



WNY
MANUFACTURING
AND TECH
**Workforce
Coalition**

**Annual
Progress Report**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2025

March 2026



RALPH C. WILSON, JR.
FOUNDATION



University at Buffalo
Regional Institute
School of Architecture and Planning



NEW YORK
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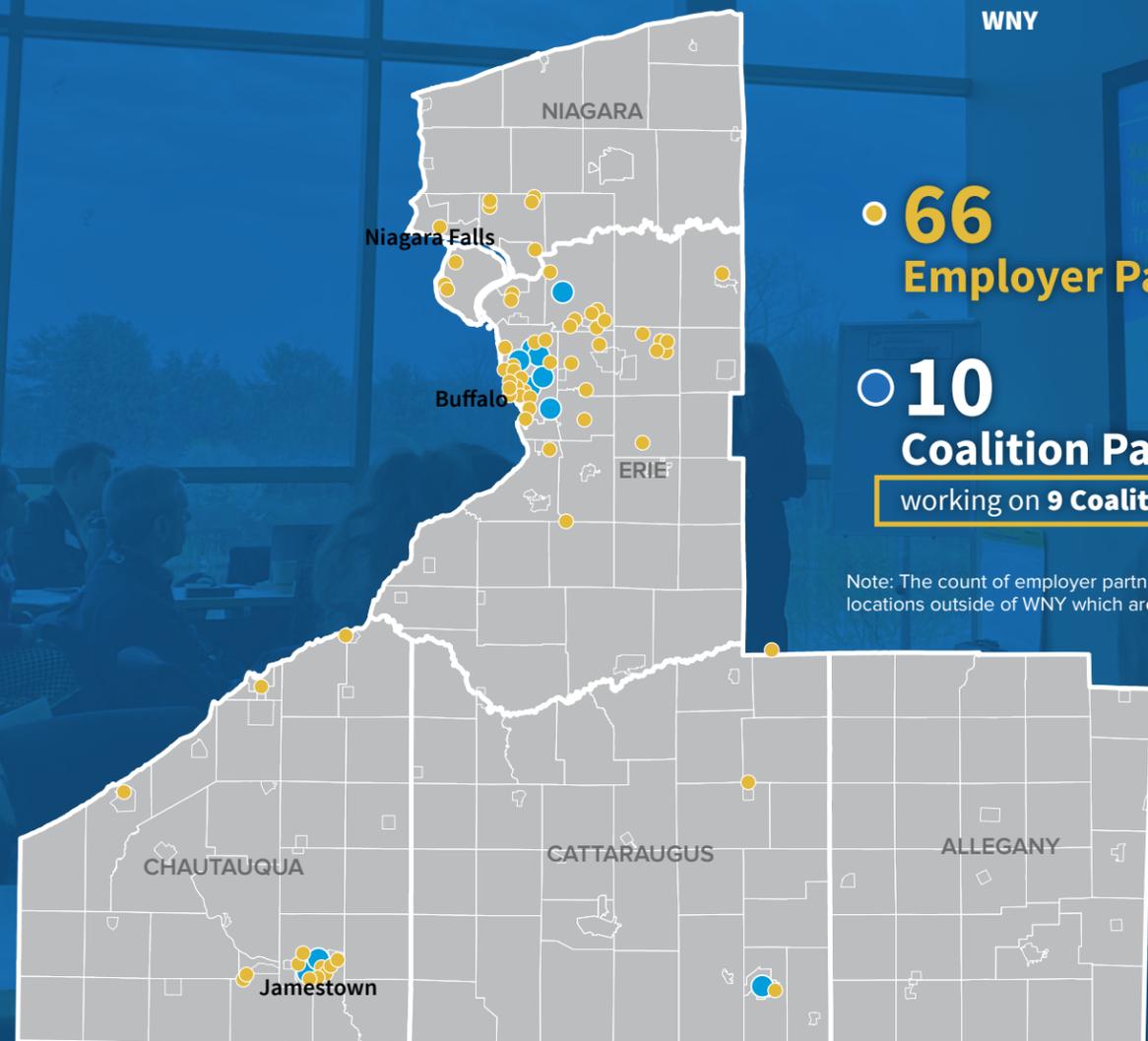
The WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition (“the Coalition”) is a collaborative effort designed to address the skills gaps in the manufacturing and tech sectors in Western New York (WNY). The Coalition emerged from partnerships that were forged around two U.S. Economic Development Administration grants that included the Good Jobs Challenge and the Build Back Better Regional Challenge.

With support from Empire State Development (ESD) and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation (RCWJF), this early work culminated in the official formation of the Coalition in 2023. The Coalition now has 66 employer partners, and 10 Coalition program partners working on nine interconnected programs.

Now in its second year of implementation, Coalition membership expanded, partner commitments deepened, and the Coalition intensified its focus on measuring collective progress toward shared goals and outcomes. This report provides an annual update on that progress, using last year’s report as a template to ensure consistency in documenting our results and impacts over time.



WNY



● **66**
Employer Partners

○ **10**
Coalition Partners
working on **9** Coalition Programs

Note: The count of employer partners includes two with locations outside of WNY which are not shown on the map.

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RECOMMENDED CITATION: University at Buffalo Regional Institute, State University of New York at Buffalo, School of Architecture and Planning, March 2026. “Western New York Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition: Annual Progress Report, Highlights from 2025.”

About the Coalition



The WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition (“the Coalition”) officially launched in late 2023 with a unique ecosystem approach that prioritizes aligning training with industry needs, facilitating careers in manufacturing and tech, and connecting local businesses with a qualified workforce.

In 2025, 735 manufacturing companies across WNY posted more than 7,800 openings for jobs, while nearly 2,500 companies posted 10,657 openings for tech and tech-aligned jobs, all requiring skills but less than a four-year college degree. Despite evolving economic conditions in both industries, demand for skilled talent remains strong and difficulty finding qualified candidates continues to challenge productivity, growth and competitiveness for businesses.

To address employer demand for talent, the Coalition brings together workforce trainers, employers, industry partners, pipeline developers, workforce development boards (WDBs) and community-based organizations. Coalition work is fueled by intermediaries that play a key role in connecting the dots across the ecosystem, assessing needs, identifying solutions, tracking progress and ensuring resources provided to the Coalition reach communities in need across the region.

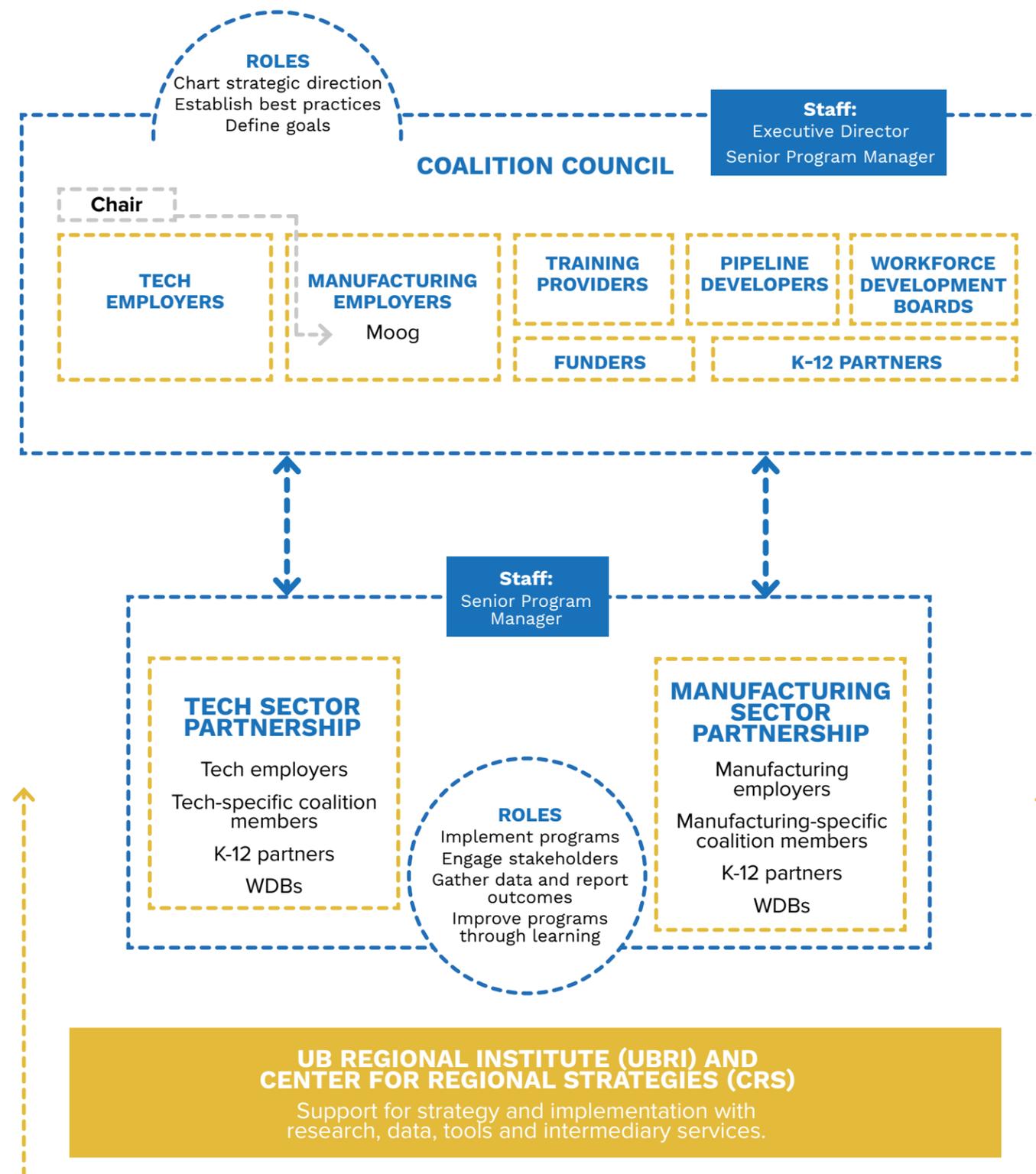
The Coalition consists of interconnected projects that work collectively toward shared workforce goals. It also includes a broader network of partners, with 66 employer partners. In 2025, the introduction of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with employers and Coalition project leads deepened shared commitments.

The Coalition operates under the framework of an employer-led Coalition Council (see the organizational chart on the next page), chaired by leadership from Moog Inc. The Coalition Council is responsible for charting strategic direction, establishing best practices, and defining goals. In addition, two interconnected employer-led sector partnerships are responsible for implementing programs, engaging stakeholders, and reporting on program outcomes.

This report highlights progress made in 2025, emphasizing cumulative outcomes to date across Coalition projects. These results reflect how coordinated action across a regional workforce ecosystem can drive strong results, deepen employer engagement and maximize regional impact.

“This was another exciting year for the Coalition...and it will continue to grow. The more impact we have, the better our ability to scale and sustain our efforts.”

Stephen Tucker, *President and CEO of Northland Workforce Training Center and Executive Director of the WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition*



Coalition Accomplishments

The Coalition made significant progress in 2025 towards strengthening the regional workforce ecosystem serving employers, trainers and residents seeking higher-wage career pathways in manufacturing and tech.

Key accomplishments include launching and scaling industry-driven training programs, deepening employer engagement, and formalizing shared expectations through a Memorandum of Understanding with employers and Coalition project leads.

During the year, the Coalition also identified shared collective goals, finalized a data-sharing agreement with the New York State Department of Labor, and expanded communications and research tools. Together these efforts strengthened alignment across partners and positioned the Coalition to drive stronger impacts moving forward.



What we did together in 2025

Convened members and fostered partnership building

The Coalition Council, sector partnerships, and funded members convened regularly throughout 2025 to foster collaboration, trainer-employer alignment and shared problem-solving. Coalition Council meetings were hosted at Power Drives (March 2025) and Cummins (September 2025).



