highest projected growth occupations align with the HITCH industries and include occupations related to transportation and material moving, food preparation, construction, healthcare practitioners and technical occupations, and computer and mathematical occupations. The top four jobs posted for 2020 mirror this projection but

also include a mix of high-turnover occupations such as retail and freight and stock movers in addition to growing occupations of registered nurses and software developer. Of the jobs posted in 2020, 66% required a bachelor's degree or higher, whereas only 44% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher.

## The Impact of COVID-19

The full impact of the pandemic is yet to be seen. The unemployment rate at the end of 2020 was 6.8%, up from 3.6% in December of 2019. The University of Chicago released an analysis identifying the most exposed industries that were likely to be negatively affected by COVID-19. In Anne Arundel County those industries make up 24.5% of jobs. Those jobs in the most exposed industries are more likely to be low-paying.



Also, 88% of jobs in those sectors require a high school diploma or less and individuals of color disproportionately hold the lowest wage jobs in these most exposed sectors. This tells us that, as anticipated, the pandemic has disproportionately affected low-income workers and individuals of color. Our plan considers the effect the pandemic has had on our region's economy, businesses, and residents and is focused on addressing these inequities. However our strategies account for not only recovery, but are also built to enhance future growth.

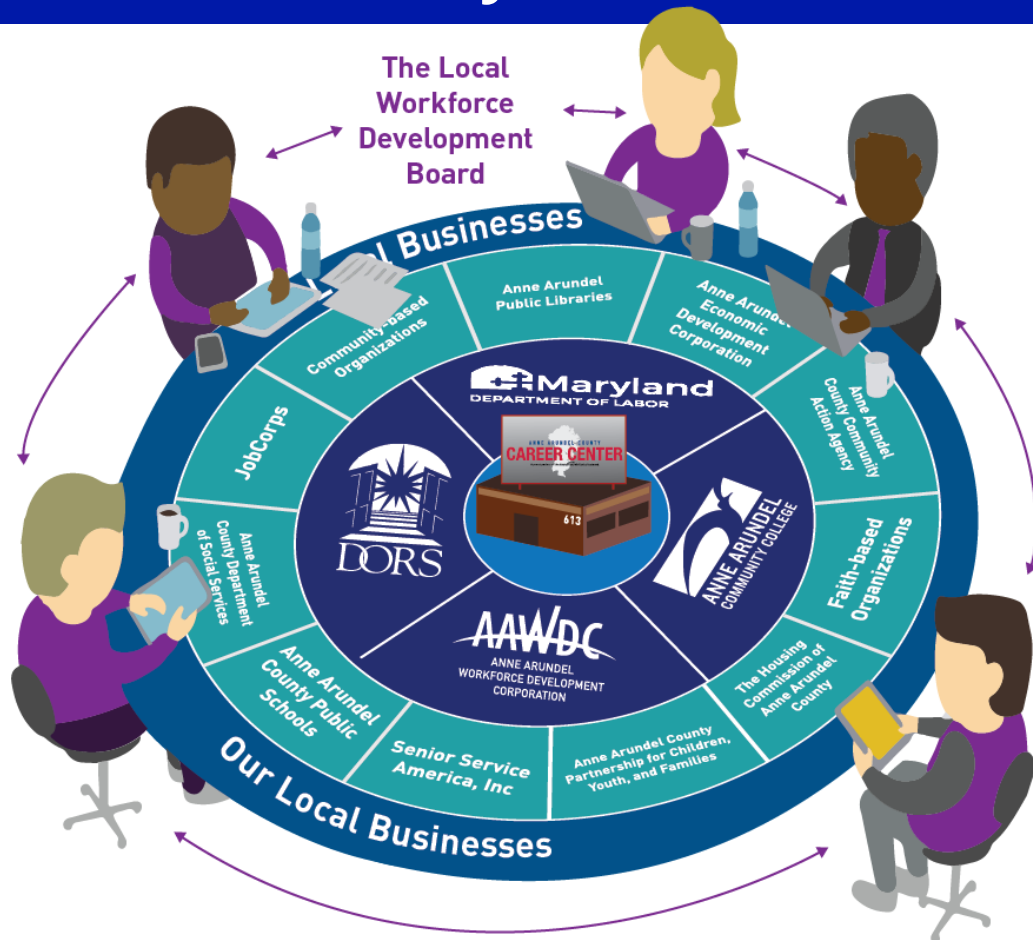
# THE ROLE OF THE WOKFORCE BOARD

The Board, whose members are appointed by the County Executive, drives and informs the development of the priorities and strategies of the system. The design of the Board is to align the workforce development system and make sure the partners are working together to meet the needs of customers and clients, where businesses are customers and represent demand and clients are individuals and represent supply. At the same time, the main role of the Board is to narrow the gap between the supply of workers (individual clients) and business demand (business customers) by providing innovative workforce solutions. As a result, businesses will have a



pipeline of skilled workers and individuals will have the skills to reach their full career potential. The Board is representative of all the WIOA mandatory and non-mandatory partners, and the membership includes business representatives from the high-growth industries in the county.

