

Recruitment & Education Needs for Westmoreland County

Survey: Fall 2022

Between August-October of 2022, the Westmoreland Assists Native Talent Consortium surveyed Westmoreland County employers in an effort to gain information regarding both their hiring needs and the educational programs and/or training sought to assist in successful preparation for companies and organizations.

Westmoreland Assists of Native Talent Consortium – Summary of Efforts and Mission

In operation for more than 25 years, the WANT consortium is a collaborative effort between the local colleges and universities, PA CareerLink offices, chambers of commerce, and economic development entities in the Westmoreland County region. WANT's primary focus has been a job fair, held at a central location in Greensburg, which brings together local employers and job seekers. Historically, the WANT Expo has been attended by both college students, alumni, and the community, and attendance typically ranges from 300-600 job seekers. (<http://www.wantexpo.org/aboutus.html>)

WANT Consortium Participants

PA CareerLink Westmoreland County-Youngwood, PA	Westmoreland County Chamber of Commerce-Greensburg, PA
Penn State New Kensington-Upper Burrell, PA	Westmoreland County Community College-Youngwood, PA
S&T Bank-Irwin PA	Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation-Greensburg, PA
Saint Vincent College-Latrobe, PA	Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Investment Board
Seton Hill University-Greensburg, PA	
University of Pittsburgh, Greensburg-Greensburg, PA	

Scope of Project

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, over 8,000 "employer establishments" exist within the County. The survey was disseminated electronically via email to more than 500 employers registered with the Consortium (e.g., Consortium career centers, Westmoreland County Chamber of Commerce) and received 49* unique responses from a variety of industries. This report displays a small sampling of the needs of Westmoreland-County employers for examples and insight.

* Two companies sent separate responses from different departments and/or positions.

Industries included the following categories: Business (Operations/Consulting), Education, Environmental, Government, Healthcare, Human Services, Manufacturing, Supply Chain, Retail, Technology, and Transportation.

Survey

The survey was comprised of twelve questions with both multiple choice and open-text responses. Two questions (Q11 & 12) were to provide information to the Committee and are not reflected within the report. Please see the survey at the end of this report.

Employment & Experiential Opportunities by Industry and Education Level (Q-3)

Local businesses were asked to list what employment opportunities they were offering. These opportunities are organized by industry in the table below.

Table 1: Employment Opportunities by Industry						
Industry	Employment Opportunities Available					
	Full-Time Work	Part-Time Work	Internships/ Coop	Seasonal Employment	Volunteer Work	Clinical Shadowing/Observation
Business	100%	56%	33%	11%	0%	11%
Education	100%	67%	67%	33%	67%	33%
Government	67%	33%	33%	67%	33%	33%
Environmental	100%	50%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Healthcare	75%	88%	50%	13%	38%	50%
Human Services	100%	80%	80%	0%	60%	0%
Manufacturing	100%	13%	13%	13%	0%	0%
Retail	100%	100%	67%	33%	33%	0%
Supply Chain	100%	67%	0%	33%	0%	0%
Technology	67%	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%
Transportation	100%	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Automotive	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Overall	92%	56%	42%	20%	20%	14%

A number of interesting details can be gleaned from this data. The vast majority of employers across most sectors were looking for full-time workers in addition to varying degrees of other types of workers. From among the three largest sectors by number of respondents—healthcare, manufacturing, and business—only the healthcare sector seemed to be hiring fewer full-time workers relative to all other industries. At the same time, the healthcare sector was looking for a high number of part-time workers, second only to the retail sector. Very few employers overall were willing to offer job shadowing, but the education and retail sectors had the broadest selection of employment types available in moderate to high proportions. Part-time work was commonly available except in the manufacturing and automotive industries.

Skill-Related Expectation for New Hires by Industry (Q-4)

The following table has been adapted from the National Association of Colleges and Employers list of career competencies as associated with [Career Readiness](#) to determine consistency with employment-related skills on a national scale. This table displays the proportion of respondents who desired each skill organized by industry.

Most skills were generally sought across every industry, but some were more universal than others. Professionalism, teamwork, and critical thinking skills seemed to be the most desired skills for new hires in the most industries. This would suggest employers place a greater emphasis on the ability of new hires to function within and contribute to the group as a whole rather than in their individual duties. Perhaps many technical skills are sufficiently taught while group cohesion requires more focus in the future. Technology skills—though

still quite desired—stand out as being relatively less desired. This suggests the education system (K-12, post-secondary) has adequately instilled knowledge of various technologies in the recent generation of new workers.

