PREPARED FOR

Capital for a Day

Arkansas employers and community partners

PRESENTED BY

Workforce Connections Team

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

LAUNCH

Arkansas LAUNCH is live today at launch.arkansas.gov.

LAUNCH for Employers

How Arkansas Workforce Connections serves employers: LAUNCH, Industry Connect, vocational rehabilitation, Skills Development grants, employment and training, and adult education

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

How Workforce Connections is organized

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Division of Workforce Connections

Office of Employment & Training

Job seeker and employer services in the Office of Employment and Training.

INCLUDES

- WIOA Title I-B
- Wagner-Peyser
- Foreign Labor Certification
- Jobs for Veterans (JVSG)
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Rapid Response-Dislocated Worker Taskforce

Arkansas Industry Connect

A single point of contact for training, sector partnerships and economic development.

INCLUDES

- Regional managers
- Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions, the state's NIST MEP affiliate
- Business engagement
- Economic development integration

Office of Skills Development

Invests in the Arkansas workforce, from students to incumbent workers.

INCLUDES

- Office of Apprenticeship
- Secondary career centers
- Skills development grants

Office of Adult Education

Connects education and training to workforce and economic development.

INCLUDES

- GED® testing
- English language learning
- WAGE™ certificates

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Prepares Arkansans with disabilities for work and helps employers keep employees on the job.

INCLUDES

- Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)
- Division of Services for the Blind (DSB)
- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- Stay-at-Work / Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW)

Matched candidates for Arkansas employers

LAUNCH for Employers uses data analytics and artificial intelligence to connect businesses with the candidates who best fit the job.

Employers spend their time engaging top candidates instead of sifting through large volumes of applications. The result is a faster recruitment process, a shorter time-to-hire and a better quality of hire.

1

Built on skills

Each job is described by its skills, and LAUNCH matches candidates against those skills.

2

Self-service from the start

Employers register, post jobs and invite candidates on their own.

WHAT EMPLOYERS GET

Candidates matched to the skills in every job they post.

Daily matches
An updated list of candidates who fit the criteria set for each job.

Wider reach
Each job also posts to the National Labor Exchange, which sends it to candidates on LAUNCH for Jobseekers.

Direct outreach
Employers invite the candidates they choose with a customized email.

Six steps from sign-up to hire

STEP 1

Easy, self-service employer onboarding

Register with name, company, EIN and role.

STEP 2

Share the job's skills and details

Enter the job and description. AI suggests the skills.

STEP 3

NLx National Labor Exchange

Post job to the National Labor Exchange

The posting reaches candidates on LAUNCH for Jobseekers.

STEP 4

Instantly view anonymous candidates

Review a daily updated list of matched candidates.

STEP 5

Select and invite candidates to apply

Send a customized email from a pre-filled template.

STEP 6

Save time and hire employees ready to work

Spend time on top candidates and reduce time-to-hire.

The next four slides show steps 1, 2, 4 and 5 as employers see them in LAUNCH.

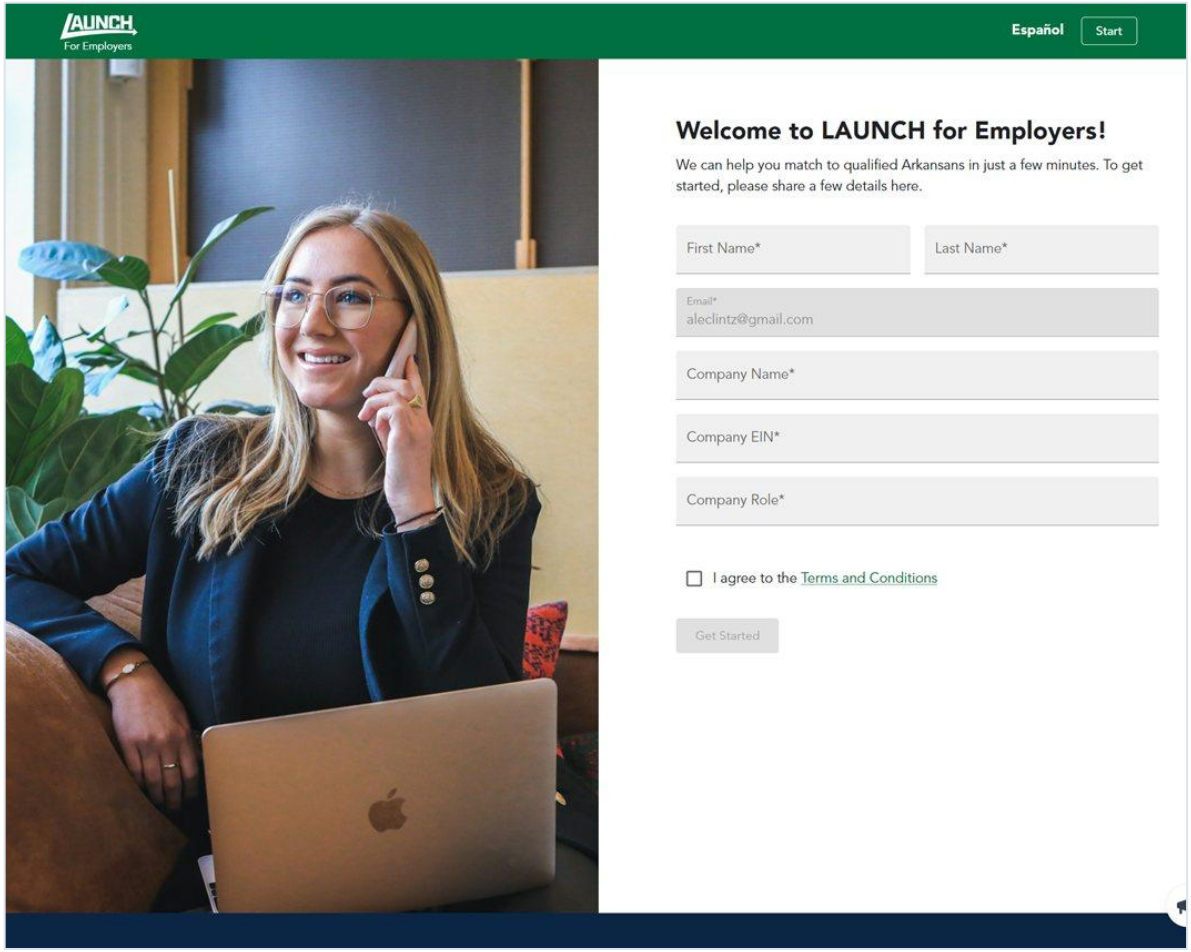
Account creation and onboarding

Registration is self-service. New users enter five details, and LAUNCH can begin finding matches.

WHAT EMPLOYERS PROVIDE

1. First name
2. Last name
3. Company name
4. EIN (federal Employer Identification Number)
5. Company role

Once registered, employers can post a job and begin finding matches.



Adding a new job

1 Describe the role

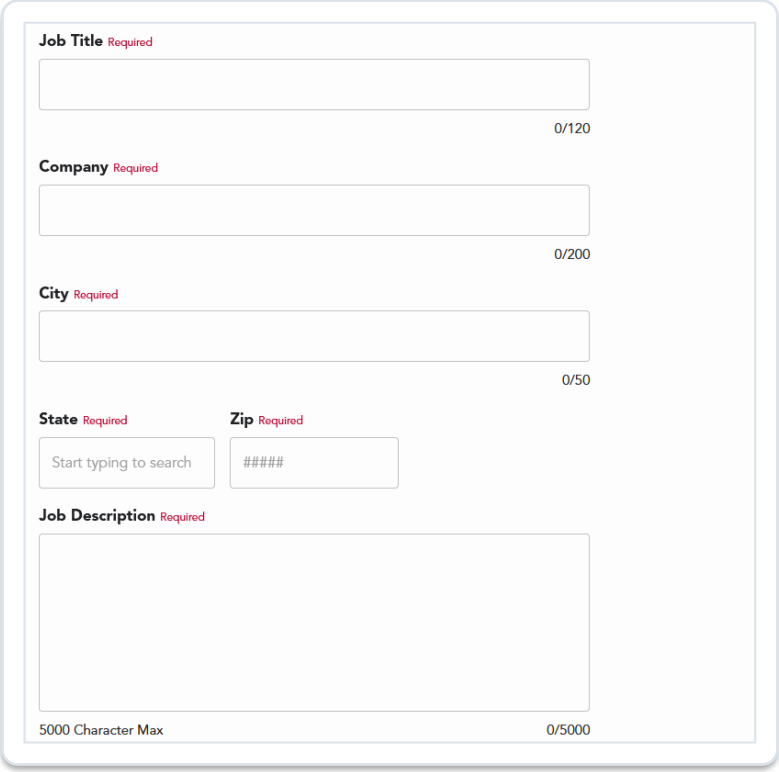
Employers enter the job title and a detailed description of the tasks and responsibilities.

