



A YEAR OF COVID-19

Workforce Solutions for a Changing Economy



ANNE ARUNDEL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

VIRTUAL SERVICE DELIVERY

Between March and April 2020, the number of unemployed individuals in Anne Arundel County rose by almost 20,000 and over 37,900 Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims were filed by County residents. This dramatic change in the economic well-being of County residents caused AAWDC to quickly switch direction to meet the changing needs of our customers and clients. Over the next twelve months, AAWDC staff would continuously evaluate the situation, develop new services, and implement solutions to help our businesses and residents through the unprecedented impact of COVID-19.

When AAWDC Offices closed on March 16, 2020 staff immediately began transitioning services to virtual delivery to continue providing valuable services to our existing customers and clients. At the same time, AAWDC began gathering information to understand the impact of COVID-19 and the services that were needed by businesses and residents at the time.

Staff started by making wellness calls to residents. A total of 2,850 calls were made to determine how COVID-19 was impacting them and what services or resources they needed. When possible, individuals were connected to resources including food, utility assistance, and guidance on filing a UI claim. At the time of calling, 70% of respondents were temporarily unemployed and expected to return to their job once restrictions were lifted.

EMAILS SENT TO RESIDENTS & BUSINESSES:

+1.17M

AAWDC also began to create and distribute resources to businesses and residents via email, social media, and AAWDC's website. These resources cover an array of topics from UI assistance to job readiness skills to help individuals prepare to reenter the workforce

after the pandemic. The resources have been viewed over 7,000 times and continue to be used while the economy reopens and hiring increases.

Virtual workshops were launched that covered traditional career readiness skills, financial literacy, and new topics such as virtual interviewing and gaining confidence on Zoom.

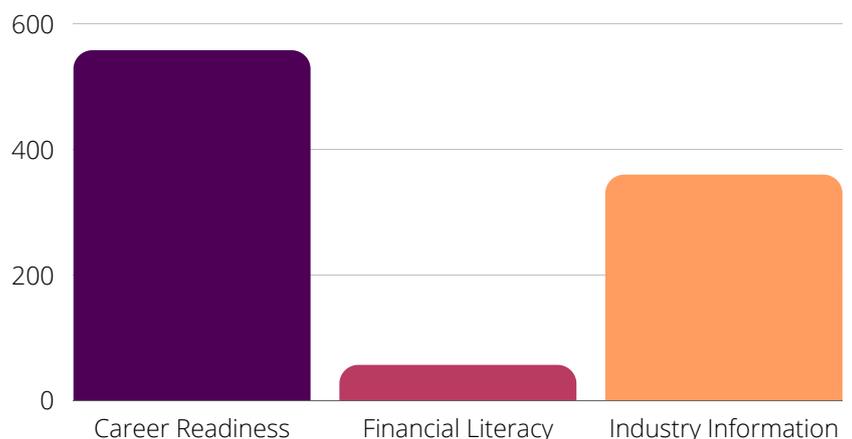
Information sessions about occupations in high-growth industries were held throughout the year. These workshops were attended by not only Anne Arundel County residents but also by individuals around the world from areas such as Canada, England, and Germany.

VIRTUAL ONE-ON-ONE CAREER COACHING SESSIONS:

13,565

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENTS:

8,050



RECRUITING THROUGH COVID-19

Although many businesses were negatively impacted by COVID-19 and many had to temporarily or permanently lay off employees, some industries saw a drastic increase in need for talent. While staff provided resources to businesses who were downsizing or temporarily shutting their doors, they also worked with businesses to attract the workforce they needed during the difficult times.

VIRTUAL HIRING & RECRUITMENT EVENTS

AAWDC quickly launched virtual hiring and recruitment events to help businesses connect to candidates in a safe, socially-distanced environment.

26

Hiring & Recruitment Events Held

[US Census](#) | [Baltimore Washington Medical Center](#) | [Reliable Contracting](#) | [Amazon](#) | [Bakery Express](#) | [Graul's](#) | [Buck Wear](#) | [Westfield Mall](#) | [Chaney Enterprises](#) | and Many More

OPERATION HEALTH CORPS

179

Applicants Vetted

123

Candidates Referred

58

Candidates Hired

AAWDC launched Operation Health Corps in partnership with County Executive Pittman and the Anne Arundel County Department of Health to recruit the employees needed by the Health Department to combat the pandemic. As part of this partnership, AAWDC's Recruitment & Sourcing Consultant recruited and pre-screened candidates for open positions then referred them to the HR department for the final interview. After a successful initial phase that resulted in all open positions being filled, the partnership was renewed when additional positions were needed by the Health Department as vaccine rollout began.

CVS PHARMACY TECH PIPELINE

AAWDC has partnered with CVS to meet their need for Pharmacy Technicians to administer the COVID-19 vaccine. Through the partnership, AAWDC recruits individuals and prepares them through a healthcare bootcamp before they apply for paid work and learn training opportunities with CVS. After placement, AAWDC will continue to work with participants and other CVS employees to prepare them for apprenticeship opportunities and the completion of their work and learn.

154

Attended Info Sessions

40

Started the Healthcare Bootcamp

31

Completed the Healthcare Bootcamp

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, AAWDC's normal summer youth and young adult internships had to be altered. Staff quickly developed a virtual career readiness and exploration series where participants explored career paths in the five top industries in the region, gained essential workplace skills, and learned about becoming an entrepreneur. After the success of the first summer session, three additional cohorts were held in the fall.

131 Started Virtual Career Readiness and Exploration Training

95% Successfully Completed the Training

“

I want to thank the AAWDC staff for presenting this amazing opportunity for the youth. This program is definitely going to change many of our lives. It changed my perspective on a lot of careers and prepared me for the real world. I'm so grateful for this opportunity and the info I got on interviews. My interview went great and I got the job!

-Jakiah S., Summer Participant

”

- Ten young adults completed hands-on pre-apprenticeship training at the Finishing Trades Institute. The training prepared them to enter apprenticeship opportunities in construction.
- Sixteen high school students were placed in the pilot STEM Core Bridges program. This was a partnership between AAWDC, AACC, AACPS, Fort Meade Alliance, and Growth Sector. The students completed AACC's Precalculus Foundations, learned the foundations of computer science and coding, and engaged in project-based learning experiences with NASA Goddard Space Flight Center and Lockheed Martin.
- Sixteen young adults were placed in internships with County Agencies to help address COVID-19 needs. Participants worked at the Food Bank, the County Executive PIO office, the Department of Aging & Disabilities, and other agencies throughout summer and fall 2020.

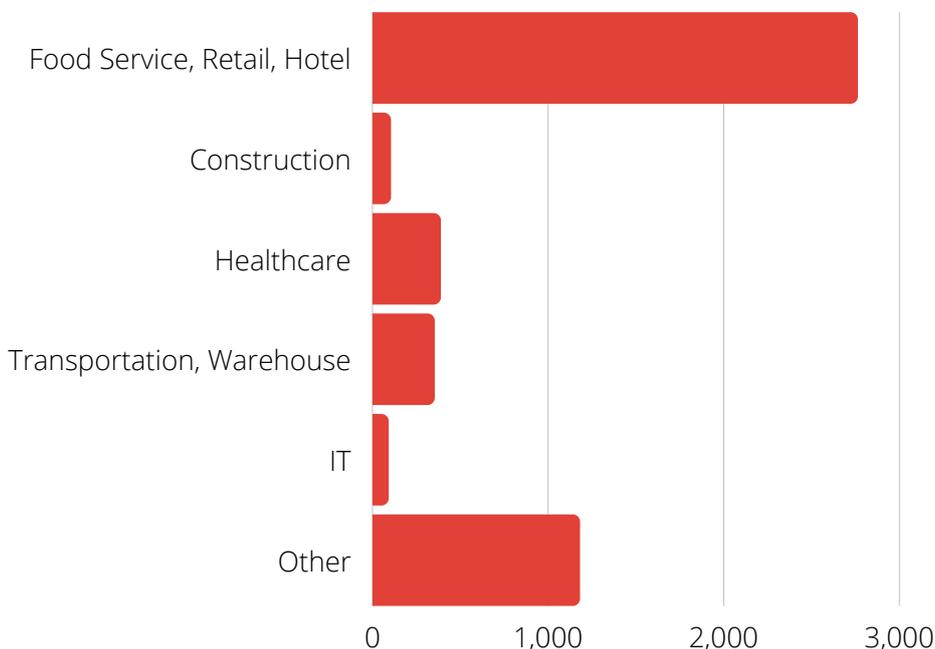


HUMANITARIAN RELIEF FUND

In July, AAWDC launched the Humanitarian Relief Fund in partnership with County Executive Pittman and Anne Arundel County. The fund initially was created to provide financial assistance to county residents who had lost their job due to COVID-19 and had not received UI benefits or were excluded from receiving UI benefits. In October, the fund was expanded to provide financial assistance to any resident whose wages had been reduced due to COVID-19 regardless of other assistance received. After the eligibility expansion, the number of applications grew exponentially until the application closed on December 18, 2020. Over 4,700 county residents were approved to receive \$500 Visa gift cards.



RESIDENTS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE BY INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT



4,774

Residents Assisted

\$2.4 M

Financial Assistance Provided

RETURNING TO WORK

In October 2020, AAWDC surveyed residents to determine what services were needed for them to return to work. Of those surveyed 79% were looking for employment in a variety of industries with the top two being IT and healthcare. Of those surveyed who were not looking for work, 69% were already employed, while 25% of respondents said they could not look for employment due to current life circumstances. When asked what concerns respondents had with returning to work at that time, safety was on average the highest concern, while childcare was preventing the largest percentage of respondents from returning to work completely.



CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE FUND

The Childcare Assistance Fund provides assistance for low-income parents who could not work, could not fully work, or could not participate in workforce services due to child care costs. The fund launched in December and is ongoing as hiring in the region increases and more residents are looking to return to work.



MICROSOFT OFFICE TRAINING

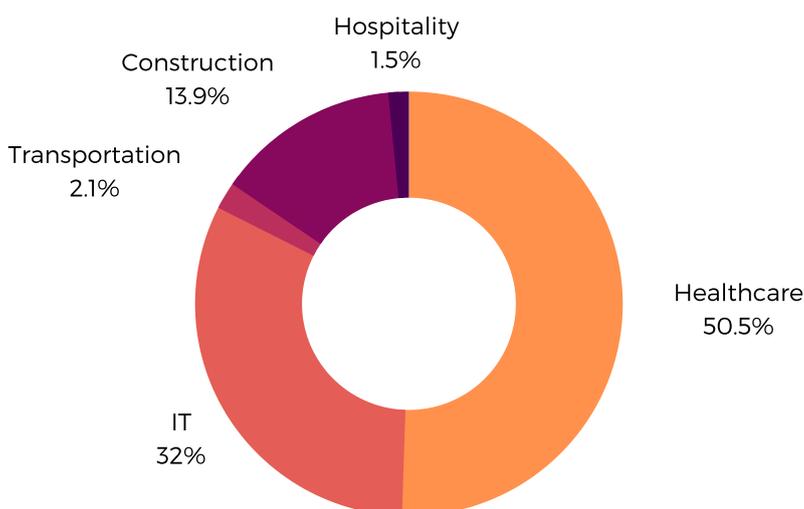
Microsoft Office Training was held to help individuals improve their computer skills to prepare for new careers. The training was held virtually and AAWDC provided laptops to those enrolled participants who did not have the equipment needed to participate. Nineteen participants started training and eighteen successfully completed.



5 STEPS TO RAPID EMPLOYMENT

In December, AAWDC launched a virtual 5 Steps to Rapid Employment program to help individuals refresh their job search, improve their self-marketing skills, and increase their confidence. Twenty-nine participants successfully completed the training and are better prepared for their job search in the new year.

PREPARING INDIVIDUALS WITH THE SKILLS TO RETURN



TRAININGS COMPLETED

- CNA/GNA
- A+
- Line Cook
- Patient Care Technician
- Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship
- IT Fundamentals
- CDL A & B
- Security +
- Help Desk