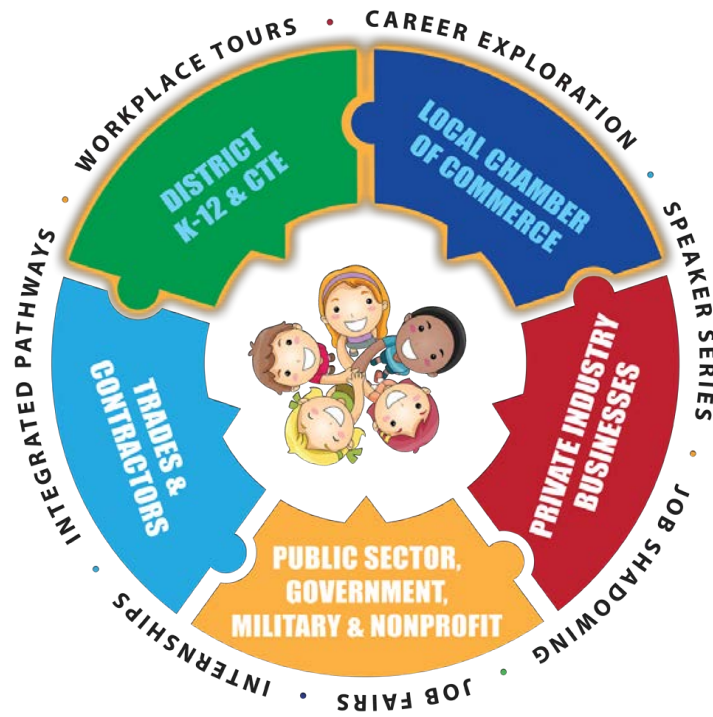


Career Readiness West Virginia



Wyoming County Summary Report

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Introduction

The following report provides a summary of the Career Readiness West Virginia analysis and recommendations for Wyoming County. To assess the Growth, Decline, and Opportunities facing both education and local industry, Forge Business Solutions worked with the members of the Wyoming County Board of Education through the **Career Readiness West Virginia initiative**.

The Career Readiness West Virginia initiative is a collaborative partnership developing a sustainable future for the next generation of the workforce. The model brings together public education and local chambers of commerce to partner with public and private sector employers, government, trades and contractors, and nonprofits to drive career and workforce development in local communities.

To gather insight on local industry trends, career opportunities, and active community partnerships, Forge distributed a multi-county online survey via SurveyMonkey to business leaders and employers throughout the Greater Wyoming County Region. The survey respondents completed the online Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020 (refer to Appendix A) and their responses were documented (refer to page 9).

Additionally, Forge examined economic data, reviewed current partnerships and collaborations, and investigated relationships that can be created or enhanced. Through this work, Forge determined where collaboration can be fostered to develop a sustainable partnership model between local industry, public school districts, and Career Technical Education.

Forge has identified seven activities in which industry and education can collaborate to support workforce development: **Internships, Speakers' Series, Job Shadowing, Job Fairs, Integrated Pathways, Career Exploration, and Workplace Tours**.

Our sincere appreciation goes to Superintendent Deirdre Cline and members of the Wyoming County Board of Education for their dedication to their community and support of Career Readiness West Virginia.



Wyoming County Schools

PO Box 69
19 Park Street
Pineville, WV 24874

Superintendent: Dierdre Cline
Enrollment: 3,771



Wyoming County Summary

Forge Business Solutions utilized data and facts from the U.S. Census Bureau, West Virginia's Bureau of Business and Economic Research *Economic Outlook 2020-2024 Report*, WorkForce West Virginia, and FRED Economic Data, as well as additional resources throughout the following report. All references and resources are included near the end of the report. It is important to note that some of the data collected to compose this report was gathered prior to the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Located in southwestern West Virginia, Wyoming County is home to Pineville (county seat), Oceana, Mullens, and other towns and unincorporated communities. As of 2019, Wyoming County's population was 20,394, but the county has experienced a 14.3% decline in the total population since 2010.

The local community benefits from the educational and technical institutions Wyoming County Career and Technical Center and Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College; these institutions support local economic development by enriching the regional workforce through various degrees programs, professional and continuing education programs, and career certifications.

In 2018, the nationwide Communities in Schools (CIS) program expanded to eight schools in Wyoming County during the West Virginia launch of the pilot program. The program focuses on supporting at-risk and low-income students and aims to increase graduation rates, improve attendance and develop relationships between the community and students.

According to Data USA 2017 report, the leading industries in Wyoming County are Mining, Quarrying, & Oil & Gas Extraction and Healthcare & Social Assistance. The most common jobs held by residents of Wyoming County (by number of employees) are Office & Administrative Support Occupations, Construction & Extraction Occupations, and Education Instruction & Library Occupations. Additionally, the highest paid jobs held by residents of Wyoming County (by median earnings) are Construction & Extraction



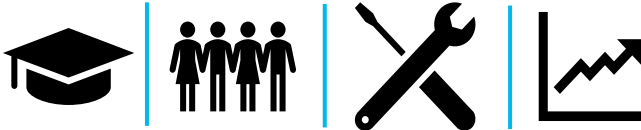
Occupations, Health Diagnosing & Treating Practitioners & Other Technical Occupations, and Production Occupations.

As a top employer in the county, Wyoming County Schools serve about 3,771 of the community’s students with Wyoming East High School, Westside High School, and the supporting middle and elementary schools. As reported in 2017, there are 270 employers in Wyoming County. While there is existing engagement between education and industry, Wyoming County Schools and local community leaders recognize the need to further enhance and expand career opportunities for students in collaboration with businesses in the community. Additionally, many community members communicated their support and dedication toward developing and implementing the [Career Readiness West Virginia partnership model](#).

Largest Employers in Wyoming County

Name	Industry	Address
1. Wyoming County Board of Education	Education	19 Park St, Pineville, WV 24874
2. Greenbrier Minerals	Mining	100 Bill Baker Way Beckley, WV 25801
3. Mountainheart Community Services	Social Services	33 MountainHeart Lane, Matheny, WV 24860
4. Contura Energy (formerly Alpha Natural Resources)	Mining	18 Clover Street, Wyoming, WV 24898
5. Council on Aging	Social Services	River Rd, Itmann, WV 24847
6. Wyoming County Commission	Government	506A River Road PO Box 1828 Pineville, WV 24874
7. STAT EMS	Ambulance Service	Pineville, WV 24874
8. Goodson’s Supermarkets	Grocery	411 Appalachian Hwy, Pineville, WV 24874
9. Wyoming Nursing & Rehabilitation Center	Healthcare	236 Warrior Way, New Richmond, WV 24867
10. Diversified Southern Production*	Oil & Gas	(N/A)

March 2019 - Source: WorkForce West Virginia



The following table compares Wyoming County's economic performance and education attainment to the state average.

	Wyoming County	West Virginia
Median Household Income 2014 -2018	\$40,045	\$44,921
Per Capita Income in Past 12 Months in 2018 Dollars 2014-2018	\$20,831	\$25,479
Average Civilian Labor Participation Rate 2014-2018	39.4%	53.1%
Average Unemployment Rate March 2020	4.6%	6.1%
High School Graduate or Greater Percent of Persons Ages 25+ 2014-2018	80.0%	86.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher Percent of Persons Ages 25+ 2014-2018	9.5%	20.3%

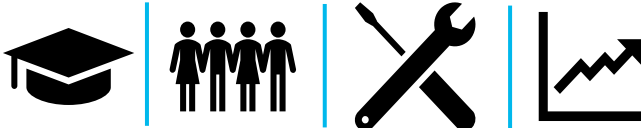
Source: US Census Bureau and FRED Economic Data

West Virginia Overview

West Virginia's small population of 1.8 million has helped the state develop a strong sense of community and pride. Despite the camaraderie, its citizens face challenges that prompt many to move out of the state. Understanding the current state of West Virginia's economy is important in developing a plan for an improved future for West Virginia students.

Population

Since 2012, West Virginia's population has declined by nearly 51,000 and is projected to continue to regress over the next five years. West Virginia has one of the oldest populations and highest mortality rates in the country, heavily contributing to the declining population. However, the state's Eastern Panhandle has exhibited enormous growth over the past decade due to positive net migration and natural population growth.



