



Partnering to Implement a
**REGIONAL WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**



Executive Summary

One of the key determinants of Acadiana's economic competitiveness and long-term success is the quality and skill of our workforce. Like other regions, Acadiana faces a skills gap in key industry sectors, with a lack of qualified candidates for a number of high-wage, high-demand jobs. At the same time, due to the recent downturn in the oil & gas market, Acadiana is also home to a large number of unemployed and underemployed workers.

These regional challenges require a regional response.

One Acadiana (1A) is working with regional partners to address our workforce needs. We analyzed regional workforce data and interviewed 30 employers in key sectors to gain insight on how to focus our efforts. Four key challenges emerged from this analysis, and working with partners we identified five initiatives to address these issues by leveraging regional assets, bridging talent and resource gaps, and connecting the dots for employers and talent through effective partnerships:

Workforce challenges

- Sector-specific **talent shortages** (e.g., RNs, software programmers)
- **Lack of awareness** about certain high-wage, high-demand jobs and negative perceptions of career & technical education
- Employer desire for **improved soft skills** of entry-level workers
- Need to **re-employ** displaced workers, particularly from oil & gas industry




Regional workforce initiatives*

- ① Support education initiatives that provide increased training for high-wage, high-demand jobs
- ② Deploy Nepris platform to help raise awareness of high-wage, high-demand careers among K-12 students
- ③ Scale model programs to improve soft skills (e.g., The Leader in Me, Capturing Kids' Hearts)
- ④ Advocate for sufficiently funding early childhood care and education
- ⑤ Build on the Acadiana Opportunity initiative to reemploy displaced workers

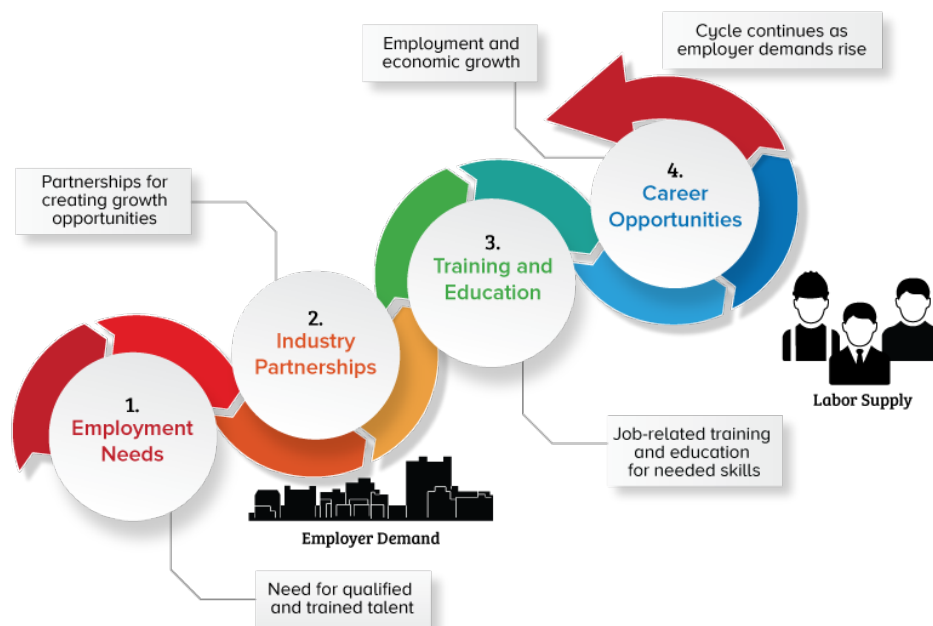
The initiatives identified in this strategy can only be achieved through the collaborative efforts of regional partners working for collective impact. Together, we can build a talent pipeline capable of supporting high-growth sectors and cultivating a diversified economy.