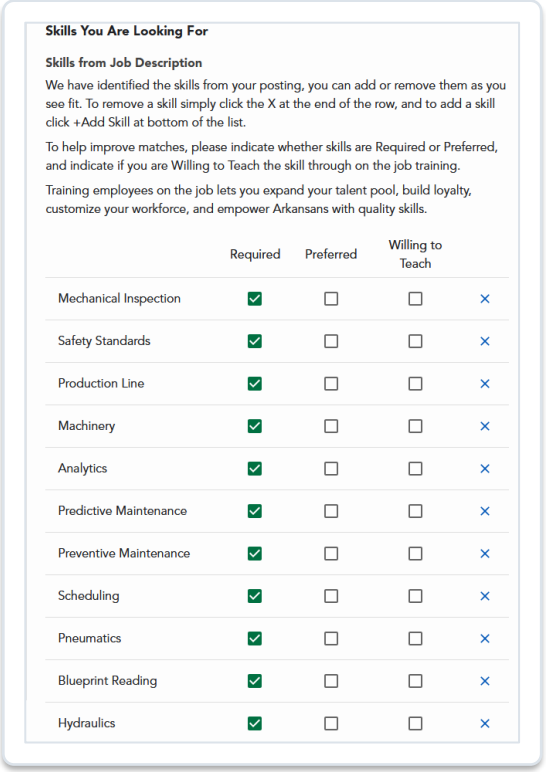
2 AI suggests the skills

LAUNCH reads the description and suggests the role's skills, which employers can keep, remove or add to.

3 The job goes out

The posting goes to the National Labor Exchange, which sends it to jobseekers on LAUNCH for Jobseekers.





On the skills screen, employers mark each skill as required, preferred or willing to teach.

Review candidate matches

1

A daily list

Employers get a daily updated list of candidates who match the criteria set for the job.

2

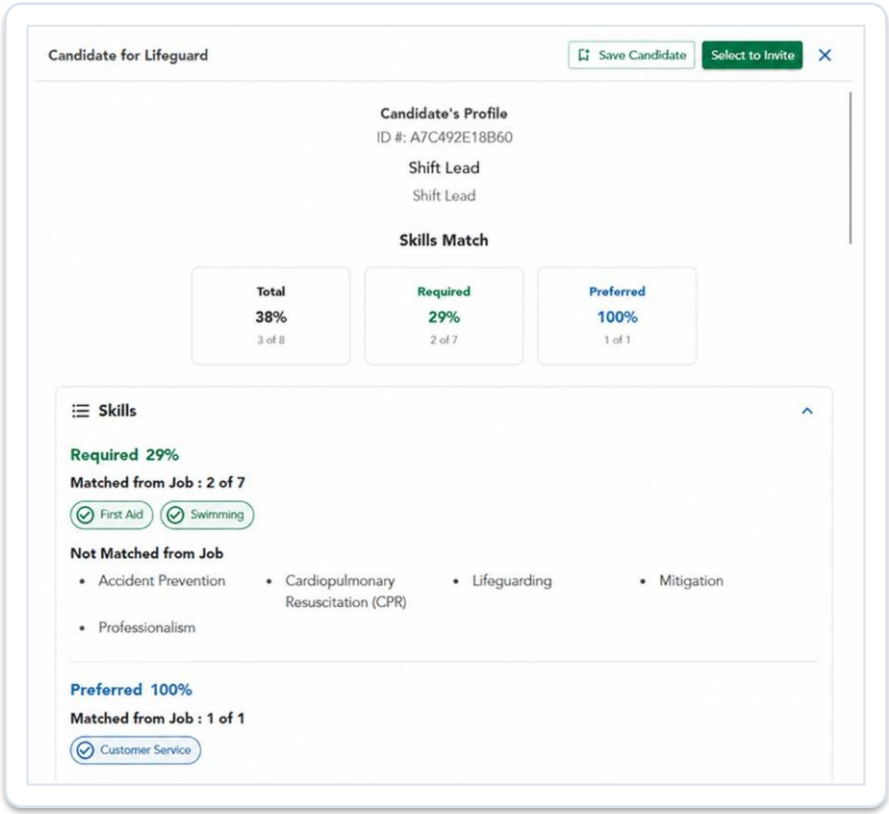
Review on the dashboard

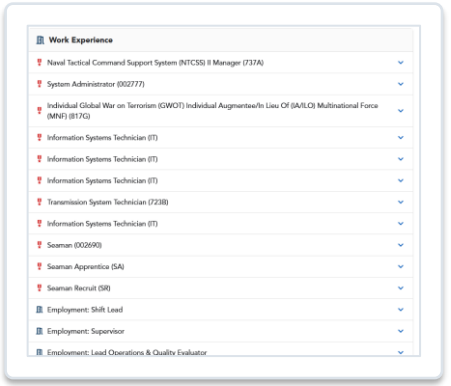
The list lives on the employer dashboard, where employers review each candidate's basic information.

3

Open the full profile

Employers decide which candidates to look at more closely in their individual profiles.





Candidates appear anonymously, by candidate ID. Employers judge each match on experience and skills.

Customize the invitation email

1

Select candidates

Once suitable candidates are identified, employers select them for an invitation.

2

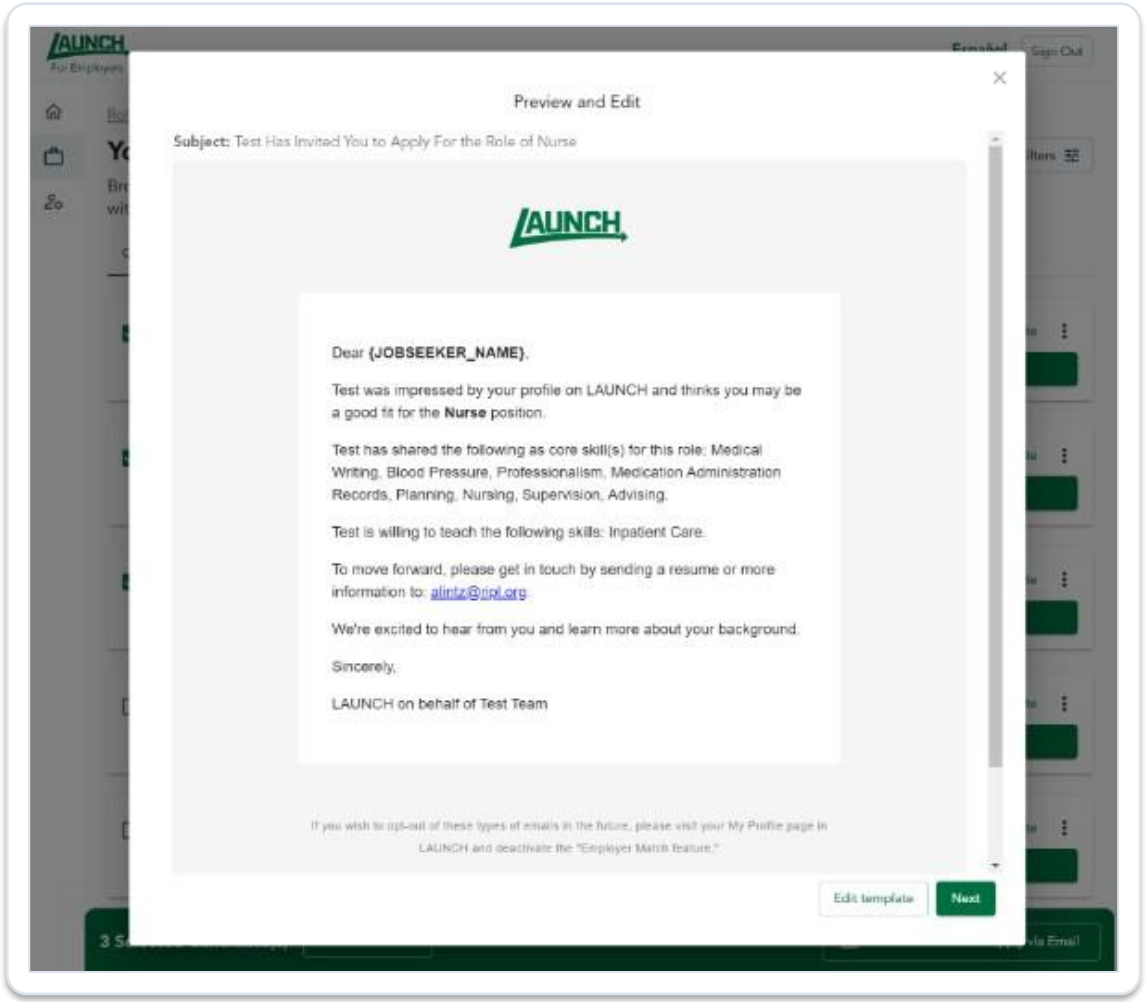
Start from a template

A pre-filled email template opens for review and editing.

