

*Advancing the Future of Business  
and Community*

[upstateworkforceboard.org](https://upstateworkforceboard.org)

PROGRAM YEAR  
**2022**  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

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## a word from the **CHAIRMAN**

On behalf of the Upstate Workforce Board, it is my pleasure to submit our Report to the Community for this past program year.

Our region continues to grow with new businesses coming in and existing businesses expanding.

While this is certainly a plus for the three counties we serve, it also presents some challenges. The unemployment rate for Spartanburg County is 3% while Cherokee County and Union County are each below 5%. This is great news but it also increases the demand for us to help find quality employees for our businesses.

Federal funding through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act allows us the resources to provide assistance and training to those who are seeking employment as well as those wanting to improve their work skills for a better employment opportunity. However, there are specific criteria we must meet in order to qualify for this funding. Due to the efforts of the staff and the many partners we have working with us, we again met all of our performance goals this past year. Partnerships have proven to be the key to success in this endeavor.

While much of the focus is on our adult population through the SC Works system, we also provide a quality program for out-of-school youth in our area. Whether it is providing assistance in obtaining a GED or providing work experience which leads to employment, our youth program continues to be extremely successful.

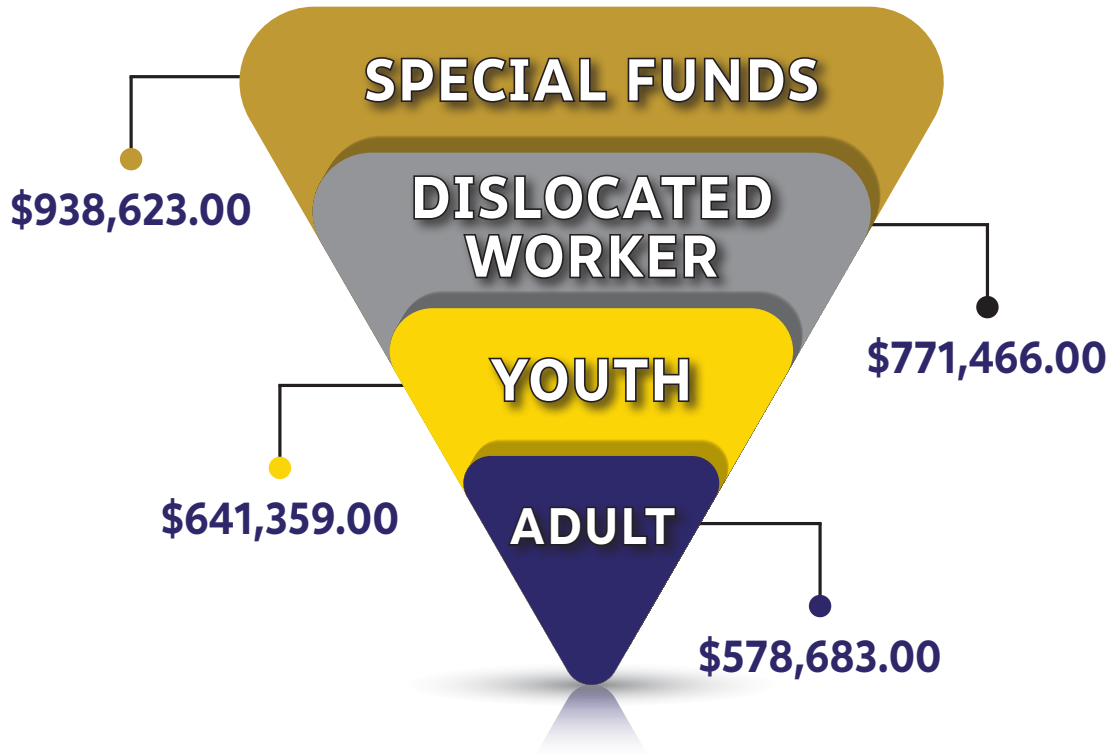
The members of the Upstate Workforce Board are actively involved in the oversight of the many programs we operate and as the Chair of this board, I am very proud of our accomplishments. The coordination of efforts to achieve our goal of providing employment opportunities for those seeking to work and advancing a quality workforce for employers looking to maintain and grow their businesses is the reason we serve and have been so successful.

