

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Local Plan
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2024**

Local Area:

Upstate Workforce Area

Counties within the Local Area:

Cherokee
Spartanburg
Union

Local Area Administrator and Contact Information:

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Section I: Workforce and Economic Analysis

An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions, to include existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. The analysis shall include:

- ***The knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including those in in-demand industry sectors and occupations:*** (Plan sections in bold italics are from the SCDEW provided outline.)

The Upstate Workforce Board has developed this four-year plan. It will be used to implement continuous improvement, build stronger relationships, develop services that positively impact the business climate in the Upstate of South Carolina, and create opportunities for individuals to enhance skill sets to increase their earning potential. The Upstate Workforce Board will ensure businesses have access to real-time, viable solutions related to workforce recruitment, training, and retention.

The Upstate Workforce Board's staff constantly reviews labor market data from many sources. The Upstate Workforce Board's One Stop Committee identifies the in-demand occupations for which training dollars may be spent based on this particular labor market data. This decision was based upon a variety of factors including overall growth rates, high growth rates in key subsectors related to regional economic clusters, high quantity of total jobs, family-supporting median wages, and existence of entry- and mid-level jobs connected to career pathways. The Board designates a Business Services Lead and she works closely with the economic developers and with existing and new industries. This allows the group to consider feedback from employers regarding their current and future employment needs.

The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations encourage Workforce Boards to work closely with community organizations to enhance a coordinated effort. To this end, the staff also reviews the impact of related regional efforts like the Upstate Alliance, area Chambers of Commerce, economic development groups, and other regional economic organizations. The resultant "cross-fertilization" of information has developed many useful symbiotic efforts.

The top sectors employing a large percentage of individuals living in the Upstate service area are:

- Manufacturing – 43,398 employed
- Healthcare – 19,961 employed
- Retail – 17,661 employed
- Accommodation/Food Service – 14,977 employed
- Administrative and Support – 14,658 employed

Note: Includes Waste Management & Remediation Services

- Distribution and Warehousing – 11,874 employed
- Educational Services – 11,047 employed
- Construction Trades – 8,179 employed

*Source: S.C. Department of Employment & Workforce
Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) - 2019 Q3 <https://lmi.dew.sc.gov/lmi%20site/Documents/CommunityProfiles/15000020.pdf>*

The Upstate Alliance (a ten county regional marketing arm for economic development) has targeting recruitment in the following sectors:

- Aerospace
 - Automotive Manufacturing
 - Food Manufacturing
 - Life Sciences
 - Engineered Materials
- <https://www.upstatescalliance.com/top-industries/>

Based on all of the above information, the Upstate Workforce Board's training focus is as follows:

- Advanced Manufacturing (20%)
 - Healthcare
 - Logistics/Distribution (15%)
 - Information Technology
 - Construction (15%)
- The remaining 50% may be spent on any of the above.

This is reflected in our regional instruction letter R17-01 <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/local-instruction-letters>.

The basis for the above training focus is because wages paid by these sectors meet the high employment wages required by the Department of Labor and the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce. Our state issued performance measures include minimum average wage targets. For example, the wages paid by the Food Service and Retail sectors are usually not high enough to meet these performance standards. Of course, we have also experienced a shortage of semi- and skilled workers in the sectors above.

In addition to basic job skills, there are additional knowledge and other skills sought after in the applicants applying for jobs. These skills include:

- Systems Analysis and Evaluation
 - Production and Processing
 - Hard Skills: such as preventive maintenance, safety, accounting, computer skills, material handling, welding, etc.
 - Certifications – such as welding, commercial driver's license, fork lift, etc.
 - Soft Skills per below:
- <https://www.wikijob.co.uk/content/interview-advice/competencies/soft-skills>



- Industry Specific Skills (per our training area focus) – based on O*Net Online and employer feedback:

Construction Trades –

Knowledge of materials, methods, and the tools involved in the construction or repair of houses, buildings, or other structures such as highways and roads.

Manufacturing –

Production and Processing - knowledge of raw materials, production processes, quality control, costs, and other techniques for maximizing the effective manufacture and distribution of goods.

Design – knowledge of design techniques, tools, and principals involved in production of precision technical plans, blueprints, drawings, and models.

Mechanical – knowledge of machines and tools, including their designs, uses, repair and maintenance.

Engineering and Technology – knowledge of the practical application of engineering science and technology. This includes applying principles, techniques, and equipment to the design and production of various goods and services.

Healthcare –

Psychology - knowledge of human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.

Therapy & Counseling - knowledge of principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for counseling and guidance.

Treatment – knowledge of the information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat human injuries, diseases, and deformities. This includes symptoms, treatment alternatives, drug properties and interactions, and preventive healthcare measures.

Logistics/Distribution/Warehousing –

Clerical – knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as designing forms, office procedures, and terminology.

Production and Processing - knowledge of raw materials, production processes, quality control, costs, and other techniques for maximizing the effective manufacture and distribution of goods.

Information Technology –

Engineering & Technology - knowledge of the practical application of engineering science and technology. This includes applying principles, techniques, procedures, and equipment to the design and production of various goods and services.

Computer and Electronics - knowledge of circuit boards, processors, chips, electronic equipment, computer hardware, and software. This includes both applications and programming.

- ***An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment:***

All three of the counties in the Upstate Workforce Area are very different. The community profiles for each county and one for the Upstate Workforce Area as a whole may be found in the links below:

Upstate:

<http://lmi.dew.sc.gov/lmi%20site/Documents/CommunityProfiles/15000020.pdf>

Cherokee County:

<http://lmi.dew.sc.gov/lmi%20site/Documents/CommunityProfiles/04000021.pdf>

Spartanburg County:

<http://lmi.dew.sc.gov/lmi%20site/Documents/CommunityProfiles/04000083.pdf>

Union County:

<http://lmi.dew.sc.gov/lmi%20site/Documents/CommunityProfiles/04000087.pdf>

Because the COVID-19 pandemic caused many shutdowns, the May 2020 unemployment rate for the area was devastating:

Upstate Workforce Area was at 14.8

Cherokee County was at 15.3

Union County was at 16.5

Spartanburg County was at 14.5

The June numbers were much improved as below:

Upstate Workforce Area was at 10.3

Cherokee County was at 11.0

Union County was at 13.1

Spartanburg County was at 9.9

Prior to COVID-19, the area was at very low unemployment. The Upstate Workforce Area's unemployment rates for the past eight months prior to the disease-caused shut downs are below:

February 2020	2.9%
January 2020	2.8%
December 2019	2.2%
November 2019	2.2%
October 2019	2.2%
September 2019	1.9%
August 2019	2.7%
July 2019	3.0%

Indeed, during the eight months prior to COVID-19, the Upstate area had a severe workforce shortage. The previous worker shortage time was marked with many creative employment efforts including:

- The Upstate Workforce Board embarked on a geo-fencing effort with the Palladian Group. This technology allowed us to have targeted marketing/outreach to out-of-state areas in an effort to entice workers to move to the Upstate.
- The Upstate Alliance developed a campaign to interest individuals in relocating to the Upstate of South Carolina and to highlight available training options for those interested in upskilling. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHq1kZmzh6Q> HYPERLINK
"https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHq1kZmzh6Q&feature=emb_rel_pause"& HYPERLINK
"https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHq1kZmzh6Q&feature=emb_rel_pause"feature=emb_rel_pause

- The Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce developed a video for recruiting people to Spartanburg. <https://www.spartanburgchamber.com/live> and click the 'Calling Spartanburg Home is Easy' video.
- The March 2019 launch of the Manufacturing Sector Partnership – (Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Edgefield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Pickens, Saluda, Spartanburg, and Union) has provided a real-time tool to connect with industry leaders and support them as they develop communication strategies, talent recruitment strategies and skill specific requirements within certain occupations, such as maintenance technicians.

In February of 2020, we had 186,599 individuals employed in the Upstate and only 5,599 unemployed that were looking for work. This resultant unemployment rate of 2.9% was well below “full employment” per the definition from economists. Full employment is “the point in which employers must begin raising wages to attract the labor force they need.” That rate is usually around 4.6 to 4.9%. In May of 2020, due to COVID-19, those employed dropped to 171,542 with a devastating 29,684 people unemployed. Our unemployment rate spiked from 2.9% to a staggering 14.8% in a mere 3 months.

The Upstate Workforce Area has many characteristics as listed:

- Our Population is aging. We are witnessing a significant “skill drain” in our working population as baby boomers exit the workplace into retirement or semi-retirement. Many have technical skills that are much needed in all of our Upstate employment sectors. Some are being incentivized to remain in the workplace past retirement age due to their skills.
- Pre-COVID-19, we were experiencing significant wage growth due to limited worker availability.
- Technical certifications and technical degrees are still in high demand by employers. Thankfully, STEM career training is abundant in the area. Spartanburg Community College is located in all three of the counties in the Upstate Workforce Area.
- Employers in the area are increasingly embracing the apprenticeship model. In July of 2020, Apprenticeship Carolina™ received two U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship grants (see attachment I-A). One is the Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grant for \$4,499,999 for a four-year time frame. The other is an Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant for \$6,991,000 for a three-year time frame. There is a need for the German equivalent for Apprenticeship Trainer Certification. Attachment I-B is a list of apprenticeships in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties per the last report received.
- 43,398 workers in the Upstate work in manufacturing. Surprisingly, these numbers are projected to remain steady with little to no growth. Automation continues to replace workers. Paradoxically, this trend creates more demand for higher skill sets more technical in nature. Somebody’s got to build, program, and repair the robots that replace the people.
- Our area enjoys a robust automotive manufacturing sector.
- The Greer inland port has grown substantially in the past few years. This has been a help to the Upstate for three reasons: 1. The port has eased high truck traffic volumes on our

roads. 2. More use of rail transportation has helped ease the trucker shortage, and 3. The inland port presence has had the effect of attracting more companies looking at the Upstate for potential relocation.

- Our transportation costs are going down.
- Ten at the Top (TATT) led an effort to form the Upstate Mobility Alliance www.upstatemobilityalliance.org . The vision is for the Upstate to be a vibrant and connected region, where transportation policy and investments promote innovation, sustainable development, and economic prosperity for all residents and businesses.
- There is an increased focus on small business startup in the Upstate. The area's conscious efforts on increasing minority and small business startups is working. The links to the incubators in the 3 counties is as follows:
 - <https://www.uscupstate.edu/academics/george-dean-johnson-jr.-college-of-business-and-economics/events/> The GreenHouse is a business incubator space located in downtown Spartanburg occupying the entire third floor of the George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics, "The George."
 - <https://www.sccsc.edu/spark-sc/index.php> The Spark Center is a primary resource for business development at SCC, Spark Center SC, is an invaluable tool to help entrepreneurs and businesses launch, build, expand, and reorganize. The Spark is in a foreign trade zone, located along the I-85 Corridor on Highway 290 in Duncan. at the SCC Tyger River Campus, a designated enterprise campus.
 - www.know2bgen.com BGEN works with start-up companies, entrepreneurs, freelancers, creatives, and mobile workforce to help by providing workspace, mentorship, expertise, access to networking, educational resources and sometimes capital (in the form of micro-loans via our community partners).
 - <https://www.startmespartanburg.com> Start:ME Spartanburg is a free intensive 14-week business training program for entrepreneurs who work, live, worship, or plan to open a business in the Northside community of Spartanburg or whose business will provide products and services to residents of the Northside.
 - Referrals are also made to the Small Business Development Centers serving Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties.
- In Spartanburg, there is an intentional push on white collar job recruitment/creation.
- During these post-COVID-19 times, it will continue to be difficult to be at full capacity in most businesses due to social distancing requirements. This will serve to slow the growth in employment until a vaccine is developed. Thus, it will take many months to get back to full employment.
- The Upstate is fortunate to have a well-respected hospital system which now covers all three counties in the Upstate Workforce Area and serves as our 2nd largest employer. We also have ReGenesis Healthcare (a federally qualified community health provider) in all three counties. The Upstate Workforce Area has free health clinics. Healthcare & Social Assistance employment in the Upstate Workforce Area is at 19,961 and expected to grow.
- Distribution and warehousing is also expected to grow in the Upstate.
- There is a shortage everywhere for individuals in the information technology field and especially in the focus area of cyber security.

- We also enjoy an outstanding metropolitan university in USC Upstate. This four-year, public institution continues to grow.

Educational Levels for Spartanburg are as follows:

Population 25 and Older

US Census Bureau, American Community Survey – 2013 5-year Estimates

Less than 9 th Grade	7.05%
9 th through 12 th No Diploma	10.75%
High School Graduate	30.76%
Some College	20.15%
Associate's Degree	10.02%
Bachelor's Degree	13.73%
Graduate Degree	7.53%

The above data that is listed in the SCDEW Labor Market Upstate Profile is quite old. For example, we know that in Spartanburg, there is a 24% Bachelor's Degree attainment for those 25 years old and above per the Spartanburg Academic Movement report <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/524977c2e4b031f96a6912ce/t/5dd40b11c2af6160a098618e/1574177568251/SAM-Chapter4+updated+final.pdf> .

Of the high school graduates in Spartanburg County high schools in 2012-2013, 25% have completed a 4-Year Degree at institutions all over the country and 12% have completed at least a 2-year degree. Some are still enrolled. Some completed technical certifications not included in these numbers.

An overwhelming majority of our high school graduates across the entire county of Spartanburg go to Spartanburg Community College when they graduate high school. As of April 2020 report:

- Class of 2013 - 693 went to Spartanburg Community College, 53% remained there for a 2nd year, 155 have received an Associate's Degree and 22 Certificates
- Class of 2014 - 717 went there, 55% remained there for a 2nd year, 139 received Associate's Degree and 25 received Certificates
- Class of 2015 - 611 went there, 51% remained there for a 2nd year, 105 have Associate's Degree and 22 Certificates
- Class of 2016 - 534 went there, 51% remained there for a 2nd year, 94 have Associate's Degree and 23 Certificates
- Class of 2017 - 560 went there, 56% remained there for a 2nd year, 88 Associate's Degree and 7 Certificates
- Class of 2018 511 went there, persistence and completion data not yet available
- Class of 2019 - 470 went to Spartanburg Community College (persistence and completion data not yet available)

This represents nearly 20% of all Spartanburg County High School Graduates from 2013-2019 (ranging each year from 2800 - 3100 graduates) attending Spartanburg Community College (our technical college). Many are still enrolled in college or transferred to other institutions.

Data Source is Spartanburg Academic Movement's Student Tracker for High Schools April 2020 Report.

In Spartanburg, Spartanburg Academic Movement (SAM) is focusing heavily on educational improvement in partnership with the seven school districts. SAM is a part of the national Strive Together Network that is helping every child succeed, from cradle to career, regardless of race, zip code or circumstance. The Spartanburg chapter is the most advanced in the entire Strive network. In the Upstate area, there are a lot of children living in poverty and especially within the City of Spartanburg. Organizations like SAM are doing amazing work with the schools serving those in poverty. The benchmark measurement areas for SAM are: kindergarten readiness, early grade reading, middle grade math, high school graduation, post-secondary enrollment, post-secondary completion and employment. The actual work of SAM reaches deeply into the classroom level on a daily basis.

Cherokee County Educational Attainment is below:

Population 25 and Older US Census Bureau, American Community Survey – 2013 5-year Estimates

Less than 9 th Grade	9.42%
9 th – 12 th No Diploma	15.61%
High School Graduate or GED	35.15%
Some College	18.24%
Associate's Degree	7.31%
Bachelor's Degree	10.4%
Graduate Degree	3.87%

KNOW(2), a non-profit in Cherokee County, has a focus on education. Their goal is for the residents of Cherokee County to excel academically, and obtain certification degrees necessary for economic success. They initiated the Talk to Me and Read to Me programs in Cherokee County. Their Neighborhood Ambassadors program is comprised of an outreach team that reaches a broad base of the community. They build trust and relationships, rooted in service, to help where needed and inspire adults and children to improve their education. Each year, KNOW(2) holds Campo Giorno which is a county wide field day competition for elementary students that celebrates both academic and athletic achievement. KNOW(2) partnered with Cherokee County to develop the Honorable Rufus H. Foster KNOW(2) scholarship project. This project provides qualified residents of Cherokee County the unique opportunity to attend college tuition-free.

