

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2016

The Honorable Thomas E. Perez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Perez:

We write today in strong support of BridgeValley Community and Technical College's (CTC) recently submitted TechHire program application. This innovative, forward-thinking proposal will offer essential course work and industry-led credentials in the information technology and advanced manufacturing sectors. The TechHire program's focus reflects the needs of our constituents and their communities suffering from the devastating and adverse economic shifts currently taking place in the Mountain State's coalfields, related supply chain employers and in other sectors.

BridgeValley CTC is leading the **West Virginia Technology Transformation Initiative (WVTTI)**, which focuses on transforming the south-central regional economy in West Virginia from one that is coal-dependent to one that is technology-based in the H-1B industries of information technology and advanced manufacturing. WVTTI will specifically focus on assisting young adults (17 to 29 years) who grew up believing that they would work in now-closed coal mines with skills upgrades and supports in order to obtain middle- and high-skill jobs in the WVTTI targeted occupations.

The WVTTI will leverage investments made under the West Virginia Bridging the Gap Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT)-funded program in order to expand employer engagement, work-based learning experiences, and significant training opportunities to help participants gain credentials needed for the workplace and long-term labor force. It will serve the 10 south-central West Virginia counties (Boone, Cabell, Clay, Fayette, Jackson, Kanawha, Lincoln, Mason, Putnam, and Wayne) served by BridgeValley CTC and its broad-based partners. The success of the WVTTI in this region will serve as a constructive model for other hard-hit coal regions of West Virginia.

We are particularly impressed that this TechHire grant support would allow BridgeValley CTC and the West Virginia Community and Technical College System to leverage \$3,175,572 in other federal grants, state support, purchased equipment and in-kind support from industry and unions. This far exceeds the 25 percent of the total budget request required in this category.

We join together to convey our strong support for the BridgeValley CTC and West Virginia Technology Transformation Initiative. We believe this award is an important investment in the future economic well-being and quality of life of our citizens, as well as the employers of our state.

We would be deeply appreciative if you would give all possible fair and timely consideration to the BridgeValley CTC proposal for the West Virginia Technology Transformation Initiative. Please contact our staffs for any additional information or with any questions. Thank you for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,



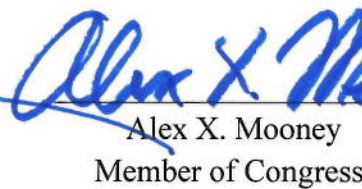
Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress



Alex X. Mooney
Member of Congress



Evan H. Jenkins
Member of Congress

Enclosure: BridgeValley CTC Technology Transformation Initiative grant abstract



WEST VIRGINIA TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE (WVTTI)

DOL TechHire Grant; \$3.99 million

SUMMARY

BridgeValley Community and Technical College (BVCTC) is leading the *West Virginia Technology Transformation Initiative (WVTTI)*, which focuses on transforming the south-central regional economy in West Virginia from one that is coal-dependent to one that is technology-based in the H-1B industries of information technology and advanced manufacturing. WVTTI will specifically focus on assisting young adults age 17 to 29-year-olds who grew up believing that they would work in now-closed coal mines with skills upgrades and supports in order to obtain middle and high skill jobs in the WVTTI targeted occupations. Young, dislocated coal miners are included in the targeted population.

GOALS

- Serve at least 400 participants over a four year period with at least 75% of the participants in the 17 – 29 age group.
- Provide approximately 200 paid work-based learning opportunities through On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts. The OJT grants funds will be leveraged with West Virginia “Learn and Earn” funds.
- Provide accelerated and innovative education/training programs to meet industry and participant needs
- 72% of participants will receive a degree or industry recognized credential. 70% of participants will either obtain employment or advance into a new position.

Partnerships

BVCTC has signed partnership agreements for WVTTI with:

- Workforce Investment Boards for Regions 1, 2, and 3
- Eight manufacturing industries
- Five information technology industries
- Six intermediary organizations that represent multiple businesses/employers
- West Virginia Department of Education Office of Adult Education

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