~ Craig Jacobs, Chairman

# PY22

## ANNUAL REPORT FIGURES

**PY22 Funds**  
**\$2,930,131.00**



\***Special Funds** = Incentive, Incumbent Worker Training, Rapid Response and other special funding received in the time period within PY22.

◆ 22EBA03	\$405,242.00
◆ 22RRIWT02	\$ 51,660.00
◆ 22RSP03	\$ 481,721.00
	<u>\$938,623.00</u>

# PY22

# ANNUAL REPORT FIGURES

## PY22 Performance

ADULT

### DOL Performance Measures

### Annual Goal

### 4th Q Final Rolling

### % of Goal

2nd Q Entered Employment

78.7%

84.6%

107.5%

4th Q Entered Employment

76.5%

82.4%

107.7%

Median Wages

\$6,429.00

\$9,822.00

152.8%

Credential Rate

67.5%

73.2%

108.4%

MSG

58.1%

71.7%

123.4%

DW

2nd Q Entered Employment

81.6%

74.4%

91.2%

4th Q Entered Employment

80.0

86.2%

107.8%

Median Wages

\$8,037.00

\$10,797.00

134.3%

Credential Rate

60.5%

65.6%

108.4%

MSG

58.5%

78.6%

134.4%

YOUTH

2nd Q Entered Employment

79.0%

78.9%

99.9%

4th Q Entered Employment

73.7%

82.6%

112.1%

Median Wages

\$2,600.00

\$3,671.00

141.2%

Credential Rate

75.3%

80.4%

106.8%

MSG

44.3%

54.7%

123.5%



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The University of South Carolina Upstate ACHIEVE Program has operated for 43 years as a Department of Labor program. It implements the 14 youth elements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and serves Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union County youth, ages 16-24. ACHIEVE operates from a central site, co-located with SC Works - Spartanburg while partnering with the Adult Education centers in all 3 counties to co-enroll youth for educational and employability training. At the main site in the SC Works center, ACHIEVE implements a GED class for participants who need transportation and others referred by the local schools. ACHIEVE also serves and transports 16- and 17-year-olds referred from the Department of Juvenile Justice in the 3 counties.

Supportive services include educational supplies/materials, youth incentives, work clothing and transportation. Once a participant is eligible for services, ACHIEVE transports them to and from class, picking them up at their homes as well as transporting them to activities and trainings. Van drivers develop a rapport with the participants that they transport and work to remove a transportation barrier that many of the youth have.

While obtaining a high school diploma or GED is a primary goal for ACHIEVE's youth, the program offers a host of employability training on-site as well as through partnerships. One training goal assists youth with obtaining a driver's license through partnerships with local driver's education schools to eliminate an employment barrier. Each participant develops a career portfolio with ACHIEVE's career readiness staff. Additional assistance is provided through partnerships with the SC Department of Employment and Workforce and SC Works staff, including things such as developing resumes in the resource center and attending workshops on interviewing skills, entrepreneurial skills, Labor Market Information, and other skills training.



## PY22 | HIGHLIGHTS

In PY22, ACHIEVE continued strong representation in the community through education and partnerships. During this program year, ACHIEVE completed its first full year in the new location at the BTC building.

Through continued grant funding, the program was able to keep focusing on serving the whole student, by continuing to offer mental health counseling for students. ACHIEVE, along with local partners and the community, were able to maintain a student food pantry. Through donations, the program has worked towards breaking the barrier of food insecurity amongst the students. The ACHIEVE Pantry provides students with eat-to-consume, shelf stable foods, as well as any personal care items they may need. New partnerships and grants allowed many ACHIEVE students pursuing higher education to receive a laptop.

## PY22 | HIGHLIGHTS CONT'D

During the program year, ACHIEVE continued partnership with the community college and an entrepreneurial business to provide occupational trainings for participants. Some included forklift, phlebotomy and CellBotics. Fifteen national occupational credentials were obtained during PY22. The program affirmed partnerships with local Adult Education centers in the counties served and opened up to the public and partners through Open House events. In Cherokee and Union, ACHIEVE was able to complete some student GED testing in Cherokee County to help to make sure all students were given the opportunity to test and meet their goals' timeline. In Spartanburg County, an effort was made to have more presence in Adult Education by scheduling and attending once- or twice-a-month sessions to speak to students about ACHIEVE and its benefits to them, as a student already enrolled in local Adult Education.