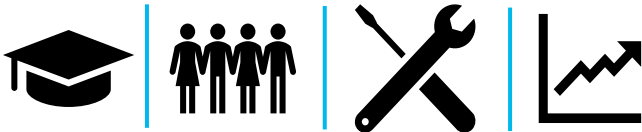
Labor Participation

Low labor participation rates hinder potential economic prosperity in West Virginia. Less than 54% of West Virginia’s adult population is working or looking for work, leaving the state with the lowest labor force participation rate in the nation. The labor participation rate varies throughout the state; the rate trends higher in the Eastern Panhandle, North Central, and Metro Valley regions, and lower in the rural areas.

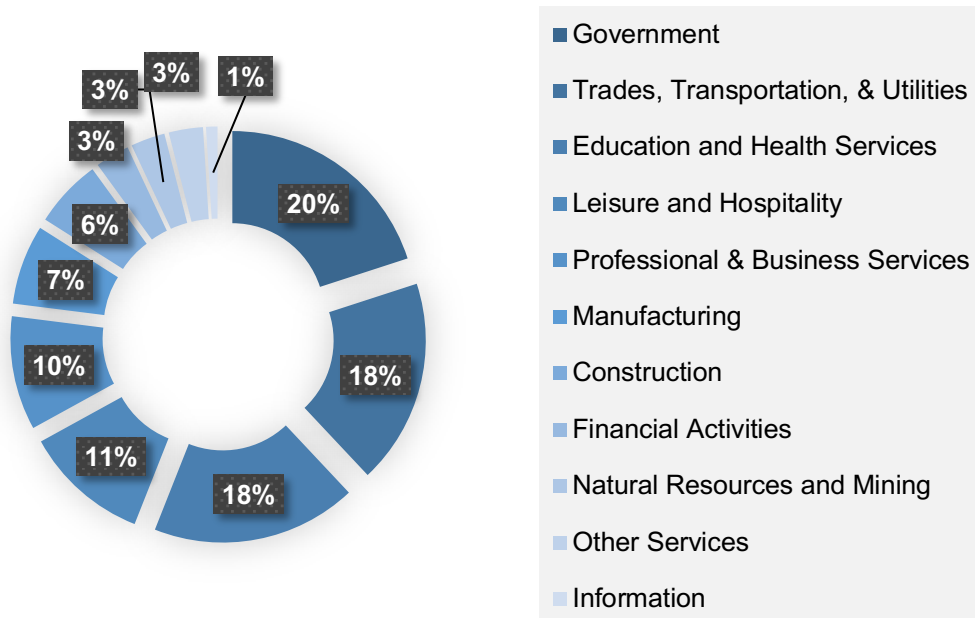
The opioid epidemic significantly affects the state’s workforce participation rate. West Virginia leads the nation in drug-related deaths, nearly triple the national average. In 2017, 58 out of 100,000 West Virginians died due to drug misuse. The prime workforce participation demographic is individuals ages 25-54; however, these individuals are also the most affected by the opioid epidemic.

Another factor that impacts labor force participation is inadequate educational outcomes. A lack of education, skills, and training leaves adults unable to secure a career. The North Central, Eastern Panhandle, and Metro Valley regions exhibit the highest rates of educational attainment in the state.

Future economic development strategies should focus on improving health outcomes, lowering drug abuse, and advancing education and vocational training opportunities in the state to make West Virginia’s workforce more appealing to potential businesses.



WV Employment Distribution by Sector



2018 – Source: [West Virginia Economic Outlook 2020-2024](#)

Top Ten Largest Private Companies in WV

Name	Industry
1. WVU Medicine	Healthcare
2. Wal-Mart	Retail
3. Charleston Area Medical Center	Healthcare
4. Mountain Health Network	Healthcare
5. Kroger	Grocery
6. Lowe's Home Centers, Inc.	Retail
7. Contura Energy	Metals and Mining
8. Wheeling Hospital, Inc.	Healthcare
9. Mylan Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	Pharmaceutical
10. Murray American Energy, Inc.	Mining

March 2019 - Source: [WorkForce West Virginia](#)



Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020

Forge Business Solutions collaborated with Wyoming County Schools to distribute a multi-county online survey from April 17 to May 15, 2020, to business leaders and employers throughout the Greater Wyoming County Region. The survey respondents completed the online Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020 via SurveyMonkey. Given the changing nature of the economy in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, survey questions were developed to assess industry growth, decline, and opportunities before the pandemic, as well as to gauge the current state of industry as the pandemic continues to unfold.

The following subsections summarize the responses collected from the survey participants of the Greater Wyoming County Region. The responses may contain opinions that do not represent the research or thoughts of Forge. An example of the questionnaire is located in Appendix A.

Local Industry Trends (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

Growth

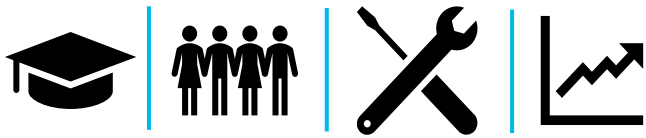
- Information Technology
- Higher Education
- Real Estate
- Healthcare
- Technical Occupations
- Medical
- Entertainment
- Locally Sourced Items
- Restaurants

Decline

- Mining
- Manufacturing
- Coal Industry

Potential Opportunities

- Information Technology
- Tourism
- Technology
- Skilled Labor/Manufacturing



- Healthcare Service
- Small Business

COVID-19 Impact on Local Industry

Industries That Have Been Negatively Impacted

- Restaurants
- Hair Salons
- Gyms
- Churches
- Automotive Sales
- Food Service
- Entertainment
- Auto Industry

Industries That Have Been Positively Impacted

- Food Delivery Services
- Grocery Stores
- Delivery Businesses
- Big Box Store Grocery Pickup

Industries That Have Not Been Affected

- Information Technologies
- Package Delivery
- Banks
- Accounting Firms
- Government
- Cellular
- Cable TV

The Pandemic's Impact on Local Organizations

- Minimal impact. Increased teleworking
- Staff working remotely from home
- Cannot see customers in person
- Remote work
- Fewer patient visits
- Closed lobbies in branches
- Operations staff working remotely



Job Market Outlook (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

The current opportunities in the local job market for those with a...

4-year Degree or Greater

- Information Technology
- School Teachers
- Engineering
- Program Managers
- Healthcare Practitioners
- Insurance
- Finance
- Sales Personnel
- Engineering

2-year Degree

- Healthcare
- Information Technology
- Administrative Assistants
- HVAC
- Skilled Trades
- Medical
- Retail
- Service
- Banking
- Nursing

Technical Certification

- Welding
- Heating & A/C
- Healthcare
- CDL drivers
- Healthcare Technicians
- Chef
- Recovery Coaches
- Oil and Gas
- Auto Repair
- Chemical plants
- Trades
- Auto Mechanics
- Autobody



High School Diploma or GED

- Construction
- General Labor
- Delivery Drivers
- Restaurant Workers
- Daycare Personnel
- Retail
- Service
- Banking
- Auto Sales

No High School Diploma or Certification

- Construction
- Transportation
- General Labor
- Janitor
- Lawn Care
- Personal Aides
- Food Service Industry
- Retail
- Auto Sales

Top Characteristics Employers Seek in Potential Employees

- Team Oriented
- Security Clearance Information
- Technology Experience Engineering
- Technology College Degree
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Initiative
- Kindness
- Language Skills
- Deductive Reasoning
- Problem Solving
- Customer Service
- Friendly
- Teamwork Approach
- Responsible
- Over 21
- High School Graduate
- Auto Mechanics



Opportunities for Those with Disabilities (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

Job Opportunities

- Information Technology
- Retail
- Grocery Store
- Restaurants
- Janitorial
- Several companies locally hire persons with disabilities
- Sales

Local Support/Programs

- Job Coach
- Goodwill Industries
- Sheltered Workshop
- We do not discriminate.
- Collaborate with state Division of Rehabilitation
- We work with our employees with disabilities to help them excel.
- We make every accommodation requested.

Opportunities for Those Serving in the National Guard and Reserves (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

Job Opportunities

- The same as everyone else
- Retail
- Medical
- Construction
- Oil and Gas
- Finance

Local Support/Programs

- Not Sure
- Some programs give priority in hiring
- We do not discriminate.
- We have priority of services for Veterans.
- We do not currently have any employees who serve.
- We pay our employees while they are serving, full pay.

Engagement with Education And/or Economic Development (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)

- Active partner with educational institutions
- We work with NRCTC to try and get the proper training



- Serve on several Workforce Development Boards
- Attend variety of local economic development meetings
- Involved in chamber, and several community organizations
- Banking & serving on boards
- We own retail space and try to bring in businesses.

Barriers/Concerns for Collaboration with Education

Pre COVID-19 Pandemic

- Education tends to develop programs and initiatives without input
- We collaborate with our BOE to help develop high schoolers into employable people.
- Financial education is lacking in basic high school education- important for life
- That they do not listen to your needs for community

Post COVID-19 Pandemic

- Lack of communication from education with workforce partners



Recommendations

The Career Readiness WV model is student-centered. In an effort to increase workforce participation and improve job growth in the Wyoming County area, collaboration between education providers at all levels and the business community is imperative. The following activities and organizations are recommended.

Workplace Tours

The Wyoming County School District would benefit from preparing an annual master calendar of workplace tours with a variety of local employers for elementary, middle, and high school students. The workplace tours should be appropriate for the schools' respective grade levels.

Educators need to ensure students are learning about occupations available at every level of education: high school diplomas, certificates, 2-year degrees, and beyond. Employers and educators need to stress the importance of a knowledge-based, drug-free workforce. An emphasis should be placed on jobs in STEM-related areas.

Speakers' Series

In a centrally organized manner, speakers should be scheduled to present various occupations to K-12 students. These occupations should represent varying skillsets and levels of education. Career and Technical Education should be the emphasis of the speakers' series.

When possible, involving parents who are subject-matter experts in their field of practice should be utilized. For areas where parents don't have the expertise, other speakers should be sought out to ensure students are getting a wide range of occupational exposure.

Job Shadowing

Each school should have an opportunity to engage in job shadowing for a wide range of occupations. These opportunities must be safe and appropriate for the students. Job shadowing should not be limited to parents and their occupations, as many students may not have parents who are employed. Every student must have an opportunity to participate.



Job Fairs

All middle and high schools should participate in at least one annual job fair and/or reverse job fair. Job fairs should be age-appropriate and, when possible, on school premises. The idea behind job fairs is not only to offer jobs to high school graduates but to expose students to as many occupations and industries as possible.

Additionally, relationships between employers and future employees can be established at an earlier level, allowing students to focus on career opportunities with a clear understanding of how to obtain and excel in a specific career.

Interview skills, with an emphasis on communication, should be developed as soon as possible. Elementary schools should offer career day opportunities where subject-matter experts visit classrooms to discuss a variety of occupations and industries. Feedback from participating employers should be collected and utilized by educators to improve each job fair event.

Internships

Local employers should offer internships (paid or unpaid) as long as safety is ensured, positions are approved by the school district, and tasks are age-appropriate. Feedback should be collected and evaluated from both employer and student perspectives.

Internships should represent a wide range of occupations and varying levels of education. Special attention should be paid to ensure that students with fewer resources have an equal opportunity to be considered. A program should be established to recognize participating students for their work and success.



Integrated Pathways

Public education, community and technical colleges, and higher education institutions should collaborate to ensure students have an efficient and secure way to obtain varying levels of education necessary to secure a job and advance within their career fields. Educators should be embedded in all levels of workforce development and career readiness. This will ensure their awareness of the skillsets, knowledge, and degrees required by industries and employers.

Additional Recommendations

Wyoming County should consider its top employers as a primary resource for career readiness. Those employers are:

- Wyoming County Board of Education
- Greenbrier Minerals
- Mountainheart Community Services
- Contura Energy (formerly Alpha Natural Resources)
- Council on Aging
- Wyoming County Commission
- STAT EMS
- Goodson's Supermarkets
- Wyoming Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

Wyoming County Schools should apply the Career Readiness WV model and provide guidance to the local career readiness advisory committee (assembled from its local stakeholders). Strategic partnerships should be developed not only with existing businesses, but also with emerging industry leaders; both large and small businesses should be engaged in this process.

The Career and Technical Education centers should offer open houses to employers in the Wyoming County area and surrounding counties that showcase the programs and skillsets being developed and deployed. An annual employer-sponsored professional etiquette workshop should be offered to students and parents.

Students with Disabilities

For students, the most common learning disabilities are ADHD, mental illness, orthopedic disabilities, hearing disabilities, and dyslexia. Post-secondary education and the workforce often have a stigma toward persons with disabilities, further challenging those students. The possible negative perceptions encourage many to conceal their disabilities after high school. Securing accommodations in the workplace can be a long, cumbersome process; due to these challenges, only 46% of adults with disabilities are



employed. Those with disabilities are more likely to work part-time jobs and attend college at half the rate of the general population.

When entering the workforce, only 19% of those with disabilities report their disability to their employer and only 5% receive accommodations. These statistics show how critical it is for a partnership between education and industry to utilize a uniquely skilled workforce. Steadily transitioning those with an individualized education plan (IEP) into the workforce or schools providing technical certificates/2-year degrees will allow local businesses to continue improving their talent pool and communities.

The community can specifically help persons with disabilities by building their self-confidence. Focusing on an individual's strengths, rather than weaknesses, will help him or her develop a positive self-image. Additionally, eliminating a negative stigma will help students with disabilities enter the workforce. Providing essential accommodations for those with disabilities will encourage others to self-report their disability.

In Wyoming County, 27.6% of the population under the age of 65 has a disability, compared to the state average of 14.1%. In West Virginia, strides are being taken to improve the lives of those with disabilities. Currently, the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services helps those with disabilities find work. The organization partners with Workforce West Virginia and the West Virginia Adult Education to develop a positive path forward for local communities.



Military Service

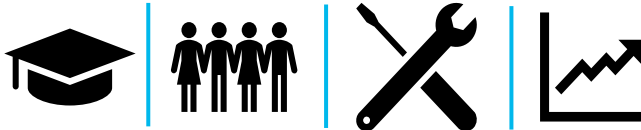
The military provides various opportunities for students. Students can choose standard enlistment, delayed enlistment, or ROTC programs. If students choose to enlist, they still have the opportunity to attend college and trade schools through the GI Bill, grants, and scholarships. These integrated pathways allow students the opportunity to build on skills, experience, and knowledge for continuous learning and growth.

Members from all branches of the military stationed within West Virginia

Branch	Active	Reserve	Total
Army	67	1780	1847
Navy	3	76	79
Marine Corps	37	96	133
Air Force	18	0	18
Coast Guard	64	9	73
Army National Guard			4172
Air National Guard			2125

Data reported September 2019. Source: https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp

In addition to opportunities within the state for military service, many West Virginians choose to enlist in the military and return home after their service. This has made West Virginia home to over 138,508 veterans (not including National Guard/Reserve unless called to active duty) and 1,509 reside in Wyoming County. These veterans provide unique skills, experience, and knowledge acquired during their service.

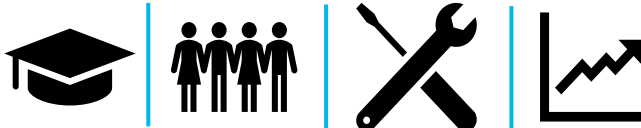


Professional Development

As part of the district’s professional development program for teachers and administrators, Wyoming County should include employers and occupational specialists as speakers. This will provide educators with a better understanding of the demand for skillsets and key employee characteristics within the local economy.

Conclusion

Local business and community leaders should be surveyed on an annual basis to gather feedback and innovative ideas. This will catalyze continued growth and development of the Career Readiness WV model. The success of West Virginia’s economy greatly depends on diversification; local districts are not limited to the current industry landscape and should ensure students are being exposed to careers through a global lens. As new businesses and industries emerge, they will need to be equipped with a unique and diversified labor force. It is important for education to prepare students for the rapidly changing job market to allow West Virginia students to thrive throughout their future careers. Together, education and local industry can initiate new relationships and collaborations that allow students to acquire a deeper knowledge of careers, preparing them for a successful future.