*Initial set of initiatives based on clarity of approach, ease of implementation, speed and scope of impact, and best practices

Goals of the Regional Workforce Development Strategy

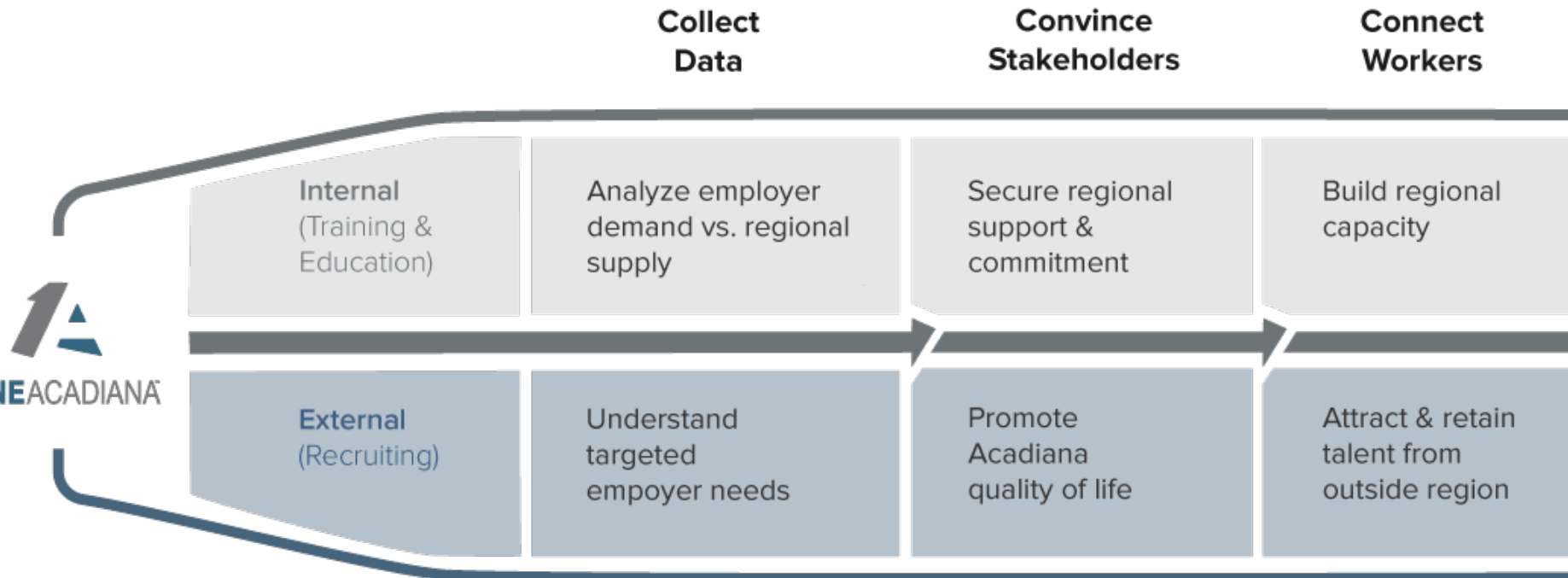
-  **Meet employer needs through a demand-driven approach:** Cultivate foundational skills and strengthen a talent pipeline for the region's economic driver industries by:
 - Identifying and supporting career educational pathways aligned with industry need
 - Attracting qualified talent from outside the region
-  **Improve individual quality of life and career opportunities:** Economically empower individuals by connecting them with education, training, and job opportunities
-  **Achieve a collective impact:** Build alignment among employers, educators, and other workforce development partners

Demand-Driven Approach:



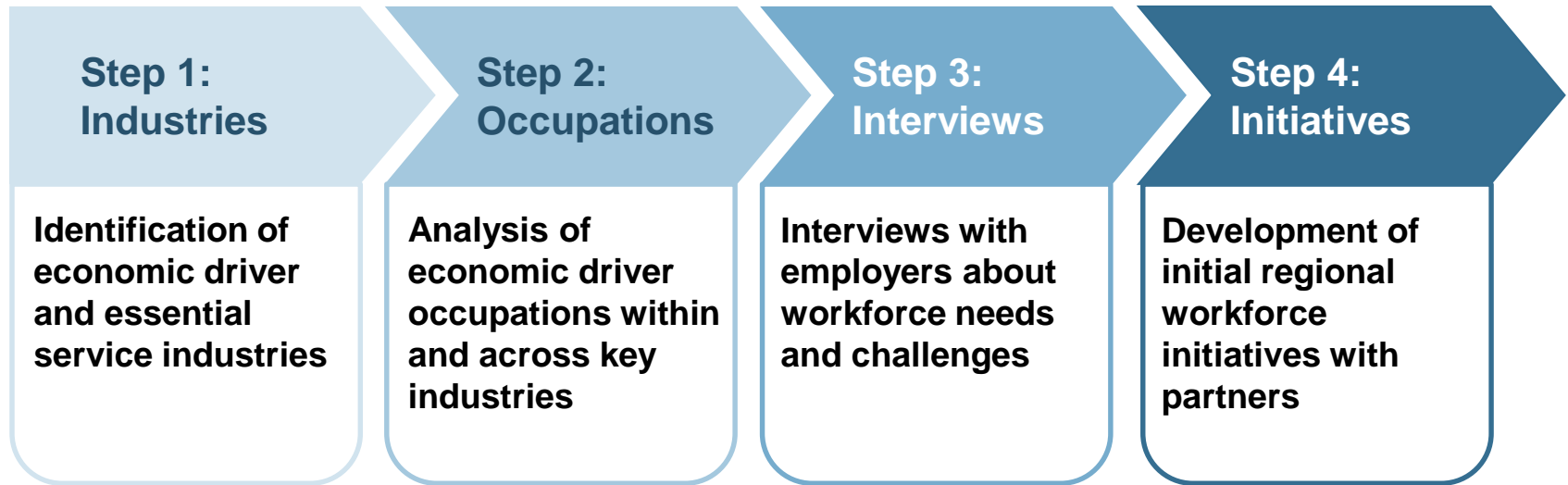
One Acadiana's efforts to strengthen our workforce pipeline within the region will parallel our efforts to attract talent from outside the region