During this program year, funding was obtained to purchase a new van from the Spartanburg County Foundation. This helped to continue to update the transportation fleet, which is very much a lifeline to the program. The ACHIEVE vans managed to stay full this year with students being transported from Union, all over Spartanburg and as far as Mayo. The vans take students not only to the Spartanburg Center, but also to driver's education, GED testing and to any certification programs. In January, a grant was received from the Cherokee County Foundation that allowed staffing and mileage for a van that runs in that program area. This helped to offset some costs on the main grant under those categories. Another grant was received from the Rotary Club of Spartanburg to help students receive driver's education.



▲ ACHIEVE students engaged in hands on learning about the brain.

In PY22, ACHIEVE served youth with a variety of barriers. All the youth who were served had at least one barrier, but most had multiple: 12% pregnant/parenting; 25% current offenders; 100% high school dropouts; 47% ages 16-17. Local high schools refer youth who are expelled or if the school exhausts all services and determines the youth can best continue their education through ACHIEVE's avenues. The program helped to award 25 GEDs in the program year.



▼ ACHIEVE students and Carolina Foothills Federal Credit Union staff learning the importance of money management.



## PY22 | HIGHLIGHTS CONT'D

ACHIEVE expended 35+% of PY22 funds to place participants in work-based learning opportunities to match their career interests. Seventeen business partners hosted 17 work-based learning experiences and job shadowing ranging from positions in health, construction, manufacturing, IT, photography, veterinary as well as community and social services. These business partners mentored and provided valuable experience and feedback to our participant interns. Several of the work-based learning experiences led to employment.

The ACHIEVE Program brings services to continue its mission that was established 43 years ago, "recognizing that it is through the holistic development of an individual that relatively permanent changes in lifestyle, goal orientation and futuristic thinking occur." While GED preparation and work readiness goals top the mission, leadership development and counseling services complete the purpose. ACHIEVE collaborates with the WIOA core partners and local agencies and businesses to combine resources to best serve the youth.



▲ ACHIEVE students enjoy a cookout with Upstate Workforce Board and WIOA programs.



▲ ACHIEVE students and staff pose for a picture with USC Upstate Chancellor, Bennie Harris, after he spoke to the classroom.



# CENTER SUCCESS STORIES

## SPARTANBURG

**ROSA BUENO-GONZALEZ** enrolled in ACHIEVE at the Spartanburg Center in January of 2023. In a very short amount of time, she obtained her GED in March of 2023, earning herself a \$150.00 incentive. Through ACHIEVE, Rosa received her permit and will be receiving her driver's license. She also participated in a work experience with a new partner, The Firm Fitness Center. Through this work experience, Rosa gained a valuable understanding about running a small business. She was also employed by The Firm once her experience was completed. Rosa is enrolling in courses at SCC and is still deciding what she wants to major in. She will also be receiving a laptop for college.



*Rosa Bueno-Gonzalez,  
Spartanburg Center Graduate*



## CHEROKEE

**HALEY HUGHEY** enrolled as a student with ACHIEVE through our valued partnership with Cherokee County Adult Education. She enrolled in the program in September of 2022, working closely with our Cherokee/Union Coordinator, Lisa Hannon. Haley, in just a few short months, received her GED and a \$150.00 incentive due to her co-enrollment with ACHIEVE. She also took advantage of driver's education and received her license. Haley then participated in a valuable work experience with Palmetto Christian Academy where she solidified her goal to be a teacher and she built valuable relationships in the education field. Through ACHIEVE, Haley also received a laptop for her enrollment at



*Haley Hughey,  
Cherokee County Graduate*



SCC to pursue her goals to become a teacher. Haley was one of the recipients of the Curtis Anderson Youth of the Year award. She was also selected as one of the speakers, alongside fellow ACHIEVE Graduate, Yalissa Draper, at Cherokee County Adult Education's graduation ceremony.

◀ *Haley Hughey, Cherokee County Graduation speech*



# CENTER SUCCESS STORIES CONT'D

## UNION

**RACHAEL CLEVINGER** enrolled in ACHIEVE in January of 2023 through our continued partnership with Union County Adult Education. In less than 2 months, she obtained her GED and received a \$150.00 incentive through ACHIEVE. Rachael also participated in driver's education and received her permit and license while in the program. She participated in work experiences with a local elementary school and SC Works. Through these experiences she gained valuable customer services skills, as well as organizational skills. Rachael was also one of the recipients of the Curtis Anderson Youth of the Year award and was asked to deliver the graduation speech at Union County Adult Education's graduation. She has enrolled at SCC and received a laptop to help with her studies. Rachael is well on her way to obtaining her degree in elementary education.



Rachael Clevenger,  
Union County Graduate

## TESTIMONIAL

*"I would personally like to express my gratitude to all teachers and staff at the ACHIEVE Program for supporting me through one of the toughest times in my life. I never thought that one Google search and a phone call would supply me with such an amazing support system. With the help and encouragement of the ACHIEVE staff I have obtained my GED, driver's license, forklift license, and I even got to work at a place in my desired field as part of a work experience. Now that I have the confidence, credentials, and job skills to enter the workforce I know there is nothing I cannot do. Thank you guys!"*

*~ Nydrayah Hughes, Spartanburg Center*

# CENTER SUCCESS STORIES CONT'D



▲ Gaffney Adult Education Graduates from ACHIEVE/Adult Partnership



▲ Yalissa Draper speaking at Cherokee County Adult Education Graduation



▲ Phillip Mullinax gets his SC Driver's License.



▲ Peyton Anthony in his work experience at Greer's Garden Center in Gaffney.



◀ ACHIEVE students attend Atlas Driving School thanks to a grant from Rotary Club of Spartanburg to assist with driver's education.

# SC WORKS

## GREATER UPSTATE

### PY22 | SUMMARY OF SERVICES AND CENTERS

SC Works Greater Upstate is a collaborative organization that serves the community by providing career services within a tri-county workforce area. All three centers in the Upstate provide a consistent set of services with the same purpose under the guidelines of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), with the overarching goal of attaining self-sufficient employment for all individuals, no matter the barriers. This is accomplished through basic career services such as job search assistance, applying for unemployment insurance and/or referral services to workforce partners. In addition, there are a variety of intensive career services offered in all locations, such as career counseling, career readiness workshops and training programs. The training programs provide financial assistance for in-demand occupational skills training and On-the-Job Training (OJT) opportunities. Another important part of the training program is the supportive services offered to individuals, which assist in removing any barriers to employment, such as transportation reimbursement, childcare and other items.



PY22

### BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

#### Incumbent Worker Training

Each year, SC Works supports local industry through Incumbent Worker Training grants. These training cost reimbursement grants are provided to assist with retention and training of existing workers. During PY22, \$97,773.00 was invested in one hundred, twenty local people working in Cherokee, Spartanburg, or Union Counties. Incumbent Worker Training helps local companies stay on the cutting edge and increase productivity and quality by providing employees with needed training to remain competitive. Incumbent Worker Training helps businesses respond to changing skills requirements caused by new technology, re-tooling, new product lines or new organizational structuring. For more information regarding Incumbent Worker Training reimbursement grants, contact your local SC Works office.



CONT'D >>



### Sector Partnership Strategies



For the first time since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Upstate Manufacturing Network (UMN) hosted its first full partnership meeting. Held on October 26th at Greenville Technical College's Center for Manufacturing Innovation, the members of the UMN Steering Team (pictured) welcomed business leaders from across Upstate South Carolina as they led a facilitated discussion designed to establish the group's priorities for the new project year. Core Partners from workforce development, economic development, and education joined



as observers as Elizabeth Watson (Director of Research and Strategic Initiatives for Upstate SC Alliance) gave a keynote presentation on emerging trends affecting manufacturers in the coming years. The group then reflected on its ongoing successes before forming a new Action Team to address issues pertaining to Talent and Training. The UMN partnership looks forward to Program Year 2023 as a year for capitalizing on its new forward momentum.

### SECOND CHANCE Initiatives

The collaborative efforts from the Reentry and Adult/Dislocated Worker training programs provided individuals with intensive training services during and after incarceration. While incarcerated, the individuals receive virtual and in-person services, to include career readiness and soft skills workshops, case management support, and industry specific instruction that leads to a credential in manufacturing. During PY22, we had thirty participants that received a credential in both manufacturing and soft skills. The program also provided financial support to these individuals once released, that included housing and emergency assistance, cell phones, uniforms required for employment and transportation assistance. The participants also had the opportunity to complete a virtual interview with a potential employer partner. Post incarceration, the

individuals continue to receive case management services which assist with employment placement through the on-the-job training program offered through SC Works Greater Upstate. During PY22, the program was fortunate to assist ten reentry participants find meaningful work with Spartanburg Steel Products and Custom Forest Products.

*Honestly speaking, I was recently released from prison on the 30th of December. Getting out, things have been overwhelming. When I came in I was nervous, but everyone made me feel comfortable and at ease.*

### Work-Based Learning Programs



Upstate has had the pleasure of partnering with Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System to support their Emergency Medical Technician Certification Program. This course is an accelerated seven-week course that gives each student the knowledge and skills to become an EMT. Once they complete the class, they are eligible to sit for the National Registry certification testing which is required to work as an EMT in SC. These students learn adult and pediatric assessment skills for both medical and trauma patients, adult and pediatric airway management and intervention skills, bandaging, splinting, tourniquet application and bleeding control,

along with becoming certified as an American Heart Association BLS CPR provider. Once these students pass their National Registry certification test, they can become certified through the state and begin working in an ambulance. The system provides both advanced life support (Paramedic) and basic life support (EMT) to the citizens of Spartanburg County. With the national shortage of Paramedics and EMTs, this program has been a huge help in meeting the needs of the county.



Faith was unemployed when she entered the SC Works Center. She was interested in the Emergency Medical Technician

(EMT) training and wanted to start a new career as an EMT. She entered the program in search of a career path in the healthcare industry to have financial stability and growth. She was enrolled in the WIOA Program for the On-the-Job Training on 08/25/2022. Upon enrollment in the OJT program, Faith worked closely with the Talent Development Specialist (TDS) to identify barriers, prioritize needs and strategize a way to move forward. Faith began EMT training on 08/29/2022 at Spartanburg Regional. The OJT benefited Faith by providing the opportunity

to “earn and learn” in a hands-on environment, acquire job and career advancement skills and provide an opportunity for long-term employment. Faith successfully completed the EMT training at Spartanburg Regional on 10/03/2022. She showed a constant sense of responsibility, commitment, and a desire to improve during her participation in the OJT program. She accepted a full-time position at Spartanburg Regional as an EMT on 11/1/2022. She continues to flourish in this career and is thankful for the program that helped to support her.



## Work-Based Learning Programs



To assist with residents impacted by business closures, we partnered with Winar Connections to offer our On-the-Job Training program for laid off Ukrainian immigrant employees to create custom cables and wire harnesses. Through the SC Works OJT program, we were able to place five of the dislocated workers with the company who bought the space from Winchester. Winar was established in 1982, in Richfield, Ohio and more recently in Spartanburg, SC.



Since then, it has been focused on continuous improvement and providing world-class products and services to customers. Their automated processes allow them to shorten lead times while producing products that adhere to even the most stringent specifications.

*Great service for individuals seeking jobs or skills training.*

*The instructor, Kenneth, was super polite and very clear on his information and answers to our questions.*

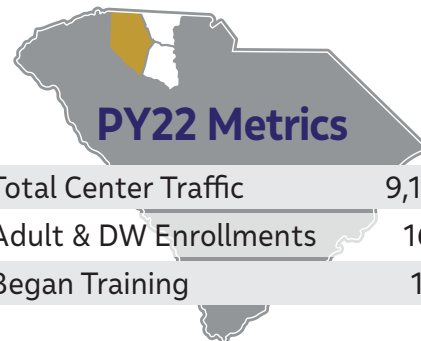
*Very helpful, I'm glad there are services out here like this for the community.*