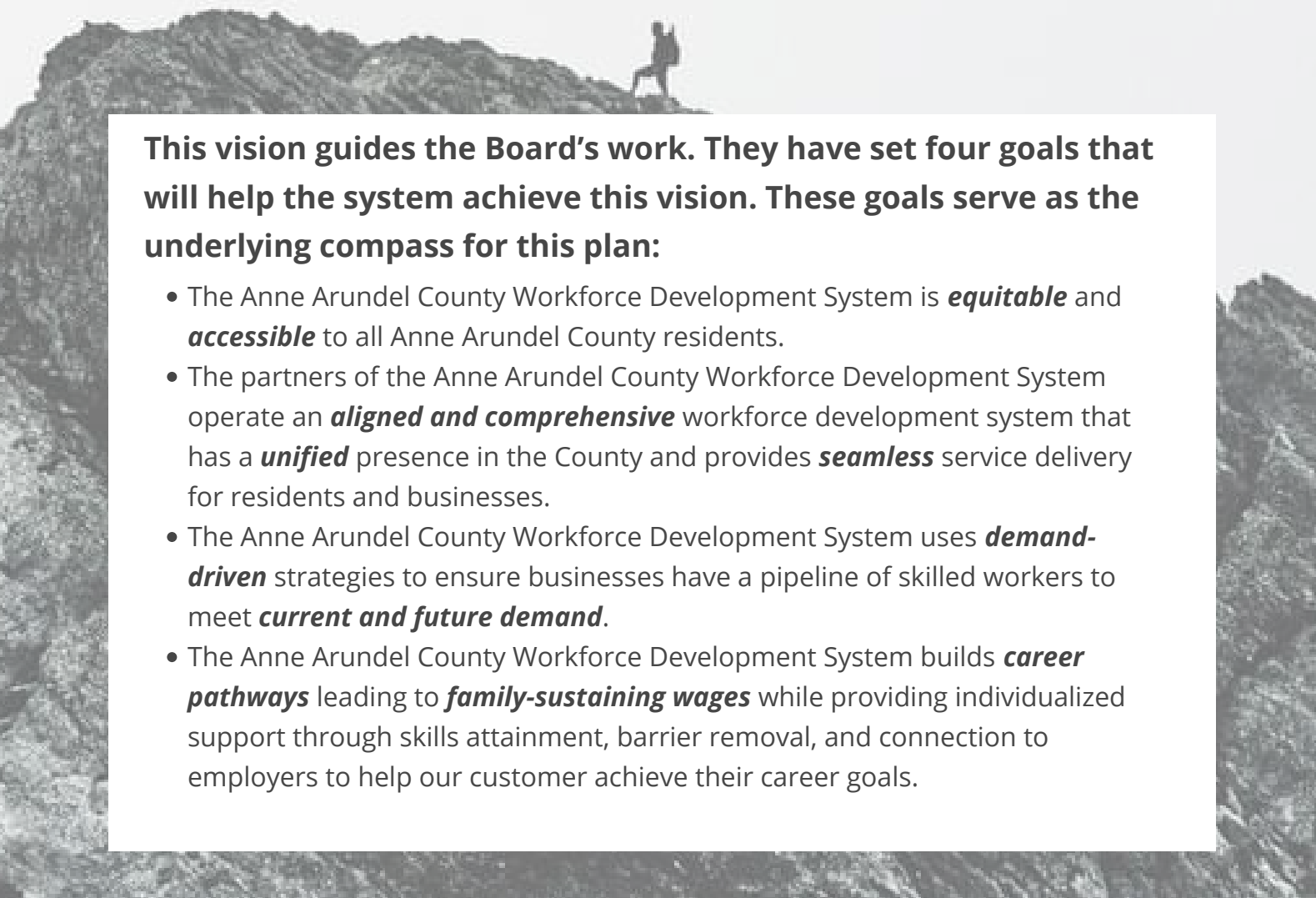
## Workforce System Partners



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***The Board's vision is to have a high-performing workforce system that is robust, seamless, and equitable so that Anne Arundel County businesses have a pipeline of skilled workers and all Anne Arundel County residents are connected to family-sustaining employment.***

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**This vision guides the Board's work. They have set four goals that will help the system achieve this vision. These goals serve as the underlying compass for this plan:**

- The Anne Arundel County Workforce Development System is ***equitable*** and ***accessible*** to all Anne Arundel County residents.
- The partners of the Anne Arundel County Workforce Development System operate an ***aligned and comprehensive*** workforce development system that has a ***unified*** presence in the County and provides ***seamless*** service delivery for residents and businesses.
- The Anne Arundel County Workforce Development System uses ***demand-driven*** strategies to ensure businesses have a pipeline of skilled workers to meet ***current and future demand***.
- The Anne Arundel County Workforce Development System builds ***career pathways*** leading to ***family-sustaining wages*** while providing individualized support through skills attainment, barrier removal, and connection to employers to help our customer achieve their career goals.