Table 2: Desired Skills by Industry

Industry	Desired Skills								
	Career & Self Development	Critical Thinking Skills	Communication Skills	Equity and Inclusion	Leadership	Technology Skills	Mechanically-Inclined	Teamwork	Professionalism
Business	67%	100%	89%	22%	44%	78%	11%	89%	89%
Education	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%
Government	0%	67%	67%	33%	33%	33%	33%	67%	100%
Environmental	50%	100%	100%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Healthcare	50%	50%	88%	50%	50%	25%	13%	88%	75%
Human Services	100%	80%	100%	100%	80%	40%	0%	100%	100%
Manufacturing	50%	50%	63%	50%	50%	63%	88%	88%	88%
Retail	100%	100%	67%	67%	33%	67%	67%	100%	100%
Supply Chain	67%	33%	67%	33%	67%	33%	67%	100%	67%
Technology	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	67%	33%	100%	67%
Transportation	50%	100%	50%	50%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Automotive	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Overall	64%	76%	80%	54%	56%	56%	36%	92%	88%

Technology-Based Qualifications

Software Familiarity & Proficiency Expected of New Hires (Q-5)

Employers were asked to list which software new hires should be able to use proficiently upon hire given the following choices: Microsoft Office (Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Outlook), QuickBooks, SPSS, and Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn). Of the 47 distinct responses, the majority indicated Microsoft Office, with Social Media and QuickBooks following. There were some Accounting-focused firms which indicated the need for Accounting-based software such as QuickBooks.

Additional Technical Skills Sought (Q-6)

The following list of technical skills indicates responses to additional software or competencies required and/or sought by individual companies. The responses to the question were open-ended. Overall, employers listed that these skill areas were position-specific and that they seek candidates that are adaptable and able to learn the company's internal programs.

The majority of additional competency areas fell into three main categories, computer/technology, laboratory, and mechanical.

- **Examples of Computer Programs/Platforms:** Canva, G-Suite, data-base software, CAD, CNC Programming, InDesign, Adobe Creative Suite, tax and accounting software, webinar software (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams), medical computer-based software, and inventory-based software.
- **Laboratory Skills:** laboratory-science experience, water testing, mathematical ability
- **Mechanical Skills:** Welding, electrical, construction, machining, painting, automotive repair, use of hand and air tools, powered industrial equipment (e.g., forklifts), radio-frequency (RF) gun.

Trainings Provided to Orient New Employees to Company Programs and/or Job-Specific Skills (Q-7)

Forty-five responded to this question with 100% of those indicating some form of orientation, job-specific training, and/or mentoring. Training may be conducted in-person or online. Some employers discussed duration, ranging from 6 weeks - 6 months of training. In some cases, there was also an opportunity for continuing education for job-specific orientation, advancement, and licensure.

More generally, some skill areas focused on: job-specific computer software, sales, digital media, metal fabrication, use of power tools, welding, equipment operation, manufacturing and warehousing standards, and associated safety trainings.

Some specific areas mentioned include:

- Opportunity to train for the water/wastewater treatment operator license (Operators)
- GIA (Gemological Institute of America), AGS (American Gem Society), JA (Jewelers of America), and Apprenticeships for goldsmiths
- Mortgage origination
- Online Net Learning education
- ClearCare Software and App, Caring for Seniors in addition to 30+ free online training courses for working with adults and seniors in their homes
- Airport operations

Education and Training Required for Most Company Positions within the Company/Organization (Q-8)

Forty-three responded to the question regarding the education and training that is associated with most hires within their company. The company or organization was asked to include all that apply. Of those indicated, On-the-Job Training and Education, Bachelor-level degrees, and Associate-level degrees made up the majority. Please see the chart below for more information.

On-the-Job Training & Education	79% (34/43)
Training/Credential (e.g., OSHA, ServSafe)	23% (10/43)
Certificate Level	26% (11/43)
Associate-Level Degrees	35% (15/43)
Bachelor-Level Degrees	41% (18/43)
Graduate/Professional Degrees	9% (4/43)

Majors and/or trainings most frequently needed by degree level (Q-9)

Thirty-seven responses were received. Careers may differ within the companies and organizations, with varying education levels sought from High-School diploma to graduate-level education in some cases. Of those who responded, 32% (12 employers) indicated that a High-School education or GED would fit entry-level eligibility requirements. Fifty-

one percent (19 employers) seek candidates with either an Associate or Bachelor's degree for either entry-level or more advanced roles, 24% (9) indicated needs for certificate-level candidates in various specialties (e.g., automotive emissions, plumbing, Nurse Aid, Medical Assistant, and Phlebotomist), 5% (2 employers) indicated Bachelor-level minimum, and 8% (3) indicated specifically graduate-level degrees.