# SC WORKS

GREATER UPSTATE CONT'D

## SPARTANBURG COUNTY

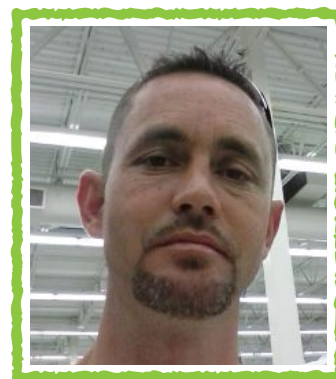
Our comprehensive center located in downtown Spartanburg is on the bus route and consists of multiple partner agencies and staff, to include: WIOA - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, SCDEW - South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, ACHIEVE, DSS - Department of Social Services, SCVR - South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Center, and Veteran Services. The full range of services is available Monday through Friday; the center also hosts recruitment and outreach events and is housed alongside other relevant partners. Partner meetings are held monthly with attendance from the tri-county area, which the partners appreciate as the majority also serve the same geographical locations.



## SUCCESS STORY..... GERALD ▶

### THE CHALLENGE (BACKGROUND)

Gerald was brought into the SC Works Spartanburg Office after completing a partner program with HOPE Ministries. The need was geared towards employment, and there were barriers present, to include the lack of a high school diploma, driver's license and a vehicle. Gerald had made some mistakes in the past, but he was working towards overcoming the barriers. In order to do so, he needed a stable income. Asheville Highway Rentals met with the Project Director and expressed a need for workers and was willing to hire someone with barriers. The Talent Development Specialist met with Gerald and enrollment for WIOA services was scheduled, along with a job interview with the employer. The job interview went well, and an employment offer was made contingent upon Gerald obtaining his driver's license within three months of hire. The Regional Business Solutions Manager worked with the employer to get setup and approved as an OJT provider. Gerald began an OJT as a Production Worker for Asheville Highway Rentals on 04/18/2023, earning an hourly wage of \$14.00. After several months of working, Gerald was able to pay all fines and obtain his driver's license and a vehicle. Gerald successfully completed the OJT on 06/30/2023. He continues to thrive and is thankful for the compassionate nature and kindness from both SC Works and the employer. *When organizations work together to help job seekers overcome barriers, amazing outcomes can occur!*



*It has helped me greatly  
and I thank the staff.*

CONT'D >>>

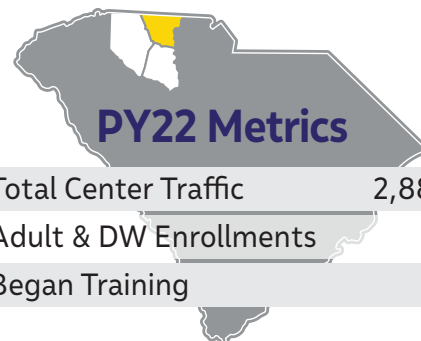
# SC WORKS

GREATER UPSTATE CONT'D

## CHEROKEE COUNTY

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

One of our two affiliate centers, SC Works Cherokee is in Gaffney. The center houses a WIOA TDS - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Talent Development Specialist, two SCDEW - South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce staff, a SCSEP - South Carolina Senior Employment Program participant and two DSS - Department of Social Services Case Workers, where they assist the same clientele as the comprehensive center. A full range of services is available Tuesday-Friday. However, due to a smaller footprint, SC Works Cherokee refers to and works with community partners in their off-site locales much more. We apply a collaborative approach in which the Facilitator/Outreach Coordinator, Kenneth Taylor, plans and facilitates a monthly community partnership meeting for the tri-county area.



### SUCCESS STORY.....TIMOTHY ▶

Timothy had a desire to upskill and obtain a Commercial Driver's License as he knew this would be a career path with opportunities for growth. He had no recent work history and needed to upgrade his skills in order to find self-sustaining employment. Timothy visited his local SC Works Center to inquire about assistance with training. He had heard great things about the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. He wanted to secure full-time employment in the trucking industry and obtain a CDL certification. He entered the program in search of a career path in the trucking industry to have financial stability and growth. Upon enrollment into the program, Timothy worked closely with the Talent Development Specialist to identify barriers, prioritize needs and strategize a way to move forward. He completed the TABE testing and other program requirements. He began CDL training on 07/11/2022 at Commercial Driving Academy. Timothy was approved for tuition costs, reimbursement fees and support services for transportation to their location. Timothy successfully completed the CDL program at Commercial Driving Academy on 08/10/2022 and obtained his CDL certification. He always showed a constant sense of responsibility, commitment, and a desire to improve during his participation in the program. He accepted a full-time position as an over-the-road truck driver on 09/10/2022. Timothy is grateful for the assistance he received from WIOA that allowed him to reach his goal of obtaining his CDL and becoming a truck driver.