Union County Education Attainment is as follows:

Population 25 and Older US Census Bureau, American Community Survey – 2013 5-year Estimates

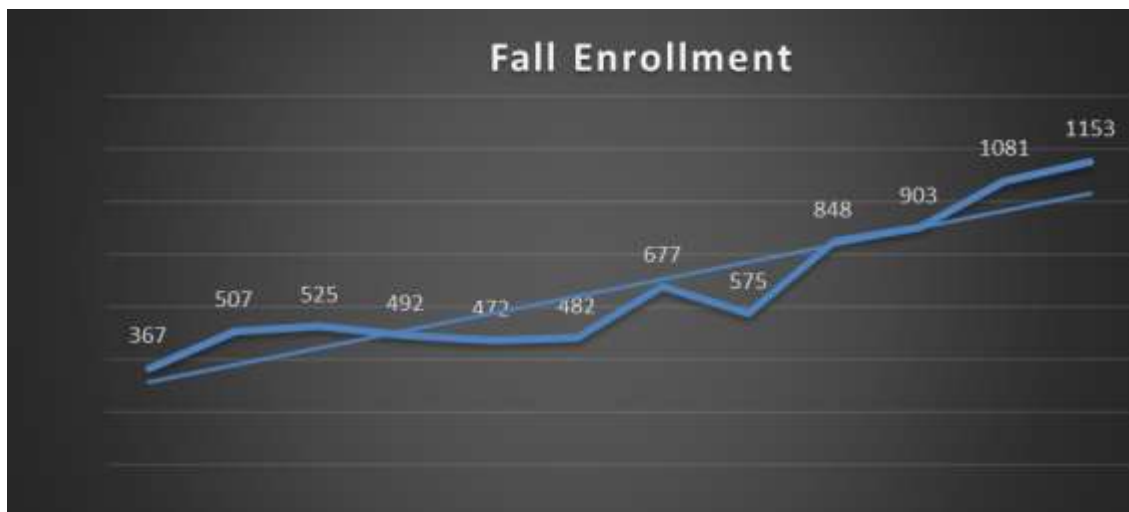
Less than 9 th Grade	7.58%
9 th – 12 th No Diploma	14.27%
High School Graduate or GED	37.51%
Some College	19.7%
Associate's Degree	8.06%
Bachelor's Degree	8.63%
Graduate Degree	4.25%

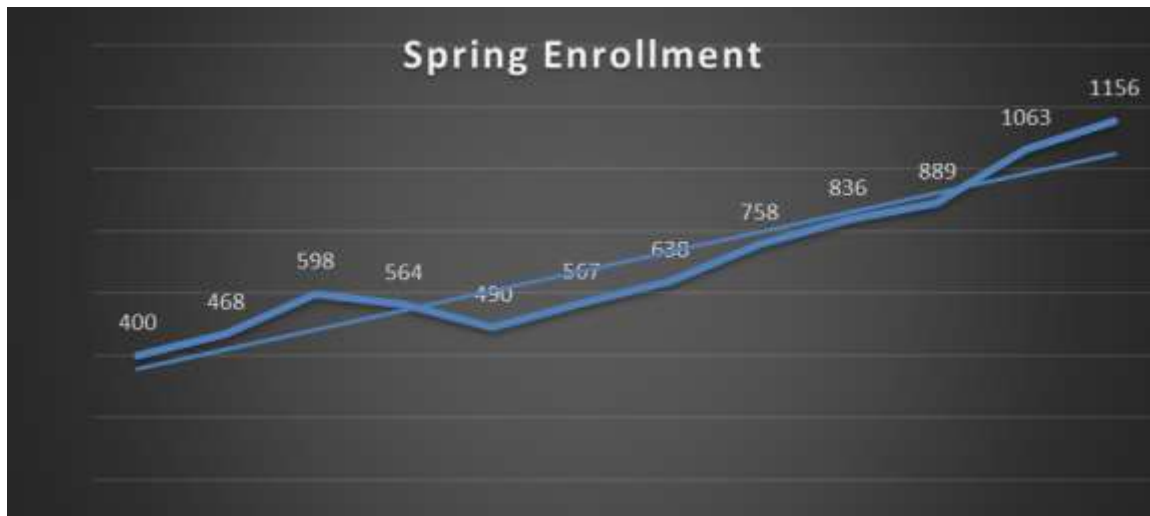
Each summer, Union County Schools partners with the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation and the Upstate Workforce Board to conduct a STEM Camp at Sims Middle School. Students focus on STEM subjects in an effort to maintain basic skills levels over the summer. They also learn about local careers and take several plant and organization tours. The Union County School District also has a STEM summer program for earlier grades.

Operation Workforce Training is for seniors or recent graduates of Union County Schools (home, private, public, or charter school). They attend 65 hours of classroom training which prepares them for general industry positions. They become knowledgeable in Six Sigma Yellow Belt, MSSC Quality Practices and Measurement as well as receive OSHA and fork lift certifications. These students do not have to pay for the class (SCC has a grant that covers the costs). Their graduation ceremony is held at a luncheon (students and parents attend). Each student receives \$500 from Lockhart Power's CEO, Bryan Stone.

Union County developed a scholarship program to provide eligible residents access to post-secondary education and training programs leading to jobs that are in demand today and in the future. Students may only utilize these funds to attend USC Union or Spartanburg Community College.

USC Union has experienced considerable growth – see below:





- ***Individuals with Barriers to Employment:***

The Upstate Workforce Board partners with the SC Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, SC Commission for the Blind and ABLE, SC to serve individuals with disabilities in the area of education and employment. The data for the three Upstate counties related to the disability rates are below for those under the age of 65:

South Carolina: 10.4%

Cherokee County: 13%

Spartanburg County: 10.7%

Union County: 15%

(Data source: US Census Bureau, 2014 – 2018 Estimates)

The Upstate Workforce Board employees serve on the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities. The Mayor's Committee holds advocacy and awareness events throughout the year. Yearly, a large disabilities walk is organized to bring awareness to the fact that those with disabilities make great employees.

Homelessness (Data Source: 2019 Report - Continuum of Care in South Carolina) shows 1,401 homeless in the Upstate (13 county region). Spartanburg had 229 homeless. Cherokee County had 59 homeless.

The Upstate Continuum of Care has the largest population of students experiencing homelessness (46% of the homeless students in SC are in the Upstate). A remarkably high percentage of Upstate students were experiencing unsheltered homelessness (1,345), accounting for 76% of students experiencing unsheltered homelessness across the state. This is very concerning and especially since these students have not been able to physically attend school due to building closures.

Veterans and their family members receive priority of service at the SC Works centers. Veterans have more services now than at any other point in history. They are very deserving of these services and more. The veteran count is in the tables below.

COVID-19 shed light on the lack of broadband in the state of South Carolina. All Upstate school districts pushed their curriculum and learning out via the internet. Many students were unable to receive this information. This serves as a big barrier for children not physically attending school. Educators fear a significant learning slide in the best of circumstances. The lack of access to computerized learning has struck the impoverished disproportionately.

The tables below provide household broadband access information as well as other useful demographic information that is more recent:

Cherokee County, South Carolina

2019 Population Estimates

57,300

[Source: Vintage 2019 Population Estimates](#)

Median Household Income

\$ 35,836

[Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

Persons in poverty, percent

16.8 %

[Source: 2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates \(SAIPE\)](#)

Educational Attainment: Percent high school graduate or higher

79.6 %

[Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent

12.8 %

[Source: 2018 Small Area Health Insurance Estimates \(SAHIE\)](#)

Median Housing Value

\$ 95,300

[Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

Total Housing Units

24,380

[Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

Number of Firms

3,165

[Source: 2012 Survey of Business Owners: Company Summary](#)

Veterans

3,596

[Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

Percent of households with a broadband Internet subscription

61.1 %

[Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

Union County, South Carolina

2019 Population Estimates

27,316

[*Source: Vintage 2019 Population Estimates*](#)

Median Household Income

\$ 40,120

[*Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*](#)

Persons in poverty, percent

20.4 %

[*Source: 2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates \(SAIPE\)*](#)

Educational Attainment: Percent high school graduate or higher

81.4 %

[*Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*](#)

Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent

11.8 %

[*Source: 2018 Small Area Health Insurance Estimates \(SAHIE\)*](#)

Median Housing Value

\$ 77,300

[*Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*](#)

Total Housing Units

14,100

[*Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*](#)

Number of Firms

1,694

[*Source: 2012 Survey of Business Owners: Company Summary*](#)

Veterans

1,796

[*Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*](#)

Percent of households with a broadband Internet subscription

62.0 %

[*Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*](#)

Spartanburg County, South Carolina

2019 Population Estimates

319,785

[*Source: Vintage 2019 Population Estimates*](#)

Median Household Income

\$ 50,179

[*Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*](#)

Persons in poverty, percent

13.6 %

[*Source: 2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates \(SAIPE\)*](#)

Educational Attainment: Percent high school graduate or higher

85.3 %

[*Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*](#)

Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent

12.7 %

Source: 2018 Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE)

Median Housing Value

\$ 133,700

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Total Housing Units

127,850

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Number of Firms

21,249

Source: 2012 Survey of Business Owners: Company Summary

Veterans

18,334

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Percent of households with a broadband Internet subscription

76.4 %

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

- ***An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must indicate the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.***

The Upstate Workforce Board is responsible for oversight of the performance of the SC Works system in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties and is a large financial contributor to the system. The Upstate Workforce Board did have substantial federal budget cuts again this year. The co-location of the Spartanburg SC Works Comprehensive One Stop Center with the downtown campus of Spartanburg Community College has been great. The space allotted to SC Works provides several advantages in service delivery: increased access to computer resources for work search related tasks; increased capacity for workshops to meet job seekers' needs more effectively; increased capacity for testing; and the ability to host job fairs more frequently on site at a significant cost savings. Being located on the campus also gives job seekers easier access to the college, its resources, and academic/continuing education staff. The location is very close to public transportation. This location allows for seamless service options. The only weakness of the co-location is poor signage for the SC Works Center. In Union, we are located inside the beautiful, newly renovated, Union Carnegie Library. This space is located in the downtown area. Being co-located with the library allows us to tap into some of the library customer traffic for our services. In Cherokee County, we rent a stand-alone location in the Tiffany Park area of the City. The Upstate Workforce Board funded SC Works centers will continue in all three counties we serve to provide help for job seekers and training dollars for those needing to upgrade their education. For training options, we utilize an eligible training provider list. Training providers submit applications to provide training to our customers and the trainings are approved by the One Stop Committee of the Upstate Workforce Board.

The Upstate Workforce Board has a very strong Regional Director of Business Solutions and she is the best in the state of SC. She is designated by the Upstate Workforce Board. The Upstate Workforce Board has a written employer services strategy and an integrated Business Services Team. This team includes multiple partners from various agencies and other organizations. The Regional Director of Business Solutions serves as the liaison with the three economic development entities in the three county area and serves as the lead convener for the 14-county Greater Upstate Manufacturing Sector Partnership. Our Business Services Team is business driven. Team members are cross trained to represent the workforce system holistically. They deliver services through an account executive approach which eliminates program focus and decreases duplication of services. This team meets at least monthly to discuss challenges within the business community and to brainstorm creative approaches to quality solutions. Recruiting and screening for employers is a primary business service. This team holds recruiting events (face-to-face and virtual) in all counties throughout the year. A large annual job fair is also conducted in each county once per year at a minimum. This team could be strengthened if the Wagner-Peyser staff were under the supervision of the SC Works One Stop Manager. It would allow us to improve quality and save dollars. This model is now allowed per USDOL. For more information on all services offered by SC Works, see www.scworksupstate.com.

We are fortunate in the Upstate Workforce Area to have many educational resources (see list below). Although there is a plethora of educational support opportunities, it is still difficult to recruit people willing to continue their education. This resistance to continue education is especially prevalent in our and low-income population. SCDEW requires us to serve 70% of individuals that are low-income and basic skills deficient. Pre-COVID-19, the unemployment rate was so low that individuals preferred working to attending technical school or college. The Upstate Workforce Area has embarked on several outreach efforts to entice people to further their education. One such effort included geo-fencing low-income areas in the City of Spartanburg. We were able to do this with a \$7,500 grant we received from the Spartanburg County Foundation. We are currently engaged in marketing planning with Upstate Alliance to continue promoting upskilling opportunities in the Upstate to existing and future residents. We have increased our speaking engagements in the low-income areas, and in the middle and high schools. We have also developed several partnerships with organizations which target their services to low-income populations. We plan to continue these efforts even more aggressively.

We do not know how many individuals will permanently lose their jobs due to the COVID-19 shutdown. We believe a forced employment gap will be an opportunity for skill upgrading for those losing their jobs due to COVID-19 related layoffs. We will not know this until unemployment benefits begin to dwindle. The CARES Act benefits have been too lucrative and have caused some employers to lose out on their employees when they try to call them in to work now. The speed of the economic recovery will also dictate whether the unemployed will choose to regain employment quickly or if they'll seek additional skills training. We assume SCDEW will perform outreach to bring the individuals into the SC Works centers to review employment and training opportunities. Businesses in the area are

struggling to fill skilled/technical positions. Using this gap in employment could help fill this need.

Due to the number e-commerce projects, the Spartanburg area will need to more than double the speculative offerings in order to keep up with economic development demand. The spec properties will need to be available and take no more than six months to up-fit for the business interested in developing in the area.

Another weakness we have seen is with childcare centers closing during the initial COVID-19 crisis. We are very concerned that childcare may continue to be a barrier for workers and for those seeking work. For a long period, approximately 50% of daycare facilities were closed due to COVID-19. If the schools only offer a partial onsite presence this fall, childcare availability will continue to plague the workforce. That is to say, limits of child care availability could well become a deterrence to economic recovery. Individuals working the 2nd and 3rd shifts have no available childcare centers open to the public.

In the Upstate we have also had a long standing problem with lack of affordable/available transportation. Individuals in outlying areas and rural counties cannot get to jobs and education. These people are needed in the workforce. With budget cuts over the past few years and a steep one this year, the Upstate Workforce Board will not have the funds to support reliable transportation in the area. Once recovery occurs, we believe there will be more private-sector led transportation efforts in the area to address this need for workers and learners. Commute with Enterprise is an option that was being consider pre-COVID-19.

- <https://www.commutewithenterprise.com> Commute With Enterprise remains committed to helping your workforce move forward. As an essential service provider, Commute with Enterprise is staying open to serve customers who rely on us to get employees to and from work - including those who are on the front lines of relief efforts.

There are 9 school districts in the Upstate Workforce Area. There are five Career Technology Centers linked to high schools. We will continue to speak in the classrooms, be at career fairs and partner with education as much as possible in an effort to interest students in the in-demand jobs in our area.

We have a strong college presence in our area. The following post-secondary educational institutions are located in the Upstate Workforce Area:

Limestone College
1115 College Dr.
Gaffney, SC 29340
800.795.7151
2018 Degrees Awarded: 1,338

Converse College
580 E Main St.
Spartanburg, SC 29302
864.596.9000
2018 Degrees Awarded: 608

Kenneth Shuler School of Cosmetology-Spartanburg
1515 John B White SR Blvd.
Spartanburg, SC 29301
864.587.6000
2018 Degrees Awarded: 194

Palmetto Beauty School
2601 East Main St.
Spartanburg, SC 29307
864.579.2550
2018 Degrees Awarded: 36

Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic
2020 Springfield Rd.
Spartanburg, SC 29316
864.578.8770
2018 Degrees Awarded: 172

Spartanburg Community College
107 Community College Dr.
Spartanburg, SC 29303
864.592.4500
Campuses in Union and Cherokee Counties
2018 Degrees Awarded: 1,502

Spartanburg Methodist College
1000 Powell Mill Rd.
Spartanburg, SC 29301
864.587.4000
2018 Degrees Awarded: 342

University of South Carolina-Upstate
800 University Way
Spartanburg, SC 29303
864.503.5000
2018 Degrees Awarded: 2,586

Wofford College
429 N Church St.
Spartanburg, SC 29303
864.597.4000
2018 Degrees Awarded: 1,062

University of South Carolina-Union
309 East Academy St.
Union, SC 29379
864.429.8728
2018 Degrees Awarded: 126

Source: Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

Spartanburg is also home to a full medical school, the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM).

The Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation is a non-profit that supports the Upstate Workforce Board. It applied for and received a grant to help with transportation challenges in Cherokee County for adults pursuing their high school diploma or GED. This grant from the Cherokee County Foundation allows us to transport individuals from their homes to Adult Education.

The Upstate Workforce Board has funded two fantastic youth programs over the past several years (one credit recovery program named YouthStop and one GED program named USC Upstate ACHIEVE. These are for individuals 16 – 24 years of age). Due to budget cuts, only one youth program is funded in program year 2020 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021). The YouthStop program elected to close and not apply. The USC Upstate Achieve grant was extended one additional month through July 31, 2020, to allow time for the procurement process to occur. The request for proposals was issued and we received two applications. The USC Upstate Achieve program won the bid and will receive a new grant beginning August 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

After completing the youth program, youth face challenges with transportation to and from work or post-secondary education. Housing has been another barrier for the homeless youth in the WIOA program. Future educational and training opportunities that lead to employment at self-sustaining wages are often hindered by current socio-economic situations such as: teen pregnancy, lack of childcare, substance abuse, incarceration, criminal backgrounds, lack of motivation, undiagnosed or untreated disabilities (such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and learning disabilities, and homelessness. Staff work tirelessly with other organizations to remove as many barriers for the youth as possible.

A virtual job fair platform was purchased during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed us to hold our first virtual job fair. It was very successful with 42 businesses and 534 job seekers attending. This will likely become the primary means for conducting job fairs in the future. We will also conduct a Career Awareness Showcase for high school students utilizing this platform in partnership with the Regional Center Director from the SC Department of Commerce. We will be able to host virtual career fairs in the schools using this platform. This will help link companies with students more directly to spark interest in careers in the Upstate area.

In March 2018, a group of upstate manufacturers were convened to discuss mutual industries challenges and opportunities. The group took off, generating a life of its own. It has named itself “the Diversified Manufacturing Partnership.” They continue to meet regularly to address industry needs in the region. The partnership pulled together during the COVID-19 shutdowns to offer best practices among peers. The following businesses are involved:

The Upstate Workforce Board partnered with Spartanburg County, SC Vocational Rehabilitation and Spartanburg Community College on a prisoner-to-work training and employment program in 2016. The program, called “Operation Educate”, has been both an employment and a recidivism reduction success. It has been replicated in other areas. A grant was just received to continue the Spartanburg program and expand the program into Cherokee County. United Way of the Piedmont was included as a partner in this grant. United Way will receive funds to provide transportation. A mobile unit is being purchased to be located at the jail in Cherokee County to offer onsite classes. A staff person has been hired to work at that site.

As has been mentioned, our past, fully employed workforce has been more motivated to work and less motivated to advance their training. If this continues, the Upstate Workforce Area's training efforts will migrate to a more targeted on-the-job training (OJT) at local business locations. OJT is a training that is conducted by the business after hiring the person. The individual hired does not have experience/expertise for the specific job. WIOA funds are provided to the employer to offset the cost of training the individual. These funds normally pay for 50% of the cost of training for up to six months.

The Upstate Workforce Area's funded SC Works center has partnered with the Spartanburg Northside Development Initiative. This is a community-based effort to improve the economic circumstances of a poverty-dense neighborhood. The program is a construction project in partnership with the Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System. The program seeks to train individuals for the construction industry. The training is both classroom based and hands-on based. Individuals earn a NCCER upon completion. The end result is for the individual to work for a contractor or sub-contractor that does work for the hospital.

The Business Services Lead of SC Works Upstate has worked with the SC Manufacturers Extension Partnership (SCMEP) on a training program that includes virtual classroom instruction and on-the-job training. This will be rolled out in the program year starting in July, 2020.

The Academy by Equus Workforce Solutions is a database housing hundreds of online training courses that our customers may take free of charge. This has been a great resource for the individuals in our area.

Workshops are offered continuously at the SC Works one stop centers for anyone in the public. These were offered via internet once COVID-19 hit and centers were closed to the public.

We are disappointed that incumbent worker training (IWT) dollars will not be available from SC Workforce Development Board this program year as they have been for many years. This is a real loss to our area businesses and for individuals to build transferable skills while working for their companies.

The Upstate Workforce Board has been waiting on SCDEW to roll out an anticipated soft skills training. SCDEW initially funded a pilot project out of Clemson, but it did not materialize for the balance of the state. The state has been working on a soft skills program for over three years. The ResCare Academy has online courses to train on soft skills, but we need a more robust effort. Should the state be unable to develop this vital program soon, the Upstate Workforce Board has plans to work with the private sector to develop this program. We plan to develop an employer-led and employer-validated soft skills training locally. This has been the primary area of concern for businesses and we need to quickly address resolving this problem in a formalized manner.

Section II: Strategic Vision and Goals

A description of the local board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency, including:

- ***Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment; and***
- ***A description of how the local board will work with core and required partners to align local resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals referenced above.***

The Upstate Workforce Board's Mission, Vision, Core Values and Tagline are as follows:

Mission: To build and maintain a workforce development system that meets the needs of employers

Vision: To create and oversee a continuously improving workforce development system that:

- Encompasses all necessary resources for the citizens of our region to obtain employment at a livable wage
- Ensures employers have a work ready pool of applicants and a point of contact to obtain other employer related services
- Promotes youth development in education, training and employment

Core Values:

- Uncompromising integrity in all situations
- Honestly and justly holding each other accountable in ethical challenges
- Embracing different perspectives, experiences, cultures, backgrounds, talents, and contributions of others
- Striving for excellence in workforce and community development

Tagline: Advancing the Future of Business and Community

The Upstate Workforce Board is the champion for regional workforce development and economic growth. We fully support economic development regionally through our involvement with regional organizations. Through our involvement with Ten at the Top, Upstate Alliance and the 14-county Manufacturing Sector Strategy work, we will work to address barriers that keep our economy from moving forward. Transportation and upskilling are two primary efforts on which we are focused regionally.

Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment:

Barriers to employment exist for residents who are low-income, disabled, veterans, ex-offenders, and/or have a drug abuse history, lack of basic and/or occupational skills, and lack of transportation/childcare. To address these barriers, we offer the following:

- Funding a quality WIOA youth program with staff experienced in serving youth with barriers;
- Identifying current programs in place that are addressing employment barriers in order to make referrals;
- Identifying gaps in services and working with the communities to fill the gaps;
- Encouraging citizens to use the 211 number for services. 211 is a free and confidential service that helps citizens identify local resources. This is available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week;
- Explore fee-for-service opportunities that other Workforce Boards in the U.S. are doing in an effort to increase funding due to cuts;
- Funding a one stop system that serves as the go to place for employment in each county;
- Providing training dollars and supportive services to individuals in need of skill building in order to earn a self-sufficiency wage in an in-demand occupation;
- Continue to perform targeted recruitment to individuals with barriers to employment and training; and
- Ensure that soft skills training is a priority for our customers that is employer led and employer validated.
- Promoting career pathways as a route to self-sufficiency.

A description of how the local board will work with core and required partners to align local resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals referenced above.

- Hold regular partnership meetings with all partner programs on a monthly basis so that alignment of resources is maximized. This should include discussion on difficult cases;
- Hold Business Services Team meetings on a monthly basis to ensure that we do not duplicate contacts with businesses. Coordinate efforts with all partners in the hiring and screening process;
- Continually seek new partners that can help us meet the needs of our businesses and job seekers;
- Partnering with others for grants to enhance our services due to funding cuts;
- Build and utilize relationships to improve our services to customers;
- Continue training staff on racial equity and using our knowledge to make changes in our communities;
- Present cases to the Safety Net Council as needed to address the barriers that our customers have;
- In partnership with the Upstate Workforce Board's Disabilities Committee and the Spartanburg Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities, we will continue to educate businesses and community members about the importance of inclusion in the workplace for individuals with a disability;
- Hold outreach and recruitment sessions in the low-income and rural areas in our three counties; and
- Continue to convene groups to address issues in the communities. Ensure proper follow through on suggestions by setting goal dates and assigning individuals to these tasks.

Section III: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

- 1. A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the local plan. The description must include how the chief elected officials, local board, and core and required partners were involved in the development of the plan.***

The Upstate Workforce Board's Executive Director decided to follow a similar model used in developing the last four-year plan. Due to COVID-19, the meetings were held via Zoom rather than in person. A group of individuals was selected to receive an invitation for each section of the plan. This group represents a cross section of community leaders/elected officials, Upstate Workforce Board members, educators, core/required partners, community partners and program staff. You will find the list in Attachment III-A. A memo was sent to each group (see Attachments III-B, III-C, III-D, III-E, III-F) along with an assigned draft section of the plan. A Zoom meeting date/time was emailed to the group so that discussion and input could be conducted. Any individual that could not attend the Zoom meeting was asked to email suggestions to the Upstate Workforce Board's Executive Director. Changes and suggestions were incorporated into the plan. Once the entire plan was written, it was sent to all groups prior to posting to the public for comments.

- 2. A description of the workforce development system in the local area, including:***

- Identification of the programs that are included in the system: The Upstate Workforce Board issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit applications for funding of programs for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds. If programs are performing well, we may extend the program for an additional three years without issue a RFP. For program year 2020 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021), the following two programs are WIOA funded:***

USC Upstate ACHIEVE Program – This is a GED program for out-of-school youth ages 16-24 from Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. This program includes an opportunity to complete a paid work experience and/or on-the-job training (OJT). In addition to high school degree completion, the ACHIEVE Program also offers occupational and soft skills training components. Case management and counseling are incorporated. This program also provides transportation from the student's home to the program site that is located inside the comprehensive SC Works One Stop. Spartanburg Adult Education provides the GED instruction for the ACHIEVE students. Students may also attend the workshops offered at SC Works. The goal after obtaining a GED, is placement in employment and/or post-secondary education.

SC Works Comprehensive Center - The SC Works Business Plan is attached (attachment III-H). This program is located in three places: 1. The downtown campus

of Spartanburg Community College; 2. An affiliate site in Union County at the Union County Carnegie Library; and 3. In a stand-alone affiliate site in the Tiffany Park area in Gaffney that services all of Cherokee County. Equus Workforce Solutions (formerly ResCare) is the operator of the SC Works centers in our three county area. Equus Workforce Solutions administers and manages the SC Works centers in cooperation with community partners, including core partners in the workforce system. The mission of SC Works Upstate is to provide a level of service to facilitate the attainment of meaningful employment consistent with customer interests and abilities. This is accomplished by providing employers and job seekers with a wide range of employment services. For the employers, these include: job postings, job fairs, screening of potential candidates, on-the-job training, labor market data, assessments and incumbent worker training grants. For the job seeker, services include: telephones and computers for use in applying for unemployment and jobs, resume assistance, job readiness and other workshops, career planning services, and classroom and work-based learning training opportunities.

SC Works accomplishes the provision of all services through partnerships with many related community services. The goal is to operate a seamless system from the viewpoint of the customer. The SC Works Comprehensive system consists of the following core partners:

Core Partners include:

South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation

- For GED & High School Diploma, WIN Assessments
- Assistance with workforce development and training for individuals with disabilities

Job Corps

- Handles recruiting and application process to a Job Corps Center

Equus Workforce Solutions

- Adult and Dislocated Worker comprehensive services, supportive services, training and employment

SC Commission for the Blind

- Assistance with workforce development and training for blind individuals

SC Department of Employment and Workforce

- Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services, Unemployment Insurance, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Reemployment Services, Veterans programs, SCWOS

Able SC

- A change agent committed to fostering an inclusive society that empowers individuals with disabilities to live fully-engaged and self-directed lives. Able SC is an organization lead by individuals with disabilities that challenges stereotypes, protects disability rights and champions social reform.

USC Upstate ACHIEVE

- Youth provider for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – serves youth ages 16-24 (detail in Section III, 2)

Adult Learning Center

- Receives adult education funding for GED instruction

Goodwill

- Senior Community Service Employment Program

Adult Education

- High School Diploma or GED instruction

Piedmont Community Actions

- Community Service Block Grant

SC Department of Social Services

- Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program

Spartanburg Community College

- Perkins Career and Technical Education

Spartanburg Housing Authority

- Housing Assistance

Indian Development Council

- Indian and Native American Program

We have many other partners such as United Way, SC Legal Services, Upstate Fatherhood Coalition, and many others in every county.

Note: Spartanburg County serves as the fiscal agent for the Upstate Workforce Board

- ***How the Local Board will support strategies for service alignment among the entities carrying out workforce development program in the local area:***

Partners are essential contributors to accomplish seamless, accessible and comprehensive services within the SC Works One Stop setting. Additional partners are always welcomed in the system to help us serve the needs of the customers. The Upstate Workforce Board's SC Works One Stop Committee periodically reviews the information related to partners and partner participation. The Equus Workforce Solutions/SC Works One Stop Operator briefs this committee at each meeting. If there are partner challenges, the Upstate Workforce Board will become more involved. Good communication and consistent partner meetings go a long way in maintaining positive relationships with partners. Partners share information across programs to include introduction of new services and initiatives that may benefit mutual customers. As the Upstate Workforce Board employees monitor, they review the partner referral process. Information about how to access services that includes clear points of contact are critical to job seekers who may be dealing with a variety of basic life needs while also seeking employment. The core business services partner group meets monthly on a formal basis. However, routine communications occur much more frequently on specific business needs as they arise.

Memorandums of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreements are utilized with partners to detail relationships and to agree upon cost sharing and on services offered. These documents are also monitored by the Upstate Workforce Board staff to ensure that partner services are in place.

3. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local are to:

Expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment.

We hope to be able to serve more individuals than we served this past year. We are also looking into fee-for-service opportunities to raise funds. We were fortunate that the State Workforce Board allocated state funding to help backfill the void that was

created by a severe budget cut in all three program funding areas. We want to significantly increase our number of on-the-job training contracts this year.

We have also applied for several grants from other sources. We did receive a major grant from DOL (WORC) in partnership with Spartanburg Community College and United Way that is over \$2,000,000. This grant allows us to continue serving those incarcerated at the jail in Spartanburg and allows us to add the Cherokee County jail for service. The grant title is GROWsc.

We are also looking to expand the eligible training provider listing this program year and have initiated meetings with institutions to discuss what they have to offer that might qualify as a training option for our customers.

We plan to try some creative outreach methods in the low-income areas to try to reach and serve those individuals most in need. We have tried many communication methods which have not yielded the results we anticipated. We will meet with informal leaders in various communities to request assistance with our messaging. We want to improve our attractiveness to inspire those most in need to the services we and our other partners offer. Our SC Works centers are in ideal locations. The Spartanburg SC Works center is very close to the public transportation hub.

We have recently modified our supportive service policy to provide additional support to WIOA clients. COVID-19 has impacted the delivery of classroom training. We are seeing the need to assist with Internet and computer access. We also increased transportation and childcare rates to match the current cost in our communities. We are working with local training providers to offer wrap around services. There are currently many tuition scholarships available to the general public and we are seeing shift in the need for WIOA classroom dollars. We are working to support training students with supportive services regardless of if they need WIOA tuition dollars.

- ***Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including an industry-recognized certificate or certification that is portable and stackable:***

We are looking for other training providers at this time. We would like to see more competition and options for our customers. We have held one meeting with Limestone College via Zoom and hope to continue seeking out other institutions that can provide qualified training. In the past, training providers would not submit trainings to the eligible training provider list due to the burdensome performance reporting required by US Department of Labor (USDOL)/SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW). SCDEW did request and received a waiver from USDOL waiving the performance reporting for program year 2020. Due to this, we think we can encourage other training providers to offer training through the

www.SCPATH.org for program year 2020. We were informed by SCDEW staff that USDOL stated a waiver will not occur in PY21. If that is the case, many of the technical colleges in the state will pull their trainings from the eligible training provider listing.

- ***Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations:***

The SC Works Business Services Team is very active and effective. The Regional Business Solutions Director is well connected in the Upstate. We currently work with employers of all sizes and are constantly making contacts to increase the number of businesses to serve. Since business services are identified by the Upstate Workforce Board as the #1 service we provide, a major focus is placed on meeting the workforce needs of employers. The Business Services staff are often out in the communities calling on businesses. The Business Services Lead works early with new businesses when they are recruited by the economic development staff in the three counties. We also work very closely with the Cherokee and Spartanburg Chambers. The SCDEW Labor Exchange staff provide many services to local businesses. In the past, we have not received many returned business surveys from the job postings. This year we have brought this to the Upstate Workforce Board staff level. The board staff will begin conducting several surveys each month to monitor the quality of the services to businesses we provide. This should allow us to expand the engagement of employers by improving any inefficiencies uncovered in the services we provide. We hope to eventually procure someone else to conduct the surveys.

- ***Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area:***

We are very excited that the State Workforce Board is going to migrate to Zip Recruiter for service delivery. We think this will be a much needed improvement over the current system. We look forward to rolling this out. We think the Greater Upstate team can better drive the entire system toward success with this partnership.

SC Works partners offer an array of services to local businesses in an effort to grow and maintain businesses in the Upstate. Partners also refer their jobs seekers to job listings posted in the state system.

Our local business solutions team works with local businesses to identify recruitment, retention and training needs, using the pull method, listening to each employers needs and matching with appropriate available services, through WIOA or other partner agencies, such as SCVR, SCDEW, and Adult Education. Typical conversations with business partners include, but are not limited to, probing questions, such as:

What is their expected growth?
Biggest Workforce Challenge:
Reason people are not hired:
Questions for Pre-Screening:
Turnover Rate: High Normal Low
Reasons people leave:
What other recruiting sources are used?
What is your re-entry policy? (ex-offenders)
What is your policy on hiring Veterans?
Who are their competitors for talent?
Interested in recruiting from High School? Y N Community College? Y N
What is their applications process like?
What is the interview process?
What is their hiring/on-boarding process? How long does it take?
What marketing material do they use?
Culture & Mission/Value:
Occupation Hiring Trend (past 6 months/year/2 years?):
Occupation Pay Trend:

Below PY20 individual and team goals are listed.

INDIVIDUAL GOALS

- Meeting or phone call to at least 4 new businesses per week
- Conduct 30 field visits per month
- Monthly TDS-OJT file review (track via SharePoint)
- Business Solutions presentation to community organization, professional group or association once per quarter
- Minimum of 25 OJT Contracts per BSC per program year

- Trade show or community event in each county quarterly

TEAM GOALS

- 4 recruitment events per month at comprehensive center
- Develop 50 OJT contracts per year (encourage contracts developed specifically based on WIOA participant need) as funds allow
- SC Works hosted Employer workshops – One per quarter
- One annual job fair per region – in partnership with local workforce partners such as SCVR, SCDEW, and Adult Education

The RDBS is also heavily involved with the Greater Upstate Manufacturing Partnership, which is a forum for manufacturers across 14 counties to come together to identify industry wide needs and to develop strategies and plans to address the needs. The RDBS is also in constant communication with local economic development and Ready SC to ensure existing and expanding companies are aware of available resources and are receiving quality services from the workforce system.

During COVID-19, the impact of outreach to employers has been very difficult. Many businesses do not allow onsite visitors. We look forward to getting back to a normal way of doing business once this crisis is over.

- ***Improve coordination between workforce development programs and economic development:***

This is a noted program of strength for our area. Our Business Services Lead has a seat at the table early in the recruiting process with economic development. She is able to offer help with recruiting and labor market information for new business prospects. The Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director also has a close relationship with economic development staff in the region. Our coordination is very strong and we will continue to improve and maintain these relationships.

- ***Strengthen linkages between the SC Works delivery system and unemployment insurance programs:***

The unemployment insurance (UI) program staff are not onsite in the centers. It has been several years since the UI staff were onsite. The recent COVID-19 crisis has shown us that there would be a great benefit to having unemployment insurance staff in the centers for face-to-face assistance. This would reduce customer angst initiated by busy lines, dropped calls, and less-than-satisfactory service per UI claimants. Other than having UI staff onsite, we do not know how to strengthen the partnership with UI since unemployment is conducted via online and call centers. This crisis has also highlighted the importance of the SC UI program in participating more financially in the operation of the SC Works centers, as during the first month of re-opening, 76% of customer traffic was related directly to UI services. During COVID-19, we were all

forced to learn more than we wanted to know about the unemployment insurance system. Data entry into the system was cumbersome at best, impossible at worst. Not having local on-site services severely limited benefit enrollment, particularly for those without computer access or knowledge. Many creative "work-a-rounds" were required for helping folks to get their benefits. I believe many in the workforce business all learned a great deal from this experience. We have all learned that there is much room for improvement with the current system software.

The recent addition of the SC Works 101 Online Training course has provided a general overview of all partners in the SC Works workforce system and includes UI services.

If SCDEW has any suggestions on partnership strengthening in the UI area, we are open to suggestions.

4. A description of how the strategies discussed in Question 3 above will be aligned with the priorities outlined in the State Plan; specifically:

➤ ***Increasing participation in work-based (WBL) activities, including registered apprenticeship programs:***

The Business Solutions Team promotes opportunities for work based learning such as on-the-job training, work experiences, transitional employment, etc. to appropriate local employers. Funding directed to work based learning provides better results long term over classroom training, so increase this investment makes sense. With training providers not wanting to participate in the SC Eligible Training Provider database due to reporting requirements, 'earn to learn' programs will be a great option.

Apprenticeship Carolina™ is the entity responsible for registered apprenticeships in South Carolina. SC Works Business Services staff make referrals to them if an employer expresses interest in competency based training combined with classroom training. Apprenticeships are a part of the offerings to employers when the Business Services staff meet with businesses. Partners on the business services team are fully aware of Apprenticeship Carolina™. We will continue to speak about registered apprenticeships when making presentations in the community. Most companies in our area move incumbent workers into apprenticeships rather than hiring new individuals for those slots. Apprenticeship Carolina™ does not post the jobs for their apprenticeships on the SC Department of Employment and Workforce SCWOS job posting site. Apprenticeship Carolina™ has webpage links to the U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship finder page where apprenticeship openings are listed. There are currently 1,070 companies in South Carolina with registered. The Upstate area has the second highest number of registered programs in South Carolina.

The youth program funded by WIOA provides youth with work-based learning activities. The youth program encourages all youth in the program throughout the year to enter into a work experience if they do not have a job. The Upstate Workforce Board staff often speak in classrooms in the middle and high schools and encourage students to seek work-based learning activities. We also promote work-based learning when conducting career fairs in the schools.

➤ ***Increasing the formal assessment and provision of soft-skills training:***

SCDEW initially funded a pilot project with Clemson University. Our area does not recall receiving access to the program, even though state SCDEW staff assure us that local areas were informed. We are thinking maybe local SCDEW staff were informed, but our operator does not recall implementation of this program. The program through Clemson is currently on pause (as of December 31, 2020) for lack of utilization by the local areas. The Academy offered by Equus has a number of soft skills online courses to train on soft skills. Our current customers use this program. There is a test at the end of each module. While this program is adequate, we think there needs to be a more robust effort. Should the state be unable to resume or develop a program soon, the Upstate Workforce Board has plans to work with the private sector to develop a meaningful, current program. We plan to develop an employer-led and employer-validated soft skills training locally. This has been the primary area of concern for local Upstate businesses. As such, we need to quickly address resolving this problem in a formalized manner. While we do provide workshops that focus on soft skills, contextualization and assessment are lacking. We would ask SCDEW if they are developing such a program and when it might be available. In the alternative, we are happy to proceed in creating a current soft skills program and would be happy to make it available to SCDEW.

➤ ***Facilitating the development of career pathways and increasing co-enrollment across partner programs, as appropriate:***

Career pathways help workers acquire marketable skills and industry recognized credentials by encouraging greater collaboration across adult education, post-secondary education, talent development specialists, and community partners. Working towards career pathways begins as early as middle school for many youths. Local teachers and guidance counseling services start planting seeds of interest in the minds of students regarding all of the different pathways available, both locally and nationally. One way SC Works presently participates is through the Career Showcase held annually for 9th graders. This effort is led by Ms. Cherie Pressley through the Department of Commerce. We also have virtual reality

equipment to allow students to immerse themselves within various occupations to get a closer feel for what that work might be like. Such virtual reality technology is also quite responsive to current COVID-19 concerns. Various Upstate Workforce Board and SC Works staff also attend school career fairs and make classroom presentations, when possible, to provide training and/or workforce information to students.

Career Pathways can also be achieved by co-enrolling workforce partner participants into the WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Program's On-the-Job Training. Sometimes an employer already has the 'right' employee, and needs some help increasing their skills to stay within the framework of their occupation. This can be nicely accomplished through Incumbent Worker Training. The most important thing that SC Works can do is to help ensure that job seekers, the already employed or in-training people receive assistance in maintaining their pathway. These training, guidance and support services accomplish this goal.

Talent Development Specialists discuss all career pathway options with clients. They encourage clients to visit the www.SCPATH.ORG website to search for training providers and programs. The Talent Development Specialists also encourage customers to conduct LMI research based on their training program choice to ensure the job demand is present and they are setup for success. Also utilizing the Traitify Personality and Career Assessment helps point out personality traits and skills clients may not even be aware of. This serves to help guide the client to the appropriate career choice based on their talents and preferences.

When the Business Services Team meets with employers, they distribute a Career Pathway Template that may be completed to showcase the career pathways within their business. (See Attachment III-G for samples)

Co-enrollment with partners is very important across programs since we cannot address all barriers utilizing shrinking WIOA funds. Talent Development Specialists see partners for co-enrollment when assessing barriers to employment and training. Many customers are enrolled in more than just the WIOA program. The Upstate Workforce Board monitors client participation to ensure that SC Works staff are co-enrolling. We, of course, educate our partners in partner meetings so they make referrals to other partners in the system in order to remove barriers, employ and upskill the clients in all programs. This communication also makes everyone aware of new programs and/or grants received for activities that may be new. Another important effort on the part of our grantees and the Upstate Workforce Board is to ensure that we do not have duplication of services. This may be minimized if every partner is aware of what is already available in the community. A formalized referral process is in place for partner use.

A best practice

➤ ***Implement cross-program staff training to enhance service delivery to businesses and job seekers:***

The Upstate SC Works Local Operator participated on a state level ad hoc committee charged with the creation and implementation of SC Works 101. The SC Works 101 Training Program is designed to equip attendees working in the SC Works Centers or in the field. They provide services to jobseekers or businesses, with knowledge and understanding of the SC Works system to ensure that customers receive high-quality services each time they engage with the system. This cross-training is considered an important part of the workforce system. The training does go into the basics of partner roles and provides a pathway for co-enrollments when in the best interests of the customer. The SC Works One Stop Operator is responsible for tracking all partner staff in the assigning of the training and its completion.

Prior to COVID-19 affecting all operations in the country, the SC Works One Stop Operator conducted quarterly training for 'all hands'. This provides an opportunity for partners to discuss their programs for the benefit of all. Additionally, we had Able SC providing specialty training. This improves service sensitivity for the special community of individuals with disabilities. In April, we had Stephani Frese, Director, Division of Technical Services, SC Human Affairs Commission, provide a well-received Webex EO Training for all Upstate partners.

BST meets monthly to review the Upstate Workforce Board's employer service standards and to learn best practices from each other. Sector Strategy collaboration has increased greatly since our last four-year plan. Of course this involves some training of staff to better serve the employers.

➤ ***Streamline intake and referral processes:***

This objective and priority seem to assume that the process has not been streamlined to the extent possible under existing conditions. There are a number of reporting requirements which cause resistance to enrollment. We could better align and make the process work if there were less impediments to state and local areas working close together. Often, it appears as though there is a struggle to determine if the state is going to get the credit for the program. For example, local SCDEW staff work in correctional facilities or with local employers, without the local area being a part of that process. A solution would be to fold Wagner-Peyser services into local area responsibilities, to include the staff associated with those functions. The local SC Works Manager is supposed to have "functional management responsibility" for these Wagner-Peyser services. He is held accountable for the entire system. Sadly, the state is resistant to operationalize this level of responsibility. SC Works Management is prevented from hiring/firing and operational management decisions. This prevents him from having optimal customer satisfaction and quality.

Another area that virtually every area in the country routinely has problems is the referral process. Since federal DOL did not institute a particular system, it is left to states to develop the data systems employed by the major WIOA partners. There is no singular data system currently in use. SCWOS is the closest thing to it, but not all partners participate in SCWOS. Within each area's MOU/IFA, there are procedures established for referring customers to other partners, but these are not actively used by MOU partners. Many partners have their own forms and are not eager to change. What has proven to work the best, and ensure results, is for a partner needing to refer someone to another partner, they pick up the phone and contact them. Direct communication remains the best form.

The Business Services Lead was developed for the local areas to determine who would lead employer relations and activities locally. Understandably, some organizations are reluctant to allow the functional leadership the local area has determined would serve our local employers best. This can make it more difficult for the appointed Business Services Lead to fully meet both the employer and job seeker needs through the intake and referral processes. Our goal in the coming years is to facilitate a better understanding of the need for this continuity of leadership and representation.

Intake has been improved by better using the VOS Greeter. Expanding this role has served to save time, improve customer visitation statistics and provide a method to measure traffic flow for particular organizations.

➤ ***Developing strategies that increase access to reliable transportation, affordable housing and access to identification and vital records:***

In Spartanburg, there is a public bus transportation system within the City of Spartanburg. The buses do not go into the county where the bulk of the manufacturing and distribution center jobs exists. The buses also do not operate during the evening hours.

Two of the counties in the Upstate Workforce Area have no transportation options other than small cab companies. Uber and Lyft aren't at a volume of reliability in Cherokee and Union counties. In Union County, the County Government has been exploring options for transportation. In Cherokee County, the Chamber is embarking on addressing transportation shortages. In Spartanburg, the Spartanburg Chamber, United Way and SC Works have been planning a project utilizing Commute with Enterprise www.commutewithenterprise.com. There was a lot of momentum with the private sector on this initiative, but when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, this effort was put on hold. This will be revisited as soon as economic recovery improves. Transportation has been a topic that has been discussed for many years. If governments are not willing to invest in transportation, the only other way it can be resolved is through private sector funding or a combination of private/public partnerships/funding.

We have used Uber or Lyft for customers in emergency situations and will continue to use these options when necessary. We have also purchased bikes for customers when their work site was not too far from the individual's home. We encourage customers to discuss transportation sharing with co-workers either for their primary means of getting to and from work or as a back-up plan. In other areas of this document, transportation has been discussed. Our youth program, ACHIEVE, has vans and drivers to transport students to the program. Without these vans, we could not serve most low-income youth in the rural areas.

The City of Spartanburg suffers from a lack of affordable housing. As one moves farther out of the city, affordable housing options are more available. The United Way of the Piedmont has been focusing on these housing issues. The Upstate Workforce Board staff attended a housing event held by the City of Spartanburg and United Way to become educated on the shortage. There has been movement in the City of Spartanburg to build affordable senior housing. Currently, we try to convince individuals to upskill through education and on-the-job training so they earn more. In this way, folks can afford to pay more for the available housing stock. We do make referrals to Habitat and the Housing Authority.

Access to identification and vital records: This has not been much of an issue for the customers we serve. The ACHIEVE and SC Works staff members work closely with customers to secure these documents so they may be enrolled. Co-enrollment with other partners also helps WIOA customers with obtaining documents.

➤ ***Supporting industry-led, sector partnerships:***

- The March 2019 launch of the Manufacturing Sector Partnership – (Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Edgefield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Pickens, Saluda, Spartanburg, and Union) has provided a real-time tool to connect with industry leaders and support them as they develop communication strategies, talent recruitment strategies and skill specific requirements within certain occupations, such as maintenance technicians.

The Greater Upstate Manufacturing Sector Partnership is an industry-driven collaboration supported by partners in workforce development, education, and economic development, and made up of regional companies including Michelin North America, AWL, Century Printing, Norbord, and ZF Transmissions, to name a few. The collaboration is modeled after similar partnerships active in 17 states around the country.

In March 2019, the partnership identified two initial priorities to tackle as a group through focused and industry led action teams:

Talent Team: Build a talent pipeline through improved career awareness. The talent team has secured TALLO for a pilot marketing campaign targeting college non-completers. This campaign will run under the SC Future Makers brand and will not duplicate efforts. The team will also revisit recruitment needs for manufacturing post-COVID as the targeted talent pool target may change.

Middle Skills Team: Address technical skill gaps of entry level Maintenance Technicians. The middle skills team has unveiled the maintenance technician skills matrix, identified core competencies for curriculum and is working on the development of an exit assessment. The team will work with the Greater Upstate technical colleges to implement a shared curriculum.

The Steering Committee has placed marketing/branding, annual celebration and full partnership meeting planning, and a regional mask campaign on the agenda for the next leadership meeting.

- ***Sharing best practices across partner programs in order to increase awareness of partner services, promote a workforce environment of growth and continuous improvement, and support a system viewpoint.***

Prior to COVID-19, the SC Works Operator was conducting quarterly training with partners. During this time, partners would share information and best practices from their own organizations. The Operator consistently stresses a systems approach to all areas of the SC Works system. The Operator may begin scheduling the quarterly trainings via Zoom or Webex if partners are not willing to travel to the SC Works site.

The Upstate Workforce Board staff meet with the Greenville Workforce Board staff quarterly to share information and best practices. We also discuss more ways in which we can partner or cost share in an effort to save funding and staff time. The shared SC Works Operations Manager and Business Services Workforce Solutions Manager join us for a portion of our meeting to discuss the quarter's progress and to request any needed assistance. They also alert us to what they are hearing from customers during this meeting.

5. *A description of how the local board will work with core, required, and other partners, including economic development, to implement the strategies and services discussed in Question 3.*

See Section II details how we will work with all partners to implement strategies and services in Question 3 above. In summary:

- Hold regular partnership meetings with all partner programs on a monthly basis so that alignment of resources is maximized. This should include discussion on difficult cases;

- Hold Business Services Team meetings on a monthly basis to ensure that we do not duplicate contacts with businesses. Coordinate efforts with all partners in the hiring and screening process;
- Continually seek new partners that can help us meet the needs of our businesses and job seekers;
- Partnering with others for grants to enhance our services due to funding cuts;
- Build and utilize relationships to improve our services to customers;
- Continue training staff on racial equity and using our knowledge to make changes in our communities;
- Present cases to the Safety Net Council as needed to address the barriers that our customers have;
- In partnership with the Upstate Workforce Board's Disabilities Committee and the Spartanburg Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities, we will continue to educate businesses and community members about the importance of inclusion in the workplace for individuals with a disability;
- Hold outreach and recruitment sessions in the low-income and rural areas in our three counties; and
- Continue to convene groups to address issues in the communities. Ensure proper follow through on suggestions by setting goal dates and assigning individuals to these tasks.

Also, we plan increased outreach with appropriate messaging in the low income areas of our three county area. We cannot fully serve low-income individuals without the help of our partners as it takes all partners to address the barriers that many individuals may have.

We are looking to expand the eligible training provider list by researching trainings that are eligible for WIOA funds. Now that the performance reporting by training providers has been removed as a requirement, we know we can interest many more educational organizations into accepting WIOA clients for training.

The Upstate Business Services Team call on business customers to engage with our SC Works system. We do very well in this area, but are always looking to increase these relationships. We were disappointed with the lack of business surveys being completed so we brought this function to the Upstate Workforce Board office beginning July 1, 2020. We need to get feedback from our business customers (positive and negative). Our services must offer more than Indeed, Manpower, etc. If we are not properly screening applicants for businesses, then we are not needed for job posting. When surveys are received, we need to call and ask probing questions if there is a need to do so. This will ensure that we continually improve the services to businesses.

Economic Development: Two of the Upstate Workforce Board staff have completed the Economic Development School training conducted by the SC Department of Commerce. The Regional Director of Business Solutions has also

gone through the same training. As written earlier, our relationships with economic development entities is strong in our three-county area. Board members and the Upstate Workforce Board Director have served on some of these boards at various times. The Regional Director of Business Solutions is at the table when new industry is coming to the area in an effort to provide workforce availability support. Labor market information is also provided as needed.

The unemployment insurance (UI) program staff are not onsite in the centers. It has been several years since the UI staff were onsite. The recent COVID-19 crisis has shown us that there would be a great benefit to having unemployment insurance staff in the centers for face-to-face assistance. This would reduce customer angst initiated by busy lines, dropped calls, and less-than-satisfactory service per UI claimants. Other than having UI staff onsite, we do not know how to strengthen the partnership with UI since unemployment is conducted via online and call centers. This crisis has also highlighted the importance of the SC UI program in participating more financially in the operation of the SC Works centers, as during the first month of re-opening, 76% of customer traffic was related directly to UI services. During COVID-19, we were all forced to learn more than we wanted to know about the unemployment insurance system. Data entry into the system was cumbersome at best, impossible at worst. Not having local on-site services severely limited benefit enrollment, particularly for those without computer access or knowledge. Many creative "work-a-rounds" were required for helping folks to get their benefits. I believe many in the workforce business all learned a great deal from this experience. We have all learned that there is much room for improvement with the current system software.

The recent addition of the SC Works 101 Online Training course has provided a general overview of all partners in the SC Works workforce system and includes UI services.

If SCDEW has any suggestions on partnership strengthening in the UI area, we are open to suggestions.

6. A description of the Adult, DW, Youth assessment processes of soft-skills and subsequent provision of soft-skills training, including descriptions of formal tools or resources utilized.

Youth – the instructor in the ACHIEVE program provides offerings that go far beyond simple GED instruction. The program is committed to future/career/college aspirations of their students. Its Director uses a check list

to make sure students are completing their post-GED completion goals. Dealing with stress is a major issue for many of these GED students. The program has guest speakers come in who help the students understand conflict and help with ways to provide conflict resolution. They also openly discuss conflict resolution issues in class.

Further, clients work on cooperation through team-building activities and group work.

In Social Studies and in English, they get the students to think critically through leading and open ended questions. In reading, they dissect the material to determine if there is any information bias. They then learn to use those skills in everyday life. The following are also done:

1. WIN Soft Skills Assessment
2. End of the Work Experience Surveys are sent to the host employers to rate the student's soft skills on the job
3. Mock interviews
4. Workshops and lectures on soft skills, such as the one that is held by SC Works
5. Samples of thank you notes to employers for interviews etc. are in the student packet
6. Students are taught to write a cover letter
7. Written materials and booklets are used in life skills training. The "Rapid Guide to Job Hunting" is an excellent preparatory resource.

Adult/Dislocated Worker - As the current Adult/Dislocated Worker service provider in Upstate/Spartanburg, SC Works invites all WIOA participants and partner customers to attend center-sponsored workshops. During this time of COVID-19 impacts to center operations and partner availability, the Facilitators/Outreach Coordinators continue their work. They are providing job preparation skills training workshops virtually on *Get LinkedIn*, *Intensive Resumes*, *Interviewing for Success*, *Live Chat with SC Works*, *Personal Branding and Job Search Strategies*. Workshops such as Dress for Success and Networking will return when conditions allow.

Talent Development Specialists (TDS) utilize Career Pathway Explorer, a scientifically backed visual personality assessment designed to be completed in under two minutes. This helps to determine a customer's potential success in general occupations, and to identify skills the individual might need for training in various jobs. During the interview and application period, a TDS is with a customer. They are determining what soft skills would benefit an applicant. Depending on the individual, it might be determined that he/she has a work history that proves the customer is lacking in time management, or conflict management. A very

important soft skill that is often overlooked is the ability to communicate effectively. This basic skill deficiency identifies those needing further English learning assistance. As part of the suite of tools, SC Works offers The Academy, which provides thousands of courses, including opportunities to improve soft skills and career readiness. This platform includes the GED Academy and Money Essentials. A few of the courses that help participants improve their employability are Communication Skills, Communicating Across Cultures, Communicating with Professionalism and Etiquette, Handling Team Conflict, Critical Thinking and Conflict-Stress-Time Management. These courses are available to anyone with an internet connection. In the near future, SC Work will be providing access and recommended training strategies via the LinkedIn Learning platform, another online depository of thousands of courses to better prepare a job seeker for employment.

SCDEW initially funded a pilot project with Clemson University. Our area does not recall receiving access to the program, even though state SCDEW staff assure us that local areas were informed. We are thinking maybe local SCDEW staff were informed, but our operator does not recall implementation of this program. The program through Clemson is currently on pause (as of December 31, 2020) for lack of utilization by the local areas. The Academy offered by Equus has a number of soft skills online courses to train on soft skills. Our current customers use this program. There is a test at the end of each module. While this program is adequate, we think there needs to be a more robust effort. Should the state be unable to resume or develop a program soon, the Upstate Workforce Board has plans to work with the private sector to develop a meaningful, current program. We plan to develop an employer-led and employer-validated soft skills training locally. This has been the primary area of concern for local Upstate businesses. As such, we need to quickly address resolving this problem in a formalized manner. While we do provide workshops that focus on soft skills, contextualization and assessment are lacking. We would ask SCDEW if they are developing such a program and when it might be available. In the alternative, we are happy to proceed in creating a current soft skills program and would be happy to make it available to SCDEW.

7. A description of the strategies and services for employers that may include the implementation of initiatives such as Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs, On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers and support the local board's strategic vision and goals.

SC Works offers an array of services to local businesses in an effort to help maintain and grow business in Upstate South Carolina. Business services are a key element of the Upstate Workforce Board's operational plan. WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff

share an integrated job matching system named South Carolina Works Online System (SCWOS). One Stop partners utilize job listings and encourage their customers to register for work in SCWOS. Efforts to contact businesses and promote workforce development to employers are coordinated with the SC Works Regional Director of Business Services (in most cases). In addition to WIOA and Wagner-Peyser representatives, the business services team is comprised of representatives from multiple workforce agencies such as the Department of Social Services, SC Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education. In addition, local community colleges, vocational schools and industry specific associations participate on the business services team. SC Works Upstate business services team provides business services using an account executive approach which includes workforce partners. This limits duplication, leads to more collaboration, encourages shared responsibility and promotes success when followed by partners. Each business services team member receives cross-training via participating partnering agencies. This training includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Customer Service
- Employer Relations
- Job Posting
- Recruitment Events
- Job Fairs
- On-the-Job Training
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Registered Apprenticeships
- Regional Education Centers
- ReadySC
- SC Manufacturing Extension Partnership
- Work Experience
- WorkKeys and WIN
- Work Opportunity Tax Credits
- E-zone
- Federal Bonding
- Business Etiquette
- Workforce Board Plan and Goals
- Economic Development

Upon completion of all training, a Business Solutions certification is issued.

Partner services are included in the outreach and informational materials distributed to businesses. Also, HR Café sessions are offered in all three counties based on employer interest.

8. A description of how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional and economic development activities that are carried out in the local area, including how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

Economic Development: Two of the Upstate Workforce Board staff have completed the Economic Development School training conducted by the SC Department of Commerce. The Regional Director of Business Solutions has also gone through the same training. As written earlier, our relationships with economic development entities is strong in our three-county area. Board members and the Upstate Workforce Board Director have served on some of these boards at various times. The Regional Director of Business Solutions is at the table when new industry is coming to the area in an effort to provide workforce availability support. Labor market information is also provided as needed. More information on the regional efforts has been detailed in earlier portions of the plan.

Entrepreneurial: Referrals are made to the Small Business Development Centers serving the counties. See section one for the incubators located in our area to which we make referrals. SCORE is a non-profit association dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals through education and mentorship. Referrals are also made to this group. The Upstate Workforce Board Director serves on the Ten at the Top Board (TATT). TATT hosts the Upstate Entrepreneur Ecosystem Workshop monthly. This is a great source for small businesses or potential start-up businesses to obtain free information and training. There are very knowledgeable individuals serving on this group. They are a good resource for us to tap into to help customers interested in small business startup or growth.

Section IV: Program Design and Evaluation

1. A description of the SC Works delivery system in the local area, including:

- ***How the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers:***

Career Services are available to everyone in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. These services include workshops, job fairs, recruitment events, interviewing skills training, resume development, The Academy from Equus Workforce Solutions (web-based skills training) and basic computer skills training. Customers are introduced to all that is available to them through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). SC Works is able to provide funds, when available, for training/education for those who qualify. Customer needs and interests are assessed to target the precise steps required to obtain meaningful employment. Every effort is then made to provide very specific assistance to each customer based on their unique need (example of a specific need is purchasing eyewear needed so they can be successful in their educational training). Appropriate referrals are then made. Many local partners are available to further these services. Section III gives a more detailed description of just how the SC Works delivery system operates. Also, the attached Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement gives further detail on partner services and contributions.

The Upstate Workforce Board's Chief Operating Officer is the primary liaison for the WIOA service providers. This staff member meets with providers consistently to ensure WIOA compliance for the federal, state and local level requirements. Survey completion is encouraged and received from job seekers and employers. Any deficiency identified is immediately addressed. The Upstate Workforce Board requires the completion and submission of monthly dashboards on performance, events and community engagement. This dashboard is given to the corresponding Upstate Workforce Board committee with the grantee present for discussion. The SC Works Director also requires social media statistics be met.

Pre-COVID-19, the SC Works Operator held a "stand-up" meeting every morning at the beginning of the work day to share information. All on-site partners were invited to participate daily. The Operator looks forward to beginning these meetings again as soon as it is feasible.

Additionally, the Upstate Workforce Board Director holds quarterly grantee meetings. It is at these meetings that a review of instruction letters, policies and performance are reviewed for clarification. This time also allows grantees an opportunity to vent any frustrations they may have or report activities of concern.

During program year 2020, a monthly grantee meeting will occur. Ongoing training is provided to grantees upon request. The employees working for the grantees are also asked during monitoring if further training is needed. This ensures that a process of continuous improvement is in place.

The Upstate Workforce Board Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer formally monitor the programs funded by the Upstate Workforce Board on a yearly basis and a formal report is issued. Throughout the year, desktop monitoring is performed. Secret shoppers are hired to shop the services of our programs and formal reports are sent to the Upstate Workforce Board. At times, the shoppers may wear recording devices. This has proven to be the best method of checking the services of our programs and allows us to address any areas needing improvement. It also allows us to praise staff on what is working well.

The Upstate Workforce Board provides written instruction to WIOA service providers. The most recent instruction letters can be found at <http://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/local-instruction-letters>.

- ***How the local board will target rural communities, including facilitating increased access to services provided through the SC Works delivery system through the use of technology and other means;***

The local library systems have been a key way we have connected with the rural areas. There are 13 public library locations in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. The libraries normally have meeting space available. They serve as key access points for customers in remote areas. Trained library staff are able to assist the customers with computer access, information about SC Works and knowledge about community partners.

When COVID-19 occurred, things changed drastically as it relates to connection with job seekers, WIOA customers and employers. The following methods were used:

- ✓ Youth programs developed student packets with instructions for students to work from home much like the K-12 schools have done. Youth program staff stay in touch with the students via phone and email to ensure that they are staying on task and were available during regular hours for participant questions/assistance. Zoom meetings to offer instruction were hosted. They have also asked students to take online workshops offered by SC Works. The students have access to The Academy from Equus Workforce Solutions.
- ✓ SC Works Talent Development Staff used email and video Webex sessions to stay in touch with clients. A few new clients were even

registered into WIOA through remote means. Some customers switched to online classes rather than in-person classes. Some customers participated in online workshops.

- ✓ The WIOA staff person responsible for workshops scheduled and conducted them through Webex. SC Works staff have also provided WIOA orientations via Webex video sessions.
- ✓ Business Services Team staffers positioned themselves as a convener and provided information and resources in real time to the businesses in our area. They are now able to provide virtual employer workshops and virtual job fairs through a recently purchased platform that facilitates these services. Unfortunately, no such services were available through the SC Department of Employment and Workforce or the SC Works Online System that would adequately do what was needed to support a job fair in a professional and helpful manner. The first large scale virtual job fair was held May 7, 2020. Recruiting and matching services were provided virtually. Over 500 job seekers attended and over 40 employers had virtual booths. The event was a big success.
- ✓ The Greater Upstate Manufacturing Sector Partnership meets every two weeks via Zoom. This effort was founded by efforts of the WIOA staff. Business managers have found so much value in networking together that their meeting has gained a life of its own.
- ✓ IWT and OJT customers are served virtually.
- ✓ Meetings started being conducted via Zoom or Webex. Not requiring travel has likely improved participation.

Going forward, everyone now realizes that we don't have to be face-to-face to serve job seekers and businesses. We don't have to travel to go to a meeting. This may be a new way of doing business even after COVID-19 is eliminated. We see an increased use of technology for connecting with individuals, especially in the remote areas. This certainly will be a way we can case manage and converse with customers without them having to physically come to a center.

This crisis has also taught us that not all training must be in a classroom. Some individuals do fine with online classes. SC Works uses Facebook and Twitter to communicate important information about services, workshops and job fairs. SC Works through www.SCworks.org has a mobile app that allows customers to access information and services.

We hope to continue experimenting with virtual services and have a mix of in

person and virtual options for the customers. New technology will continue to emerge due to the COVID-19 crisis. We look forward to exploring all of these emerging options.

- ***How entities within the SC Works delivery system, including center operators and partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities:***

The Upstate WIOA programs provide services to all customers without regard to race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status. Quality services and effective communication to all customers are very important to the Upstate Workforce Board. To assure all accessibility requirements of Section 188 of the WIOA law are met, the Upstate Workforce Board staff schedule visits to service provider locations and make every effort to accommodate customers facing various challenges. A local instruction letter is in place that addresses the needs of customers who do not have English as their primary language <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/wia%2013-03%20amend%201.pdf>. This ensures that the Upstate Workforce Board meets the requirements of Limited English Proficiency customers. All enrolled customers receive a grievance handout that details their rights to services and how to file complaints, as necessary, against any organization not serving them according to those rights.

Recently, Assistive Technology in the Resource Rooms of each of SC Works Centers were updated to ensure vision impaired customers access to services. ZoomText is a software that brings advanced text magnification and powerful reading tools to a computer. Vision impaired customers' experience surfing the web, creating a document, or emailing. These features allow customers to use the computer applications more easily than ever before. Also, the Assistive Technology designated computer is equipped with such products as a large monitor, an adjustable table for wheelchair users, a modified keyboard, joystick, trackball and JAWS for reading text.

. Upon assignment, new staff (both operator and on-site partners) and volunteers receive training on the operations of the center and its many parts. The Resource Room equipment, along with its ADA assistive technology, are highlighted in this

training. Follow up refresher training is conducted, as deemed necessary, by the Comprehensive SC Works Center Manager and other center leaders.

As stated in the SC Works Certification Management Standards, “There are consistent expectations for physical infrastructure and facilities which includes accessibility of each SC Works Center so that all job seekers and business customers can fully participate in the services offered.” In an effort to provide staff training and support, the state EO staff provided training to local staff on serving customers with disabilities. When re-location of an SC Works Center is considered, compliance with ADA is of paramount concern. The Upstate Local Area contracted with Able SC to assure the accessibility of the new Cherokee facility a few years ago. The local EO officer also monitors to ensure accessibility to programs and facilities annually.

The Upstate Workforce Board’s Disabilities Committee reviews and provides information as needed to local service providers. This assists with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. This information may include issues relating to compliance with section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). It may also address programmatic and physical access to the services, programs and activities of the one stop delivery system. These interim communications may also address additional training for staff on providing support for accommodations as well as targeted ways for helping employers with accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

One function of the Disabilities Committee is to make recommendations to the full Upstate Workforce Board on its full range of disability access issues. It may suggest ways to facilitate the participation of customers with disabilities. This Committee can be flexible in its formulation and is intended to provide an effective means for participants with interests in this area to exchange ideas and develop recommendations for accessibility solutions. This will, in turn, enhance the board’s policy making on disability access issues. A board member of the Upstate Workforce Board chairs the Disabilities Committee. The Committee consists of board members appointed by the Upstate Workforce Board Chair and individuals within community partners that are appointed by the Disabilities Committee Chair.

The Disabilities Committee partners with organizations such as AbleSC, SC Vocational Rehabilitation, SC School for the Deaf and the Blind and SC Department of Employment and Workforce to provide disabilities training for the Upstate Workforce Board staff and service provider staff. Staff members of the other partners in our service area also benefit by the work of this committee. Topics covered include: understanding disabilities and the misconceptions that go along with them, hidden disabilities, hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities, etc. There is an upcoming training that is being planned for the Spring of 2021. This

will offer expertise to educators on guiding students with disabilities toward post-secondary training and careers. This training will be in partnership with the Regional Center for Educational Support and our 9 school districts.

SC Works staff attend the Safety Net meetings where tough cases may be shared with a group of providers. The goal is finding solutions. Predictably, many cases brought before the group are for individuals with disabilities.

- ***Identification of the roles and resource contributions of the SC Works partners.***

Core Partners include:

South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation

- For GED & High School Diploma, WIN Assessments
- Assistance with workforce development and training for individuals with disabilities

Job Corps

- Handles recruiting and application process to a Job Corps Center

Equus Workforce Solutions

- Adult and Dislocated Worker comprehensive services, supportive services, training and employment

SC Commission for the Blind

- Assistance with workforce development and training for blind individuals

SC Department of Employment and Workforce

- Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services, Unemployment Insurance, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Reemployment Services, Veterans programs, SCWOS

Able SC

- A change agent committed to fostering an inclusive society that empowers individuals with disabilities to live fully-engaged and self-directed lives. Able SC is an organization lead by individuals with disabilities that

challenges stereotypes, protects disability rights and champions social reform.

USC Upstate ACHIEVE

- Youth provider for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – serves youth ages 16-24 (detail in Section III, 2)

Adult Learning Center

- Receives adult education funding for GED instruction

Goodwill

- Senior Community Service Employment Program

Adult Education

- High School Diploma or GED instruction

Piedmont Community Actions

- Community Service Block Grant

SC Department of Social Services

- Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program and TANF

Spartanburg Community College

- Perkins Career and Technical Education

Spartanburg Housing Authority

- Housing Assistance

Indian Development Council

- Indian and Native American Program

We have many other partners such as United Way, SC Legal Services, Upstate Fatherhood Coalition, and many others in every county. Please also view our MOU/IFA (attachment) that is negotiated annually for more information on our partnerships.

In the Upstate Workforce Area, the SC Works Centers are operated by Equus Workforce Solutions. They were assigned this role based on the results of a competitive procurement process. They provide day-to-day support for SC Works System operations in all three locations. The SC Works Project Director provides strategic oversight to the entire system, regardless of where it is hosted or by whom it is managed. Several partner programs (see Section III and attachments for more detail) support infrastructure costs with cash support and/or with staff assistance in the centers. The remaining partners provide support in terms of electronic access to their services, periodically stationing personnel in the SC Works Centers, participation on the business services team and/or collaborating to plan and implement special projects and events.

2. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), career services are available to everyone. These services include workshops (such as interviewing skills, resume development, social media networking and basic computer skills) as well as job fairs and recruitment events. Other offerings include: The Academy by Equus Workforce Solutions (web-based skills training), assessments for referral to WIOA, WIOA Orientation, self-directed and staff assisted job searches and more. Funding is available for qualified individuals in need of additional education and training to upgrade their skills.

Individuals may be laid off due to a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN), business closing or substantial layoff. The state Dislocated Worker Rapid Response Department coordinates meetings and the local Director of Business Services presents information to these workers. These presentations include guidance about filing for unemployment compensation as well as familiarization with Workforce Information and Opportunity Act (WIOA) opportunities. The discussion includes methods to get the workers back into a job as quickly as possible.

SC Works program enrollment in the Adult category must use a “priority of service” method. This includes giving priority to those on public assistance, low income and those with basic skills deficiencies for enrollment into WIOA. The State Workforce Board requires that 70% of the individuals we serve fall into these categories. This requirement does serve to limit us from serving the needs of businesses when there is a very low unemployment rate. Many of the working poor tend to be just above the income threshold. Pre-COVID, there were more jobs than people to fill them. If the priority of service percentage were changed to 50% rather than 70%, we could fill more jobs with on-the-job training and place more individuals into college. Other partners can serve more of these lower income individuals until they are ready for training and higher level employment. If they are very low basic skills, they will not be able to attend post-

secondary training. Our performance measures are too high in the area of wages to place individuals in low-wage jobs for which they might be suited until their basic skills levels improve. Many states only require the 50% threshold. Having a 70% requirement makes sense if you have a high unemployment rate. But in a great economy with low unemployment, the needs of businesses should drive these types of decisions. This percentage threshold should be a decision made by the local workforce boards since they know their local economy and business needs. This flexibility is specifically allowed by the WIOA law and regulations. The needs of South Carolina would be well served if the State Workforce Board would allow this adjustment.

Adult and Dislocated Workers who are enrolled in WIOA are provided personalized assistance. They are assessed to determine their skill sets, employment history, previous education and goals in order to gauge their employability at a self-sufficient wage. In instances where a customer may have employment barriers such as a criminal history or need for a GED, guidance is provided to help address these needs. WIN and a Career Interest Profile are administered to all WIOA enrollees. With these assessment results, Talent Development Specialists provide individualized job coaching to help the customer identify their needs and establish employment goals. Together they build an individual employment plan.

If it is determined that the customer is in need of employment skills, a training track may be deemed necessary. Training is contextualized with regard to local labor market information and the Upstate Workforce Board approved training lists. The Upstate Workforce Board has set the training target to be for advanced manufacturing, construction, healthcare, logistics and IT. SC Works is approved to pay \$12,000 over a two-year period to train an individual. WIOA funds are “the last payer” and other forms of payment for which the client is eligible are applied first before WIOA funds are spent.

Upon completion of training, Talent Development Specialists continue to provide services such as career counseling, job referrals, mock interviews, resume review and other areas of support. This continues until the customer is employed.

Supportive services, based on verified customer need, are also available in the form of transportation assistance, emergency assistance, childcare reimbursement at a capped amount, etc.

3. A description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

The Upstate Workforce Board delegates local rapid response activities to SC Works. SC Works partners with the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) to offer rapid response services. Upon receipt of the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification, a collaborative meeting occurs to conduct fact-finding. This helps target the

most appropriate services for the company and employees. The SC Works staff members participate in management meetings and in group orientation sessions for the affected workers. By meeting with the affected worker group prior to the layoff date, SC Works employees are sometimes able to assist those individuals in obtaining employment *before* they need to draw unemployment insurance. SC Works often schedules job fairs for local companies who are hiring, and for the affected worker group before the layoff date. SC Works Upstate makes accommodations to ensure these services are given priority before layoff. We realize the importance of reaching out to individuals early in the process.

If it has been determined that the closure or significant layoff will have a great impact on the local area, additional state resources can be accessed. Under extreme circumstances, a temporary one-stop can be set up at the business to assist the affected workers.

In addition to rapid response services, the Upstate Workforce Board's designated Director of Business Solutions works closely with SCDEW to execute rapid response incumbent worker training grants used for layoff aversion. The Director of Business Solutions partners with the SC Manufacturing Extension Partnership staff to identify companies in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union counties that may be struggling and considering layoffs. Additionally, the Director of Business Solutions meets with local economic developers, ReadySC staff, and chambers of commerce staff to create awareness of the incumbent worker training program. This collaborative effort provides the best opportunity to identify struggling companies and offer a potential solution to turn the businesses around and ultimately avert layoffs.

Additionally, SC Works staff work to connect local companies together to decrease the cost of raw materials. Referring and building local business collaboration averts layoffs by decreasing the overall expenses and increasing profit for Upstate businesses.

4. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities.

We have one youth program for program year 2020. This is the USC Upstate ACHIEVE (Academic Challenges Helping Individuals Expand Values and Education) program. They focus specifically on the area's socially and economically vulnerable youth. The program serves Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. The program is a year-round program and does not take the summer off like some education programs. ACHIEVE serves 85 youth ages 16 – 24.

ACHIEVE operates a comprehensive, youth basic skills, pre-employment and employment program for school dropouts in need of obtaining a GED or out-of-school youth who need upgrading in basic skills. This training is done on-site, where ACHIEVE is co-located with SC Works Spartanburg in the Spartanburg Community College downtown campus. ACHIEVE has vans and van drivers that transport the students to and from their homes.

This is the primary reason the students are successful as many have no transportation options.

ACHIEVE is designed to help youth gain their full potential in education and employment, and to become productive citizens. The youth are assessed to determine their individual needs and receive personalized assistance while in the program. While academic skills are a main part of the program, intensive work readiness to identify career pathways, including occupational skills and post-secondary education for gainful employability, is the driving force.

ACHIEVE is required to serve youth with one or more of the required barriers to employment. Barriers include unemployment, offender status, runaway/foster care/homeless, disabled, pregnant/parenting and/or no driver's license. Over the years, ACHIEVE has worked with many youths with disabilities. Often, the disability is not documented and it is very difficult for ACHIEVE staff to obtain this information since the student has been released from the secondary schools. For several years, the disability documentation could be obtained from the schools, but HIPAA privacy regulations changed this. Further, students are reluctant to disclose a disability. It might be behavioral, dyslexia, ADHD, etc. Many students come to ACHIEVE because they have been expelled from high school or are referred by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The Adult Education partner places a staff member at the site of ACHIEVE. She serves as one of two GED instructors for the program. This is a great partnership. This instructor provides the students with core GED preparation and basic skills upgrading. Students receive on-site classroom and individualized instruction in reading, writing and math skills. The instructor must have the ability to figure out how each student learns and adapt instruction to that student. This is the reason they failed in high school. They did not get the necessary, individualized instruction based on their ability. It has always been the philosophy of the program that activities can be planned accordingly and re-evaluated as necessary to accommodate the needs of the student (and the student's disability). The youth have access to the ADA stations located at SC Works centers. The staff rely on guidance from the Upstate Workforce Board and the experience of SC Works partners in providing any other accommodations that may be required. Student success is the goal of all partners.

Many community partner programs are available in the Upstate Workforce Area that serve youth. We often receive and make referrals to these organizations. In the following link, there are several organizations listed that help individuals which include youth in the area. <https://uwpiedmont.galaxydigital.com/agency/>

The Upstate Workforce Board works closely with Project Search and serves on their Business Advisory Council. Project Search is a high school transition program that ensures career readiness for students in special education programs. This program is different in that it is a school-to-work program that takes place entirely at work during the student's senior year of high school. Spartanburg County District Six partners with the Spartanburg

Regional Healthcare System to provide internship opportunities for their students. SC Vocational Rehabilitation provides students with job coaching. During the year, students intern with three different departments, gaining valuable work experience that can lead to employment. The Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director and a past Upstate Workforce Board Member introduced the program to Spartanburg leaders through a convened meeting for the purpose of getting a Project Search site in the Upstate. It was the first in South Carolina. Now, there are many Project Search sites in South Carolina mostly modeled after the Spartanburg program. Sadly, the Upstate Workforce Board staff have not been able to perform co-enrollment into the Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act programs as SCDEW/DOL does not recognize the training as a legitimate training for the Eligible Training Provider List. This co-enrollment would be very beneficial to the students as many are in need of transportation help throughout the year in addition to help with transitional employment. We have been able to help some students with transportation in the past through our non-profit, the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation.

5. A description of how the fourteen youth program elements are integrated in program design, including a description of partnerships or formalized agreements in place for the provision of program elements not provided by the local program.

ACHIEVE either has the elements available from their program or they have a memorandum of agreement on file with all partners providing any of the requisite fourteen elements. The ACHIEVE Director provides the list of the partnering agencies to the Upstate Workforce Board office no later than the end of the first quarter of each program year.

The Fourteen Elements:

1. Tutoring & study skills leading to the completion of the GED: ACHIEVE provides GED instructional training and basic skills upgrading for high school dropouts or those lacking basic skills. Students receive classroom and individualized instruction in reading, writing, math, science and social study skills. Those on a GED track continue until they achieve a functional grade level high enough to take the GED exam. ACHIEVE students also take the GED Ready tests. This is a great tool and the ACHIEVE instructors use it to determine if students are going to test well on the GED exam. Once that level is attained, ACHIEVE schedules them for the GED exam. If the student fails any part of the GED, they continue in the classroom until they are ready to retake the GED. GED instruction is held four days per week for four hours per day. Morning and afternoon classes are offered. Additionally, ACHIEVE partners with Cherokee and Union Adult Education to provide their students with comprehensive career readiness while students work on their GED/High School Diploma.
2. Youth Alternative Secondary School Services: The ACHIEVE program is an alternative program.

