



We're kicking off day two of [Economic Development week](#) with discussion on possibly the hottest topic in economic development right now - workforce. Why is workforce such a critical component of economic development? When competing for projects that could lead to new jobs and added investment into a community, economic development organizations (EDOs) aren't just competing with the community next door, but internationally. Having a skilled workforce helps a community remain competitive in a global marketplace, and having local access to workforce development programs gives communities a major advantage.

[Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing \(RCAM\)](#)

The Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing (RCAM) is the branded outreach of [Northeast State Community College](#). Focused on advanced manufacturing training, the programs and services offered through the RCAM are designed to develop the 21st century workforce. The RCAM offers programs for industry specific training, college credit, and even programs for K-12 students that offer exposure to different career opportunities in the manufacturing field. The RCAM also offers apprenticeship training programs for Electrical Systems Technicians, Electromechanical Technicians, HVAC Technicians, Lubricators/Oilers, and Mechanical Systems Technicians. Employers can work with the RCAM to customize apprenticeship programs based on the needs of employees.

[University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services \(UTCIS\)](#)

The University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services (UTCIS) focuses on consulting, training, and connection. Local Solutions Consultants assess company needs and provide only services that are value added. Training courses taught by subject matter experts are provided on topics related to manufacturing and service-oriented businesses. Connections are made between companies, communities, entrepreneurs, and appropriate resources.

Alliance for Business & Training (AB&T)

The Alliance for Business & Training, Inc (AB&T) is a community based not for profit corporation. Its mission is to create and sustain a workforce development system which promotes Economic Development; meets employer needs and is responsive to changing labor market demands, community economic growth and participants' job skills. Workforce development services facilitated through the AB&T include on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and customized training opportunities.

ACT Certified Work Ready Communities Initiative

ACT's Certified Work Ready Communities (CWRC) initiative was created to make our country more competitive and close the skills gap. The program starts at the grassroots level, by providing a community-based framework that links workforce development to education, aligns with the economic development needs of communities, regions, and states, and matches individuals to jobs based on skill level. A major component of this program is the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). Current, transitioning, and emerging workforce can earn this portable, industry-recognized credential that clearly identifies an individual's WorkKey skills in reading for information, applied math, and locating information.

In the state of Tennessee, communities are encouraged to certify industrial sites through the Select Tennessee Certified Sites Program. The reasoning behind this is to minimize risks and remove the guess work that comes with locating a new site for a potential facility relocation or expansion. The CWRC initiative is a similar concept. A company can confidently locate in our community knowing that there is a skilled workforce capable of meeting their needs.

How you can support workforce development in Sullivan County

Support the WCRC initiative. It's easy, takes two minutes, and can be done by [clicking here](#). By choosing "recognize," you are not obligating your company to anything; it simply shows that your company sees the value in the program and supports it. If you would like to use the NCRC in your hiring processes, please select "recommend."

Sullivan County has successfully attained 78% of its business support goal and 48% of its overall goals.

To learn more about workforce training, [click here](#). To learn more about Sullivan County's workforce profile, [click here](#).

Visit tomorrow to learn more about the role of the volunteer in economic development.