3

Add the details

Employers add a personal message or links to the application process, then send.



Updated candidate matches

1

Percent match and ID

Results show a percentage match and a candidate ID, so candidates are easier to compare and tell apart.

2

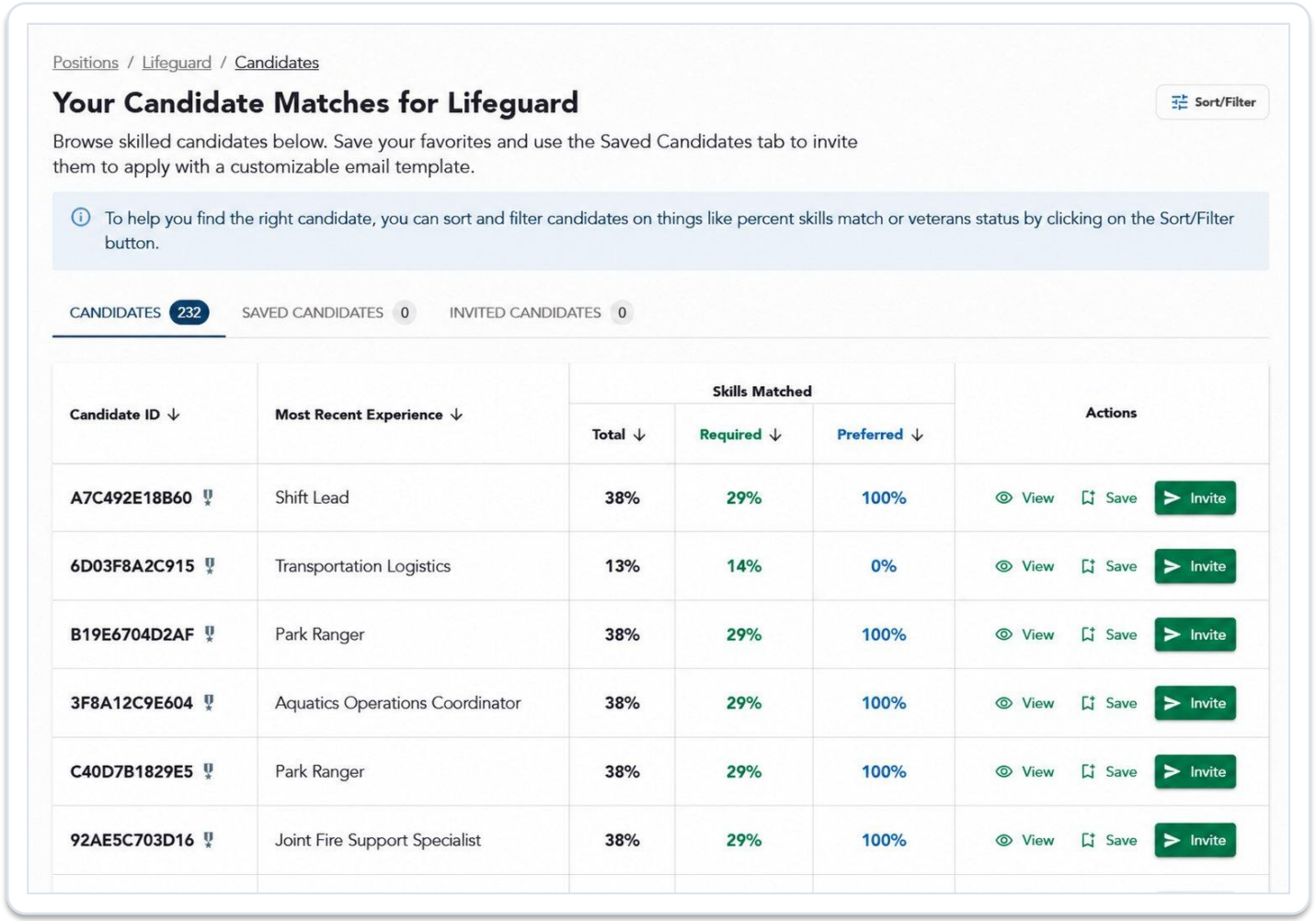
Skills by type

Profiles separate required and preferred skills from skills the employer is willing to teach.

3

Badges

Profiles show military badges and verified credential indicators.



Positions / Lifeguard / Candidates

Your Candidate Matches for Lifeguard

Sort/Filter

Browse skilled candidates below. Save your favorites and use the Saved Candidates tab to invite them to apply with a customizable email template.

To help you find the right candidate, you can sort and filter candidates on things like percent skills match or veterans status by clicking on the Sort/Filter button.

CANDIDATES 232 | SAVED CANDIDATES 0 | INVITED CANDIDATES 0

Candidate ID	Most Recent Experience	Skills Matched			Actions
		Total	Required	Preferred	
A7C492E18B60	Shift Lead	38%	29%	100%	View Save Invite
6D03F8A2C915	Transportation Logistics	13%	14%	0%	View Save Invite
B19E6704D2AF	Park Ranger	38%	29%	100%	View Save Invite
3F8A12C9E604	Aquatics Operations Coordinator	38%	29%	100%	View Save Invite
C40D7B1829E5	Park Ranger	38%	29%	100%	View Save Invite
92AE5C703D16	Joint Fire Support Specialist	38%	29%	100%	View Save Invite

Military and veteran features

1

Find veterans

Military badges identify veterans, and employers can filter results by veteran status.

2

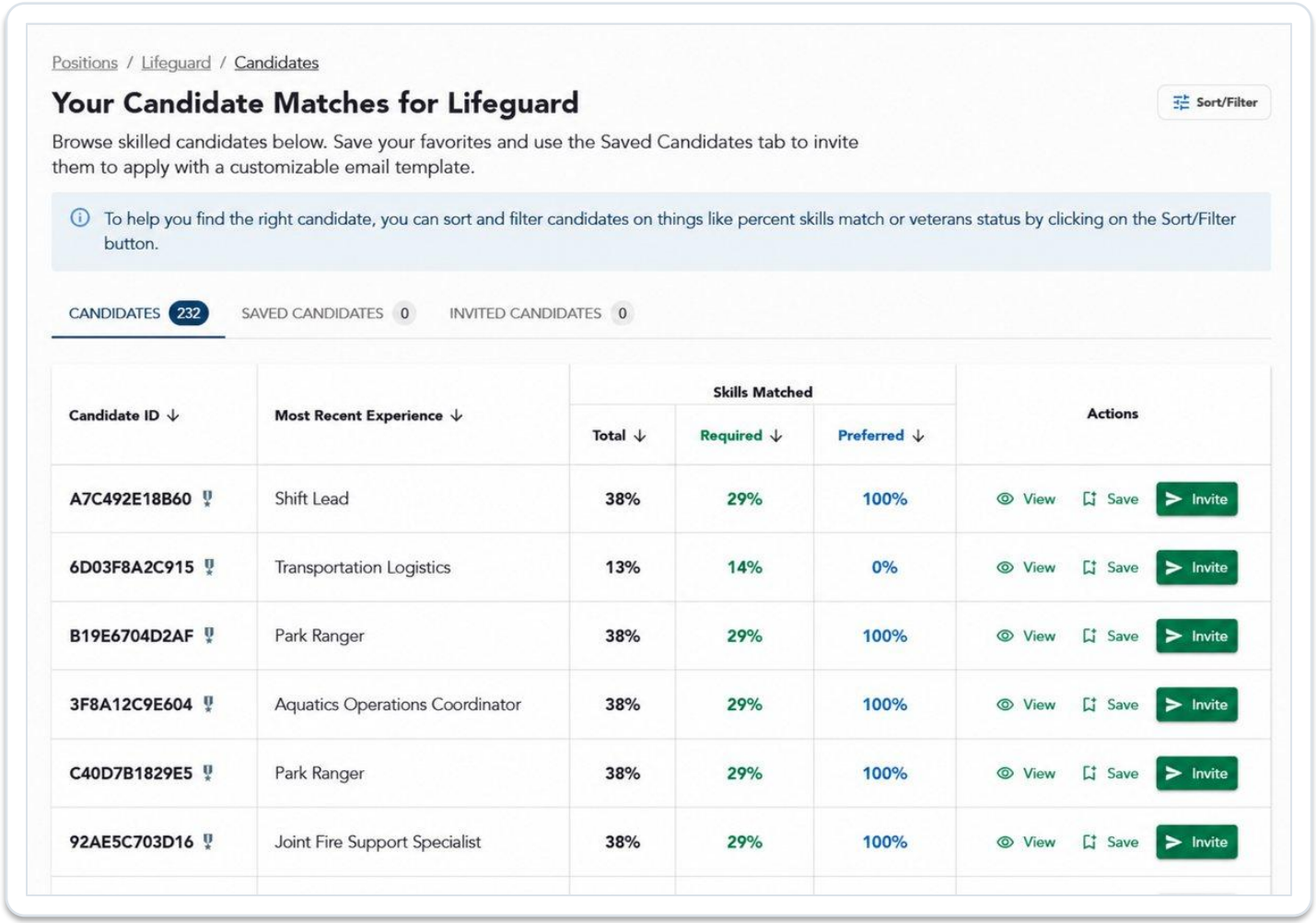
Veteran priority

Veteran status factors into matching alongside the job's location, skills, experience and other qualifications.