Resources & References

Wyoming County Schools

<http://boe.wyom.k12.wv.us/>

Data USA: Wyoming County

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/wyoming-county-wv>

Wyoming County EDA

<https://wyomingcounty.com/>

Communities in Schools

<https://wvde.us/cis/>

Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College

<https://www.southernwv.edu/programs/>

Wyoming County Career and Technical Center

https://wvde.state.wv.us/ed_directory/index.html?county_id=98&school_id=701

West Virginia Economic Outlook Report 2020-2024

[https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1310&context=bureau_b
e](https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1310&context=bureau_b
e)

Bureau of Business and Economic Research

https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/bureau_be/

Education Alliance

<http://educationalliance.org/>

WorkForce West Virginia

<https://workforcewv.org/>

myStrategic Compass

<https://www.winlearning.com/mystrategic-compass>

WV Division of Labor

<https://labor.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx>



West Virginia Department of Education

<https://wvde.us/>

Career Technical Education – WVDE

<https://wvde.us/technical-education/>

West Virginia Development Office

<https://westvirginia.gov/>

WV Adult Education

<https://wvde.state.wv.us/abe/>

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services

<https://wvdrs.org/>

smartasset

<https://smartasset.com/checking-account/fastest-growing-job-in-each-state-2019>

United States Census Bureau

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/WV>

FRED Economic Data

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>

United States Department of Labor

<https://data.bls.gov/projections/occupationProj>

WV Executive

<https://www.wvexecutive.com/west-virginias-largest-employers/>

National Intelligence Council

https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/GlobalTrends_2030.pdf

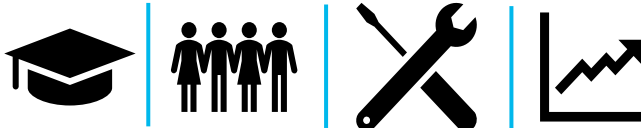
Forbes

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2017/12/19/14-hiring-qualities-that-are-more-important-than-experience/#73cedf7f7b73>



Defense Manpower Data Center

https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp



Appendix A

Career Readiness West Virginia: Questionnaire 2020

First Page/Disclaimer

Thank you for participating in the Career Readiness West Virginia online survey.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time. You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help our team develop insight into local career opportunities and workforce development trends.

Your survey answers will be sent to a link at SurveyMonkey.com where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Therefore, your responses are only accessible to members of the research team. Your information will be kept private and provided responses utilized in the research findings will remain anonymous.

Should you have any questions regarding the Career Readiness West Virginia initiative or the following survey, please contact info@forgebz.com or visit: <http://careerreadinesswv.com/>

Please check all that apply:

- I have read the information above.
- I voluntarily agree to participate in the survey.
- I am 18 years of age or older.

Background Information:

Name:

Email:

Organization/Title:

Organization Location (County/State):

Please select the primary county or counties where your organization's employees reside:

- Cabell
- Doddridge
- Harrison
- Kanawha
- Lewis
- Marion
- Nicholas
- Preston
- Upshur



- Wyoming
- Other (please specify)

1. List the local industry trends in your region (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic). Please list three industries per section.

Growth:

Decline

Opportunities

2. What local industries have been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic?
Please list at least two industries that have been negatively impacted:

Please list at least two industries that have been positively impacted:

Please list at least two industries that have not been affected by the pandemic:

How has your organization been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic?

3. Based on education attainment, what are the opportunities in the local job market (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)? Please list three answers per section.

4-year degree or Greater

2-year degree

Technical Certification

High School Diploma or GED

No High School Diploma, GED, or Certification:

4. What are the top 3 characteristics/skills your organization is looking for in an employee?

5. What career opportunities are available in the local job market for persons with disabilities (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

Are there active local education and/or career programs for persons with disabilities?



What efforts have you/your organization taken to support persons with disabilities?

6. What career opportunities are available in the local job market for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

Are there active local education and/or career programs for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves?

What efforts have you/your organization taken to support for those serving in the National Guard and Reserves?

7. How is your organization engaging with public education and/or public and private industry for the purpose of workforce and economic development (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

8. How are you/your organization engaged in local economic development (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic)?

9. What concerns do you have about collaborating with education? What barriers can you identify and how can we overcome those? (Pre COVID-19 Pandemic):

10. What concerns do you have about collaborating with education? What barriers can you identify and how can we overcome those? (Post COVID-19 Pandemic):

11. Additional comments regarding career readiness and workforce development in your community:

