

FY

24

ANNUAL
REPORT

BUILDING SUCCESS



ANNE ARUNDEL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Hi, I'm Kirkland Murray, President & CEO of Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation. I am pleased to present our FY24 Annual Report. This was an exceptional year for Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation. We launched our new in-school career coaching initiative in partnership with the Local Workforce Development Board, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, AAWDC, and Anne Arundel Community College. We also responded greatly to the needs of the workers impacted by the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse. We continue to build apprenticeship opportunities here in Anne Arundel County to ensure that businesses have the available skilled workforce that they need to continue to grow here and that our county residents have an opportunity to start, transition, and advance on their career pathway to family success. I also would like to thank our Corporate Board, our Local Workforce Development Board, our exceptional staff, and all of our partners for all their hard work in helping Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation to continue to make sure that Anne Arundel County is the best place for all.

IN FY24, AAWDC SERVED...

11,975

RESIDENTS

**IN OUR SCHOOLS,
COMMUNITIES, AND OFFICES**



461

LOCAL BUSINESSES

**IN A VARIETY
OF INDUSTRIES**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT AAWDC



VISION

Every Anne Arundel County business has the skilled workforce needed to be competitive in a global economy and all Anne Arundel County residents have met their full career potential.

MISSION

AAWDC is a nonprofit organization that enhances the economic vitality of Anne Arundel County by developing and implementing workforce solutions. We build and maintain a pipeline of skilled talent to meet the demand of businesses and prepare residents with the in-demand skills that lead to family-sustaining employment.

CORE VALUES

AAWDC is driven by three core values which guide the organization in ensuring Anne Arundel County is the best place for all. Our values guide the way that we work with businesses, job seekers and partners.

INNOVATION

AAWDC exercises creativity and vision to drive purposeful change that impacts both businesses and job seekers.

COLLABORATION

AAWDC partners with public and private entities to effectively address the workforce needs of the region and maximize impact.

EXCELLENCE

AAWDC is a premier workforce provider delivering products and services that lead to meaningful results.

SHOWCASING BEST PRACTICES

AAWDC continues to set the bar in all areas of workforce development through our innovation practices and commitment to excellence. Throughout the year, AAWDC staff received various awards, accreditations, and invitations to present at key events and conferences across the nation.



Regional & National Presentations at:

- Maryland Workforce Association's Raising the Bar Annual Conference
- Maryland Rehabilitation Conference
- Maryland Community Action Partnership Annual Conference
- National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) Annual Conference

Standards for Excellence

After years of dedicated effort, AAWDC officially received our Standards for Excellence accreditation from Maryland Nonprofits. The Standards for Excellence is a national initiative established to promote the highest standards of ethics, effectiveness, and accountability in nonprofit governance, management, and operations. This milestone was driven by our Leadership and Operations teams, led by Jason Papanikolas during his tenure as Corporate Operations Manager, and supported by the Corporate Board of Directors.

2023 Partners in Education Awards

In November, AAWDC was recognized as a Business & Community Partner of the Year Honoree for our work at Old Mill High School. AAWDC's Young Adult team provided several résumé and interview workshops to all 11th grade students at OMHS as well as a Professional Skills Workshop at the Anne Arundel County Career Center prior to AAWDC's Senior Hiring Event in spring 2023.



AWARDS

Bekki Leonard,
Director of
Strategic Initiatives
*Raising the Bar in Leadership,
Maryland Workforce
Association*

**Anne Arundel
Local Workforce
Development Board**
*2023 Maryland Apprenticeship
Awards, Local Workforce Board
– MD Department of Labor*

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FIRESIDE CHAT

As part of their Signature Breakfast Series, the BWI Business Partnership hosted a Workforce Development Fireside Chat in May. This event brought together local leaders, including AAWDC President & CEO Kirkland Murray, to discuss critical topics and innovative strategies in workforce development. Kirk highlighted impactful initiatives in Anne Arundel County, such as apprenticeship, in-school career coaching, and re-entry support programs.