3

Military to civilian

Military occupation codes translate into civilian occupations, so employers can see how service experience fits their needs.



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DIVISION OF WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Arkansas Industry Connect

IN THIS SECTION

Arkansas Industry Connect (AIC)

Mission, partners, services, regional managers and results

Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions (AMS)

The state's NIST MEP affiliate: team and services for manufacturers

Arkansas Industry Connect and Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions

LAUNCH helps an employer fill a job. AIC works with the business itself, through a single point of contact for training, sector partnerships and economic development support.

202 discovery calls with companies across Arkansas

185 outreach visits with chambers, economic developers and training providers

AIC Regional Managers, first eight months of 2026.

One point of contact for Arkansas industry

ABOUT US

Arkansas Industry Connect (AIC) is a strategic workforce development engine built to serve Arkansas industry through single points of contact.

AIC connects employers, educators and workforce partners through high-impact training, sector partnerships and economic development solutions tailored to business growth.

MISSION

“To drive economic prosperity in Arkansas by delivering innovative workforce solutions, customized training, & industry-aligned strategies that help businesses & workers succeed.”

KEY PARTNERS

Four groups of partners

Arkansas employers	New and existing businesses
Education	Institutions of higher education, career and technical education, adult education
Workforce system	Local Workforce Development Boards, Office of Skills Development, career centers
Economic developers	Arkansas Economic Development Commission, state and local economic developers, and regional alliances

A full suite of workforce and business solutions

SOLUTION 1

Industry-Centered Workforce Solutions

Custom training programs aligned with employer needs in advanced manufacturing, logistics, tech, construction, healthcare and more.

SOLUTION 2

Business Engagement and Support

Hands-on support for Arkansas employers, from workforce assessments to incentive coordination, consultative services and talent planning.

SOLUTION 3

Economic Development Integration

A workforce strategy arm for business recruitment and expansion, in partnership with state and local economic developers.

SOLUTION 4

Regional Talent Coordination

Alignment of business, education and workforce assets across regions.

SOLUTION 5

Interagency and Education Alignment

Connects K–12, higher education, adult education and state partners to build coordinated, responsive training pipelines.

For manufacturers: Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions adds assessments, leadership development and operational excellence training, covered later in this section.

How AIC is organized

REGIONAL MANAGERS

Justin Majors

Director, Arkansas Industry Connect

- Outreach to industry across Arkansas
- Serve as the liaison between business, education, service providers, the State and other resources
- Project managers for workforce development and economic development initiatives

ARKANSAS MANUFACTURING SOLUTIONS

Keith Gammill

Center Director, Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions

- National Institute of Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NIST/MEP)
- Partnerships with the ASU and UA Systems
- Delivers organizational and operational excellence programs

Regional managers across the state

Rory Gulick

Regional Manager

SOUTH ARKANSAS

Scott Edmondson

Senior Regional Manager

CENTRAL-EAST ARKANSAS/NWA

Todd Hunter

Regional Manager

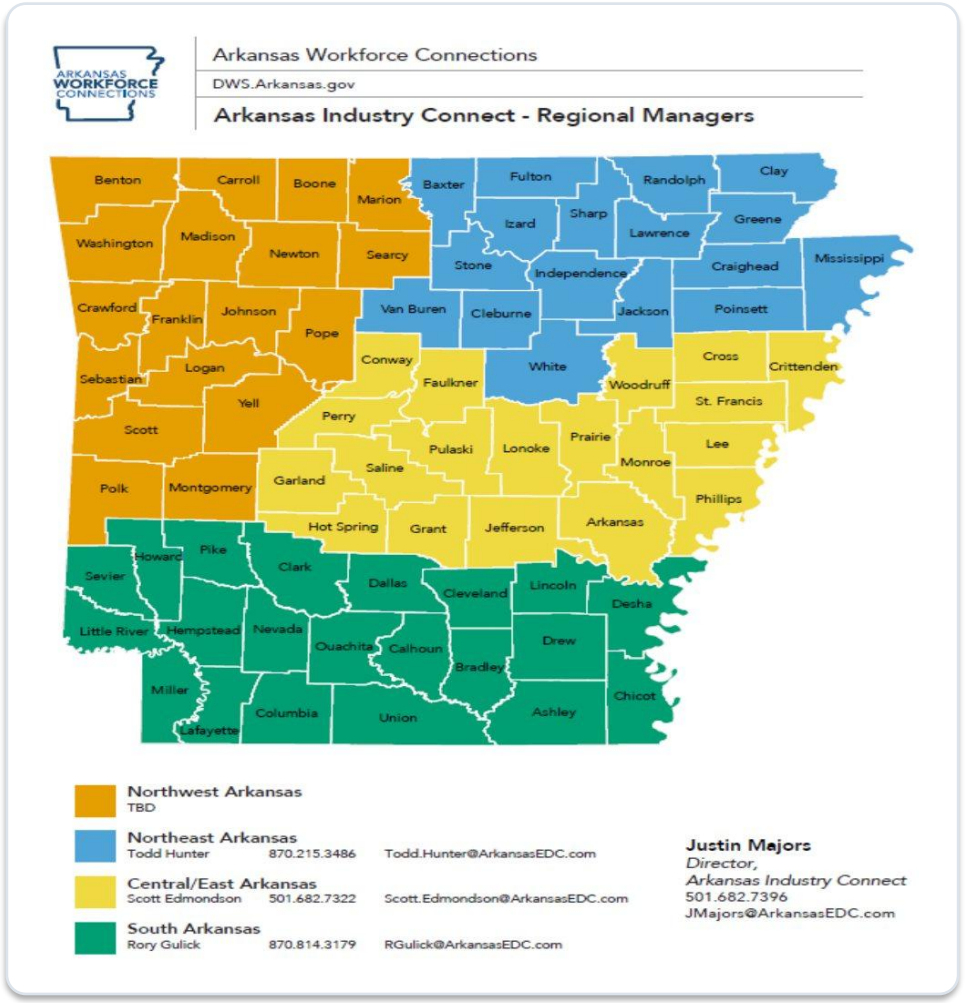
NORTHEAST ARKANSAS

202

discovery calls with companies across Arkansas

185

outreach visits with local chambers, economic developers, training providers and other organizations



Regional Managers' activity, first eight months of 2026. Map: AIC regions and contacts.

Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions team

WHO WE ARE

AMS is the Arkansas affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP).

MEP National Network™
The Go-To Experts for Advancing U.S. Manufacturing

Eight-person team: a director, an operations manager and six client service managers.

Keith Gammill
Director

Bill Kraus
Client Service Manager

Candy Burris
Client Service Manager

Brandon Harvill
Client Service Manager

Julianne Gonzalez
Operations Manager

Amy Turnbull-Weegram
Client Service Manager

Brandon Brown
Client Service Manager

Joel Gordon
Client Service Manager

What AMS offers manufacturers

Assessments

- Workplace Resilience Assessment
- Supply Chain Assessment
- Technology Assessment

Quality System Excellence

- Statistical Process Control
- ISO Certification Support
- Leadership Overview
- Risk Management
- Executive Sessions

Leadership Development

Transformational Leadership Improvement (TLI): 360 Feedback, DDI Leadership Training, Goal-setting, One-on-one Coaching

The Leadership Challenge: Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders, Leadership Practices Inventory

Team Building: Interpersonal Style (Everything DiSC, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), CliftonStrengths, 6 Types of Working Genius), The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team, TKI Conflict Management

Operational Excellence

Lean Enterprise: Kaizen, 5S, Quick Changeover/SMED, Kanban, Cellular/Flow, Poka-Yoke, Total Productive Maintenance, Lean 101, Leader Standard Work, A3, 8 Step Problem Solving, Leading and Sustaining Lean, Standard Work, Value Stream Mapping, Plant Layout, Root Cause Analysis, Problem Solving, Lean Six Sigma Certifications, Design of Experiments

Training Within Industry (TWI): Job Instruction (JI), Job Relations (JR)

Toyota Kata: Leader Starter Kata, Vision Challenge, Improvement Kata, Coaching Kata

Business engagement results, 2024 and 2025

WHY IT MATTERS

AIC delivers real-time workforce solutions for Arkansas employers.

