



## CASE STUDY

# WORK-BASED LEARNING ON-RAMPS TO HEALTH CARE APPRENTICESHIPS

## WorkSource Metro Atlanta Healthcare Industry Partnership

**Industry-Driven:** Convened by WorkSource Metro Atlanta, a coalition of five workforce boards and Atlanta CareerRise, a regional funders collaborative, part of the National Fund for Workforce Solutions network and part of the United Way of Greater Atlanta, the Healthcare Industry Partnership has brought together the largest health care industry association in the area and several health care employers from across metro Atlanta. WorkSource Metro Atlanta and Atlanta CareerRise also convene similar partnerships in information technology and transportation, distribution and logistics. The healthcare partnership convenes both an industry council, comprised of businesses in the healthcare industry, and a workforce partners council, comprised of workforce experts, community and technical college representatives, community organizations, and more than eighteen state agency partners that interact with potential participants and can support their success, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) administrators. Business partners help identify workforce needs and play an active role in training program development, including advising on curriculum content and sharing screening criteria to align training program content with their needs. Employer partners often conduct mock interviews, provide job site tours, and speak to students during classroom learning portions of training.

**Alignment with broader workforce, education, and human services systems:** Convened in partnership with five local workforce boards, the partnership also brings together representatives from eight technical colleges and seven school districts. The partnership leverages Goodwill of North Georgia's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) funding, targeting SNAP recipients to access initial training on the work-based learning pathway.

**Locally-based:** Partners began initial formation in 2016 to collaboratively aggregate and address healthcare employers' demand for middle-skill workers. The partnership expanded in size and scope after investment from the governor in 2018 through the High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI). After detailed analysis of the state workforce needs through HDCI, Georgia officials recognized variation in

workforce demand at the local level and implemented a focus that supported partnerships in local economic development regions across the state responding to local employer demand. The partnership encourages collaboration across the partner network and facilitates innovative approaches to workforce development, including work to expand healthcare work-based learning pathways.

**Expanding work-based learning:** To address the shortage of entry and mid-level hospital workers, including Environmental Technicians and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), the partnership, working with Goodwill of North Georgia as the "lead partner," launched an Environmental Services Technician pre-employment training program. During eight weeks of training, participants learn in the classroom four days a week, with one day each week spent on the hospital floor either shadowing workers, applying techniques learned in the classroom, or meeting with hospital administrators.

SNAP E&T or WIOA funding from the local WorkSource board support participant training costs. During their training and for ten months after completing the program, participants have access to career counseling and mentorship through Goodwill to help them address any barriers to their retention on the job, such as help accessing childcare during night shifts. Those who have been hired by employer partners continue in on-the-job training provided through the employer partner. After completing the program, participants are guaranteed interviews with members of the industry council and receive up to a year of career counseling to ensure access to industry employment. After six months of successful employment, participants are eligible to sit for their Certified Health Environment Services Technician (CHEST) certificate and have access to coaching and scholarships through Goodwill to shepherd them through that process. In 2019, the partnership will launch programs targeting unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers who are interested in becoming Certified Nursing Assistants, Patient Care Technicians, Licensed Practical Nurses, Emergency Medical Technicians, and Paramedics through two pre-employment training programs and two apprenticeship programs.