Sector partnership meetings took place in January, February, April, May, October and November. Funded member meetings were held in January, May, August, and December 2025.

In June 2025, a special convening in Lakewood, NY brought together employers across the Southern Tier to expand in-person employer engagement beyond Erie and Niagara counties and address region-specific hiring challenges.

Implemented industry-driven training and pipeline development



Two funded programs launched in 2025. UB TCIE's Entry-Level Manufacturing Technician Training program began in June 2025. Shaped by employer input, the program provides a certificate, college credit, and work-based learning opportunities through internships. The Workforce Development Boards of Cattaraugus-Allegany and Chautauqua Counties also launched their program, providing training and job placement services for residents across the Southern Tier.

Seven additional Coalition programs that launched in 2024 were scaled in 2025 to increase enrollment capacity and employer engagement. In addition, the Finishing & Deburring program launched by the Coalition in 2024 implemented a second cohort in 2025. Funding sources for this program include Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Development Board, the Coalition's Innovation Fund, and sponsoring private-sector employers.

In July 2025, the Coalition established a partnership with MACNY to expand registered apprenticeships at employer sites across the region. As a group sponsor, MACNY manages relationships with New York State, coordinates related instruction, and assists employers in accessing funding streams for apprenticeship training. By year-end, the Coalition referred 32 employers, who expressed interest in registered apprenticeships, to MACNY.

Developed resource tools



The Coalition continued refining research and resource tools to support outreach, recruitment, placement and wraparound services. Interactive maps were updated with current job posting data and enhanced to identify priority populations and available childcare resources. These tools help partners align training capacity with real-time labor market demand and better target outreach efforts.

Facilitated outcomes tracking and data sharing



As part of its strategic planning process, Coalition leadership and funded members established clear three-year quantitative goals: the enrollment of 1,200 trainees, with a 75% training completion rate, a 70% job placement rate and \$20 per hour average starting wage.

Progress toward these goals is tracked on an ongoing basis and shared at Coalition Council, funded member, and sector partnership meetings.

To strengthen data capacity, the University at Buffalo finalized a data-sharing agreement with the New York State Department of Labor. This agreement enables the analysis of participant wage outcomes across Coalition programs.

Built communications tools



In 2025, the Coalition significantly expanded its communications infrastructure to improve transparency, trainer-employer alignment and outreach. Materials released or updated during the year included:

- Updated baseline report
- Organizational chart updates
- Slide decks for Council and sector partnership meetings
- Website updates
- Promising Practice brief
- Tech Training brochure
- Communications folders

The Coalition also developed a suite of communications materials for the Finishing & Deburring program.

Pursued and secured resources for collaborative programming



In April 2025, the Coalition launched a Workforce Innovation Fund to accelerate job placement and support short-term, high-demand training. The fund enables rapid response to emerging workforce needs. In 2025 one proposal was funded in support of the Finishing & Deburring program.

In October 2025, the Coalition submitted a \$600,000 federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant application, with a \$400,000 match, to strengthen the Coalition's backbone intermediary role and scale regional impact.

Additionally, the Coalition submitted a \$12.8 million proposal to the U.S. Department of Defense Maritime Industrial Base to establish a three-year Talent Pipeline Partnership focused on outreach, strategic partnerships, and train-the-trainer activities.

Supported Coalition Council leaders



Stephen Tucker, President and CEO of Northland Workforce Training Center, serves as the Coalition's executive director, focused on developing strategic direction, convening members, forging employer partnerships, and cultivating training programs that address employer needs.

Paul Wilkinson, Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer at Moog, serves as the Coalition Council Chair. The leadership team meets regularly with the chair to shape agendas, discuss strategy, and ensure meetings reflect employer priorities.

Ensuring relevance to members remains a priority. In September 2025, the Coalition distributed a survey to identify the most pressing issues facing employers and other partners. Talent attraction and retention emerged as clear priorities, particularly among employers. In response, the final two sector partnership meetings of the year featured guest speakers from companies that have implemented comprehensive and innovative talent strategies. Promising practices shared at those meetings are also featured in this report to ensure broad dissemination across the Coalition.

Strengthened an employer-led Coalition Council



The Coalition unites about 100 organizations across industry, education and training providers, workforce development boards, and pipeline engagement partners. Employer engagement grew substantially, with employer partners increasing from 48 to 66 over the past year, a 38% increase.

Beyond growth in numbers, engagement deepened. In 2025, all funded members signed an MOU, formalizing both individual accountability for program-level outcomes and shared accountability for collective Coalition goals. An Employer MOU was also developed to clarify expectations for employer engagement, including participation in sector partnerships, hiring commitments, and feedback loops to strengthen training alignment. The Employer MOU was finalized and introduced at the September Coalition Council meeting.

Outcomes Across Coalition Programs

With all funded Coalition programs launched and implemented in 2025, the Coalition made substantial progress towards its three-year goal of enrolling 1,200 individuals, graduating 900, and placing 630 in jobs with career pathways.

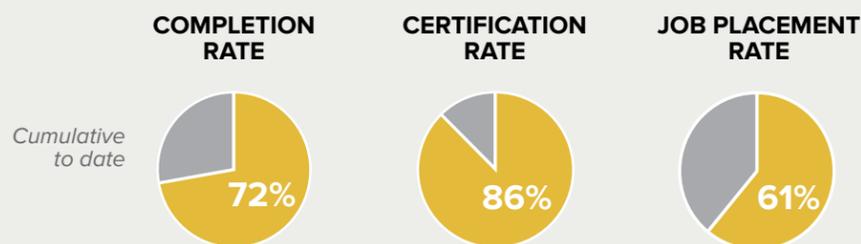
From 2024 to 2025, enrollment in Coalition programs doubled, completions nearly doubled and job placement more than quadrupled. This acceleration was driven by stronger trainer-employer partnerships, the expansion of an employer-led Coalition Council, shared best practices for talent attraction and retention and dedicated placement staff embedded within Coalition organizations.

In 2025 the list of employers who hired Coalition program graduates was too large to include here. Employers span not only manufacturing and tech but other key sectors of the economy including health services, insurance, financial services, education and logistics. Employers engage with the Coalition not just for a source of talent but as a partner for new programs, curriculum design, hiring events, internships and more. Outcomes in 2025 demonstrate a coordinated regional model that is producing measurable outcomes and building a sustainable talent pipeline.

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

	2024	2025	Cumulative to date
OUTREACH	3,075	10,738	13,813
PARTICIPATION IN PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES	697	1,221	1,918
ENROLLMENT IN TRAINING	293	638	931
TRAINING COMPLETIONS	239	429	668
CERTIFICATES	205	368	573
JOB PLACEMENT	63	343	406
AVG ANNUAL WAGE	\$43,713	\$46,366	\$45,956
AVG HOURLY WAGE	\$21.02	\$22.29	\$22.09

\$18.7 M
Economic Impact (cumulative to date)
+38%
Compared to minimum wage



Source: UBRI analysis of outcomes data provided by funded members.

Hiring Employers:

In 2025, more than 100 employers hired graduates of Coalition-funded programs. Nearly one in five were repeat hiring employers, hiring multiple graduates from the same trainer and/or across Coalition programs. Nearly one-fifth of hiring employers were Coalition members, underscoring the Coalition's role as a bridge between employers and trainers and its ability to consistently meet the hiring needs of employers.

Over the past two years **more than 13,800 individuals received information** about a coalition training program, and career opportunities in manufacturing and tech. This included individuals who attended workshops, information sessions, or were contacted directly through outreach efforts. Nearly 2,000 individuals participated in career awareness activities.

406 students who completed training to date have been placed in jobs. In manufacturing, these roles include **Welders, Machinists, Deburrers, Battery Remanufacturing Technicians, Mill Operators, Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Operators, and Industrial Maintenance Technicians**. In tech, placements include **IT Support Specialist, IT Analyst, Computer Repair Technician, Help Desk Analyst, Customer Service Representative, and Account Coordinator and Systems Coordinator**.

Since the Coalition launched, **931 individuals have enrolled in a Coalition training program** to prepare for a career in manufacturing or tech. More than 660 individuals completed these programs by early February 2026.

IN MANY COALITION TRAINING PROGRAMS...

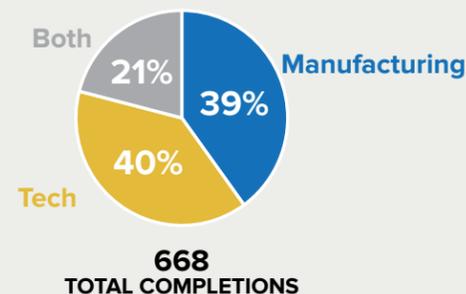
...individuals of color accounted for at least 6 out of 10 participants.

6 out of 8 programs have **over 60% people of color**

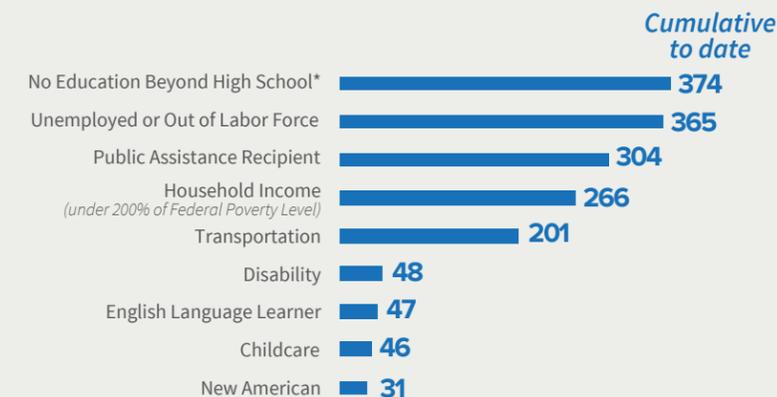
...women accounted for less than half of participants.

7 out of 8 programs have **less than 50% women**

Of all completions to date, 39% are from manufacturing training programs, and 40% are from tech trainers. Another 21% come from programs supporting both manufacturing and tech.



Many individuals enrolled in Coalition training programs faced barriers to training and employment. The most common barriers reported by Coalition members for their participants included:



*Barriers reflect conditions prior to or at the time of enrollment.

Progress on Coalition Programs

TRAINERS

BUFFALO CENTER FOR ARTS & TECHNOLOGY (BCAT)	P. 14
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JAMESTOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE (JCC)	P. 18
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UB - THE CENTER FOR INDUSTRIAL EFFECTIVENESS (UB TCIE)	P. 26

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PIPELINE DEVELOPER

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Buffalo Center for Arts & Technology (BCAT)

In 2024, BCAT expanded its IT training to meet growing demand for work-ready IT candidates. Tech training at BCAT leads to CompTIA certification in four areas including IT Fundamentals, IT Technical Support, IT Networking and IT Security. Training includes instruction, certification fees, wraparound services, job placement coaching, and a participant stipend. BCAT is preparing over 100 Buffalo residents annually for careers in tech and tech-aligned roles with career advancement opportunities.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

STRONG COMPLETION AND CREDENTIAL OUTCOMES: In 2025, BCAT's completion rate was nearly 90%, exceeding the Coalition's goal of 75%. Forty-seven individuals earned industry-recognized certifications through BCAT's CompTIA pathway program, which enabled participants to earn up to four certifications.

OUTREACH: BCAT reached 1,000 individuals in 2025 through outreach efforts. Of the 72 participants who enrolled, 58 were participants of color and 24 were women, reinforcing BCAT's ability to make training accessible to underrepresented individuals.

EMPLOYER AND COALITION COLLABORATION: BCAT partnered with other Coalition tech trainers on an employer-facing marketing flyer introducing Coalition tech programs, credentials, and engagement opportunities.



PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

IT Fundamentals

This eight-week program prepares individuals for entry-level jobs in tech or tech-enabled roles. Students may also pursue additional study in the programs below.