By connecting business, training and opportunity, AIC helps grow local talent and secure the future of Arkansas industry.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT: REGIONAL MANAGERS AND AMS

	2024	2025
Discovery calls	339	367
Outreach visits	132	169
Created/retained jobs	2,155	1,917
New/retained sales	$245M	$203M
New investment	$49M	$6M
Cost savings	$11M	$16.5M

DIVISION OF WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Office of Skills Development

IN THIS SECTION

Training grants for Arkansas employers

Grow Our Own, Customized Technical and Professional Development

Funding and apprenticeship

Awards by year and the six industry sectors for apprenticeship funding

Arkansas Department of Commerce

SECTION 3 · OFFICE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Training grants from the Office of Skills Development

OSD helps Arkansas companies pay for training, from students to incumbent workers, through three types of grants.

$6.8M awarded in 2025-26

3 grant types for employer training

Funding figure from OSD's funding-awarded-per-year chart, in millions.

Investing in every level of the Arkansas workforce

ABOUT OSD

The Office of Skills Development (OSD), a division of Arkansas Workforce Connections, strategically invests in all levels of the Arkansas workforce, from students to incumbent workers.

HOW OSD DOES IT

1. Raising education and skill levels
2. Meeting the needs of companies operating in Arkansas
3. Balancing workforce and employer interests

Three types of training grants

Grow Our Own

75% MAXIMUM FUNDING

Available to businesses headquartered in Arkansas with less than 250 employees.

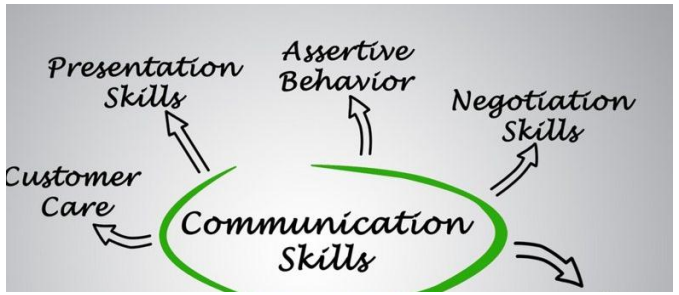
Up to 75% of the allowable training costs per fiscal year.

Customized Technical

75% MAXIMUM FUNDING

Highly technical training specific to, or customized for, a certain industry, skill or equipment.

Up to $250,000 per company site per fiscal year.



Professional Development

50% MAXIMUM FUNDING

Reimburses basic professional or academic training, including leadership, conflict resolution and teamwork.

Up to 50% of the allowable training costs, to $50k per fiscal year.

Grow Our Own companies

Arkansas companies that have trained their workforce with Grow Our Own grants.

D & L INC HVAC & SHEET METAL

FCPS

AWIP All Weather Insulated Panels

JULIAN & SONS est 1985

sealsolar energy solutions.

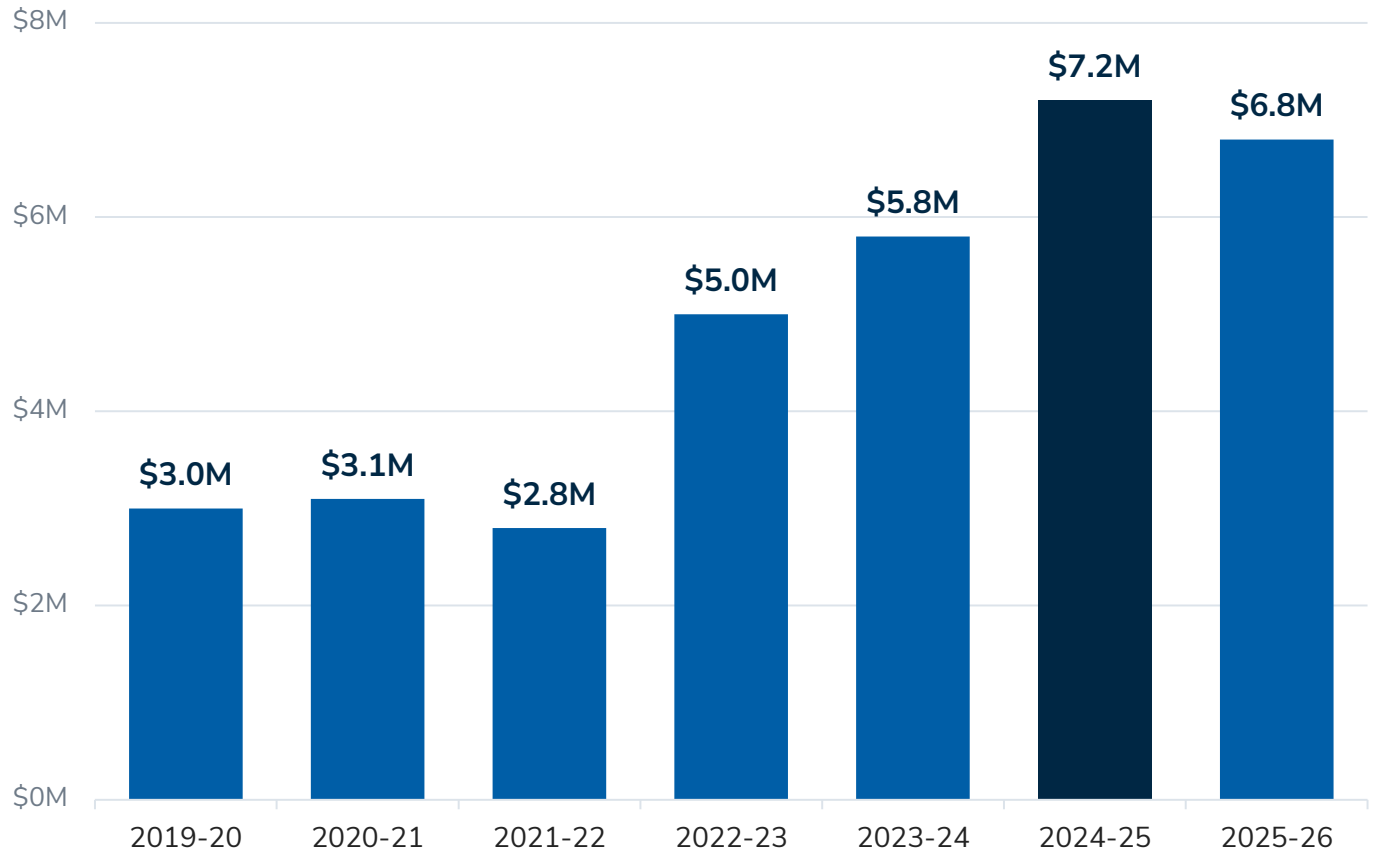
SPF

HIGHLAND

TABER ALUMINUM EXTRUSIONS • FABRICATION • ALUMINUM CASTHOUSE FRICTION STIR WELDING • PRECISION EXTRUSIONS

POWERS

Funding awarded per year



SEVEN YEARS OF AWARDS

Annual awards more than doubled

$3.0M awarded in 2019-20

$7.2M awarded in 2024-25, the highest year shown

$6.8M awarded in 2025-26

Funding for apprenticeship in Arkansas

Apprenticeship funding reflects fast-changing factors: regional and statewide workforce priorities, and demand on an industry-by-industry basis.

The Office of Skills Development, Office of Apprenticeship (OA), determines eligibility for funding as it relates to six targeted industry sectors.

SECTOR 1

Advanced manufacturing

SECTOR 2

Energy (non-construction)

SECTOR 3

Information technology

SECTOR 4

Construction/carpentry

SECTOR 5

Healthcare

SECTOR 6

Transportation/logistics

DIVISION OF WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Office of Employment and Training

IN THIS SECTION

WIOA services and results

Programs, local areas, the State Plan, funding, enrollments and training investment

Workforce reform and employer services

USDOL waivers, the restructuring proposal, regional business councils and Rapid Response

Employment and Training

services for job seekers and employers

OET's programs include WIOA Title I and Wagner-Peyser employment services. Its offices provide career counseling and job placement assistance for Arkansas communities and businesses.

$21.4M WIOA Title I and III funds, PY 26

10 local workforce development areas

PY 26 total from OET's WIOA Title I and III funding table: $21,369,128.

Expanding access for job seekers and employers

OUR MISSION

“Expanding access and opportunities for determined people and employers through a unified, responsive workforce system that serves as the vehicle for progress.”

Our offices serve as a pivotal resource hub, offering career counseling and job placement assistance tailored to meet the unique needs of Arkansas communities and businesses.

SERVICES DELIVERED THROUGH

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

PROGRAMS

14 programs and funding streams

- WIOA Title I
- WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser/ES)
- Arkansas Workforce Development Board
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)
- Foreign Labor Certification (FLC)
- Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program (MSFW)
- Career Readiness Certificate Program
- Disaster Grants
- Rapid Response/Dislocated Worker Services
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Federal Bonding Program
- Discretionary Grants
- Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI)

Arkansas WIOA Combined State Plan

THE 2026–2027 STATE PLAN

A more unified, efficient and demand-driven system

The plan outlines a workforce development system that **reduces administrative complexity, maximizes public investment** in direct services, and **strengthens alignment** with employers and career seekers alike.