Our dual strategy entails collecting data, convincing stakeholders, & connecting workers



One Acadiana is **partnering** with workforce development stakeholders across the region on **implementing** these internal and external approaches.

We took the following steps to develop a collaborative Regional Workforce Development Strategy




Economic Driver Industries:

- Growth potential is limited by workforce availability rather than population
- Generate sales primarily from outside the region rather than recirculating wealth within the region
- Average wages for the industry are above the region's average wage
- Examples include mining and manufacturing

Essential Service Industries:

- Necessary for a high quality of life
- Demand grows with local population
- Provide economic driver industries the support to grow
- Examples include healthcare and education

 Essential service industry

Example analysis of economic driver and essential service industries:

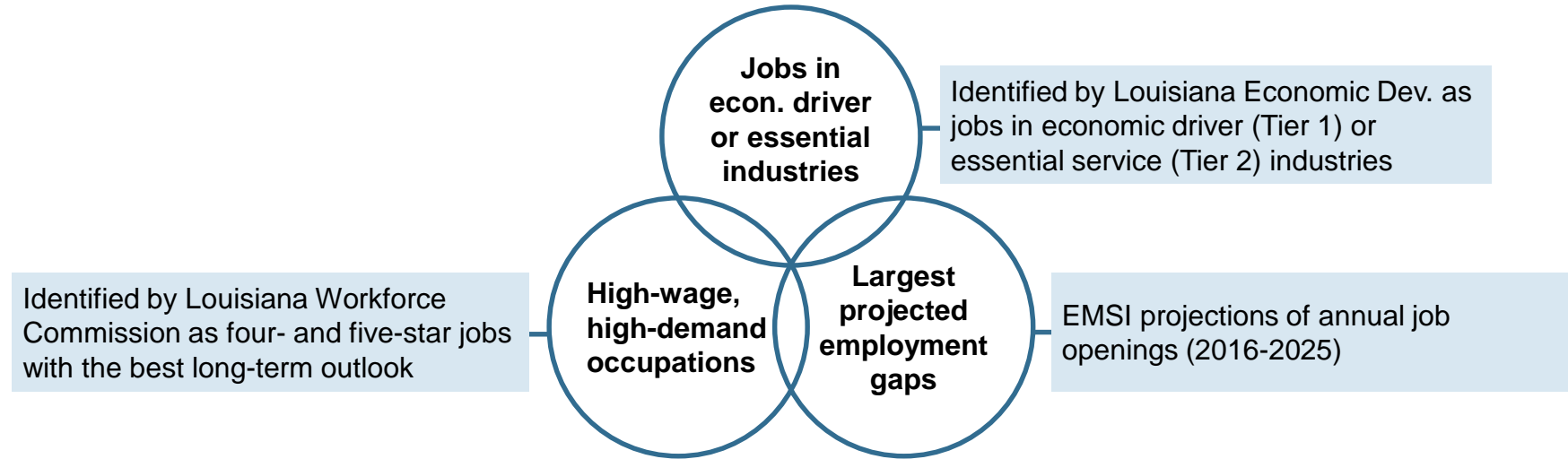
NAICS code(s)	Industry	% Traded industries*	Regional employment
21	Mining	100%	17,038
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	100%	3,226
11	Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, and Hunting	100%	1,320
31-33	Manufacturing	98%	20,995
52	Finance and Insurance	89%	6,850
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	88%	4,706
51	Information	78%	3,286
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	74%	10,506
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	72%	8,549
42	Wholesale Trade	72%	10,325
62	Healthcare and Social Assistance	0%	40,426

*% traded industries refers to the number of industries within a NAICS categorization that qualify as traded, or as generating sales primarily from outside the region

Step 2: Occupations

Analysis of economic driver occupations within and across key industries

Our analysis of economic driver occupations relies on three pillars:



Example analysis for Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics industry:

Occupation	LWC star rating	2016 regional employment	Projected annual openings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	★★★★★	4,302	80
Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	★★★★★	1,289	80
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	★★★★★	718	30
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	★★★★	860	20
First-Line Supervisors	★★★★	539	20
Bus and Truck Mechanics, and Diesel Engine Specialists	★★★★	403	10

We met with 30 employers from economic driver and essential service industries

Acadian Companies	FENSTERMAKER	Noble Plastics
ATC Group Services	Frank's International	Oceaneering / C & C Technologies
Bell Helicopter	Home Bank	Peppers Unlimited of Louisiana
Bizzuka	Island Operating Company	Perficient
Cameron	Lafayette General Health	PHI
Cameron Valves	Louisiana Rice Mill	Schilling Distributing Company
CGI	The Lemoine Company	Sunland Construction
Digital Machining Systems	M&M International	United Vision Logistics
Dupré Logistics	Macro Companies	Ville Platte Iron Works
Enquero	Metal Shark	Women's & Children's Hospital

One Acadiana will continue to engage our economic driver and essential service industries on workforce development. ***Let us know if your company is interested in discussing your workforce needs.***

Step 3: Interviews

Interviews with employers about workforce needs and challenges

What we're hearing from employers:

"Working with our partners at UL and SLCC, we are focusing on building a talent pipeline that incorporates diversity, inclusion and STEM in the earliest stages of education. Exposing our younger generation to technology is key to sustaining a workforce capable of supporting the future development of a diverse economy in Acadiana."



James Debaillon
CGI

"I am happy with the quality of the people I hire, but have concerns with the broader pool of applicants. Many lack understanding of appropriate dress, interview protocol, and other important professional skills."



Missy Rogers
Noble Plastics

"We are recruiting out-of-state talent for several key positions. We would like to establish Lafayette as a place IT professionals want to come."



Eric Prudhomme
Perficient

"There are a lot of skilled workers who are looking for employment right now. We know that will change when the price of oil goes up. The boom-bust cycle has been a huge challenge for our region."



Candy Gerace
Cameron Valves

"We need to improve training opportunities for the skilled trades workforce to build strong careers for these men and women."



Don Broussard
The Lemoine Company

"We need to address the stigma about blue-collar occupations. These are stable jobs with great benefits."



Chris Schouest
Schilling

"There is a perception problem among students and parents about careers in manufacturing. We need to change that."



Jim Carter
Digital Machining Systems

Our analysis and interviews pointed to four key challenges.

Our analysis and interviews revealed four key challenges, and working with partners we identified five initiatives that respond to the challenges:

Workforce challenges

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- **Lack of awareness** about certain high-wage, high-demand jobs and negative perceptions of career & technical education
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Regional workforce initiatives*

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- ⑤ Build on the Acadiana Opportunity initiative to reemploy displaced workers

The five regional workforce initiatives respond to key challenges identified through analysis and interviews

Initiative	Rationale	Talent shortages	Career awareness / Perceptions	Reemploying displaced workers	Soft skills
1 Support education initiatives that provide increased training for high-wage, high-demand jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strong workforce demands alignment of student outcomes at the post-secondary level with private sector demand K-12 systems train individuals in core competencies and offer career & technical education 	✓	✓		
2 Deploy Nepris software to help raise awareness of high-wage, high-demand careers among K-12 students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers and educators identified barriers to student career awareness This cloud-based platform engages industry & educators to improve student awareness of various careers 	✓	✓		
3 Scale model programs to improve soft skills – e.g., The Leader in Me (TLIM) and Capturing Kids’ Hearts (CKH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few programs exist to nurture leadership and soft skills; TLIM and CKH programs show promise TLIM program is gaining traction and demonstrating results across the region 				✓
4 Advocate for sufficiently funding early childhood care and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality early childhood care and education is the most proven and impactful investment in our long-term talent pipeline Ongoing advocacy is necessary to ensure stable and sufficient funding for early childhood education 				✓
5 Build on the Acadiana Opportunity initiative to reemploy displaced workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acadiana’s displaced oil and gas workers have skills and experience that can translate into industrial jobs across the state Retraining displaced workers for high-wage, high-demand jobs provides new opportunities for a skilled portion of Acadiana’s workforce 	✓		✓	

We are focused on workforce initiatives with the greatest promise for addressing regional challenges...