Certifications: CompTIA Tech+

IT Tech Support

This 10-week program prepares students for IT support specialist roles.

Certifications: CompTIA A+

IT Networking Pro

This 12-week program prepares students for roles as network specialists.

Certifications: CompTIA Network+

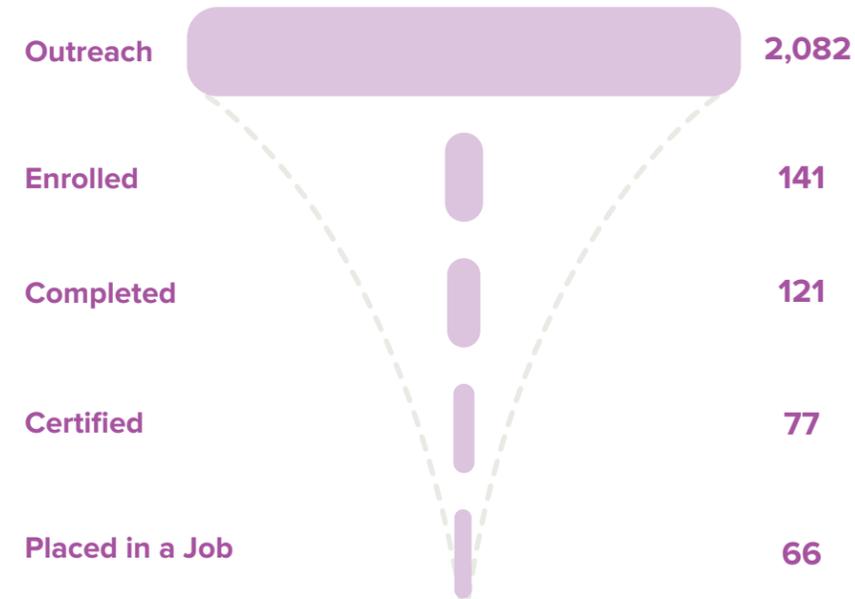
IT Security

This 10-week program prepares students to work in cybersecurity roles.

Certifications: CompTIA Security+

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of December 31, 2025



To date, BCAT has steadily expanded their reach and strengthened their training program performance. Outreach engaged 2,082 individuals in 2024 and 2025 and generated 141 enrollments with strong persistence through BCAT's IT Pathway program. More than 120 participants completed training during 2024 and 2025, and 77 earned industry-recognized CompTIA certifications. Completion and certification figures are notable given the barriers many participants faced prior to entry, including unemployment and low income.

Employment outcomes show meaningful progress, especially given that most graduates in 2025 just completed their program in December. To date, 66 graduates have found jobs, securing tech and tech-enabled jobs at employers such as M&T, CUBRC, Tesla and Aleron. The average hourly starting wage of \$24.60 for graduates working in tech/tech-aligned roles in 2025 underscores the value of tech training.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Continue operating and expanding BCAT's training pathway to meet regional employer demand.
- Continue supporting job placement for participants who are still seeking employment.
- Leverage Coalition resources and tools to conduct target outreach to unemployed graduates and connect them with positions and hiring tech and tech-enabled employers.
- Continue tracking employment status and career progression for program graduates, leveraging the Coalition's MOU with NYSDOL for wage data.
- Continue to expand employer engagement, building on existing partnerships with companies like Tesla, M&T, Aleron and others.

Goodwill of Western New York

Goodwill of WNY is expanding Goodskills Career Builder with a focus on training in Erie County. Goodskills Career Builder is an industry-driven program with sector specific recruitment, career readiness training, an experiential work environment, support services, and technical and job training. It includes connections with hiring employers and career coaching for up to three years. The program prepares individuals for manufacturing and tech-aligned roles and provides a strong foundation for additional study. Goodwill anticipates that 150 underserved residents will complete training over its three-year grant period.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

CONTINUED TO ENHANCE PROGRAMS:

Strengthened curriculum by adding instruction in blueprint reading and precision measurement, ensuring closer alignment with manufacturing employer expectations. On the tech side, Goodwill began developing AI training, which will be integrated in 2026.

EXPANDED OUTREACH AND VISIBILITY:

Launched a dedicated LinkedIn page to provide employers with up-to-date program information. A separate LinkedIn group is maintained for program graduates to share job postings.

DEEPENED EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT:

Built new employer relationships and deepened existing partnerships leading to repeat hiring with employer partners such as FedEx Logistics, which hired at least four program graduates.

OPERATED AS A MANUFACTURING AND TECH ON-RAMP:

With 16 graduates in 2025 pursuing additional training, strengthened transitions to advanced training through referrals and pathway alignment within the Coalition.

STAYED ON TRACK WITH GOALS: Kept on pace to meet enrollment targets and came very close to graduation goals for the year. Demonstrated growth in program scale and outcomes across programs.



PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Manufacturing Track

Four weeks of training prepares individuals to begin a career in manufacturing.

Certifications: OSHA 10, Shop Math Certification through JCC

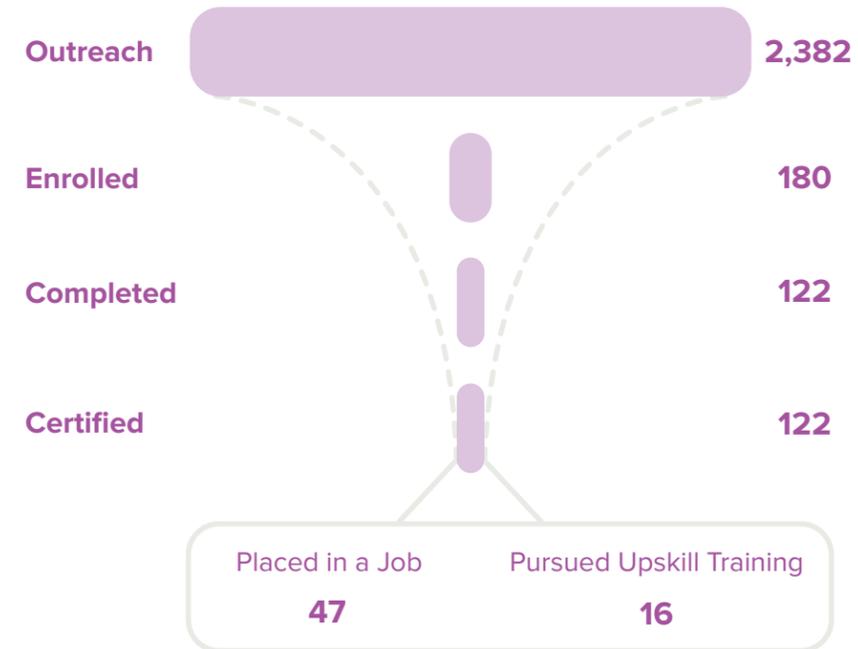
Tech Track

Goodskills Career Builder tech track prepares students to work in a tech-aligned role or pursue additional training.

Certifications: CompTIA Tech+

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of December 31, 2025



In 2025, Goodwill made clear progress in both scale and outcomes, building on prior-year results. Outreach nearly tripled from 2024 levels, reaching 1,780 individuals in 2025 and over 2,300 cumulatively. That pipeline generated 115 enrollments in 2025, and 180 participants enrolled in training to date.

Program performance remained strong as the program scaled up. In 2025, 78 participants completed and earned certifications, bringing cumulative completions and certifications to 122. Average wages also increased, reinforcing the program's focus on higher-paying career pathways.

Employment outcomes support Goodwill's role as both a connector into employment and next-step training. In 2025, 28 graduates secured jobs with a diverse group of employers. The program has 47 job placements to date. At the same time, a total of 16 participants leveraged Goodskills as a launchpad to additional training with partners that included Per Scholas, Trocaire, BCAT, and SUNY Erie.

LOOKING AHEAD

Continue to improve curriculum, using ongoing employer feedback and labor market research to guide program design, changes and delivery, keeping programs aligned with current and emerging workforce needs.

Integrate AI into training, offering participants foundational AI literacy and an introduction to practical skills for leveraging new technologies in AI-aligned tasks.

Strengthen outreach and employer engagement. Leverage Goodskills's LinkedIn presence as an employer-facing resource with accessible, up-to-date information and supporting broader employer engagement efforts for the program.

Continue to expand an on-ramp model by equipping individuals with work readiness skills that prepare them for training programs offered by Coalition partners that ultimately lead to placement in higher-wage jobs.

Jamestown Community College (JCC)

JCC is expanding its current manufacturing offerings to all three campus locations. Developed in partnership with employers, programs include Welding Fundamentals, Machining/CNC Operator, Industrial Maintenance Technician and Building Automation Systems Technician. JCC is also developing new programs for employers and their incumbent workforce interested in upskilling, while launching industry-driven tech courses at all three campuses and at industry partner sites.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

DELIVERED CORE MANUFACTURING TRAINING PATHWAYS: Successfully ran cohorts in Welding, Industrial Maintenance Technician (IMT), CNC/Machining, and Building Automation Systems.

EXPANDED TRAINING INTO ADVANCED AND SPECIALIZED ROLES: Launched and offered new programs in Electrical Technician, CAD/CAM, CNC Lathe Specialist, CNC Mill Specialist, Robot Technician, and Controls Technician. Expanded the training portfolio to support more specialized, automation-driven manufacturing occupations.

STRENGTHENED ALIGNMENT WITH EMPLOYER DEMAND: Program offerings reflected both employer-identified needs in advanced manufacturing, automation, and precision machining and responsiveness; and evolving industry needs, including the adoption of new technologies.

EXPANDED OUTREACH AND ACCESS: Hired a Hispanic outreach coordinator who translated all IMT marketing and course materials into Spanish and provided in-cohort support to participants.

ELEVATED THE VISIBILITY OF NON-CREDIT CREDENTIALS: JCC recognized achievements in workforce development by including non-credit bearing students in the college's graduation program.



PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Building Automation Systems

Trains individuals in the design, installation and maintenance of building automation systems.
Certifications: OSHA 10 Construction, JCC Certificate of Completion

Welding

Provides foundational skills in various welding techniques.
Certifications: OSHA 10 General Industry, AWS D1.1 Structural Steel Qualification, JCC Certificate of Completion

Industrial Maintenance Technician

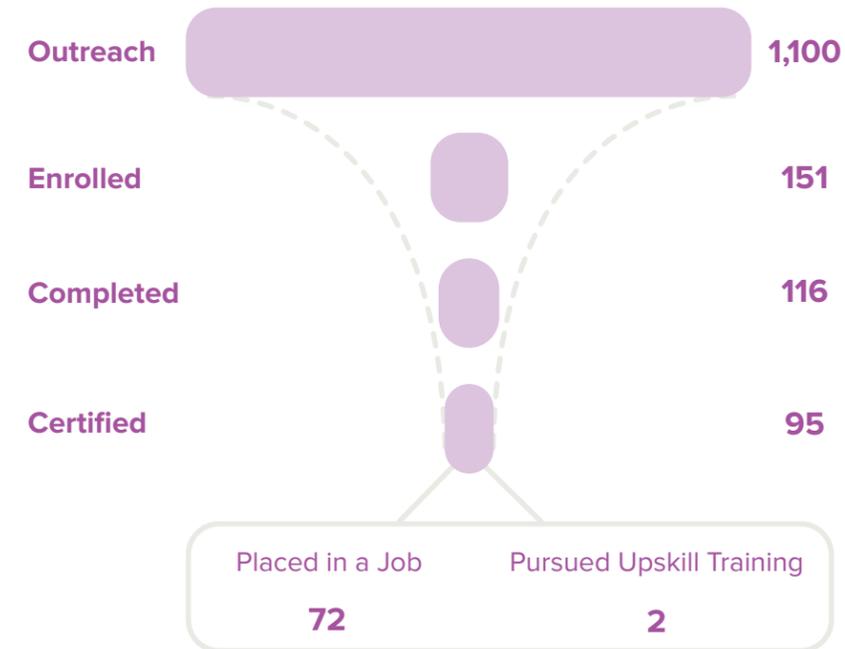
Prepares individuals for work as industrial maintenance technicians.
Certifications: OSHA 10 General Industry, Smart Automation Certification Alliance (SACA): Electric Motor Control Systems 1, JCC Certificate of Completion

Machining/CNC Operator

Trains individuals to operate machine tools and computer numerical control machines.
Certifications: OSHA 10 General Industry, HAAS Basic Mill Operator, JCC Certificate of Completion

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of December 31, 2025



JCC made gains in 2025, particularly on employment outcomes, while continuing to build toward strong program outcomes. In 2025, JCC enrolled 77 participants, with 54 completing training and 33 earning industry-recognized certificates. Forty-seven graduates secured a new job or promotion with a wage increase, pushing cumulative job placements to 72 since 2024.