GROUNDED IN

- The Governor's Workforce Strategy
- America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age
- New flexibilities provided through USDOL TEGL 05-25

The plan advances a bold restructuring of governance, service delivery, educational alignment and business engagement to ensure a more responsive and integrated workforce ecosystem.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

WIOA is a federally funded program. It supports job seekers with training, education and career services to help them find and keep a job, and it helps employers find skilled workers for local labor needs.

FOR JOB SEEKERS

1. **Training and education**
   Training, education and career assessments to build the skills for in-demand jobs.

2. **Job search assistance**
   Job leads, labor market information, résumé critiques and career counseling to find and keep a job.

3. **Supportive services**
   Help with childcare, transportation and similar needs so people can take part in WIOA programs.

4. **Youth programs**
   Training and employment services that prepare young adults for careers.

FOR EMPLOYERS

Skilled workers for local labor needs

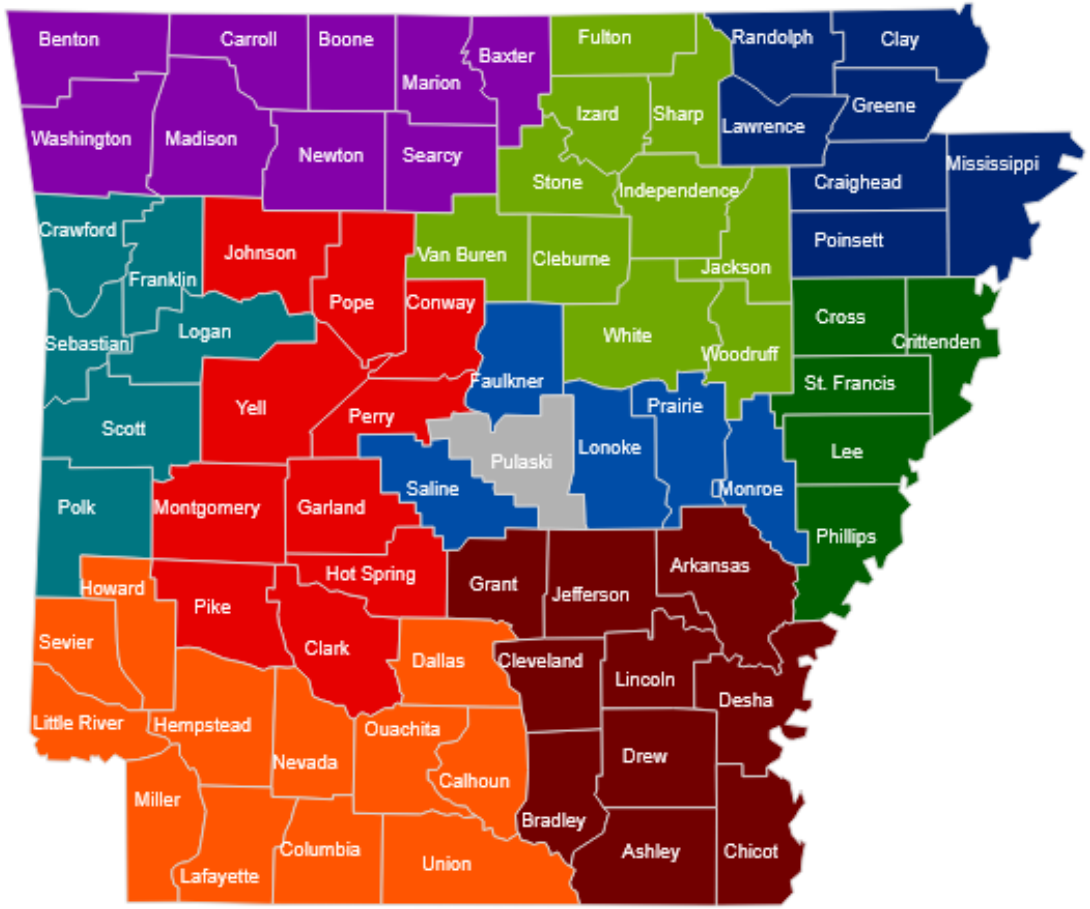
Skilled workforce

Referrals of qualified, trained job seekers who match the employer's specific needs.

Work-based learning

Tailored work-based learning strategies that help employers build a skilled workforce.

Your local connection



LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Ten areas, drawn around shared geography and economies

10 local workforce development areas cover the state

1+ comprehensive service center in every area

Many affiliate service centers in each area

Funding levels, WIOA Title I and III

WIOA ALLOCATIONS BY PROGRAM YEAR

	PY 23	PY 24	PY 25	PY 26
WIOA adult	$5,361,433	$5,096,827	$6,024,321	**$5,958,432**
WIOA youth	$5,543,794	$5,253,909	$6,199,664	**$6,212,277**
WIOA dislocated worker	$4,598,216	$4,522,192	$4,069,250	**$4,083,588**
Title I total	**$15,503,443**	**$14,872,928**	**$16,293,235**	**$16,254,297**
Wagner-Peyser (Title III)	$5,068,542	$4,999,917	$4,951,896	**$5,114,831**
Title I and III total	**$20,571,985**	**$19,872,845**	**$21,245,131**	**$21,369,128**

PY 26 AT A GLANCE

$21.4 million in WIOA funds

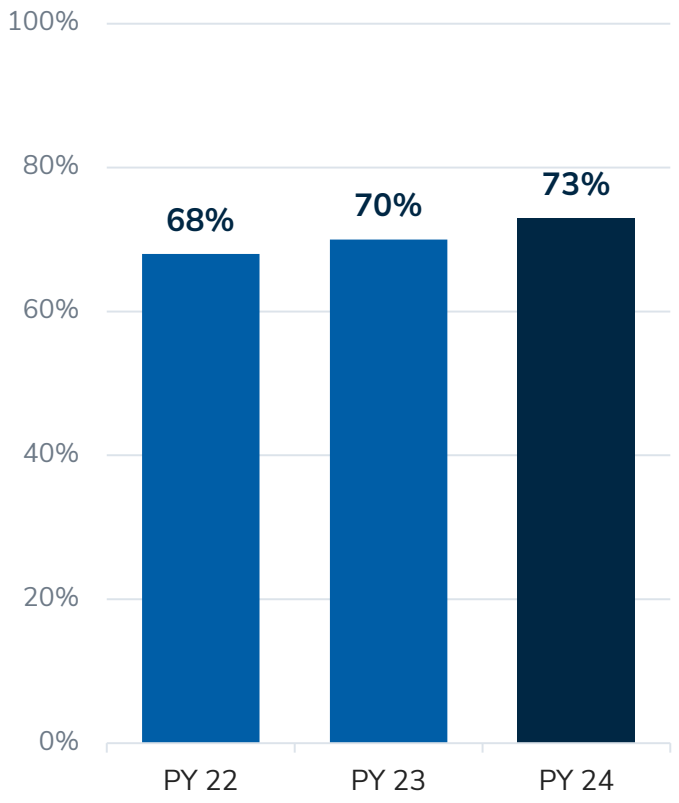
$16.3M Title I: adult, youth and dislocated worker

$5.1M Title III: Wagner-Peyser employment service

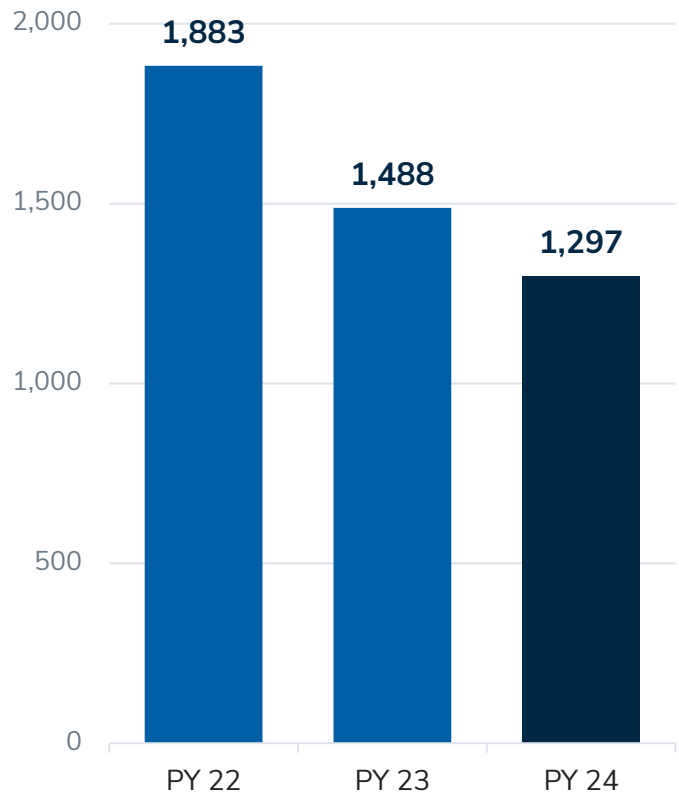
+3.9% Title I and III total, PY 23 to PY 26

