

WORKFORCE



Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports & Parks

GARY MOLLOY

COMMISSIONER

JUNE 22, 2023

Good Morning, Honorable Senator Angel Bolques, Jr., Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports & Parks, Honorable Members of the Committee, distinguished Senators, ladies and gentlemen, listening, viewing and virtual audiences. I am Gary Molloy, Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Labor (VIDOL).

I am here today with Mr. Jean Forde, Assistant Commissioner, and Ms. Shenika Sebastien, Director of Youth and Apprenticeship. Thank you for inviting us to provide testimony on a status update as it pertains to the Department of Labor's career path opportunities and services, namely the Summer Youth Work Experience, (SYWEP), Labor Investing for Tomorrow (LIFT) Internship Program, the Career Exploration Program, and Jobs for America Graduates (JAG-VI).

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Development includes a relatively wide range of activities, policies and programs employed by several entities to create, sustain, and retain a viable workforce that can support current and future business and industry. The Virgin Islands Workforce Development Board (VIWDB) is comprised of 27 members representing government, business, economic development, and education charged with strengthening the workforce development system and determining the demand sectors in the Territory. VIDOL implements the policies passed by the Workforce Board in partnership with the Office of the Governor, the Apprenticeship Council, Workforce 180, ICF, Equus, the Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans Affairs, the Department of Education, and other Private, and Non-Profit organizations.

In supporting Governor Bryan's Workforce Development Initiative, VIDOL builds the territory's talent pipeline through Workforce Development programs that focus on target industries tied to Vision 2040 and funded through a combination of local and federal funds. A graph illustrating the Workforce Development Initiative highlighting our on-going partnership with the Department of Education is illustrated in Addendum #1.

YOUTH AND APPRENTICESHIP

The VIDOL Youth Services Division develops and administers workforce development programs for youth ages 14 to 25. Youth Services provides year-round training, employment, and educational opportunities for in and out of school youth.

The Youth team provides in-house academic and career assessments to determine the services and activities needed for each youth. Individual Employment Plans or Service Strategies are developed, and referrals made to the service providers. Youth Services may include, but are not limited to job preparation skills, resume building, and paid and unpaid work experience.

Available programs include Occupational Skills Training, the Work, Learn and Earn Program, the Summer Youth Work Experience Program, the Labor Investing for Tomorrow (LIFT) Internship

Program, and the Jobs for America’s Graduate Virgin Islands (JAG-VI). Each program targets several groups including current high school students, out-of-school youth, current college students, graduate students and recent graduates.

The Youth Team serves more than eight hundred (800) youth in all programming annually via federal and local funding. The total number of participants each year is based on available funds. In FY 2023, the Summer Youth Work Experience Program is serving six hundred and ninety-four (694) youth customers aged 16-25 in the Work Experience, one hundred and forty-four (144) 14- and 15-year-olds in the Career Exploration Program, and ninety-nine (99) in the Labor Investing for Tomorrow Program including the Summer, Spring and Fall. In the 2022-2023 academic school year, there were one hundred and eighty-two (182) participants in JAG-VI territory-wide with ninety (90) in the St. Thomas/St. John district and ninety-two (92) in the St. Croix district.

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (RAP)

Apprenticeships are a work-based learning model. Apprentices have supervised on-the-job training, along with job-related education, all while earning a wage that increases during the progression of the program.



Programs are intended for long-term employment. Apprenticeships are proven training programs that are used as a talent development strategy for recruiting, training, and retaining world-class talent and have been used in industry for decades. All registered programs are aligned with industry occupational standards to provide authenticity and consistency resulting in a nationally recognized, industry specific certificate. The length of a registered apprenticeship program varies from one to five years depending on the occupation training requirements.

Recognized as a State Apprenticeship Agency, VIDOL assists in program creation, registration of programs that meet Federal and State standards, promotes the development of new programs through marketing and technical assistance, provides technical assistance to sponsors throughout the program lifecycle and assures that all programs provide high quality training.

Current Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Occupations	
• Certified Massage Therapist (CMT) – Territorial	• Pipefitter (construction) – Territorial
• Medical Assistant/Patient Care Coordinator - STX	• Certified Nursing Assistant – Dementia Specialty - STX
• Life Safety Coordinator - STX	• Certified Nursing Assistant – Restorative Specialty - STX
• Surgical Technologist - STX	• Recreation Assistant
• Able Seaman (Water Sports) - STT	

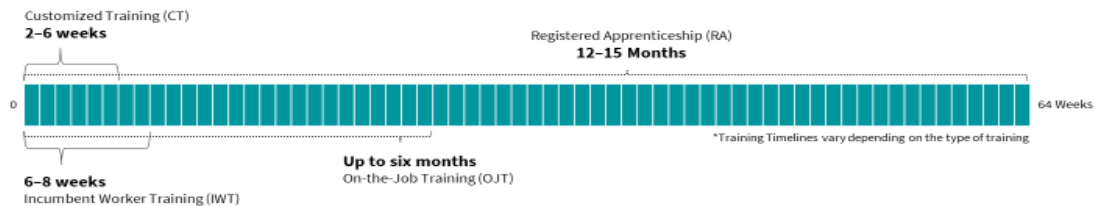
The sponsors/employers are Plessen Healthcare, Peace of St. Croix, Virgin Islands Professional Charter Association, Tropical Treasure Hunt Co., Islands Seasfire, The Turning Point, the Bureau of Corrections, and Gold Coast Yachts.

Sponsor/Employer			
Sector	Current	Planned	Total
Marine	2	1	3
Health Care	2	3	5
Massage Therapy	1	1	2
Culinary	1	1	2
Construction	1	2	3
Tourism/Hospitality	1	0	1
Information Technology	N/A	3	3
Services (Not Elsewhere Classified)	N/A	3	3
Total	8	14	22

Apprentices			
Sector	Hired	Planned	Total
Marine	8	1	9
Health Care	14	7	21
Massage Therapy	18	2	20
Culinary	0	5	5
Construction	2	12	14
Tourism/Hospitality	4	0	4
Information Technology	N/A	7	7
Services (Not Elsewhere Classified)	N/A	11	11
Total	46	45	91

The entire workforce development system is based on the work-based learning training timelines.

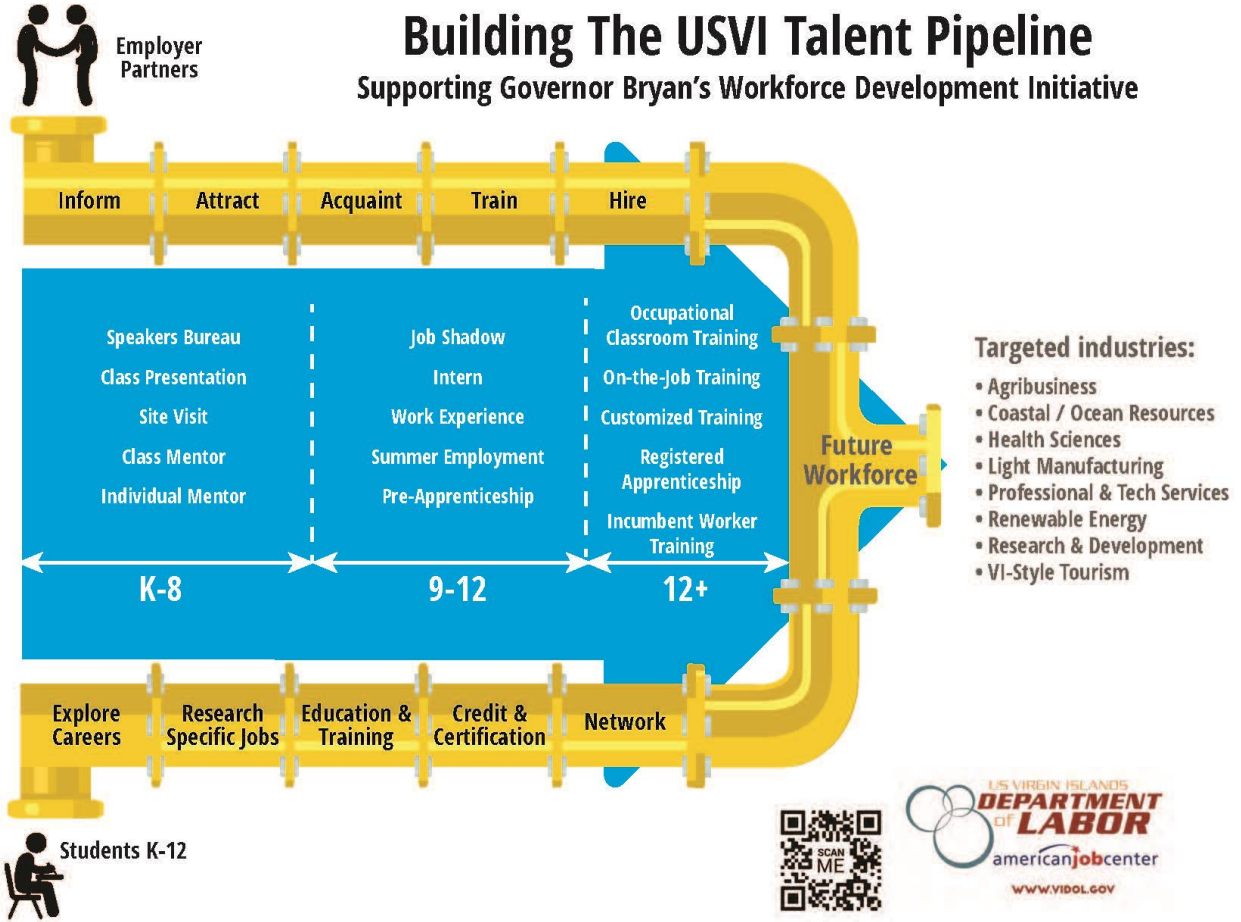
TRAINING TIMELINES



CONCLUSION

The Virgin Islands Department of Labor remains committed to serving all Virgin Islanders, including our Youth population, across all sectors and industries through the many programs and services housed in our offices on St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John. On behalf of VIDOL, I would like to thank the Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports & Parks for allowing VIDOL to provide testimony on our programs and services in the Virgin Islands. This concludes my testimony. My staff and I welcome any questions you may have.

ADDENDUM #1



ADDENDUM #2