Average hourly wages for placed participants increased from \$18 in 2024 to \$21 in 2025, underscoring the value of training. Two participants also pursued advanced upskilling at JCC.

Since its program launched in 2024, JCC has reached more than a thousand individuals through outreach, enrolled 151 participants, and supported 116 completions and 95 certifications. Beyond certificates, the program generated additional academic and industry value with three participants matriculating into academic programs and earning college credit. Four participants earned additional credentials equipping them with skills related to OSHA and Smart Automation.

LOOKING AHEAD

Continue core training programs, implementing non-credit training in IMT, Welding, and CNC/Machining during spring 2026. Cohorts will graduate in early May.

Strengthen employer connections, actively soliciting job openings from employers aligned with May graduations to support placement.

Expand advanced manufacturing offerings with additional cohorts in Electrical Technician, Controls Technician, Robot Technician, CNC Mill Specialist, and CNC Lathe Specialist.

Launch new manufacturing courses in macro-programming and automated machining.

Develop AI-focused IT upskilling pathways, creating online IT courses informed by employer input, covering topics such as general computing, networking fundamentals, Linux and cloud foundations, and AI infrastructure. Anticipate possible launch in spring 2026.

Northland Workforce Training Center

NWTC continues to build on its successful training model for advanced manufacturing with new and updated programming that prepares students for jobs in clean energy and manufacturing. The program features an Emerging Technologies Lab with a live microgrid and hands-on learning opportunities. In addition to industry-driven, employment-focused training, students receive wraparound services, career coaching and placement services. NWTC anticipates enrolling 189 students over the three-year grant period in CNC machining, mechatronics, HVAC and clean energy training leading to a certificate or degree. NWTC has an 88% retention rate, nearly 64% graduation rate for matriculated programs, almost 98% completion rate for industry-driven programs and 80% job placement rate.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

SCALED UP PROGRAMS: NWTC executed multiple advanced manufacturing pathways in 2025, enrolling 159 participants and achieving 112 completions to date. These outcomes reflect NWTC's ability to scale training and maintain outcomes.

EXPANDED A DIVERSE TALENT PIPELINE: Reached more than 6,300 individuals in 2025 and 6,600 individuals to date, producing a robust and diverse participant pipeline. Nearly 80% of enrollees were individuals of color, with many facing employment, educational, and/or structural barriers.

IN-DEMAND CREDENTIALS: Participants earned industry-recognized credentials tied directly to in-demand roles, including CNC operator, mechatronics technician, and battery manufacturing. Training remained tightly aligned to employer needs.

EMPLOYMENT AND WAGE OUTCOMES: At least 84 confirmed job placements or promotions were achieved to date across completed cohorts. In 2025, post-training wages ranged from \$20.72 to \$23.12 per hour, demonstrating program value for both participants and employers.



PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

CNC Machining

This 12-week program was created in response to employer feedback. It offers the skills needed for an entry-level CNC Operator role.

Certifications: HAAS Certification

Mechatronics

This program equips students with electrical, mechanical, robotics and computer tech skills.

Certifications: One-year certificate

Building Maintenance

This is a full-time, one-year certificate program offered in partnership with Alfred State College.

Certification: One-year certificate

HVAC

This one-year certificate leads to technical roles in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC).

Certifications: One-year certificate

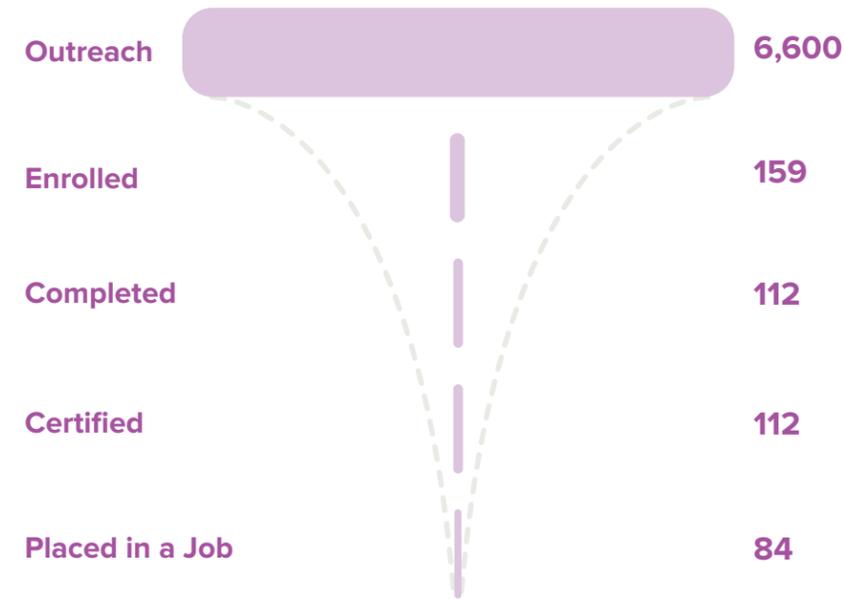
Finishing & Deburring

This 12-week, industry-driven program prepares students for finishing and deburring roles in manufacturing.

Certifications: Certificate of completion

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of January 31, 2026



Programming at NWTC scaled up considerably over the past year. To date, 6,600 individuals have been reached through outreach efforts, resulting in 159 enrollments and 112 program completions. A total of 112 participants earned industry-recognized credentials, including SUNY Certificates primarily related to mechatronics and CNC. Additional participants earned college credits in HVAC and mechatronics. Much of this growth occurred over the past year, significantly accelerating overall program scale. The majority of recent enrollees came from historically underrepresented and economically vulnerable populations.

Employment outcomes followed a similar upward pattern. Through January 31, 2026, 84 participants secured jobs across a range of in-demand manufacturing roles. Hiring employers included a broad mix of manufacturers, reflecting strong employer engagement and program alignment with talent demand. Average starting wages increased in 2025 to nearly \$22 per hour, reinforcing progress toward higher-paying career pathways.

LOOKING AHEAD

Building on the success of the HVAC lab and the Mechatronics Industrial Wiring Co-Lab, Northland will focus on constructing the WNY Clean Energy Experience Center and the Clean Technology Lab. Following completion, NWTC will enroll 32 new Building Maintenance students and launch training in fall 2026. This one-year program, offered in conjunction with Alfred State College, will equip participants with industry-recognized certifications and hands-on experience. Barriers to training and work will be reduced through enhanced participant supports, including a driver's education program launching in 2026.

The WNY Clean Energy Experience Center will provide immersive, hands-on learning opportunities for policymakers, entrepreneurs, students, adult learners, and residents. The Center will demonstrate how renewable energy is generated, stored, and used in residential and commercial applications, featuring solar panels, wind turbines, batteries, EV charging stations, and electrification exhibits.

By linking clean energy deployment with workforce development and economic inclusion, the WNY Clean Energy Experience Center and Clean Technology Lab will serve as a model for advancing climate goals while expanding access to clean energy careers.

Per Scholas Buffalo

Per Scholas expanded its tuition-free IT training programs to WNY, strengthening the regional pipeline into higher-wage tech jobs. With an expanded campus footprint, multiple satellite locations, and partnerships with Coalition members, Per Scholas will eventually offer multiple training tracks, including IT Support, Cybersecurity, and AI Native Business Intelligence. They will eventually serve up to 300 individuals a year across the region, generating an estimated \$8 return for every dollar invested.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

CREDENTIALS AND SKILLS: Per Scholas awarded 24 industry-recognized certificates, including CompTIA A+ and Google IT Support. In addition, 48 individuals earned badges, including ServiceNow ITSM credentials.

ACCESS: Per Scholas trained two cohorts over this reporting period. Among the 58 individuals who enrolled in training in 2025, 35 (60%) were people of color and 13 (34%) were women, reinforcing expanded access to tech careers for individuals in WNY who are underrepresented in the field. Through its holistic approach, the program continued to support participants experiencing significant barriers to employment.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT: Per Scholas collaborated with local employers and staffing firms to support job placement which included direct hires and contract-to-hire roles reflecting flexible entry points into the tech workforce. Graduates were hired by a diverse set of employers, including tech and tech-aligned sectors. Average earnings demonstrated the higher-paying career paths in tech.



PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

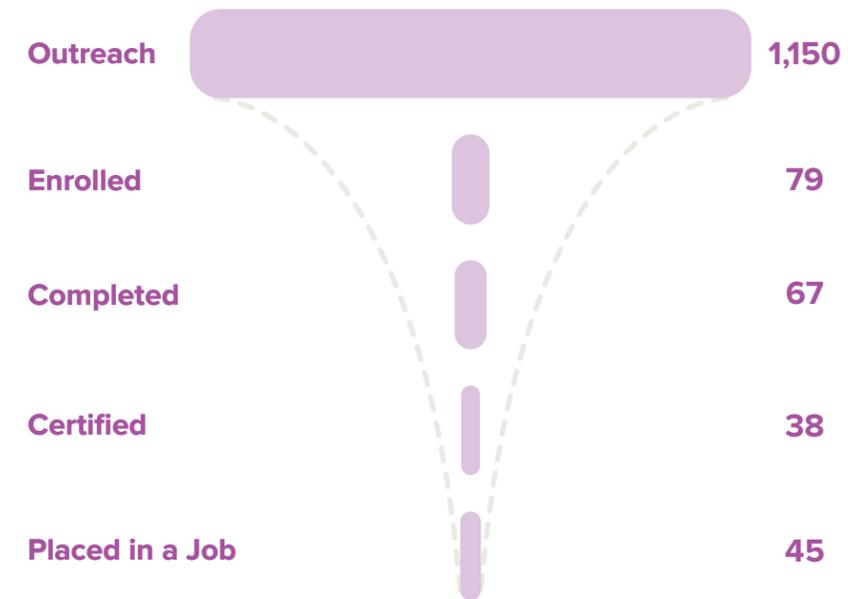
IT Support

This 15-week program (400+ hours) prepares individuals for an entry-level job in tech or tech-aligned roles.

Certifications: Multiple IT certifications (varies by track)

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of February 6, 2026



In 2025, Per Scholas significantly scaled its IT training pipeline, expanding outreach to 750 individuals and bringing cumulative outreach to 1,150. Annual enrollment nearly tripled, with 58 learners enrolled over the past year and 79 enrolled to date.

Completion outcomes were strong, with 47 participants completing training over the last year, raising total completions to 67. Credential attainment accelerated as well, with 24 participants earning industry-recognized certifications over the last year, up from 14 in the prior year.

Per Scholas' programs made significant progress in job placements, which grew from 5 placements in 2024 to 40 over the last year with 45 individuals altogether securing IT and tech-enabled roles with a wide range of regional employers. \$21.30 per hour is the average starting salary since the program launched. The significant gains in completions, certifications, and placements indicate that Per Scholas Buffalo has been able to translate expanded outreach and enrollment into scaled up employment outcomes for residents.

LOOKING AHEAD

Sustain and expand training through both existing and new funding sources. The organization will also continue leveraging partnerships with employers to scale and extend the program's impact.