Statewide trends, PY 22 to PY 24

STATEWIDE · % OPERATING EXPENSES



STATEWIDE · ENROLLMENTS, TITLE I PROGRAMS



PY 22 TO PY 24

Fewer enrollments, higher operating share

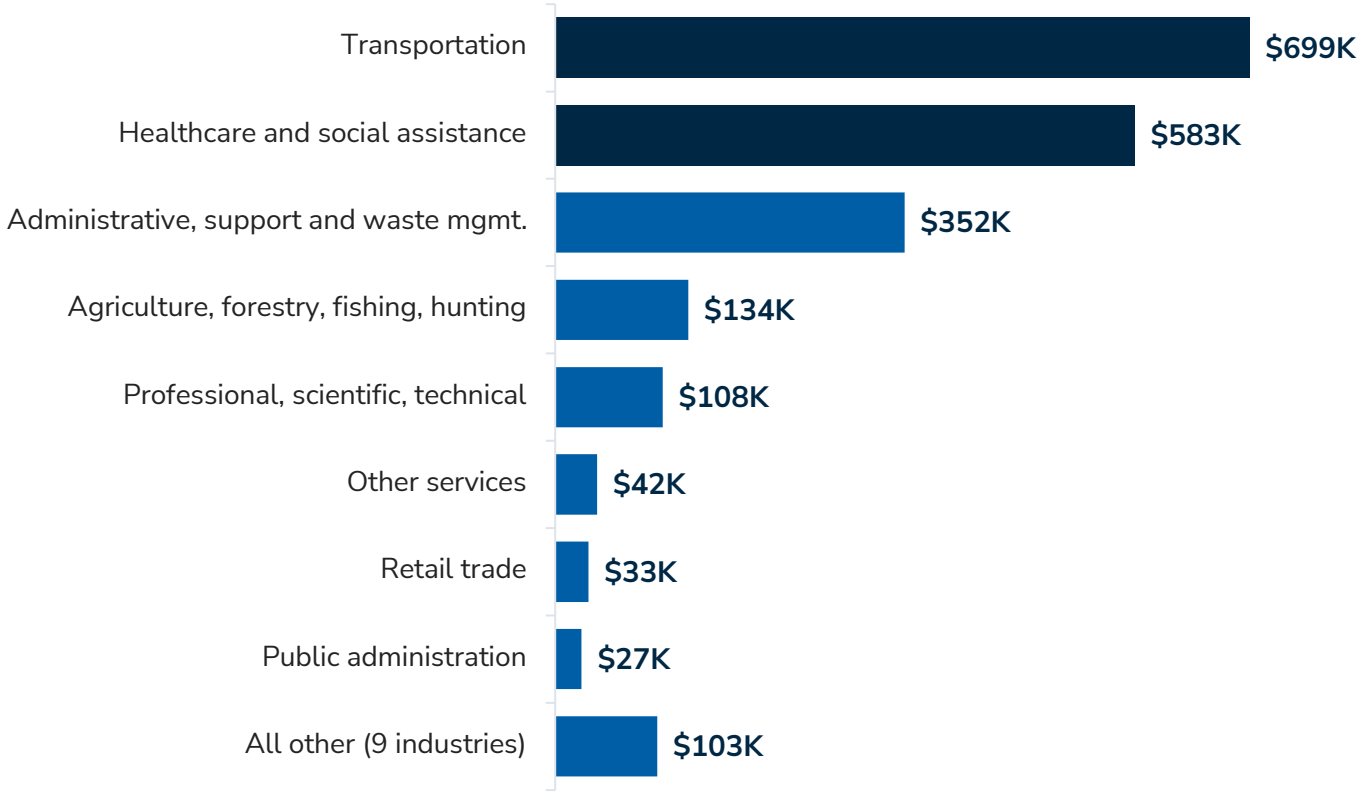
-31% Title I enrollments, 1,883 to 1,297

+5 pts Operating expenses, 68% to 73%

10 local boards; detail on the next slide

Training investment by industry

STATEWIDE TRAINING INVESTMENT, TOP INDUSTRIES



STATEWIDE TOTALS

$2.08 million invested in training

992 participants trained across the ten local areas

62% went to transportation and healthcare

$12.8M PY 25/FY 26 subaward allotments to local areas

USDOL waivers approved in August 2026

WAIVER APPROVALS

Nine waivers: seven new, two renewals

1. State Board functions as local board
2. State Plan as regional plan
3. State Board composition flexibility
4. Reallocation of funds across local workforce areas
5. WIOA training funds and supportive services: last-dollar flexibility
6. Network of affiliate sites in lieu of comprehensive centers
7. Flexibility in the 14 youth program elements
8. In-school and out-of-school youth funding flexibility, 50/50 RENEWAL
9. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth RENEWAL

USDOL WAIVER REQUESTS

The moment for bold workforce reform

May 2026 requests submitted

Aug. 2026 waivers approved

Proposal for a unified statewide workforce system

GOVERNANCE

Unified governance, planning and accountability

11 administrative entities to 1

10 planning regions to 1 statewide region

11 sets of performance accountability to 1

11 sets of board policies to 1 statewide policy

208 board members to a single board structure

SERVICE DELIVERY

Streamlined service across all Arkansas Workforce Centers

- More efficient administration across case managers, executive staff, board directors, one-stop operators and other personnel
- A path to a “No Wrong Door” approach
- Mobile, virtual and after-hours service
- A better customer experience, with consistent staff onboarding and training and a streamlined, automated eligibility application
- **Ability to redirect approximately 6 million dollars for direct participant services: training and supportive services.**

AGILITY

Faster response to economic and labor market shifts

- Regional flexibility
- The ability to move funds across areas
- A future request to move funds across programs (block grant)

Regional business councils

1. Provide employer-driven recommendations of their needs
2. Provide real-time insight into employer needs, industry trends and skill gaps
3. Guide training and supportive service strategies tailored to local labor markets
4. Ensure that regional perspectives directly shape statewide workforce decisions
5. Leverage industry associations and existing workforce councils

Rapid Response for businesses and workers

EMPLOYER SERVICES

Rapid Response

Rapid Response is a strategic WIOA program. It provides immediate, flexible and customized services to businesses and workers affected by layoffs, plant closures or mass job dislocations due to disasters.

Its goal is to connect affected workers quickly with reemployment services, training and resources, to minimize disruption and prevent unemployment, while also helping businesses through economic change.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

Pictured: an Arkansas Workforce Center mobile unit.

DIVISION OF WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

IN THIS SECTION

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)

Who ARS serves, its services, Access and Accommodations, and how to apply

Division of Services for the Blind (DSB)

Vocational rehabilitation, transition, and services for work and independence

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind

LAUNCH connects employers with candidates. Vocational rehabilitation prepares Arkansans with disabilities for work, and its accommodation specialists help employers keep employees on the job.

19 ARS field offices statewide

11 ARS regions, each with a Rehabilitation Area Manager

Field office counts from the ARS Field Office Map, July 2025.

Preparing Arkansans with disabilities to work

ARS MISSION STATEMENT

“To prepare Arkansans with disabilities to work and lead productive and independent lives.”

ARS works toward that mission through training and career preparation programs. The goal is to help individuals with disabilities overcome barriers to employment and achieve greater independence.

PROGRAM FOCUS 1

Vocational rehabilitation

PROGRAM FOCUS 2

Career and technical education

PROGRAM FOCUS 3

Transition services

Who ARS serves

ARS serves Arkansans with a wide range of physical and mental health conditions that may create barriers to employment.

Physical disabilities

- Mobility impairments (spinal cord injuries, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, amputation)
- Sensory impairments (deafness and hard of hearing)
- Chronic health conditions (e.g., diabetes, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis)

Cognitive and learning disabilities

- Intellectual disabilities
- Specific learning disabilities (reading, writing, math)
- Neurodevelopmental disabilities (autism, ADHD)
- Traumatic brain injury (TBI)
- Developmental disabilities

Mental and behavioral health conditions

- Depression, anxiety disorders, PTSD
- Bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and other conditions

Other disabilities covered

- Any condition that creates a substantial barrier to employment, where the person can benefit from VR services

Individuals receiving SSI or SSDI are presumed eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

What ARS provides

Tools and equipment

Diagnosis and evaluation of capacities and limitations

Guidance and counseling services

Career and technical education

Job placement

Physical and cognitive restorative services

Assistive technology

On-the-job training

Additional ARS services: Arkansas Career Development Center, Transition Special Projects, Program Planning, Development and Evaluation, and Business Services.

Access and Accommodations

Access and Accommodations helps Arkansans with disabilities live and work more independently through expertise in, use of, and access to services and assistive technology.

1. **Assessment**

   Assessment and diagnosis that support clients, counselors and employers.

2. **Assistive technology (AT)**

   Expertise in, use of, and access to assistive technology.