*They really took time to help me. They were AWESOME.*

CONT'D

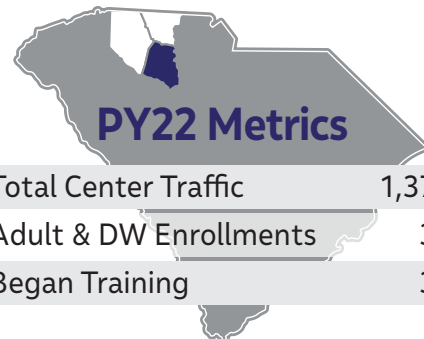
# SC WORKS

## GREATER UPSTATE CONT'D

### UNION COUNTY

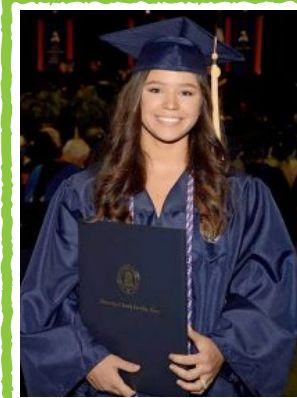
#### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT | Workshops and Outreach

Our second affiliate center is located in the historic Carnegie Library in Union. One WIOA TDS - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Talent Development Specialist is assigned full-time, with SCDEW - South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce staff and a Veteran Workforce Consultant splitting time between Gaffney and Union. A full range of services is available on Monday and Wednesday of each week. The library also serves as the University of South Carolina at Union library for their college students. In addition, other community partners are housed there, to include Project REST, United Way of the Piedmont and Union Cancer Association.



#### SUCCESS STORY.....MAKENZIE ►

During PY22, SC Works partnered with USC Union to provide supportive services to students enrolled in in-demand occupational programs. Makenzie was enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at USC Union, which is in partnership with the USC Aiken Campus. She was working part time at the Union Medical Center and continuing to complete the academic portion of her degree program. Given the prices of books and all required items needed to be successful, she reached out for financial assistance that SC Works offers. Makenzie was enrolled in the WIOA Program in July of 2022, and quickly completed the requirements to obtain supportive services. The program was able to support her and provide required items for training, such as an iPad, shoes and uniforms for clinical lab classes, books, and transportation reimbursement for attending physical and clinical lab classes. Makenzie successfully completed her degree program and graduated in August of 2023 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and successfully passed the NCLEX certification exam. She continues to work at Union Medical Center and has been promoted into a new role as a Registered Nurse.



#### PY22 CONTRACTURAL GOAL PROGRESS

Enrollments	234
Social Media	443
OJT	57
WEX	5
Recruitment Events	49
Community Events	194
Workshop Attendees	550



### Customer Survey Comments

At SC Works Greater Upstate, we value feedback from job seekers and employers! Listed below are a variety of comments from the surveys given to our customers. The survey results are reviewed on a monthly and quarterly basis by operators, partners and the local board.



The following quotes come from our job seeker and employer surveys:

#### JOB SEEKERS:

*The staff is always helpful here and on the phone. They never made me feel uncomfortable.*

*The instructor, Kenneth, was very friendly and helpful! He explained things thoroughly to me, and was very patient, which I appreciated greatly. He was able to help me with taking qualities and skills of mine and translate them over to things that worked well on a resume. I was very grateful for his insight and assistance.*

*Karl has been helpful both times I have been to this location.*

*Mr. Taylor was great! He explained the information thoroughly and it was very easy for me to understand the information and the process.*

*Jay is great at explaining what I need to do in order to do my job searches and navigate my account. He is awesome.*

*Kenneth covered everything so well we barely had any questions at the end.*

*Mr. Powell is a very sweet young man. Please have more like him.*

*This was pretty freaking cool! Definitely a 12/10 experience. The VR was beneficial and fun.*



