

Creating a Vibrant Regional Workforce

North Idaho and Eastern Washington
Working Together Towards an
Economically Prosperous Region



Partnership

- Greater Spokane Incorporated
 - **Mission:** *“Accelerating regional economic prosperity”*
 - **Workforce:** *“Position the region for economic expansion by partnering to establish a highly educated and technically skilled workforce, and responding to employer needs*
- Spokane Area Workforce Development Council
 - **Mission:** *“Lead a dynamic, demand-driven workforce system”*
 - **Vision:** *“Innovate workforce solutions for the Spokane Region”*

Regional Data

- Labor Market Data
 - Vacancies
 - 51% of employers attempting to hire found it difficult to find qualified applicants
 - Job Growth
 - Spokane County- 1.9%
 - Kootenai County- 4.3%
 - National Average- .9%
 - Health Care- Twice as many openings as other clusters
 - Manufacturing- 12% of all vacancies and the highest wages of all clusters
 - Transportation/Construction/Business Services- Highest numbers of continuous openings (Constant need)
- Drop Out Rate
 - Only 74% of all Washington State public school students from the class of 2005 graduated on time from high school... Graduation rates are significantly lower for African-American students (61%), Latinos (60%) and Native Americans (54%).
- New Business Data
 - Start-ups
 - Relocations
 - Growth/Expansion

The Model: Manufacturing

- Partnerships
- Collaboration
- Accomplishments
- Next Steps



Partners

- Industry
 - Manufacturers Roundtable
 - Regional Sector Academy
- K-12 School System
 - K-12 Roundtable
 - Pre-Apprenticeship Pathways
- Community College System & Four Year Higher Ed Institutions
 - Higher Education Leadership Group
 - North Idaho College
- Government
 - Department of Labor
 - Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
 - Inland Northwest Community Foundation

Accomplishments

- Town Hall Meetings
- Workforce Skill Panel Study
- Lean Certificate Program
- Manufacturing Career Awareness Campaign
- IBEST Skills Training Program
- Aerospace Consortium
- First Robotics

Town Hall Meetings

- Four town hall meetings were held between June 2005 and January 2007 that accomplished the following objectives:
 - Raise awareness of the issues facing the manufacturing industry, such as unfair public policy issues around offshore competition such as currency and tariffs.
 - To communicate and validate the results of the AMWI skill panel study
 - To raise awareness of the shortage of skilled labor, and the opportunities for well paying manufacturing careers within the region.
 - To understand how public policy in manufacturing impacts companies, individuals and communities.

Workforce Skill Panel Study

- Recommendations
 - Address the lack of applied math, science and language skills
 - Address the lack of core competencies in the workforce
 - Make available an ongoing LEAN certification program
 - Update, revitalize, and promote machinists' training programs
 - Awareness of manufacturing jobs is key

Innovative Training Programs

- **Lean Certificate Program:** The program is geared to train and certify incumbent workers in Lean Manufacturing principles and technology.
- **IBEST Skills Training Program:** A two-quarter, short-term training curriculum that introduces students into professional technical education, while concurrently serving to meet the immediate needs of local employers seeking to grow their business.
- **Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, Idaho WWAMI:** Provide access to publicly supported medical education across the five-state region by offering first year medical school courses locally.
- **Pre-Apprenticeship Program:** Spokane School District course series that prepares students for direct entry into apprenticeships upon graduation

Aerospace and Beyond

- **Aerospace Consortium:** The intention of the consortium is to cluster the resources of the many aerospace-related organizations to increase the region's exposure as a world-class aerospace community.
- **Skills Gap Analysis:** With financial support from the Washington State Department of Community Trade and Economic Development a skill gap analysis of the aerospace industry in the Inland Northwest Region is being conducted.
- **FIRST Robotics:** *FIRST* designs accessible, innovative programs that build not only science and technology skills and interests, but also self-confidence, leadership, and life skills.

Comprehensive Strategy

Strategic Goals and Objectives are aligned across the region – our business community, labor, the K-12, community college and higher education system, and other key stakeholders are working collaboratively to utilize resources and build a stronger foundation to improve the living standards of our citizens and sustain our long term economic development

- **Together we are:**
 - **Closing the skills gap**
 - **Supporting job creation**
 - **Increasing wages**
 - **Improving productivity**
 - **Reducing poverty, and**
 - **Developing a highly responsive and effective workforce system**

Next Steps

- Aerospace
- Construction
- Health Care
- Other Industries as evaluated