# THE BOARD STRUCTURE

The Board has four committees that work on specific topics and strategies: the Governance Committee, the Alignment Committee, the Target Populations Committee, and the Business Engagement Committee. This structure allows the Board to be an effective convener of businesses, mandatory and non-mandatory partners, and the broader community with the objective of developing a strong and efficient workforce development system in the County. Board committees

are engaged in the development of strategies and the performance of the WIOA partners. In particular, the committees oversee the performance and activities of the Career Centers, WIOA funding allocations, and policy development. These committees drove the development of this plan. Each committee identified focus areas and will be conducting detailed action planning to identify new or improve existing service strategies around these focus areas.

## Board Committees

### Governance

#### FOCUS AREAS

- Vision
- Strategic goals
- Performance
- Policy
- Fiscal Oversight

### Alignment

#### FOCUS AREAS

- Internal/ interagency communication
- Unified outreach
- Customer service
- Virtual services

### Business and Industry

#### FOCUS AREAS

- COVID Recovery
- Skills development
- Career pathways
- Registered apprenticeship
- Help businesses achieve equity goals

### Target Populations

#### FOCUS AREAS

- Outreach to hard to reach populations
- Fill technology gap
- Impacts of COVID

# THE PLAN

Each partner organization assisted with writing the plan to make this a truly collaborative document. The Board used a four-step process: a community survey, one-on-one partner meetings, board committee strategic planning, and then detailed action planning will take place in the spring of 2021.

## Plan Development Process



This local plan serves as the action planning roadmap. It will drive the Board actions and decisions to work toward achieving the strategic goals, in turn meeting the State's benchmarks to maximize the earning capacity of Marylanders by: maximizing access to

employment, maximizing access to and use of skills and credentialing and life management skills, by eliminating barriers to employment, and to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Maryland's workforce system.

## *Partnerships*

In order for the system to be efficient and ensure that the demand has been met, the Board continues working in close collaboration with system partners. System partners are co-located in our career centers. Over the past four years, the Board has added community career centers and worked to develop a more integrated service structure. New community partners will be engaged to reduce duplication of services across the County. This plan represents the work required to better integrate and align our system.

## *Communication*

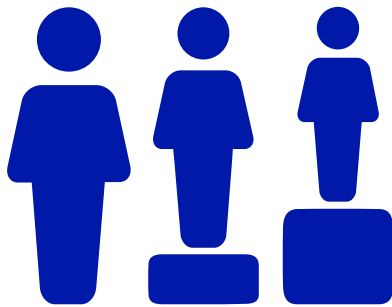
A recurring theme throughout this plan is communication. The Board has reflected on our internal, inter-agency, and external outreach strategies. Improving communication and outreach in these three spheres will be important to achieve the goal of an aligned, unified system.



# THE PLAN

## *Equity in Our System*

Equal opportunity is at the center of WIOA and at the core of the Anne Arundel County Workforce System. However, the Board also wants to do the work to understand what it means for the workforce system to be more equitable.



By engaging our community, partners, and businesses, as well as examining our services, we are gaining a better understanding of how to make sure residents in need of services have the ability to access our services and are provided the correct services that will help them achieve family-sustaining wages, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, disability status, income level or skill level.

## *Demand-Driven*

Working alongside the business and economic development community, the Board uses a demand-driven approach to business services. The Board continues to leverage labor market research and engage

businesses to learn about workforce gaps and trends, ensuring the system meets the needs of businesses. The Board's Industry Collaboratives bring together businesses, economic development, workforce development, education and training, government, labor, and community organizations focused on each HITCH industry. This work is driven by the Anne Arundel County Business Services Team comprised of the Business Solutions Team of AAWDC and Business Service representatives from DORS, MDOL (including LVERs), AAEDC, and AACC. The Business Team conducts an array of services from training development to hiring events to ensure Anne Arundel County businesses have the resources to continue to grow and thrive.

## *Youth Services*

The Board youth services aim to prepare an emerging workforce for starting on a career path and acquiring necessary education, skills, credentials, and experience. To help youth to find their career, the Board administers a model that includes career exploration, essential skills training, occupational training that leads to credentials, and paid work experience.

# THE PLAN

## *Client Services*

At the same time, the Board utilizes a client-centric approach in providing services to job seekers. The approach involves innovative ways to engage individuals in the workforce development system. It encourages the partners to develop service strategies to meet clients where they are to start in, advance within or, transition into a career pathway, address their barriers to employment or career progression, and ensure they have essential workplace skills and industry certifications in order to meet their full

career potential. The Board uses a variety of approaches to skills enhancement, including, but not limited to: short-term occupational training, work-and-learn models (including apprenticeships), incumbent worker training, essential workplace skills training, and contextualized trainings. Our innovative Industry Sector Training model conducts training development by involving businesses, training providers, and partner organizations to meet the needs of industry as well as set participants up for success.



The Board puts people before performance; however, it will make certain that continuous improvement and analysis of performance is a priority for all programs. Development of initiatives and programs will be based on industry demand. Program activities and outcomes will be tracked and analyzed to uncover trends and evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of strategies. ***The Anne Arundel Local Workforce Board will implement this plan with its continued commitment to excellence to enhance the region's economy to ensure an equitable, robust, seamless system delivering a pipeline of skilled workers and connecting Anne Arundel County residents to family-sustaining employment.***