Support job placement for graduates who are still seeking employment, making use of employer leads, tools and resources made available through the Coalition.

Deepen employer and Coalition alignment, strengthening relationships with Coalition employers to expand placement opportunities for graduates. The organization also plans to participate in Coalition-sponsored activities—such as tech hiring events or an internship program for tech trainees—if these initiatives move forward with support from the tech sector partnership.

Trocaire College

Trocaire College is delivering Jump Start Plus tech training in underserved areas of Buffalo and Lackawanna. The 15-week program combines IT career exploration, work readiness training, and industry-recognized credentials. A financial stipend is available to participants who face barriers such as transportation or childcare. Over two years, Trocaire will train 96 individuals across eight cohorts for entry- and mid-level careers in tech, equipping them with in-demand, industry-recognized credentials.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

ENROLLMENT TARGETS MET: Trocaire reached and exceeded its 2-year enrollment goal of 95 students, enrolling 104 participants by the end of 2025 with strong participation by people of color and women. Trocaire conducted outreach to over 200 individuals by the end of 2025.

STRONG COMPLETION AND CERTIFICATIONS: The program comes close to meeting the Coalition target of a 75% completion rate. Moreover, all completers earned industry-recognized credentials including 76 Cybersafe certifications, 34 ITF+/Tech+ certifications and multiple A+ Core 1 and Core 2 credentials.

MUCH IMPROVED JOB PLACEMENT: Trocaire saw the impact of a dedicated staff member focused on strengthening employer engagement and connecting trainees with employment opportunities. One cohort saw early success with four individuals employed prior to program graduation.



PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

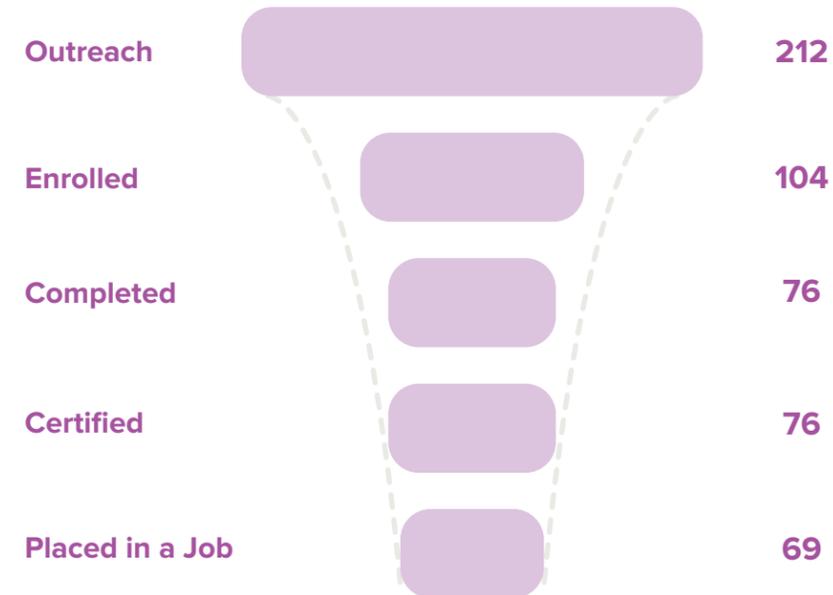
Jump Start Plus

This 15-week, 224-hour program covers IT foundations, basic internet security and skills related to IT support.

Certifications: CompTIA A+, CompTIA Tech+, and CertNexus CyberSafe

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of December 31, 2025



In 2025, Trocaire College's Jump Start Plus program showed significant progress that contributed to outcomes. To date, Trocaire College's Jump Start Plus program has reached 212 individuals through outreach efforts, resulting in 104 enrollments. A total of 76 participants completed training and earned industry-recognized CompTIA certifications. Much of this growth occurred over the past year as the program scaled.

Employment results reflect similar momentum. As of the end of 2025, 69 participants secured employment with 38 in tech/tech-adjacent roles. After hiring a staff member dedicated to supporting program outcomes, job placement accelerated sharply in 2025. The average starting wage for 2024 and 2025 placements is \$23.82 per hour.

LOOKING AHEAD

Focus placement efforts on moving participants quickly from completion into employment through expanded and deeper connections with tech and tech-enabled employers.

The program will continue efforts to strengthen post-program tracking and reduce the number of participants with unknown employment outcomes. This may include securing approval from the Trocaire College leadership to share participant information that enables the tracking of wage outcomes for the purposes of program evaluation.

UB - The Center for Industrial Effectiveness (UB TCIE)

To address the shortage of technicians across the region and state, UB TCIE launched an Entry-Level Manufacturing Technician (EMT) training program in 2025. This new certificate program prepares students for work as technicians in jobs traditionally filled by individuals with two- and four-year degrees. The program will prepare up to 100 individuals for entry-level employment in a variety of manufacturing industries. The 400-hour program consists of classroom training where theory and lab activities include lectures, readings, discussion, project work, and assessments. Training also includes a one-month internship where participants gain hands-on experience, wraparound services and college credit that can be used towards a degree.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

PROGRAM LAUNCH: TCIE's EMT program launched in June 2025 with two cohorts, each with 12 students. Curriculum was developed in partnership with Alfred State with input from Coalition employers.

COMPLETION AND JOB PLACEMENT TARGETS: In less than a year after launching, EMT is meeting Coalition targets for completion (75%) and job placement (70%). The program's 240 hours of classroom training and 160 hours of paid internship experience provide a solid foundation for employment.

IMPACTFUL EMPLOYER OPEN HOUSE: UB TCIE hosted a successful open house for committed and prospective manufacturers and funders. Students met one-on-one with employers, arrived interview-ready with resumes, and demonstrated professionalism.

COMMUNITY BUILDING WITHIN COHORTS: The program spurred a strong peer-support culture that included ride-sharing among students. This improved attendance and reduced transportation barriers.

ACCESS AND OUTREACH: UB TCIE launched a public transit billboard campaign along Bailey Avenue and in Downtown Buffalo to reach priority communities with information about its program.



PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Entry-level Manufacturing Technician (EMT) Training

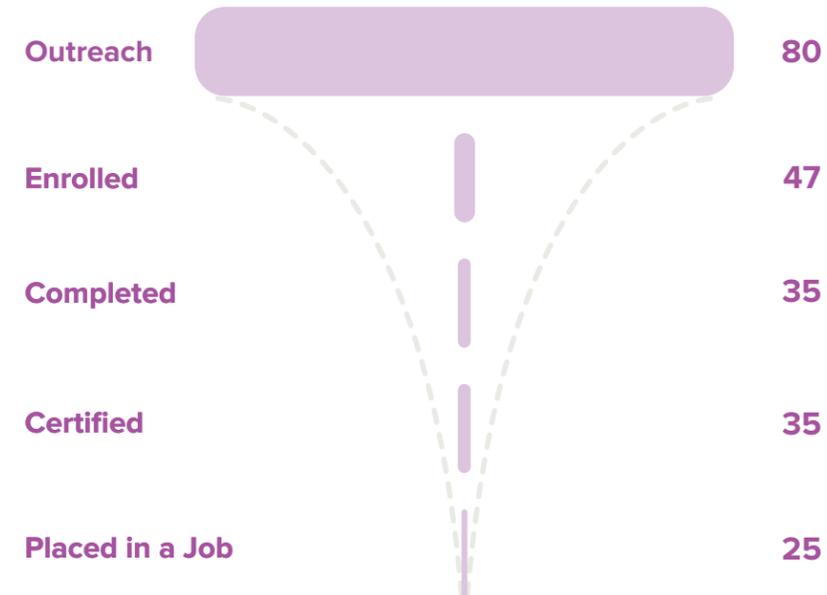
With 240 hours of training and a 160-hour paid internship, this 12-week program prepares students with skills and stackable credentials for an entry-level technician job in manufacturing.

Certifications: Certificate of Completion

College credits: 1+ credit hour

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of December 31, 2025



In 2025, UB TCIE launched its program reaching 80 individuals through outreach efforts and enrolling 47 participants, the majority of whom were people of color.

All of the 35 graduates who completed training also earned a Certificate of Completion for the Entry-Level Manufacturing Technician program, which includes both classroom instruction and an internship component developed in partnership with Alfred State.

Job placement outcomes included 25 participants securing employment in entry-level manufacturing roles with employers such as Tesla, Caplugs, and Viridi.

Placement levels of 71% indicate this new program is successfully expanding employment opportunities for residents through training and internships. This is notable as many participants face barriers including transportation challenges, low incomes and being previously disconnected from the labor force.

LOOKING AHEAD

The next UB TCIE cohorts will begin in February. Training is expected to conclude in April.

Employment input will help to further refine the program. UB TCIE gathered employer feedback and will fine-tune the curriculum to ensure it continues to align with hiring needs.

An employer open house is scheduled for March to continue to strengthen connections between trainees and manufacturers.

Recruitment efforts will continue to focus on increasing participation from underserved communities and demographics, with a focus on increasing participation by women.

The program will continue to provide strong supports for participants, including bus passes and transportation support for internships.

Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) (Cattaraugus-Allegany and Chautauqua Counties)

The region's two workforce development boards in the Southern Tier partnered to bridge the gaps among job seekers, trainers and employers, and strengthen the workforce for manufacturing and tech across Allegany, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua Counties. Chautauqua Works and the Cattaraugus-Allegany Workforce Development Board will braid public funding into Coalition strategies. Along with existing federal funding, these two WDBs will utilize the new funding for training and wraparound services, addressing the barriers faced by rural residents in the region.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

EARLY MOMENTUM: After launching the initiative in late 2024, operations ramped up quickly in early 2025, transitioning from program startup to active implementation during the first quarter of the year.

PROGRAM ACCESS: The program reached rural populations facing significant barriers to training and employment, expanding inclusive pathways into manufacturing and tech careers. Of the 70 participants enrolled, 52 were from households with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level, and 54 had no education or training beyond high school. The majority of enrollees were unemployed or out of the labor force prior to entering the program.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT: Chautauqua Works hosted a Southern Tier Sector Partnership meeting in Lakewood, NY in June 2025, which was well attended and generated valuable employer input to support Coalition training and activities. In September, the WDBs also hosted a job fair in Olean, NY, which drew strong employer participation.



PROGRAMS, CERTIFICATIONS AND SERVICES

Occupational Training

Funding and coordination for training programs aligned with what local employers need. Many programs lead to industry-recognized certifications and skills for roles that included:

- Welding
- Robotics Technician
- Industrial Maintenance Technician
- Machining/CNC Operator Control Technician
- Welding Technology, CAD/CAM Programming
- HVAC, Heavy Equipment Operator

Certifications: Certificate of Completion

Employment Services

Includes support for resume development, interviews, job leads and connections to employers.

On-the-Job Training and Other Work-Based Learning

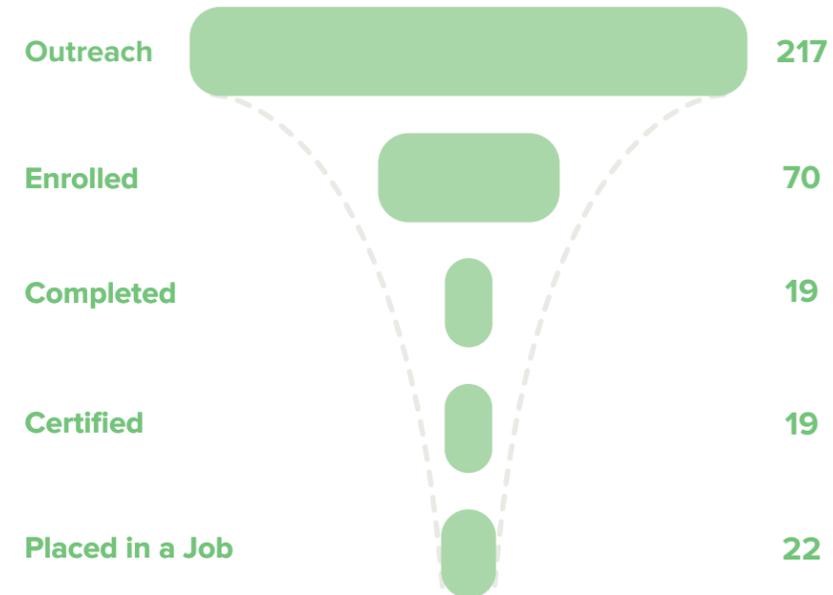
Funding to employers that offset the wages of new hires who are trained on-the-job, and included support for non-OJT models like internships or paid work experiences.

Supportive Services

Covers supportive services like transportation, childcare and technology that remove barriers to training and work.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of December 31, 2025



Note: Job placements can exceed training completions if a participant secures a job while in training and doesn't complete training, and/or if they enroll in the program but not in training and secure employment through a staff-supported job search.

In 2025, the region's two workforce development boards in the Southern Tier enrolled 70 participants, including 24 people of color and 15 women.

Nineteen participants completed training, and all earned industry-recognized certificates across high-demand manufacturing and technical fields such as welding, CNC machining, robotics, and industrial maintenance.

With some individuals seeking only job placement assistance, job placements exceeded completions, with 22 participants securing employment in entry-level roles with a broad mix of regional employers.

Those placed earned an average hourly wage of \$20.43, meeting the Coalition's \$20 per hour target for family-sustaining entry-level wages.

LOOKING AHEAD

Build on the successes of the program's first year, leveraging employer partnerships, job placements, and impactful success stories to strengthen participant outreach and enrollment, as well as employer relationships.

Increase awareness of manufacturing careers, especially CNC, by communicating the opportunities in machining and programming to potential trainees and connecting them with training options and job openings.

Use feedback from employer roundtables and meetings to refine training alignment and hiring pipelines, and provide participants with supportive job placement services.

Scale training and job placement through job fairs, targeted employment recruitment, and by building on successful placements.

DREAM IT DO IT WNY

Dream It Do It Western New York (DIDIWNY) is energizing and building the early talent pipeline. The Dream It Do It Advanced Manufacturing Program (DIDIAMP) is connecting, engaging, enriching, challenging and rewarding students on their way to manufacturing career pathways. DIDIAMP provides manufacturers with access to an early talent pipeline for talent validation and recruitment. The initiative is powered by Buffalo Niagara Manufacturing Alliance (BNMA) and the Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier (MAST) and their combined 300+ members.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS:

DIDIWNY delivered and supported a wide variety of hands-on, career awareness experiences for students. These included several Girls in Manufacturing Camps, Manufacturing Mayhem Camps, Manufacturing Tech Tours, Create Your Future Camps and STEM/TECH Wars that engaged thousands of students in multiple counties. All activities emphasized hands-on learning, exposure to manufacturing and interaction with employers.

CREDENTIALS AND BADGES: In 2025, over 1,200 students enrolled in the Dream It Do It Advanced Manufacturing Program through DIDIWNY's technology platform partner Tallo. Tallo is a digital career development platform that enables students to explore careers, earn electronic badges, and connect with manufacturers. In 2025, 19 students earned DIDIAMP certificates.

EXPANDED STRONGER REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: DIDIWNY partnered with SUNY Niagara, SUNY JCC, NWTC and manufacturing locations to deliver camps and various programming for students.

DIVERSITY FOCUSED OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT: DIDIWNY expanded in Erie and Niagara counties. Bringing on two additional DIDIWNY Directors, the team implemented targeted efforts to help manufacturers link to diverse student populations across urban and rural school districts. In addition, DIDIWNY expanded Girls in Manufacturing Camp programming.



PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

DIDI Advanced Manufacturing Program (DIDIAMP)

This program engages students starting in 8th grade through the end of high school towards a pathway into a manufacturing career. The program includes activities that raise awareness of careers in manufacturing and provide hands-on learning, as well as the opportunity to earn industry-relevant badges and certifications.

Manufacturing Technology Tours

Guided tours of local manufacturing companies raise awareness of career opportunities within the industry.

Girls in Manufacturing Camps

These camps are designed to introduce girls to opportunities in manufacturing with hands-on activities.

STEM/Tech Wars

These competitive events challenge students to address real-world manufacturing challenges, while building skills and sparking interest in manufacturing careers.

Manufacturing Mayhem Camps

These camps offer a variety of career exploration activities.

TCAM Camps

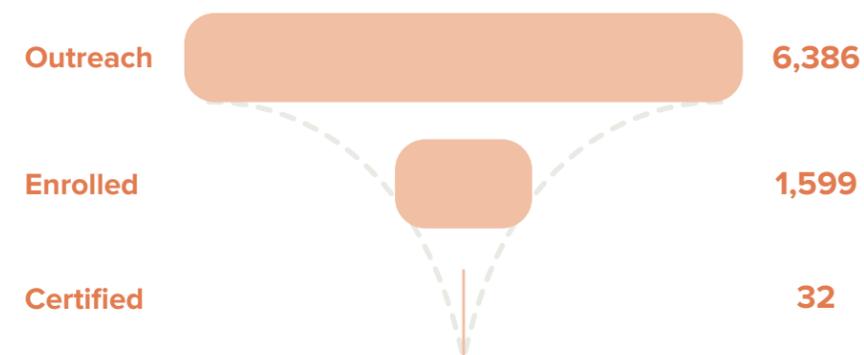
These camps educate the educators on the career opportunities for students in the manufacturing field.

Create Your Future Camps

These camps are designed to introduce both girls and boys to opportunities in manufacturing with hands-on activities.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

as of December 31, 2025



Note: This chart includes the metrics on which DIDIWNY is making progress as a pipeline developer. It excludes completions and job placements, which are outcomes being tracked only for Coalition-member trainers.

DIDIWNY's performance showed substantial reach and scale across outreach and enrollment activities in 2025. Since its efforts with the Coalition launched, outreach has engaged nearly 6,400 individuals, primarily youth, with strong growth between 2024 and 2025.

Enrollment followed a similar trend, reaching nearly 1,600 students to date. This was driven by additional staff and a significant geographic expansion of activities in Erie and Niagara counties during 2025.

Progress in credential attainment also continued, with 32 youth earning certifications to date. This growth in outreach, enrollment, and certifications is building a stronger pipeline into training and jobs, laying the groundwork for longer-term workforce and employment impacts.

LOOKING AHEAD

Expand connections in the educational sector, strengthening relationships with educators, counselors, administrators and students while influencing curricula in alignment with the needs of manufacturers.

Grow relationships in the manufacturing sector, encouraging employers to actively connect with the WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition, host facility tours, DIDIWNY programming and engage with students on the Tallo platform.

Seek new and support current funding applications, including identifying opportunities that can support the work of the WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition and DIDIWNY programming implementation. In partnership with Moog and NWTC, continue to support funding applications submitted last year through the Coalition to the Department of Defense.

Implement programming and grow enrollment, continue and expand the reach of manufacturing technology tours, camps and hands-on programming activities while growing enrollment in DIDIAMP.

Success Stories



Chautauqua Works
americanjobcenter

Alan spent years either unemployed or at dead-end jobs. Once his daughter was born, he decided he wanted to build a better life for his family.

Through help from Chautauqua Works, he enrolled in a CNC workforce development class at Jamestown Community College. Alan took on the 500-hour course load that included CNC G-coding, blueprint reading and metrology. In addition to his CNC training, the Goodwill Goodskills Career Builder program assisted Alan in creating a resume and cover letter which helped him obtain a position at **Classic Brass** in Jamestown.

At Classic Brass, Alan is an Apprentice-level CNC Programmer. He returned to Chautauqua Works for assistance in applying for financial aid and re-enrolling in classes.

Classic Brass supports his professional growth through a flexible work schedule that allows him to further his education.

Alan is more financially secure and is on his way to having the life he dreamed of for him and his six-year-old daughter.

Alan's daughter provides his biggest reward—telling him she's proud of him before he heads off to work.



“Ben is a dependable and enthusiastic volunteer at our events. Whether he’s helping set up, or assisting with hands-on demonstrations, he brings a positive energy and enthusiasm,” said DIDIWNY Executive Director, Todd Trantum.

Ben is a student at Jamestown Public Schools and aspires to be a welder. He’s part of Dream It Do It Western New York (DIDIWNY) and is in a mentoring program through Chautauqua Striders.

Before getting involved in DIDIWNY, Ben didn’t know much about manufacturing. Through events like STEM Wars and Manufacturing Mayhem and going on factory tours, he learned that welding takes skill, science, math and creativity, and saw how welding is used in high-tech ways. He is also a volunteer at DIDIWNY events, showing kids his age and younger that manufacturing is fun and exciting.

As part of DIDIWNY Ben uses an app called Tallo to earn digital badges for participating in events and tours, finishing tech classes, or being a good team member. Each badge helps him build his future resume.

Being part of DIDIWNY and Chautauqua Striders helps Ben stay focused and guides him to his goals of becoming a welder and working in advanced manufacturing.

“Some people think welding is just about melting metal, but to me, it’s more than that. It’s not just sparks flying, it’s about being careful, smart with your tools and creating things. It’s about building strong things—like bridges, cars, and machines.”

- Ben



Donnie was a Warehouse Administrator at a local food product manufacturing company—hoping to take advantage of their promised tech training. He was unexpectedly laid off after a few months. He had previously taken a cybersecurity course and continued to search for ways to expand his tech training. Trocaire College’s IT Jumpstart program stood out to him because his recruiter was so helpful.

Just a few weeks into the IT Jumpstart program, Donnie was offered a Customer Service Representative (CSR) job at **Avalon Document Services**. He continued his tech training at Trocaire hoping to advance into a more tech-related position at Avalon. Donnie was impressed by the dedication, commitment and knowledge of his Trocaire instructor.

“Keeping the mindset of continuing the journey is a challenge, but it’s important if you want to reach your goals.”

- Donnie

After completing the course, Donnie was given the choice to be promoted to either a cybersecurity or forensic technician position at Avalon. He credited his time as a CSR to help him make the decision to choose forensic technician. Donnie is a part of a team that gathers data, analyzes it, and prepares it to be presented in the court of law, working with police and justice departments.

Donnie already has his CompTIA ITF certification, and he’s still studying for his CompTIA A+ and CCFE (forensic) certifications, hoping to advance his career even further.



“Trust the process, show up and give 100%.”

-Christy (quoting Per Scholas Staff)

Christy worked in admissions in the emergency room of a hospital. While in recovery after a serious car accident, she was let go from her admissions job and pivoted to working as a part-time driver for DoorDash to make ends meet. A former co-worker of Christy’s and current instructor at Per Scholas encouraged her to apply for Per Scholas’ 13-week cybersecurity training course.

Even though the coursework was challenging and the days were long, she was able to complete Per Scholas’ program despite some personal and health struggles. Instructors were thorough and taught with a real-world perspective. Students teamed up to work on in-class assignments and took online skills testing. On professional development days, students updated their social media profiles, worked on their resumes, and participated in mock interviews.

Christy’s new certification, past healthcare experience, and interview prep led her to multiple job offers. She is now an IT Analyst I at **Kaleida Health**. Kaleida is investing in her professional growth—sending her to Wisconsin to learn Epic and encouraging her to get certified in Epic’s Cadence and Prelude modules and earn a data career badge.

It has been a long road for Christy, but she is accomplishing her goals—completing her certification, working in healthcare cybersecurity, and meeting her salary requirements.



Before enrolling in the Entry-Level Manufacturing Technician (EMT) program at UB’s Center for Industrial Effectiveness (TCIE), Britany was working multiple jobs to make ends meet. Despite working nearly 30 hours a week, she was still struggling financially and searching for something more.

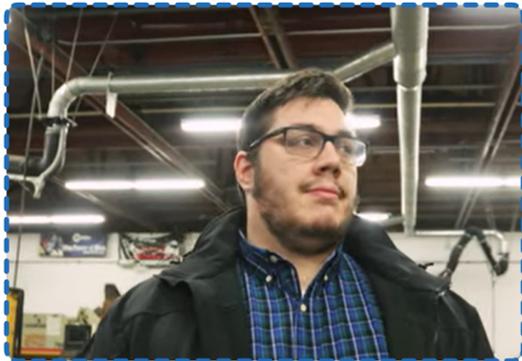
Through the EMT program, she quickly developed a passion for electrical work, PLCs (Programmable Logic Controllers), troubleshooting, and motor rebuilds. With encouragement from her instructors, she gained confidence and became a leader among her peers.

After completing the classroom portion of the program, Britany began her internship at **Caplugs**, where she applied her skills to real-world maintenance work, including wiring, relays, filters, gaskets, and mechanical troubleshooting. She was soon offered a full-time position as a Maintenance Mechanic.

“Stay committed. Stick with it. Don’t give up. This program can change your life.”

-Britany

Today, Britany is a valued member of the Caplugs team and is proud of the career she has built through the EMT program at UB TCIE. The stability and confidence she gained have been life changing.



John was looking for a pathway to a career in advanced manufacturing. He explored the Jamestown Community College (JCC) Maintenance Technician program, after seeing an advertisement for it, and it turned out to be the right fit.

Now a graduate of the Maintenance Technician program, JCC's coursework prepared John for a career in manufacturing and gave him the confidence to pursue job opportunities. JCC's instructors were engaging, encouraging and helpful.

After graduating, John attended a JCC job fair that included five companies looking for qualified candidates to fill open positions. John heard back quickly for interviews and landed a job with **Purina** as a Maintenance Technician Electrician.

John acknowledges that he couldn't have done it without JCC and is excited to see where his new career takes him.

“My advice for someone considering a career in advanced manufacturing is to just go after these types of courses. Really get a lot under your belt and take every course you can. It’s so helpful. I can’t stress it enough. JCC has really been a cornerstone in my life.”

- John



A graduate of Buffalo State University in Computer Information Systems and Economics & Finance, Cyndy wanted to improve her skills and technical knowledge—understanding the importance of continuing education in the ever-changing tech field. She learned about BCAT while taking a course at Goodwill and was attracted to BCAT's offerings and welcoming atmosphere.

“You have to be committed and invest in yourself. Every day I learn things that I can apply at work. It has been and continues to be a great experience.”

- Cyndy

For Cyndy, BCAT's Information Technology training ensured she had the technical training and skills to pass certification exams, and land and retain a good-paying job. Cyndy's approachable and knowledgeable BCAT instructors were tech professionals who brought insights into real-world workplace challenges and solutions. BCAT also provided Cyndy with professional skills like building a resume and practicing interviews, and they promoted networking opportunities. Through group projects, chats, and class participation, students built relationships—often helping each other with coursework, networking and job prospects—making the challenging course load, homework and job search easier to manage.

Cyndy is now working as a Vulnerabilities Assessment Specialist at **M&T Bank** while continuing to expand her knowledge by taking additional IT classes at BCAT. She appreciates that M&T Bank encourages additional professional development to stay current in the field. Cyndy's instructors' abilities to bring real-world training to the classroom prepared her for her new workplace and new responsibilities.





Shalion was looking to further his education when he came across Northland Workforce Training Center's (NWTC) website. He took a tour of NWTC and originally considered the Electrical program but pivoted when he heard about the upcoming Finishing & Deburring program. NWTC staffers encouraged and guided Shalion who was nervous about applying, as the course required candidates to interview with hiring employers. Shalion was initially waitlisted but accepted when a spot became available.

Shalion was determined to get through the 12-week course, but it wasn't without personal obstacles. He shared with his instructor and NWTC career coach that he had lost his home, didn't have a car and had to bus back and forth from work at a fast-food restaurant to NWTC. They helped Shalion manage his finances and guided him in his search for an apartment and a car he could afford. That additional support allowed him to persevere through his studies.

Shalion loves working with his hands and knew he wanted to work at Moog. He was laser focused on succeeding in the NWTC course because he felt it would change his life. The day before graduation **Moog** offered him the position as a B-level Technician for their Space and Defense division. Moog was impressed by Shalion's talent and dedication. A month into his employment Shalion feels well-prepared for the job from his training and loves his job at Moog.

“They [teachers] were as tough as they needed to be because of the high level of precision that’s required in this profession. At the same time, they were motivating and there for the students when we had questions.”

- Shalion



“Goodskills updated my skills and prepared me for the career I’ve dreamed of.”

- Sonja

Sonja spent eight years out of the workforce after stepping away from a successful career to care for her family. When she was ready to return, her hiatus led to unexpected challenges.

Through Goodskills Career Builder, Sonja refreshed and updated her professional skills so she could successfully re-enter the job market. Goodskills helped her connect directly with companies, opening new doors to employment.

After graduating, Sonja landed an interview and was hired at **Catholic Health**. Within a few months, Sonja was promoted to the position of Revenue Management Patient Experience Specialist.

Sonja's courage and commitment to Goodskills Career Builder helped her overcome barriers and achieve her career goals at Catholic Health.

Lessons Learned and Promising Practices

The Coalition seeks to foster collaborative learning and drive positive workforce impacts by facilitating information sharing, providing mutual support, and developing promising practices to address shared workforce challenges.

Throughout 2025, Coalition members convened regularly to review program progress, share effective strategies and problem-solve common challenges. These discussions informed ongoing program implementation and continuous improvement. This section highlights key lessons learned from the Coalition's collective work over the past year.

EMPLOYER LEADERSHIP STRENGTHENS THE COALITION

Employer leadership continues to drive the Coalition's success, with the Coalition working best when employers are actively involved in shaping strategy and curriculum, and are committed to hiring our graduates.

The drafting of an employer MOU in 2025 reflects a shared commitment to formalizing expectations, expanding meaningful employer participation and growing the number of active employer partners.

DEDICATED PLACEMENT STAFF IMPROVE OUTCOMES

Placement after training does not happen without effort. Programs with staff dedicated to job placement, interview preparation, resume development and facilitating employer-trainee connections are seeing stronger outcomes. In one case, a training program increased placements from two in 2024 to dozens in 2025 after filling a dedicated business relationship and placement role.

JOB PLACEMENTS LAG COMPLETIONS

It's something the Coalition saw last year, and the data this year proves it. The Coalition's job placement rate is 61% in 2025, more than double the rate in 2024. Enrollments and completions will outpace placements, and this underestimates the Coalition's longer-term impact. The data underscores the importance of continued follow-up and tracking beyond completions.

BUSINESS OUTCOMES MATTER

Employers seek talent that can quickly contribute to production, quality and operational efficiency, and grow with a company. When training aligns with business needs, employer engagement deepens. This model has driven the success of the Finishing & Deburring program, now in its second year, as employers shape curriculum, interview and hire candidates, and see returns in workforce readiness. As a result, employers are willing to invest in training, which is more difficult to achieve when their involvement is more limited.

ECONOMIC MOBILITY IS A LONG-TERM INVESTMENT

Wages are a critical metric and will continue to be tracked. However, they don't capture career trajectory, job stability, access to benefits or opportunities for advancement. For adults who have lost a job permanently, or those who are pivoting into a new industry, starting wages may not initially exceed prior earnings. Evaluating impact requires a longer-term horizon that accounts for upward mobility, skill progression and sustained employment over time.

FLEXIBILITY IS ESSENTIAL IN A CHANGING ECONOMY

Economic conditions are constantly evolving, as hiring demand can shift in response to technology, politics, policy changes, and market forces. The Coalition is well-positioned to respond through its employer-driven, collaborative, regional approach. As a connector and convener, the Coalition can pivot more quickly than individual programs constrained by curriculum approvals, funding restrictions or staffing limits. Looking to 2026, this flexibility will continue to be a core strength that supports employers, trainers and job seekers.

"We are trying to be innovative and think outside the box."

WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition Member

"We have industry-focused development. I think that's why it's so successful."

WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition Member

"It's like business. You have to be responsive. You have to follow up. You have to be professional, and you have to deliver."

WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition Member (paraphrase)

"There was a significant investment made...and we want to make sure we are giving a return on investment."

WNY Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Coalition Member (paraphrase)

Talent Attraction and Retention

Employer Best Practices: Lessons from Moog and West Herr

The Workforce Need

In September 2025, the Coalition distributed a survey to Coalition Council members to identify priority topics for future meetings. Talent attraction and retention emerged as clear focus areas, particularly among employers.

In response, Coalition leadership invited Paul Wilkinson, Coalition Chair and Chief Human Resources Officer of Moog, and Jay Galligan, VP of Fixed Operations at West Herr, to present their company's strategies for talent attraction and retention at the Manufacturing and Tech Sector Partnership meetings in the fall.

Their presentations generated strong interest and were well received. This section highlights the key best practices that they shared.



Moog's Employee Value Proposition (EVP)

Building an Employer Brand That Attracts and Retains

What is an Employee Value Proposition?

EVP is a set of factors that defines what's unique about working for your company and why people should join and stay.

It's a blueprint for your employer brand storytelling.

It's the backbone that guides all your employment communications—internally and externally.

Why is this important?

Standing out amongst the competition

Competition for key talent is real.

Increased costs are associated with low brand presence/recognition.

A strong employment brand helps the company attract talent.

Employees will better recognize the full value of working there.

Your company and what you do are mostly unknown externally.

How can your company improve attraction?

Using your company's story to attract talent

Create a clear EVP.

Make sure your career sites and various social media platforms speak to your company's uniqueness.

Differentiate yourselves from your competition.

Leverage how great it is to work for your company.

How can you unlock talent through your EVP?

Present your company's EVP clearly

Set the stage with a compelling overview of what makes your company unique.

Align interview questions with EVP themes

Ensure every conversation reflects your core values and differentiators.

Showcase EVP during candidate interactions

Bring EVP to life through stories, visuals, and culture cues.

Share real success stories

Demonstrate how your EVP drives career growth and innovation.

Feature employee testimonials

Let authentic voices speak to your company's experience.

Engage in open Q&A

Invite curiosity and build trust through transparent dialogue.

West Herr's Approach to Attracting, Hiring and Keeping Great People

Start with the Application Process

Try applying for a job at your own company to determine how easy it is for your applicants. Many companies find that their own application process is hard to use which can stop qualified applicants from applying. Making it easy to apply helps more people find and join your company.

If your company's process is not simple, change it. The goal should be to create the broadest list of applicants.

- Make it mobile friendly.
- Consider building a website just for job applications.
- Use friendly and clear words so everyone can understand the process and the job descriptions.
- Remove any unnecessary questions or exclusionary language.
- Make sure every applicant gets a phone call.

Consider the Interview Process

- **Pre-screening:** Find out if the candidate aligns with your company culture.
- **Demonstrating Care:** Understand who you're bringing into the company to help identify the best fit for the right roles in the organization.
- **Team Involvement:** Involving coworkers in interviews helps new hires meet the team and fosters a welcoming environment.
- **Importance of Follow-Up:** Staying in touch after interviews ensures strong communication and allows scheduling of second interviews when necessary.

Use Internships to Develop the Talent Pipeline

Running summer and fall intern programs helps students develop skills and provides insight into their work capabilities.

- Create specific intern programs.
- Add/assign staff to support these programs.
- Reach out to as many schools and colleges as possible to reach as many students as possible.

Engage Employees in Recruitment Through Referral Programs

Develop a reward program for your employees who refer others to join the company.

- Make the financial incentives attractive to your employees.
- Pay the employee for the candidate's interview.
- Give the employee a bonus if the candidate is hired.
- Reward them if their referral reaches a retention milestone.

Support New Hires

Retention takes effort. Retain your talent by welcoming new hires on day one, introducing them to the company's core values, and showing off the company culture. Demonstrate that you support them throughout their careers at your company.

Make Day 1 / Week 1 Memorable

Make the first days special for your new hire by warmly welcoming them and helping them to feel valued.

- Have a peer mentor and manager introduce them to people and processes.

- Go to lunch with them on their first day.
- Give them a sense that your company cares about its people.

Know the Importance of the 90-Day Review

Conduct a 90-day review to provide feedback and ensure new hires are progressing well.

- Report on positive progress, not just poor performance.
- Find out how to say yes to hand-raisers who can move into higher roles.
- Partner with training providers who can upskill your employees, allowing them to show their commitment to advancement.

Forge Partnerships That Build the Talent Pipeline

Joining school advisory councils connects companies with local communities and educational institutions that prepare students for careers. Get involved and stay relevant.

- Partner with training and educational providers to help develop curriculum specific to your company's needs.
- Tap into these providers for a pipeline of talent.
- Visit classrooms and host educational activities to inspire students about future career opportunities.
- Support programs that help develop workforce skills and job readiness overall.
- Team up with other companies, including competitors, to strengthen the industry by ensuring sufficient skilled workers.



Looking Ahead

ADVANCE MANUFACTURING SECTOR PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

Develop and implement more targeted short-term training programs in high-demand areas like CNC Machining and Finishing & Deburring.

Develop case studies and share emerging practices to maximize impact and replicate innovative approaches like the Finishing & Deburring program.

Coordinate a collaborative, multi-county, Coalition-driven approach to Manufacturing Day/Month 2026 with targeted outreach and activities that raise awareness of manufacturing.

Leverage an ongoing collaboration with DIDIWNY to promote manufacturing careers and connect high schools with Coalition partners.

STRENGTHEN TECH SECTOR PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

Consider a hiring event that brings together trainers, tech and tech-aligned employers and recent training graduates of workforce training programs.

Consider piloting a paid tech internship that connects graduates with employers, providing valuable experience and opportunities to apply skills.

Track outcomes of initiatives to assess effectiveness in connecting participants with employment opportunities.

LEVERAGE THE INNOVATION FUND

Drive targeted investments into promising workforce development initiatives identified by the Coalition.

Encourage leveraging additional resources to maximize the impact of the Coalition's innovation fund.

Build communications outlets to help ensure Coalition members leverage this matching funding opportunity.

STRATEGICALLY ENGAGE EMPLOYERS

Actively recruit new employer members to the Coalition Council, prioritizing those aligned with existing training partners.

Leverage job postings data and other Coalition resources to identify new employer partners.

Adopt a network-building approach to directly support job placement for graduates of Coalition trainers.

Promote marketing material to showcase Coalition trainers and pipeline developers to employers.

PROMOTE DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Actively identify and share best practices among members related to program development, recruitment, job placement, retention and other key areas.

Showcase successes and lessons learned, in meetings and through short, readable briefs that can be incorporated into annual reports and foster continuous improvements across the Coalition.

MONITOR AND REPORT PROGRESS

Publish an annual progress report highlighting Coalition-wide progress and outcomes. Provide periodic progress updates to Coalition members and funders.

Implement a data-sharing agreement with the NYS DOL to track participant wage outcomes of Coalition-funded training programs.

Continue to use data to inform strategy and measure impact.

IDENTIFY AND EVALUATE NEW FUNDING SOURCES

Continue evaluating new opportunities that align with the Coalition's vision and goals.

Prioritize funding and sustainability for existing partners.

Data Sources and Notes

Outcomes Data: Unless otherwise noted, the outcomes data presented in this report reflects cumulative results for 2024 and 2025. It includes outcomes for the Per Scholas Buffalo's graduating class in February 2026. Programs that began in 2025 but will finish in 2026 will be included in next year's report. Data were collected through a standardized online portal and/or Google Sheet, with many members providing subsequent updates via email and feedback on draft sections.

Enrollment in Training: Reflects the number of individuals who enrolled in Coalition programs in 2024 and 2025. Unless otherwise noted, participants in programs that are scheduled to graduate in 2026 are not included in the Coalition's collective enrollment total.

Certificates: Reflects the number of participants who completed training and earned at least one certification. In tech, certificates primarily consist of industry-recognized credentials such as CompTIA certifications. The manufacturing numbers include certificates of completion as well as industry-recognized certifications.

Average Hourly and Annual Wage: These figures represent a weighted average across Coalition program partners who provided wage data. When an hourly wage was reported, an annual salary was calculated based on a 40-hour work week and 52 weeks per year. The same assumptions were made to calculate an hourly rate for program partners that provided an average annual salary.

Job Placements: This metric reflects graduates who secured a new job or received a promotion with their existing employer after completing training. Graduates who remained in the same position without a promotion or wage increase are not counted as job placements. While the Coalition aims for all graduates to find employment in their field of study, some placements may be in other fields.

Minimum Wage: As of January 1, 2025, the minimum wage in WNY was \$15.50 per hour. It is \$16.00 per hour as of January 1, 2026.

Participation in Pipeline Development Activities: Data for 2024 reflects enrollment reported by DIDIWNY and TechBuffalo across a variety of career awareness events. Data for 2025 reflects enrollment reported by DIDIWNY. DIDIWNY's outreach total reflects direct engagement in DIDIWNY-produced or supported programming. It does not include broader outreach and engagement activities such as classroom presentations, career fairs, employer presentations, stakeholder engagement, or student engagement through Tallo and social media.

Barriers: The data presented reflects the total number of individuals reported by Coalition members as facing specific barriers. While the goal was to align with barrier data collected by funded members for OSOS grant reporting, some funded members may not collect the full set of barrier information. As a result, the figures shown may understate the total number of participants facing barriers.

Success Stories: All Coalition program partners were invited to submit success stories. In some cases, the Coalition's intermediary team interviewed participants identified by program partners and drafted their stories for inclusion in this report.

Employer Partners in 2025

Below is a list of the Coalition’s current employer partners, along with links to their online job-posting pages. This information is provided as a resource to trainers and their graduates to support job placement efforts over the next year.

MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

Acension Industries	https://asmfab.com/careers
Alro Specialty Metals	https://careers.alro.com/career-home/jobs
Anderson Precision Inc	https://andersonprecision.applicantpro.com/jobs/
Artone Manufacturing Co Inc	https://artonemfg.com/contact/careers/
Blackstone Advanced Tech LLC	https://blackadvtech.com/careers/
Boston Valley Terra Cotta	https://bostonvalley.com/manufacturing-careers/
Buffalo Gear	https://buffalogear.com/
Casey Machine Co	https://caseymachine.com/contact/
Cintas Corp	https://careers.cintas.com/search/
Cobey Inc	https://www.cobey.com/Careers/careers.html
Cummins Inc	https://cummins.jobs/locations/new-york/jobs/
Cutco Corp	https://www.cutco.com/company/jobs
Dimar Manufacturing Corp	https://www.dimarmfg.com/careers/openings/
Edwards Vacuum	https://www.edwardsvacuum.com/en-us/join-us
Electrovaya	https://electrovaya.com/contact-us/
EOS Worldwide	https://www.eosworldwide.com/job-board
First Healthcare Products	https://firstproducts.com/careers/
Flow Control Holdings	https://www.fchinc.com/contact-us/
Graham Corp	https://graham-mfg.com/careers/
Great Lakes Cheese Factory	https://jobs.greatlakescheese.com/
Greenpac	https://jobs.cascades.com/search/
Harmac Medical	http://harmac.com/careers/
Keller Technology Corp	https://www.kellertechnology.com/contact-us/careers/
Moog	https://www.moog.com/careers.html
New Flyer	https://apply.workable.com/new-flyer/
Nissha Medical Technologies	https://www.nisshamedical.com/
Oetiker	https://www.oetiker.com/en-us/careers
Perry’s Ice Cream Co Inc	https://careers-perrysicecream.icims.com/jobs/
Pfannenbergl Inc	https://www.pfannenberglusa.com/about-pfannenbergl/open-positions/
Power Drives Inc	https://www.powerdrives.com/careers/
Prince Rubber and Plastics	https://princerp.com/careers/

Rand Machine Products	https://www.randmachine.com/careers/
Renold	https://www.renold.com/company/careers-at-renold/
Rosina Food Products	https://www.rosina.com/careers/
S & H Machine	https://shmachine.com/careers/
S. Howes	https://www.showes.com/contact/
Sealing Devices Inc	https://sealingdevices.com/careers/
T & T Legacy Metals LLC	https://www.tandtleacymetals.com/contact-us
Tesla	https://www.tesla.com/careers
Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc	https://jobs.thermofisher.com/global/en/
Ulrich Fabrication Inc	https://ulrichfabrication.com/careers/
Voss Manufacturing Inc	https://vossmfg.com/careers/
Weber Knapp Co	https://www.weberknapp.com/careers
Wells Enterprises	https://wellsenterprisesinc.com/careers
West Herr	https://www.westherr.com/careers/
Willard Manufacturing	https://www.willardmanufacturing.com/

TECH COMPANIES

ACV Auctions Inc	https://www.acvauctions.com/careers/jobs-at-acv
Aleron	https://aleroninc.com/careers/
Best Self Behavioral Health	https://www.bestselfwny.org/careers-join-our-team/
Catholic Health System	https://www.chsbuffalo.org/careers/
Centivo	https://centivo.com/careers/
CTG	https://www.ctg.com/careers
CUBRC	https://www.cubrc.org/careers/
Fresenius KABI USA LLC	https://www.fresenius-kabi.com/work-with-us/your-opportunities
Independent Health	https://www.independenthealth.com/about/careers
Ingram Micro	https://careers.ingrammicro.com/en/jobs/
M&T Bank	https://www.mtb.com/careers
Microsoft	https://careers.microsoft.com/v2/global/en/home.html
National Fuel Gas Co	https://www.nationalfuel.com/corporate/careers/
National Grid	https://jobs.nationalgrid.com/usa/teams/new-york
Odoo	https://www.odoo.com/jobs
PCI	https://www.pconected.com/
Spectrum	https://jobs.spectrum.com/
Systems Personnel Inc	https://www.systemspersonnel.com/search-jobs/
Teksystems	https://www.teksystems.com/en/careers
Univera Healthcare	https://careers.univerahealthcare.com/

Acronyms Used in this Report

ENTITIES

- BNMA - Buffalo Niagara Manufacturing Alliance
- BCAT - Buffalo Center for Arts & Technology
- CRS - Center for Regional Strategies
- DIDIWNY - Dream It Do It WNY
- DOL - Department of Labor
- ESD - Empire State Development
- JCC - Jamestown Community College
- MACNY - Manufacturers Association of Central New York, Inc.
- MAST - Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier
- MOU - Memorandum of Understanding
- NWTC - Northland Workforce Training Center
- NYPA - New York Power Authority
- OSWD - Office of Strategic Workforce Development
- RCWJF - Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation
- UB - University at Buffalo
- UBRI - UB Regional Institute
- UB TCIE - UB - The Center for Industrial Effectiveness
- WDB - Workforce Development Board

GEOGRAPHIES

- NYS - New York State
- WNY - Western New York

COURSEWORK AND CERTIFICATIONS

- AI - Artificial Intelligence
- BAS - Building Automation System
- CAD/CAM - Computer-Aided Design/Computer-Aided Manufacturing
- CNC - Computer Numerical Control
- DIDIAMP - Dream It Do It Advanced Manufacturing Programs
- EMT - Entry-Level Manufacturing Technician
- EV - Electric Vehicle
- HAAS - Hardware as a Service
- HVAC - Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
- IT - Information Technology
- OJT - On-the-Job-Training
- STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- TCAM - Teacher, Counselor, Administrator and Manufacturer



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