The majority of majors or concentrations discussed included: Accounting, Art/Music Therapy, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Communication, Counseling, Early Childhood Education, Environmental Science, Finance (focus on financial planning and advice), Graphic Design, Human Services, IT, Library Science, Marketing, Math, Nursing, Project Management, Psychology, and Sociology.

In addition, some specific certifications and skilled areas were discussed, including: CAD, machining, welding, technical skills, carpentry, AES (Automotive service excellence), PA State Inspection license/PA Emission certification, and Nurse Aid Licensure for LPN/RN-ASN/BSN diploma program.

Education & Training Needs for Westmoreland County Employers (Q-10)

Twenty-five employers responded to the question regarding any educational and recruitment needs still sought within the County or which are not met at this time. Of those, 28% (7 employers) indicated that they did not see any additional programs or certifications needed at this time. There were some specific education and training needs expressed – please see the list below. While some schools and programs do offer some of these, we may speculate that there are not enough of people going into these fields to meet some of the needs of the County as well. The query was open-ended which resulted in diverse responses, including a keen focus in skill enhancement, not merely education/training per se.

Skills specifically sought by employers included: communication and grammar, critical thinking, basic mathematics (e.g., how to give change back at a register, fractions), organization, and professionalism (e.g., showing up to work on time, email etiquette, work ethic).

Programs/Certifications/Education Sought:

- Accounting & Finance
- Machine Operator
- CAD and Character Development
- CNC Programming and Operation
- Grant Writing
- Plumbing Certifications
- Warehouse: Operating a Forklift
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Training
- Welding and Machining Programs

Additional Comments

- *We believe that the local higher education facilities in the area have really evolved in job specific programs. As an example, St Vincent College has an excellent finance program that branches off into some specific aspects of the field. Even better, is we have spoken with some students who believe that they are very challenging classes which much better prepares them for the "real world" workforce.*
- *Civil service testing should be encouraged.*

Number of Jobs by Industry Posted to PA CareerLink Westmoreland between August-October 2022

In addition to the survey, it is helpful to see the number of positions that have been advertised to the PA CareerLink throughout the August-October timeframe as well. The majority of positions came from manufacturing, administrative support and food services, and health care and social assistance. While these

varied by education and skill level, the industries with marked openings exemplifies needs within the County. Please see the following page for a chart and subsequent examples posted.

Industry/Career Cluster	Number of Job Titles
Accommodation and Food Services	6
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	99
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	7
Construction	26
Educational Services	48
Finance and Insurance	50
Health Care and Social Assistance	94
Information	6
Manufacturing	300
Other Services (except Public Administration)	11
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	57
Public Administration	40
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1
Retail Trade	80
Transportation and Warehousing	21
Utilities	42
Wholesale Trade	86

For the highest areas listed with employment needs, some examples of common job titles include the following list. The education and training vary to prepare to work in these positions. While some jobs may be done with a high-school diploma (e.g., Production Worker), the majority of positions require some specialized (e.g., Machinist, Nurse Aide) or on-the-job training, or a degree with formal education (e.g., Nurse, Accountant).

- Manufacturing: Machinist, Production Worker
- Healthcare/Social Assistance: Care Giver/Nurse Aide/Nurse, Case Management
- Administrative Support, etc.: Accountant, Office Management, Staffing agency jobs

Please see additional resources provided on the next page from NACE and the Department of Labor.

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References: [NACE Career Readiness Competencies](#) & [U.S. Census 2020 Westmoreland County Employers](#)

Additional Resources

Career Readiness: <https://www.nacweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/>
(main career readiness page – includes definitions, resources)

Research on the Career Competencies from both the Employer and Student Perspectives:
<https://www.nacweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/recruiters-and-students-have-differing-perceptions-of-new-grad-proficiency-in-competencies/>

“The Center for Workforce Information & Analysis is pleased to announce the release of the 2020-2030 employment projections (industry and occupational) for the state’s Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Workforce Development Areas. Employment projections provide a lot of valuable information about the changing industry and occupational composition of your local workforce. They can be used to predict where demand for workers will be in the future, to develop/modify training programs to meet that demand, and to help educate the job seekers of both today and tomorrow as to where those opportunities will be. These data, along with the previously released statewide information, are available on the CWIA website at the link below.”

CWIA Customer Response Team

PA Department of Labor & Industry | Center for Workforce Information & Analysis

<https://www.workstats.dli.pa.gov/Products/employment-projections>