3. **Work-related programs**

   Direct support that improves competitive integrated employment outcomes.

WHO PROVIDES THE EXPERTISE

A team of clinical and technical specialists

- Occupational therapists
- Assistive technology professionals
- Licensed psychological examiners
- A medical doctor
- A nurse practitioner
- A vocational counselor
- Other subject matter experts

Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW)

1

Focus on what the employee can do

Accommodation specialists focus on what an employee can do, or is capable of doing, with the right accommodation.

2

Work with employer and employee

Specialists work hand in hand with the employer and the employee.

3

Change the task or the tools

They find new ways to do the work by adjusting how tasks are performed or by introducing different technology or equipment.

Watch: SAW/RTW success story. Click the image or this link to play it on YouTube.

How to apply for ARS

1

Register online

Complete the ARS referral form online, or scan the QR code on the flyer.

2

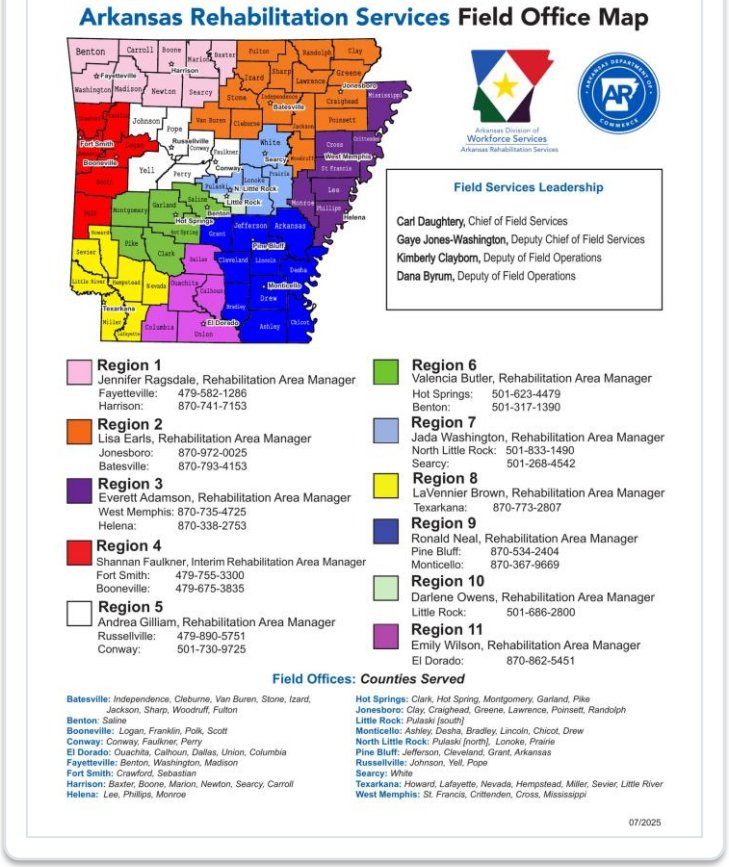
Find the local office

ARS has 19 field offices in 11 regions. The map lists each office's phone number and the counties it serves.

3

Get support

Financial aid and disability supports toward training, career readiness, career leads and placement, and career supports.



ARS flyer with referral QR code (left) and ARS Field Office Map, July 2025 (right).

Division of Services for the Blind

THE GOAL

Enhance the personal and economic independence of blind and severely visually impaired persons of all ages in Arkansas.

HOW DSB DOES IT

1. Removing barriers to employment
2. Increasing an individual's confidence in their ability to work
3. Providing education, training and resources

Vocational rehabilitation and transition

1

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services

Assesses each person's needs and provides job-related planning, vocational training and employment preparation, to help visually impaired individuals find new jobs, return to work, or advance in their careers.

2

Transition Services (ages 14 to 21)

Career development and independent living training for youth and eligible students moving from special education to the adult workforce.

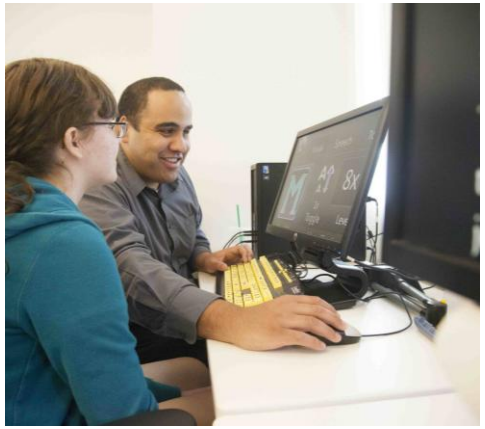
- Advocacy
- Career counseling
- Work-based learning
- Work readiness
- Job exploration

Jump Start: each summer, DSB places youth in part-time jobs, building interest and confidence in a work setting with recreational and educational enrichment.

More DSB services for work and independence

Supported Employment

A “place-then-train” model that places individuals with significant disabilities in competitive, community-based jobs, with long-term, ongoing workplace support.



Assistive Technology (DSB Tech Lab)

Evaluates needs for specialized equipment such as screen readers or electronic magnifiers, handles routine maintenance and repairs, and trains users for home or work.

Arkansas Information Reading Services (AIRS)

A 24/7 radio and telephone service that reads newspapers, magazines and other timely materials for people unable to read standard print.

Vending Facility Program

Under the Randolph-Sheppard program: training, equipment management and initial stock setup for qualified blind entrepreneurs who run snack bars, vending routes or cafeterias.

DIVISION OF WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Office of Adult Education

IN THIS SECTION

Services and reach

What adult education provides, where, and to how many Arkansans

Credentials, WAGE™ and employer partners

Industry-recognized credentials, WAGE™ Levels I and II, and partner stories

Arkansas Department of Commerce

SECTION 6 · ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education in Arkansas

Adult education connects education and training, workforce development and economic development, so adults can finish their education and move into work.

18,707 individuals served in all 75 counties

76% credential attainment rate, second in the nation

Services that connect education to work

Three connections: education and training, workforce development, and economic development.

High school equivalency

English language instruction

Basic skills education and college prep

Workforce training

Workforce readiness (WAGE™)

Workplace training

Meeting workforce demand statewide

34

programs

106 LOCATIONS

18,707

individuals served

75 COUNTIES

WHAT EVERY LEARNER RECEIVES

Academic and barrier assessments

Education and career plan

Career coaching

WAGE™

Industry-recognized credentials

3,126

credentials and certifications earned

76%

credential attainment rate

SECOND IN THE NATION

3,001

GED® credentials

5,621

WAGE™ certificates

INDUSTRY CREDENTIALS LEARNERS EARN INCLUDE

NCCER

OSHA 10-Hour General Industry

American Welding Society

Certified Production Technician

WAGE™ Level I: four building blocks

1

Exploring Careers

Discover strengths, explore local careers, choose a pathway, and leave with a next-step plan.

2

Technology Skills

Practice email, online learning, job searches, documents, privacy, and responsible digital communication.

3

Workplace Skills

Build attendance, teamwork, communication, conflict management, interviewing, and help-seeking skills.

4

Money Management

Understand paychecks, banking, budgeting, credit, transportation costs, and the real cost of working.

THE LEARNER PATHWAY

1. Initial student contact and registration
2. Education and skill ability assessment
3. Career development and placement
4. Workforce preparation and training
5. Certificate and industry-recognized credential attainment
6. Final bridge to career education or employment

WAGE™ Level II: learning with stackable credentials

1

Pre-Apprenticeship

40-hour industrial course that builds credit toward a future paid Registered Apprenticeship Program.

2

Career Technical Training

Contextualized training for in-demand occupations in energy and defense, logistics, healthcare, and advanced manufacturing.

3

Industry Recognized Certifications

Credentials of value aligned with employer demand, with clear pathways from entry-level work to advanced skills and higher earnings.

4

Workplace Skills Partnership

Employer partnerships that strengthen academic and workplace skills through mentoring, job shadowing, and work-based training.

Hands-on knowledge, hands-on credentials, real careers ahead.

Partnerships through industry-recognized credentials

1. **Employer partnerships**

   Equal benefit for the employer and the adult learner.

2. **Labor market demand**

   Industry-recognized credentials and certifications, plus recruitment, retention, and advancement.

3. **Post-secondary education and training**

   Connect adult learners to educational institutions.

EMPLOYER PARTNERS INCLUDE

Lockheed Martin · Simmons · BankOZK · Albemarle · Hytrol · Tyson

Partner and learner stories

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Southern Arkansas University Technical College

ALBEMARLE®

Learner story: Arkansas Adult Education video, embedded in the deck. Click to play.

LAUNCH

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Visit our website today:

https://dws.arkansas.gov/

CAPITAL FOR A DAY

Questions?

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EMPLOYERS: GET STARTED

launch.arkansas.gov

REFER SOMEONE TO ARS

arkansasdws.formstack.com/forms/ars_referral_short_form

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE