

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Local Plan
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2023**

2022 Modification

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~~ 42,363 employed
- Healthcare – ~~19,961~~ 22,202 employed
- Retail – ~~17,661~~ 18,735 employed
- Educational Services – 14,358 employed

- Accommodation/Food Service – ~~14,977~~ 14,343 employed
- Administrative and Support – ~~14,658~~ 12,775 employed
Note: Includes Waste Management & Remediation Services
- Distribution and Warehousing – ~~11,874~~ 13,963 employed
- Wholesale Trade – 8,140
- Construction Trades – ~~8,179~~ 7,140 employed

Source: S.C. Department of Employment & Workforce
Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) - 2021 Q4
<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.upstatesalliance.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 SCDEW. Our state issued performance measures include minimum average wage targets. For example, the wages paid by the Food Service and Retail sectors are 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, forklift, 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

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 shutdowns 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.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHq1kZmzh6Q&feature=emb_rel_pause

- This video was removed. Per the Spartanburg Chamber, 19 individuals are moving to the county per day. 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. This group continued to meet virtually during the pandemic. They recently changed their name to the Upstate Manufacturing Network.

In February of 2020, we had 186,599 individuals employed in the Upstate and only 5,599 unemployed. 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.

2022 Update: The Upstate Area has recovered from the COVID-19 crisis and did so quickly unlike many other areas of the country. This may be attributed to the fact that the SC Governor did not shut down the state like many other governors in the US. We are currently at what economists would deem to be full employment. The unemployment rates are as follows for the last six months:

Month, 2022	Rate
January	3.9%
February	4.1%
March	3.3%
April	2.7%
May	3.2%
June	3.6%

In June of 2022 in the Upstate, 188,218 individuals were employed and 7,049 were unemployed with 3,417 job openings.

The Upstate Workforce Area has many characteristics as listed below:

1. 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.
2. Pre-COVID-19, we were experiencing significant wage growth due to limited worker availability. Now that COVID-19 has eased, we have seen a big spike in wage growth due to the reluctance of many to return to the workforce quickly, retirements, a plethora of incentives that were being doled out and inflation growth.
 3. 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. They now have free tuition.
 4. 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 an updated list of the apprenticeships in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties per the last report received.
 5. ~~43,398~~ 42,363 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.
 6. Our area enjoys a robust automotive manufacturing sector.
 7. 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.
 8. ~~Our transportation costs are going down.~~ The cost of fuel continues to go up, and especially diesel which has driven up transportation costs.
 9. 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.
 10. There is an increased focus on small business startup in the Upstate. The area's conscious efforts on increasing minority and small business startups are working. The links to the incubators in the 3 counties is as follows:
 - [Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation | USC Upstate](#) 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 in 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 the residents of the Northside.
- Referrals are also made to the Small Business Development Centers serving Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties.

11. In Spartanburg, there is an intentional push on white collar job recruitment/creation.

12. 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. Mask mandates are no longer in place except in medical facilities. Anyone wanting the vaccines has the opportunity to get them.

13. 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 22,202 and expected to grow and is expected to see a slight decline.

14. Distribution and warehousing are also expected to grow in the have a slight decline in the Upstate.

15. There is a shortage everywhere for individuals in the information technology field and especially in the focus area of cyber security.

16. We also enjoy an outstanding metropolitan university in USC Upstate. This four year, public institution continues to grow. Due to COVID-19, we have seen a decrease in enrollments at USC Upstate. Some of this may be due to the fact that the technical college tuition is free. Spartanburg Methodist College also has free tuition. There was improvement in the education levels in Spartanburg over the last plan update.

Educational Levels for Spartanburg are as follows:

Population 25 and Older US Census Bureau, American Community Survey – 2013 2020 5-year Estimates

Less than 9 th Grade	7.05%	4.44%
9 th through 12 th No Diploma	10.75%	8.44%
High School Graduate	30.76%	30.66%
Some College	20.15%	21.08%
Associate's Degree	10.02%	10.56%
Bachelor's Degree	13.73%	15.55%

Graduate Degree	7.53%	9.28%
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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% 27% Bachelor's Degree attainment for those 25 years old and above Spartanburg Academic Movement latest data. 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 2013-2014, 25% 27% have completed a 4-Year Degree at institutions all over the country and 12% 11% have completed at least a 2-year degree. Some are still enrolled. Some completed technical certifications not included in these numbers. (Data Source: National Student Clearinghouse Student Data Tracker April 2022)

Of the high school graduates in Spartanburg County high schools in 2014-2015, 27% have completed a 4-Year Degree at institutions all over the country and 11% have completed at least a 2-year degree. Some are still enrolled. Some completed technical certifications not included in these numbers. (Data Source: National Student Clearinghouse Student Data Tracker April 2022)

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 2020 5-year Estimates*

Less than 9 th Grade	9.42%	5.51%
9 th – 12 th No Diploma	15.61%	13.01%
High School Graduate or GED	35.15%	36.24%
Some College	18.24%	20.85%
Associate's Degree	7.31%	10.00%
Bachelor's Degree	10.4%	8.68%
Graduate Degree	3.87%	5.70%

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 2020 5-year Estimates*

Less than 9 th Grade	7.58%	4.38%
9 th – 12 th No Diploma	14.27%	11.43%
High School Graduate or GED	37.51%	40.04%
Some College	19.7%	20.32%
Associate's Degree	8.06%	10.35%
Bachelor's Degree	8.63%	9.73%

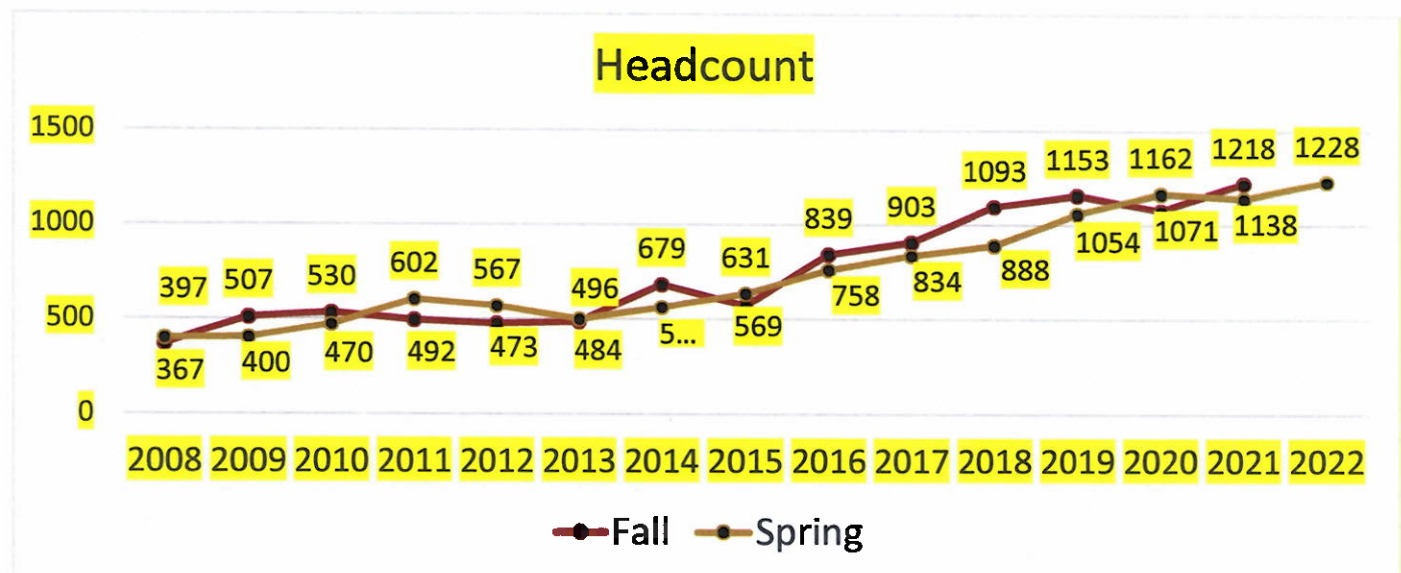
Graduate Degree	4.25%	3.75%
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Each summer, Union County Schools partners with the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation and the Upstate Workforce Board to conduct a STEM Camp at Sims Middle School. Students focus on STEM subjects in an effort to maintain 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 forklift 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 attend USC Union or Spartanburg Community College.

USC Union has experienced considerable growth – see below (this is an updated chart)



- 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%~~ 16.1%
Cherokee County: ~~13%~~ 11.6%
Spartanburg County: ~~10.7%~~ 10.6%
Union County: ~~15%~~ 16.1%

(Data source: US Census Bureau, ~~2014—2018~~ 2016 – 2020 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~~ 2020 SC State of Homelessness Report) shows ~~1,401~~ 1,536 homeless in the Upstate (~~13~~ 11 county region). Spartanburg had ~~229~~ 201 homeless. Cherokee County had ~~59~~ 85 homeless.

The Upstate Continuum of Care has the largest population of students experiencing homelessness (~~46%~~ 48% of the homeless students in SC are in the Upstate). A remarkably high percentage of Upstate students were experiencing unsheltered homelessness (~~1,345~~ 1,697), accounting for ~~76%~~ 80% 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. Update: The state and counties received funds related to the pandemic and are using a portion of those funds to increase broadband.

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

UPDATED:			
Demographic	Cherokee	Spartanburg	Union
Population Estimates	56,052	335,864	27,016
*US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (PEP), updated annually - 7-1-21			
Median Household Income	\$ 37,787	\$ 53,757	\$ 41,117
*US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimates - 2016-2020			
(in 2020 dollars)			
*Persons in poverty, percent	14.6%	14.2%	14.9%
*The Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE), 1-Year Estimates - 2020			
Educational Attainment: Percent high school graduate or higher	81.5%	87.1%	84.2%
*US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimates - 2016-2020			
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	15.2%	12.9%	12.4%
*The Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE), 1-Year Estimates - 2020			
Median Housing Value	\$ 98,300	\$ 153,000	\$ 80,300
*US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimates - 2016-2020			
Total Housing Units	24,944	140,821	13,487
*US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (PEP), updated annually - 7-1-21			
Number of Employers	907	7,166	455
*July 22, 2022 SCDEW LMI Community Profile			
Veterans	3,437	18,590	1,886
*US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimates - 2016-2020			
Percent of households with a broadband Internet subscription	67.0%	82.1%	74.4%
*US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimates - 2016-2020			

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 has had ~~did have~~ substantial federal budget cuts over the years. ~~again this year.~~ We were fortunate to be level funded for program year 2022. 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. Update: Spartanburg Community College offers free tuition. Due to this, they have had explosive growth. They needed the space that we occupied in the downtown campus of their school. We had to move to a temporary site in the Business Technology Center in downtown Spartanburg at 145 North Church Street, suite 110. 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. Due to free tuition at Spartanburg Community College and other technical colleges, our training options listed on the eligible training provider listing continue to dwindle. Training institutions do not want the burden of data reporting on all students as required by USDOL.

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. 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~~ quarterly 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 in all counties throughout the year. A large annual job fair is also conducted in each county the Upstate Workforce Area 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.~~ In 2022, USDOL does not allow for this model unless grandfathered. 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 low-income population. SCDEW requires us to spend 70% of our training dollars on those that are low-income. 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 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. **Update: The Technical College has free tuition and has increased enrollments substantially. We are focusing a lot of our funding this program year towards On-the-Job Training with local businesses. We also are co-enrolling to offer supportive services. We have had an opportunity with this at USC Union with the nursing students.**

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. **Update: SCDEW has done a great job with conducting outreach to those on unemployment to help facilitate a return to the workplace. We still have a labor shortage, but it is improving slowly.**

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 childcare availability could well become a deterrence to economic recovery. **Update: Childcare centers have reopened.**

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. **Update: We were level funded for program year 2022. We are offering transportation funding through supportive services.**

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. This grant was received again in 2022. The non-profit also received a grant for \$27,295 from Women Giving for Spartanburg to purchase a vehicle for the USC Upstate ACHIEVE WIOA program. A Ford Explorer was just received in August of 2022. In October of 2022, the non-profit was awarded a grant from the Spartanburg County Foundation in the amount of \$26,180 to purchase another vehicle for the USC Upstate ACHIEVE WIOA program. We hope to have this vehicle by the first of 2023. We continue to apply for grants to bring needed funds for transportation options.

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 and low-income). Due to budget cuts, only one program will be funded in program year 2020 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021). The YouthStop program elected to close and not apply. The request for proposals was issued and we have received two applications that are under review.

SC Works Greater Upstate purchased a virtual job fair platform 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 529 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. SCDEW also purchased a license for another job fair platform, so we now have two options for virtual workforce job and career fairs.

In 2018, a group of upstate manufacturers were convened to discuss mutual employment problems. The group took off, generating a life of its own. It has rebranded ~~named~~ itself “~~the Diversified Manufacturing Partnership~~ the Upstate Manufacturing Network.” The Network will kick off networking events and a Re-ignite event in the fall of 2022. This group has matured into a motivated, if not passionate, effort pursuing a manufacturing sector strategy. The ~~Business Services Lead Partnership Facilitator/Convener~~ from SC Works serves as the point of contact for convening the group. He reports to the Business Services Lead. They continue to meet regularly to address workforce development in the region. They even continued to meet during the COVID-19 shutdowns. The following businesses serve on the steering team and meet monthly: BMW, Century Printing, Michelin North America, Strama MPS, West Fraser, and ZF Transmission.

The following businesses are involved:

BMW, Century Printing, Contec, Cooper Standard, Customer Performance Engineering, Dantherm Air Handling, EPC, GE, IVC Inc., Michelin, Milliken, Minileit, Inc., Siemens, Teijin Carbon Fibers, ABB, AWL Automation, Bosch, Mogul, Norbord, Nutra, Standard Motor Products, T&S, TransTech of SC/Wabtec and ZF Transmission.

In March 2019, this 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 technical colleges to implement a shared curriculum.

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 at local business locations.

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.

~~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.~~ Due to Covid-19, this did not role out. The following has occurred regarding virtual reality:



In June 2021, SC Works Greater Upstate added a career exploration resource to its arsenal. Amidst the pandemic, this technology provided a solution, but even today career exploration has expanded to include a virtual platform. This virtual platform allows SC Works to offer our job seekers, high school students, and partner participants to access more than 23 occupations within multiple industries through a virtual reality immersive experience. For employers, this platform is seen as a marketing tool to attract students and adults to careers within their industry. Since July 2021, SC Works has provided career exploration opportunities to more than 200 individuals in partnership with Eckerd Connects, Greenville County schools, Greenville Technical College, Spartanburg Regional Project Search, and USC Upstate Achieve.

In addition to career exploration opportunities, virtual reality is now a platform for training for high school students, those seeking employment, and those already in the workforce. SC Works

plans to provide virtual reality training to both job seekers, youth, and employer partners by July 1, 2023.

ResCare Academy 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. Update: Equus has switched to LinkedIn Learning Platform. There are over 13,000 courses to choose from and individuals can upload their certificates directly to their LinkedIn profiles.

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. Update: All centers are fully operational with both in-person and online options for workshops. We were first in SC to open our doors back to the public.

We are disappointed that incumbent worker training (IWT) dollars will not be available from SCDEW this coming program year as they have been for many years. With our 15% budget cut, we cannot use any of our formula funds for IWT. This is a real loss to our area businesses and for individuals to build transferable skills while working for their companies. Update: SCDEW did issue IWT funds during PY21 for which we were grateful. We also have the opportunity to request Rapid Response IWT funding.

We have also been waiting on SCDEW to roll out an anticipated soft skills training. The state has been working on a soft skills program for over three years. 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. Update: SC Works currently offers a specific soft skills workshop that is open to anyone interested in the topic. The workshop entitled Skill Me Now! provides an overview of what soft skills are, why employers seek out candidates that possess them and a deep dive on communication and conflict resolution/problem solving. The workshop is offered twice a month at different times to allow for people with varying schedules to attend. This session has also been conducted onsite for partners such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education in the Upstate. The workshop was developed by the Service Delivery team at Equus. Prior to the development, our local team including the Regional Director of Business Solutions participated in reviewing a list of 50 soft skills. The team then selected the top 5 needed for our market. That information was provided to Equus (corporate) who built the presentation around those skills. In addition to Skill Me Now!, the SC Works Facilitator staff also revamped other workshops to incorporate at least one soft skill component in every workshop offered.