APPRENTICESHIP SOLUTIONS LAUNCH

A key highlight of FY24 was AAWDC's formation of an Apprenticeship Solutions team, a pivotal addition to its Business & Industry Solutions division. This effort reflects AAWDC's commitment to tackling workforce challenges through innovative apprenticeship models. During FY24, the Apprenticeship Solutions team helped establish 20 new Apprenticeship Maryland Programs (AMPs), all of which were approved by the Maryland Apprenticeship Training Council. These efforts reflect the team's commitment to success as they work toward the Local Workforce Development Board's goal to have 6,000 apprentices by 2030.



NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

AAWDC celebrated National Apprenticeship Week in November 2023 with a variety of events that attracted both businesses and residents. Highlights included a Business Roundtable led by County Executive Stuart Pittman, a multi-chamber breakfast promoting Registered Apprenticeships, and a highly successful Apprenticeship Hiring Fair. AAWDC received proclamations from County Executive Pittman, the Maryland Department of Labor, and the White House, along with the Maryland Apprenticeship Award for Notable Contributions, recognizing our efforts to expand apprenticeship opportunities in the county.

NATIONAL YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

In May 2024, AAWDC participated in the first-ever National Youth Apprenticeship Week with a series of exciting events across the county. Early in the week, AAWDC and Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Career and Technical Education Program hosted a networking event to introduce local businesses to the benefits of apprenticeship. AAWDC also supported an Open House at the Mid-Atlantic Lineman Training Center for youth and their families to explore the grounds and learn more about what an apprenticeship entails. AAWDC's efforts were recognized with proclamations from County Executive Pittman and the Maryland Department of Labor.



PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM WITH INDEPENDENT ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS CHESAPEAKE

AAWDC continued our collaboration with Independent Electrical Contractors Chesapeake (IECC) on their Pre-Apprenticeship program for high school seniors. The graduating class of 2024 included 11 students, eight of whom accepted job offers to begin electrical apprenticeships. The remaining graduates will pursue careers in plumbing, I.T., and the military, demonstrating the program's versatility and impact.



JASON RIVERA-RIVAS

As a high school senior, Jason Rivera-Rivas attended AAWDC's CareerX class and worked with his Career Coach to build essential professional skills and access supportive services. AAWDC was able to connect Jason with IEC Chesapeake's Pre-Apprenticeship program in collaboration with AACPS and AAWDC, where he completed the program at the top of his class. He has since been employed by BoMark Electric as an Electrical Apprentice.

"My internship experience in the electrical field has been a transformative journey, providing invaluable insights and skills that will resonate throughout my academic and professional pursuits."

- Jason



FIRST ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY DEPARTMENT APPRENTICESHIP

With the help of AAWDC, the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks established its inaugural high school apprenticeship program for Childcare Aides, marking the first apprenticeship opportunity within a county department. Developed in collaboration with Anne Arundel County Public Schools and the Maryland Department of Labor, the program offers students hands-on experience, mentorship, and training to begin their trajectory toward success while meeting the need for qualified professionals in this sector.



JAEDON JOHNSON-WEBB

Jaedon Johnson-Webb was initially drawn to AAWDC due to his interest in the I.T. industry, inspired by his mother's career. As a high school senior, Jaedon completed AAWDC's CareerX program at Meade High School and interned at the Career Center under AAWDC staff. Following graduation, Jaedon participated in the FutureSuccess program and interned at AAWDC's Millersville site, continuing to hone his technical and interpersonal skills. Subsequently, he was able to complete his I.T. Fundamentals training through NextSuccess and secured a 560-hour work-and-learn internship at PEAKE, where he was then offered a full-time position as a Support Services Tech. His recent achievement of CompTIA A+ marks yet another significant milestone in his burgeoning career.



E-LEARNING LAUNCH

AAWDC launched a dedicated e-learning initiative leveraging Google Career Certifications and Skillup AAWDC to deliver virtual education and training opportunities across a wide range of occupations. 500 Google Scholarships were available for residents to pursue Google Career Certifications in I.T., Digital Marketing, Project Management, Data Analytics, and more. Additionally, more than 533 users registered for Skillup AAWDC and completed a total of 1,166 courses. AAWDC is now expanding our use of Skillup AAWDC to support small businesses in training their staff, further extending its reach and impact in workforce development.

POP-UP CAREER CENTERS

AAWDC expanded our Pop-Up Career Centers to bring career services directly into even more neighborhoods across Anne Arundel County. By partnering with local libraries and community centers, we made it easier than ever for job seekers to access the resources they need to succeed.

The Pop-Up Career Centers provide walk-in services, including personalized career success planning, resume and cover letter reviews, interview preparation, and connections to skills training, certifications, and job opportunities. Our Career Coaches also address barriers to employment and offer referrals to AAWDC programs and partner agencies. These Pop-Ups are designed to ensure that career assistance is available to everyone, when and where they need it most.



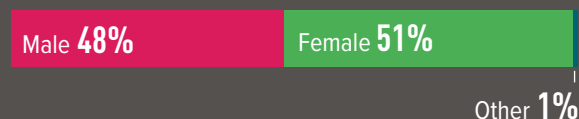
OUR IMPACT FOR INDIVIDUALS

INDIVIDUALS IN INTENSIVE CAREER SERVICES

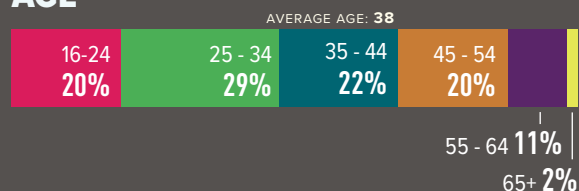


DEMOGRAPHICS OF INDIVIDUALS IN INTENSIVE CAREER SERVICES

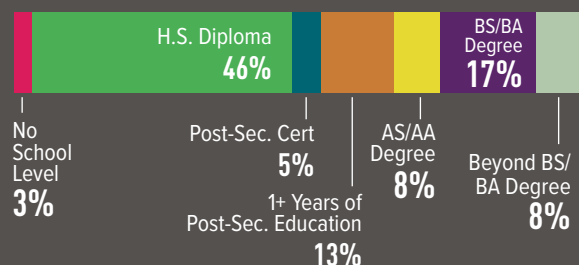
GENDER



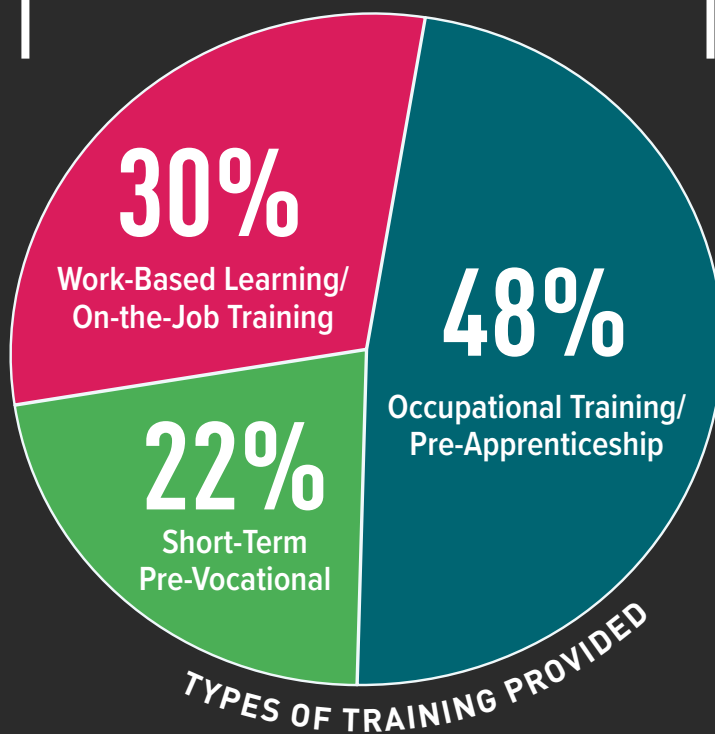
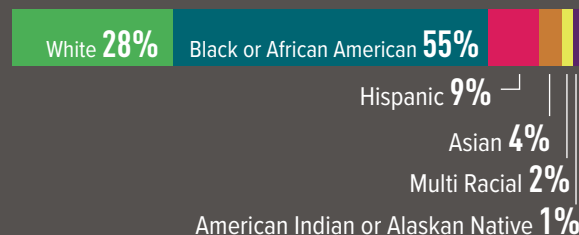
AGE



EDUCATION



RACE/ETHNICITY





ANNE ARUNDEL STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE (AASCE) LAUNCH

In summer 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Anne Arundel County Local Workforce Development Board, AAWDC, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS), and Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) to provide Career Coaching for all middle and high school students in Anne Arundel County. This initiative aligns with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, aiming to enhance career readiness for students. The program officially launched in September with Career Coaches integrated into middle schools, where they collaborated with school leadership and staff to align academic goals with career exploration.

CAREER-CENTRIC ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Career Coaches implemented engaging career-centric activities to introduce students to key tools, strategies, and resources for career exploration. This included Pathful, an online college and career readiness platform that facilitated the completion of 6,584 career assessments by AACPS students during the course of the 2023-2024 school year.

Additionally, many Career Coaches organized Career Days, which offered students direct interaction with professionals from various industries and occupations. In February and March, the Old Mill Middle School North Career Coach organized a series of Career Days, which were divided by grade level and included a special day for International Baccalaureate students in Social Studies classes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

AASCE's impact extended beyond the classroom through collaborations with AACPS, Anne Arundel Community College, and Maryland Leadership Workshops. Career Coaches helped organize resource fairs, wellness events, and student summer camps, ensuring a well-rounded approach to career readiness that included students' families as well as the community.



FUTURESUCCESS

In July 2023, 170 Anne Arundel County young adults started six-week paid internships with 63 local businesses, marking the largest FutureSuccess program to date. Interns were paired with businesses aligned with their career interests and received ongoing support from a dedicated staff member throughout the summer.

The program had a 97% success rate, with 166 interns successfully completing their internships.

Of these, 15 were offered employment at their host sites, and 13 accepted the offers.

As a recognition of their achievements, all FutureSuccess participants received citations from the Anne Arundel County Delegation of the Maryland General Assembly.

CAREER TRANSITION PROGRAM (CTP)

AAWDC partnered with the Fort Meade Alliance on the Career Transition Program, which prepares transitioning service members, veterans, and military spouses to enter the civilian workforce. The program culminated in the Career Transition Showcase, where participants had the opportunity to connect with local employers. The event took place in April at Live! Casino & Hotel, attracting 24 employers and 43 program applicants. Both employers and applicants rated the event highly, with several applicants receiving conditional job offers and invitations for further interviews.

SHAVONNE MONTGOMERY

ShaVonne Montgomery, a military spouse and veteran, came to AAWDC's Military Career Connections through a referral from Blue Star Families. Seeking federal employment in the I.T. industry, she identified the need for a CompTIA Sec+ certification to qualify for her desired positions. With support from AAWDC, she completed her Sec+ training with Train ACE in March and successfully secured a position as a Cybersecurity Specialist with the U.S. Defense Information Systems Agency. ShaVonne started work in June at a Step 8 salary level.





BUILDING THE TALENT PIPELINE

AAWDC continues to excel in our support for businesses in high-growth industries through collaborative initiatives and targeted training programs. By engaging with industry leaders, partners, and policymakers, AAWDC ensures that businesses have the skilled talent they need to thrive while helping workers achieve career success.

INDUSTRY COLLABORATIVES

This year, AAWDC's Industry Talent Consultants (ITCs) supported Industry Collaboratives for the Healthcare, I.T./Cybersecurity, and Hospitality industries. These collaboratives, spearheaded by the Local Workforce Development Board, provide local businesses with a platform to address pressing workforce challenges. Key discussions in FY24 focused on improving recruitment, enhancing retention strategies, planning for employee succession, and creating work-and-learn opportunities like apprenticeship. Participants also explored innovative ways to diversify talent pipelines to meet evolving industry needs.

INDUSTRY TRAININGS

AAWDC facilitated several training programs tailored to the needs of businesses in high-demand industries. Offerings included Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), ServSafe, CompTIA+, ITF+, and other credentials. Partnerships with employers, such as local hospitals, senior living facilities, bus contractors, and others, ensured these programs not only addressed technical skill requirements but also prepared participants with essential soft skills. Many program participants secured permanent positions after earning their credentials, with several advancing into higher-paying roles—demonstrating the success of these initiatives in fostering upward mobility and growth.

WHAT BUSINESSES ARE SAYING...

"As chair of the Hospitality Collaborative, I am incredibly proud of the strides we've made in 2024 to not only support but to elevate the hospitality industry and careers. Through this partnership with Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation, the establishment of our own Foundation, and the unwavering support from our partner stakeholders, we've fostered innovation, collaboration, and practical solutions to the workforce challenges our industry faces. Together, we are shaping a more resilient and sustainable future for hospitality, ensuring continued growth and success for our businesses and employees."

-Kristen Pironis, Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County

OUR IMPACT FOR BUSINESSES



461 BUSINESSES
SERVED

21 HIRING EVENTS

245 BUSINESSES
PARTICIPATING

1,414 CANDIDATES
ATTENDING



= **233** OPENINGS FILLED

NUMBER OF SKILLED CANDIDATES ADDED TO THE PIPELINE

HEALTHCARE
74

17
IT/CYBER

15
SKILLED TRADES

TRANSPORTATION
42

HOSPITALITY
32



AACPS BUS DRIVER RECRUITMENT SUCCESS

The 2023-2024 school year in Anne Arundel County marked the second year in a row that every school bus route was fully staffed from day one. This achievement is the result of a three-year collaboration between AAWDC, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, and local government to address a critical shortage of bus drivers.

The initiative was driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, which intensified a nationwide bus driver shortage and left many families struggling to find transportation for their children. In response, AAWDC and county leaders held numerous roundtables with school bus contractors to identify key obstacles. This led to the launch of a retention and recruitment bonus program aimed at making bus driver and attendant roles more appealing and competitive. Over two years, AAWDC helped facilitate two rounds of bonuses, incentivizing both new hires and existing staff.

In addition to financial incentives, AAWDC implemented a strategic recruitment strategy in partnership with all the contractors. This included hosting hiring events and utilizing social media to attract candidates. Other innovative solutions were developed to address immediate needs, such as transitioning some bus routes to van service, enabling non-CDL drivers to fill positions. These efforts made Anne Arundel County one of the first counties in Maryland to fully cover school bus routes following the pandemic.

In order to ensure that bus driver positions remain filled in the future, AAWDC initiated a rolling enrollment program for Commercial Driver's License (CDL) courses. This program aims to maintain a steady pipeline of qualified drivers while supporting broader needs in the transportation industry.

MANDEL BROWN

Mandel Brown came to AAWDC in July 2023, seeking a fresh start after incarceration. Wanting to provide financial stability for his son, Mandel decided to pursue a Class A Commercial Driver's License (CDL-A) certification. While completing his training, AAWDC provided supportive services, including transportation assistance and career coaching. Mandel's hard work paid off, and he landed a position with Western Express upon completion of his training. Mandel has since been promoted to Driver Trainer and helps guide new hires through their first 90 days, paying forward the support he received on his own journey.





KEZIA KYEI-BOAHEN

Kezia Kyei-Boahen, an 11th grade student at Chesapeake Science Point, self-published *Refined*, “an insightful collection of Christian poetry,” on August 26th, 2024. She says career coaching gave her support, resources for marketing, and encouraged her resiliency to complete her goal.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY BRIDGE COLLAPSE RESPONSE

Following the collapse of Baltimore’s Francis Scott Key Bridge on March 26th, AAWDC swiftly mobilized to aid individuals and businesses affected by the collapse and the closure of the Port of Baltimore. In cooperation with both local and state partners, AAWDC launched a centralized assistance webpage and coordinated a comprehensive range of resources and supportive services.

For impacted individuals, AAWDC provided direct support in navigating Unemployment Insurance (UI) applications, securing temporary job placements, and connecting to state emergency assistance programs. Businesses received targeted assistance through AAWDC’s Francis Scott Key Bridge Disaster Workforce Service, which offered help with relief program applications, workforce training, and reskilling initiatives to help businesses retain affected employees. In addition, AAWDC supported recovery efforts by staffing the Small Business Administration Recovery Center in Canton and Glen Burnie, ensuring businesses had access to critical resources and guidance throughout the recovery process.



RESPONDING TO THE OPIOID CRISIS

AAWDC concluded a four-year effort to serve individuals affected by the opioid crisis. During this time, 158 participants received supportive services and training in healthcare, I.T., peer support, and transportation.

A key achievement of the initiative was the Peer Recovery Support Specialist training, organized by AAWDC and Serenity Sistas. All individuals who completed the training are now employed as Peer Recovery Support Specialists and were recognized by Recovery Anne Arundel.



HIRING & RECRUITMENT

AAWDC continues to demonstrate our commitment to Anne Arundel County's workforce by bridging the gap between local businesses and job seekers. Through targeted hiring events and innovative recruitment initiatives, AAWDC has provided opportunities for residents to secure employment while helping businesses meet staffing needs.

HIRING EVENTS

AAWDC organized 21 multi- and single-business hiring events during the year, held at various locations including the Anne Arundel County Career Center, BWI Airport, and Baltimore Washington Medical Center. Among these events were specialized career fairs, which allowed individual businesses and organizations to reach a targeted audience of potential hires.

Signature events included seasonal HITCH Career Fairs focused on high-growth industries: Healthcare, I.T./Cybersecurity, Transportation, Construction/Skilled Trades, and Hospitality. Additionally, partnerships with Anne Arundel Community College and Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) generated hiring events that showcased opportunities both to graduating students and county residents.

DEDICATED RECRUITMENT

Beyond hiring events, AAWDC enhanced recruitment strategies to address specific needs. The BWI Business Solutions Center underwent a significant refresh, including the introduction of a new Business Development Specialist. As one of only three centers of its kind in the nation and the first located in an international airport, the center provides a unique space for airport businesses to recruit and hire talent. In addition, the launch of a new online recruitment platform allowed AAWDC to streamline job postings, expand visibility, and screen applications efficiently, reducing employer costs.

Partnerships with businesses such as Southwest Airlines further showcased AAWDC's effectiveness. Bi-monthly dedicated recruitment events facilitated hundreds of interviews and resulted in dozens of successful job offers. Southwest praised AAWDC's role in streamlining the process and expressed gratitude for the ongoing support.

A. SMITH



For two decades, A. Smith faced homelessness, with a stroke making it even more difficult to find stable employment. When AAWDC's Recruitment and Sourcing Specialist informed him of a hiring event at BWI, he attended with cautious optimism. AAWDC helped Mr. Smith obtain a Maryland ID and the required documents to apply for a position with Prospect Airport Services at BWI. He successfully secured the job and was able to find accommodation with his nephew in Perry Hall. Despite a 90-minute commute via public transportation, Mr. Smith remains unwaveringly committed to his new role, proving his resilience and dedication each day.

AAWDC remains steadfast in our mission to support businesses and residents in Anne Arundel County by delivering impactful programs and services. With a focus on our core values—innovation, collaboration, and excellence—AAWDC will continue to foster meaningful partnerships and expand opportunities for the community.

AAWDC WILL WORK TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF APPRENTICES IN ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY BY:



- Engaging a diverse network of stakeholders, including businesses, residents, nonprofits, industry associations, and other partners in apprenticeship.
- Establishing new Registered Apprenticeship opportunities through single business and group-sponsored programs in a variety of industries.
- Expanding existing apprenticeship programs to provide more opportunities for job seekers to gain valuable, hands-on experience.

IN COLLABORATION WITH ANNE ARUNDEL STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE, AAWDC WILL ENHANCE CAREER COACHING FOR AACPS STUDENTS BY:



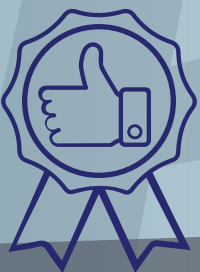
- Expanding career coaching to all AACPS high schools, ensuring every middle and high school student benefits from individualized guidance.
- Empowering career coaches to equip students with the skills, resources, and confidence needed to graduate and succeed in the workforce.
- Cultivating opportunities for students to engage in career exploration and develop a career plan that informs their post-CCR and post-graduation decisions.

AAWDC WILL CONTINUE TO HELP ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY RESIDENTS SECURE GOOD QUALITY JOBS BY:



- Broaden services for underemployed residents and targeted populations through dedicated services designed to help individuals progress in their career to mid- to high-skill positions.
- Strengthen community services, partnerships, and outreach to connect more residents in underserved communities to career services that will put them on a path to financial stability and long-term success.

AAWDC WILL REMAIN PREPARED TO RESPOND TO NEW AND EVOLVING WORKFORCE NEEDS BY:



- Remaining closely connected with our community and gathering regular input from local businesses and residents on opportunities to address challenges.
- Maintaining strong ties with local and state agencies and officials to stay ahead of economic changes and coordinate services or support.

**SUPPORT OUR IMPACTFUL
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES:**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANKS TO OUR CORPORATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Courtien
Gloria Dent

Jennifer Gross
Tanya Millner, Ed.D.

Patrick Shurney
Kaya Smith

Daryl Watson

THANKS TO THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

THANKS TO OUR STAFF

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Kara Weekley
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Darrand Williams
Isaac Williams
Lisa Wolfington
Kausarat Yekini
Milous Young
John Zuknick



OUR FUNDING

FUNDERS



Maryland Department of Education



Maryland Department of Labor



Anne Arundel County Government



Maryland Department of Human Services



Howard County Government



Anne Arundel County Public Schools



Social Security Administration



U.S. Department of Labor

EXPENSES

July 01, 2023 - June 30, 2024

STAFFING

\$4,852,338.97

PARTICIPANT TRAINING

\$1,912,017.67

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

\$1,903,439.99

OTHER PROGRAM COSTS

\$405,985.28

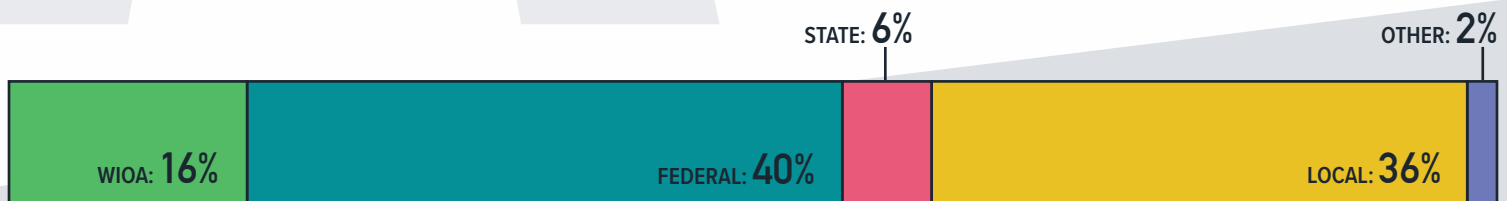
OPERATIONS

\$1,092,037.88

TOTAL

\$10,165,819.79

FUNDING STREAMS



REPORT PRODUCED BY:

ELIZABETH ANDERSON

GRACE FERDOCK

BEKKI LEONARD

GIL PLAKS

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