3. Occupational Skills Training: Occupational skills training must be offered to students on-site at ACHIEVE or at a local training provider location. Each student will be given the opportunity to choose from curriculums that meet their interests. Upon completion of the training, a certificate will be kept on file. The training must meet the SCDEW/DOL definition of a degree/certificate. Some of the trainings offered during program year 2020 are fork lift certification, certified nursing assistant, phlebotomy certification, CellBotics, CDL and NCCER. NCCER is a national certification recognized nationwide. Please see <https://www.nccer.org/workforce-development-programs/credential-registry> .
4. Work Experience: Granted funds may be used to pay stipends for work experiences in the public or private sectors. The ACHIEVE staff will maintain appropriate paperwork on all work-based activities. Work experiences should not exceed 480 hours.
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster: While customers are attending classes, and usually after receiving pre-employment (work readiness training), they may engage in occupational skills training. These types of training activities may lead to an attainment of a degree/certificate and may result in a work experience and continue to employment. Where possible, customers will be grouped into cohorts, depending on occupational interests, for educational services, related workforce readiness and industry-specific training.
6. Youth Leadership Development Services: Leadership development includes tours of community colleges, local colleges and universities, field trips to cultural events, a guest speaker program and a life/work skills training component. The life/work skills training component provides students with the opportunity to participate in community service projects as well as help them to develop and/or enhance communication skills vital to success in the workplace. Community involvement and a sense of civic responsibility are also fostered through group projects and volunteer opportunities. Past projects have been held at Mobile Meals and the Soup Kitchen, and included activities such as volunteering in food drives and helping to set up projects for community agencies.

All leadership development opportunities are developed in conjunction with each county's appropriate agencies through linkages. These activities are designed to be fun, informative and motivational while meeting pre-determined, measurable outcome expectations.

7. Supportive Services: Supportive services for customers are offered in the areas of transportation, childcare, educational fees, work clothing, assistance with toiletries

and household needs and any other funded service that may be needed to remove a barrier and promote educational and employment activities. Supportive services are also offered through partnering agencies.

8. Youth/Adult Mentoring: ACHIEVE provides adult mentoring through job shadowing and worksite supervisors, tutors and community organizations for those individuals determined to be in need of adult guidance through initial assessment. United Way is the partner that mentors the students on financial matters.
9. Follow Up: ACHIEVE follows up not less than twelve months after the completion of participation, as appropriate. This follow up is done via phone, email, text or social media options. Information obtained in these post-program contacts may be used to make program adjustments.
10. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling: This may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referrals through alcohol and drug abuse recovery agencies. Any needed behavioral counseling may be done through the Department of Juvenile Justice. Academic and career counseling services are provided to all customers. Mental health counseling is offered to all customers and is provided to interested customers at intervals deemed appropriate by the staff. These mental health referrals are offered to customers needing assistance outside of the scope of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services. It would be very beneficial if the youth program could actually pay for immediate psychiatric counseling for some of the students. Tragically, we have had several students commit suicide over the years. Our programs continue to work with community partners to identify and recruit eligible customers who will benefit from all aspects of our services. These partners include DSS, local school districts, Birth Matters, Safe Homes Rape Crisis, The Forrester Center, SC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and many others. These have been lead partners for providing information on pregnancy counseling, sex abuse counseling, domestic violence counseling, bullying counseling, etc. ACHIEVE was able to secure a licensed therapist through a non-WIOA grant to provide behavioral counseling to the students.
11. Financial Literacy Education: Carolina Foothills Federal Credit Union provides financial literacy classes for the ACHIEVE program students. They also provide financial counseling as a follow up to the classes. Topics may include developing and following a workable budget, establishing and monitoring credit, choosing a checking and savings account, planning for large expenditures and maintaining appropriate insurance. Attention is also given to planning for costs associated with post-secondary education and training.
12. Entrepreneurial Skills Training: This is a part of the pre-employment and career pathway training to acquaint customers with owning one's own business. Workshops

are provided in partnership with local businesses and non-profit organizations and focus on researching the market, creating a business plan and securing and managing finances.

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling and career exploration services: A Career Development Specialist/Job Coach ensures that students have access to the most up-to-date labor market information pulled from the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition into post-secondary education and training: Services are provided through a series of workshops and field trips designed to explore post-secondary options, arrange financing and create a plan to implement enrollment. Additional services, especially those related to financial aid and scheduling, may be provided through one-on-one case management. The Upstate Workforce Board staff are also available to speak to classes.

6. *If using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), what is the LWDAs policy that further defines how to determine if a youth is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. If your area continues to use TABE for determining youth basic skills deficiency, a local policy is not required.*

ACHIEVE utilizes the TABE tests to determine basic skills deficiency.

7. *A description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.*

All individuals without a high school diploma or GED are referred to Adult Education, the Adult Learning Center or USC Upstate ACHIEVE.

Individuals may take the practice tests at www.wincrsystem.com. They choose the assessment they want/need to practice on: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information and/or Reading for Information. Unlike WorkKeys, WIN does not have the same remediation offerings.

Anyone needing help with FAFSA is helped by SC Works, ACHIEVE, Upstate Workforce Board staff or referred to other agencies that will help them.

SC Works and the Upstate Workforce Board employees participate in career fairs in the middle and high schools and speak in classrooms about careers in the area. We also speak about the importance of post-secondary education. We have presentations that were

developed in-house. We are also able to do manufacturing simulation and make extensive use of virtual reality technology.

With our comprehensive SC Works One Stop co-located with the Spartanburg Community College, it allows us to showcase the college and provide tours to interested individuals. We also conduct several recruiting events at the site. The Director of Advanced Manufacturing from Spartanburg Community College has a seat on the Upstate Workforce Board. This greatly enhances inter-program coordination.

The ACHIEVE youth program students participate in field trips to colleges in the area. SC Works, ACHIEVE and the Upstate Workforce Board employees stand ready to speak to any group about the importance of secondary education completion and post-secondary education and show the increase in earnings based on educational attainment.

We also partner with the SC Department of Commerce's local Regional Center on a Career Showcase held yearly for all 9th grade students in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. This showcase may serve up to 4,500 9th grade students and has approximately fifty businesses on-site showcasing their products, work culture and jobs. Several colleges also have booths. This was held at the Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium last October (2019). Due to COVID-19, we are working with the Regional Center Director to hold the event virtually this year using our Virtual Job Fair platform. SC Works and the Upstate Workforce Board staffers help with this event each year.

A STEM summer camp has been held each year at Sims Middle School in Union. There are approximately 12 students in the camp each year. There is a focus on STEM subjects and STEM careers. Students tour colleges and businesses. Due to COVID-19, we were not able to organize the program this year, but plan to start back next year. Funds are raised from businesses and local governments to pay for the costs of the program.

KNOW(2) is a non-profit in Cherokee County with a focus on secondary education completion and post-secondary attainment. This organization was formed from the Cherokee County Community Indicators work started by the Upstate Workforce Board in partnership with United Way of the Piedmont. The Upstate Workforce Board Director is an officer/board member of this vital educational support organization.

The Upstate Workforce Board Director is an officer and board member of the USC Upstate Foundation. This foundation awards several scholarships each year to local high school students.

The Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation (UWFC) is a non-profit that was started in 2010 to support the work of the Upstate Workforce Board. The Upstate Workforce Board Director is a board member and officer. This board raises funds for workforce development projects which are not funded by WIOA. Each year, the UWFC gives scholarships to local students in memory of a past Upstate Workforce Board Member,

Mr. Danny E. Allen. Mr. Allen helped form the non-profit. This organization partnered with several entities to provide Virtual Reality related to STEM careers.

There are other examples in other parts of this document.

8. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation, child care, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

In the Upstate, we have had a long standing problem with the lack of affordable/available transportation. Individuals in outlying areas and rural counties cannot get to jobs and education. These people were needed in the workforce when we were under 5% unemployment. Once recovery occurs, we believe there will be more private-sector led transportation efforts in the area to address this need for workers and learners. Commute with Enterprise is an option that was being considered pre-COVID-19 (<https://www.commutewithenterprise.com>). The Economic Futures Group/Spartanburg Area Chamber, SC Works Director of Business Solutions, United Way and private businesses were considering this partnership utilizing Enterprise. Per their website, it reads "Commute with Enterprise remains committed to helping your workforce move forward. As an essential service provider, Commute with Enterprise is staying open to serve customers who rely on us to get employees to and from work - including those who are on the front lines of relief efforts."

The Upstate Workforce Board has used Uber and Lyft in some cases for transportation for customers to solve emergency transportation, last minute issues. Transportation solutions are definitely a focus for the Upstate Workforce Board as well as many partnering programs.

The SC Works Talent Development Specialists have been able to solve most childcare problems in the past except those related to individuals working on the 2nd or 3rd shifts. When COVID-19 hit, this changed when childcare centers closed. We fear this may continue to be a problem. We do not have a solution for this, but will work with other community leaders to address any problems in this area. The Talent Development Specialists work closely with DSS on childcare vouchers. They also work closely with other partners on support services. The Upstate Workforce Board has issued an instruction letter for supportive services <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/R17-02%281%29.pdf>.

9. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the SC Works delivery system.

Partnership meetings occur monthly and at those meetings, challenges are discussed. Partners also discuss any new grants/programs. Partners tend to work well together on

most identified issues. Not all of the partners use the SC Works Operating System (SCWOS), so there is duplication. This will not change unless the Governor requires that all agencies performing workforce activities use one single system. The State Workforce Board is now considering Zip Recruiter. If SC Works is to use both systems, this will complicate matters even more. We do feel Zip Recruiter would probably be much more user friendly than the current SCWOS. Having a single, designated system will be most helpful. The Upstate Workforce Board's designated Director of Business Solutions oversees the function of the Business Services Team for the SC Works system.

In the past, this has been challenging when individuals do not follow her lead. In an effort to avoid duplication with WIOA and Wagner-Peyser, the Business Services Solutions Manager, at times, comes to the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation for help with funding to address an immediate issue for the business customer(s). At other times, we use another community partner in order to react quickly. Mostly, when this occurs, it is an issue from the Columbia SCDEW office and not a local decision by SCDEW staff. These cases do not happen often, but they do occur and we've had to work around the barriers when they cannot be solved by partner staff. We have to do what is needed to serve the business customers in a timely manner. These types of challenges will never be totally avoided until the Wagner-Peyser staff are fully under the SC Works Operator which is now allowed by USDOL (see <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=ETA-2019-0004-0001>). If you can't hire and fire staff, you cannot have optimum quality, customer services and processes. Responsibility and authority must go together. This lack of coordination for business services leaves the Business Services Workforce Solutions Manager and One Stop Project Manager with complete responsibility, but with little authority over partner staff actions. You would never see such a dysfunctional set up like this one under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in the private sector. It just does not work well. *We strongly encourage the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) Director to consider this staffing flexibility that is now allowed by the US Department of Labor. It would mean a reduction in staff for SCDEW and improve the system.*

In addition to our core, required and optional partners, there are many other community partners. We seek out partners that help us solve problems in serving those seeking services whether it is an individual in need of work or training, or a business in need of workers or other services. We have worked with the United Way, Northside Development Group, HR associations, Regional Centers under the Department of Commerce, chambers, economic developers and many more organizations to address workforce challenges.

10. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under the WIOA Title II, including how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA requirements.

The adult education partners work very well with the Upstate workforce development system. Cross referrals occur often between adult education providers and the other partners in the SC Works system. Spartanburg County Adult Education and the Adult Learning Center are core partners. Spartanburg Adult Education provides an instructor for the ACHIEVE program. The Directors of the Adult Learning Center and Spartanburg County Adult Education are both on the Upstate Workforce Board. The Cherokee County Adult Education Director rotated off the Upstate Workforce Board on June 30, 2020 and is now a staff person in the USC Upstate ACHIEVE program.

The Upstate Workforce Board (UWB) participated in the last Adult Education Application Review process. We were able to secure UWB member volunteers. We are not sure what the process will be this time. The last review was cumbersome and the SC Department of Education realized this and plans changes for this round of reviews. We will once again ask for Upstate Workforce Board members to participate with Adult Education on the review process once they issue the instructions.

11. A description of how the local board will coordinate with partner programs to conduct affirmative outreach to include members of groups protected by the Equal Opportunity provisions of WIOA § 188, including individuals of various religions, racial and ethnic backgrounds, individuals of limited English proficiency, individuals with disabilities, and individuals of different age groups and sexes.

The Upstate Workforce Board members and staff serve on various boards in the three county area. Many of those organizations, on which they serve, are providing outreach to individuals listed in the question above. As members of those boards, we are able to provide information about all of the programs in our workforce system. Some examples:

Board Member, Mr. Craig Jacobs serves on the Charles Lea Center Board. The Charles Lea Center provides services that enhance the quality of life for approximately 1,600 children and adults in Spartanburg County with intellectual disabilities and/or chronic medical conditions. The Charles Lea Center also has a worksite for adults.

Board Member, Mr. Bill Brasington is the Director of the Adult Learning Center. The Adult Learning Center provides GED instruction and English for Speakers of Other Languages. Many of his students have limited English proficiency and come from different racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Mr. Brasington is a core partner in the workforce system and is able to make referrals to partners in the system as he is knowledgeable of other partner offerings.

Upstate Workforce Board staff, Ms. Ann Angermeier and Ms. Nikoya Shaw serve on the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities in Spartanburg. This group focuses on advocacy and outreach to the disabled. There is an annual Walk and Roll event with hundreds of disabled individuals attending from Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. SC Vocational Rehabilitation is a key partner with this event.

The SC Works Center in Union is located at the Union Carnegie Library. Being at this site allows us to provide outreach to the customers visiting the library which consists of individuals listed in the question above. The Union Carnegie Library often promotes our services.

The Upstate Workforce Board's Disability Committee is chaired by Upstate Workforce Board Member and Director of the Bryant Center of SC Vocational Rehabilitation, Ms. Jennie Thomas. She is very knowledgeable of the services offered and shares the information with her clients. The Upstate Workforce Board staff have spoken to her clients in groups on many occasions.

Board Chairman, Mr. Wade Ballard is heavily involved with the Spartanburg Human Resources Association and is on the board of the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Ann Angermeier serves on the KNOW(2) Board in Cherokee County. This group focuses on five key areas of the community. The Director of KNOW(2), Ms. Teresa Spires participated in this plan review. She also is able to share information about the services we provide at the grassroots level. The Neighborhood Ambassador of KNOW(2), Carol McFadden often asks SC Works to step in and help with mock interviews, job fairs, etc. for those from low income neighborhoods.

Upstate Workforce Board staff member, Ms. Dana Wood is a Board Member of the Spartanburg Community College Foundation. In this role, cross referrals can occur among the students and the SC Works system.

Board Member, Evander Thomas is involved with Brothers Restoring Urban Hope, Inc. This mentoring organization has served over 4,700 individuals since 2005. They work with youth on job preparedness, academics, physical health, emotional maturity, social competence and communication skills. Mr. Thomas is currently the Upstate Workforce Board's Youth Committee Chair. He also is a past participant in a youth program.

Ms. Ann Angermeier serves on the USC Upstate Foundation Board, Spartanburg Community College Tyger River Campus Advisory Board, the Career and Technology Education Board for District Five Schools, the Spartanburg Network for Racial Equity, the Northside Development Corporation Advisory Board, the Ten at the Top Board, member of Spartanburg Rotary and much more. Through all of these organizations, she has a chance to be constantly looking for outreach opportunities.

The above are just a few of the connections we have through staff and Board members.

The Upstate Workforce Board staff and the two funded WIOA programs held several meetings in the Spartanburg public housing complexes as a way to recruit individuals for

training and employment. Once COVID-19 has eased, we plan to continue with these efforts. We are also planning outreach in the outermost rural areas in all three counties. The staff are often guest speakers at civic clubs, school events and for other community events.

Section V: Operations and Compliance

- 1. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local SC Works system. This includes agreements between the local board or other local entities with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, such as the cross-training of staff, technical assistance, the use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination:***

The SC Works Business Plan was attached in an earlier section. This gives some information on cross training of staff.

Attached is attachment V-A which is an executed agreement between the Upstate and Greenville Workforce Boards on the sharing of staff resources.

Also attached are the Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement with Partners – Attachment V-B

The local instruction letter, in the below links, describes the technical assistance request process. In addition to this, Upstate Workforce Board staff ask if grantee staff need any training during grantee meetings and when monitoring -

<https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/18-10.pdf> and
<https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/Req%20for%20TA.pdf>

Earlier in this document, we described how staff/partners are cross trained on ADA assistive equipment so they may serve all customers with disabilities.

Businesses must sign Incumbent Worker Training and On-the-Job Training agreements. Those templates are issued by SCDEW to the local boards.

Avenues used to share information is primarily through social media, the monthly dashboards (<https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/sc-works-upstate>), grantee meetings, partnership meetings and job fair notices.

- 2. A description of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the chief elected official(s):***

The Upstate Workforce Board chose Spartanburg County as the fiscal and administrative agency for the WIOA federal funds. This was also approved by the local elected officials in Cherokee and Union counties. Spartanburg County has the lowest indirect cost rate of all workforce board administrative entities in the state of South Carolina. The Upstate Workforce Board Director reports to the Board first and then to the County Administrator

as a Department Head for Spartanburg County. All Upstate Workforce Board staff are on the payroll of Spartanburg County with the exception of any temporary staff. Temporary staff are on the payroll of a temporary agency when they are hired as it is usually for short-term projects.

3. A description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities:

The Upstate Workforce Board follows the procurement policy of Spartanburg County. The procedure is as follows:

<https://www.spartanburgcounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/1721/Procurement-Ordinance?bidId=>

- \$50,000 and above: Must receive the approval from Spartanburg County and Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director. Our two program grantees would fall under this procurement. A non-mandatory, pre-bid conference is scheduled prior to the due date for the proposals. This procurement is done by sealed bid, but the lowest bid does not necessarily have to be awarded. When procuring for grantees to run our SC Works One Stop, the One Stop Committee has the responsibility for reviewing proposals and making a recommendation to the full Upstate Workforce Board. The Youth Committee is responsible for reviewing proposals for youth program funding and making a recommendation to the full Upstate Workforce Board. There is an appeal procedure.
- \$10,000 and above: Must receive sealed bids in response to a written request, awarded to the lowest bidder. Must also have approval of the Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director.
- \$5,000 and above: Must receive SCDEW approval for equipment. Must also have approval of the Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director.
- \$2,500 to \$9,999: Must receive 3 quotes, awarded to the lowest bidder. Must also have approval of the Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director.
- \$1,000 to \$2,499.99: Must receive 2 quotes.
- \$250 to \$999.00: Requires written approval in advance (email permitted) by the Associate Director.
- Under \$250: Processed by the Upstate Workforce Board CFO.

4. Agreed upon local performance goals after negotiations are finalized:

PY20 and PY21 goals are below:

WIOA TITLE I – ADULT	Program Year 2020 Goal	Program Year 2021 Goal
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	78.20%	78.70%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	76.00%	76.50%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,379	\$6,429
Credential Attainment Rate	65.00%	65.50%
Measurable Skill Gains	49.50%	50.50%
WIOA TITLE I – DISLOCATED WORKER	Program Year 2020 Goal	Program Year 2021 Goal
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	81.10%	81.60%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	78.00%	78.50%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,400	\$7,400
Credential Attainment Rate	60.00%	60.50%
Measurable Skill Gains	48.00%	48.50%
WIOA TITLE I – YOUTH	Program Year 2020 Goal	Program Year 2021 Goal
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 2 nd Quarter After Exit	78.50%	79.00%
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 4 th Quarter After Exit	72.00%	72.50%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd Quarter After Exit	\$2,252	\$2,252
Credential Attainment Rate	71.50%	72.00%
Measurable Skill Gains	35.00%	35.50%

5. A description of actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce area, including:

- ***The effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the local board will implement to assess their one-stop centers*** – The Upstate Workforce Board has its Chief Operating Officer (COO) in direction over the WIOA service providers/grantees. The providers consistently meet with the COO to ensure WIOA compliance at the federal, state and local levels. SC Works receives survey results monthly from job seekers and WIOA customers. Beginning in program year 2020, the business surveys are conducted and received by the Upstate Workforce Board staff. This was necessary as no employer surveys were coming in for job postings and screenings except when specific recruiting events occurred. At the recruiting events, the Director of Business Services would ensure that surveys were completed. The results of surveys are reviewed and changes are made to the system processes as needed. Secret shoppers are used periodically to ‘shop’ the services of the programs. This has proven to be the best method of monitoring the customer service, processes and outcomes of the customers.

Each WIOA grantee submits monthly dashboards that reflect relevant program information. The dashboards give the Upstate Workforce Board the ability to observe trends and see a monthly snapshot of the services provided. Any areas of concern are immediately addressed. The dashboards provide performance information above the WIOA required performance measures.

Grantee meetings are held to have discussion on program services and customers. During this time, technical assistance may be requested. At times, the Upstate Workforce Board staff may detect a training need based on dialogue with the program staff.

The youth program grantee conducts customer surveys sporadically with their customers. Upon exit of the program, students give feedback for improvement or make suggestions.

The Upstate Workforce Board’s Executive Director issues numbered instruction letters to the two programs as needed to communicate changes and updates. The link to those letters is below.

<https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/local-instruction-letters>.

- ***A description of fiscal and program performance goals beyond the federal measures and how progress will be tracked and made publically available*** – See the above answer to previous question. Dashboards are posted on the Upstate Workforce Board website. They are also reviewed in the One Stop Committee, Youth Committee and Upstate Workforce Board meetings and these meetings are open to the public. The Upstate Workforce Board staff also require that success stories be published.
<https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/news>.
 - In addition to the above the local area tracks the following measures monthly to ensure the requirement is met annually.

- Participant Cost Rate Policy (LWDAs expected to meet a minimum participant cost rate of 30%). This measure was impacted in PY19 by COVID-19. We anticipate the same for PY20.
 - Obligation Rate Policy (LWDAs to obligate 80% of the program portion of current allocation)
 - Fund Utilization Policy (LWDAs required to have a minimum 70% fund utilization rate)
 - Priority of Service (LWDA is required to serve 70% low income and/or Basic Skills Deficient). This requirement is higher than the federal law requires and impacts us to be able to work individuals already working that are interested in promotions or skill upgrades.
- ***A description of the methodology used by the local board to allocate SC Works center infrastructure funds*** – The Upstate Workforce Board utilizes the square footage methodology for allocating infrastructure costs of the SC Works center. The Infrastructure Funding Agreement is a plan to fund the costs of the operations of the one stop system. Partners enter into an agreement to support the cost of shared services and jointly occupied facilities. The square footage methodology classifies space based on its purpose and reasonable methods of determining each partner’s proportionate share. The three types of space are sole, public assess resource room and common space.

Cost allocation among partners shall meet the WIOA regulations, Federal Uniform Guidelines, state rules and policies. This agreement is modified annually. Some shared costs may include:

- ✓ Rental space
 - ✓ Copier costs
 - ✓ Phone and internet services
 - ✓ Information and technology maintenance
 - ✓ Office supplies
- ***A description of the roles and contributions of SC Works partners, including cost allocation*** - this description is detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement plan which has been included as an attachment. Infrastructure costs related to the operation of the SC Works Upstate Center are currently allocated among partners who either occupy the facilities or make use of the facilities. The cost of rent, phones, etc. is divided based on the square footage method by which each partner is apportioned their part of the costs. This is based on the blend of the amount of space they actually occupy within each center and the number and variety of customers served or usage time for the facilities.
 - **Core Partners include:**

South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation

- For GED & High School Diploma, WIN Assessments
- Assistance with workforce development and training for individuals with disabilities

Job Corps

- Handles recruiting and application process to a Job Corps Center

Equus Workforce Solutions

- Adult and Dislocated Worker comprehensive services, supportive services, training and employment

SC Commission for the Blind

- Assistance with workforce development and training for blind individuals

SC Department of Employment and Workforce

- Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services, Unemployment Insurance, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Reemployment Services, Veterans programs, SCWOS

Able SC

- A change agent committed to fostering an inclusive society that empowers individuals with disabilities to live fully-engaged and self-directed lives. Able SC is an organization lead by individuals with disabilities that challenges stereotypes, protects disability rights and champions social reform.

USC Upstate ACHIEVE

- Youth provider for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – serves youth ages 16-24 (detail in Section III, 2)

Adult Learning Center

- Receives adult education funding for GED instruction

Goodwill

- Senior Community Service Employment Program

Adult Education

- High School Diploma or GED instruction

SC Department of Social Services

- Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program and TANF

Spartanburg Community College

- Perkins Career and Technical Education

Spartanburg Housing Authority

- Housing Assistance

Indian Development Council

- Indian and Native American Program

6. *A description of how adult and dislocated worker training services will be provided through the use of individual training accounts (ITAs), including:*

- ***If contracts for training services will be used*** – The Upstate Workforce Board’s SC Works WIOA program primarily utilizes the training services from the eligible training provider lists and issues individual training accounts, not contracts. The exceptions are on-the-job training contracts, incumbent worker training contracts, work experience agreements and transitional job agreements. The maximum expenditure amount for any combination of training that SC Works staff may approve is \$12,000, excluding supportive services. Requests for exceptions to these requirements or limits require a completed waiver request form, to be signed and approved by the Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director, but cannot exceed \$14,000. It is rare to have a cost exceeding the \$12,000 limit. The instruction letter on this is located at <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/R17-07.pdf>

The ACHIEVE youth program may have signed agreements with training providers based on the student’s interests such as fork lift certification/training, CellBotics training, certified nursing assistant, MSSC, etc.

- ***How the use of training service contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs*** – we do not use training service contracts other than those listed above. Should an individual complete training through the use of the individual training account (ITA) and then be placed in on-the-job training, the Project Accountant will ensure that the customer’s training costs do not exceed the ITA limit. Equus Workforce Solutions staff utilize a financial reporting system that tracks all costs associated to the participant. Training providers must upload their trainings on the eligible training provider list and sign a memorandum of agreement with SCDEW in which the providers agree to supply data about themselves and their programs. Once the customer selects the training desired from the eligible training provider list, their assigned Talent Development Specialist creates their ITA under the established guidelines.

- ***How the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided*** – The One Stop Operator’s Talent Development Specialists will review training options with customers. Customers may make an informed selection of their training program through the www.scpaath.org site. The assigned Talent Development Specialist must feel confident that the individual has the basic skills and ability to complete the training program.

The Upstate Workforce Board engages with as many training providers as possible directly. This ensures that information pamphlets, points-of-contact, presentations and other information shared by the Talent Development Specialists are up-to-date. The SC Works staff make valuable use of tools such as the O*Net and Career Interest profiles which help customers make decisions on training options. Other factors considered when these decisions are being made are transportation methods to and from training, childcare availability during the times of training, household budgeting, etc. These same factors are also reviewed for on-the job training, work experience and transitional job customers.

7. ***A description of the process used by the local board to provide a 10-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of the businesses, labor organizations, and education.***

In Section III, we list the individuals invited to review the plan along with those attending the Zoom meetings for plan review. In addition to this, the final plan is posted on the Upstate Workforce Board and SC Works websites for the public comment period. We also have the link sent to the 13 public libraries, the 4 chambers of commerce and all 9 school superintendents. We have two individuals from local labor on the Upstate Workforce Board. We ensured that small, medium and large businesses were included in the review invitation. All three counties had individuals invited to participate in the review process.

8. ***A description of how the local area SC Works centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by SC Works partners.***

A virtual job fair platform was purchased by the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation. This has allowed us to hold several virtual job fairs. This purchase was made due to the COVID-19 pandemic in an effort to serve businesses and provide conference opportunities to organizations. All fairs and conferences will be offered for a fee. The fee is based on size and staff time required. This virtual platform has been so successful that it will likely become the primary means for conducting recruiting events in the future. We will also conduct a Career Awareness Showcase for high school students utilizing this platform in partnership with the Regional Center Director from the SC Department of Commerce. We will be able to host virtual career and college fairs in the schools using

this platform. This will help link companies with students more directly to spark interest in careers in the Upstate area.

As has been written in other sections, the staff in both programs have been using Webex and Zoom for meetings with customers, to conduct workshops and for case management. WIOA orientations have also occurred virtually. Emails and texts are also used. We look forward to other technologies that will surface due to our need for distancing. See this link for more information:

<https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/Regional%20Instruction%2019-03.pdf>

Job seekers already had the SCWOS system available to them virtually. We are seeing more online training options coming available so individuals do not have to go to a classroom. These online trainings will be properly vetted for quality.

O*Net has a plethora of careers that people can review including videos.

Co-enrollment is occurring virtually, but it would be much more successful and seamless if all partners were under one data system.

- 9. A description of how the local board ensures compliance with the adult priority of service requirements under WIOA Title I** – please see the following link. Also, the Associate Director performs desktop monitoring quarterly to ensure that we are meeting this measure <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/WIOA%20R17-04%20Amend%201%281%29.pdf>

The SC Works and Upstate Workforce Board staff have engaged in outreach to those in low income areas. This was placed on hold with the China virus outbreak. We plan to continue this outreach in person once there is a cure. In the meantime, we will work to conduct outreach virtually, but it is tougher with the low income population using this method.

- 10. A description of how the local board is serving priority populations, including those with barriers to employment, as required by WIOA** - please see the following link. Also, the Associate Director performs desktop monitoring quarterly to ensure that we are meeting this measure <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/WIOA%20R17-04%20Amend%201%281%29.pdf>

All program staff are aware of this metric. The Operations Manager and Accountant for SC Works monitors this metric periodically to ensure compliance.

Our local agreements with our operator contains goals to ensure we are striving to serve all populations. Most recent goals are as follows:

- 20 Veterans
- 14 Individuals with disabilities
- 20 Individuals with criminal backgrounds

Different recruitment strategies are used to identify these individuals. Partner referrals tends to be the most effective.

11. A description of the local area's fiscal and programmatic monitoring process.

All Upstate Workforce Board grants will be monitored once during the grant period for programmatic compliance and once for financial compliance. Desktop monitoring, to include SCWOS data, will be ongoing throughout the year. Areas to be reviewed during on-site compliance monitoring visits include:

- Performance and Compliance
- Financial Procedures and Reporting
- Equal Opportunity
- Grievance Procedures
- Competency Attainment
- Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Eligibility Certification
- Inventory
- Case Management Processes/Tools
- Spreadsheet associated with Local Instruction Letter 13-20 (Tracking Training Related Employment)
- Compliance with all OneStop processes/standards
- Customer Interviews
-

Please see attachment V-C for details on this process.

12. Copies of current local board policies and definitions, including:

- **Supportive Services policy** – for the Upstate Supportive Services Policy, please see <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/R17-02%281%29.pdf> and for the youth program, see attachment V-J.
- **OJT reimbursement policy** – Please see the grant work statement to Equus Workforce Solutions for this policy. It is attachment V-D, pages 16-21.
- **IWT policy, when using local funds** – we have never used local funds.
- **Youth incentives policy** – see attachment V-J
- **Local training cap policy** – please see the following link <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/R17-01.pdf>
- **Youth BSD policy (if applicable)** – Not Applicable – we use the TABE tests
- **Local definition for youth who “require additional assistance”** – please see <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/15-11%20amend%201.pdf>

- **Adult and dislocated worker self-sufficiency definition(s) for training** – The Adult self-sufficiency policy is 200% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL). The Dislocated Worker self-sufficiency policy is employment attained at 85% of pre-layoff wages.

13. Copies of current local workforce area documents, including:

- **Memorandum(s) of Understanding, including signature sheets** – attachment V-B
- **Resources Sharing Agreements, including signature sheets** – attachment V-B
- **All service provider grants, including statements of work and budgets** – attachments V-D (Equus) and V-E (ACHIEVE).
- **Statements of work for in-house operational staff (where applicable)** – the Upstate Workforce Board does not operate programs. The statement of work for the Upstate Workforce Board is attachment V-F.
- **Current or most recent Grant Application Request(s)/Request(s) for Proposals** – Youth Program RFP is attachment V-G. The RFP for the One Stop Operator is attachment V-H.
- **LWDB By-Laws** – see attachment V-I
- **LWDB and Committee meeting schedules** – see the following link - <https://www.upstaterworkforceboard.org/workforce-events>
- **LWDB budgets** – attachment V-F
- **Local monitoring schedules** – see below

PY 2020 Upstate Workforce Board Monitoring Schedule

Site	Start Date	End Date
USC Upstate ACHIEVE	9/8/2020	10/9/2020
SC Works Upstate (all locations)	10/12/2020	12/11/2020

Note: Programmatic and financial monitoring will occur concurrently. EO review/inspection of common areas will be conducted once as both programs are located in the same building. Entrance and exit conferences will be scheduled as close to the dates listed above as possible.

Local Plan Signatures

Upstate Workforce Board:

Upstate Workforce Board
Wade Ballard, Esq. - Chair

Signature

Date

Local Grant Recipient Signatory Official:

Upstate Workforce Development Area

B. Cole Alverson
Name

Spartanburg County Administrator
Title

Signature

Date