Initiatives:

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Outcomes from 2017:

- Partnered with local school systems to strengthen Career & Technical (CTE) programs through collaboration with CTE program leads and service on program advisory boards
- Advocated for developing and expanding higher ed programs in high-wage, high-demand job fields, incl. UL Lafayette Master of Informatics, LSUE nursing program, and SLCC Corporate College

Key steps for 2018:

- Advance programs and activities that support high-wage, high-demand jobs
- Support policy that provides higher ed partners with operational autonomy, adequate funding, and increased accountability
- Facilitate greater dialogue between industry and education to inform instructional practice

Partners:



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Outcomes from 2017:

- Launched the Acadiana Career Awareness Platform, powered by Nepris
- Conducted professional development on Nepris for 400+ teachers and employers in the 1A region
- 270+ teacher and employer users registered on the platform
- 70+ completed Nepris sessions in classrooms across the region, with more scheduled

Key steps for 2018:

- Ongoing outreach to employers and schools to increase awareness and utilization of the Nepris platform
- Organize industry-themed campaigns via the Nepris platform (e.g., Manufacturing Week)

Partners:

- Employers across Acadiana
- Teachers and school systems
- Louisiana Dept. of Education
- Local EDOs and chambers



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Outcomes from 2017:

- Supported efforts by the United Way of Acadiana (UWA) to expand The Leader in Me (TLIM), including fundraising efforts
- Supported TLIM “Leadership Events” at local schools; connected 1A investors and members to schools implementing the program

Key steps for 2018:

- Support efforts of UWA and others interested in accelerating TLIM implementation, incl. fundraising efforts
- Increase 1A investor and member awareness of TLIM program, incl. participation in “Leadership Events” and other opportunities recommended by UWA
- Work with partners to establish shared metrics for improving soft skills among K-12 students

Partners:



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Outcomes from 2017:

- Advocated for sufficiently funding early care and education during Legislative Session, incl. joining partners on a “Statement of Support for Increased Investment in Quality Early Care and Education” and supporting passage of HB 584 (Leger), which created a special fund for early childhood education
- Supported partners in promoting the School Readiness Tax Credit

Key steps for 2018:

- Collaborate with partners to increase awareness of and participation in the School Readiness Tax Credit and support other efforts to sufficiently fund early care and education
- Support policies that strengthen early care and education and improve access to quality programs for working families

Partners:

- Employers across Acadiana
- Teachers
- Louisiana Dept. of Education
- Local partners
- United Way of Acadiana
- Louisiana Policy Institute for Children



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- 5 **Build on the Acadiana Opportunity initiative to reemploy displaced workers**

Outcomes from 2017:

- Partnered on hosting second annual Industrial Trades Career Fair (Feb. 2017), with 19 participating companies and 750 job seekers
- Supported Vermilion Job Fair (April 2017), LEDA Job Fair (May 2017), Lafayette Diversity Job Fair (October 2017)
- Collaborated on applying for and obtaining a two-year \$200,000 grant for SLCC from the JPMorgan Chase Foundation, which will help 69 students with partial tuition vouchers, pre- and post-test assessments, and one-on-one job coaching

Key steps for 2018:

- Participate in hosting targeted career fairs
- Continue to connect job seekers to opportunities through the AcadianaOpportunity.com web portal
- Support efforts of partners to retrain and reemploy workers (e.g., identifying and applying for third-party grants)

Partners:



Implementation overview

Initiatives	Key steps for 2018	Success metrics
<p>① Support education initiatives that provide increased training for high-wage, high-demand jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advance programs and activities that support high-wage, high-demand jobs ▪ Support policy that provides higher ed partners w/ operational autonomy, adequate funding, and increased accountability ▪ Facilitate greater dialogue between industry & education to inform instructional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service on education advisory boards ▪ Advocacy for policies that support pathways into high-wage, high-demand jobs ▪ Support of relevant partner initiatives
<p>② Deploy Nepris software to help raise awareness of high-wage, high-demand careers among K-12 students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing outreach to employers and schools to increase awareness and utilization of the Nepris platform ▪ Organize industry-themed campaigns via the Nepris platform (e.g., Manufacturing Week) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Double # of Nepris sessions hosted by regional employers ▪ Increase # of Acadiana classrooms participating in Nepris sessions
<p>③ Scale model programs to improve soft skills – e.g., The Leader in Me (TLIM), Capturing Kids’ Hearts (CKH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support efforts of United Way of Acadiana (UWA) and other partners interested in accelerating TLIM implementation ▪ Increase 1A investor and member awareness of TLIM program, incl. participation in “Leadership Events” and other opportunities recommended by UWA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support UWA’s goal of implementing TLIM in 90% of pub. schools by 2020 ▪ Opportunities for 1A investors / members to become involved with TLIM, incl. “Leadership Events”
<p>④ Advocate for sufficiently funding early childhood care and education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborate with partners to increase awareness of and participation in the School Readiness Tax Credit and support other efforts to sufficiently fund early care and education ▪ Support policies that strengthen early care and education and improve access to quality programs for working families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of investors / members participating in School Readiness Tax Credit ▪ Advocacy for policies that strengthen early childhood programs
<p>⑤ Build on the Acadiana Opportunity initiative to reemploy displaced workers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in hosting targeted career fairs ▪ Continue to connect job seekers to opportunities through the AcadianaOpportunity.com web portal ▪ Support efforts of partners to retrain and reemploy workers (e.g., identifying and applying for third-party grants) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job fair participation ▪ AcadianaOpportunity.com web traffic ▪ Applying for and obtaining third-party grants

Initial Impact

Progress with implementation of Nepris and the Acadiana Opportunity initiative demonstrate the initial impact of the Regional Workforce Development Strategy

Raising career awareness – top Nepris chats:

1. Acadian Companies **516 students**
 - Virtual ambulance tour and career overview
2. LHC Group **463 students**
 - 3 chats on careers in home health
3. Bell Helicopter **271 students**
 - Chat on process planning in manufacturing
4. Advanced Graphics Engraving **105 students**
 - Virtual tour of manufacturing facility

Re-employing displaced oil & gas workers

- The second annual Industrial Trades Career Fair hosted **19 participating companies** and welcomed **750 job seekers**
- 1A collaborated on applying for and obtaining a two-year **\$200,000 grant** for SLCC from the JPMorgan Chase Foundation, which will help **69 students** with partial tuition vouchers, pre- and post-test assessments, and one-on-one job coaching

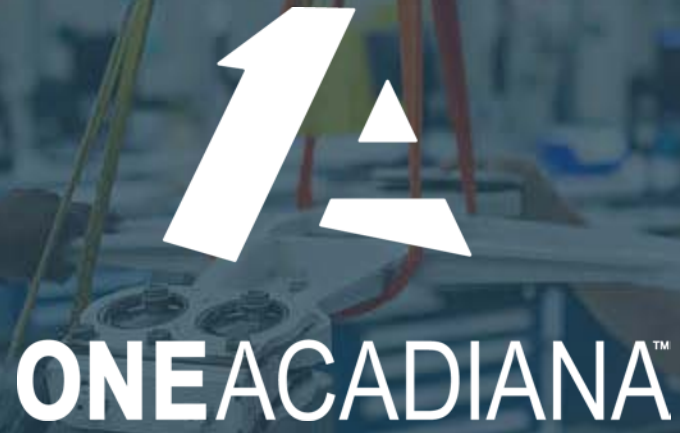
“Acadian’s Nepris chat went very well. We had a paramedic and EMT share an overview of their careers and how to become a medic from ground zero. The Nepris platform was a great way to reach students.”

—Joe Lightfoot, VP of Human Resources, Acadian Companies

“There are good career opportunities here in Acadiana, but more people need training that will prepare them for jobs that are waiting to be filled. That’s what this grant is all about – rapidly retraining and reemploying dislocated oil and gas workers into high-demand, living-wage jobs.”

—Ed Hebert, Lafayette Market Exec., JPMorgan Chase

To read more about the initial impact, visit oneacadiana.org/rwdsreport



Digital copy available at www.oneacadiana.org/rwds

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